

PII PP. X

LITTERAE APOSTOLICAE

I

Septimo iam

DE PRIMO ORDINE SANCTI
FRANCISCI NONNULLI IN
PERPETUUM STATUUNTUR

Pius Episcopus

**SERVUS SERVORUM DEI
AD PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM**

*Transcriptus ex Acta Apostolicae Sedis,
An. I., Vol. I., Die 4 Oct. 1909, Num. 18,
pp.725-738*

SEPTIMO IAM pleno saeculo, postquam
Ordinis Franciscalis initia feliciter
constituta sunt, iure quidem, quotquot
Franciscum auctorem suum et parentem
agnoscunt, laetabile factum concelebrant,
grataeque pietatis significatione multiplici
memoriam viri sanctissimi et immortalia
eius in commune beneficia gestiunt
recolere. Sed quamquam praecipua
quaedam est ratio, cur id sollemne ante
alio agant Minoritae; eiusdem tamen
sollemnitatis laetitiaeque in partem omnes
venire decet, quicumque Franciscana
Instituta pro merito suscipiunt, maximeque
decet hanc Apostolicam Sedem; cuius cum
semper singulari favore et gratia, tum
magna existimatione et iudicio ipsa illa
Instituta floruerunt. Innumerabilia paene,

Pope St. Pius X

Apostolic Letter

I

Septimo iam

Concerning the First Order of St. Francis,
not a few things are established in
perpetuity

Pius X

**Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God
As a perpetual remembrance**

*Transcribed from Acta Apostolicae Sedis,
An. I., Vol. I., Die 4 Oct. 1909, Num. 18,
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WITH THE SEVENTH CENTENARY
already passed, after which the beginnings
of the Franciscan Order were happily
founded, rightly indeed do, as many as
acknowledge Francis as their author and
parent, celebrate together this glad event,
and with the display of a grateful piety do
very many, most holy men commemorate
his memory and immortal benefactions in
common. But although there is a certain,
chief reason, why the Minorites keep this
day solemn more than any other; it is,
however, fitting that all, who enter
Franciscan Institutes for the sake of merit,
come to share in this solemnity and
gladness, and most of all it is fitting that
this Apostolic See (do so); since with Her
always singular favor and grace, and in

eaque praeclara exstant huius rei in actis
 Decessorum Nostrorum monumenta.
 Principio Gregorius IX, qui et Seraphici
 Patriarchae studiose amicitiam coluerat,
 et, cardinalis, legitimum Franciscalium
 patronum primus egerat: « Sancta, inquit,
 plantatio Fratrum Minorum Ordinis sub
 beato Francisco bonae memoriae incepit,
 et mirabiliter profecit, per gratiam Iesu
 Christi flores sanctae conversationis longe
 lateque proferens, et odores ». ¹ Isque,
 cum gravi sollicitudinum et curarum mole
 premeretur, ita ad alumnos Francisci in
 generalem coetum congregatos scribens,
 declaravit quam patrocinio beati Patris,
 quamque ipsius filiorum precibus
 confideret: « Inter pressuras innumeras et
 angustias infinitas, quas plus ferre
 possumus quam referre, consolationis et
 gaudii materiam resumentes, gratias et
 laudes, quas possumus, referimus
 Redemptori qui beatum Franciscum,
 Patrem Nostrum et vestrum, forte autem
 magis Nostrum, quam omnium vestrum,
 adhuc in carne viventem insignibus
 praeveniens muneribus gratiarum, tanta
 nunc eum cum ipso regnantem clarificat
 gloria, . . . ut Nos, in eiusdem Sancti
 magis ac magis pio amore succensi, totis
 affectibus in ipsius laudibus delectemur;
 sperantes, ut quos in saeculo extra
 saeculum vivens tota mente dilexit, et Nos
 nunc clarius amplexetur, quo illum, qui est
 vera charitas, vicinius intuetur, pro Nobis
 intercedere non desistens; et vos, quos
 idem in Christo regenerans in abundantia
 divitiarum altissimae paupertatis reliquit
 haeredes, gerentes in intimis visceribus
 caritatis ad profectum Ordinis vestri
 adspiremus ardentem, proposita Nobis spe,
 quod vestrarum orationum suffragiis,
 nostrarum tolerantiae passionum nobis
 provenient in salutem. ». ²

great esteem and judgment, have these
 very same Institutes flourished.
 Innumerable and brilliant monuments to
 this stand forth among the acts of Our
 Predecessors. At the beginning Gregory
 IX, who both studiously cultivated the
 friendship of the Seraphic Patriarch, and
 as a cardinal, acted as the first legitimate
 patron of the Franciscans: « The holy
 planting, he said, of the Order of Friars
 Minor began under blessed Francis of
 good memory, and it did wonderfully
 progress, through the grace of Jesus
 Christ, proffering its flowers and scents of
 holy comportment far and wide ». ¹ And
 he, after he was pressed with the heavy
 weight of solitudes and cares, writing in
 this manner to the disciples of Francis
 gathered in general chapter, declared how
 thoroughly he trusted in the patronage of
 their blessed Father and in the prayers of
 his very sons: « Among unnumbered
 pressures and infinite anguishes, which we
 can bear more than relate, resuming the
 matter for consolation and joy, we return
 thanks and praise, as we can, to the
 Redeemer who with remarkable gifts of
 grace was going before blessed Francis,
 Our father and yours, but perhaps more
 Ours, than yours, while he yet lived in the
 flesh, now does make him shine with
 Himself with such glory, . . . that We,
 enkindled in a greater and greater pious
 love for the same Saint, delight with all
 Our affections in his praises; hoping, that
 he may embrace now more clearly both Us
 and those, whom he, while living in the
 world outside of the world, did love with
 his whole mind, as much as he more
 closely gazes upon Him, who is true
 charity, not ceasing to intercede on Our
 behalf; and that We, with profound charity
 of heart, may aspire ardently to advance

your Order, you whom, the same, regenerating in Christ unto an abundance of riches, did leave as heirs of most high poverty, with the hope offered to Us, that by the suffrages of your prayers, the bearing of our sufferings will result in our salvation. »: .²

2. Idem autem Pontifex, in commendanda Episcopis familia Franciscalium (id quod Honorius III, vivo Francisco, iam fecerat), perhonorificis his verbis usus est: « Quoniam abundavit iniquitas et refriguit caritas plurimorum, ecce Ordinem dilectorum filiorum Minorum Dominus suscitavit, qui non quae sua sunt, sed quae sunt Christi, quaerentes, tam contra profligandas haereses, quam contra pestes alias mortiferas extirpandas, se dedicarunt evangelizationi verbi Dei in abiectioe voluntariae paupertatis ». ³

2. Moreover the same Pontiff, in commending the Franciscan families to the Bishops (which Honorius III, while Francis lived, had already done), used these very ennobling words: « Since iniquity has abounded and the charity of very many has grown cold, behold the Lord has stirred up the Order of Minors, our beloved sons, who seek not what is their own, but what is Christ's, as much against heresies to be overcome, as against other mortiferous pests to be uprooted, they dedicate themselves to the evangelization of the word of God in the abjection of voluntary poverty .³

