



CONSTITUTIONS
AND
DIRECTORY
OF THE MARIAN FATHERS

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**OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**



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GENERAL CURIA OF THE MARIAN FATHERS
ROME 2023

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Cover: *The painting of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was commissioned by the Marian Fathers and painted by Franciszek Smuglewicz (1745-1807) in 1782. The painting was placed in the main altar of the church of St. Vitus in Rome; At that time the church, together with adjacent monastery, belonged to the Marian Order and was the seat of the General Procurator's Office.*

Color Insert: *Coat of arms of the Congregation of Marian Fathers designed in 2009 by Tomasz Steifer (1955-2015), a member of the Polish Heraldic Society. The coat of arms was approved for official use in the entire Congregation by the decree of the Superior General of Nov. 3, 2009, No. 210/09. The General Chapter of 2017 placed its detailed description in §15 of the Constitutions.*

Imprimi potest

Most Rev. Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC
Superior General
of the Congregation of Marian Fathers
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**PRIVILEGES GRANTED TO
THE CONGREGATION OF CLERICS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE B.V.M.**

Innocent XI, Pope

For the perpetual remembrance of the matter

Since (as we have been informed) there exists in the church or chapel or oratory of the Congregation or Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in the Diocese of Poznań, a pious and devout Confraternity that is Congregation of Clerics Recollect faithful to Christ and dedicated to assisting the faithful departed who live in the canonically erected community of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, under the authority of the [present] Bishop of Poznań, whose members have the custom of carrying out the most abundant works of piety and charity; in order that this same Confraternity that is Congregation may continue to grow, by the mercy of God almighty and of the Apostles Peter and Paul and trusting in his [Bishop of Poznań] support, we grant that each cleric who is incorporated in the future into this Confraternity that is Congregation shall receive a **PLENARY** indulgence the first day after his entrance, if he is penitent and has gone to confession and received Holy Communion. We also grant a plenary indulgence at the moment of death to all confreres already incorporated into this Confraternity that is Congregation as well as to those who shall be incorporated into it, provided that they are truly penitent and have gone to confession and received Holy Communion; or if they are not able, at least if they are contrite and say the name of Jesus with their mouth; or if not able to do that, at least if they call upon Him devoutly in their heart. To these same present and future confreres we also mercifully grant in the Lord a plenary indulgence and remission of all their

sins if, being truly penitent and having gone to confession and received Holy Communion, they devoutly visit a church or chapel or oratory of the aforementioned Confraternity that is Congregation on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, from first vespers until the setting of the sun, and there they raise their prayers to God for concord between Christian governments, for the eradication of heresy, and the exaltation of Holy Mother Church.

In addition, on four other days of the year (whether feasts or non-feasts), agreed upon and chosen permanently by the confreres with the approval of the Ordinary, we grant an indulgence of seven years and as many quadragenes to those confreres who being truly penitent and having confessed and received Holy Communion will visit and pray in a church or chapel or oratory of the same kind.

As often as the confreres take part in Masses and other Divine Offices celebrated and recited in the said church or chapel or oratory, wherever it may be, whether for public assemblies or privately for the Confraternity that is Congregation; or they bring the poor to a hospice or make peace between enemies, whether they bring it to be or help preserve it, and also when they escort the bodies of the deceased to the grave, both of the aforementioned confreres as well as of others; or when they accompany the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist in processions with permission of the Ordinary, both in bringing the Eucharist to the sick and in other kinds of processions; or if impeded from doing so, at the sound of the bell they recite once the Our Father and the Hail Mary, or also if they recite the Our Father and Hail Mary five times for the souls of the deceased confreres; or lastly, when they lead someone to the way of salvation and teach the ignorant the precepts of God and the things which pertain to the way of salvation, or practice whatever other work of piety or charity; however many times they exercise any of the aforementioned works, we relax 60 days of the due penances howsoever enjoined in the customary form of the Church to them or others.

We also will that if at other times some other indulgence has been granted to the aforementioned confreres perpetually or temporarily, whose duration has not yet ended, this

earlier indulgence becomes null; in the same way that if said Confraternity that is Congregation is already incorporated into some Archconfraternity or in the future will be incorporated into such a thing, or in some other way united or otherwise arranged, this and any other documents of the Holy See will not serve them in any way, but will hence forth be annulled.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's under the Fisherman's seal, on March 20, 1681, in the fifth year of our pontificate.

Place of the Seal

I. S. Slusius



**APOSTOLIC APPROVAL
OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN CLERICS REGULAR
HELPING THE [SOULS OF] DECEASED AND PASTORS**

Francis Pignatelli

*By the grace of God and the Holy See
Archbishop of Taranto, the prelate of the household of
His Holiness Clement, by Divine Providence the XI Pope of
that name, the Assistant to the Holy See assigned to the Most
Serene Augustus II, the Most Powerful King of Poland, as well
as the Nuncio for the entire Kingdom of Poland and
the Grand Duchy of Lithuania,
holding the full authority of a Delegate a Latere.*

To all in general and everyone in particular who is interested or who might someday take interest, we make it known, that the Very Reverend Father Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, Superior General of the Order of the Immaculate Conception, a Congregation bringing help to the deceased and pastors, has appeared before us on his own behalf and on behalf of the above-said Order and presented the document of affiliation from the Most Reverend Father General of the Order of St. Francis in its authentic form of confirmation, the content of which is as follows:



Brother Matthew of St. Stephen

*Lector Emeritus and the General and Servant of
the entire Holy Order of our holy Father Francis:*

