

# Canonical Merger

## **I. Description**

A process in which an institute, usually a fairly small one, joins another in such a way that the former is incorporated into the latter, adopting its name, constitution, its form of government, etc. In other words, one institute has disappeared juridically although its houses and works may be maintained.

(Margaret Gallagher, SC "The Future of Small Institutes Merging and Other Issues"  
Canon Law Society of America Proceedings 57 1995 p.210)

For those belonging to the merging institute, membership is transferred into the receiving institute.

- The merging communities cease to exist
- Members become members of the new group at the same stage they were in the original community
- Civil consequences: only those arranged by the communities; original civil corporations remain in place unless civil action is taken to dissolve them

## **II. Components and Relationships**

Not just for the preservation of the Congregation

Does the mission need to continue or has the mission been fulfilled?

Needs to be associated with the reason for the Congregation's existence

A preliminary agreement for the disposition of temporalities according to the norms of Canon and Civil Law

Approval is reserved to the Apostolic See, i.e., CICL-SAL\*

\*Canon 582 Mergers and unions of institutes of consecrated life are reserved to the Apostolic See alone; competent ecclesiastical authority as well as its wholesome traditions, all of which constitute the patrimony of the institute itself, are to be observed faithfully by all.

### **III. Structures**

#### **Leadership**

That of the receiving Congregation.

### **IV. Implications (Strengths, Limitations)**

#### ***Strengths:***

1. Continuance of the mission into the future
2. Revitalized Community identity
3. New energy as members
4. Stronger support for ministries
5. Sharing of resources
6. Streamlining administrative support
7. Re-imagining religious life

#### ***Limitations:***

1. Complex issues that affect each other
2. Clarity about intended outcomes
3. Sense of lost history and identity