

VADEMECUM

Order of the Discalced Augustinians



Rome - 2025



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Segreteria generale

Prot. III; fol. 195/01

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF THE *VADEMECUM* FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ARCHIVE AND THE COMPILATION OF DOCUMENTS, REPORTS, AND *REGISTERS*.

Dear Confreres,

the 80th General Chapter (2023), in addressing community life, determined that from the very beginning of initial formation, there should be better preparation of the confreres in the drafting of documents and the *Registers* that are part of our daily life.

Moreover, it urged the new General Curia to provide practical guidelines for the organization and maintenance of local, provincial, and general Archives (PD 29–30). All of these indications were to be included in two *Vademecums* entrusted to the Secretary General.

By *Vademecum*, we mean a compendium of information regarding a particular area—in our case, the Archive—intended to provide practical and concise guidelines that can help standardize the organization and compilation of documents and *Registers* throughout the Order.


After gathering the initial material, I decided to group all the guidelines into a single *Vademecum*, which is now being

published *ad experimentum*, so that every confrere may collaborate in enriching it with modifications, additions, and suggestions.

This *Vademecum* presents: 1. *The organization of the Archive and its digitalization*; 2. *The structure and protocol of documents*; 3. *The structure of the reports to be submitted to Ordinary Councils and Definitories*; 4. *The compilation of Registers of the local Community: Local Chapter, Masses, and Administration*.

I hope that this *Vademecum* may be enriched and help us to live our charism: *Joyfully in serving the Most High in a spirit of humility*.

Rome, August 6, 2025.


FR. DIONES RAFAEL PAGANOTTO
(Secretary and General Archivist)



1. ARCHIVE

An archive is usually divided into:

- **Historical**, which no longer receives documents;
- **Current**, which continually receives new documents.

1.1 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ARCHIVIST

There are three levels of Archivist within the Communities of the Order:

- o General Archivist (*Const.* 211),
- o Provincial Archivist (*Const.* 230),
- o Local Archivist (*Const.* 260).

The Archivist is responsible for the Archive and must preserve the most important *Registers* and documents of the Order, the Province, the House, and the religious.

The Archivist is one of the specific Offices appointed by the respective Superiors at the beginning of the six-year or three-year term. However, our *Directory* offers only **limited practical indications** for the proper exercise of this role.

The 80th General Chapter, in its *Programmatic Document*, entrusted the General Curia with the task of preparing a *Vademecum* at the general level for the archiving of documents and the maintenance of protocols (PD 31).

This *Vademecum* aims to offer every confrere called to the role of Archivist practical guidance so that the archives of each Community of the Order may have a similar organization.

1.2 ARCHIVE ORGANIZATION CHART

a) Importance of organization

A clear and simple organization of the archive is essential:

- to locate documents quickly,
- to file new documents efficiently,
- to ensure continuity in organization over time.

b) Proposed organizational model

Below is the proposed organizational chart of the General Archive, which may also serve as a model for Provincial and Local Archives, with appropriate adaptations.

1. PERSONS

- Prior General (Provincial/Local),
- Vicar General,
- Procurator General,
- Secretary General,
- General (Provincial/Local) Economo,
- Other individuals.

2. COLLEGIAL BODIES

- Minutes of the General (Provincial/Local) Chapter,
- Minutes of the General Definitory (Provincial Council),
- Minutes of the Plenary Congregation,
- Minutes of the former General Prior's Council,
- Other meetings.

3. RELIGIOUS

- File for each Solemn Professed Religious,
- File for each Simple Professed Religious,
- File for each former Religious (Simple and Solemn),
- File for each deceased Religious,
- Necrology.

4. PROVINCE

- File for each Religious Community,
- File for each Suppressed Community,
- File for each Provincial Activity (School, College, etc.),
- File containing the Province's legal personality documentation.

5. ADMINISTRATION

- *Register* of the administration of the General (Provincial/Local) Economo, with monthly reports,
- Accounting documents, employee records, taxes, etc.

6. VARIOUS *REGISTERS* OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- Professions,
- Canonical visits,
- Masses (Mass schedule, Masses celebrated, OAD Masses, Acceptance of Masses, Gregorian Masses).

