

COUNCIL OF THE ORDER OF CHRIST PILGRIMS

«In itinere Deus habitat»

The Charter Project

Version v2.0 / Year of the Lord 2025

City _____

Registered in the Register of the Order

CHARTA ORDINIS CHRISTIANORUM PEREGRINORUM

PROOEMIUM

“Homo viator, Deus in itinere habitat.”

The Pilgrim is on the way, God dwells on the way.

The Order of Christ's Pilgrims (Ordo Christianorum Peregrinorum) was born in an era when humanity is experiencing profound upheavals: wars and violence, forced migration and the disintegration of communities, demographic crisis, technological shifts, and a loss of meaning. Millions of people are leaving their homes – not only as refugees from disasters and conflicts, but also in search of work, a future, security, and inner peace.

The Catholic Church, in light of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen gentium*, *Apostolicam actuositatem*), calls the laity not to be passive observers of history, but to become living instruments of the Gospel in the world—in the family, society, the economy, culture, politics, and on the roads of nations.

The Order of Christ's Pilgrims is a response to this call. It unites laypeople and clergy, emigrants and those receiving them, people of different nations and cultures who desire:

- live pilgrimage as a form of life;
- transform migration from tragedy into a journey;
- connect spiritual life with social service;
- create cultures of hospitality and justice;
- develop concrete forms of assistance, education, protection, and integration.

This Charter defines the spiritual vision, social mission, structure, and fundamental principles of the Order. It does not replace the teachings of the Church, but is rooted in them and strives to be its living application in the context of the modern world.

CAPUT I – DE VOCATIONE ORDINIS

О призвании Ордена

Motto: “Non imperium, sed ministerium.”

Not power, but service.

1.1. The Order of Christ's Pilgrims is a community of laypeople and clergy of the Catholic Church dedicated to serving people on the move: migrants, refugees, displaced persons, pilgrims, and all those who, for one reason or another, find themselves "on the border" between the past and the future, home and the unknown.

1.2. The Order recognizes the image of God in every person and believes that every journey can become a pilgrimage, and every exile a chance for a new gift of grace, if met with faith, love, and just support.

The Order's vocation is to be a bridge:

- between the Church and the modern world;
- between migrants and host communities;
- between spiritual life and social responsibility;
- between tradition and innovation;
- between local initiatives and global coordination.

1.4. The Order is not a political organization, party, or lobby. It acts in the spirit of the Gospel, in obedience to the Church, and with respect for the legitimate structures of the state.

1.5. The Order does not claim a monopoly on truth or assistance, but seeks cooperation with all people of good will, faiths, organizations, and states that share the value of human dignity and the desire for peace.

CAPUT II – DE MINISTERIO LAICORUM IN ECCLESIA

On the Ministry of Laity in the Church and the World

Motto: “Laici cor Ecclesiae in saeculo.”

The laity are the heart of the Church in the world.

2.1. In the spirit of Lumen Gentium, the Order affirms that all baptized people are God's people, called to holiness and mission. Laypeople, living in family, work, and society, have a special vocation: to sanctify the world from within, to be a "leaven" in history.

2.2. In accordance with Apostolicam Actuositatem, the Order recognizes the apostolate of the laity not as secondary, but as a distinct and irreplaceable gift to Christ and the Church. This apostolate is realized:

- through professional activities;
- through social responsibility;
- through participation in the life of communities and parishes;
- through concrete service to those in need and suffering;
- through participation in cultural, educational, and economic creativity.

2.3. The Order is a form of organized lay apostolate: the brothers and sisters of the Order, remaining in all their professions and life situations, combine spiritual life, professional competence, and social service.

2.4. The priests and religious participating in the Order do not replace the laity, but accompany them as spiritual directors, confessors, liturgical ministers, and counselors.

2.5. The Order is committed to developing forms of spiritual accompaniment, formation, and support for the laity, so that their faith and service are mature, responsible, and rooted in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

CAPUT III – DE SPIRITUALITATE PEREGRINATIONIS

On the spirituality of pilgrimage

Motto: "In itinere Deus habitat."

God dwells on the way.

3.1. Pilgrimage is not only an external path to a holy place, but also a model of the entire Christian life. Man is a wanderer on earth, seeking the Heavenly City.

3.2. For the Order, pilgrimage means:

- an inner turning to God;
- a willingness to leave the familiar for the sake of fidelity to the Gospel;
- openness to meeting another person as a brother;

- acceptance of labor, discomfort, and risk in the name of love;
- humility before the Mystery of the path.

