

BY LAWS OF THE LAY CISTERCIANS OF GETHSEMANI

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Lay Cistercians of Gethsemani is a community of believers who seek to follow Christ through the Gospels, under the guidance of the Rule of Benedict, and in communion with the monks of the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani. We dedicate ourselves to live the Cistercian charism through prayer and work as outlined in our Plan of Life.

ARTICLE I

OFFICES

The corporation shall continuously maintain in the State of Illinois a registered office and a registered agent whose business office is identical with such registered office and may have other offices within or without the state.

ARTICLE II

INQUIRERS, CANDIDATES IN FORMATION, COMMITTED MEMBERS, AFFILIATE MEMBERS, FRIENDS OF LCG

SECTION 1. DEGREES OF ATTACHMENT: Lay Cistercians of Gethsemani recognizes five degrees of attachment: Inquirer, Candidate in Formation, Committed Member, Affiliate Member, and Friend of LCG.

SECTION 2. INQUIRER

A person who has heard about LCG and has made an initial contact with a local community directly, or, made an indirect contact through the LCG website. If the initial contact was made through the website, the LCG Secretary has referred the person to a local community. The person is interested in learning more about LCG, but is not necessarily sure if he or she is interested in becoming a Committed Member. The person may have attended some meetings at the invitation of the local community, but no mentor has been assigned.

SECTION 3. CANDIDATE IN FORMATION

A person who has completed the LCG “Application for Candidates,” has been accepted for formation by the local community, has been assigned a mentor, and has begun the process of formation as outlined in The LCG Formation Guide. The process of formation typically takes 2 years, but may take longer, depending on the needs of the candidate. Throughout the 2 years or more of formation, the candidate evaluates a sense of being invited by the Holy Spirit to participate in the gift of the Cistercian spiritual tradition as a lay person.

Note: A person may not become a member of LCG if they are currently a member of any other lay associate program, such as Benedictine Oblate, Third Order Franciscan, Carmelite, or another Lay Cistercian community from another Abbey. (These types of persons may become Friends of LCG.) However, if such a person determines that they would like to choose to end their membership in the other lay associate program and pursue membership with the Lay Cistercians of Gethsemani, they may do so. In the special case of a Lay Cistercian from another Abbey whose monastery has closed, however, membership in the LCG would likely be an appropriate option. The person’s individual circumstances would be reviewed to see which LCG Attachment Type would be the best assignment.

SECTION 4. COMMITTED MEMBER

A. A person who has completed the formation process with a mentor, and, at the recommendation of the mentor, has been approved by the local community as ready to make a formal commitment as a Lay Cistercian of Gethsemani. The formal commitment ceremony is usually conducted during an LCG retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani during a solemn Vespers service with the monks.

Note: At the request of the local LCG Community, in the case of extreme hardship (such as health problems or living a great distance from the Abbey), the Advisory Council may grant an exception to the requirement that the Candidate be present at the Abbey for the commitment ceremony. In these cases, the commitment ceremony may be conducted by the local LCG Community.

- B. A Committed Member is expected to make sincere efforts to practice Cistercian values and practices in the context of his or her life, as outlined in the LCG Plan of Life. A Committed Member is also expected to engage in ongoing formation, to participate in the community life of the local in-person or online LCG community, and to support the overall LCG community and the monastic community of the Abbey of Gethsemani in prayer and actions. If possible, a Committed Member is expected to attend an LCG retreat at the Abbey of Gethsemani once every 2 years.

Special Note #1: Diocesan priests or ministers of other Christian denominations may become Committed Members.

Special Note #2: Priests from religious orders that have their own charism, such as the Jesuits or Franciscans, may not become Committed Members. This is the same exclusion as for lay persons associated with charisms such as Benedictine oblates or lay Franciscans. However, these priests may become Friends of LCG.

- C. Each local in-person or online LCG community may assess dues or solicit contributions to cover their unique expenses.

SECTION 5. AFFILIATE MEMBER.

A person who was a Committed Member, but who at some point became unable to maintain a connection to their Local Community due to health, geography, or some other reason that prevents him or her from actively participating in the life of their community. The change in the person's attachment type to Affiliate Member is by the decision of their Local Community. Affiliate status affirms a person's continuing and devoted filiation with the LCG, but recognizes that due to personal circumstances, full membership participation is unattainable. The local community will review the status of their Affiliate Members annually and affirm or change their attachment type as needed.

