THE CANONS REGULAR OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED,
OR, THE COMPASSIONISTS

For an everlasting memorial

TO THE HONOUR AND GLORY OF THE HOLY AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY,
for the increase of devotion to the Blessed Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ and
His Immaculate Virgin Mother, Our Lady of Sorrows, and in petition to the Divine
Mercy for the salvation of our souls and those of all men, imploring the merits
and favour of the Saviour, the Mother of God, St Joseph and all the saints, as
follows:

BY THESE LETTERS:

There is established, within the Old Catholic Apostolic Church, the CANONS
REGULAR OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED, or, THE COMPASSIONISTS, for the said
purposes and with the norms and laws hereby established;

Membership

1. Those in full membership, to be termed CANONS REGULAR, shall, to the
satisfaction of the Abbot and Visitor, be:
   a. Baptised in the Name of the Divine Trinity and confirmed, in
      accordance with Catholic practice, and;
   b. Of holy and right life;
   c. Of sufficient health, in mind, body and spirit, to perform the duties
      expected of a Canon Regular;
   d. At least thirty years of age.
   e. Applicants who have not received the sacraments of initiation are to
      be required to receive them and a subsequent probationary period
      (of not less than three months, nor more than two years) is to be
      prescribed.
   f. Applicants for admission as Canons Regular may, if suitable, be
      admitted immediately as Oblates.
2. It shall be no bar to becoming a Canon Regular that a candidate be male
   or female, or in holy orders (whether in the apostolic succession or no).
3. Those who wish to share in the charism and life of the Compassionists
   may, at the discretion of the Abbot or his/her appointed deputy, be
   admitted as Oblates, on condition that 1.a and 1.b are fulfilled, and having
   attained the age of eighteen years at the date of application.
4. Full membership is conditional on taking vows of poverty, chastity and
   obedience in the form appended to these Constitutions.
5. Should a Canon Regular wish to separate him or herself from the
   Compassionists, he/she must write a Letter of Demission, addressed to
   both the Abbot and the Visitor. This shall then suspend and dispense him
   from the vows for a period of thirty days, after which he/she has the right
   to apply for Termination from Vows, which is final.
6. The Visitor has the right to suspend, restrict or terminate the ministry of Canons Regular on the grounds of:
   a. Gross misconduct;
   b. Misrepresentations during application

7. Appeal against the decision of the Visitor lies to the Plenary Council of the Canons Regular, who may affirm or modify the decision of the Visitor.

8. The ministry and membership of Oblates may be suspended, restricted or terminated at the discretion of the Abbot. Appeal in such cases lies to the Visitor, who may affirm or modify the decision.

9. Those appointed as Canons Regular may use the title of “Brother” or “Sister”, followed by their Christian name, as appropriate, and, at their discretion, the post-nominal letters “CRCC”. A name in religion may be taken suitable to the gender and devotion of the member. The use of “Dom” or “Dame” before the name in religion is likewise permitted.

10. Canons Regular in Holy Orders shall, unless they simply use the title “Brother” or “Sister”, be thus titled (NB: italicised portions of the titles following are adjusted according to gender):
   a. If in episcopal orders, “The Right Reverend Father in God, Dom N, CRCC”;
   b. If in priestly orders, "The Reverend Father, Dom N, CRCC;
   c. If in diaconal or minor orders or a minister not in the apostolic succession, “The Reverend Dom N, CRCC”.

11. Canons Regular shall, as appropriate, wear the dress appropriate and approved by the Abbot for their state of life.

12. Oblates of the Compassionists shall, when in the company of Canons Regular or fellow Oblates, address each other as “Brother N” or “Sister N”, as appropriate. A form of habit may be approved for their use by the Prior.

13. The vesture and dress appropriate to each is a reminder of the need to be incorporated into the saving Passion, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord as a living out of their baptismal vows.

14. Canons Regular in Holy Orders may choose to wear the habit appropriate to their state when undertaking ministry in secular contexts.