3.3. The pilgrimage spirituality of the Order includes:

- regular prayer (private and communal), participation in the liturgy;
- reading and meditating on the Holy Scriptures;
- the practice of confession and spiritual direction;
- "contemplative action" – the ability to see God's presence in specific services.

3.4. The Order views historical pilgrimage routes (Santiago, the shrines of the Holy Land, the Apostolic Routes, including those associated with the Apostle Matthew, etc.) as living axes around which contemporary ministry to migrants, youth, families, and pilgrims can be formed.

3.5. Each Pilgrim House (Domus Peregrinorum) is called to be a place where pilgrimage becomes a spiritual experience, not simply a tourist service.

CAPUT IV – DE CARITATE SOCIALI ET OECONOMIA MISERICORDIAE

On social love and the "economy of mercy"

Motto: "Caritas in veritate et in opere."

Love in truth and in deed.

4.1. Social charity (caritas socialis) is not merely private charity, but a transformative force that impacts the structures of society, the economy, and politics.

4.2. The Order recognizes the need for a new "economy of charity," in which:

- people are more important than profit;
- work is perceived as participation in God's creative work;
- migrants and refugees are recognized not as a burden, but as bearers of gifts—experience, work, faith, and culture;
- business and investment are viewed as serving the common good.

4.3. The Order encourages and develops:

- social entrepreneurship;
- cooperative and community-based forms of management;
- fair and sustainable forms of tourism and hospitality;

- local production projects (especially food, crafts, and services) involving migrants and local residents.

4.4. In collaboration with local authorities, businesses, and the Church, the Order promotes job creation, training, and the development of value chains around pilgrimage routes and Pilgrim Houses.

4.5. The Order rejects economic models based on exploitation, corruption, habitat destruction, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and any form of human degradation.

CAPUT V – DE HOSPITIO ET MOBILITATE GENTIUM

On hospitality and human mobility

Motto: “Peregrinus non onus, sed donum.”

A pilgrim is not a burden, but a gift.

5.1. In the modern world, migration is becoming a permanent structural phenomenon: people move because of wars, poverty, and environmental disasters, but also for education, work, family, freedom, and faith.

5.2. The Order sees migrants not as problems, but as "pilgrims of history" who bring gifts: experience, culture, work, patience, faith, and hope.

5.3. Hospitality (hospitalitas) is the Order's key response to the challenges of migration. It means:

- recognition of the dignity of each person;
- willingness to share shelter, bread, and attention;
- creation of reception and integration structures;
- accompaniment of people on their journey – legal, social, spiritual, and psychological.

5.4. The Order strives to connect:

- pilgrimage as a spiritual route;
- tourism as an economic resource;
- migration as a social reality;
- education and work as a path to sustainable integration.

5.5. In light of contemporary research on labor and markets (including analytical data from international organizations on future professions, labor shortages, and mobility), the Order participates in the development and implementation of programs:

- training and retraining of migrants;
- integration into hospitality, medicine, care, agriculture, crafts, and the digital economy;
- protection from exploitation and informal employment;
- support for host communities to prevent the burden from becoming destructive.

5.6. The Order defends the right of people to decent working conditions, fair wages, access to education, healthcare, and spiritual guidance, collaborating with the Church, states, and international organizations.

CAPUT VI – DE TRANSPARENTE ET IUSTITIA IN ADMINISTRATIONE DONORUM

On transparency and fairness in gift management

Motto: “Lux in administratione, veritas in opere.”

Light in governance, truth in deeds.

6.1. The world devotes significant resources to aiding migrants, refugees, and the poor. However, some of these funds are lost due to inefficiency, abuse, and corruption.

6.2. The Order recognizes that love without transparency becomes vulnerable, and charity without responsibility is a source of temptation.

6.3. The Order establishes an internal Office of Light and Justice (Officium Lucis et Iustitiae), whose mission is to:

- maintain honest and transparent records of all gifts and resources;
- prepare transparent reports on the activities of Pilgrim Houses and projects;
- develop and maintain hospitality and social impact indices (e.g., the Domus Lucis Index);
- assist partners (Churches, NGOs, governments) in increasing the transparency and effectiveness of aid programs.

6.4. The Order prohibits the use of its structures as instruments of money laundering, political manipulation, or private enrichment. Violation of the principles of justice and truth is considered a grave violation of the Charter.

6.5. In cooperation with competent authorities of the Church, states, and international organizations, the Order may participate in independent evaluations of aid programs, offering its knowledge, data, and expertise to ensure that gifts more fully reach their intended recipients.