Note: Affiliate Members may register for and attend LCG retreats at the Abbey if there are rooms available after all other actively participating LCG persons have been accommodated.

SECTION 6. FRIEND OF LCG

A person who is interested in and supportive of the Lay Cistercians of Gethsemani, but who is unable (see Notes #1 and #2 below) or unwilling to become a Committed Member. LCG actively encourages people to be Friends of LCG, who, by their interest and support, affirm their dedication to and prayers for LCG.

Note #1: Since a lay person may not become a Committed Member of LCG if they are currently a member of any other lay associate program (such as Benedictine oblate, Third Order Franciscan, Carmelite, or another Lay Cistercian community from another Abbey), these persons may become Friends of LCG. (See also the Candidate in Formation section.)

Note #2: Since priests from religious orders that have their own charism, such as the Jesuits or Franciscans, may not become Committed Members, these priests may become Friends of LCG. (See also the Committed Member section.)

Note #3: Friends of LCG who are active participants in the meetings and activities of an in-person or online Local Community are eligible to register for and attend the LCG retreats at the Abbey.

SECTION 7. TERMINATION OF COMMITTED OR AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

The membership of a Committed or Affiliate Lay Cistercian of Gethsemani shall terminate upon the occurrence of either of the following events:

- A. Upon his or her notice of resignation. Such resignation shall be delivered to the local community leader and to the LCG Advisory Council Secretary and to the Coordinator who maintains the master membership roster.
- B. If a Committed or Affiliate Member becomes a Lay Associate of another community. The person will then be given a choice, by their local LCG community coordinator or the Advisory Council coordinator, as to which community they wish to remain with, since they may not belong to both. (See also the Candidate in Formation section.)

SECTION 8. NONLIABILITY OF MEMBERS, AFFILIATES AND FRIENDS

An Inquirer, Candidate in Formation, Committed or Affiliate Member, or Friend of the LCG is not personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or obligations of the LCG.

ARTICLE III

LOCAL LCG COMMUNITIES

The Advisory Council, by resolution adopted by a majority of the councilors in office, may designate one or more local LCG Communities. Local LCG communities may include online communities. Local LCG Communities are expected to provide the structure and support for its members to sustain a commitment to live a Cistercian lay contemplative spirituality. Local Communities are expected to meet periodically, to offer guidance and assistance to local members better to support and encourage application of the Cistercian charism.

ARTICLE IV

ADVISORY COUNCIL

SECTION 1. NUMBER AND TENURE.

The number of councilors shall be variable as approved by the Advisory Council but shall be no less than the number representing one councilor from each local LCG community.

Each councilor shall be selected by his or her local LCG community and shall serve a renewable 2 year term.

SECTION 2. QUALIFICATIONS.

Only committed Members are eligible to serve on the Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council shall be composed of at least one member, but no more than 2, from each local LCG community. Monks as assigned by the Abbey of Gethsemani serve as non-voting spiritual advisors to the LCG Advisory Council.

SECTION 3. GENERAL POWERS.

The affairs of the corporation shall be managed by or under the direction of its Advisory Council.

SECTION 4. DUTIES.

It shall be the duty of the Advisory Council members to:

- A. Perform any duties that support, direct and sustain the best interest of the LCG

- B. Select officers and designate committees to carry out the mission of the LCG.

- C. Meet at least annually.

SECTION 5. TERM OF OFFICE.

Each advisory council member may serve for a renewable 2 year period.

SECTION 6. COMPENSATION.

Advisory Council members shall serve without compensation.

Reasonable expenses may be reimbursed to advisory council members when incurred in the performance of their duties. Any payments to advisory council members shall be approved in accordance with the conflict of interest policy, as set forth in Article XV of these bylaws.

SECTION 7. MEETINGS.

The Advisory Council shall meet at least annually and may provide, by resolution, the time and place for the holding of regular meetings of the board without other notice than such resolution. Meetings can be held in person at the Abbey or online using digital technology.

Special meetings of the Advisory Council may be called by the Advisory Council Coordinator, the Advisory Council Secretary, or by any six advisory council members.

