

Type of Canonical Restructuring	Constitutions after canonical Restructuring	Number of Supreme Moderators	Competent Authority to Approve	Suppression of Juridic Persons
Federation	6	6	CICL-SAL	No suppression
Merger	1 (revised of receiving congregation)	1 (that of the receiving institute)	CICL-SAL	Suppression of 5 juridic persons
Union	1 (new)	1 (elected by the new entity)	CICL-SAL	Suppression of 6 juridic persons

A **federation** “occurs when certain institutes sharing the same nature and spirit join together for common purposes while each institute retains its autonomy.”¹

A **merger** “occurs when one institute remains intact while a second is absorbed into it. The first institute (referred to here as *the receiving institute*) retains all its rights and duties as a juridic person and as a religious institute while the juridic person of the second institute (referred to here as *the merging institute*) ceases to exist. For those belonging to the merging institute membership is transferred into the receiving institute.”²

A **union** “occurs when a new institute comes into being. Unions may take place between two or more institutes. The juridic personality of each of the institutes ceases to exist. An entirely new juridic person comes into existence. For all forming institutes, membership is transferred into the new institute.”³

Competent Authority to Approve

According to canon 582, approval for mergers, unions and federations all religious institutes (both pontifical and diocesan) is reserved to the Apostolic See, i.e., the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Supreme moderator is the term used in the *Code of Canon Law* to designate the major superior who has authority for the entire institute.⁴

A **juridic person** provides a legal identity or standing in canon law, similar to a corporation in civil law. A juridic person “...is an artificial person, distinct from the natural persons or material goods, constituted by competent ecclesiastical authority and with canonical rights and duties...”⁵ By its very nature, a religious institute is a juridic person. A parish is another example of a juridic person.

¹ Rose M. McDermott, “Part III: Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life,” in Beal et al., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, New York, Paulist Press, 750.

² Catherine C. Darcy, “Restructuring Religious Institutes: A Canonical Perspective,” in *Bulletin on Issues of Religious Law*, v. 15, 1997, 2.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Canon 622.

⁵ Robert T. Kennedy, “Chapter II, Juridic Persons,” in ,” in Beal et al., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, New York, Paulist Press, 155.