To our beloved in the Lord brethren priests, clerics, and brothers, who call themselves Marians under the invocation, that

is, the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God, devoted to God through the service of holy exercises, both in the present and the future, we send our greetings in Him, who is true salvation. Having begun some time ago the imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the encouragement of the Church of God, some persons have composed a rule, imbued with a pious spirit, which was approved by Pope Alexander VI for men and women—that is for Brothers and Sisters—under the title of the Rule of the Ten Virtues of the same Blessed Virgin Mary. Thereafter, Pope Julius II kindly deigned to approve it again, granting it an apostolic document [of approval], which opens with the words: *Ad ea, quae* of January 26, 1506. Following the increase of the Christian faithful devoting themselves with a greater zeal to the imitation of the Mother of God in accordance with the said Rule, Leo X, of happy memory, divided them into three orders approved by himself, prescribing to all this imitation or the institution of imitating the above-mentioned ten virtues (as it is set forth in detail in the apostolic document of July 25, 1517, of the same Leo X, starting with the words: *Regulam profitentibus*, and in another [entitled] *Cum in honorem* issued on July 14 of the same year), by which the said Pope Leo X, as well as many other popes, his successors, either granted or re-established or gave permission to benefit from numerous privileges, graces, indulgences, forgiveness of sins, exemptions, and indults previously granted to other orders and religious congregations, which is contained and explained in the book of the above-said Rule of the imitation of Mary. Since also you (who have already elected—by the power of the bishop’s authority—to fulfill this pious service toward God through the spiritual exercises under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and who desire ever more each day to persevere in the imitation of the same Mother of God in accordance with the above-named Rule adjusted for men, as well as to benefit from the graces of exemptions, indulgences, privileges also described in detail there for the followers of the Ten Pleasures or Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary) humbly petition us through Fr. Joachim of St. Ann, a member of your Institute and your Procurator in our beloved city [of Rome], to grant you the above mentioned by the power of our authority

mercifully imparted to us by the Holy See, we would be in opposition to the plans and intentions of the Holy See, if we desired to deny your request. Therefore, by the authority and power granted to us by the above-mentioned and other apostolic documents, thus far acting with deliberation, we permanently admit as members all of you, in entirety and individually, priests, seminarians, and brothers presently belonging to the named Institute, as well as those who would belong to it at some point, also allowing you to wear your habit and to make your profession of vows on the said Rule of the Ten Pleasures of Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, adjusted for men—as mentioned above, and to petition the Holy See for provisions, by the power of which you would be able to freely benefit and dispose of each and every privilege, grace, indulgence, forgiveness of sins, exemption, and apostolic dispensation mentioned above. Forasmuch as you and your successors are rightfully entitled to it by the power of the said profession, we state and declare upon the authority granted to us, and so commend your Order, which will henceforth be called according to the Ten Pleasures or Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title or invocation of her Immaculate Conception, as well as all your confreres, priests, seminarians, and brothers to the favor and protection of the most distinguished and reverend diocesan bishops and nuncios of the Apostolic See, especially of those to the invincible and faithful Kingdom of Poland, in which your Institute was began and now continues to grow, asking the Most High to grant you the fullest growth for the glory and praise of His Most Holy Mother and the honor of her Immaculate Conception and for your honor and eternal distinction.

Given at the Friary of Aracaeli, on September 21, 1699.

Place of the Seal

Br. Matthew of St. Stephen
Minister General

Upon the commission of our Most Reverend Father
Br. Nicolaus de Leon
Secretary General of the Order

There are other documents written on parchment and bearing the Fisherman's seal, complete, undamaged, and intact, which leave no room for the smallest suspicion, whose content is similar, and which read as follows:



To our beloved Son, the Apostolic Nuncio
residing in the Kingdom of Poland.

From Innocent XII, Pope

Our beloved Son,
greetings and apostolic blessing.

Recently, our beloved son, Joachim of St. Ann, a priest and procurator of the Order and Congregation of priests and religious brothers called Marians, which have undertaken the task of imitating and honoring the Blessed Mother as a Congregation of the Ten Pleasures of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of Poland, which Congregation was founded and established by our beloved son, Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, and which order under the title or invocation of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin—by the power of his entitlement to apostolic privileges—our beloved son, the Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis admitted to the profession [of vows] and observance of the Rule of the Ten Pleasures of the Blessed Virgin Mary in accordance with the manner accepted and solemnly approved by the Holy See and in proper adaptation for men, with the duty or exercise to [prayerfully] assist the souls in Purgatory as well as to provide help to pastors in the administration of the sacraments and the catechesis the Christian faithful. In accordance with the apostolic privileges, by the rescript of the said Minister General, this Congregation, admitted in the above-said manner, should benefit from privileges, graces, and indulgences granted by the Holy See to the religious orders which already dedicate themselves through this Rule to the

service of God or will do so in the future. Although, as is evident from its contents, the legitimacy of this letters patent can never be questioned now or in the future, so that it reaches its full effect, nevertheless, to ensure the observance, preservation, and use of this letters patent is not opposed or hampered in any way either by our beloved sons, the religious or some other persons, the above-named Spokesman submitted a humble petition, asking us to kindly prevent this by our apostolic grace. Therefore, we absolve the said Spokesman from all excommunications, suspensions, interdicts and other Church judgments, censures, and penalties either resulting from law or imposed by people for whatever reason or cause or with which he might be charged in any way, in order to attain his goal in this present matter; by deeming him absolved, we accede to his requests and to your discretion (seeing that the Spokesman proves that the matter regards only those exempt from episcopal jurisdiction), and by this letter we confirm and recommend that—by our apostolic authority—you act now and, in the future, instruct to act those who are already called or will be called to abide by the Minister General's letters patent and by everything it stipulates according to its form and contents, so long as no other ruling on the above be provided anywhere else. In view of the above, by the power of our apostolic authority, by this decree we grant you, appointed by a public rescript, the fullness of power to hold responsible always and whenever needed all the religious and all other persons attempting to thwart the execution, observance, and implementation of this decree, and to impose as many times as necessary the judgments, censures, and penalties in accordance with the provisions of the Council of Trent to announce, impose, and increase penalties on the disobedient even to the extent of securing the assistance of lay authorities, should the need be, as well as to apply all necessary measures; everything to the contrary is notwithstanding.