3. Cum Gregorio plane concinit Nicolaus III: « Haec est Minorum Fratrum mitis et docilis in paupertate et humilitate per alium Christi confessorem Franciscum radicata Religio, qui, ex illo vero semine germinans, germen illud per Regulam sparsit in filios, quos sibi et Deo per suum ministerium in observantia evangelii generavit. Isti sunt filli, qui, docente Iacobo, Verbum aeternum Dei Filium, insitum humanae naturae in horto virginalis uteri, potens salvare animas in mansuetudine susceperunt. Hi sunt illius sanctae Regulae professores, quae evangelico fundatur eloquio, vitae Christi roboratur exemplo, fundatorum militantis Ecclesiae Apostolorum eius sermonibus

3. After Gregory, Nicholas III plainly agreed saying: « This is the meek and docile religion of the Friars Minor, rooted in poverty and humility by the kind confessor of Christ, Francis, which sprouting the sprout (cf. Is. 35:2) from that true seed, strew the same by (means of) the Rule among (his) sons, whom he generated for himself and for God through his ministry in the observance of the Gospel (cf. 1 Cor 4:15). These very ones are the sons, who by the teaching of Jacob (cf Gen 49:1-27) have received the Eternal Word, the Son of God, sown by human nature in the garden (Gen 2:8; Dt 11:10; Ct 6:2; Jer 61:11; Lk 13:19) of the virginal womb [and] able to save souls in

actibusque firmatur. Haec est apud Deum et Patrum munda et immaculata Religio, quae descendens a Patre luminum per eius Filium exemplariter, et verbaliter Apostolis tradita et demum per Spiritum Sanctum beato Francisco et eum sequentibus inspirata, totius in se quasi continet testimonium Trinitatis. Haec est, cui, attestant Paulo, nemo de cetero debet esse molestus, quam Christus passionis suae stigmatibus confirmavit, volens institutorem ipsius passionis suae signis notabiliter insigniri ». ⁴

4. Item Clemens V, qui locum illum Eccli. XXIV, 42, *Exivi de paradiso, dixi: rigabo hortum plantationum* sic ad praeconium Seraphici Ordinis accommodat: « Hic est hortus siquidem est Fratrum Minorum sancta Religio, quae muris regularis observantiae firmiter undique circumclusa intra se, solo constenta Deo, adornatur abunde novellis plantationibus filiorum. Ad hunc veniens dilectus Dei Filius mortificantis poenitentiae myrrham metit cum aromatibus, quae suavitate mira universis odorem attrahentis sanctimoniae circumfundunt. Haec est illa caelestis vitae forma et regula, quam descripsit ille confessor Christi eximius, sanctus Franciscus ac servandam a suis filiis verbo

meeckness (Heb. 7:25). These are the professors of that holy Rule, which is founded on the evangelical discourse, strengthened by the example of the life of Christ, and made firm by the sermons and deeds of His Apostles, the founders of the Church Militant. This is [that] *clean and immaculate religion in the sight of [Our] God and Father*, (James 1:27b) which *descending from the Father of lights* (James 1:17) through His Son, having been handed on to the Apostles verbally and by example, and at last through the Holy Spirit to blessed Francis, and having inspired those following him, contains in itself, at it were, a testimony of the whole Trinity (vulg. of Jn 5:7). It is this, to which with Paul attesting *no one for the sake of the rest ought to be molested* (Gal 6:17), which Christ confirmed by the stigmata of His own Passion, willing [as He did] to notably mark with the signs of His own Passion the institutor of that very (religion). ». ⁴

4. Likewise, Clement V, who accommodated the verse from Ecclesiasticus 24:42, *I went forth from paradise, I said: I will water the garden of plantings*, as a public commendation of the Seraphic Order: « This garden is indeed the holy Religion of the Friars Minor, which firmly enclosed by the wall of regular observance, contented within herself with God alone is adorned abundantly by new seedlings of sons. The beloved Son of God coming upon this reaps the myrrh of mortifying penitence with aromatics, which with a marvelous sweetness sprinkle about in all places an odor of attracting holiness. This is that heavenly form of life, and rule, which that

docuit pariter et exemplo ». ⁵

5. Ita etiam hunc Ordinem effert Leo X: « Haec est sacra illa Minorum Fratrum Religio, quae, virentibus caremoniis foliis, per viros apostolicos, tamquam per palmites extensos a mare usque ad mare, et a flumine usque ad terminos orbis terrarum, vino sapientiae et scientiae irrigavit montes, et implevit terram. Haec est Religio sancta et immaculata, in qua, per speculum sine macula, Redemptoris contemplatur praesentia, vitae Christi et Apostolorum inspicitur forma, per quam primorum Ecclesiae fundatorum ante oculos christianae plebis reducitur norma; quae demum nihil nisi divinum, angelicum, omni perfectione refertum, Christoque nil nisi conforme, ut non immerito sua dicatur, repraesentat ». ⁶

6. Similiter Xystus V: « Ad denuo inflammanda corda Nostra, Pater misericordiarum et luminum, famulum suum beatum Franciscum misit, et in tam larga benedictione dulcedinis praevenit, ut non modo virtutum praerogativis et meritis celebrem fecerit, sed in carne ipsius sacra Christi Stigmata renovaverit, et mira Crucis mysteria, ligamina et paupertatem multiformiter in eo ad vivum demonstraverit, adeo ut vere Christus Francisco inferre possit: " Semitam meam et funiculum meum investigasti, et omnes vias meas praevidisti ". Unde et factum est, ut meritis dicit beati Francisci

excellent Confessor of Christ Saint Francis wrote down; and taught equally by word and example to be observed by his sons. ⁵

5. Likewise did Leo X also extol this Order: « This is that sacred Religion of the Friars Minor, which, with the greening leaves of holy deeds, through apostolic men, as through palms extended *from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the Earth*, has irrigated the mountains with the wine of wisdom and science, and has filled full the earth. This is the holy and immaculate Religion, in which, through the mirror without spot, the presence of the Redeemer is contemplated, the form of life of Christ and the Apostles is gazed upon, through which the norm of the first founders of the Church is brought back before the eyes of the Christian people; which, in short, represents nothing but what is divine, angelic, filled with every perfection, and naught but in conformity to Christ, so that it not undeservedly called His own. ». ⁶

6. Similarly Sixtus V: « To inflame Our hearts anew, the Father of mercies and lights, sent His blessed servant Francis, and went before him in such a large blessing of sweetness, that not only did He make him celebrated by the prerogatives and merits of virtue, but He renewed in his flesh the sacred Stigmata of Christ, and in a manifold manner gave a live demonstration in him of the wonderful mysteries, bonds and poverty of the Cross, for this, to be able to truly introduce Christ by means of Francis: " Thou hast investigated my path and my cord, and all my ways Thou hast foreseen ". Whence it

sacrosancta mater Ecclesia, foetu nova prolis amplificata, ac multorum sanctorum eius Instituti meritis, virtutibus, exemplis et miraculis aucta, necnon quamplurimis Episcopis, Archiepiscopis, Patriarchis, Cardinalibus, Regibus et Summis Pontificibus decorata, non possit ad eius devotionis et imitationis sectanda vestigia non esse propensa ». ⁷

