

## THE PAPAL BULL “ITE VOS”

Aiming to settle long-standing disputes among Franciscan friars, this “bull of union” issued by Pope Leo X was proclaimed in St. Peter’s Basilica on May 30, 1517 to the vast assembly of friars gathered for the “Most General (*generalissimum*) Chapter” of Pentecost, 1517.<sup>1</sup> Its provisions effectively divided the Order into two independent congregations, the Friars Minor of the Regular Observance and the Friars Minor Conventual; they would soon be joined by a third, the Friars Minor Capuchin.

### LEO, BISHOP

*Servant of the Servants of God  
For a perpetual memorial of the matter*

### PREAMBLE

#### 1. Parable of the Vineyard Workers and its Application to the Friars Minor

*Go into my vineyard,*<sup>2</sup> says that Master of the household who had planted a vineyard: [that is,] the Savior of the world and our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Even though he took care of everyone and managed everything that he did, nevertheless, among his other seedlings, which, through his Father he planted in the ground of the Church militant, there was one that he looked after with such ardent love, that everywhere he would call it his own.<sup>3</sup> He cared for this vineyard so carefully with diligent, industrious and faithful farm workers, whom he *sent out* almost constantly, some *early in the morning*, others in *the third hour*, the *sixth hour*, the *ninth hour* and even the *eleventh hour*.<sup>4</sup>

This is the sacred religion of the Friars Minor, who, while yet in the green leaves of fruitfulness, by means of apostolic men extended themselves like branches *from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth*.<sup>5</sup> They irrigated the mountains and filled the earth with the wine of wisdom and knowledge. This is the holy and immaculate religion in which we may contemplate the presence of the Redeemer as through a spotless mirror. Through it, one can admire the form of life of Christ and the apostles. It sets before the eyes of the Christian people the standards of the first

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<sup>1</sup> This translation is a revision of one provided online by the inter-obediential commission “Franciscan Friars in Chapter,” to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Ite Vos*, and is based on the critical edition of J. Meseguer Fernández, “La bula ‘Ite Vos’ (29 de mayo 1517) y la reforma cisneriana,” *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 18 (1958): 257-361. The final text of the bull as well as a preliminary draft is on pp. 332-353. The accompanying notes are based on that study as well as the more detailed work of Pacifico Sella, *Leone X a la definitiva divisione dell’Ordine dei Minori, (OMin.): La Bolla ‘Ite Vos’ (29 maggio 1517)* (Grottaferrata, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Mt 20:4, from the parable of the vineyard workers.

<sup>3</sup> This statement of an especially close relationship of Christ to the Franciscan Order, continued in the following paragraph, is reminiscent of the similar assertion by Nicholas III in his classic constitution of 1279, *Exiit Qui Seminavit*, 1-2 (FA:ED 3:739-764).

<sup>4</sup> Mt 20: 1-6.

<sup>5</sup> Ps 72:8.

foundations of the Church; and finally, it evokes what is divine, angelic, most perfect, and in full conformity to Christ -- so much so that it can justly be called his own.

To cultivate this vineyard, the Master of the Household sent, *early in the morning*,<sup>6</sup> *from the rising of the sun, an Angel ascending from the east, with the sign of the living God*,<sup>7</sup> the blessed Francis, who, along with companions of admirable sanctity, laid the first foundations of this vineyard. *In the third hour*, they were succeeded by religious men, led by blessed Bonaventure; with the power and help of the Holy Trinity, they repaired the walls of this vineyard already threatening to fall into ruin.<sup>8</sup> After them, as *in the sixth hour*, some friars went forth who were fervent in spirit, who, comforted by the Holy Council of Vienne, as though sent by God,<sup>9</sup> brought back to their beginnings the rigors of discipline, then almost completely worn out. Then, *at the ninth hour* – as when the Lord died – a time when evil and scandalous vineyard workers had arisen, the Lord stirred up the spirit of a youth, or rather a few friars, who under the guidance and authority of the blessed Bernardine, the herald of the Name of Jesus, and trusting in the support of the Council of Constance, revived the Order, which had languished, indeed, was almost dead.<sup>10</sup>

