

# Diocese of Honolulu

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Office of the Bishop

## Decree Establishing Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery

With this decree, I hereby erect Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery, as a Catholic public association of the Christian faithful of diocesan right in the Benedictine tradition, in accord with canon 312, §1, 3°. As such, the association enjoys juridic personality (canon 313).

I also hereby approve the statutes of this association, adopted by the Chapter on May 13, 2013, and I reserve to me or my successor the right to approve any changes in the statutes (canon 314) and all usual canonical rights of a diocesan bishop over a diocesan public association, including those in canons 305, 315-320.

Furthermore, I recognize the following persons as fully professed members of the association: Father David Barfknecht, Sister Celeste Cabral, Sister Ann Cic, Sister Mary Jo McEnany, Father Michael Sawyer, and Sister Geralyn Spaulding.

I also dispense, at least for the time being, from the requirement of the statutes that priest members be incardinated into the Diocese of Honolulu for the following: Father David Barfknecht and Father Michael Sawyer.

Given at the offices of the Diocesan Curia in Honolulu, Hawai'i on May 23, 2013.

Most Reverend Larry Silva  
Bishop of Honolulu

  
Ecclesiastical Notary

SEAL

STATUTES  
OF  
MARY, SPOUSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
MONASTERY

A Public Association of the Faithful  
in the Diocese of Honolulu

Adopted by the Chapter  
May 13, 2013

Approved by  
Most Reverend Clarence (Larry) Silva  
Bishop of Honolulu  
May 23, 2013

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## Prologue

*“Listen carefully ... to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. ... See how the Lord in his love shows us the way of life.”*

– Prologue to the *Rule of St. Benedict* 1, 20

The Benedictine sisters and brothers of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery desire to respond daily to this invitation of the Lord. With the Gospel as their guide they profess to live in these times the values of Jesus as these values are embodied in the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the *Statutes* and the *Customary* of the monastery.

They willingly embrace the monastic way of life seeking to open themselves to God who is always seeking them.

In response to the call of the Church, the community of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery presents these documents as a contemporary articulation of the Benedictine charism as lived by its members.

# I. Heritage of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery

1. **History:** The origins of Hawaii's Benedictine community go back to September 1983 when Abbot David Geraets of Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery in Pecos, New Mexico, asked Benedictine Father Michael Sawyer to respond to the bishop of Honolulu's invitation to begin a new foundation in the islands. The Pecos monastery had both men and women members and had embraced the Catholic charismatic movement. By February 1984, four members from the Pecos motherhouse joined Father Sawyer in a temporary house on Waialae Iki Ridge from which they began to offer parish missions and retreats, and accepted their first oblates.
2. In 1987, Father Sawyer relocated the monastery to the present property, 67 acres overlooking Waialua with a one-story ranch house and a grand view of rolling hills and the blue Pacific on Oahu's North Shore. The community has since added other facilities including a seven-sided pavilion which houses the chapel, a conference and dining room, a kitchen and a bookstore. For many years the monastery was under the Benedictine sponsorship of the Congregation of St. Mary of Monte Oliveto. This continued until December of 2012, at which time the Olivetans decided upon consolidation of their United States monasteries and to close the monastery in Hawaii and one other. This prompted Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery to leave the Olivetans and pursue its present canonical status.
3. The monastery has oblates, lay people who have made a commitment to the Benedictine spirituality through a yearlong series of classes and a final oblation. The monastery also has a longtime spiritual association with the Basic Christian Community of Hawaii. The Benedictines also participate in Hawaii's Catholic charismatic movement, pro-life ministries, spiritual counseling, youth and young adult ministries, and vocations work. The priests also occasionally assist local parishes in celebrating Mass and the sacraments.
4. **Title:** The monastery was originally formed and legally incorporated in 1983 under the title "Benedictine Monastery of Hawaii, Inc.," which remains its civil title. The monastery later adopted the patronage of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, "Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery" is now the canonical title and is recognized as an additional civil title.
5. **Description:** The monastery is a community of women and men living the Gospel way of life in the Benedictine tradition. As such, it has the right to elect its own prior/ess, establish its own novitiate, incorporate new members, and acquire, administer, and alienate its temporal goods within the norm of law. The monastery provides support for the development and growth of a Benedictine community. Through a balanced rhythm of prayer, work, leisure, and study, it promotes an environment conducive to the well-being of persons, the building of relationships, and service to others.
6. *Rule of St. Benedict:* The *Rule of St. Benedict* embodies the basic principles and values of cenobitic life. The community maintains this tradition of cenobitic monasticism, characterized by the common life under the rule and a prior/ess.<sup>1</sup>
7. *Gospel Call:* The Gospel call to the evangelical life has taken many forms. Guided by the Holy Spirit, each founder of a religious community responds to the signs of the times and the needs of the Church in a unique way. Benedictines live the Christian life in accord with the *Rule of St. Benedict*, a dynamic monastic tradition, and the specific charism of their individual monasteries.

