



**Constitution for Men of St. Joseph
International**

**A Private Association of the
Christian Faithful**

with an

Interlinear Commentary

Preamble

Men of St. Joseph International is dedicated to St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus and model for all Christians, especially men. In these documents Men of St. Joseph International will be referred to hereafter by the initials M.O.S.J.I.

M.O.S.J.I. ministry emanates from a desire to share with Catholic men the fruit experienced through the Roman Catholic Church and charismatic renewal. It is a response to what Jesus says in Matthew 10:8. “The gift you have received, give as a gift.”

Though born of and nurtured by Catholic charismatic renewal, M.O.S.J.I. invites all Catholic men to become members. Openness to the expression of all charismatic gifts includes respect for the varied backgrounds of all those attending M.O.S.J.I. functions.

We desire that all men enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and live a life filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. We desire that all men have the oneness with God without insisting that all become the same. “There are indeed many different members, but one body.” (I Cor.12:20)

M.O.S.J.I. is a Catholic Association dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships, encouraging their transformations as individuals, brothers, fathers, and parishioners by living according to God’s Word.

Article I

Name

The association described in this constitution is known as Men of St. Joseph International.

Article II

Objectives

A) M.O.S.J.I. objectives are to

- 1) help Catholic men to open more and more to the Holy Spirit through a deeper commitment of their lives to Jesus as Lord and to impart the Holy Spirit to one another by their love, service, and sharing the good news of salvation,**
- 2) provide opportunities which foster growth in holiness,**
- 3) monthly men's meeting (2 hours each),**
- 4) yearly men's conference (6 hours), and**
- 5) yearly men's retreat (42 hours).**

B) M.O.S.J.I. encourages Catholic men to grow in holiness through the following means:

- 1) daily personal prayer,**
- 2) realization of the personal love of God the Father,**
- 3) personal knowledge of and love for Jesus Christ and commitment to him as Lord,**
- 4) experience of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and openness to all is gifts,**

- 5) **frequent participation in the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation,**
- 6) **study and daily reading of the sacred scriptures, the Word of God,**
- 7) **deep love for and loyalty to the Catholic Church, as expressed through the Church’s teaching authority, the pope and the bishops in communion with him, who serve as guides in matters of faith and morals,**
- 8) **sensitivity to the needs of the Church and willingness to address these needs through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.**

Article III

Principals of Organization

A) **In general,**

- 1) **M.O.S.J.I. is a private association of the Christian faithful.**

Commentary: Unlike a public association, which operates in the name of the Church, M.O.S.J.I. operates in its own name and in the name of its members. As a private association, M.O.S.J.I. is free to develop its own statutes, to choose its own officers, and to administer its own temporal goods. However, as a private association, M.O.S.J.I. does not enjoy unlimited autonomy. (See c. 323:1 of the revised Code of Canon Law.) M.O.S.J.I. remains under the vigilance and jurisdiction of the local ordinary. (See c. 305.2.) In general, the local ordinary is to see that M.O.S.J.I. exercises its apostolate in accord with the common good of the Church. (See c. 323.2.) He has more particular rights and duties, which are pointed out in the statutes and commentaries which follow. For the sake of simplicity, M.O.S.J.I. often acknowledges the rights and duties of the local ordinary by using the term “diocesan bishop.”

- 2) **These statutes govern all expressions of M.O.S.J.I., the central service team as well as local chapters.**

Commentary: The role of the central service team is explained fully in Article XI.

B) In particular,

1) Local chapters must accept these statutes to achieve and maintain affiliation with the central service team.

Commentary: This statute uses invalidating language to emphasize the necessity of each local chapter accepting the revised constitution in order to conduct the M.O.S.J.I. ministry in its locality. The point of this statute is not to repress the Spirit, but to give the central service team a minimum amount of control over the ministry as it spreads within and beyond the diocese of Providence. Thus, by refusing to accept the revised constitution, a local chapter invalidates its affiliation with the central service team. The central service team, as noted below, has the right to prohibit that chapter from using the M.O.S.J.I. name and logo.

