

Building a new culture

The OCD Missionary Cooperation Office

1. Preamble

This profile is a plan of action for the Missionary Cooperation Office as well as for the Carmelite missions themselves. It aims at bringing missionary awareness and communicate missionary initiatives within the Order as well as setting strategies to strengthen the collaboration between the Centre of the Order and the missions. It also seeks to build and strengthen partnerships between the Order and funding organisations. We recognise that the world is changing. New financial challenges, processes and norms are emerging forcing donor organisations and agencies to adjust. Communication and transparency are increasingly becoming compulsory for collaboration and partnership. To be effective and remain relevant in today's world, Carmelite missionaries have to familiarize themselves with the new emerging culture. The Missionary Cooperation Office aims to help them walk the new path. It targets to build their capacity in order to make positive changes in their relationships with donor organisations and with the communities they serve.

2. Overview

The Missionary Cooperation Office is the point of reference for pastoral and socio-economic projects for the Order's missions.

2.1. The mission

The mission of the Missionary Cooperation Office within the Order is to assist, accompany, support and advise Missionaries (both friars and nuns) in their internal, pastoral and socio-economic projects. It serves as a channel of solidarity within the Order and as a bridge for collaboration and

partnership between the Discalced Carmelite Order and funding organisations (Partner organisations and individual donors). We are convinced that collaboration and partnerships are the key to the success to deliver in social development and pastoral projects.

2.2. The objectives

1. To bring missionary awareness and communicate missionary initiatives within the Order;
2. To assist, advise, accompany and support missionaries in their concrete Carmelite, pastoral and socio-development projects;
3. To coordinate financial and logistic support for concrete pastoral and socio-economic projects in the missions;
4. To be a channel of solidarity within the Discalced Carmelite family and from other Church organisations;
5. To serve as a bridge of collaboration and partnership between missions and donor organisations;
6. To ensure the effective administration of funds in support of concrete pastoral and socio-development projects.

2.3. The values

Christian love

The basis of the activities of the Missionary Cooperation Office is the Love of God poured into the hearts of all Christian faithful at baptism. This love of God transforms us into the image of Christ, vivifies and sustains the practice of mission. It prepares us for the highest union with Christ, through the Church, His mystical body. It empowers us to love our neighbours as Christ Himself loved us up to death, death on the Cross.

In fulfilling our mission, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Therese of Lisieux are our models as they set for our Order the framework for its missionary actions. Saint John of the Cross is our master as he teaches us

the self-denial as the basic attitude to adopt in our relationship with God whom we cannot love if we fail to love the neighbour we see.

Prayer

Faithful to the historical roots of our Order, prayer is central to our missionary life, according to the spiritual heritage and the charism of Saint Theresa of Avila. Daily personal and community prayers animates the Carmelite daily work and strengthen the Carmelite missionary spirit and actions. Our daily prayers are a sustenance to all those who join their efforts and generosity to support our missionaries in their daily efforts to reach out to our brothers and sisters in their needs, both spiritual and material.

Service

As a bridge between missionaries and benefactors (partner organisations, individual donors), the Missionary Cooperation Office fulfils its mission through humble and selfless service to brothers and sisters in the missions, helping them meet regular requirements from partners. In the same way, the Office strives to facilitate effective regular exchange of missionary solidarity towards supporting internal, pastoral and socio-development sustainable projects.

Excellence

The Missionary Cooperation Office aspires to a continuous improvement and to being a point of reference for internal, pastoral and socio-development projects for our missions. Selflessness, continuous dedication, sustainable collaboration, solidarity and transparency in the framework of openness, responsibility, accountability and mutual respect are the basis of the Office's effectiveness.

3. Governance and management

The Missionary Cooperation Office follows the formal authority and communication structure of the Order as edited in our constitutions and norms of applications.

To the Office, the General Definitory serves as the **Self-Perpetuating Board** (successors of the Definitors form automatically a new board) **of Governors**. Fr General heads the board while the Definitor in charge of missions serves as Secretary to the board. The General Definitory appoints the Secretary for Missionary Cooperation for a renewable term of three years. It also appoints members of the “project grant committee” for a renewable mandate of three years.

The ‘project grant committee’ is made of the Missionary Cooperation Secretary and two definitors and/or any other members appointed by the General Definitory. It regularly meets to approve or disapprove project proposals beyond the Secretary’s mandate.

The Missionary Cooperation Office is funded by contributions from the different circumscriptions of the Order. The General Definitory determines, in agreement with major Superiors, the amount each circumscription contributes yearly. To build the sense of self-denial and Carmelite solidarity in the Order, all the circumscriptions of the Order, Carmelite monasteries and OCDS communities alike, are invited to contribute to the mission funds of the Order.