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<sup>1</sup> *Rule of St. Benedict (RB)*, Liturgical Press (1980) 1:2

8. *Identity and Vision:* Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery is a monastic community of celibate men and women, invited by God, touched by his love, and prompted by the Holy Spirit, who seek closer unity with him. The Lord Jesus leads the members to do this through the *Rule of St. Benedict* and the guidance of a prior/ess in prayer and work. Professing conversion of life, stability in the community, obedience, celibacy, and poverty, the members hope to liberate themselves through their vows to follow him along the narrow way that leads to eternal life.
9. With Mary, patroness of the monastery, as mother and guide, the members desire to give their “yes” to Jesus. She brought forth Jesus, giving God flesh through her faith. The members, following her example, give their “yes” to God and abandon themselves to the Holy Spirit, that Jesus might take flesh in their lives. In this school of the Lord’s service,<sup>2</sup> following the Benedictine rule, the members can run along the way with hearts enlarged by love, so that, united with Christ, they can say with St. Paul, “Now I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20).
10. *Charism and Mission:* The goal of the members is to form a monastic community and retreat center, to be a light of Christ shining forth from the hills of Waialua, to minister to the spiritual needs of the people of the Catholic Diocese of Honolulu, all the people of Hawaii, and all who come to visit. This is done by bringing people into the monastery’s life of prayer and work. People join in chanting the Divine Office, celebrating daily Mass, praying the rosary, adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, meditation, spiritual reading, and the work of cooking, cleaning, maintenance, lawn care, and other tasks.
11. In the monastery’s outreach, the members desire to have their hearts open to the many needs of people. All visitors are to be treated like Christ and no one should leave without the blessing of prayer. Spiritual direction, day retreats for groups and overnight retreats for individuals, days of reflection, formation of oblates in Benedictine spirituality, and healing prayer are provided at the monastery. Members of the monastic community also minister outside the monastery in various apostolates. In all things the members strive for fidelity to the Church.
12. *Source of Authenticity:* The source and foundation of authenticity in a Benedictine monastery is the Holy Spirit, which is confirmed by ecclesiastical authority. Inspired by the Gospel, the *Rule of St. Benedict*, centuries of Benedictine tradition, and the changing conditions of the times, the way of life in the monastery is a communal witness to the reality of God’s presence among all people.
13. **Canonical Status:** Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery is a Catholic public association of the faithful in the Diocese of Honolulu seeking in due course to become a religious institute of diocesan right. As a public juridic person of the Catholic Church, it functions within the norm of canon law.
14. **Monastery Documents:** The *Statutes* and the *Customary* interpret the Gospel way of life according to the *Rule of St. Benedict* for Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery. They are the proper documents of the monastery, established according to the norm of canon law.
15. *The Statutes:* The *Statutes* focus on the seeking of God as a call to community, conversion and commitment, prayer and work. They describe the continuous call to holiness and the response in love expressed fully in Jesus Christ and guided by St. Benedict. The *Statutes* guide the monastery in authentic living of the Benedictine charism in contemporary times in union with the whole Church. They are adopted or amended by a two-thirds vote of the monastery Chapter and submitted for approval to the diocesan bishop.

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<sup>2</sup> *Rule of St. Benedict (RB)* Prologue 45

16. *The Customary*: The *Customary* is the companion document to the *Statutes* governing the internal and familial aspects of the monastery. It is approved or amended by two-thirds vote of the monastery Chapter. A copy of the *Customary* and any revisions and monastery guide books will be given to the local ordinary.
17. *Interpretation of the Documents*: In matters of doubt, interpretation of the *Statutes* will be referred to the local ordinary. Interpretation of the *Customary* will be made by the prior/ess of the monastery. The prior/ess will consult with the local ordinary if an interpretation of the *Customary* is difficult.
18. *Dispensing*: For a just cause, the local ordinary may dispense from the *Statutes*. He may not, however, dispense from procedural or penal matters. For a just cause, the prior/ess, after consultation with the monastery Chapter, may dispense from the *Customary*. The prior/ess may not, however, dispense from procedural or penal matters.