Then lately, in these last days, almost to the last hour, other men have appeared, zealots for the House of Israel. They cut down the sacred groves, demolished the temples<sup>11</sup>: *and where sin abounded*, with the Lord's help, they made sure that *his grace abounded all the more*,<sup>12</sup> introducing a model of reform.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Dissension within the Order: the Pope Urged to Reach a Solution

However, just as among the workers of the vineyard in the Gospel parable, when the ones who came later were treated as being equivalent to the ones who arrived earlier, a great clamor arose, as kings, princes, communities and peoples attest. News has reached us that serious contentions, quarrels and clashes are occurring among the friars of this religion, over [alleged] superiority and higher degrees of perfection, incidents that have been increasing day by day throughout the world.

For this reason, we, who have been ardently devoted to the friars of this Order and the Order as a whole since childhood, are now even more ardently impelled, out of the ordinary concern of the duties of our office and pastoral governance - which we bear, even though unworthy - to silence this kind of quarrelling among the vineyard workers. Imitating that steward in the Gospel, we desire to quell this grumbling, especially considering the abundant fruits that we see flow continuously to the whole church from the friars' exemplary life and sublime doctrine. We are also roused to take action by the continual supplications and prayers we have received, up to this very moment, from Christian princes, especially from our beloved sons in Christ, the Emperor-elect

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<sup>6</sup> Mt 20:1.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. 7:2. Bonaventure applies this passage to St. Francis in his *Legenda major*, prolog. (FA:ED 2: 527).

<sup>8</sup> Reference to Bonaventure's work stabilizing the constitutions of the Order at the Chapter of Narbonne (1260).

<sup>9</sup> Reference to those friars who attempted to live according to the norms of the reform constitution *Exivi de paradiso*, promulgated by Clement V at the Council of Vienne in 1312 (FA: ED: 3: 767-783).

<sup>10</sup> Referring to the work of the reforms attempted by Martin V following the Council of Constance at the general chapters of 1421 and 1430 and the spread of the Regular Observance.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. 2 Kings 18:4.

<sup>12</sup> Rom. 5:20.

<sup>13</sup> Reference to several abortive attempts at reform of the entire Order advanced in the early 1500s.

Maximilian<sup>14</sup>; and the illustrious kings, Francis, the most Christian (king) of France<sup>15</sup>; the Catholic Charles of Spain<sup>16</sup>, Henry the VIII of England<sup>17</sup>, Manuel of Portugal and the Algarves<sup>18</sup>; Louis of Hungary and Bohemia<sup>19</sup>; Sigismund of Poland<sup>20</sup>; Christian of Denmark<sup>21</sup>, as well as a number of other princes, dukes, counts, peoples and communities. All of them beg us to settle these divisions in the Order of Saint Francis.

Therefore, after designating a secret consistory, we have charged and enjoined some of our venerable brothers, Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, to investigate diligently the causes and origins of these quarrels and divisions, and to explore thoroughly appropriate remedies in order to settle such disputes.<sup>22</sup> After long examination and mature debate, they made a very faithful and diligent report to us. After our further consideration, having weighed the issues they explored and examined, in order to achieve harmony, and after having deliberated over them within our consistory, we, together with them and the other Cardinals, and with their unanimous opinion, have reached the following verdict:

## II. The Minister General

1. First, we found that the main causes of such quarrels and divisions are the multiplicity of superiors,<sup>23</sup> the perpetuity of some positions, and the unreformed life of other friars. Therefore we desire and we order, according to what is contained in the Rule of blessed Francis, that there should be one Minister General of the whole Order with full powers over all individual friars of the same Order. Each and every friar is bound strictly to obey him in all those matters that do not go against God, their soul, or the Rule.<sup>24</sup>

2. This Minister General shall exercise the office of generalship for a term of six years. During this time, if it should appear to all of the provincial ministers and custodians that the aforesaid Minister General is unable to perform his service for the common good, these aforesaid friars, who are responsible for the election of the Minister General, are required to elect another, in the name

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<sup>14</sup> Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor from 1493-1519. Called “elect” because he never travelled to Rome to be crowned officially by the Pope.