Given in Rome at St. Mary Major, under the Fisherman's seal, on November 24, 1699, in the ninth year of our pontificate.

Place of the Seal

✠ *B. Cardinal Pro-Datar*

In response to the humble requests that we would deign to proceed in the fulfillment of this apostolic document, having received with due veneration the above apostolic document, we sought first of all after the consent of Fathers and Brothers who wish to make their profession upon the said Rule; they gave us their consent which they presented to us [in writing] signed and sealed, and which reads thus: We, the undersigned unworthy superiors and priests of the Order of the Immaculate Conception of the Polish Congregation, which assists the deceased and pastors, being gathered at the Chapter and having celebrated a votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, accept in the Lord as well as on behalf of other equally thinking brethren, which includes seminarians and lay brothers, the Rule of Imitation of the 10 Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, approved and ratified by Popes Alexander VI, Julius II, and Leo X, of happy memory, and kindly sent to us from the City of Rome upon our request in order to make our profession, together with the apostolic brief Pope Innocent XII, of very happy memory, by virtue of which brief we wish to make the profession of solemn vows according to the above Rule and to observe it by the grace of God. Therefore, we beseech His Most Honorable Excellency, the Apostolic Nuncio, our Lord and Guardian, to whom the said brief was addressed, to graciously accede and decide by his power—especially in view of the grave illness of our Superior General who also desires it and entreats the Most Revered Shepherd most humbly—that we may hasten our profession.

With our signatures and the seal of the Congregation we certify the authenticity of the above on our own behalf and that of the others, given in Góra, at the Cenacle of the Lord, on April 14, 1701.

Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, unworthy Superior,
Joachim of St. Ann, Assistant and General Procurator,
Joseph of All Saints, Assistant,
James of St. Ann,
Constantine of St. Casimir,
Cyprian of St. Stanislaus, Secretary.

Place of the Seal

We have been asked once again to kindly satisfy this apostolic proclamation. After reviewing the above apostolic proclamation, as well as the [letter of] acceptance, aggregation, and agreement attached to this request, upon giving the matter a proper consideration and examination, in order to satisfy and obey this apostolic proclamation and letters patent from the Minister General along with everything contained therein, and to fulfill them according to their above-given form and content, we allowed the Most Reverend Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, the Superior, to make his religious profession before us, which we accepted from him in our hands according to the Rule. After making his profession, the said most Reverend Fr. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, is obliged, as the legal Superior General, to have his confreres make their religious profession either before him or before his delegate. Upon completing this, we command each and every one under penalty in the above mentioned apostolic proclamation to consider these religious as proper, legal, and removed from under episcopal jurisdiction, otherwise they would disobey the Holy See, us, and our successors. We encourage these religious by the grace of God to keep the prescribed Rule and watch over its observation.

To certify its authenticity, we sign this document and confirm it with our seal.

Given in Warsaw, on June 6, A.D. 1701.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Francis*
Archbishop of Tarento
Apostolic Nuncio
(by his own hand)

Septimus Paulutius
General Auditor

Adalbertus Skwarczyński
Chancellor



**APPROVAL AND RATIFICATION OF
THE STATUTES OF
THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN CLERICS REGULAR
BRINGING HELP TO THE DECEASED AND
ASSISTING PASTORS IN THEIR MINISTRY**

Innocent XIII, Pope

For the perpetual remembrance of the matter.

Being established by the unfathomable abundance of God's grace on the highest throne of the Church militant, we endorse what is said to be prudently established and ordered under the sweet yoke of Christ and under the custom of religious discipline for the salutary direction of religious men, who strive to fulfill their vows to God, and continually provide upon the inspiration of heavenly grace the innumerable benefits of their good deeds, so that it would remain constant and intact, and secured by our apostolic protection, whenever we are asked for it. Therefore, as our beloved son Joachim of St. Ann, Procurator General of the Marian Clerics Regular of the Congregation under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, had recently brought it about that certain statutes, ordinances, and decrees for the fruitful direction and careful observance of religious discipline were submitted to us, which have been previously approved by the General Chapters of the Congregation, and were ratified by the episcopal authority, as well as by the one at present who was at that time the Nuncio of the Apostolic See in the Kingdom of Poland, and as the said Joachim, the Procurator General, fervently wished to have these statutes, ordinances, and decrees more lasting and more carefully observed as well as protected by the authority of our

apostolic approval; therefore, we, wanting to accede as much as possible in the Lord to the pleas of the said Joachim, Procurator General, from any excommunications, suspense, and interdicts, as well as all other Church judgments, reprimands, and penalties that might be pronounced for any reason, [imposed] by law or by a man, should he be by some sort of sentence, rebuke, or punishment in any way encumbered, for only this instance for the effect of this letter, free him and recognize him as being released, we accede to his entreaties presented to us on his behalf, and the above-mentioned statutes, ordinances, and decrees, as long as they are in use, are legitimate and noble, and are not revoked or mentioned in some revocation, and are not contrary to the holy canons, especially to the decrees of the Council of Trent, to the apostolic constitutions and orders or to the religious regulations of the aforementioned Order, confirmed by the Holy See, we confirm and approve by the power of our apostolic authority through the content of this letter, and give these statutes, ordinances, and decrees the inviolable power of apostolic approval, also dictating that our present letter as well as the aforesaid statutes, ordinances, and decrees, referred to above, are and will always be lasting, valid, and effective, and that they obtain and retain their complete and full effects, and that they will be fulfilled in the fullest in everything and observed absolutely by those presently concerned or might be concerned at any given time, and in such a way that these matters be adjudicated and settled by all judges, both ordinary and delegated, as well as by auditors of the law of the Apostolic Palace. It should be deemed invalid and without power, if someone of any authority would attempt to take whatever action against it, both consciously and unconsciously. No other legal acts stand in the way of what is mentioned above. Furthermore, we want that copies or duplicates of the present letter, including those produced in print, signed by a public notary or confirmed by some person established in a Church office, be granted the same full authority as would be given to this letter itself, should such copies or duplicates be shown or presented.