1.3 DIGITAL ARCHIVE

a) Chapter decision

The 12th session of the 78th General Chapter (May 2, 2017) approved the digital drafting of **minutes** and their printed version with page authentication.

The Chapter members suggested issuing **specific norms** on how to proceed with the drafting and preservation of digital minutes, to be included in the *Directory* under the section on archives. To date, these have not yet been implemented.

b) Digital expansion

The Chapter members initially envisioned digital minutes for every **Collegial Body**: General Chapter and General Definitory, Provincial Chapter and Provincial Council.

In recent years, the importance has become clear of maintaining both a printed and a digital (PDF) copy of every document in the General Archive, especially those produced by **individuals** (General Prior, Provincial Prior, Local Prior, General Vicar, Procurator General, General Secretary, General/Provincial/Local Economo, and others).

The expansion of the Digital Archive allows for **quick and secure access** to organized and efficiently preserved data and documents.

c) Key elements

The Archivist must ensure documents remain legible and follow a standard format for **naming** each file, thus facilitating access.

Currently, the General Archivist names files using a model with **four essential, abbreviated elements**:

| |
|--|
| Prot V 249.10 – 27 set 2024 – Provinciale Italia – Decreto cambiamento nome Provincia Madre Buon Consiglio |
|--|

Protocol number – registration date – recipient – subject

d) Archiving norms *ad experimentum*

- Each document must be correctly stored following the aforementioned organizational chart.
- Archiving must be complete – no document may be lost.
- Every document must be archived as soon as possible, in both printed and digital format.
- Each digital document must correspond exactly to the printed original.
- Each document may be accessed only by those responsible or duly authorized individuals.
- Each document must be easily and quickly retrievable.
- Minutes must be stored in folders and bound at the end of a predetermined period (e.g., one year, three years, six years).

- After each meeting (General Definitory, Provincial Council), all relevant attachments (reports, requests, etc.) must be included.
- Each page of digitally drafted archives must be stamped and numbered.
- Each bound volume must have an index.

e) Directory and Archival Science

I. The General Archivist

166) §1. He is responsible for carefully keeping the Order's archive, in which the following must be kept:

- a) documents and other writings concerning the Order: its rights, privileges, favors etc. ;
- b) the registers of the General Chapters, of the Plenary Congregations and of the Minutes of the General Definitories;
- c) the registers of the Offices of the Procurator, Administration, Protocol and the Prior General;
- d) the economic and moral reports, the Acts of the Provincial and Commissariat Chapters;
- e) everything that may be useful to the history of the Order and individual religious.

§2. The General Archivist will endeavor to enrich the archive of documents concerning the Order, and also take care of the archive of the General House.

§3. The archives of the Provinces, Commissariats, Delegations and suppressed Houses must be transferred to the General Archive.

II. The Provincial Archivist

196) §1. Maintain diligently the documents and records relating to the Province in the Archive, in accordance with the provisions of the General Archivist at no. 166 of the *Directory*, take care of the history of the Province and work to recover our documents possibly kept in State Archives or other bodies.

§2. The archives of the suppressed Provinces must be transferred to the General Archive; those of the suppressed Houses in the Provincial Archives.

III. The Local Archivist

227) §1. The Archivist is in-charge of keeping the Archive of the House, according to the norms of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Superiors of the Order.

§2. In the Archive are kept the documents concerning the rights of the House and the Church; those issued by the Ecclesiastical Authority, and relating to the House; the Acts of the Chapters, of the General Definitories, of the Provincial and Commissariat Councils; circulars and provisions of the Prior General, the Prior Provincial and the Commissary. In addition, the registers: of the Propositions of the Local Chapter, of the Masses, of the Legati, of the religious Professions, of the administration, of the history of the House, of the deceased religious. Finally, everything that can be useful for the history of the Community.

§3. The Archivist keeps the inventory of documents up to date for easier consultation.

§4. The Archive should be closed and well-kept. No religious, except the Archivist, will consult the contents without the Prior's consent. No document is to be destroyed, even if it is judged to be of little importance, and is not lent to strangers without the consent of the Chapter, who will act in this very carefully.

IV. Collection of quotes

17) Before Solemn Profession.