7. Nec vero unquam postea de Francisco eiusque institutis Apostolicae Sedis praedicatio continuit. E monumentis autem recentioris memoriae, praetereundae non sunt eae Litterae Gregorii XVI, in quibus de Aede Mariae Angelorum Assisiensi scribit: « In eo templo, Umbriae atque adeo totius Occidentis praecipuum decus, sanctus Franciscus Assisiensi maiores quotidie efficiens in eximia sanctitate processus, et mira omnipotentis Dei charismata accipiens in caelestium rerum meditatione continenter defixus, divino impulsus instinctu, sui Ordinis fundamenta iecit, atque divini Nostri Reparatoris eiusque sanctissimae Genitricis placido aspectu, suavissimisque fuit dignatus colloquiis. ». ⁸ -- Sed potissime digna sunt, quae commemorantur, acta Leonis XIII; qui quidem in Litteris Encyclicis *Auspicato*, ubi laudes Assisiensis Patris grandiloqua et gravi oratione persequitur, haec habet: « Ista rerum miracula, angelico potius quam humano celebranda praeconio, satis demonstrant quantus ille Vir, quamque dignus fuerit quem aequalibus suis ad mores christianos revocandis Deus destinaret. Profecto ad Damiani aedem exaudita Francisco est maior humana vox:

happened, that with the merits of the said blessed Francis, the sacrosanct Mother Church, amplified with the birth of a new offspring, and driven onward by the merits, virtues, examples and miracles of many saints of his Institute, and decorated with not a few Bishops, Archbishops, Patriarchs, Cardinals, Kings, and Supreme Pontiffs, could not but be propelled to follow in the footsteps of his devotion and imitation.». ⁷

7. But concerning Francis and his institutes, neither has the preaching of the Apostolic See ever been completely silent. Moreover from the monuments of more recent memory, there must not be passed by those Letters of Gregory XVI, in which he writes of the shrine of St. Mary of the Angels at Assisi: « In that temple, the chief ornament of Umbria and to that extent of the whole Western World, Saint Francis of Assisi, working greater things every day, having progressed in exceptional sanctity, and accepting wonderful carisms from the Omnipotent God having been molded in continual meditation of heavenly things, impelled by a divine instinct, laid the foundations of his Order, and was made worthy of gazing upon Our Divine Repairer and His Most Holy Theotokos, and of the sweetest conversations (with them). » ⁸ -- But most of all the acts of Leo XIII, which are remembered well, are worthy (of mention), he who in a certain Encyclical Letter *Auspicato*, where he pursues the praises of the Father of Assisi with grandiloquence and grave prayer, has this (to say): « Those wonderful things of his, (which) must be celebrated with angelic rather than human proclamation,

I, labantem tuere domum meam. Neque minus admirationis habet oblata divinitus Innocentio III species, cum sibi videre visus est Basilicae Lateranensis inclinata moenia humeris suis Franciscum sustinentem. Quorum vis ratioque portentorum perspicua est: nimirum significabatur, christianae reipublicae non leve per ea tempora praesidium et columen Franciscum futurum. Revera nihil cunctatus est quin accingeretur. Duodeni illi, qui se in eius disciplinam primi contulerant, exigui instar seminis exstiterunt, quod secundo Dei numine, auspiciisque Pontificis maximi, celeriter visum est in uberrimam segetem adolescere. ». -- Idem in Constitutione *Misericors Dei Filius*: « Iamvero in curandis Iesu Christi praeceptis Instituta Franciscalia tota sunt posita; neque enim quicquam spectavit aliud auctor sanctissimus, quam ut in iis, velut in quadam plaestra, diligentius vita christiana exerceretur. Profecto Ordines Franciscuales duo priores, magnarum virtutum informati disciplinis, perfectius quiddam diviniusque persequuntur ». -- Atque in Constitutione *Felicitate quadam*: « Insignis est enim et benevolentia studioque Sedis Apostolicae dignissima ea, quae Fratrum Minorum familia nominatur, beati Francisci frequens ac mansura soboles. Ei quidem Parens suus, quas leges, quae praecepta vivendi ipse dedisset, ea omnia imperavit ut religiosissime custodiret in perpetuitate consequentium temporum; nec frustra imperavit. Vix enim societas hominum est ulla, quae tot virtuti rigidos custodes eduxerit, vel tot nomini christiano praecones, Christo martyres, caelo cives ediderit, aut in qua tantus virorum proventus, qui iis artibus, quibus qui

sufficiently demonstrate how great and how worthy was that Man, whom God destined for the recalling of his contemporaries to Christian morals. Indeed at the shrine of San Damiano a greater than human voice was heard by Francis: *Go, watch over My House (which is) falling down.* Nor is there less admiration for the sight divinely offered to Innocent III, when he himself seemed to see Francis sustaining the wavering walls of the Lateran Basilica on his shoulders. The strength and reason for which portents is evident: undoubtedly it was to signify, that Francis was not a light-armed guard of the Christian republic throughout those times and would be a future column (of support). In truth there is no delay for the one who is unequipped. Those twelve, who were first to bring themselves together under his discipline, stood forth like a scanty seed, which with the nod of God and the auspices of the Supreme Pontiff, swiftly was seen to grow up into the most bountiful crop. ». -- Likewise in the Constitution *Misericors Dei Filius*: « All of the Franciscan institutes have already been set up to observe the precepts of Jesus Christ: for neither did (that) most holy author intend any other end, than that the Christian life be more diligently exercised in them, as in a certain gymnasium. Truly did the first two Franciscan Orders, formed with the disciplines of great virtues, follow after him more perfectly and divinely ». -- And in the Constitution *Felicitate quadam*; « For that, which is named the family of the Friars Minor, is remarkable as one being most worthy of the benevolence and attention of the Apostolic See. For her, indeed, her own Begetter commanded all those laws, which he himself gave as

excellunt praestare ceteris iudicantur, rem christianam remque ipsam civilem illustrarint, adiuverint ».

8. Iamvero Nos, qui, ut ipse de se Leo confirmabat, ⁹ « Franciscum Assisiensem admirari, praecipuaque religione colere ab adolescentia assuevimus, et in familiam Franciscanum adscitos esse gloriamur », certe non minoris, quam Decessorum Nostrorum quivis, grande beati Patris Opus aestimamus, nec secus, atque illi, peculiari quodam studio Nostro dignum ducimus. In hac igitur saecularium celebritate, cum Ordinis, a Francisco divinitus fundati, magna in rem christianam promerita verbis Decessorum illustravimus, videtur Nobis, palam facere et mansuro probare testimonio plenum paternae caritatis animum, quo tres familias, unde Franciscalium Ordo princeps constat, sine ullo discrimine complectimur. Certe quidem humani ingenii mobilitate et varia conversione temporum sensim factum est, ut Franciscani sodales ex concordissima communitate vitae atque victus in diversas deinceps disciplinas abirent. « Summam rerum inopiam, quam Vir sanctissimus in omni vita adamavit unice, ex alumnis eius optavere nonnulli, simillimam; nonnulli,

precepts for living, so that she would guard them most religiously in the perpetuity of subsequent times; nor did he command this in vain. For there is scarcely any society of men, which has brought forth so many rigid guardians of virtue, or has given forth so many heralds of the Christian Name, martyrs for Christ, citizens of Heaven, and/or in which there has assisted so great an issue of men, who brightened Christian and civil society with those arts, by which they are judged to stand before all others who excel (in them) ».