SECTION 8. NOTICE.

Notice of any meeting of the Advisory Council shall be sent to all members by written or digital communication at least 2 weeks in advance, unless extraordinary circumstances require a meeting within a shorter time period.

SECTION 9. QUORUM.

A majority of the Advisory Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Advisory Council, provided that if less than a majority of the councilors are present at said meeting a majority of the councilors present may adjourn the meeting to another time without further notice.

SECTION 10. MANNER OF ACTING.

The act of a majority of the councilors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the advisory council, unless the act of a greater number is required by statute, these bylaws, or the articles of incorporation. No councilor may act by proxy on any matter.

SECTION 11. VACANCIES.

Any vacancy occurring in the Advisory Council or any councillorship to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of councilors shall be filled by the local LCG community affected unless the articles of incorporation, a statute, or these bylaws provide that a vacancy or a councillorship so created shall be filled in some other manner, in which case such provision shall control. A councilor elected or appointed, as the case may be, to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office.

SECTION 12. RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL OF COUNCILORS.

A councilor may resign at any time upon written notice to the advisory council. A councilor may be removed with or without cause, as specified by statute.

SECTION 13. INFORMAL ACTION BY COUNCILORS.

The authority of the Advisory Council may be exercised without a meeting by consent of the majority of all of the councilors entitled to vote.

SECTION 14. NONLIABILITY OF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

The Advisory Council members shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the Advisory Council.

ARTICLE V

ADVISORY COUNCIL OFFICERS

SECTION 1. OFFICERS.

The officers of the corporation shall be a coordinator, one or more vice coordinators (the number thereof to be determined by the Advisory Council),

a treasurer, a secretary, and such other officers as may be elected or appointed by the Advisory Council. Officers whose authority and duties are not prescribed in these bylaws shall have the authority and perform the duties prescribed, from time to time, by the advisory council.

SECTION 2. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE.

The officers of the corporation shall be elected for a renewable two year term by the Advisory Council at the regular annual meeting of the Advisory Council. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently may be. Vacancies may be filled or new offices created and filled at any meeting of the Advisory Council. Each officer shall hold office until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified, until his or her death, or until he or she shall resign or shall have been removed in the manner hereinafter provided. Election of an officer shall not of itself create contract rights.

SECTION 3. REMOVAL.

Any officer elected or appointed by the Advisory Council may be removed by the Advisory Council whenever in its judgment the best interests of the corporation would be served thereby.

SECTION 4. COORDINATOR.

The coordinator shall be the principal executive officer of the corporation. Subject to the direction and control of the Advisory Council, he or she shall be in charge of the business and affairs of the corporation. The Coordinator shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Council and shall be the Chairperson of the Council. The Coordinator may sign, with the Secretary or any proper Officer of the Corporation authorized by the Advisory Council, contracts, or other instruments that the Advisory Council has authorized to be executed, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Advisory Council or by these Bylaws or by statute to some other Officer or agent of the Corporation, and in general shall perform all duties incident to the office of Coordinator.

SECTION 5. VICE COORDINATOR.

In the absence of the Coordinator or in the event of the Coordinator's inability or refusal to act, the Vice Coordinator (or, in the event there be more than one Vice Coordinator, the Vice Coordinator in the order designated, or, in the

absence of any designation, then in the order of their election) (or, in the event there is no Vice Coordinator, the Secretary) shall perform the duties of the Coordinator, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions on the Coordinator. Any Vice Coordinator shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Coordinator or by the Advisory Council.

SECTION 6. TREASURER.

The treasurer shall be the principal accounting and financial officer of the corporation. He or she shall (a) have charge of and be responsible for the maintenance of adequate books of account for the corporation; (b) have charge and custody of all funds and securities of the corporation, and be responsible therefor, and for the receipt and disbursement thereof; and (c) perform all the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the coordinator or by the advisory council. If required by the Advisory Council, the treasurer shall give a bond for the faithful discharge of his or her duties in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the advisory council shall determine.

SECTION 7. SECRETARY.

The secretary shall (a) record the minutes of the meetings of the Advisory Council; (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law; (c) be a custodian of the corporate records; (d) keep a register of the contact information of each member that shall be furnished to the secretary by such member; and (e) perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the coordinator or by the Advisory Council.