## II. Governance of the Monastery

### A. The Prior/ess

19. **Role:** The prior/ess is the superior of the monastery and holds the place which the *Rule of St. Benedict* assigns to the abbot. In accord with the spirit of the rule, s/he is believed to hold the place of Christ in the monastery.<sup>3</sup> The prior/ess is the spiritual and temporal leader of the monastery, guides the formation of the members, directs the works of the monastery, and is a sign of the community's unity in Christ.
20. The authority of the prior/ess is derived from the Holy Spirit and the *Rule of St. Benedict* and confirmation by ecclesiastical authority. The monastic Chapter in its collegial act of election vests that authority in the member whom it calls forth to be prior/ess.
21. **Election:** The monastery prepares for the election of prior/ess in a spirit of prayer and discernment in accord with the *Rule of St. Benedict*<sup>4</sup> and the *Customary*. The election of a prior/ess may be anticipated by as much as three months.
22. **Term:** The term of office for the prior/ess shall be four years. S/he may be reelected.
23. **Eligibility:** A member to be eligible for election as prior/ess must:
  - a. be finally professed for at least five years
  - b. be at least 35 years old and not over 76 years old
  - c. have the qualifications for the office of prior/ess, as described of the abbot in the *Rule of St. Benedict* in Chapters 2 and 64
24. **Election Officials:** The officials of the election for prior/ess are the presiding officer, who is the local ordinary, and the secretary and the tellers elected by the monastic Chapter. The duties of the secretary and tellers are specified in the *Customary*.
25. **Voters:** The capitulars who comprise the monastic Chapter elect the prior/ess.
26. **Postulation:** Postulation is a vote which indicates a preference for a member who is ineligible for office and which includes a petition for a dispensation from the impediment. The elector must state, "I postulate for the office of prior/ess N." The request for postulation requires a two-thirds vote. The request for dispensation from the impediment is submitted to the local ordinary.
27. **Election Procedure:** The balloting for the election of prior/ess is in accord with the following:
  - a. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
  - b. An election requires an absolute majority vote (one more than one-half of all voting).
  - c. A member who receives the majority vote on the first, second, third, or fourth ballot is elected.
  - d. If no one receives the majority vote on the fourth ballot, only the names of the two members receiving the highest number of votes on the fourth ballot are placed on the

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<sup>3</sup> *RB* 2:2

<sup>4</sup> *RB* 64:1-2

fifth ballot.

- e. If no one receives a majority vote on the fifth ballot, the presiding officer, in the spirit of the *Rule of St. Benedict*, calls for further discernment and decides whether to continue the election or postpone it.
  - f. Once a prior/ess has been elected, the presiding officer, having obtained the consent of the prior/ess-elect, declares the election. At that moment, the prior/ess receives all the rights and obligations of office.
28. *Installation*: The newly elected prior/ess shall take the oath of office and be installed by the local ordinary on a day and manner determined in accord with the *Customary*.
29. **Authority**: The prior/ess has the authority and responsibility which canon law grants to the major superior of a religious institute including those granted to the supreme moderator, without prejudice to the authority and responsibility which belong to the local ordinary by these *Statutes* or by universal or particular law.
30. The prior/ess guides the monastery in its living of the *Rule of St. Benedict* in accord with the charism of the monastery, these *Statutes* and the *Customary*, canon law, and the needs of the Church. In exercising her/his authority, the prior/ess listens attentively to the Holy Spirit speaking through the Church, through the monastic Chapter and individual members in the spirit of mutual obedience.<sup>5</sup> S/he has the right and duty:
- a. to call and preside at the monastic Chapter
  - b. to assign members to the various works of the monastery
  - c. to discuss with each member on a regular basis her/his monastic life and work
  - d. to supervise the administration and use of the temporal goods of the monastery
  - e. to admit or deny a candidate to postulancy
  - f. to admit, with the consent of the monastic Chapter, postulants to the novitiate, to temporary profession, and to final profession
  - g. to readmit, with the consent of the monastic Chapter, a former member to a period of probation or to temporary or final profession
  - h. to arrange for a canonical visitation of the monastery, report the results of the visitation to each member and to the local ordinary, and to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the visitators
  - i. to perform other duties which may arise within the context of her/his office as prior/ess or which are specified in these *Statutes* or the *Customary*
31. **Vacancy**: When a vacancy occurs in the office of prior/ess due to the completion of the four year term, resignation, removal, or death, an election is to be held within three months. The newly elected prior/ess begins a new full term of four years.
32. *Resignation*: The prior/ess may resign from office by notifying the Chapter, who must vote to accept the resignation. Upon acceptance, the local ordinary is to be notified.
33. *Removal*: The diocesan bishop may decree the removal of a prior/ess from office only for grave reasons, given in writing, and after having heard the prior/ess and subprior/ess.

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<sup>5</sup> RB 71

34. *Appointment of an Administrator:* In the event of a vacancy, when in the judgment of the Chapter, a new election is not possible within three months, or if the Chapter has not elected a new prior/ess within three months, the diocesan bishop may appoint an administrator for the monastery. The term may be for up to one year, and may only be renewed for one additional year.
35. **Subprior/ess:** The prior/ess, in the spirit of the *Rule of St. Benedict* and in accord with the *Customary*, shall appoint a finally professed member as subprior/ess who fulfills the role which the rule assigns to the prior<sup>6</sup> and who takes the place of the prior/ess when s/he is absent or hindered from fulfilling her/his duties. The duties of the subprior/ess shall be clearly defined so that s/he will know the extent and limitations of her/his responsibilities. The subprior/ess is responsible to the prior/ess and retains her/his office at the prior/ess' discretion. The subprior/ess ceases from office upon the election of a new prior/ess.