8. But We now, who, as Leo himself confirmed on his own, ⁹ « have been accustomed to admire Francis of Assisi and to foster from adolescence his chief religion, and We glory in being adopted into the Franciscan family », certainly not of the Minors, which We, as any of Our Predecessors, esteem as the great Work of the blessed Father, nor otherwise than that particular other, which we have judged worthy of Our own certain involvement. Therefore in this fame of the seculars, when We have illustrated with the words of Our Predecessors the great merits of the Order, divinely founded by Francis, for Christian society, it seems to Us, that to publicly make and prove by enduring testimony the fullness of Our paternal charity, by which We embrace the three families, from which the principal Order of Franciscans is established, without any discrimination. Certainly indeed with the mobility of human genius and the various changing of times it has gradually happened, that the Franciscan members have departed one after another from a most harmonious community of life and

quibus ea visa gravior, modice temperatam maluerunt. Quare aliorum ab aliis secessionem facta, hinc *Observantes* orti, illinc *Conventuales*. Similiter rigidam innocentiam, altas magnificasque virtutes, quibus ille ad miraculum eluxerat, alii quidem imitari animose ac severe, alii lenius ac remissius velle. Ex prioribus iis fratrum *Caputalorum* familia coalita, divisio tripartita consecuta est ». ¹⁰ -- At legitimarum varietatem disciplinarum nihil obstare, quominus qui cuius earum essent adscripti, omnes se germanam Francisci progeniem esse iure defenderent, pluries est Apostolicae Sedis auctoritate sancitum. Ita Leo X: « Quod ipsi *Fratres de Observantia et Reformati*, veri et indubitati Fratres Ordinis B. Francisci et eius Regulae observatores semper fuerint, ac, divina favente gratia, sint futuri, sine aliqua interruptione seu divisione, a tempore editae Regulae per B. Franciscum usque ad praesens ac sub ipsius B. Francisci Regula militaverint, et etiam ad praesens militent; sicque in omnibus teneri et observari ac decidi debere decernimus ac mandamus ». ¹¹ Et Clemens VIII Fratres Minores de Stricteri Observantia Reformatos nuncupatos ab iniuriis quorundam tuetur. Ipsosque *Reformatos*, declarat « veros filios et indubitatos Fratres Ordinis sancti Francisci ». ¹² De Capuccinis autem, Paulus V, ¹³ Urbanus VIII, ¹⁴ Clemens XII, ¹⁵ eos « esse vere Fratres Minores », et « originem seu principium illorum esse realiter et cum effectu computandum a tempore primaevae et originalis institutionis Regulae Seraphicae, cuius observantiam ipsi Fratres Cappuccini semper sine aliquo interruptione continuarunt », eosdemque « fuisse et esse ex vera et numquam interrupta linea, ac veros et indubitatos

manner of living into diverse disciplines. « The most high penury of things, which the most holy Man fell uniquely in love with through his whole life, not a few of his students preferred in a very similar manner; not a few, to whom this seemed heavier, in a moderately tempered manner. Wherefore with the secession of some from others accomplished, on this side there arose the *Observants*, on that side the *Conventuals*. Similarly the rigid innocence, and the high, magnificent virtues, with which he had shown forth as a miracle, some indeed wanted to imitate courageously and severely, others more leniently and mildly. After the family of the friars *Capuchine* coalesced from the first of these, there resulted a tripartate division ». ¹⁰ -- But that the variety of legitimate disciplines obstructs nothing, still less that which those who had joined whichever of these, all rightly defended, (namely) that they are the genuine progeny of Francis, has been sanctioned very many times by the authority of the Apostolic See. Thus Leo X: « That the very *Friars of the Observance* and the *Reformati*, have always been the true and undoubted Friars of the Order of Blessed Francis and observers of his Rule, and, by the favor of divine grace, may always be (such), without any interruption or division, they have from the time of the publishing of the Rule by Bl. Francis even to the present also served as soldiers under the Rule of Bl. Francis, and do also serve even to the present; and in this manner We discern and mandate that they ought to be held and observed and judged ». ¹¹ And Clement VIII protected the Friars Minor of the Stricter Observance, called the *Reformati*, from injuries from certain persons. And the *Reformati* themselves, he

Fratres Ordinis sancti Francisci, et illius Regulae observatores, subque ipsius B. Francisci Regula militasse et ad praesens quoque militare » statuunt. -- Haec ipsa Nos affirmantes, volumus, iubemus, ut quotquot sunt de ternis disciplinis Franciscalis Ordinis primi, omnes non solum germani sed *gemelli* Fratres, omnes eodem Francisco nati eisdemque religiosae vitae documentis ad unam ipsius Regulam exculi, cum inter se tum ab omnibus habeantur. Itaque ut huius caritatis fraternae, quae inter filios beatissimi Patris una dominari debet, melius tuta et salva iura sint, ideoque ut Franciscana Instituta uberiores Ecclesiae sanctae fructus pariant, Nos de communibus totius gentis Minoriticae rationibus haec valere in perpetuum, tamquam certa principia et capita, decernimus, sancteque ab omnibus servare ex Apostolicae potestatis plenitudine praecipimus quae infra scripta sunt:

declares to be « true sons and undoubted Friars of the Order of Saint Francis ». ¹² Moreover concerning the Capuchines, Paul V, ¹³ Urban VIII, ¹⁴ (and) Clement XIII, ¹⁵ established them « to be truly Friars Minor », and « to be really their origin and beginning and to be effectively counted (as such) from the time of the primeval and original institution of the Seraphic Rule, the observance of which the Friars Capuchin themselves always continue without any interruption », and that the same « were and are from a true and never interrupted line, both true and undoubted Friars of the Order of Saint Francis, and observers of his Rule, and that they have served as soldiers and do also served at the present under the Rule of Bl. Francis himself ». -- Affirming these very things, We will (and) order, that as many are of the three disciplines of the first Franciscan Order, they are to be regarded both among themselves and by all, as not only genuine but *twin* Brothers, as all having been born from the same Francis and as having been carefully cultivated by the same documents of religious life according to his one Rule. And so that for this fraternal charity, which among the sons of the most blessed Father ought to rule as one, there may be more safe and sure laws, and for the reason that the Franciscan Institutes may bear more abundant fruit for the holy Church, We concerning the common reasons of the whole Minorite nation, discern these things to be valid in perpetuity, as certain principles and sources, and We precept with the plenitude of Our Apostolic power that those things which are written below are to be observed in a holy manner by all:

I. Ordo primus sancti Francisci, si Patrem legiferum a quo conditus, si Regulam, qua utitur, spectes, una est religiosorum familia: si vero rationem regiminis et Constitutiones, quibus ex Apostolicae Sedis praescripto gubernatur, in tres familias dividitur: quarum una est *Fratrum Minorum*, quae olim a *Regulari Observantia* dicebatur, quaeque quum in quatuor sodalitia esset distincta, id est in Observantes, Reformatos, Alcantarinos, Recolectos, a Leone XIII fel. rec. ad unitatem revocata est, uno *Ordinis Fratrum Minorum* indito nomine; altera est *Fratrum Minorum* qui *Conventuales* audiunt; tertia *Fratrum Minorum* qui *Cappuccini* appellantur.