SECTION 8. ASSISTANT TREASURERS AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.

The assistant treasurers and assistant secretaries shall perform such duties as shall be assigned to them by the treasurer or the secretary, respectively, or by the coordinator or the Advisory Council. If required by the Advisory Council, the assistant treasurers shall give bonds for the faithful discharge of their duties in such sums and with such sureties as the advisory council shall determine.

SECTION 9. VACANCIES.

Any vacancy caused by the death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, of any officer shall be filled by the Advisory Council. In the event of a vacancy in any office other than that of Advisory Council Coordinator, such vacancy may be filled temporarily by appointment by the Coordinator until such time as the advisory council shall fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE VI

COMMITTEES

The Advisory Council, by resolution adopted by a majority of the councilors in office, may designate one or more committees, each of which will consist of two or more councilors and such other persons as the Advisory Council designates.

ARTICLE VII

CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

SECTION 1. CONTRACTS.

The Advisory Council may authorize any officer or officers or agent or agents of the corporation, in addition to the officers so authorized by these bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

SECTION 2. CHECKS, DRAFTS, ETC.

All checks, drafts, or electronic transfers for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation shall be issued by such officer or officers or agent or agents of the corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Advisory Council. In the absence of such determination by the Advisory Council, such instruments shall be issued by the Treasurer. Any accounts of the corporation held in a financial institution will be established to allow access by both the Treasurer and one other designated member of the Advisory Council, usually the Coordinator.

SECTION 3. DEPOSITS.

All funds of the corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Advisory Council may select.

SECTION 4. GIFTS.

The Advisory Council may accept on behalf of the corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the corporation.

ARTICLE VIII

BOOKS AND RECORDS

The corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account. It shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of the Advisory Council and shall keep a record giving the names and contact information of the Members entitled to vote. All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any member, or his or her agent or attorney, for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

ARTICLE IX

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be fixed by resolution of the Advisory Council.

ARTICLE X

DUES

SECTION 1. ANNUAL DUES. The Advisory Council may determine from time to time the amount of initiation fee, if any, and annual dues payable to the corporation by members.

SECTION 2. PAYMENT OF DUES. Dues shall be payable in advance as determined by the Advisory Council.

ARTICLE XI

SEAL

The corporation shall have no seal.

ARTICLE XII

WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of Illinois or under the provisions of the articles of incorporation or the bylaws of the corporation, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice. Attendance at any meeting shall constitute waiver of notice thereof unless the person at the meeting objects to the holding of the meeting because proper notice was not given.

ARTICLE XIII

INDEMNIFICATION

LCG shall have no indemnification policies.

ARTICLE XIV

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

SECTION 1.

If a transaction is fair to the corporation at the time it is authorized, approved, or ratified, the fact that a councilor of the corporation is directly or indirectly a party to the transaction is not grounds for invalidating the transaction.

SECTION 2.

In a proceeding contesting the validity of a transaction described in Section 1 of this Article, the person asserting validity has the burden of proving fairness unless the material facts of the transaction and the councilor's interest or relationship were disclosed or known to the advisory council and the board or committee authorized, approved, or ratified the transaction by the affirmative votes of a majority of disinterested councilors even though the disinterested councilors were less than a quorum.

SECTION 3.

The presence of a councilor who is directly or indirectly a party to the transaction described in subsection a of this Article or a councilor who is otherwise not disinterested may be counted in determining whether a quorum is present but may not be counted when the advisory council or a committee then takes action on the transaction.

SECTION 4.

For purposes of this Article, a councilor is "indirectly" a party to a transaction if the other party to the transaction is an entity in which the councilor has a material financial interest or of which the councilor is an officer, councilor, or general partner.

ARTICLE XV

AMENDMENTS

The power to alter, amend, or repeal the bylaws or adopt new bylaws shall be vested in the Advisory Council unless otherwise provided in the articles of incorporation or the bylaws. Such action may be taken at a regular or special meeting for which written notice of the purpose shall be given. The bylaws may contain any provisions for the regulation and management of the affairs of the corporation not inconsistent with law or the articles of incorporation.

END

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