[...] §2. Copies of the devices of the religious' patrimony , of the will , of the holograph declaration of poverty are to be kept in the Provincial or Commissariat and General Archive.

95) Admission to Novitiate.

[...] §3. The admission must be transcribed on a register and signed by the novice, the religious who presides over the admission ceremony and the Local Prior. An authentic copy shall be sent to the Major Superior of the House and the candidate, who will keep it in the archive.

113) Dimissorial Letters.

It is the duty of the Major Superior to notify the Parish Priest of the place of baptism as soon as possible of the occurred ordination and to send to the General Archive a copy of the Dimissorial Letters and of the certificates of conferral of Sacred Orders.

163) The Procurator General.

[...] §2. Protocols in the register of the procuration of the individual documents dealt with at the Apostolic See, with the questions and their answers, and putting them to the General Archive.

164) The Secretary General.

[...] §3. Draws up the Necrology of the deceased confreres, which he will keep in the archive, and he will distribute a copy to the various communities of the Order for archiving.

189) The Provincial Council.

[...] §3. A copy of the Acts should be sent to the Houses of the Province, to the Secretary General, to the other Commissariats, Provinces and Delegations for them to keep in their respective archives.

195) The Provincial Economo.

[...] §2. Manage an Archive of the Administration of property owned by the Province and the Provincial savings.

2. DOCUMENTS

2.1 STRUCTURE OF AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

Essential elements of a document published in the Order:

1. Header
 - official logo
 - name of the issuing authority
 - address
 - contact information (telephone, email)
2. Protocol Number
3. Date of Publication
4. Recipient(s) of the document
5. **Subject**
6. *Body of the document*
7. Name, signature, and official seal
 - of the person issuing the document
8. Countersignature
 - of the Secretary (Provincial or General), acting in the capacity of notary
9. Number of Attachments*



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2.2 PROTOCOL REGISTER

The protocol serves to ensure the **systematic registration** of every official document issued, facilitating both its preservation and future retrieval.

There are several accepted methods within the Order for registering documents. At present, each **competent authority** records their documents in a designated register, as exemplified below:

- **Prior General:** Prot. Reg. V; fol. 249/01 = Book number (V); page/folio (249); document number (01).
- **Secretary General:** Prot. III; fol. 182/09 = Book number (III); page/folio (182); document number (09).
- **Procurator General:** Prot. Proc. Gen. 2024/27 = Year (2024); document number (27); no book number cited.
- **Prior Provincial of Brazil:** Prot. 01/52/02 = Book number (01); page/folio (52); document number (02).
- **Prior Provincial of the Philippines:** Prot. I/78/2024 = Book number (I); document number (78); year (2024).
- **Prior Provincial of Italy:** Prot. I/45/2023 = Book number (I); document number (45); year (2023).

3. REPORTS FOR THE COUNCILS AND DEFINITORIES

No. 30 of the *Programmatic Document* of the 80th General Chapter indicated the need to include in the *Vademecum* specific guidelines for the drafting of reports submitted to the Ordinary Provincial Councils and General Definitory.

The General Archivist gathered suggestions from the confreres during the annual meeting of the Prior General with the Priors Provincial (25 September 2024) regarding the structure of the moral and economic report to be presented to the aforementioned governing bodies.

3.1 STRUCTURE OF A WRITTEN REPORT

It was agreed that the structure of the written report should follow the outline found in Part II, Section I of the *Constitutions*, dividing the contents into: **Liturgical Life**, **Consecrated Life**, **Community Life**, and **Apostolic Life**, with a few supplementary sections.

The model below is intended for the Provincial Prior. The written report of the Local Prior shall follow the same outline, with the appropriate adjustments.

1. COMPOSITION OF THE PROVINCE

- a) List of Communities with the names and offices of each religious.
- b) List of Professed religious in formation, Novices, Postulants, and Aspirants.

- c) List of religious in particular situations: exclaustrated, irregular, dispensed, etc.

2. LITURGICAL LIFE (CONST. 12–21)

- a) Evaluation of the spiritual vitality at both personal and communal levels.
- b) Moral situation related to the liturgical life.

