ORDINES RELIGIOSI

Religious Orders

Religious bind themselves by public vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to follow Christ more closely in the "state of perfection." Each order has its own founder, rule, habit, emblem and motto, expressing the particular gift (charism) it brings to the Church.

"If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor... and come follow me." — Matthew 19:21

Orders of Men

Most also have a branch of enclosed nuns and a Third Order for lay people.



Benedictines

O.S.B.

St Benedict of Nursia · Monte Cassino, c. 529

Ora et labora · Pax
Pray and work · Peace

The father of Western monasticism. Monks and nuns (under St Scholastica) live by the Holy Rule in stability, obedience and the solemn chanting of the Divine Office. They preserved learning and civilisation through the Dark Ages.

Habit & emblem: Black habit · emblem: the St Benedict Medal



Cistercians & Trappists

O.Cist. · O.C.S.O.

Sts Robert, Alberic & Stephen Harding · Cîteaux, 1098

Cistercium mater nostra
Cîteaux is our mother

A reform seeking the strict observance of the Rule of St Benedict, made famous by St Bernard of Clairvaux. Silence, manual labour and simplicity. The Trappists (La Trappe, 1664) are the strict observance branch.

Habit & emblem: White habit, black scapular



Carthusians

O.Cart.

St Bruno · La Grande Chartreuse, 1084

Stat crux dum volvitur orbis
The Cross stands firm while the world turns

Hermits living in community, each in his own cell, meeting for the night Office and Mass. The strictest order in the Church, of which it is said: *Numquam reformata, quia numquam deformata* — never reformed, because never deformed.

Habit & emblem: White habit · emblem: globe and cross with seven stars



Premonstratensians

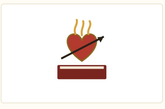
O.Praem.

St Norbert · Prémontré, 1120

Ad omne opus bonum parati
Prepared for every good work (2 Tim 3:17)

Canons regular, also called Norbertines, who join the solemn liturgy of the abbey with care of souls in parishes. They live by the Rule of St Augustine and have a great devotion to the Holy Eucharist.

Habit & emblem: White habit · arms: golden lilies and crossed croziers



Augustinians

O.S.A.

Rule of St Augustine · Grand Union of 1256

Anima una et cor unum in Deum
One mind and one heart intent upon God

Mendicant friars living by the Rule St Augustine wrote for his community at Hippo. Preachers, teachers and missionaries; Augustinian friars include St Nicholas of Tolentino and St Thomas of Villanova.

Habit & emblem: Black habit, leather belt · emblem: flaming heart pierced by an arrow, on a book



Franciscans

O.F.M. · O.F.M. Conv. · O.F.M. Cap.

St Francis of Assisi · 1209

Pax et bonum · Deus meus et omnia
Peace and all good · My God and my all

The Friars Minor live in poverty, preaching penance and the love of Christ crucified. Three branches of friars, the Poor Clares (Second Order) and the Third Order for laity. Great saints include St Anthony and St Bonaventure.

Habit & emblem: Brown or grey habit, white cord with three knots · emblem: arms of Christ and Francis crossed before the Cross



Dominicans

O.P.

St Dominic de Guzmán · Toulouse, 1216

Veritas · Laudare, benedicere, praedicare
Truth · To praise, to bless, to preach

The Order of Preachers, founded to combat heresy by learning and preaching. Their great doctor St Thomas Aquinas summed up their life: *contemplata aliis tradere*, to give to others the fruits of contemplation. Promoters of the Rosary.

Habit & emblem: White habit, black cappa · shield: black and white cross fleury



Carmelites

O.Carm. · O.C.D.

Hermits of Mount Carmel · Rule of St Albert, c. 1209

Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum
With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of hosts (3 Kgs 19:10)

Hermits on Mount Carmel claiming the Prophet Elias as father. Reformed by St Teresa of Ávila and St John of the Cross as the Discalced Carmelites. Our Lady gave the Brown Scapular to St Simon Stock.