<sup>15</sup> Francis I, King of France 1515-1547.

<sup>16</sup> Charles I, King of Spain 1516-1556, later Holy Roman Emperor as Charles V. Leo X mentioned on May 27, 1517 that he had received letters from the kings of France and Spain in favor of the Observants (Meseguer Fernandez, p. 338).

<sup>17</sup> Henry VIII, King of England 1509-1547, who had earlier written in favor of the Observants in 1514. (Meseguer Fernandez, p. 336).

<sup>18</sup> Manuel I “The Fortunate,” King of Portugal 1495-1521.

<sup>19</sup> Louis II, King of Hungary and Bohemia 1516-1526.

<sup>20</sup> Sigismund I (Jagiellon), King of Poland 1506-1548.

<sup>21</sup> Christian II, King of Denmark and Norway 1513-1523,

<sup>22</sup> The four cardinals on this commission were Lorenzo Pucci, personal secretary to the Pope; Bernardino de Carvajal, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia; Domenico Grimani, Cardinal Bishop of Albano, Cardinal Protector of the Order; and Pietro Accolti. They were assisted by four Franciscan “assessors” or consultants, who participated in drawing up the draft document: John Glapion, a Flemish Observant and close confidant of future Emperor Charles V; Boniface of Ceva, advocate of the “reformed under the ministers”; Alfonso Lozano, procurator general of the Cismontane Observants; and Juan de Costa, procurator general of the Ultramontane Observants. None of these friars belonged to the “unreformed” Conventual party. See footnote 27 below.

<sup>23</sup> Referring to the splintering of authority within the Order with the rise of so many virtually autonomous reform groups over the preceding century.

<sup>24</sup> LR 8.1, 10.3

of the Lord.<sup>25</sup> Having completed this term of six years, he is automatically (*ipso facto*) released from the office of generalship, and all are to consider the office as vacant.<sup>26</sup>

3. The election of his successor is to be carried out exclusively by the Reformed<sup>27</sup> provincial ministers and custodians, whether they be Ultramontane or Cismontane, during the General Chapter of the same Order, on the feast of Pentecost, in the place chosen by the Minister General during the General Chapter immediately preceding. All the ministers and custodians or their delegates, both Cismontane and Ultramontane, are bound to attend the Chapter.

4. Moreover, so that the head does not appear different from the members [of the body], we desire and also command, that no friar shall be elected Minister General if he is not leading a reformed life, and is not considered such by the Reformed Community. In addition, no one shall have [active] voice in the election of the Minister General, unless he is reformed and is considered reformed by the Reformed Congregation. If something to the contrary is attempted in the future, it shall be deemed wholly null and void.

5. The election of the future Minister General should be celebrated at the next feast of Pentecost in the Friary of Aracoeli in Rome, according to our orders expressed in the letters sent in the form of a papal Brief:<sup>28</sup>we order that all Reformed ministers and custodians,<sup>29</sup> as well as the vicars and discreets of the friars of the Observance, or of “the Family,”<sup>30</sup> should celebrate the aforesaid election.

6. And so that the election of the Minister General be carried out according to the above rule by the provincial ministers and the custodians, so that it might be celebrated freely, according to the intention of the same rule, and without any scruples [about who are valid electors], we hereby ordain and establish that these [vicars of the Observance] are true ministers, and are such by virtue of their election [by the Observant friars]; we declare also that their discreets are custodians.

7. With regard to other Reformed friars, we desire, in provinces where the ministers are presently not reformed, or are not considered to be such, and under whom there are some Reformed friaries, that two friars be elected by the aforesaid Reformed friaries, according to the standard of

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<sup>25</sup> LR 8.4.

<sup>26</sup> To completely “clear the deck,” on May 29<sup>th</sup> Leo X nominated the existing Minister General, Bernardino of Chieri, titular Bishop of Athens.