3. CONSECRATED LIFE (CONST. 22–43)

- a) Initial and ongoing formation: studies, courses, conferences, etc.
- b) Vocational promotion.
- c) Relations with other religious realities: FABRA, APAC, affiliated Congregations.
- d) Moral situation related to consecrated life.

4. COMMUNITY LIFE (CONST. 44–52)

- a) Celebration of local Chapters.
- b) Retreats and spiritual exercises.
- c) Periodic and annual meetings.
- d) Canonical visitation.
- e) Collaboration with the General Curia and other Provinces.
- f) Moral situation related to community life.

5. APOSTOLIC LIFE (CONST. 53–65)

- a) Parishes.
- b) Schools.
- c) Chaplaincies and hospitals.
- d) Groups, movements, and lay associations.
- e) Services to the local Church (episcopal appointments, etc.).
- f) Publications.
Communications (media).
- g) Promotion of causes of beatification and canonization.
- h) Moral situation related to apostolic life.

6. ADMINISTRATION OF TEMPORAL GOODS (CONST. 262–278)

- a) Ordinary administration: clarification of income and major expenses.
- b) Extraordinary administration: acquisitions, sales, donations, renovation of immovable property.
Legal personality and NGOs.
- c) Projects.
- d) Moral situation related to the administration of goods.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

- a) Additional elements not included in the previous sections.

4. REGISTERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

No. 30 of the *Programmatic Document* of the 80th General Chapter also called for the inclusion, within the *Vademecum*, of clear guidelines for the drafting and maintenance of the various *Registers* of the Local Community, namely:

1. The *Register of Local Chapter Meetings*,
2. The *Register of Masses*,
3. The *Registers of Administration*.



4.1 REGISTER OF LOCAL CHAPTER MEETINGS

a) Responsibility of the Local Prior

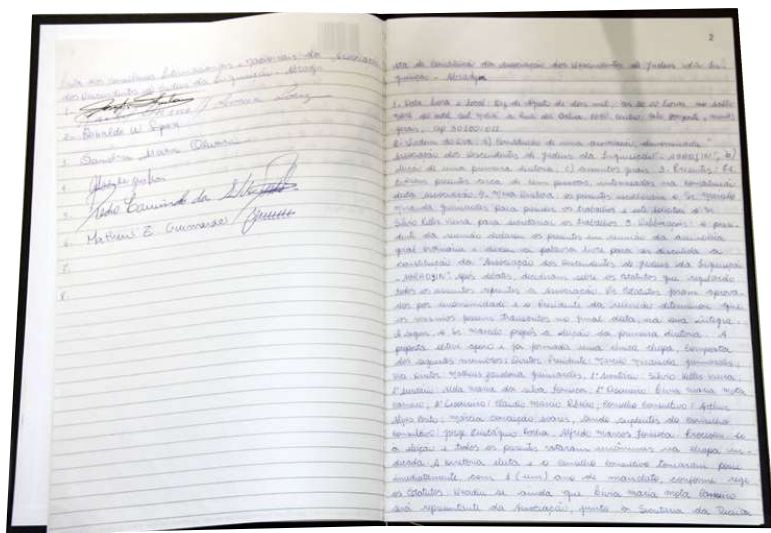
Every Local Chapter is to be preceded by a formal or informal **convocation**, and its celebration is to take place on a monthly basis. It falls under the direct responsibility of the **Local Prior** to ensure that, during the celebration of the Chapter, all matters discussed and decisions taken are duly recorded.

This record must be transcribed either manually (into a physical register) or digitally (to be printed and archived), and shall be presented for approval and signature by all those present.

b) Essential Elements to be Recorded

- Opening Prayer ;
- Mention of the convocation;
- Date and time of the meeting;
- Place of assembly;
- Names of the religious present and absent;
- List of the points on the Agenda;
- Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- **Subjects to be addressed (Dir. 221):**
 - o Review and approval of the monthly financial administration of the House, including declaration of the cash balance;
 - o Consideration of various instructions from ecclesiastical authority;

- Sharing of apostolic activities;
 - Engagement or release of personnel;
 - Determination of the schedule of communal acts;
 - Discussion of matters pertaining to the house, particularly those concerning Communities with specific apostolates (houses of formation, parishes, educational institutions, etc.), with a view to resolving them in a spirit of fraternal collaboration;
 - Deliberation on extraordinary expenses, according to the faculties granted;
 - Other matters deemed opportune or necessary (miscellaneous).
- A generous space should always be reserved for fraternal sharing, recognizing that the Local Chapter is not only a deliberative body, but also a place for communion and discernment.
 - Whenever a decision requires a formal vote, a **Capitular Proposition** should be drafted, explicitly stating the motivation and the outcome approved by the Community.
 - Conclusion and final prayer.