2) Local chapters must also have these statutes reviewed or approved by their diocesan bishop.

Commentary: Episcopal review or approval of these statutes is necessary for M.O.S.J.I. to achieve recognition from the Catholic Church as an association. (See c. 299.3.) As noted above, the Bishop of Providence has approved these statutes for his jurisdiction. The bishop of each diocese outside Providence must approve or review these statutes for M.O.S.J.I. to establish itself in his jurisdiction.

Reviewing these statutes means no more than reading them. It is equivalent to allowing M.O.S.J.I. to become established within a diocese without commenting on its merits. Approving these statutes establishes a closer relationship between M.O.S.J.I. and the diocesan bishop. Episcopal approval of these statutes can indicate an intention to make M.O.S.J.I. a public association. (See c. 314.) Episcopal approval can also prepare M.O.S.J.I. to become a private juridic person. (See c. 322.2.) The bishops of the dioceses to which M.O.S.J.I. spreads retain the freedom to

review or approve these statutes. Thus, in some dioceses, M.O.S.J.I.'s statutes may be approved, while in others they may only be reviewed.

- 3) **Local chapters cannot amend these statutes unless an express provision to amend them is provided in this constitution. Such amendments must be reviewed or approved by the bishop of the diocese in which the local chapter is located. That local chapter is to inform the central service team of the amendments.**

Commentary: This statute requires local service teams to preserve the integrity of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry by invalidating any unauthorized attempts to modify the constitution. At the same time, minor modifications (to be spelled out below) are authorized to enable each local chapter to adapt the constitution for its own use. The review or approval of the diocesan bishop validates these minor modifications. Since these modifications are authorized by the constitution, a local chapter does not need permission from the central service team. The local chapter only needs to inform the central service team that the adoption and modification of the statutes has occurred. Such notification contributes to the orderly development of the association.

Article IV

Membership

- A) **Membership in M.O.S.J.I. is spiritual in nature and open to all men who**
 - 1) **strive to incorporate in their lives the objectives of M.O.S.J.I.**
 - 2) **register with a local chapter.**

Commentary: The spiritual nature of membership in M.O.S.J.I. means that the bonds between the members are not juridical; the bonds involve no vows or promises which bind at civil or ecclesiastical law. Membership in M.O.S.J.I. is voluntary.

M.O.S.J.I. is an association of the faithful, not an institute of consecrated life. Since membership is open to all men, those belonging to other religions who fulfill the two conditions stated above may also become members. This openness entails no danger that M.O.S.J.I. will depart from its Catholic objectives. Another statute requires that officers be practicing Catholics. Non-Catholics may also attend M.O.S.J.I. functions without becoming members. Since attending M.O.S.J.I. is not a requirement for membership, M.O.S.J.I. can accept as members those who are home bound or unable to attend functions for some other reason, provided they fulfill the two conditions stated above.

- B) Membership is effected by familiarizing oneself with the objectives of M.O.S.J.I. and signing a request for membership form.**
- C) Members' names are inscribed on the local chapter's roll, which is kept by the secretary.**
- D) Membership in M.O.S.J.I. is perpetual unless someone requests in writing that his name be deleted from the roll.**

Article V

Leadership

- A) Each local chapter is governed by a service team consisting of three or five men.**
- B) The local service team is responsible for**
 - 1) keeping the local chapter faithful to the vision and objectives of M.O.S.J.I.,**
 - 2) initiating and maintaining contact with the diocesan bishop under whose vigilance and jurisdiction M.O.S.J.I. remains as required by canon 305.2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law,**
 - 3) selecting the local chapter's spiritual advisor,**