II. Familia, seu Ordo, Fratrum Minorum, cui quondam a Regulari Observantia nomen fuit, postquam a Leone XIII ex variis sodalitiis in unum redacta est, si *ab Unione Leoniana* appelletur, recte appellatur. Ea quidem « ex concessu Sedis Apostolicae antecedit loco et honore » ceteras Franciscalium familias, eiusque alumni « Fratrum Minorum merum nomen a Leone X acceptum retinent », ut ait in Constitutione *Felicitate quadam* Decessor Noster: sed tamen non sic hoc nomen interpretandum est, quasi in ipsa tantum familia omnis Ordo Minoriticus videatur consistere. Patet interpretationem huiusmodi et longe abesse a vero, et valde reliquis Minoritis non paucis esse iniuriosam. Quoties igitur appellatio *Ordinis Fratrum Minorum* sine ullo apposito ambiguitatem haberet, oportere

I. St. Francis' first Order, whether you consider the lawgiver-Father by whom it was founded, or the Rule, which it uses, is one family of religious: but if the reckoning of its government and the Constitutions, by which it is governed from the prescript of the Apostolic See, it is divided into three families: of which one is the *Friars Minor*, which once used to be called *of the Regular Observance*, and which when it had been separated into four groups [sodalitia], that is into the Observants, the Reformati, the Alcantarines, (and) the Recolects, it was, by Leo XIII, of happy memory, recalled to unity, having been given the one name *Order of Friars Minor*; the other is the *Friars Minor* who are spoken of as *Conventuals*; the third the *Friars Minor* who are named the *Capuchins*.

II. The family, or Order, of the Friars Minor, to whom formerly the name "of the Regular Observance" belonged, after it had been brought back to unity from various groups [sodalitiis] by Leo XIII, if it was named *of the Leonine Union*, it was rightly named. Indeed « from the concession of the Apostolic See it anteceded in place and honor » the other Franciscan families, and of its members « retain the worthy name, Friars Minor, received from Leo X, as Our Predecessor said in the Constitution *Felicitate quadam*: but, however, not this name is not to be interpreted, as if it seemed that every Minoritic Order consisted in only that family. It is clear that an interpretation of this kind is far from the true one, and very injurious to the not few, remaining Minorites. Therefore as often as the

hanc familiam de qua loquimur, eiusque Moderatores et sodales, praesertim in actis publicis, propria peculiarique adiecta nota designari, vocarique *Ordinem Fratrum Minorum ab Unione Leoniana*, Moderatores et sodales *Ordinis Fratrum Minorum ab Unione Leoniana*, statuimus et sancimus.

III. *Titulus Ministri Generalis totius Ordinis Minorum*, quo titulo utitur Minister Generalis familiae eiusdem quam ab Unione Leoniana appellamus, meri honoris est nec quicquam iurisdictionis aut potestatis in certeras Franciscalium familias notat.

IV. *Nomina Capuccinus, Conventualis, Unionis Leonianae* Franciscales discriminant non id notando, quod ad rationem ipsam et naturam Fratris Minoris pertinet: hoc enim in *Regula Seraphica* consistit quae apud omnes Franciscales *Ordinis primi* una atque eadem est: verum eas designando res quae in hoc genere *accidunt* naturae; et hae sunt *Constitutiones*, quas unaquaeque familia proprias et peculiare in observanda *Regula*, ex *Apostolicae Sedis praescripto*, sequitur.

appellation of *Order of Friars Minor* without any other determination is ambiguous, We establish and sanction that it is proper that this family of which We are speaking, and its Moderators and members, especially in public acts, be designated by a proper and peculiar term [adiecta nota], and to be (thus) called the *Order of Friars Minor of the Leonine Union*, (its) Moderators and members, of the *Order of Friars Minor of the Leonine Union*.

III. The title of *Minister General of the whole Order of Minors*, which the Minister General of the same family, which be have named "of the Leonine Union", uses as a title, is merely honorific, nor does it denote any jurisdiction or authority over the all the other families of Franciscans.

IV. The names *Capuchin, Conventual, of the Leonine Union* distinguish Franciscans not by noting that, which pertains to their reckoning and nature as Friars Minor: for this consists in the *Seraphic Rule* which among all Franciscans of the first Order is one and the same: but by designating those things which *accede* to the nature in this genus; and these are the *Constitutions*, which each family follows as its proper and peculiar (norms) in observing the *Rule*, from the prescript of the *Apostolic See*.

V. Minister Generalis Fratrum Minorum ab Unione Leoniana, item ex concessu Sedis Apostolicae, in omnibus coetibus sacrisque publicis, ubicumque lex de praestantia loci obtinet, Ministrum Generalem Conventualium, uterque autem Minister Generalem Cappuccinorum praecedit. Familiae vero e singulis coenibiis quem locum inter se in pompis aliisque sacris publicis teneant, pluribus Apostolicae Sedis decretis definitum est.

VI. Trium familiarum Franciscalium Ministri Generales omnes sunt atque habendi sunt et dignitate et potestate pares, ut Vicarii atque adeo veri successores sancti Francisci, nempe pro sua quisque familia, atque etiam pro sodalibus Secundi et Tertii Ordinis, quotquot suae habent vel iurisdictioni subiectos vel familiae aggregatos: iidem praedecessorum suorum perpetuam seriem ab ipso Patre Seraphico omnes iure ducunt.

VII. Tres Ordinis Minoritici familiae, quasi totidem rami sunt nobilissimae arboris, cuius radix ac truncus Franciscus est. Propterea Fratres Minores tum Unionis Leonianae, tum Conventuales, tum Capuccini pari plenoque iure veri Franciscales, verique Fratres Minores et sunt et haberi debent. Iidemque non alii aliis antiquiores dicendi sunt, quandoquidem eorum originem verum est repeti ab ipsa instituta Regula Seraphica, cuius omnes observantiam sine ulla intermissione continuarunt.

V. The Minister General of the Friars Minor of the Leonine Union, likewise from the concession of the Apostolic See, in all sacred and public gatherings, wherever a law obtains from the superiority of a place, precedes the Minister General of the Conventuals, but the Minister General of the Capuchins both of these. But it has been defined by very many decrees of the Apostolic See, that the families from each convent are to have a mutual [inter se] place in parades and other sacred public functions.

VI. All the Minister Generals of the three families of Franciscans are and are to be held as equals in dignity and authority, as Vicars and furthermore true successors of Saint Francis, that is each on behalf of his own family, and also on behalf of the members of the Second and Third Order, however many families have either been subjected or aggregated to their own jurisdiction: the same all rightly stand in the perpetual line of their predecessors from the Seraphic Father himself.

