

**STATUTES  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF PUERI CANTORES (FIPC)**

**Art. 1 TITLE AND COMPOSITION**

The International Federation of Pueri Cantores (hereinafter FIPC [Foederatio Internationalis Pueri Cantores]) was erected as a moral person by the decree of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome on January 25, 1965. It is a universal private association of the faithful in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, canons 298 to 311 and 321 to 329 of Section V (Book II, Part I).

- a) The International Federation of Pueri Cantores is a union of National Federations united on the basis of equal fraternity.
  - aa) The name "National Federation" means the diocesan or interdiocesan association of at least three choirs in the area of some territorial, political, geographical or linguistic unit.
  - ab) National Federations are organised according to their needs and observing the prescriptions of Canon Law and the legislation of their respective countries.
- b) The International Federation can incorporate directly choirs which, for various reasons, have not yet been able to unite among themselves and form a National Federation.

The rights and responsibilities of these choirs are fixed in a regulation in accordance with Article 14.
- c) The FIPC can accept National Federations from other Churches and Christian Communities, which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church, as cooperators.

The rights and responsibilities of these cooperators are fixed in Article 8(d), Article 9(a), and in a regulation in accordance with Article 14.

**Art. 2 PATRON SAINT**

St Dominic Savio was established as patron saint of the International Federation of Pueri Cantores by a brief of Pope Pius XII on June 8, 1956.

**Art. 3 DEPENDENCE ON ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY**

The Federation of Pueri Cantores is dependent on the competent ecclesiastical authority in accordance with Article 22 of the Constitution on the Liturgy as follows:

- the International Federation on the Holy See;
- the National Federation(s) on the Episcopal Conference(s) of the territory or the competent ecclesiastical authorities;
- the Diocesan Federation on the Ordinary of the place.

The Federation of Pueri Cantores fulfils its role in complete accordance with the competent commission for sacred liturgy and for sacred music, in accordance with Articles 44 and 46 of the Constitution on the Liturgy.

#### Art.4 THE CHOIRS OF PUERI CANTORES

"Petits Chanteurs" is understood as meaning choirs of both sexes (girls and/or boys of school age) with or without men's voices, engaged principally in the service of the liturgy.

If a National Federation is constituted (in accordance with Article 1) in such a manner that it accepts youth choirs, these choirs are also accepted by the FIPC.

In order that it may be recognised as a "Pueri Cantores" choir and associated to a National Federation, it is necessary that each choir of Petits Chanteurs obtain the agreement of the Federation concerned.

Individual choirs which want to be affiliated directly to the International Federation must at least be recognised by the competent ecclesiastical authority.

- a) Petits Chanteurs, having received their appropriate liturgical mandate from ecclesiastical authority, wear the liturgical vestments allowed in their Church (referring to the local Ordinary).
- b) Each choir has the duty of animating liturgical celebrations by particularly encouraging the participation of the congregation and supporting their singing.
- c) "The Little Singers of the Wooden Cross" gave birth both to the spread of Petits Chanteurs and to the establishment, by Mgr Fernand Maillet, of the FIPC, and so they are directly incorporated in the FIPC.

#### Art. 5 AIMS OF THE FEDERATION

The International Federation of Pueri Cantores has the following aims:

- a) promoting among Pueri Cantores, with their own participation, liturgical music, from Gregorian chant to classical and modern polyphony and contemporary music, composed according to the ecclesiastical prescriptions of each culture;
- b) promoting works of quality so that it may be possible to cultivate and form the directors and the Petits Chanteurs from the spiritual, intellectual, musical and aesthetic points of view;
- c) leading all the members of the Federation, regardless of nationality, towards brotherly understanding, founded on and bound together by sincere friendship and mutual assistance, in order to help build a new world: "All the children of the world will sing the Peace of God" (Mgr Maillet)

## Art. 6 THE MEANS OF ACTION

The means for achieving these ends are as follows:

- a) the publication of a magazine (information on the life of the National Federations and of the choirs), and of books or pamphlets which support spiritual, liturgical, musical and educational formation;
- b) the publication of both old and contemporary sacred music, in order to build up a common repertoire, while allowing each group the possibility of adding religious (and other kinds of) music of its own choice;
- c) the organisation of International Congresses in order to promote sacred music among children, to illustrate the aims of the Federation, and to demonstrate its efficacy; furthermore, there is encouragement for holding National or Regional Congresses, pursuing the aims quoted above;
- d) public relations, by means of newspapers, radio and television, and also through music groups, seminarians, students etc; there should be representatives at all levels of the Church in Rome (at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, the ecclesiastical colleges, the general curias of religious): they will encourage relations between the International Federation and each country's bishops and religious.

## Art. 7 HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the FIPC is established in the Vatican City.

The administrative offices of the President, of the Vice-Presidents, of the Ecclesiastical Assistant, of the Secretary and of the Treasurer are situated at their respective places of residence.

The sessions of the General Assembly and of the Council of Administration of the FIPC are held where the Council of Administration decides.