CAPUT VII – DE CULTURA PACIS ET DIALOGI

On the culture of peace and dialogue

Motto: “Beati pacifici, fratres dialogi.”

Blessed are the peacemakers, brothers of dialogue.

7.1. The Order understands its mission as peacemaking. In an era of polarization, war, and destructive conflict, it strives to:

- be a space for encounter, not division;
- help overcome fear of the "other";
- mitigate social and cultural tensions in migrant-receiving areas.

7.2. The Order recognizes and respects ecumenical initiatives, documents, and efforts aimed at Christian unity and cooperation with other religions in building peace and supporting those in need.

7.3. In its Houses and projects, the Order encourages:

- dialogue between Christians of different faiths;
- meetings with Jews, Muslims, and representatives of other religions based on mutual respect;
- cultural and educational programs that promote understanding and reconciliation.

7.4. The Order avoids hate speech, ideological aggression, and religious intolerance. Any form of discrimination based on national, racial, cultural, or religious background is incompatible with its Charter.

CAPUT VIII – DE TERRAE BENIGNITATE ET CURA CREATIONIS

On responsibility for the earth and care for creation

Motto: “Terra domus communis peregrinorum.”

The Earth is the common home of pilgrims.

8.1. In light of the Church's teaching on creation and ecology (especially in the spirit of Laudato si'), the Order recognizes that the destruction of nature and the climate crisis are among the causes of forced migration, the loss of homes, and the future.

8.2. The Order strives to:

- develop models of "green pilgrimage" and sustainable tourism;
- implement practices of sustainable resource consumption, recycling, and landscape care in the Pilgrim Houses;
- support projects to restore land, forests, rivers, and coastal zones;
- educate migrants and host communities in environmental awareness and responsibility.

8.3. Particular attention is given to small communities and rural areas, which can become spaces for sustainable living, crafts, and rural tourism if managed with respect for creation.

8.4. The Order supports initiatives aimed at preserving biodiversity, traditional rural ways of life, sustainable fisheries, and handicraft production.

CAPUT IX – DE FAMILIA PEREGRINORUM ET EDUCATIONE

About the pilgrim family and upbringing

Motto: "Familia schola caritatis et fidei."

Family is a school of love and faith.

9.1. The family is the primary community where people learn love, trust, work, and faith. Migration often becomes a difficult challenge for families: separation, instability, cultural gaps, and challenges raising and integrating children.

9.2. The Order strives to support migrant and pilgrim families through:

- spiritual and psychological support programs;
- family gatherings and retreats;
- assistance with integrating children into the educational system;
- support for mixed and intercultural families.

9.3. Particular attention is paid to youth: the Order develops cadetship and mentoring programs (Programma Cadetorum), in which:

- adolescents and young adults learn responsibility, service, and leadership;
- knights and sisters of the Order act as mentors;
- skills for the future are fostered – communication, teamwork, respect for diversity, and technological literacy.

9.4. The Order's educational initiatives include:

- schools for pilgrims and peacemakers;
- language courses, vocational training, and cultural adaptation;
- projects that combine spiritual and practical education.

CAPUT X – DE COMMUNITATIBUS DOMUS LUCIS

About the Houses of Light communities

Motto: “Domus lucis, domus fraternae spei.”

The House of Light is the house of brotherly hope.

10.1. The Pilgrim's House (Domus Peregrinorum or Domus Lucis) is the Order's primary, concrete form of presence. It is:

- a house of reception;
- a house of prayer;
- a house of education;
- a house of work;
- a house of dialogue.

10.2. Each House:

- is rooted in the local reality (culture, economy, tradition);
- is open to migrants, local residents, pilgrims, and volunteers;
- operates in cooperation with the local Church, government, businesses, and NGOs.

10.3. The internal rhythm of the House includes:

- regular common prayer;
- shared meals;
- sharing of responsibilities;
- service projects (social, educational, cultural).

10.4. The Domus is managed by a responsible person (Praefectus Domus) and a ministry council, which includes brothers, sisters, residents, and, where possible, representatives of the local community.

10.5. The Domus may have various profiles:

- shelter and adaptation center;
- educational and craft center;
- pilgrimage and tourist hub;
- rural or craft community;
- urban social station.

CAPUT XI – DE STRUCTURA ORDINIS ET OFFICIIS

About the structure of the Order and its ministries

Motto: “Ordo ad servitium, non ad dominationem.”

Build for the sake of service, not for the sake of power.