Given in Rome at St. Mary Major under the Fisherman's seal
on September 3, 1723, in the third year of our pontificate.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Fabio Cardinal Olivieri*



APOSTOLIC APPROVAL OF BOTH THE INSTITUTE AND THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE MARIAN CLERICS REGULAR

November 17, 1786

Pius VI, Pope

For the perpetual remembrance of the matter.

On account of the duty of the Pastoral Office, by the authority of which and by the will of God we preside over the Catholic Church spread throughout the whole world, we regard with paternal affection all the Orders or Congregations of Christian faithful that dedicate themselves to the works of love and Christian mercy in order to support pastors and which work with commendable zeal on teaching young people the first principles of the Faith and education, and we strive to enrich their condition with appropriate indulgences and favors so that those who have chosen such a pious Institution of life may persevere in their vocation until the end, believing in the Lord after a mature consideration that this will contribute to the growth of good deeds, the glory of the Almighty God, and the salvation of souls. Recently, our beloved son Norbert Gołkowski, Procurator General of the Congregation of Clerics Regular Marians, informed us that the Order or the Congregation was previously founded, namely in 1670, by the Servant of God Stanislaus Papczyński in order to help pastors and teach the first principles of Faith and educate the youth in the Kingdom of Poland, was confirmed by the then Apostolic Nuncio, and then affiliated to the Order of the Friars Minor of St. Francis; also, its Founder Stanislaus personally submitted a humble request to Pope Innocent XII, of happy memory, our predecessor, asking to approve this Order or

Congregation, as a result of which the said Innocent, our predecessor, issued on November 24, 1699, an apostolic document, by which he instructed the then Apostolic Nuncio in the Kingdom of Poland, Francis Pignatelli, to accept upon a mature examination of everything, the solemn profession of the above Founder, then acting only as a proxy, and of all his confreres; since in fact they all made their religious profession before the above Apostolic Nuncio and the same Nuncio approved the Order or the Congregation by the power of Apostolic Authority, as it can be read in more detail in the aforementioned apostolic document of June 6, 1701. Therefore, as it was mentioned in the petition, the said Norbert, Prosecutor General, interceded before us, asking to separate and detach the aforementioned Order or the Congregation from the Order of the Friars Minor of St. Francis of the Strict Observance, to which—as he asserted—his Order was joined and affiliated; this he obtained from us also through mediation of the assembly of our venerable brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, as shown in the decree of that Congregation of March 10, 1786. Not only did they request from this Congregation the approval of their Institute, but also of their newly reformed Constitutions with the following content.

Here was included the text of the Constitutions.

After a thorough and mature examination of the case,
the Congregation of these Cardinals issued
the following decree, which states:

The Sacred Congregation of their Eminences, the Most Reverend Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church for Bishops and Religious decided to answer in response to the presentation of His Eminence Cardinal De Zelada Ponente in consideration of the reform of the Constitutions carried out according to the recommendations of the Most Reverend Bishop Inspectors in accordance with the rescript of August

11th, for the approval of this reformed Constitution and the Institute, following the consultation with His Holiness in Rome on September 15, 1786.

For this reason, the aforementioned Norbert, Procurator General, also on behalf of our beloved son Raymond Nowicki, the Superior General, and other priests and coadjutors of the above-named Order or Congregation, submitted to us a humble request, asking that we deign to kindly approve by our Apostolic Authority his Institute and the attached Constitutions.

Therefore, wishing to accede as much as possible in the Lord to the request of the said Superior General, as well as the Procurator General and the rest of the aforementioned Clerics Regular, we hereby absolve individual persons and consider them to be absolved in the future from excommunication, suspense, interdict and any other Church judgments, censures, and penalties imposed by law or by people for whatever cause or reason, should they be affected by these to such in any way, so as to attain only the discussed effect; [therefore,] we accede to their request and, through this decree we approve and endorse forever by the power of our apostolic authority the Institute, as well as the attached Constitutions with whatever is contained within and grant them endorsement of inviolable apostolic power. We decide that this document shall always have such power, validity, and efficacy now and in the future, that it will receive and achieve its full and complete effect by those whom it concerns or whom it will concern in whatever manner in the future, and that it shall be preserved intact. Therefore, should it [this document] be judged and interpreted differently by any judge, ordinary or delegate, even by the auditors of the Apostolic Palace or by cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, even by legates *a latere*, vicars, nuncios of the Holy See, despite denying them and or anyone from among them [the right to] a different judgment about and interpretation of its power and authority, they shall be deemed invalid and without effect, if perchance someone deliberately or unwittingly dares to attack it by the power of some authority in spite of the constitutions and ordinances of the Holy See or of that Order or the Congregation, even by a sworn apostolic

statement or by any other power, the established statutes and customs, privileges and apostolic documents in spite of the above, in whatever manner granted, approved, and renewed. In this way, considering their wording as complete and sufficiently articulated, and explained word for word, leaving general provisions in force, for this specific occasion we expressly overrule them, as well as any other contrary regulations.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, under the Fisherman's seal, on March 27, 1787, in the thirteenth year of our pontificate.

Place of the Seal

✠ *R. Cardinal Braschius de Honestis*



PRIVILEGES GRANTED BY POPE PIUS VI TO THE ORDER OF MARIANS

Pius VI, Pope

For the perpetual remembrance of the matter.