4.2 REGISTERS OF MASSES

a) Responsibility of the Sacrista

The **Sacrista** (cf. *Directory*, n. 227) is to exercise his office in fidelity to the liturgical and ecclesiastical norms, and in obedience to the directives of the Superiors.

He is entrusted with the care and maintenance of the following **five Registers**¹:

1. The *Mass Schedule Book* (kept in the sacristy);
2. The *Register of All Masses Celebrated*;
3. The *Register of OAD Masses*;
4. The *Register of Accepted Masses and Their Fulfillment*;
5. The *Register of Gregorian Masses*.

¹ Not all Communities have the *Agenda* and *Registers* of Nos. 4 and 5, however the *Registers* of Nos. 2 and 3 are mandatory.

b) Register of All Masses Celebrated

This *Register* serves to record all the Holy Masses celebrated by members of the Community. The following norms are to be observed:

- It is not necessary to indicate the location of the celebration, but only the intention.
- It is not required that each priest sign the record; it suffices that the Sacrista record the name of the celebrant.

I. Mode of Entry for Masses Celebrated

The entries must be recorded in **chronological order**, including the essential elements. These may be written in a book or prepared for printing and subsequent binding.

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Intention</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1/1 | For our benefactors | Fr. John |
| 1/1 | † Clare | Fr. Leonard |
| 1/1 | <i>Pro Populo</i> (Parish) | Fr. Peter |
| 2/1 | † Magdalene | Fr. John |
| 2/1 | † Mary | Fr. Leonard |
| 2/1 | † Raphael | Fr. Peter |
| 3/1 | <i>Pro Se</i> | Fr. John |

c) Register of OAD Masses

This *Register* is designated exclusively for three categories of Mass intentions:

I. Pro Bono Ordinis

Each House of the Order is bound to celebrate **seven** Masses annually for the good of the Order (*Pro Bono Ordinis*), namely:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| March 19 | Saint Joseph |
| ... | Easter Sunday |
| ... | Pentecost |
| May 19 | Anniversary of the Reform |
| August 28 | Our Holy Father Saint Augustine |
| September 4 | Our Lady of Consolation |
| December 25 | Nativity of the Lord |

II. Pro Se

Every Solemnly Professed Religious and Ordained Priest is entitled to two Masses per month, to be celebrated according to his personal intention (*Pro Se*), especially on feast days and solemnities.

III. Pro Defunctis

Masses for the Faithful Departed are divided as follows:

- **Habitual – for each Community:**

| PER MONTH | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| † Deceased Religious and Faithful | 1 | Mass per month in each community |

| THREE ANNUAL ANNIVERSARIES | | |
|---|---|---|
| † Deceased family members of religious | 1 | Mass per year (January 16) in each community |
| † Deceased benefactors | 1 | Mass per year (October 13) in each community |
| † Deceased of the religious of the Augustinian family | 1 | Mass per year (November 6) in each community |

- Occasional – for each Religious:

| | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| † Deceased Religious | <i>COMMUNITY</i> | 3 | Masses per each Priest in the Community of the Deceased |
| | <i>PROVINCE</i> | 2 | Masses per each Priest in the Province of the Deceased |
| | | 1 | Gregorian Series * <i>by provision of the Prior Provincial</i> |
| | <i>OTHER COMMUNITIES</i> | 1 | Mass per each Priest of the Order |
| † Deceased Novice | <i>NOVITIATE COMMUNITY</i> | 1 | Mass per each Priest in the Novitiate Community |
| | <i>PROVINCE</i> | 1 | Mass in each Community of the Province |

| | |
|--|---|
| † Deceased Prior General | The same provisions in the case of a deceased Religious (above) |
| | 1 Concelebrated Mass on 30th day from death by all members of the General Curia |
| † Deceased parents of a religious | 1 Mass per each Priest in the Province of the religious |
| † Deceased siblings of a religious | 2 Masses in the Community of the religious |
| † Deceased Roman Pontiff | 1 Mass in all Houses of the Order |
| † Deceased Diocesan Bishop <i>Prior</i> | * <i>At the discretion of the</i> |

IV. Mode of Entry for OAD Masses

Unlike the chronological mode used for general Masses, the OAD Masses should be recorded by Groups, as illustrated below.