15. Formation for applicants is at the discretion of the Prior or his/her appointed deputy and it should take into account previous studies or training, formal or informal, already undertaken.

**The Holy Rule**

16. The Holy Rule of St Augustine, as received by the Western Church, is hereby instituted as the foundation of common and spiritual life within the Compassionists. It is to be studied regularly by all Canons Regular and Oblates.

17. At the time of foundation, the Canons Regular are a dispersed community. If they come together temporarily for the sake of their work or their prayer, it shall be termed a MISSION.
18. The Abbot may erect communities of Canons Regular and/or Oblates as he/she believes to be best conducive to holy life. These are to be dedicated to some mystery of the life of Our Lord, or Our Lady, or to a saint associated with our charism.

**The Charism**

19. The Charism of the Canons Regular of Christ Crucified is the Divine Love and Mercy, known to devotion in both the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Sacrament, but also in the Most Precious Blood and the Most Holy Name of Jesus. This love, which transcends all human comprehension, sought and seeks the salvation of all mankind. To know this love and to make this love known are the Charism of the congregation.

20. Members of the congregation may pursue either an active or contemplative role. The choice is for the individual member, according to his/her disposition and abilities. This particular strain of Catholic tradition places emphasis on the propagation of devotion, the preaching of missions, retreats, pilgrimages, days of recollection and the assistance of pastoral clergy.

21. Ecumenical work is also highly approved and encouraged, where appropriate and in accordance with the norms of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church and the other denominations.

**The Work of God**

22. Saint Benedict enjoins us that nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God (*Opus Dei*) in the sacred liturgy. We heed his exhortation and both Canons Regular and Oblates are enjoined to recite the portions of the Divine Office (in any form approved by the Abbot) as best suits his/her vocation and health. Moreover, the frequent recitation of the Most Holy Rosary, the Stations of the Cross and other forms of devotion are strongly encouraged.

23. All Canons Regular and Oblates are free to pursue work in the secular work and, among others, work in medicine, education and for the relief of suffering are strongly encouraged.

24. The charism of the congregation means that it is not primarily a pastoral congregation, thus its clergy should not be primarily engaged as pastoral clergy without the approval of the Abbot, who may issue a dispensation (renewable without limit) each year.

**The Visitor**

25. The Visitor has responsibility for the oversight of the congregation, for the discipline of Canons Regular and for ensuring these letters and any other applicable regulations are adhered to.

26. The Visitor shall be the Patriarch of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church (UK) *ex officio*.

27. If the office is for any reason unoccupied or the bishop indisposed, the function shall devolve, temporarily, to the Plenary Council.
28. He/she has the rights and precedence accorded by these letters and ancient practice.

The Plenary Council

29. The Plenary Council, or Chapter, shall consist of the Abbott, Prior and all Canons Regular in good standing.

30. It shall meet at least once every two years.

31. It shall elect from its number not only the Abbot (for a period of five years, renewable once) but also a Prior to represent its interests to the Abbot, to maintain order and to discipline its meetings. He/she shall be elected for a term of ten years, which is not renewable.

32. The Plenary Council shall have potestas to alter these letters and to hear appeals in accordance with them.

33. The Plenary Council may annul the letters, regulations or decisions of the Abbot by majority vote.

34. Oblates, if desired, may be admitted as observers, but not as voting members of the Plenary Council.

35. All those who seek admission as Canons Regular shall be subject to approval by the Plenary Council (they also require the approval of the Abbot and Prior).
   a. Members living overseas may be present by electronic means.

36. The Prior has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the congregation.

37. He/she must be a Canon Regular, either a Founding Member, or of at least five years' standing.

The Prior

38. The Prior has responsibility for the recruitment, vetting and formation of new members.

39. He/she must be a Canon Regular, either a Founding Member, or of at least two years' standing.

Founding Members

40. They shall be termed Founding Members who desire to be Canons Regular at the time of the promulgation of these letters.

BE IT BY DIVINE WILL ACCOMPLISHED.

THIS 14th DAY OF OCTOBER MMXVIII