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<sup>6</sup> *RB* 65:14-16

## B. The Monastic Chapter

36. **Membership:** The monastic Chapter is the assembly of the capitulars convened by the prior/ess or her/his delegate to assist in decision-making. All members, by their final profession, automatically become capitulars of the monastic Chapter. The capitulars are the finally professed members who have the right to vote.
37. **Function:** The monastic Chapter, in the spirit of the *Rule of St. Benedict*,<sup>7</sup> assists the prior/ess in making decisions regarding the spiritual and temporal welfare of the community. The prior/ess shares with the capitulars her/his decision-making responsibilities by seeking their counsel or consent in those areas which are required by universal law, the *Rule of St. Benedict*, these *Statutes* and the *Customary*.
38. The capitulars, when convened by the prior/ess or her/his delegate, are the monastic Chapter. The monastic Chapter acts validly when:
  - a. the capitulars are notified of the date, place and agenda in advance of the Chapter and in accord with the *Customary*
  - b. the necessary quorum, not less than half the Chapter members, is present
39. **Meetings:** The monastic Chapter shall be convened at least once a year in the manner set forth in the *Customary*.
40. **Voting:** For all acts requiring a vote, results of the balloting shall be determined on the basis of the number present and voting, unless otherwise stated in the *Customary*. In all cases each capitular has one vote only. If the act requires agreement of a certain proportion of all eligible Chapter members present and voting, blank and invalid ballots and abstentions are counted as negative votes.
41. In matters other than the election of the prior/ess, the method of voting is as stated in the *Customary* or is determined by the voting body.
42. In matters requiring consent, the presiding officer cannot vote to break a tie. If the vote is collegial, the presiding officer, if eligible, shall vote as an individual member of the body but may not cast an additional vote to break the tie.
43. **The Monastic Council:** The prior/ess may constitute the Monastic Council from among the capitulars to assist the superior in decision making in accord with the *Customary*.

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<sup>7</sup> *RB* 3:1-2

## C. Monastic Stewardship

44. **Canonical Norms:** As a public juridic person of diocesan right, the monastery is bound by the canons of Book V, The Temporal Goods of the Church, of the *Code of Canon Law* and relevant norms issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the diocesan bishop.
45. **Prior/ess as Temporal Administrator:** The prior/ess is the chief steward/ess of the temporal goods of the monastery.
46. **Controller:** There is to be a controller who serves as a finance officer distinct from the prior/ess who is to manage the administration of temporal goods under the direction of the prior/ess.<sup>8</sup> The controller is appointed by the prior/ess with the consent of the Chapter and may be compensated. The controller is not required to be a member of the monastery.
47. **Monastic Finance Council:** The purpose of the Monastic Finance Council is to advise the prior/ess in the administration of the monastery. The members of the council are appointed by the prior/ess with the counsel of the Chapter and are not compensated. The council is to include at least three members, who are not required to be members of the monastery. The term of office, specific duties and manner of meetings are to be determined in the *Customary*. All finally professed members are permitted to attend meetings of the Monastic Finance Council.
48. **Monastery Budget:** Since the communal dimension of monastic poverty lies in common ownership and the wise stewardship of goods, the monastic Chapter, through acceptance of the annual budget, approves the financial expenditures of the monastery. A copy of the budget is to be submitted to the local ordinary according to requirements determined by the diocesan finance officer. The prior/ess must obtain the consent of the Chapter to conduct any transactions in excess of \$10,000 (either as a single transaction or an aggregate of related transactions) which are not included in the approved budget.
49. **Financial Accountability:** The monastery will submit an annual financial report to the local ordinary for review. The report will be submitted according to the requirements determined by the diocesan finance officer.
50. **Debt Limitation:** Debts are not to be contracted unless it is certain that the interest on the debt can be paid off from ordinary income and that the capital sum can be paid off through legitimate amortization within a period that it not too long. The monastery may not incur or accumulate a debt in excess of 10 percent of the prior year's income without the permission of the local ordinary.
51. **Witness to Charity and Poverty:** The monastery is to strive to give a collective witness of charity and poverty and is to contribute according to its ability something from its own goods to provide for the needs of the Church and the support of the poor.
52. **Suppression of the Monastery:** The suppression of the monastery requires a two-third vote of the monastery Chapter and is effected by a decree of the diocesan bishop. The disposition of its temporal goods will be determined by the Chapter and canon 123 of the *Code of Canon Law*.