<sup>27</sup> The Pope explains the term ‘Reformed’ (*reformati*) in Section V below. This general term had come into use in the early 1500s to refer, not only to the Regular Observants, but other groups in the Order attempting to follow the Rule of St. Francis more closely under reform statutes. The Pope’s decision here to exclude the “unreformed” friars from the election of the general minister as well as his decision in Section IV below was the “bombshell” that fell on the Conventual party on May 30.

<sup>28</sup> *Romanum Pontificem*, 11 July 1516. AM 16, 27-28, which had summoned a “most general (*generalissimum*) chapter” to meet in Rome the following year. It was to include not only the provincial ministers and representative custodians, but also the vicars of all of the reform groups in the Order. This chapter had been summoned to meet on Pentecost (May 31), two days after the final version of the bull was promulgated.

<sup>29</sup> A relatively small number of provincial ministers and custodians who had accepted reform statutes.

<sup>30</sup> This term refers to the largest of the reform groups, the friars of “the Regular Observance,” who had been organized under Eugene IV in the Papal bull, *Ut Sacra* (11 Jan 1446). This bull grouped the Observant friars into two large “families,” Cismontane and Ultramontane. The Cismontane family comprised Observant friars in Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland, the Balkans, and the Holy Land; the Ultramontane family comprised Observant friars in France, the Iberian peninsula, Germany and the Low Countries, the British Isles, and Scandinavia. Observant friars in each province elected their own vicar provincial who directed their life and activities largely autonomously from the provincial minister; these vicar provincials gathered in two “family” general chapters, one Cismontane, the other Ultramontane, which chose a Vicar General for their region. Each family also drew up its own general constitutions. This bull made the Regular Observance a virtually autonomous “order within the Order.”

our other letters, written in the form of a Brief,<sup>31</sup> to represent the voice of those unreformed ministers of the respective provinces.

We also grant at this time to the friars of the Congregation of Brother Amadeo,<sup>32</sup> of the Clareni,<sup>33</sup> and of the Holy Gospel or of the Capuche,<sup>34</sup> in each province in which they have friaries, that in addition to the voices of their vicars, they shall have, just this once, two voices.

8. We define and declare this election of the Minister General, which shall be carried out by the aforesaid friars, to be canonical according to the Rule of the Friars Minor and the form transmitted by Blessed Francis in the Rule.

9. And in order to keep peace in this same Order as much as possible according to God, and to foster charity between the Cismontane and Ultramontane friars, we command that if the Minister General, as has been said, were to be elected from among the Cismontane friars for a six-year term, that in the six years that follow he should be elected from among the Ultramontane friars. The friars shall preserve this manner of alternating elections in perpetuity.

### III. The Commissary General

1. Nevertheless, since we see that this Order has expanded so marvelously throughout Christendom, we wish that the benefit of pastoral care might never be lacking. We therefore judge that when the Minister General is elected from among the Cismontane Friars, he shall institute a Commissary General in the Ultramontane zones, to be elected by the Ultramontane friars themselves. The Minister General shall give him the task of presiding over the Ultramontane friars, in accordance with what the General Chapter deems most appropriate: but in such a way that the said Commissary is still subject to the Minister General, as are the [other] superiors of the Order, obliged to obey in everything according to the Rule. If, however, the Minister General were to be elected from among the Ultramontane Friars, then he must institute a Cismontane Commissary General, in the same way as stated and set out above for the Ultramontane Commissary.

2. The said Commissary General will exercise his office for three years only, after which, the Minister General must institute a new Commissary, to be elected as above, according to what seems fitting to the Ultramontane and Cismontane friars.

3. [At times,] the Minister General may be absent from the headquarters he has chosen for his six years [of service], and move to another area of his choosing. But during the time of his absence, he shall leave a Commissary in his place, with the advice and consent of the definitors of the General Chapter.