The Pastoral Office entrusted to us by heaven requires that, we, having fatherly care over the sacred orders and religious congregations which dedicate themselves with commendable fervor to charity and works of Christian mercy, support their pious work and organizations by imparting graces and privileges to encourage their undertaking of toils, their ever more willing performance and diligent fulfilling of everything that we consider appropriate in the Lord. Our beloved son Norbert Gołkowski, Procurator General of the Order or the Congregation of Clerics Regular Marians in the Kingdom of Poland, recently submitted to us in the Roman Curia, that—since the aforesaid Order or Congregation has been recently separated and detached by us, with the advice of our venerable brethren, cardinals of our Holy Roman Church, in charge of the matters of bishops and religious, from the Order of the Friars Minor of St. Francis of the Strict Observance, as well as—also with the advice of the same Congregation—by another document in the form of a similar brief prepared on the same day for these priests called Marians, their Constitutions and Institute were approved and ratified, so that the three solemn vows can now be made in it similar to the other religious orders and institutes, approved by the Holy See, and various significant and devout works of mercy can be performed in helping pastors, as well as teaching the youth principles of Faith and basic education now and in the future; and so that it may always be carried out with great zeal, the said Norbert entreated us to grant and endow his Order or the

Congregation with graces and privileges granted to mendicant and non-mendicant orders of both sexes. Therefore, wishing to embrace the Order or the Congregation of Clerics Regular Marians and other pious institutes with our care and benevolence, and impart our special regards and wishes to the aforesaid Norbert and our beloved sons, priests, seminarians and lay brothers of the said Order or the Congregation, for this purpose only, by this decree we absolve each individual person of that Order from all excommunications, suspense, and other ecclesiastical judgments, censures and punishments imposed by law or by people for whatever cause or reason, should they be affected by any of them, in order to achieve only this effect, and we consider them as absolved in the future. Acceding to the humble requests of the said Norbert, after due consideration we decide to extend forever each and every privilege, prerogative, grant, favor, power, declaration, custom, and exemption, as well as liberties and other graces, preeminence and indults of both spiritual and worldly kind, as long as they are not revoked or restricted due to some appeals or holy canons and decrees of the Council of Trent and apostolic constitutions and directives nor prohibited to the aforesaid Clerics Regular Marians of the above-mentioned Order or Congregation, and are not in contradiction with the above-mentioned mendicant and non-mendicant Orders, along with all their monasteries, houses, and other apostolic workplaces, as well as the Superior Generals of these Orders, their presidents and all other prelates and even General Chapters and Provincial or intermediate Chapters and the chairmen of thereof, their priors, novices, brothers, serfs, and all other religious persons situated both in the city or in whatever part of the world; and because of them or for whatever other reason have been already granted and are still being granted by Roman Bishops, our predecessors or other persons of authority, to which they have the right, or custom, or a privilege of using, employing, owing, and enjoying, as well as may use, employ, owe, and enjoy in the future, we have granted them already and grant them anew wishing that they serve this Order well; we also decree that the present document have a perpetual and

uninterrupted legitimacy, validity, and effectiveness now and forever and that it shall receive and attain its full and absolute effect, and that it shall be preserved in its integrity by those whom it concerns now or shall concern in whatever manner in the future; therefore, should [this document] be judged and interpreted differently by any judge, ordinary or delegate, even by the auditors of the Apostolic Palace or by cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, even by legates *a latere*, vicars, nuncios of the Holy See, despite denying them and any of them any different judgment and interpretation of power and authority, they shall be deemed invalid and ineffective, if perchance someone deliberately or unwittingly dares to attack it by the power of some authority. For this reason, by the present document we instruct and order our reverend brethren patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and all other local ordinaries of any kind, as well as our beloved son in charge of the affairs of Apostolic Curia, the principal auditor if one of them either personally or through others should be asked to solemnly proclaim this document and its contents whenever necessary and as many times as needed to the benefit of the General or the Clerics Regular of aforementioned Order or Congregation, thus extending them an effective help in that matter, they shall ascertain by the power of our authority that this document obtains its proper impact and attains its effect, while all those whom it concerns may freely employ and enjoy it without allowing anyone to be unduly distressed in spite of this document's meaning by whomever and for whatever reason or even under pretext of the lack of our intentions; what is more, should anything contrary be attempted to or initiated, it must be categorically returned to the original state; whatever adversaries or troublemakers shall be restrained by all censures and ecclesial penalties and by all appropriate legal and factual means deemed necessary, restraining the proposal of filing an appeal and observing the law when suing them; increasing censures and penalties even with recourse, if need be, to the assistance and support of the lay authorities. All has power despite what has been earlier said, regarding the regulations of Pope Boniface VIII, our predecessor of happy memory, who on one occasion

said of the general Council summoning for a second time, he would be clear of a third summons by the power of a lower court, and despite all other constitutions and apostolic or religious regulations even those previously approved by apostolic power or any other perpetuated statutes and customs, privileges, indults and apostolic documents mentioned above or in whatever manner granted, approved, or verified. We cancel the authority of all of the above in general and in detail, even though there may exist a special mention of them and their contents expressed in detail, not just in general manner, or there may be some other wording or some formula for their corroboration; the wording, expressed in detail with absolutely no omissions and close adherence to the traditional form, we recognize as being expressed completely and sufficiently, and we hold it as specified in other cases and deem it effective; for the above effect, this time only we cancel its validity uniquely and specifically along with any other contrary orders; the same should be understood if an indult is granted to some by the Holy See either jointly or separately, i.e., that they cannot be interdicted, suspended, or excommunicated by virtue of an apostolic document, if they do not make a total and clear word for word mention of this indult. We wish that copies of this document, even the printed ones, personally signed by a public notary and sealed with the seal of the person holding a Church office or certified by the General Procurator of the aforesaid Order or Congregation, be given the same credence with which their original would be viewed if delivered and presented.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, under the Fisherman's seal, on March 27, 1787, in the thirteenth year of our pontificate.

Place of the seal

✠ *R. Cardinal Braschius de Honestis*



SACRA CONGREGATIO
DE RELIGIOSIS

No. 3544-09

DECREE

The Congregation of the Marian Fathers under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary founded in the 17th century, was approved by Popes Innocent XII and Innocent XIII. Pope Pius VI allowed the Marians to make the profession of solemn vows.