- 4) **making all decisions concerning the local chapter,**
 - 5) **arranging for and presiding over the functions of M.O.S.J.I.,**
 - 6) **discerning persons who have the gift of leading worship,**
 - 7) **appointing new service team members to fill unexpired terms of members who die or resign,**
 - 8) **electing new service team members,**
 - 9) **being good stewards of all chapter monies, approving the spending of same, and reporting annually on the finances of the local chapter,**
 - 10) **seeking opportunities for spiritual growth and training for the lay apostolate through conferences, workshops, retreats, days of renewal, and other similar exercises.**
- C) **The local service team includes the following who serve as officers of the local chapter: the coordinator, assistant coordinator, secretary, treasurer, and historian.**
- D) **The duties of these officers are as follows:**
- 1) **The coordinator**
 - a) **leads the local service team in prayer,**
 - b) **encourages a spirit of unity among team members,**
 - c) **looks for and calls forth potential in others,**
 - d) **acts as team spokesman,**
 - e) **is liaison with the spiritual advisor,**

- f) sees to the preparation of the agenda for team meetings,
 - g) convenes and conducts the team meetings,
 - h) polls the team membership, when necessary, and
 - i) administer oversight over all retreats and conferences, sets stipends and prices for all retreats and conferences, oversees teachings for retreats and conferences.
- 2) **The assistant coordinator**
- a) acts in the absence of the coordinator,
 - b) supervises the chairmen of the various ministries associated with M.O.S.J.I. and other functions of the local chapter.
- 3) **The secretary**
- a) records the minutes and policies of the team and files all written reports,
 - b) handles correspondence for the local chapter,
 - c) maintains the local chapter's membership roll and mailing list.
- 4) **The treasurer**
- a) oversees the collecting, counting, and depositing of all income for the local chapter.
 - b) obtains the approval of the service team for all other expenditures,
 - c) pays all bills,

- d) **maintains accurate records of all financial transactions,**
 - e) **presents the service team a report after each event which requires financial transactions but at least bi-annually.**
 - f) **prepares a budget for the next fiscal year and submits it for approval by the local service team on or before January 1,**
 - g) **monitors the budget to ensure that committees remain within their allotted limits.**
- 5) **The historian**
- a) **chronicles all M.O.S.J.I. events, in photographs, newspaper articles, written reports, and other forms,**
 - b) **prepares the annual report on the activities of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry for the local service team in time for obtaining the team's approval prior to releasing the report to the membership of the local chapter and to the central service team.**

Commentary: The job descriptions given above determine the person responsible for the fulfillment of various tasks. They do not preclude informal arrangements, e.g., the responsible party asking someone else to help him perform a specific task.

- E) **When circumstances warrant only three service team members, all of the responsibilities of the officers listed above are to be divided among the three men. Provided that all the tasks are covered, these local service teams are free to determine their own division of responsibilities.**

Commentary: Getting the work done is more important than the number of service team members. Hence, these statutes provide the flexibility to rearrange the job descriptions given above. A combination of responsibilities for a three member service team recommended by the central service team includes:

the coordinator, assistant coordinator-treasurer, and secretary-historian. These combinations of office should remain effective until the local service team can expand to five members.

F) Initial formation of the local service team

- 1) The first local service team is to come from those men whose common vision and life situation allows them to make the commitment to establish M.O.S.J.I. in a particular place.**
- 2) The person appointed by the diocesan bishop is to appoint a selection committee of three men who are committed to the establishment of M.O.S.J.I.**
- 3) The others who are committed to the establishment of M.O.S.J.I. should submit the names of eligible men to the selection committee, which, through prayer and consultation with the person appointed by the diocesan bishop, will select the first service team.**

G) To qualify for membership on the local service team a man must

- 1) be a practicing Catholic,**
- 2) agree with and pledge to pursue the objectives of M.O.S.J.I.,**
- 3) evidence spiritual leadership in his daily life,**
- 4) (preferably) be involved in but (at least) certainly supportive of Catholic charismatic renewal,**
- 5) have a servant's heart, and**
- 6) have actively participated on a regular basis in the area of responsibility for the M.O.S.J.I. men's meetings.**