The Secretary manages the funds of the Missionary Cooperation Office in cooperation with the General Bursar, according to the mission and objectives of the office. Twice a year (end of June and end of December), he presents detailed accounts to the General and to the General Definitory. However, any time of the year, Fr General or the Definitory can ask the Secretary to present a financial report of the Office. During the meetings of the ‘project grant committee’ the Secretary presents the overview of the Office’s finance to allow the committee take decisions based on full knowledge of the actual state of the Office’s funds.

4. Working strategy: *collaboration, support and formation*

Because missionaries are the ones witnessing practically to the Carmelite charism to the people of God whom the Order serves through their daily dedication, they are the ones who know better the context they are working in and the needs it requires. They are the ones who can present better their needs for support. Communication with missions that present their needs helps the Office grasp the necessity, urgency and appropriateness of requests to respond objectively and adequately. Lack of communication would make this impossible and therefore fail the Office in its mission.

In various cases whereby the Office serves as a bridge, especially between our missions and funding organisations, the openness of missionaries for collaboration through constant communication is vital. Moreover, evaluations and documented transparent reporting are fundamental for trust.

Project proposals should originate from community consultations and thus be results of the participation of each member of the community. Missionary Cooperation Office never imagines projects to write down proposals for grant. It advises missions on what is needed and how to proceed to write proposals. It gives guidelines for writing concrete project proposals for well-identified funding organisations.

The Office aims, among other things, to accompany missionaries properly do things, especially regarding project management and partnership with donor organisations. Capacity building is one of its dearest strategies in assisting and accompanying the missions. For this reason, the Office encourages all the missionaries, without exception, to follow guidelines provided. The philosophy behind is that all should be familiarised with the conditions and processes of most of the donor organisations. By so doing, missionaries will enhance their abilities to join and compete in today's development culture that expects some standards for cooperation and partnerships. Any negligence of this strategy, whatsoever the reason might be, cannot be helpful for our missionaries. There is a need to start building a new culture: a culture of 'standards to be observed'.

5. Internal guidelines

The Office adopts a twofold educational strategy: to attend to and serve the missionaries with love and great attention to make them feel at home with the Centre of the Order; at the same time, it firmly makes it compulsory to comply with new emerging financial principals. Hence, the Office's guidelines for grants should be applied by/to all the missions without exception. This aims at familiarising the applicants with the normal standard principals applied by donor organisations.

1. Any financial support sought for from the Missionary Cooperation Office should be formally applied for with the approval of the Applicant's major Superior.
2. The Missionary Cooperation Office advises and accompanies in project management. It provides limited internal and small projects grants. These are basically, projects designed to meet specific needs. They must be part of the support needed in the Carmelite missions and benefit the direct needs of the confreres or nuns of the province, vice-province, Vicariate, Delegation, Commissariat or community in their efforts to better attend to the people they serve. These projects are mainly small with an economic investment, which, in most cases remains below 10,000 euros. About social and pastoral projects, the Office advises, accompanies and assists applicants directing their applications towards partner organisations that can fund them.
3. Internal Carmelite missionary project grants worth below or equal 4,000 euros can be approved by the Office's Secretary who informs the "project grant committee" at its meeting time. Projects above this amount are presented to the committee for its approval. However, for any extreme urgent need in the missions that requires an immediate attention and decision, the Secretary will consult Father General and follow his directives. The Committee will be informed when it meets.
4. In the "project grant committee" meeting, the Secretary of the Missionary Cooperation Office will present all the project applications presented to the Office. He will justify the decisions taken for those

within his mandate or directed by Fr General and will present those beyond his mandate to the committee's assessment and decisions.

5. For a reasonable time before the committee meeting, all projects to be discussed will be distributed to the committee members. Each one will analyse them and prepare his observations, comments and suggestions for the committee meeting;
6. The objective and didactic criteria, as set in these guidelines, will be applied to all applications without exception. If needed, more communication with the applicant missionary to comply with the criteria will be engaged. Any failure to comply with the criteria will disqualify the application.
7. Applicant must comply with the Office's principals for grants applications and project follow up;
8. Grant applications are addressed to our Father General (who forwards them to the Office) or directly to the Missionary Cooperation Office.
9. What is eligible for help as far as the fund request is concerned?
 - Activities in favour of disalced Carmelite communities, if meant to support the Carmelite life within the Order,
 - Construction or repair of buildings for the use of friars and nuns
 - Carmelite formation
 - Any other needs judged necessary for the life and mission of the friars (or nuns).
10. What is not eligible? The Missionary Cooperation Office will not directly provide funds for :
 - Strictly socio-development project,
 - Strictly pastoral activities, such as the building of churches or oratories, or other parish activities,
 - Construction of schools and hospitals or purchase of transport means for schools and hospitals,
 - Mere charity activities carried by friars and nuns,
 - Activities that are exclusively educational,

- Expenses carried out before the approval of the request,

11. For the projects that the Office cannot provide funds, it will provide technical assistance and accompany applicants in their search for partner organisations that can fund them. The applicant is asked to be collaborative and transparent.