VII. The three families of the Minorite Order, as so many branches belong to a most noble tree, whose root and trunk is Francis. On this account the Friars Minor, both of the Leonine Union, the Conventuals, and the Capuchins, both are and ought to be held equally and most rightfully true Franciscans and true Friars Minor. And none of the same are to be called more ancient than the others, when indeed it is true that their origin is traced back to the time of the Seraphic Rule's very institution, which all continued to

VIII. E Franciscalium templis illud habendum esse sacerimum, in quo ipse Pater legifer beatissimus requiescit, vix attinet dicere: quae aedes propterea mature a Gregorio IX Ordinis Seraphici *Caput et Mater* renuntiate est, ¹⁶ et a Benedicto XIV per Litteras *Fidelis* ad dignitatem praeterea Basilicae Patriarchalis et Capellae Papalis est evecta. -- Sed insignis etiam dignitas est Aedes Mariae Angelorum de Portiuncula; de qua Benedictus XIII: « Ne quis denique Basiliam beati Francisci civitatis Assisiensis, ubi sacrum eius corpus requiescit, a Romanis Pontificibus, praedecessoribus Nostris, variis privilegiis auctam, ita supra ceteras eiusdem Ordinis ecclesias verbis aut scriptis extollat et efferat, ut debitus honor ac reverentia denegetur Basilicae B. Mariae de Portiuncula extra muros eiusdem urbis, in qua constat, Seraphicum Patrem Institutum suum inchoasse; praecipimus et mandamus, ut ambae Basilicae, diversis licet rationibus, B. Mariae quidem propter Ordinis primordia, Assisiensis vero propter sacrum corpus sanctissimi Insitutoris, tamquam Ordinis matrices ab omnibus Fratribus Minoribus agnoscantur et observentur » ¹⁷ Nos vero ipsam quoque Basilicam Mariae Angelorum nuper datis Litteris *Omnipotens ac misericors Dominus* Matrem et Caput Ordinis Minorum duximus, eamque Basilicae Patriarchalis et Capellae Papalis titulo honestavimus. Quare utramque Basilicam, quasi commune patrimonium, tueantur oportet, quotquot filiorum Francisci gloriantur nomine: utramque omnes tamquam paternam domum fidentes

observe without any interruption.

VIII. Of the temples of the Franciscans it is nearly pointless to say that that is to be held most sacred, in which the blessed lawgiver-Father himself rests: the shrine which on that account was opportunely renamed *the Head and Mother* of the Seraphic Order by Gregory IX, ¹⁶ and which moreover was raised by Benedict XIV by the Letter *Fidelis* to the dignity of a Patriarchal Basilica and Papal Chapel. -- But there is a remarkable dignity in the Shrine of St. Mary of the Angles of the Portiuncula; of which Benedict XIII (said): « Finally so that no one may extol and praise, with words or writing, the Basilica of blessed Francis in the city of Assisi, where his sacred body lies, enriched with various privileges by Our Predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, so above all the other churches of the same Order, as to deny the honor and reverence due the Basilica of Blessed Mary of the Portiuncula, outside the walls of the same town, in which is established, that the Seraphic Father began his Institute; We precept and mandate, that both Basilicas, though for divers reasons, indeed that of Bl. Mary on account of the primordial times of the Order, but that of Assisi on account of the sacred body of the most holy Insitutor, be acknowledged and observed as mother (churches) by all the Friars Minor » ¹⁷ But the very Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels We non long ago reckoned as Mother and Head of the Order of the Minors with the publishing of the Letter *Omnipotens ac misericors Dominus*, and We have honored it with the title of Patriarchal Basilica and Papal Chapel. Wherefore it is proper that

laetique celebrent, ibique omnibus fraternae caritatis officiis recreati sentiant, *quam bonum et quum iucundum habitare fratres in unum.*

IX. Ministri Generales triplicis Minorum familiae pari sunt potestate in Ordinem Tertium. Tertiarii propterea qui Ministro Generali unius Familiae parent, iisdem privilegiis indulgentiisque fruuntur, ac qui duobus aliis subiecti sunt. Nec licebit qui Tertio Ordini adscripti sunt, eos Tertiarios vel ab Unione Leoniana, vel Conventuales, vel Capuccinos appellare, sed Tertiarios S. Francisci seu Franciscales, sine alio apposito dici oportebit.

X. Decora, quibus aliqui ex tribus Minorum familiis elucet; praeconia, quibus ab Apostolica Sede ornatur; sancti, beati, venerabiles Viri quibus illustratur, quamquam praecipue illius familiae sunt, tamen iure fraternitatis ad ceteras quoque, ut communia ornamenta, pertinent. Veteres vero Ordinis gloriae, a rebus gestis aut a sanctis viris profectae ante canonicam divisionem a Leone X factam ipsius Ordinis, ¹⁸ nullius ex tribus familiis habendae sunt praecipuae, sed omnium promiscuae.

however many of the sons of Francis glory in that name, they guard each Basilica, as a common patrimony: let all trustingly and gladly celebrate both as their paternal home, and let them there sense themselves renewed by every office of fraternal charity, *how good and how jocund that brothers dwell as one.*

IX. The Minister Generals of the threefold family of the Minors are equal in authority over the Third Order. The Tertiaries on this account who serve the Minister General of one Family, enjoy the same privileges and indulgences, and those who are subject to the other two (likewise). Nor will it be licit that those who have joined the Third Order, be named Tertiaries either "of the Leonine Union", or "Conventuals", or "Capuchins", but it will be proper that they be called Tertiaries of St. Francis or Franciscan Tertiaries, without any other description.

X. The ornaments, with which any of the three families of the Minors shines forth; the public commendations, by which any is ornamented by the Apostolic See; the Saints, Blesseds, Venerable men by which any is brightened, although they chiefly belong to that family, rightly, however, pertain to all the others of the fraternity, as common ornaments. But the old glories of the Order, sprung from the past deeds or holy men before the canonical division of the Order itself, accomplished by Leo X, ¹⁸ are to be held by none of the three families in particular, but all indiscriminately.

9. Ita Nos, quae vel declarando, vel definiendo, vel praecipiendo praescipimus, plurimum posse ad copulandos omnium inter se Franciscalium animos arbitramur. Ceterum, « Qui pacem loquitur in plebem suam et super sanctos suos, certam illam avertendae contentionis vim rationemque discipulis designavit, monitis exemplisque suis eosdem adhortatus, ut, qui maior esset inter ipsos, fieret sicut minor, ac proinde esse contenderent non praeeminentia et primatu, sed ministrandi ac subiacendi humilitate praecessores. Haec autem documenta B. Franciscus Seraphici Ordinis conditor, et ipse mirabiliter arripuit et expressit, et custodiendae pacis firmamentum esse voluit alumnis suis ».