Commentary: A practicing Catholic is one who is in sacramental union with the Catholic Church and is in agreement with and living according to canon law and the moral and

doctrinal teachings of the magisterium. Spiritual leadership is evident when one is committed to prayer, the sacraments, and service to the Church (e.g. lecturing at Mass or serving on a parish council). A person with a servant's heart works well with others and is a source of unity rather than division. Other qualities are: reliability, honesty, flexibility, wisdom, and vocational fidelity. Stability of life is an important indication of leadership potential.

H) The spiritual advisor selected by the local service team must receive the confirmation of the diocesan bishop.

1) The spiritual advisor, preferably a priest, must be

- a) involved in or supportive of Catholic charismatic renewal,**
- b) in agreement with and supportive of the objectives of M.O.S.J.I.,**
- c) able to give the local service team guidance and direction, and**
- d) able to attend at least one M.O.S.J.I. meeting per year.**

Commentary: The spiritual advisor should be a wise, discerning person who will advise the service team in spiritual and theological matters in accord with the teachings of the Church's magisterium. He should be a person of prayer who is able to relate well to men.

The spiritual advisor should attend at least one M.O.S.J.I. meeting per year. Ordinarily, spiritual advisors need and are encouraged to attend M.O.S.J.I. meetings more often, especially when the local chapter is beginning.

2) The spiritual advisor's duties are

- a) to help the service team achieve consensus when necessary, and**

- b) to counsel the service team when considering the selection of new team members or new functions or services.**

Commentary: The working relationship between the service team and the spiritual advisor is very important. If a difficulty arises in this relationship, the service team should consult immediately with the central service team for discernment and assistance.

As liaison, the coordinator is responsible for securing the spiritual advisor's advice. In matters of importance such as new direction and where discussion is needed, the spiritual advisor should meet with the entire service team.

The service team is obliged to follow the advice of the spiritual advisor in matters regarding faith and morals in accord with the magesterium. In matters that pertain to inner governing, his advice should be respected and weighed very carefully before final decision is made.

Article VI

Meetings

- A) The local service team should be attending a monthly small group meeting.**
- B) Attend yearly conference.**
- C) Attend yearly retreat.**
- D) The local service team is to meet regularly at a time and place determined by the members. The team should meet as often as necessary to facilitate the M.O.S.J.I. ministry.**
- E) Complete unanimity on all issues, while not always possible, is the goal of all decision making by the local service team.**

- 1) **Thus, the local service team is to seek the Lord's guidance in prayer at the beginning of every meeting. Such guidance may be sought through reading sacred scripture, praying spontaneously, and sharing words of knowledge or prophecy.**
 - 2) **Unanimity of mind, heart, and attitudes does not mean sameness. Unanimity is the ability to confirm and build on the ideas and judgments of others as each person is heard. It is achieved through using the various gifts, talents, and personalities of the members of the local service team.**
 - 3) **A simple majority vote suffices to make decisions on details such as time and place. Consensus is required on policy and pastoral matters. Consensus occurs when members are willing to abide by the decision of the group and see no need to veto it.**
 - 4) **When stumbling blocks emerge, prayer and mutual submission to the Lord can bring new insights. Often scripture passages and word gifts can help resolve the conflict. In the face of seemingly unresolvable problems, the local service team is to consult its spiritual advisor. If the spiritual advisor is unable to help the local service team achieve consensus the team should select, in consultation with its spiritual advisor, an unbiased competent person to help the team make its decisions. If consensus is still not achieved, the matter should be dropped at least temporarily. However, if all the service team members and the spiritual advisor agree, the matter can be deferred to the diocesan bishop or his delegate.**
 - 5) **When necessary, the local service team is to consult with experts.**
- F) The local service team is to meet with the advisory team as often as necessary to ensure the orderly conduct of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry but at least twice a year.**