11.1. The Order has a spiritual and organizational structure designed to serve the mission, not replace it.

11.2. Basic Levels:

- Magister Ordinis – Master of the Order, spiritual and symbolic leader, guardian of the Charter and the Path.
- Magistratus Ordinis – Magistrate, responsible for overall coordination, strategy, and management.
- Praefectura Peregrinorum – Prefecture of Pilgrims, responsible for projects, Houses, and programs.
- Officia – departments (services) specializing in education, social assistance, economics, communications, legal support, etc.
- Communitates Locales – local communities and Houses.

11.3. Members of the Order:

- Fratres et Sorores – brothers and sisters who have taken vows of peace, service, and charity according to the statute;
- Socii – allies and friends of the Order, participating in projects but not taking full vows;
- Voluntarii – volunteers who participate as much as possible;
- Programma Cadetorum – youth wing.

11.4. Internal Vows and Rules (briefly):

- fidelity to the Gospel and the teachings of the Church;
- service to the poor, migrants, and those in need;
- honesty in resource management;
- non-violence, corruption, or exploitation;
- respect for local laws, while God's law is always superior to human law.

CAPUT XII – DE ETHICA, TUTELA ET DISCIPLINA

On Ethics, Defense, and Discipline

Motto: “Sanctitas non sine responsabilitate.”

Holiness is not without responsibility.

12.1. The Order recognizes that without internal purity and responsibility, its mission loses credibility and strength. Therefore, the following are established:

- a code of conduct for members;
- procedures for preventing abuse;
- internal and external control mechanisms.

12.2. Particular attention is paid to:

- the protection of minors and vulnerable adults;
- the prevention of sexual, financial, spiritual, and power abuses;
- the prevention of manipulation of conscience and religious pressure.

12.3. Violations incompatible with the Charter (violence, serious corruption, exploitation, racism, religious hatred) result in disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from the Order, in cooperation with the competent ecclesiastical and civil structures.

CAPUT XIII – DE FOEDERIBUS ET COOPERATIONE INTERNATIONALI

On treaties and international cooperation

Motto: “In communione, non in solitudine.”

In communication, not in solitude.

13.1. The Order openly seeks cooperation:

- with the Catholic Church at all levels (the Holy See, episcopal conferences, dioceses, orders, and movements);

- with other Christian denominations;
- with religious communities sharing a commitment to peace;
- with NGOs, foundations, and international organizations (in the fields of migration, human rights, and development);
- with states and local authorities.

13.2. Agreements and partnerships are based on:

- clarity of objectives;
- respect for the competence of each individual;
- transparency of financial and organizational conditions;
- compliance with the principles of the Charter.

13.3. The Order, whenever possible, avoids dependence on a single source of funding or political power in order to maintain freedom and fidelity to its mission.

CAPUT XIV – DE SIGNIS, SYMBOLIS ET DEVIZIIS ORDINIS

About the signs, symbols and mottos of the Order

Motto generale: "In itinere Deus habitat."

14.1. The symbols of the Order are not ornaments, but signs of vocation and remembrance of the mission. They are intended to:

- remind us of the path, the cross, the light, and hospitality;
- connect the past and future of the Church, pilgrims, and knights;
- speak to the world of hope and service.

14.2. The Order's fundamental motto:

"In itinere Deus habitat." – God dwells on the path.

14.3. The practical motto of service:

"Non imperium, sed ministerium." – Not power, but service.

14.4. The motto of hospitality:

"Peregrinus non onus, sed donum." – A pilgrim is not a burden, but a gift.

14.5. The symbols of the Order (coat of arms, cross, clothing, insignia) are developed and approved by the competent bodies of the Order in agreement with the Church.

NOTA FINALIS

“Duc in altum!” – Sail away into the depths!

The Order of Christ's Pilgrims does not claim to be the answer to all the world's problems. It strives to be one of the humble instruments of God's Providence in a time of change.

This Charter is not a dead text, but a living roadmap that life and the Holy Spirit will complement, deepen, and test.

Let each reader ask themselves:

Where can I become a home for a pilgrim?

Where can my path become a service?

Where can my talent become a light for others?

The Order of Christ's Pilgrims invites:

- The Church – to trust and cooperation;
- States – to work together for the common good;
- Business – to honest and creative partnership;
- Migrants – to a path not of solitude, but of brotherhood;
- Local communities – to discover their vocation in hospitality;
- All people of good will – to participate in a new culture of journey, peace, and mercy.

“Homo viator, Deus in itinere habitat.”

Man is on his way. God is on his way.

May this way be illuminated by the light of Jesus Christ.

ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ORDER OF CHRIST PILGRIMS

(Elder brother / Magister Ordinis)

(Secretary General)

Year of the Lord 2025

City _____ [Seal of the Order]