1. First Group: Masses for the COMMUNITY***a) Pro Bono Ordinis (Annual)***

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Solemnity</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 19/3 | Saint Joseph | Fr. John |
| 20/4 | Easter Sunday | Fr. John |
| 19/5 | Anniversary of the Reform | Fr. Leonard |
| 8/6 | Pentecost | Fr. Peter |
| 28/8 | Saint Augustine | Fr. John |
| 4/9 | Our Lady of Consolation | Fr. John |
| 25/12 | Nativity of the Lord | Fr. Peter |

b) Pro Defunctis – Three Anniversaries (Annual)

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Anniversary</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 16/1 | Deceased family members | Fr. John |
| 13/10 | Deceased benefactors | Fr. Andrew |
| 6/11 | Deceased Religious | Fr. Peter |

c) Pro Defunctis (Monthly)

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Month</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| 20/1 | January | Fr. Andrew |
| 5/2 | February | Fr. John |
| 10/3 | March | Fr. Andrew |
| 15/4 | April | Fr. Peter |
| 16/5 | May | Fr. Michael |
| 9/6 | June | Fr. John |
| 30/7 | July | Fr. Andrew |
| 24/8 | August | Fr. Peter |
| 5/9 | September | Fr. John |
| 8/10 | October | Fr. John |
| 10/11 | November | Fr. Andrew |
| 22/12 | December | Fr. Peter |

2. Second Group: Masses for INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS***a) Pro Se Mass (Monthly)***

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Month</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| 15/1 | January | Fr. John |
| 21/1 | January | Fr. John |
| 19/1 | January | Fr. Peter |
| ... | ... | ... |

b) Pro Defunctis Mass (Occasional)

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Intention</i> | <i>Celebrant</i> |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 16/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. John |
| 18/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. John |
| 20/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. Andrew |
| 21/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. Andrew |
| 17/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. Peter |
| 18/6 | † Fr. Giovanni Foschi | Fr. Peter |

4.3 REGISTER OF ADMINISTRATION

a) Responsibility of the Economo

The Economo (Dir. 225), in the exercise of his office, is to act in accordance with what is prescribed by our proper law concerning the Administration of Goods, a matter of significant importance in both canonical and civil spheres.

The Economo is charged with the keeping of the **Register of Administration**, which must provide a clear and complete monthly summary of all revenues and expenditures of the Community, including a statement of the monthly balance of all available financial resources.

The monthly report is to be submitted to the House Chapter, where it must be reviewed, approved, and signed by all its Vocals.

The Economo must also ensure the preservation and organization of all accounting documents, maintaining a proper archive of all contracts currently in force, including: Utility agreements, Insurance policies, Tax documentation, Employment contracts, and other such relevant records.

Bank accounts held in the name of the Community must have at least two authorized signatories empowered to operate them.

b) Register of Administration

This *Register* must provide a concise and categorized summary of the Community's income and expenses. The format below may be adapted to meet the particular needs of each local Community.

[MONTH / YEAR]

REVENUES

- Pastoral ministry
- Celebration of Masses
- Offerings and donations
- Bank interest
- Other sources

EXPENDITURES

- House / Church / Seminary
 - o Electricity, telephone, internet, gas, water, insurance, property maintenance, etc.
- Religious
 - o Food, groceries, travel, vacations, pharmacy, medical care, clothing, recreation, studies, etc.
- Vehicles
 - o Fuel, maintenance, insurance, fines, etc.
- Taxes and Contributions

- Governmental, banking, provincial obligations, etc.
- Miscellaneous

Balance carried over from the previous month

Total revenues

Total expenditures

Final balance for the month (cash + bank accounts)

Signatures of all Members of the Community

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