

APPENDIX

*The Prologue from the Original Latin Statute
of the Scuola Grande di Santa Maria della Carità*

(Venezia, Archivio di Stato, Scuola Grande di Santa Maria della Carità,
busta 233)

Translated by Abigail Firey (University of Kentucky)

Thanks be to the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Lord in the year 1260 on the third indiction in the month of December.

For the honour of omnipotent God and of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Apostles Peter and Paul and the blessed Evangelist Mark, and of all the holy men and women, and for the honour and reverence of the lord Pope and of his brothers, and of the whole Roman Church, and of the lord doge and the commune of Venice.

Here begin the chapters and ordinances of the confraternity of Santa Maria della Carità. To wit. Whatever mortal is happy while he lives and thrives ought to have the end of this transient and fleeting life before his eyes, and he ought always to consider the reward of the ultimate good of grasping future things, because our very Lord and Redeemer warned us in the Holy Gospel, saying, “Keep watch and pray, for you do not know the day or the hour.”²⁷ Whence we also, with the inspiration of divine grace, have thought and studied how through the love of brotherhood and through the assistance of prayer we might be able to obtain the salvation of souls, mindful of the words of the Apostle James, “Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.”²⁸ On that account we, all the brothers whose names are written below, with free mind and eager soul, with sincere will in one spirit to the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin Mary of Charity have begun this congregation, so that the above-mentioned Blessed Mary, who, standing faithfully before the throne of God, might intercede for us to the Lord Jesus Christ on account of our crimes and sins and those of the brothers [whose names are] written below.

And because we know that the religious friars at the aforesaid church of Santa Maria della Carità surpass the standard even of other men of religion and honesty, we have taken care to enter their fraternity so that with their prayers

²⁷ Mark 13:32–33.

²⁸ James 5:16.

and offerings we may be assisted in heaven before the omnipotent Lord. And therefore we establish this fraternity at this time for the salvation of our souls and of all our successors.