4. And should there be no Commissary General in the previously mentioned areas over the said six years, the Minister General shall be required, in the first three of those six years, to celebrate a General Chapter, gathering the delegates in that area, the area that he is from; and

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<sup>31</sup> Again, in the brief *Romanum Pontificem* (see footnote 28).

<sup>32</sup> A reform congregation, founded in the late 1450's by a Portuguese nobleman, Amadeo Menez de Silva (+ 1482). By the late 1400s they had about 30 houses.

<sup>33</sup> Followers of the Spiritual leader Angelo Clareno, who had rebelled against church authority in the early 1400s; later in the century they returned to obedience with the Church, living under the authority of local bishops; they were received back into communion with the rest of the Order in 1473 but allowed to elect their own vicar general.

<sup>34</sup> This group of hermitages was established in Spain by Juan de Puebla and recognized in 1489. After Juan's death, a disciple, Juan de Guadalupe, wished to lead a life of the "strictest observance," and gained exemption for his group in 1496. They were variously called "Discalced," "Friars of the Holy Gospel," or "Friars of the Capuche."

similarly he must celebrate another General Chapter in the area that he is not from, either in person or through his Commissary, to which all the delegates of that area shall attend; or else, regarding this matter, do whatever the Minister General and the General Chapter shall appropriately decide.

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#### IV. The Provincial Ministers

1. In addition, with regard to the provincial ministers in those provinces whose ministers are not yet reformed, or are not considered to be such, we declare, decide and order that the vicars of the friars of the Observance, or “the Family,” of those same provinces, are, henceforth and forever, the undoubted ministers of those same provinces. Henceforth, they are to enjoy the title of minister. We make each and every friar fully subject to them, and also, as said above, the houses and places where they dwell, of those respective provinces. Moreover, to the Minister General and other provincial ministers, we grant the same authority and power previously enjoyed by the general and provincial vicars of the [Observant] Family; and declare that this shall be considered such in perpetuity. Therefore, we command the previously mentioned friars, even those who observe the Rule of St. Francis purely and simply, to be obedient in all things according to the Rule, to the said ministers, as [their] true ministers, declared and established by us.<sup>35</sup>

2. In addition, to ensure that the collapse of the Order does not happen again, due to the irremovability of provincial ministers, we want and we order that the aforesaid provincial ministers cannot continue in their office beyond a three-year term, after which all friars shall consider them released from office. However, during that three-year period, they may be relieved of their office by their respective chapters, which shall be celebrated according to the Rule and custom, in case they were found to be less than suitable; the same is true for the custodians, on this matter.

3. No one can be elected provincial or custodian or have voice in their elections, if he does not lead a reformed life, and is considered such by the Reformed community of that Province, of which he would be put in charge. Whatever might be attempted contrary to this shall, *ipso facto*, be considered null and void.

#### V. Who Are Understood by the Term “Reformed”

Also, since frequent mention is made earlier [in this decree] and in what follows of Reformed [friars] and those who observe the Rule of blessed Francis purely and simply, we wish and declare that under the name of “Reformed,” and those who “observe the Rule of St. Francis purely and simply,” are to be included all together and singly those included below, namely: the Observants “of the Family”<sup>36</sup> and the “Reformed under the ministers,”<sup>37</sup> including the friars of the Amadeans, of the Colettans, of the Clareni, of the Holy Gospel or of the Capuche, or again those called

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<sup>35</sup> This was to prohibit groups of reform friars from claiming exemption from the authority of the provincial minister.

<sup>36</sup> See note 30 above.

<sup>37</sup> These *reformati sub ministris* referred to friaries which were not part of the Regular Observance but lived according to reform statutes while remaining under the authority of the provincial ministers. The largest group of these were friars associated with the reform efforts of St Colette of Corbie who had gained recognition to live according to their own reformed statutes. They also included similar smaller reform efforts in France and Germany, as well as the other reform groups specifically named below who enjoyed their own vicars.