The aim of the Congregation was to embrace with particular care and devotion the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary; to work for the salvation of the others; to teach the truths of the Faith, especially to the uneducated; and through their works of mercy support the souls of the faithful departed detained in Purgatory.

The Congregation expanded in Poland, where it originated, and in Portugal, and it served the Faith well everywhere. However, in the 19th century, during times of severe persecution, it suffered a gradual decline so that finally only one Religious remained, who was in fact the Superior General.

Some diocesan priests, who were seeing with regret the decline of this once renowned Institute, dedicated themselves, with the consent and encouragement of the Most Rev. Ordinaries of Mohyliv, Warsaw, and Sejny, as well as the still living Superior General, to the revival of this Institute, and successfully accomplished this undertaking in compliance to the prescripts of this Sacred Congregation for Religious. However, they deemed it necessary slightly to amend the Constitutions of the Congregation, so that—considering the current circumstances—henceforth the professed vows be simple and not solemn as before, and that the Office of the Dead, which according to the former

Constitutions was to be recited daily, be graciously replaced with a special devotion of the entire Congregation, intended to aid the souls in Purgatory, without imposing any definite obligations.

After the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Religious presented and referred all this matter, together with the corrected Constitutions that precede this Decree, to His Holiness Pope Pius X at the audience on September 15, 1910, the Holy Father graciously deigned to grant approval to the thus reformed Institute and to the aforesaid Constitutions, and also allowed for replacing the Office of the Dead, preserving, however, the Apostolic Constitutions and the jurisdiction of bishops.

Everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given in Rome, on November 28, 1910.

Place of the Seal

✠ *J.C. Cardinal Vives*
Prefect

✠ *Donatus*
Archbishop of Ephesus
Secretary



SACRA CONGREGATIO
DE RELIGIOSIS

**DECREE CONFIRMING THE PRIVILEGE OF EXEMPTION
GRANTED TO THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS**

Rome, April 26, 1929

The present Superior General of the Congregation of the Marian Fathers under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, submitted recently a petition to have a clear declaration made in order to remove any doubts in the important matter regarding the exemption granted to the Congregation by Pope Pius VI by virtue of brief *Iniuncti Nobis* on March 27, 1787, about which there is no mention in the decree of the Holy Congregation for Religious of November 28, 1910, No. 3544/09, by virtue of which, certain alterations, more suited to the circumstances of the place and time, were introduced to the Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Fathers as a result of replacing the solemn vows with the simple ones.

After careful consideration of the matter, this Sacred Congregation for Religious, declares and affirms by the form and content of this decree that the above-mentioned privilege of exemption remains in force regardless of the Institute's transformation performed by virtue of the above-mentioned decree of November 28, 1910.

Subject to other regulations. Everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Alexis Henri M. Cardinal Lepicier, OSM*
Prefect

Vincenzo La Puma
Secretary



SACRA CONGREGATIO
DE RELIGIOSIS

**DECREE RATIFYING THE CONSTITUTIONS OF
THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS**

Rome, January 27, 1930

In the audience given to the undersigned Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Religious on January 27, 1930, His Holiness, by Divine Providence Pope Pius XI deigned to approve and confirm the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Marian Fathers under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which had been previously approved by Pope Pius X by a decree of the said Sacred Congregation on November 28, 1910, and presently adapted to the Code of Canon Law, with the inclusion of numerous changes and additions made at the request of the General Chapter of the aforementioned Congregation, and [then] verified by this Sacred Congregation, as it is set forth in the copy, the original of which is kept in the archives of the Sacred Congregation. The form and content of the present decree approve and confirm all of the above; with the preservation of the powers of the local ordinaries, in accordance with the provisions of the canons and the Apostolic Constitutions.

Everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Alexis Henri M. Cardinal Lepicier, OSM*
Prefect

Vincenzo La Puma
Secretary



**SACRA CONGREGATIO
PRO RELIGIOSIS ET INSTITUTIS SÆCULARIBUS**

Prot. No. S. 26-1/84

DECREE

The Members of the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary are ready to serve the Church, under the direction and protection of the Mother of God, by undertaking various works, which the needs of the times are demanding. In a very special manner, not neglecting their own sanctification, they dedicate themselves to pastoral work in parishes, in schools, and in the publishing apostolate. Moreover, following the original tradition of the Congregation, they strive to render help to the souls detained in Purgatory.

After a previous examination of the text by its consultors, and taking into consideration the favorable vote of its Plenary Session, by virtue of this present decree this Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes approves and confirms the Constitutions of the said Institute according to the text prepared in the Latin language, which is conserved in its archives.

The Members of the Institute, inspired, according to the mind of its Founder and Renovator, by the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, which from the very foundation of the Congregation is the distinctive sign, strength, and joy of the Marian vocation, should live their religious consecration with enthusiasm, and endeavor to fruitfully carry out the apostolic works for Christ and the Church.

Besides this everything is to be observed as required by law. Anything whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Rome, on the 25th day of March, 1986,
on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.

Place of the Seal

✠ *J. Jerome Cardinal Hamer, OP*
Prefect

✠ *Vincentius Fagiolo*
Arch.em. Theat.
Secretary



CONGREGAZIONE
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Prot. No. S. 26ⁱ –1/2005

YOUR HOLINESS:

In compliance with the decision of the Institute's General Chapter celebrated between February and March 2005, the Superior General of the Congregation of Marian Fathers requests that the alteration of the article no. 18 of the Constitutions be approved, according to the enclosed text and for the stated reasons.