### CENTRAL BODIES

## Art. 8 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### a) *Composition*

The General Assembly consists of the Presidents, or, in their absence, delegates named by each Federation, and who in the discussions that take place have the right to cast a vote according to the regulation specified in Article 8d.

### b) *Calling the General Assembly*

The General Assembly meets every two years or when the Council of Administration considers it necessary for an adequate or extraordinary reason. The General Assembly is normally called by the President; it can be called at the request of a third of its members.

c) *Duties and Responsibilities of the General Assembly*

- ca) to elect the President and the other members of the Council of Administration;
- cb) to examine and approve
  - the minutes of the General Assembly in accordance with Article 9 fb;
  - the motions proposed by the members of the Federation and included in the agenda;
  - the regulations in accordance with Article 14;
  - the President's report in accordance with Article 9 ce;
- cc) to approve the financial report;  
to accept the work of the Treasurer;
- cd) to consider the acceptance of new National Federations or new individual choirs.

d) *Election Procedure*

The Council of Administration draws up regulations in accordance with Article 14 fixing the details concerning elections and voting.

These regulations must be approved by the General Assembly with a majority of two thirds of its members in accordance with Article 8 cb.

Those who are cooperators in accordance with Article 1 c have only a consultative vote in the General Assembly.

Art. 9 THE COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION

a) *Composition*

The Council of Administration consists of the President, two Vice-Presidents, the Ecclesiastical Assistant, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The representatives of those who are cooperators in accordance with Article 1c are not eligible to serve on the Council of Administration of the FIPC.

Each member of the Council of Administration is elected for four years by the General Assembly and can be re-elected in accordance with the regulations envisaged in Article 8d.

It is not possible to hold more than one office.

- aa) Following the election, the Council of Administration presents to the Holy See the name of the candidate proposed by the General Assembly for the position of Ecclesiastical Assistant. The Ecclesiastical Assistant is confirmed by the Holy See in accordance canon 324/2 of the Code of Canon Law. He is a member of the Council of Administration *ex officio*.
- ab) The Council of Administration can appoint commissions and special delegates chosen by the General Assembly in accordance with its needs.

*b) The Meetings and the Duties of the Council of Administration.*

The Council of Administration arranges its own meetings each year. Its duties and responsibilities are:

- ba) to promote the activity and the progress of the Federation, by carrying out the decisions of the General Assembly;
- bb) to examine plans and ideas put forward by the President and the members of the FIPC;
- bc) to discuss the provisional admission of members of the Federation;
- bd) to prepare for the General Assembly;
- be) to supervise the proper application of the Statutes and of the Regulations made in accordance with Article 14, elaborating upon them and proposing any useful modifications.

*c) Responsibilities of the President*

The President

- ca) represents the Federation;
- cb) directs the activities of the Federation;
- cc) presides over the General Assembly and the Council of Administration;
- cd) calls meetings of the General Assembly, while maintaining the provisions of Article 8 b;
- ce) presents his report to the General Assembly.

*d) Responsibilities of the Vice-Presidents*

The Vice-Presidents

- da) assist the President in his work;
- db) carry out the duties of representation and the particular tasks which may be entrusted to them by the President.

*e) Responsibilities of the Ecclesiastical Assistant*

The Ecclesiastical Assistant, working alongside the President, ensures that the aims of the Federation (Article 5) and the spiritual development both of the FIPC and of the affiliated Federations are maintained.

*f) Responsibilities of the Secretary*

The Secretary

- fa) directs the administrative activities and supervises the publications of the FIPC, its promotion and the preparation of International Congresses;
- fb) writes the minutes of meetings of the Council of Administration and of the General Assembly;

fc) together with the President, ensures that the decisions taken by the General Assembly and by the Council of Administration are carried out.

g) *Responsibilities of the Treasurer*

The Treasurer

ga) runs the finances of the FIPC and keeps the account books;

gb) presents the financial report to the General Assembly; it is received by the General Assembly in accordance with Article 8cc.

In this matter, the Treasurer does not have the right to vote.

Art. 10 THE AUDITORS OF THE ACCOUNTS

a) *Composition*

The Committee of Auditors consists of two members, elected for four years by the General Assembly. The Auditors may be nominated from among the members of the General Assembly or from outside.

b) *Responsibilities of the Auditors*

The Auditors

ba) examine the account books kept by the Treasurer;

bb) present a report on this matter to the General Assembly;

bc) propose that the General Assembly approve the Treasurer's Report and accept his work.

Art. 11 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The resources of the Federation are:

a) the annual affiliation fees of the National Federations;

b) profits which come from the sale

- of the "Pueri Cantores" international card,

- of the badge of the International Federation;

- of subscriptions to the official journal of the International Federation;

- of editions of books, pictures, music scores and records;

c) profits which come from concerts of Petits Chanteurs;

d) the offerings and endowments of friends of the Federation;

e) grants from the ecclesiastical authorities, from the State or from cultural foundations.