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<sup>8</sup> RB 31:4

### III. Membership, Conversion and Commitment

53. **Benedictine Vocation:** A vocation to the Benedictine way of life is a call to seek God in a cenobitic community and to live the Christian life under the *Rule of St. Benedict* and a prior/ess. A response to this call demands conversion.
54. **Conversion:** Conversion, in the Gospel sense, is a daily turning from oneself to God, a lifelong process by which the member seeks the will of God through a deepening of their baptismal commitment. For a Benedictine, conversion takes place within the context of a community of persons committed to the same monastic way of life. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the sister or brother<sup>9</sup> endeavors to put on Christ through a lifelong conversion. Monastic profession enables one to continue the conversion process.
55. **Incorporation and Formation:** Formation is the process of incorporating a member into a faith community committed to the monastic way of life. The aim of monastic formation is to enable the person to center her/himself in God. The person who seeks God according to the *Rule of St. Benedict* undertakes the asceticism of monastic life in the spirit of moderation rather than austerity and in the spirit of humility and joy.<sup>10</sup> Initial formation prepares the member for her/his monastic profession to live faithfully the Christian life within the monastery according to the Gospel and the *Rule of St. Benedict*.
56. The formation process involves two phases of development: initial and ongoing formation.
- a. Initial formation includes the stages of postulancy, novitiate, and temporary profession. A member progresses through these three stages of initial formation in order to prepare her/himself for the perpetual incorporation into the monastery that comes with final profession.
  - b. Ongoing formation is that phase of formation which continues from the time of final profession until death. A member takes responsibility for their ongoing formation within the context of community and under the guidance of the prior/ess.
57. **Admission:** In the monastic tradition, the prior/ess, with the consent of the monastic Chapter, admits a postulant to the novitiate, a novice to temporary profession, and those in temporary profession to final profession, with due regard for canon 316 of the *Code of Canon Law*.
58. Those things established in canons 642-645 of the *Code of Canon Law* apply to candidates for the novitiate.
59. **Formation Director:** The prior/ess appoints a director of initial formation who with a team of at least one sister and one brother in final profession, under her/his direction, is responsible for the initial formation of those who seek to be incorporated into the monastic community.<sup>11</sup>
60. **Novitiate:** The monastery establishes its own novitiate in accord with what is established in canon 652 of the *Code of Canon Law* and the *Customary*. For validity the duration of the novitiate shall be for a period of not less than twelve months nor more than twenty-four months. At the conclusion of the novitiate, the novice may be admitted to temporary profession.

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<sup>9</sup> The term “brother” in these *Statutes* and in the *Customary* refers to a male non-cleric in profession as well as to a cleric in profession, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>10</sup> *RB* 7

<sup>11</sup> *RB* 58:6

61. **Safe Environment:** All capitulars will participate in the Safe Environment Program of the Diocese of Honolulu. Prior to admission to the novitiate, the postulant shall be subject to a background and reference check. This will include a criminal history record check as permitted by federal and state law for any history of sexual misconduct involving minors. The Diocese of Honolulu from time to time shall arrange programs and seminars for training and education on issues of interpersonal boundaries, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Participation in such programs and seminars are mandatory beginning with novitiate and continuing throughout profession.
62. **Monastic Profession:** Each member expresses her/his commitment in a ceremony through a monastic profession, first for a limited time and then for a lifetime.<sup>12</sup> Upon completion of the novitiate, the novice may be admitted to temporary profession, provided that the conditions of canon 656 of the *Code of Canon Law* are met. The duration of temporary profession is to be three years. If necessary in an individual case, the period of temporary profession may be extended by the prior/ess, with the consent of the monastery Chapter, but the total time during which the member is bound by temporary profession shall not extend beyond nine years. At the conclusion of the period of temporary profession, the member may be admitted to final profession, provided that the conditions of canon 658 of the *Code of Canon Law* are met.
63. *Baptismal Commitment:* Through monastic profession, each member strengthens her/his baptismal commitment to God in Christ and enters into a covenant with the sisters and brothers of the monastery.
64. *Document of Profession:* The prior/ess receives the temporary and final profession of a member. The formula of monastic profession is:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I, Sister/Brother (name), baptized in the diocese of (name), promise to God (for — years *or* perpetually), fidelity to the monastic way of life, including celibacy and poverty, and stability in this monastery, and obedience according to the *Rule of St. Benedict*,<sup>13</sup> the *Statutes* and the living tradition of Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery. I make this monastic profession before God and the saints, before (name), the prior/ess, and the brothers and sisters of this monastery.

In witness thereof, I have written this document and have signed it here at Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery in Waialua, Hawaii, on the (number) day of (month) in the year (year). Amen.

An introduction and/or conclusion approved by the prior/ess may be added.

65. **Ongoing Formation:** Benedictine formation is a lifelong process of daily conversion within a dynamic, monastic faith community. The entire community is responsible, under the direction of the prior/ess, for the ongoing formation of all the members. The monastery fulfills this responsibility when it provides the environment for the members to share their life together in faith and to continue their own daily effort toward growth in Christ.