Discalced,<sup>38</sup> or of similar groups, no matter what name they go by, but who observe that very Rule of Saint Francis in a pure and simple way. Making of them one single body, we unite them to one another forever. From now on, therefore, having abandoned all these different names, they can and must be called the *Friars Minor of St. Francis of the Regular Observance*, together or separately<sup>39</sup>, and they can and should refer to themselves in this way. All of these groups together, as already mentioned, should be subject in all respects, according to the Rule, to the aforesaid Minister General, and the provincial ministers and custodians in whose provinces they are residing.

## VI. The Conventuals

The Conventuals then, who live according to privileges, should be subject to and obey the same Ministers General and Provincial, in the ways that will be established when our forthcoming letters are published.<sup>40</sup>

## VII. Ban on Name-Calling

1. So that every occasion of dissension, scandal, and partiality is completely removed from the Order, we firmly order and command, under penalty of *latae sententiae* excommunication -- which will be incurred *ipso facto*, and from which no one can be absolved, other than *in articulo mortis*, except by us or by the Apostolic See -- that no friar of the Order of St. Francis may, with malice, ridicule or insult, call another friar of the same Order: 'Privileged,' 'Colettine,' 'of Clareno,' 'of the Gospel or of the Capuche,' 'Pharisaic', or any other name, even one that is newly-coined. Nor should anyone who, in the future, using the previous divisions of the Order or using our union and institution created by the grace of the Holy Spirit, jeer, insult, or offend him in any way or be perceived as doing so. No friar then, whether cleric or lay, should mockingly or maliciously call those friars and their supporters by such names; but all the friars of this same Order must be called, among themselves and by others, *Friars Minor*, as has already been said, or *of St. Francis*.

2. We furthermore decree that no Reformed friar can be sent by any superior of the Order, not even the Minister General, to live in a unreformed friary, or one not considered reformed. If, however, a Provincial Chapter should deem it a lesser evil to send some friar to an unreformed friary rather than keep him with the Reformed, in that case, the superiors may send one or more friars to an unreformed friary.

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<sup>38</sup> See notes 32-34 above.

<sup>39</sup> That is, they could be called either "Friars Minor" or "Friars of St. Francis (i.e., Franciscans) of the Regular Observance."

<sup>40</sup> Leo X would issue these regulations some days later in the bull, *Omnipotens Deus* (12 Jun 1517), which effectively organized the Conventual friars as a separate Order. This brief sentence dramatically cut back on the extensive prescriptions proposed in the draft version of *Ite Vos*, which would have placed the "unreformed" friars in each province under a commissary subject to the (Observant) provincial minister, with the intent of introducing reform among them. Friars who resisted would have been condemned to gradual extinction by forbidding "unreformed" friaries to admit new vocations. In the final days before the promulgation of the bull, the Pope retreated from these provisions in the draft, to leave the two groups of friars essentially independent of each other. He was urged to do so by a communication from the Doge of the Venetian Republic as well as by many cardinals; however, this decision aggravated the monarchs of Spain and Portugal, who would eventually achieve the suppression of the Conventuals in their lands in 1566/67.

3. We command, under pain of *latae sententiae* excommunication, to each and every Conventual living according to privileges, both superiors and friars, that they shall not dare to receive the aforementioned Reformed except as indicated; similarly (we ordain), under the same penalty, that the Reformed friars shall in no way depart from the obedience of their ministers.

4. And so that no new groups [*sectae*] are introduced in that Order, with the risk of causing new conflicts, we firmly impose and command that in the future, no new group [*secta*] or reform shall be introduced in the said Order; or carried out without the express consent of the Minister General, or the Reformed provincials in their respective provinces: so that such reforms should still be subject in everything to the Minister General and the Reformed Provincials, according to the Rule, as we expressed above regarding the Reformed.<sup>41</sup>

5. Therefore, we submit, and we incorporate in perpetuity, in their respective Provinces, all of the houses, places and hermitages, maintained and owned by the friars of the Observance, or the Family, or those otherwise called Reformed, subject to ministers instituted and declared by us. We want these same places held, possessed and governed in perpetuity by these same Ministers and their reformed successors. We take this upon our self and extinguish any dispute on these matters, brought before any ordinary or delegated judge, or even before the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, or the Cardinal Protector, or the auditors of our Sacred Palace, or the Commissaries Apostolic, both in the Roman Curia and outside of it, both among the prelates and among the subjects, in any state or instance, both possessory and petitionary or even in dispossession, under any pretense, even if previously they were subjected to the obedience of the chapters of the Conventual friars of the said Order; and we impose perpetual silence upon the parties.