## Art. 12 PERMANENCE AND DISSOLUTION OF THE FEDERATION

The International Federation of Pueri Cantores is intended to be a permanent body. However, a decision to dissolve it can be made in accordance with the conditions stipulated for the modification of the statutes, while maintaining the prescriptions of canon 326 of the Code of Canon Law.

In the event of the Federation being dissolved, the General Assembly will entrust to one of the members of the Council of Administration the task of proceeding with the liquidation of the Federation's capital assets. The General Assembly has the absolute right to decide to give any remaining monies to an Association pursuing a similar aim.

## Art. 13 PROMULGATION AND MODIFICATION OF THE STATUTES

The Statutes come into force as soon as they have been accepted by the Holy See, and they can be modified by the General Assembly with a majority of two thirds of its members, subject to the approval of the Holy See in accordance with canon 322/2 of the Code of Canon Law.

The French text is to be taken as definitive. Any translation is to be approved by the General Assembly.

## Art. 14 The regulations concerning the Statutes will be proposed by the Council of Administration and are to be approved by the General Assembly with a majority of two thirds of its members.

These regulations must not contradict the Statutes. They can be revised during each General Assembly called in accordance with Article 8 b. Proposed modifications must be communicated to members with the invitation to the meeting and the agenda.

Modifications are to be approved by the General Assembly with a majority of two thirds of its members.

These Statutes replace those which were approved on February 15, 1965, by His Holiness Pope Paul VI and modified on August 8, 1983, by letter number 95688 of the Secretariat of State.

These Statutes were accepted during the General Assembly at Rome on December 29, 1993.

They were considered as meeting the requests made by the Secretariat of State of the Vatican in letter number 341.887 of May 4, 1994.

With reference to these present Statutes, the Pontifical Council for the Laity recognised the International Federation of Pueri Cantores as a universal private association of the faithful in accordance with canons 301 and 321 of the Code of Canon Law by the Decree of Recognition of January 31, 1996, the feast of St John Bosco.

The President of the FIPC:

The Secretary of the FIPC:

Wilhelmus Buys

Jean-Francois Duchamp

#### A SHORT ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT AND OF THE STATUTES OF THE FIPC

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| 1944       | Establishment of a French Federation.   |
| 06.03.1947 | Approval of the French Federation by the French Bishops' Conference.  |
| 20.05.1949 | Commendation by Pope Pius XII during the second International Congress in Rome.   |
| March 1951 | Third International Congress in Rome  |
| 06.04.1951 | Approval of the <b>first statutes</b> of the FIPC by Mgr Montini, by letter number 248.378.   |
| 22.11.1958 | <b>Renewal</b> of the statutes and their extension for five years by a letter of Mgr Tardini, Pro-Secretary of State.   |
| 25.01.1964 | Establishment of the FIPC as a moral person of the Church by the protocol number 3317, signed by Cardinal Clemens Micara, Vicar General, and the Secretary, G. Giaquinta.   |
| 15.02.1964 | Definitive approval of the <b>modified statutes</b> by Pope Paul V by letter number 25598.  |
| 05.08.1983 | Approval of the <b>modification of the statutes</b> by Mgr G. B. Re, Assessor of the Secretariat of State, by letter number 95.688.   |
| 29.12.1993 | Approval of the planned <b>modification of the statutes</b> by the General Assembly during the 21 st Pueri Cantores Congress in Rome.   |
| 04.05.1994 | Modification of the statutes considered as meeting the requests made by the Secretariat of State of the Vatican by letter number 341.887.   |
| 31.01.1996 | <b>Decree of recognition</b> as a universal private association of the faithful in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, canons 298 to 311 and 321 to 329 of Section V (Book II, Part I), by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. |

Translator's note.

The French term "Petits Chanteurs" literally "Little Singers" is the expression normally used in French for a choir of boys or a choir of both boys and girls with or without men. In English we would normally use the expression "Boys' Choir" or "Children's Choir" as "Little Singers" would not be idiomatic. Thus, "Les Petits Chanteurs de Saverne " become "The Saverne Boys' Choir" when they come to Britain and "The Newport Boys' Choir" becomes "Les Petits Chanteurs de Newport" when it sings in France. (The exception is that "Les Petits Chanteurs à la Croix de Bois" have always been known in Britain as "The Little Singers of the Wooden Cross".)

Sometimes the term "Petits Chanteurs" is best translated as "Pueri Cantores Choir" However, it sometimes refers to a grouping bigger than one choir.

In translating these Statutes I have left "Petits Chanteurs" untranslated in order to avoid repetition or ambiguity. A quick glance at Article 4 for instance will show why I have done this!

I am most grateful to Father Matthew Jones L.C.L., priest of the Diocese of Cardiff for his assistance in preparing this translation. He has ensured that it conforms to the style of ecclesiastical legal documents and also made a number of helpful suggestions to improve clarity. Any remaining faults are on my own.

MJL (Michael J. Landers)