19 Omnes igitur dicto audientes sint Patris legifero, sic praecipienti: « Non litigent, neque contendant verbis, nec alios iudicent; sed sint mites, pacifici, modesti, mansueti, humiles, honeste loquentes omnibus, sicut decet ». **20** Et « caveant ab omni superbia, vanagloria, invidia ». **21** Qui autem ad normam suarum Constitutionum in ipso cultu Domus Dei et in perfunctione sacrorum atque in rerum humanarum usu rigidam sequuntur paupertatem, ne despiciant ceteros; de quibus Leo X: « Declaramus, vos illorum tantum esse custodes et non possessores, et propterea, absque vestrae professionis macula aut violatione, cum deceat, iuxta celebritatem solemnium, et solemnioribus officiis et decentioribus paramentis divinam honorare Maiestatem, et ipsius cultum munificare, et aliis, quibus tam Ordo quam Fratres utuntur, communiter vel divisi, uti et potiri libere et licite posse ». **22** Quod si inter Fratres Minores ullum legitimae praestantiae

9. Thus We judge that there can be very many things, which We have prescribed by either declaring, defining, or precepting, to mutually join the souls of all Franciscans. Moreover, « He who speaks peace unto His people and upon His Saints, has marked out for His disciples that certain strength and reckoning for averting contention, having urged these with His warnings and examples, so that, he who is greater among them, would be as the minor, and that they, therefore, are to contend not in pre-eminence and primacy, but to be surpassing in the humility of serving and being subject (to others). But these instructions Bl. Francis, the founder of the Seraphic Order, himself both wonderfully grasped and expressed, and he wanted them to be the foundation of the peace kept by his students ». **20** Therefore let all be hearers of their Father's lawgiving saying, being thus precepted: « Let them not argue, nor contend with words, nor judge others; but let them be meek, peaceable, modest, gentle, humble, speaking uprightly to all, as it fitting ». **21** And « let them beware of all pride, vainglory, envy ». **22** Moreover let not those who according to the norm of their own Constitutions follow a rigid poverty in the very worship (that takes place in) the House of God and in the performance of the sacred (rites) and in human affairs, despise all others; of whom Leo X (says): « We declare, that you are to be only the custodians of these things and not the possessors, and on this account, without the stain or violation of your profession, when it may be fitting, in accord with the celebration of the solemnities, that you both honor the Divine Majesty with more

discrimen agnosci debet, illud non in eo ponendum est quod alius de alia familia sit, qua quidem re omnes eos pares esse diximus; sed in hoc, quod alius alio melius et iudiciis et dictis et factis caritatem fraternam erga sodales, ceterarum praesertim familiarum, custodiat; atque alius alio perfectius Regulae Seraphicae, pro suae familiae Constitutionibus, praescripta servet. Omnino qualis debeat esse Fratrum minorum inter se consuetudo, intelligi ex his potest, quae de priscis Francisci filiis habet Thomas a Celano: « O quanto caritatis ardore flagrabant novi Christi discipuli! Quantus in eis piae societatis vigeat amor! Cum enim alicubi pariter convenirent, vel in via, ut moris est, sibi invicem obviarent, ibi spiculum spiritualis resultabat amoris, super omnem amorem verae dilectionis seminarium spargens. Quid illud? Casti amplexus, suaves affectus, osculum sanctum, dulce colloquium, risus modestus, aspectus iucundus, oculus simplex, animus supplex, lingua placabilis, responsio mollis, idem propositum, promptum obsequium et indefessa manus. Et quidem, cum cuncta terrena despicerent et se ipsos numquam amore privato diligerent, totius amoris affectum in commune refundentes, se ipsos in pretium satagebant, ut fraternae necessitati pariter subvenirent ». ²³ -- Nos vero, ut caritatis fraternitatisque vincula, quibus inter se Franciscas trium familiarum continentur, vel arctiora fiant, haec in perpetuum damus et tribuimus:

solemn offices and more decent vestments, and that you generously offer Him worship, and that you can licitly and freely use and acquire those other things, which both the Order and the Friars use, commonly and/or individually » ²³ Because if among the Friars Minor any discrimination of legitimate precedence ought to be acknowledged, that it must be placed not in that which otherwise concerns another family, in which matter We have said that they are to be equal; but (rather) in this, that both in judgments and in words and in deeds one guards fraternal charity towards members, especially of all the other families, better than another; and that one observes the prescriptions of the Seraphic Rule more perfectly than another, according to the Constitutions of its own family. The custom which ought to exist among the Friars Minor, can be understood from those things, which Thomas of Celano wrote of concerning the ancient sons of Francis: « Oh with how much ardor of charity did the new disciples of Christ used to blaze! How much did the love of pious society used to thrive in them! For when they met each other, wherever they would gather together, and/or in the street, as was the custom, there the dart of spiritual love used to rebound, scattering over all the sower's love of true love [dilectionis]. What was that? Chaste embraces, tasteful affections, a holy kiss, sweet conversation, a modest smile, a jocund appearance, a simple eye, a supple spirit, a pleasing tongue, a soft response, likewise a purposeful, prompt obsequium and an indefatigable hand. And indeed, since they despised all earthly things and never loved themselves with a private love, overflowing in common with the affection

of complete love, they used to show proof of it to one another, by equally assisting their brother's needs ». ²⁴ -- But, so that the links of charity and fraternity, with which the Franciscans of the three families are mutually contained, may be also more constraining, We give and grant these things in perpetuity:

I. Ut dedicatio duarum Basilicarum Assisiensium, quae totius Ordinis Minorum, licet diversa ex causa, matrices et capita sunt, ab universis triplicis familiae clericis ritu duplici secundae clasis celebretur; et ambae iisdem indulgentiis iisdemque privilegiis et nunc et in posterum gaudeant. Fratres autem eis Basilicis addicit, meminerit, se omnium sodalium, non solum e sua iposurm familia, sed aliorum etiam, personam gerere; ob eamque rem, Deum Omnipotentem, Mariam Immaculatam, Patrem Seraphicum, omnium nomine, quotidie colere et laudare ne cessent.

II. Ut in sacris, pompis, aliisque sollemnibus, quae adstante Pontifice Maximo fiant, tres Ministri Generales una simul procedant, servata tamen inter se lege praecedendi.

I. That the dedication of the two Basilicas at Assisi, which of the entire Order of the Minors, though from diverse reasons, are the mother and head, is to be celebrated by each and every cleric of the threefold family with the rite of a double of second class; and that both are to enjoy the same indulgences and the same privileges both now and in perpetuity. Moreover it will be remembered that the Friars assigned to these Basilicas, represent all the members, not only of their own family, but also of the others; on account of which also, let them not cease to daily worship and praise the Omnipotent God, Mary Immaculate, (and their) Seraphic Father, in the name of all.

II. That in sacred ceremonies, processions, and other solemn acts, which are conducted in the presence of the Supreme Pontiff, the three Ministers General are to proceed together as one, however observing among themselves the law of precedence.

III. Ut indulgentiae, gratiae, exemptiones, privilegia omnia quae uni Minorum familiae concessa vel iam sint vel posthac fuerint, ea ipsa ceteris familiis concessa censeantur et sint. Quod si cuiuspiam rei concessio ad mitigandam Regulam Seraphicam pertineat, non iis suffragabitur, quorum constitutiones nullam huiusmodi mitigationem patiuntur. Facultates autem, quae Viam Crucis, Scapulare sancti Ioseph, Chordam sancti Francisci, item pias concosiationes et sodalitia spectant, ab eo tantum Ministro Generali tribuantur in posterum, cui usque adhuc reservatae sunt.

IV. Ut officia ritualia, quae de Sanctis et Beatis Ordinis sunt vel ad priva sacra seu *devotiones* attinent, uni familiae concessa, ab aliis quoque familiis, probante generali aut *Capitulo* aut *Definitorio*, adhiberi, nullo intercedente indulto, liceat: idem de aliis omnibus privilegiis in re liturgica, uni familiae tributis, fieri licebit.