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<sup>12</sup> *RB* 58:15-16

<sup>13</sup> *RB* 58:17

## IV. Rights and Obligations and Call to Community

66. **Monastic Profession:** The monastic tradition rooted in the *Rule of St. Benedict* calls for fidelity to the monastic way of life (*conversatio*), a profession of stability in the monastery, and obedience. Monastic profession in a cenobitic community includes consecrated celibacy and monastic poverty.
67. **Conversion of Life (*Conversatio*):** By professing fidelity to the monastic way of life, a member commits to the movement of daily conversion from a self-centered life to a God-centered life that is one's lifetime goal, to put on Christ, and which is indispensable for the life and witness of the community. By embracing the pattern of cenobitic living inspired by the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the member grows in faith, hope and love, willingly supporting their prior/ess and their sisters and brothers as together they seek God.
68. **Stability:** By professing stability, a member promises to seek God in the monastery until death. By establishing a personal commitment to this particular monastic community, s/he witnesses to the unchanging faithfulness of God. By remaining steadfast in relationship to their prior/ess and their sisters and brothers, the member will progress in this way of life and in faith, and will run on the path of God's commandments with heart overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love.<sup>14</sup>
69. **Obedience:** A monastic by professing obedience commits her/himself to listen attentively and respond eagerly to the will of God as revealed in Scripture, the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the prior/ess, the community, and in her/himself. Obedience is a mutual blessing to be shown by all, not only to the prior/ess, but also to one another as community members.<sup>15</sup> This external constraint on one's will fosters humility through which one learns contentedness. The member, by professing obedience, shall acknowledge and accept the authority of the prior/ess as together they discern the will of God. S/he shall participate in community decisions and obey in trust the decisions of the prior/ess and the community in accord with the *Rule of St. Benedict*, these *Statutes* and the *Customary*.
70. In their profession of obedience, the community member follows Christ who was absolutely obedient to the Father, and fulfilled the Old Testament, even to the cross. In the monastic tradition, the prior/ess holds the place of Christ in the community. Like the disciples, we give a humble, respectful, listening, trusting attitude to the prior/ess, expressing but releasing personal convictions, believing that the prior/ess loves and cares for the community members like Christ.<sup>16</sup> The prior/ess should be challenging without being harsh, gentle but firm towards faults and failings, promoting an ever deeper relationship with God for the individual brother or sister.
71. "It is love that impels them to pursue everlasting life; therefore, they are eager to take the narrow road of which the Lord says: 'Narrow is the road that leads to life' (Matt 7:14). They no longer live by their own judgment, giving in to their whims and appetites; rather they walk according to another's decisions and directions, choosing to live in monasteries and to have an abbot over them. Men of this resolve unquestionably conform to the saying of the Lord: 'I have come not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me (John 6:38).'"<sup>17</sup>
72. Members are called by their profession to respond in obedience to their community, their prior/ess as their spiritual leader, to the diocesan bishop and to the Church with the pope as

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<sup>14</sup> *RB* Prologue 49

<sup>15</sup> *RB* 71

<sup>16</sup> *RB* Prologue 1; 5:7, 14

<sup>17</sup> *RB* 5:10-13

its chief pastor, in the performance of ministry, and in building up the faith of the people.

73. **Celibacy:** Besides professing fidelity to the monastic way of life, each brother and sister explicitly promises consecrated celibacy. S/he relinquishes the right to marry and commits her/himself to perfect continence. In living celibately, s/he frees her/himself to love Christ within a cenobitic community and to love and serve others without distinction. They prefer nothing to the love of Christ and therefore promote the reign of God through their fidelity to the monastic way of life. Community members limit themselves to familial and friendly relationships that lead others to Christ and the kingdom of God. Mary, spouse of the Holy Spirit provides the inspiration to seek spiritual fruitfulness in lived celibacy.
74. *Cloister:* In the *Customary*, the monastery Chapter shall designate a cloister which is suitable to monastic life in the contemporary world and is appropriate for celibate women and men sharing a common life.
75. **Poverty:** By the profession of poverty, the community member follows Christ who kept no material possessions for himself, and saw his life on earth as temporary. Through commitment to monastic poverty s/he agrees to hold all goods in common with the other community members and to renounce the accumulation and possession of material goods.<sup>18</sup> The members are bound by the precepts of canon 668 of the *Code of Canon Law* as applied in the *Customary*.
76. Each member in promising to live monastic poverty, detaches from self-centeredness and from material goods in order to seek God more freely and be more open and available to others. A community member may have personal items only as allowed by the prior/ess or the *Customary*.
77. As defined in the *Customary*, the dress of the Benedictine is marked by simplicity. It is a sign of monastic consecration and a witness to poverty. According to the *Rule of St. Benedict*, clothing varies with local conditions and the work of the person.<sup>19</sup>
78. **Benedictine Identification:** The female members may use the title “Sister” and the male members “Brother” (or “Father” if he is a priest). All members may use the letters “OSB” for *Ordo Sancti Benedicti* after their names.
79. **Use of Social Communication:** The use of means of social communication is to be defined in the *Customary* and as permitted by the prior/ess.
80. **Call to Community:** These *Statutes* provide for the structure and governance to advance and protect a contemporary expression of cenobitic monasticism in a community of celibate women and men responding to the inspiration of the *Rule of St. Benedict*. It is recognized by a call to listen and to respond to the Gospel invitation to community, conversion and commitment, prayer, and work.
81. *Support for Monastic Life:* Prayer, mutual encouragement, asceticism, and other monastic observances help the sister or brother to be faithful to their commitment. Members are further obligated by the precepts of canons 277, 285, 286, 287, and 289 of the *Code of Canon Law*. The prior/ess can grant the permission mentioned in canon 285, §4.
82. *Residence:* The members shall live within the monastery or, for a just cause and with the consent of the prior/ess, in another appropriate residence.
83. **Call to Monastic Prayer:** An essential element of Benedictine life is prayer, both