Habit & emblem: Brown habit, white mantle · shield: Mount Carmel and three stars



Jesuits

S.J.

St Ignatius of Loyola · Rome, 1540

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam
For the greater glory of God

The Society of Jesus, bound by a special vow of obedience to the Pope in missions. Champions of the Counter-Reformation, of schools and of foreign missions: St Francis Xavier, St Peter Canisius, the North American Martyrs.

Habit & emblem: Black cassock · emblem: IHS with cross and three nails



Passionists

C.P.

St Paul of the Cross · Monte Argentario, 1720

Passio D.N.I.C. sit semper in cordibus nostris
May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ be ever in our hearts

Missionaries who take a fourth vow to promote devotion to the Passion. Known for preaching missions and retreats; St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows and St Gemma Galgani (a Passionist in spirit) are among their saints.

Habit & emblem: Black habit · the "Sign": a heart inscribed *Jesu XPI Passio*



Redemptorists

C.Ss.R.

St Alphonsus Liguori · Scala, 1732

Copiosa apud eum redemptio
With Him there is plentiful redemption (Ps 129:7)

Founded by the Doctor of moral theology to preach to the poorest and most abandoned souls. Famous for parish missions and devotion to Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

Habit & emblem: Black habit, rosary at the belt · arms: cross with lance and sponge



Salesians

S.D.B.

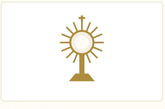
St John Bosco · Turin, 1859

Da mihi animas, cetera tolle
Give me souls, take away the rest (Gen 14:21)

Dedicated to the Christian education of poor youth by the "preventive system" of reason, religion and loving-kindness. Named after St Francis de Sales. Their sister order is the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

Habit & emblem: Clerical dress · arms: St Francis de Sales, anchor, heart and star

Orders of Women



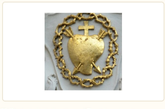
Poor Clares

O.S.C.

St Clare of Assisi · San Damiano, 1212

The Second Order of St Francis: enclosed nuns of absolute poverty and perpetual adoration. St Clare drove off invading Saracens by holding up the Blessed Sacrament, so she is shown with the monstrance.

Habit & emblem: Brown habit, black veil · emblem: the monstrance



Visitation Sisters

V.H.M.

St Francis de Sales & St Jane Frances de Chantal · Annecy, 1610

Vive Jésus!
Live Jesus!

Contemplative nuns devoted to humility and gentleness, open to women of weak health. In their monastery at Paray-le-Monial Our Lord revealed His Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary Alacoque.

Habit & emblem: Black habit · emblem: a heart pierced by two arrows, crowned with thorns, surmounted by the Cross



Ursulines

O.S.U.

St Angela Merici · Brescia, 1535

Serviam
I will serve

The first teaching order of women, under the patronage of St Ursula, for the Christian education of girls. They brought schools to New France (St Marie of the Incarnation) and New Orleans.

Habit & emblem: Black habit · emblem shown: the IHS arms of an Ursuline community



Daughters of Charity

D.C.

St Vincent de Paul & St Louise de Marillac · Paris, 1633

Caritas Christi urget nos
The charity of Christ presseth us (2 Cor 5:14)

Sisters serving the poor in hospitals, orphanages and homes, renewing their vows each year. Famous for the white cornette. Our Lady gave the Miraculous Medal to St Catherine Labouré, one of their novices, in 1830.

Habit & emblem: Blue-grey habit, white cornette

Monks, friars, canons, clerks

Monks (Benedictines, Cistercians, Carthusians) stay in one monastery for life. Canons regular (Norbertines) join choir to parish work. Friars or mendicants (Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, Augustinians) go out to preach. Clerks regular and congregations (Jesuits, Redemptorists, Passionists, Salesians) arose for active apostolates.

About the emblems

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