

✠ Militia Templi — Christi Pauperum Militum Ordo ✠

Preceptory for North America

“Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed Nomini tuo da gloriam” (Ps.113)

We humbly acknowledge receipt of the three-year formation plan outlined for 2024-2027. After reviewing its contents, the North American Preceptory wholeheartedly agrees with the substance and direction presented in the document. We appreciate the clarity of vision and the depth of spirituality laid out in its 13 pages.

I. Current Practices and Strengths

The North American Preceptory affirms its commitment to the Rule and the spirituality that has been thoughtfully articulated, particularly in reference to the criteria for growth, which we have and will continue to make the main guideline under which we arrange the practical affairs of our perceptorial life. We stand ready to further enhance the spiritual formation of our members and recognize the importance of providing traditional liturgical training to all, with specific attention to the recitation of the Divine Office.

We continue our practice of organizing three separate retreats annually. In our annual book program, we ensure a balanced selection, incorporating both historical and chivalric works alongside theological and spiritual readings. Gregorian chant is practiced regularly at the commandery level, and we are exploring opportunities to bring in instructors during our perceptory meetings, focusing on Psalm tones and other essential aspects of chant.

Regarding charity and combat, these tasks are effectively delegated within the militia. Apostolic activities, both within and outside the preceptory, are consistently encouraged, and the process of obtaining dispensations is clearly established at both the local and national levels.

Knights are, of course, always instructed to attend the Traditional Latin Rite of the Church, even when it requires great sacrifice of time or distance.

Regarding novice training, the heart of the process begins with the establishment of a prayer rule before the novice is fully accepted. This rule, written under the guidance of the Master of Novices, outlines how the novice will fulfill all their duties in prayer, work, study, and other responsibilities. This prayer rule is central to the novice's spiritual formation and is reviewed regularly in meetings with the novice master. It forms the foundation of spiritual direction, with input from the spiritual director, who works with the Master of Novices to ensure that the prayer rule fosters intense spiritual growth while balancing the novice's capacity.

Our Oblates are organized and active participates in the Preceptory. The Master of Oblates arranges monthly electronic meetings, and the oblates are encouraged to join in all activities

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and retreats. They also engage in formation readings, either with the knights or independently, selecting their formation books through their own voting mechanisms.

II. Concerns Regarding Language Proficiency

For several years in a row, the Commandary here in Charles Town studied Latin under Dom. Alban. The study of a language after working 8-10 hour days in a professional job is not a small burden, it is an even larger burden when one returns home to a household of small children. It is easy to become stretched thin between many duties. We studied Latin at an uneven pace for the last few years, and we often all felt overburdened.

The North American Preceptory fully acknowledges that Italian is the language of the order and the language of the order's business. However, we wish to express a concern regarding the expectation of reaching B2 proficiency. Achieving this level requires approximately 650 hours of classroom study for an English speaker, which is a significant commitment. Although there are many resources available online as the document said, most of our members are married men with young children who are already stretched thin between working full-time jobs, fulfilling their prayer rules, engaging in apostolates, studying catechetics, homeschooling their children, and other responsibilities.

While we agree that studying Italian is a worthy pursuit, we respectfully request that it should be strongly encouraged, but not strictly required as part of our formation for the next 3 years.

III. Areas for Improvement and Future Plans

The preceptory intends to plan and make a Marian pilgrimage within the next 3 years as requested.

To date, we have not made arrangements for the Spiritual Exercises to be conducted at a Preceptory level, though some members have made the effort to attend these themselves. We will be delegating a Knight to explore how this can be arranged in the next 3 years.

We will be sending our specific training plan for novices to the head preceptory for review once it is complete.

We hope these reflections serve as a constructive response to the formation plan and express our ongoing commitment to the spiritual and practical development of our members.

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In Our Lord Jesus Christ,

dom. Noah Moerbeek, CPMO
Preceptor
Preceptory for North America
October 24th, 2024

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