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<sup>18</sup> *RB* 33:2-6; 58:24

<sup>19</sup> *RB* 55:1-2

communal and individual. Therefore, a person joins the monastery so that they may lead a life dedicated to the seeking of God together with other members who have made the same commitment. In general, communal prayer is to take priority over ministry, work or personal projects.

84. *Eucharist*: The Holy Eucharist is a privileged time of liturgical celebration, when the monastic community situates its lived experience of common life within the context of the paschal mystery of Christ. Following the rhythm of the day and the cycle of the seasons, the recurring memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection calls each member to an attitude of praise. The Eucharist is to be a daily communal celebration at the monastery or, if necessary, at a nearby parish Mass.
85. *Oratory and Tabernacle*: The monastery is to have an oratory in which the Eucharist is ordinarily celebrated and reserved so that it is truly the center of the community.
86. *Opus Dei*: According to the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the daily *Opus Dei*, the monastic Liturgy of the Hours, is the recurring sign of the monastery's unity with Christ and among its members.<sup>20</sup> To praise and glorify God, with Christ and in Christ, the community shall celebrate the *Opus Dei* in common daily, as determined in the *Customary*.
87. *Lectio Divina*: The members prepare for the *Opus Dei* and Eucharist by pondering the Word of God in *Lectio Divina*, the monastic tradition of reflective reading of Scripture. This tradition of reflective spiritual reading is the principal nourishment for individual and communal prayer and shall be provided for as determined in the *Customary*.
88. *The Holy Spirit and Charismatic Dimension*: The orderly manifestation of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit in common prayer is to be valued for the gift it is, with the necessary discernment that it be edifying and fruitful. It is a defining charism of the community.
89. *Silence*: To foster prayer and reflection, an atmosphere of peace and quiet around the monastery environs is to be observed in a general way during the day. A more reflective silence is observed at night and during specified prayer times.<sup>21</sup>
90. *Penance*: The importance of some measure of penance in the life of the Christian and the member is promoted in the community by:
  - a. honoring fast days on normal Wednesdays and Fridays
  - b. regular use of the sacrament of reconciliation, with due regard for the precepts of canon 630 of the *Code of Canon Law*
  - c. a generous embrace of the *Bona Opera* during Lent<sup>22</sup>
91. *Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary*: The Virgin Mary holds a privileged place in the life of our community which is manifested in the communal recitation of the rosary each day and in other ways determined in the *Customary*.
92. *Devotional Life*: The sisters and brothers under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit nurture a devotional life shaped by the communal and liturgical prayer of the monastery. The monastery provides the time and resources for the continuing spiritual development of its members.
93. *Retreat*: Members are to observe faithfully an annual period of sacred retreat as determined

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<sup>20</sup> *RB* 8-19

<sup>21</sup> *RB* 42:1

<sup>22</sup> *RB* 49

in the *Customary*.

94. **Call to Work:** The monastery, rooted in a particular locality, is a sign of God's presence in the world. By the witness of the life of its members, it shares in the mission of the Church. In the light of its charism, the monastery may undertake any kind of work, provided the work is compatible with the cenobitic way of life, is suited to the talents of its members, and responds to the needs of the people of God. In this, manual labor and household tasks are to be recognized as honorable, fruitful and useful. Each member of the monastery proclaims Christ and the Gospel by bringing God's presence to the world and to the Church by their life and by their work, both within and beyond the monastery. One is true to the Benedictine tradition of work when they seek Christ in mutual service with their brothers and sisters, caring for all people from conception until to death, especially the poor, the sick, youth and guests who come seeking meaning in their lives.<sup>23</sup>
95. **Integration:** The life of the monastic shall reflect balance and moderation so that they may experience an integration of prayer, work, silence, study, and leisure.
96. **Hospitality:** Graced by the spirit of hospitality, the members bring reverence, acceptance, and availability to their service of others. Through their life and service, they not only meet the needs of those who call upon them, but together with them extend the reign of God in peace and justice.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *RB* 48