- G) The local service team is to meet with its spiritual advisor as often as necessary to obtain his counsel but at least once a year.**

Article VII

Bylaws

- A) Each local service team is authorized to write bylaws for facilitating its M.O.S.J.I. ministry.**
- 1) These bylaws must conform to the spirit and letter of this revised constitution.**
 - 2) For validity these bylaws must be reviewed or approved by the local service team's diocesan bishop.**
 - 3) For validity these bylaws must also be approved by the central service team.**
- B) Once a local service team has formulated and agreed on bylaws, that local service team is obligated to send them to its diocesan bishop and the central service team.**

Commentary: Two separate actions are required to effect valid bylaws, the review or approval of the diocesan bishop and the approval of the central service team. The diocesan bishop can be counted on to ensure that the bylaws conform to the teaching of the Church, to ecclesiastical discipline, and to public order in the Church. However, he cannot be expected to decide whether the bylaws respect the integrity of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry. That decision rests with the central service team. Hence, the necessity of the two actions.

Article VIII

Ministries

- A) Ministries constitute various responsibilities necessary to facilitate the monthly meetings and other functions of the local chapter.**

- 1) **Depending on the size and needs of the chapter, these responsibilities may be handled by the local service team or delegated to other members of M.O.S.J.I.**
 - 2) **The local service team can appoint members of the local chapter to chair or co-chair teams for carrying out the various ministries.**
 - 3) **Anyone may resign from a ministry when he determines that he is no longer able to serve.**
 - 4) **The local service team can terminate the services of anyone whose actions conflict with the objectives of M.O.S.J.I.**
- B) The local service team also has the power to establish any ministries needed to facilitate the monthly men’s meetings and other functions of the chapter.**

ARTICLE IX

Temporal Goods-Stewardship

- A) M.O.S.J.I. requires yearly dues of \$1.00 (U.S.) from each member which is sent to the central service team.**
- B) M.O.S.J.I. depends on voluntary financial contributions to defray other operating expenses. Those attending a conference are given an opportunity to contribute as they wish and are able to do so.**

Commentary: Canon 1265.1 requires that each local chapter secure written permission from its diocesan bishop to raise these funds.

- C) The fiscal year runs from January 1 through December 31.**
- D) At the beginning of the fiscal year, the advisory team selects three of its members to serve as an audit committee. Within three months of the new fiscal year, the audit committee reviews the financial statement of the preceding fiscal year prepared by the treasurer and submits its report to the advisory team. In turn, the**

advisory team files this report with the secretary for inclusion in the permanent record of the local chapter.

Commentary: As an example of all religious bodies, M.O.S.J.I. makes every effort to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and to handle its financial affairs in an open manner.

ARTICLE X

Dissolution of a Local Chapter

- A) Should any local chapter of M.O.S.J.I. be dissolved, suppressed, or cease to function for any reason for ten complete and continuous years, any assets remaining after settling its accounts, must be given to another person or association which will carry out the will of those who donated these assets.**
- B) Local chapters may give such remaining assets but not their liabilities to the central service team, to another local chapter, or to its diocesan bishop for the purpose of supporting ministry to Catholic men.**
- C) The local service team is competent to dissolve its local chapter.**
- D) Each local chapter is responsible for procuring a just settlement of its own liabilities.**

Commentary: A local chapter can go out of business in three ways. As noted above, the local service team has the authority to dissolve its local chapter. The diocesan bishop has the power to suppress a local chapter within his territory (See canon 326.1). A local chapter may simply stop its meetings for ten years. Since the statute says “ten complete and continuous years” any meeting, within that period of time, keeps the local chapter alive, unless it has gone out of business in another manner.