Having considered the given reasons, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approves the above-mentioned alteration of article 18 of the Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Fathers, according to the norm of can. 587, §2.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Vatican on May 31, 2005.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Piergiorgio Silvano Nesti, CP*
Secretary

Sr. Enrica Rosanna, FMA
Undersecretary



CONGREGAZIONE
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Prot. No. S. 26 –1/2005

YOUR HOLINESS:

On behalf of the General Chapter, the Superior General of the Congregation of Marian Fathers humbly asks Your Holiness for ratification of alterations made to articles 15-16, 19, and 248 of the Congregation's Constitutions.

Having attentively considered the proposed alterations, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life ratifies them by the power of this rescript, according to the Polish version of the text submitted in writing on March 14, 2011, the copy of which was deposited into the Archives of the above-named Congregation.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Vatican on March 21, 2011.

Place of the Seal

✠ *Joseph W. Tobin, CSsR*
Archbishop Secretary

Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, OCist
Undersecretary



**CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS VITÆ CONSECRATÆ
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITÆ APOSTOLICÆ**

Prot. No. S. 26 -1/2017

DECREE

As a result of a thorough study conducted in order to preserve a greater fidelity to the founding charism, the 57th General Chapter of the Congregation of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary reviewed the text of the Constitutions, previously approved by the Holy See on March 25, 1986.

By his letter of May 17, 2017, the Superior General subsequently submitted a request to approve the revised text of the Constitutions, adopted by the General Chapter, which took place from February 6-23, 2017.

Having carefully examined the document and made some corrections, The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life by virtue of this Decree approved the new Constitutions, according to the wording of the text edited in Polish, which is kept in its archives.

The Congregation hopes that the preservation of the Constitutions will be a valuable help for the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in

carrying out their institutional mission in a spirit of loyalty to their Founder, Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Vatican, September 8, 2017,
on the feast of the Nativity of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary.

Place of the Seal

✠ *João Bráz Cardinal de Aviz*
Prefect

✠ *José Rodríguez Carballo, OFM*
Archbishop Secretary



DICASTERO
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Prot. n. S. 26⁻¹/2005

DECREE

59th The General Chapter of the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after a thorough analysis of the text of the Constitution, approved by the Holy See in 2017, made changes to some articles.

The Superior General of the Institute, in a letter dated February 21, 2023, presented a request for approval of changes to articles: **17, 72, 177, 178, 239, 252, 257, 267** and **305** of the Constitution, as voted by the General Chapter Assembly.

The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, having carefully studied the changes made to the above-mentioned articles, approves the new text by virtue of this Decree, in accordance with the copy made in Polish, which it keeps in its archives.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.
Given at the Vatican on June 6, 2023.

Place of the Seal

✠ *José Rodríguez Carballo, OFM*
Archbishop Secretary

Fr. Pier Luigi Nava, SMM
Undersecretary





**TO THE BELOVED BROTHERS IN CHRIST
OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF
THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Greetings in the Lord!

After a lapse of many years, during which our Congregation, according to a decree of the Second Vatican Council published on October 28, 1965, devoted itself to studies and produced a renewal of our laws, the Holy See approved our *Constitutions*.

Now that this printed edition of the *Constitutions and Directory* has made its appearance, I hereby promulgate these our laws and I present them to you to be observed.

We should, however, bear in mind that the task of renewal is not finished. Indeed, it is our duty to continue this renewal by putting into practice these precepts since it is according to them that our Marian manner of living is fashioned, our spiritual progress is more advanced and the apostolic mission of the Congregation is better fulfilled. That all this might be accomplished more efficaciously, it is necessary that we thought fully investigate how we, as Marians, can serve Christ and the Church in the most perfect way.

I would like to remind you of what the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes mentioned in its Decree of Approbation: "Members of the Institute ... (devoted) to the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, which from the very inception of the Congregation has been a special sign, strength and joy of the Marian vocation, happily live out their religious consecration and strive to fulfill most fruitfully their apostolic works for Christ and the Church."

In so doing “in and through all things, all should strive to seek the closest union with God, to be joined to Him in the highest degree in their prayers as well as all their actions, and to be magnanimous and most generous and liberal in His service” (C 36).

With the promulgation of the *Constitutions and Directory*, every member should be concerned with fully familiarizing themselves with these laws so that the principles contained in them may acquire a vital strength in our daily conversation with God and our brothers. It is our grave duty to put these principles into practice, and in doing so we shall provide a secure future for our Congregation and render our religious life truly fruitful.

Mary Immaculate remains our guide on our journey to Jesus. May her trust in us continuously increase, while we who bear her name are confident that she will never abandon us. Would that she in this year dedicated to her, emerge more steadfast in our Marian vocation and may all the works of our Congregation assume a new significance and a new importance.

Rome, January 27, 1988,
on the Feast of Blessed George Matulaitis-Matulewicz.

Donald S. Petraitis, MIC
Superior General



**TO THE BELOVED BROTHERS IN CHRIST
OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF
THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Greetings in the Lord!

“Since no community can exist except under the guidance of laws, nor would it be possible for one to live without law in this earthly existence: because of this, you [...] will strive to observe these very few Statutes for your inner peace and the security of your consciences” (*NV*, I, 1)—in this manner our holy Father Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński, Founder of our Congregation, justifies the need for religious laws for his Institute. The inner peace and security of conscience depend not only on observing the law, but also on adapting it to the changes both in the Church and in the world. In response to the teachings of the Church and the signs of the time, the 57th General Chapter, celebrated in Rome between Feb. 6-23, 2017, undertook the toil of amending our *Constitutions and Directory*, previously ratified in 1986 and adapted to the requirements of the Second Vatican Council. The text of our by-laws adopted during this Chapter was consequently presented to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which, after making some of its own changes, ratified the renewed *Constitutions and Directory* by its decree of Sept. 8, 2017.