6. We also overturn and cancel judgments and processes on that matter, promoted by any judge, whatever the result, even if such disputes were to involve the places of the friars, and goods received from any area, or for any other reason. Nevertheless, we command, order, and impose on these Conventual friars, or any judge and anyone else who does not presume to make an attempt, to procure, judge or say, both in court and out, anything against this our declaration, what we have instituted, innovated, united and incorporated, under penalty of *latae sententiae* excommunication, and the deprivation of the benefits obtained, as well as the inability to obtain others in the future, even if there could, or should, be a demand on our part in the future, even if those arguments were related to the places of the friars and assets being received, or any other subject.

### VIII. New Constitutions

In order to ensure, according to the needs of places and peoples, that everything is wisely regulated in view of maintaining the reform, which, through the grace of God, has been introduced throughout all of Christendom in the same Order, we desire, order, and establish, in view of the “Most (*generalissimum*) General Chapter” to be celebrated in the near future,<sup>42</sup> that you deputize some friars from among those most reliable, scholars and experts from different regions. They should gather together everything they consider appropriate for the maintenance of the reform and true observance of the Rule, and the due execution of this our Constitution, to be

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<sup>41</sup> This provision accounts for the harsh reaction of major superiors within the Regular Observance to new reform movements, such as the Capuchins, in the 1520s and 30s.

<sup>42</sup> That is, immediately following this decree.



approved by the entire Chapter or its majority, and finally by us, armed with the backing of Apostolic confirmation.

### **IX. Final Clauses**

To the current Auditor of the Apostolic Camera, to all archbishops, bishops and prelates and to any person registered in Apostolic dignity, we command through Apostolic writings, through solemn publication of these our letters, and everything contained therein, that wherever and whenever they deem appropriate, and whenever the Minister General and the Reformed provincial ministers or any among them so requests; that they be assisted with the garrison of an effective defense, and ensure that everyone can peacefully make use of it and enjoy it, not allowing them to be unduly harassed by anyone, or by any authority they might possess. Those who are disobedient shall be suppressed by means of ecclesiastical censures and other means of redress including, if necessary, appealing to the secular arm.

This is not withstanding any Apostolic letter and pardons, as well as those of the Sacred Council of Constance, we specifically waive, notwithstanding any opposition to the above formalities and unusual clauses that are granted, or are eventually granted, in the future to the friars, families, congregations, denominations, or to some of them, both authors and founders, Reformed or Conventual, or those otherwise called such, belonging to this religion, even if they should have to make special, specific, detailed, and literal mention of it.

Finally, since it would be difficult to convey these letters of ours to all the places that one should, we want and we decree with Apostolic authority, that the copies, sealed by notary public and bearing the seal of an ecclesiastical prelate, are deemed worthy of faith, as if the originals were being displayed.

Therefore, it is unlawful for anyone to devalue, or rashly dare to oppose, this page of our institution, definition, submission, declaration, union, statute, subjection, incorporation, convocation, imposition, revocation, termination, taxation, precept, command, derogation, will, and decree. Should anyone then presume to attempt it, know that he shall incur the wrath of Almighty God and the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome, May 29<sup>th</sup>, in the year of Our Lord's Incarnation 1517, the fifth year of our pontificate.

Translation based on work of the *Ite Vos* Inter-obediential Commission, "Franciscan Friars in Chapter," available online in "Enlighten the Darkness of My Heart, *Ite Vos*: An Inhabited Memory for Walking Together Towards the Future,"), but revised in light of the critical edition and with notes, by Dominic Monti, OFM November 2017