III. That indulgences, graces, exemptions, (and) all privileges which either have already been or hereafter shall be conceded to one of the families of the Minors, are to be and to be judged as conceded the same to the other families. That if the concession of any of whatever matter pertains to the mitigation of the Seraphic Rule, it shall not be in favor of those, whose constitutions endure no mitigation of this kind. But the faculties, which regard the Way of the Cross, the Scapular of Saint Joseph, the Chord of Saint Francis, (and) likewise the pious societies and sodalities, are to be henceforth granted only by that Minister General, to whom they have until now been reserved.

IV. That the ritual offices, which concern the Saints and Blesseds of the Order and/or which touch upon their own particular sacred acts or *devotions*, conceded to one family, also by the other families, with the approval of either the General Chapter or General Definitory, may be licitly employed, without an additional indult: the same will also become licit concerning all the other privileges, in liturgical matters, granted to one family.

V. Ut omnes Romanorum Pontificum vel Apostolicae Sedis Litterae, in quibus generatim instituta Franciscalia laudantur, ornantur, defenduntur, etsi ad unius familiae Ministrum Generalem, moderatores ceteros, sodales, datae sint, tamen ad Ministros Generales, moderatores ceteros, sodales aliarum quoque familiarum datae intelligantur.

10. Praesentes vero Litteras et quaecumque in ipsis habentur, nullo unquam tempore de subreptionis, aut obreptionis, sive intentionis Nostrae vitio, aliove quovis defectu notari, vel impugnari posse; sed semper validas et in suo robore fore et esse, atque ab omnibus cuiusvis gradus et praeeminentiae inviolabiliter in iudicio et extra observare debere, discernimus; irritum quoque et inane si secus super his a quoquam, quavis auctoritate vel praetextu, scienter vel ignoranter contigerit attentari declarantes; contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque, etiam speciali et specialissima mentione dignis; quibus omnibus ex plenitudine potestatis, certa scientia et motu proprio quoad praemissa expresse derogamus, et derogatum esse declaramus.

V. That all the Letters of the Roman Pontiffs and/or of the Apostolic See, in which the Franciscan Institutes are generally praised, embellished, defended, even if these have been given to the Minister General, to the other moderators, (or) to the members of one family, are to be understood, however, as also given to the Minister Generals, the other moderators, (or) to the members of the other families.

10. But We judge that the present Letters and whatever is had in them, at can no time ever from injury of subreption, or obreption, or of Our intention, or in any other manner by whatever defect, be marked and/or impugned; but that they are to be and to remain always valid and in force, and ought to be observed inviolably by all of whatever grade and pre-eminence in their judgment and external behavior; and declaring ineffectual and empty if anything otherwise upon these matters by whoever, with whatever authority and/or pretext, knowingly or unknowingly happens to be attempted; in regard to the aforementioned things, notwithstanding all those things which are to the contrary, even those things worthy of special and most special mention, We from the plenitude of power, with certain knowledge and *motu proprio*, expressly derogate and declare to be derogated.

11. Volumus autem ut harum Litterarum exemplis, etiam impressis, manu tamen notarii subscriptis et per constitutum in ecclesiastica dignitate virum sigillo munitis, eadem habeatur fides, quae Nostrae voluntatis significationi, his praesentibus ostensis, haberetur.

12. Nulli ergo hominum liceat hanc paginam Nostrae constitutionis, ordinationis, unionis, limitationis, derogationis, voluntatis infringere, vel ei auso temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare praesumpserit, indignationem omnipotentis Dei et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum eius se noverit incursurum.

13. Datum Romae apud S. Petrum sub annulo Piscatoris, in festo S. Francisci Assisiensis, dei IV Octobris MCMIX, Pontificatus Nostri anno septimo.

PIUS PP. X

¹ Litt. Recolentes, die 29 Apr. 1228.

² Litt. Mirificans, die 16 Maii 1230.

³ Litt. Quoniam, die 6 Apr. 1237.

⁴ Litt. Exiit, die 14 Aug. 1279.

⁵ Const. Exivi, die 6 Maii 1312.

⁶ Const. Ite et Vos, die 29 Maii 1517.

⁷ Litt. Divinae, die 29 Aug. 1587.

⁸ Litt. Neminem, die 7 Febr. 1832.

⁹ Litt. Encyc. Auspicato.

¹⁰ Const. Felicitate quadam.

11. Moreover We will that copies of this Letter, even when printed, subscripted, however, by the hand of a notary and fortified with a seal by a man constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, be regarded with the same faith, which by the signification of Our will, is to be had for these presently being shown.

12. Therefore let it be licit to no man to infringe this page of Our constitution, ordination, union, limitation, derogation, (and) will, and/or by temerarious daring to contravene the same. If anyone however has presumed to attempt this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of the Omnipotent God and of His blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

13. Given in Rome at St. Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman, on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 7, 1901, in the seventh year of Our Pontificate.

Pope Pius X

¹ The Letter Recolentes, Apr. 29, 1228.

² The Letter Mirificans, May 16, 1230.

³ The Letter Quoniam, Apr. 6, 1237.

⁴ The Letter Exiit qui seminat, Aug. 14, 1279.

⁵ The Constitution Exivi de paradiso, May 6, 1312.

⁶ The Constitution Ite et Vos, May 29, 1517.

⁷ The Letter Divinae, Aug. 29, 1587.

⁸ The Letter Neminem, Febr. 7, 1832.

- 11 Litt. Licet, die 7 Dec. 1517.
- 12 Litt. Ex iniuneto, die 7 Sept. 1602,
- 13 Litt. Ecclesiae, die 15 Oct. 1608.
- 14 Litt. Salvatoris, die 28 Iun. 1627.
- 15 Litt. Ea quae, die 14 Maii 1735.
- 16 Litt. Is qui, die 22 Apr. 1230.
- 17 Litt. Qui pacem, die 21 Iul. 1728.
- 18 Const. Ite et vos.
- 19 Benedict XIII, Litt. Qui pacem.
- 20 Reg., Cap. III.
- 21 Ibid. Cap. X.
- 22 Litt. Merentur, die 2 Ian. 1514.
- 23 Legenda I, Cap. 15.

- 9 The Encyclical Letter Auspicato.
- 10 The Constitution Felicitate quadam.
- 11 The Letter Licet, Dec. 7, 1517.
- 12 The Letter Ex iniuneto, Sept. 7, 1602,
- 13 The Letter Ecclesiae, Oct. 15, 1608.
- 14 The Letter Salvatoris, Jun. 28, 1627.
- 15 The Letter Ea quae, May 14, 1735.
- 16 The Letter Is qui, Apr. 22, 1230.
- 17 The Letter Qui pacem, Jul. 21, 1728.
- 18 The Constitution Ite et vos.
- 19 Benedict XIII, Letter Qui pacem.
- 20 Regula Bullata, ch. III.
- 21 Ibid. ch. X.
- 22 The Letter. Merentur, Jan. 2, 1514.
- 23 Celano's Legenda I, Cap. 15.

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