6. Concluding remark

The Missionary Cooperation Office believes that, to be effective and remain relevant in today's world, missionaries have to familiarise themselves with today's emerging financial culture. The Office's mandate is to help missionaries embrace the modern financial principles. It aims at supporting missionaries' capacity to make positive changes in their relationship with donor-organisations. The fact of obliging our missionaries to comply with certain conditions is an approach that aims at helping missionaries to get used to the way of doing things as required by the donor organisations. To remind each and every missionary of these directives would be a great service to them. The Office will accompany this strategy with a program of sensitisation and formation for those missions, friars and nuns that wish.

Appendix I

Guidelines for the submission of request to the Missionary Cooperation Office

The Missionary Cooperation Office is not a NGO (in the sense of funding organisations). It is a development and solidarity expression within the Order. It expects to receiving “within request applications” that provide the full picture of the situation to be addressed and the details of who applies. A descriptive request application of about 2-6 pages is expected. It should include the following details:

1. Physical and electronic address of the applying community;
2. The details of the friar or nun submitting the proposal: name, pastoral address, email, telephone number. Indicate who is directly responsible for the project, if different from the applicant;
3. Title of the project: Any application must have a single specific title that reflects the main goal of the project.
4. **Cover letter:** very briefly, introduce yourself, the project and the objectives it pursues. State the total amount required and indicate what you are requesting from the Missionary Cooperation Office.
5. **Description of the project:** origin and justification of the request, the context, general and specific objectives, beneficiaries, and activities planned.
6. **Timetable of the implementation:** indicate the expected dates for the starting and completion of the project. The person directly responsible for the project should immediately communicate any delay in the timetable, due to any contingencies, to the Office.
7. **Budget and requested contribution:** indicate each single item of the estimated expenses and, if possible, annex the formal receipt, invoices, quotations... Indicate any contribution from other organisation and list them. Please, the summary of the budget should

be presented in euros or dollars and the exchange rate against the local currency provided.

8. Indicate the bank account details for the transfer of the approved funds (bank details other than the community account will not be used):
 - name and address of the bank,
 - name of the account holder,
 - number of the bank account (IBAN),
 - currency of the account,
 - SWIFT code for the identification of the bank for foreign credit operations.

N.B: The descriptive request application should always be accompanied by:

1. Recommendation from the major Superior,
2. A detailed budget together with a quotation by a local constructor, dealer (depending on the case). These should be objective, real and verifiable.
3. Any other important documentation supporting the application.

In case one does not know which documentation is needed, kindly contact the Missionary Cooperation Office for more details and you will kindly be directed.

Appendix II

Guidelines for the final report

The final report helps the Missionary Cooperation Office have a general picture of how the objectives set in the projects, the Office has funded, were achieved. It should give some information on how the project was carried out and on the results attained.

The project report should include two component:

Final narrative report

- Never forget to indicate the code number of the request application, as indicated in the approval letter;
- Describe the realization of the various activities that were indicated in the application (proposal). Do not forget to indicate the difficulties you went through (if any), how you dealt with them and the lessons you learnt from them;
- Describe the benefits received by the beneficiaries (the community);
- Indicate your overall assessment of the project: was it as success of a failure? Why?

Final financial report

- Indicate the flow of expenses, in reference to the budgeted items and the actual implemented activities' cost.

Annexes

- Annex proves and means of verification such as invoices, contracts, photographs and any other documentation proving the use of the funds.

Appendix III

Approval procedure and evaluation of the use of funds

1. Request for funds

A project grant Commission for the proposals submitted to the Missionary Cooperation Office meets regularly to evaluate the various applications received. Following each Commission's meeting, the Office informs the applicants, by mail or e-mail, about the results regarding their requests.

- In case the request is not approved, there is a written communication of the reasons for the non-approval;
- In case the request is missing some documents or descriptions required, an integration is expressly requested from the applicant responsible for the request;
- In case the request is approved, the Office informs the applicant and transfer the approved sum, following the modes indicated in the application. The Office will never transfer funds to other account than the account of the community. The Applicant, who is also the recipient of the contribution, should immediately inform the Office of the regular reception of the transferred sum. The time required by these procedures will not generally exceed three months from the reception of the application.
- In case of partial contributions or total funding as requested from the beneficiary, the Office cannot commit itself to send extra funds for the completion of the project.
- New requests from the same mission that has benefited from the Office's Funds cannot be approved in case previously financed projects are still in course. Any funds received from the Office should be reported for before a mission envisages applying for other financial assistance.

- The Missionary Cooperation Office reserves itself the right to monitor and evaluate the general and specific goals reached, through the received reports and field visits carried out during the implementation of projects (directly funded by the Office or mediated), by the Secretary either himself or other people commissioned to do so.