Observing the will of the donor is the most important obligation of those who receive temporal goods dedicated to pious purposes. Local chapters have three options for disposing of their assets. They may be given to the central service team or to another local M.O.S.J.I. chapter. (Giving assets to a local chapter close to the

chapter going out of business is an especially good way to observe the will of the donor.) These goods may also be safely given to the chapter's diocesan bishop. He is responsible for seeing that all goods dedicated to pious cause within his territory are used only for those causes. (See canon 1301.)

ARTICLE XI

The Central Service Team

- A) The highest governing body of M.O.S.J.I. is known as the central service team. Its headquarters are located within the Diocese of Providence.**
- B) The central service team fosters unity among the local chapters and among the local service teams. While allowing for legitimate diversity, the central service team, in union with the bishops of the dioceses to which M.O.S.J.I. has spread, preserves the integrity of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry. It also coordinates the expansion of M.O.S.J.I. by enabling the affiliation of new local chapters and by offering advice, when requested by a local service team.**
- C) Membership of the central service team consists of at least five men drawn from any local chapter of M.O.S.J.I.**
- D) The leadership of the central service team.**
 - 1) The central service team contains the same five officers as any five member local service team: the coordinator, assistant coordinator, secretary, treasurer, and historian.**
 - 2) The central service team may choose its own spiritual advisor. He must have the same qualifications as the spiritual advisor of a local service team and be confirmed in this office by the Bishop of Providence.**
- E) The first central service team is authorized to function for as long as necessary to establish the ministry on a firm foundation and ensure its continuity of existence.**

- F) The first and subsequent central service teams are not bound but will strive to replace their members in the same manner as local service teams and hence may remain in office as long as necessary to ensure the continuity of the ministry.**
- G) The central service team meets as often as necessary to carry out its duties. It meets and decides issues in the same manner as any local service team. Unanimity of mind and heart on all issues is its goal.**
- H) The central service team alone has the power:**
- 1) To grant permission to use the M.O.S.J.I. name and logo, which are copyrighted at civil and ecclesiastical law and**
 - 2) to modify this constitution.**
 - a) All amendments proposed by the central service team must be submitted to the Bishop of Providence for his review or approval.**
 - b) The central service team is to communicate any changes reviewed or approved by the Bishop of Providence to the local service teams, which in turn, must adopt them and submit them to their own diocesan bishops for their review or approval.**
 - c) Local service teams are free to request the central service teams to consider amendments which they consider beneficial to the M.O.S.J.I. ministry.**

Commentary: Only the words printed in bold type belong to the constitution. The central service team may update or change the historical introduction and the commentary without episcopal review or approval.

- I) The central service team has the right to revoke permission to use the M.O.S.J.I. name and logo whenever the conduct of those with that permission violate the statutes of this constitution or act in a manner contrary to the objectives of M.O.S.J.I.**

- J) The central service team is competent to establish bylaws governing its operations.**
- 1) These bylaws must conform to the spirit and letter of this constitution.**
 - 2) For validity these bylaws must be reviewed or approved by the Bishop of Providence.**
- K) The central service team has the power to establish any ministries needed to carry out its function of service to the local service teams and local chapters of M.O.S.J.I.**
- 1) These ministries may include teams for providing practical assistance to local service teams and chapters.**
- L) The central service team is accountable for its temporal goods in the same manner as any local service team.**
- 1) At the end of each fiscal year, the central service team accounts for its temporal goods to all the local chapters through their respective service teams.**
 - 2) This same report is also available to the Bishop of Providence on request.**
- M) Should the central service team be dissolved, suppressed, or cease to function for ten complete and continuous years for any reason, any assets remaining after settling its accounts, must be used with respect for the will of the donors.**
- 1) Those funds provided by local chapters must be returned to them in the proportion in which these local chapters supported the central service team.**
 - 2) Funds from any other source must be given to the Bishop of Providence for the purpose of supporting ministry to Catholic men.**

Commentary: The central service team lives by the same rules governing all other aspects of the M.O.S.J.I. ministry.