

PART I

INFORMATION FROM THE LAITY OFFICE AT ROME

Dear Sisters and Brothers in St. Dominic - and all those who are interested in being informed about the Statutes governing Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters! Several years ago, my predecessor, Fr. Jerry L. Stookey, O.P., asked Fr. Columba Ryan, O.P. to convoke a team of Latinists of the English Province of Dominican friars to prepare an English translation of the Rule of Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic. Important differences in the translation of the text have been experienced around the world, hence it was necessary to have as literal a translation from the Latin as possible. The original text in Latin was published in the *Analecta of the Order*, 1987, pp.82-87. Owing to an error, Article 2 of Paragraph 12 of the approved final text of the Rule was omitted. Lay Dominican Provincial Chapters of English-speaking countries, with the approbation of their prior provincials, have the right to produce a modified translation when the language pattern used in their particular country differs from this 'British' English version. It is imperative to adhere strictly to the concept of the original Latin of the Rule, approved by the Holy See on January 15, 1987. The Rule was drawn up two years before by the International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities, Montreal, June, 1985. As Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters are integrated to the Order of Preachers via the friars, they pertain not to the Pontifical Council of the Laity as do "associations of the faithful" but to the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. This Rule declares (§ 24) that it has to be observed together with the General Declarations, approved by the Master of the Order and his Council and of the General Chapters, as well as national or provincial Directories adapted to local requirements, approved by the provincial authorities. Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters should not regard the Statutes from a solely juridical aspect but as an aid to inspire the Lay Dominicans' vocation as preachers of God's love and mercy for his creation, in union with the other branches of our Order. To "Release the Fullness of our Preaching – catching Fire from Dominic's Vision" – the motto of the time of jubilee commemorating the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Order of Preachers – the following texts may be a continuous helpful guideline!

Rome, Feast of the Holy Rosary, October 2007

Fr. David Michael Kammler, OP

Promoter General of Dominican Laity