<sup>24</sup> *RB* 53

## V. Visitations and Benedictine Contacts

97. **Ordinary Visitation:** The visitation is a process to facilitate self-evaluation of the monastery to encourage continuing growth in Benedictine living. An ordinary visitation of the monastery is conducted during the last year of each four-year term of office of the prior/ess.
98. *Purpose:* The purpose of the visitation is to assist the monastery in reviewing its monastic way of life in terms of monastic profession, prayer, common life, new members, formation, fiscal management, the works of the monastery, the *Customary* and guide books, reception of guests, etc.
99. *Visitors:* The prior/ess makes the arrangements for the visitors in accord with the *Customary*. The choice of visitors requires the approval of the local ordinary. At least one of the visitors shall be either a president or a federation councilor of a Benedictine congregation or federation or a similarly experienced monastic.
100. *Reports and Mandates:* Final reports of the visitation will be provided to each community member and to the local ordinary. The local ordinary may issue, in serious matters, mandates to the prior/ess or the monastic Chapter following a visitation.
101. **Extraordinary Visitation:** With due regard for a just autonomy of life of the monastic community, the local ordinary, for a grave cause, may make or mandate an extraordinary visitation of the monastery:
  - a. on his own initiative
  - b. at the written request of the prior/ess
  - c. at the written request of the absolute majority of the monastic Chapter
102. **Benedictine Contacts and Support:** In order that Mary, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery not become isolated from other monastic communities, it will seek to establish a covenant, twin or companion relationship with another Benedictine monastery of men and of women as a source of guidance and encouragement. It will also make use of various workshops, institutes, formation gatherings and other such opportunities to reinvigorate the community and its monastic life.

## VI. Clerical Members and Oblates

103. **Ordination:** It is the prior/ess who guides the discernment of a possible call to ordination from among the brothers of the monastery.<sup>25</sup> To be considered for entrance to major seminary, the brother must have completed at least one full year of temporary profession, meet the requirements of canon law and the *Program of Priestly Formation* of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and be approved by the diocesan bishop. For acceptance and admission to ordination the candidate must have made final profession, and the consent of the monastery Chapter and the diocesan bishop is required.
104. *Incardination:* Clerical members of the monastery shall be incardinated into the Diocese of Honolulu upon ordination to the diaconate, with due regard for the right of the cleric to fulfill his obligations to the monastery. Clerical members are bound by all the canonical obligations of other clergy of the Diocese of Honolulu and enjoy the same rights that are not contrary to these *Statutes* and the *Customary*, with due regard for specific agreements between the prior/ess and the bishop.
105. **Oblates:** In the Benedictine tradition, oblates are lay associate members who live in the world but seek to follow the monastic spiritual life in a closer way by making oblation of themselves to God and to Our Lady, Spouse of the Holy Spirit Monastery. They do not profess vows. They are governed and ordered according to the stipulations of the *Customary*.

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<sup>25</sup> *RB* 62:1

## VII. Separation from the Monastery

106. **Departure during Novitiate:** During the novitiate, a novice may freely leave the monastery or be dismissed by the prior/ess. At the conclusion of the novitiate, the novice may freely leave the monastery or may be dismissed by the prior/ess.
107. **Departure during Temporary Profession:** During the period of temporary profession, the member may be dismissed by the prior/ess only for a serious reason with the consent of the Chapter. The prior/ess may also grant an indult of departure to a member during the time of temporary profession with the counsel of the Chapter. At the conclusion of the period of temporary profession, the member may freely leave the monastery or may be dismissed by the prior/ess with the consent of the Chapter.
108. **Exclaustration of the Finally Professed:** Exclaustration of the finally professed may be granted by the prior/ess for up to three years with the consent of the Chapter. If the finally professed is a cleric, consent of the local ordinary is also required. An exclaustrated member lacks active and passive voice.
109. *Liability of Monastery:* If a member does not return to the monastery at the end of a period of exclaustration or other approved absence, or if a member is unlawfully absent from the monastery, the monastery is not liable for any debts, actions, omissions or obligations whatsoever incurred by the member. Such a member may be subject to dismissal.
110. **Departure of the Finally Professed:** The granting of an indult of departure to a member in final profession is reserved to the diocesan bishop after having heard the prior/ess.
111. *Dismissal:* The procedure for dismissal<sup>26</sup> of a member shall follow the same procedure as required of a religious institute in canons 694-703 of the *Code of Canon Law* and with the same effects. The prior/ess shall fulfill the function designated for the major superior and the diocesan bishop shall fulfill the function designated for the supreme moderator.
112. *Financial Arrangements:* In the spirit of justice and charity, the prior/ess, with the consent of the monastic Chapter, may determine an equitable amount of financial aid or other assistance necessary for a former member who was finally professed to establish her/himself in the secular state. A member who receives an indult of departure or is dismissed from the monastery cannot claim any recompense from the monastery for any work done while a member.
113. **Readmission to the Monastery:** In the spirit of the *Rule of St. Benedict*,<sup>27</sup> a former member of the monastery may be readmitted in accord with what is established in canon 690 of the *Code of Canon Law* and in the *Customary*.

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<sup>26</sup> *RB* 28:6

<sup>27</sup> *RB* 29