The main motive for undertaking work on our *Constitutions and Directory* was the current teaching of the Church addressed to all religious institutes, as well as the events, which our Congregation experienced during the last 30 years. Particularly important here is the apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* which states: “...there is a pressing need today for

every Institute to return to the Rule, since the Rule and Constitutions provide a map for the whole journey of discipleship, in accordance with a specific charism confirmed by the Church” (VC, 37). No less inspiring were events of the said period that concerned our community directly: the beatification of Archbishop George Matulaitis-Matulewicz, Renovator of our religious community (in 1987), the beatification of two of our confreres—Frs. Anthony Leszczewicz and George Kaszyra, together with other martyrs of World War II in 1999; the beatification of our Father Stanislaus, Founder of the Congregation (in 2007), the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Renewal of our Congregation (in 2009), and finally, Father Stanislaus’ canonization (in 2016).

All these circumstances, marked by an intense work of the Holy Spirit in our religious community, brought about a deeper reflection on the charism of the Congregation and prompted us to seek a more adequate description of its identity and mission. In this context, the Church’s appeal to rethink our by-laws anew made us all more aware of the *kairos* for our Congregation and prompted—first the issuance by the General Chapter, in 2011, of the decree to create a Committee on *Constitutions and Directory*, and then, during the last Chapter, to develop and adopt changes in our by-laws. The guiding idea was to read the charism of the Congregation in the context of modern times and in fidelity to the founding spirit and the patrimony shaped throughout history, particularly through the work of Renewal. The knowledge of the Holy Spirit’s work in our religious community found its expression in legal form through changes to our by-laws made by the 57th General Chapter. The ratification of the new version of our *Constitutions and Directory* by the Holy See confirms the legitimacy of the Congregation’s path and legal solutions adopted by the Chapter. This becomes particularly important with regards to difference in wording, related to the identity and mission of the Congregation between the new and previously published *Constitutions*, which continues to be deeply rooted in the original tradition.

Therefore, acting in accordance with Church law (CIC, can. 8), I promulgate the *Constitutions and Directory* of our Congregation and encourage all of us—inspired by the example of our holy Fathers—to observe [diligently] these very few Statutes for your inner peace and security of your consciences (*NV*, I, 1), and to “strive to know, love, and imitate Christ more and more from day to day” (*C*, 5). Let each one of us accept these renewed by-laws as “as a rule of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Preamble).

May the Mother of the Lord, whose spiritual sons we are, continue to implore for us for all the favors we need on this road of life, whose path is set out in the *Constitutions and Directory*. Let the mystery of her Immaculate Conception be “a special sign, strength, and joy” (*C*, 2) for our vocation. May Saint Stanislaus intercede for us that we may recognize the challenges of the modern world and fulfill our mission in the Church faithfully and in accordance with the Marian charism. May Blessed George, our Renovator, implore for us the grace of renewing and deepening of our relationship with God—the foundation of our vocation. May the example of our Blessed Martyrs, Anthony and George, inflame us to serve the Church eagerly and courageously, even laying down our lives if necessary. Let us beseech our patron saints that we may—supported by their example and intercession—give both individual and communal witness to holiness to the contemporary world and thus contribute to its salvation.

Rome, May 18, 2018,
on the solemnity of our holy Father Stanislaus Papczyński.

Andrzej Pakuła, MIC
Superior General



GREETINGS TO ALL OF THE MARIAN CONFRERES AROUND THE WORLD!

In the name of the Triune God and for His glory, out of love and reverence for the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of the Savior, under her protection and following her example, faithful to the Holy Church, for our sanctification and the salvation of others, We the Marians, accept these Constitutions as a rule of life for living the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Preamble – *Invocatio Dei*)

The General Chapter held six years ago in 2017 was a Chapter of great historical significance for our Congregation. It marked the second time since the Second Vatican Council that our *Constitutions and Directory* had been amended and ratified, the first time being in 1986. In his promulgation letter, our former Superior General, Fr. Andrzej Pakuła, MIC very eloquently explained the circumstances which led to the renovations of our rule in 2017. The result was the clearest expression of our Marian Charism in our rule to date. We can say that the 59th General Chapter which took place during the last year of our 350th Jubilee was a continuation of the work of the previous General Chapter. We did not make as many changes to our *Constitutions and Directory* as the last General Chapter, but there was a historic change which hearkens back to something that our Founder, St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, held dear: the white habit. He once stated, "... I assumed the white habit in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary ..." (*Testamentum II*, 3).

The Jubilee Message of the General Chapter of 2023 speaks of the Marian Fathers' School of Spirituality of the Immaculate Conception. The Mystery of the Immaculate Conception is a gift of God to Mary, to the world, and in a special way to our religious community. It is a mystery that we are only beginning to appreciate and understand. Each of us has the task throughout

our lives of continuing to discover the hidden treasures contained within this mystery. Mary wants to lead each of us on the paschal path of Christ to our destiny. She did this for our holy Father Founder and for Blessed George, our Renovator. She showed the Marian martyrs of Rosica, Blessed Anthony and Blessed George, how to remain faithful until the end. As we discover the depths of this mystery, we will continue to more fully discover our Marian identity. Our Founder considered the white habit an important part of the Marian identity. He had wanted to don the white habit when he professed his *Oblatio* in 1670, but it was not possible. He was only able to do so on September 15, 1671, when he received ecclesiastical permission. He once stated, “All of these will be white in color, in honor of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady” (*Norma Vitæ*, IV, 4).

In this General Chapter, there were also changes made to the *Constitutions* and the *Directory*, especially regarding Formation, Structure, and Government. We are also including, for the first time in our history, interpretations of the *Constitutions and Directory* in the appendix. These are in accordance with *Constitutions* § 306, which states that the highest authority in the Congregation for interpreting the *Constitutions and Directory* belongs ordinarily to the General Council acting collegially and extraordinarily to the General Chapter.

Therefore, acting in accordance with ecclesiastical law (CIC, can. 8), I promulgate the present edition of the *Constitutions and Directory* of our Congregation. As we state in the preamble to the *Constitutions*, may we each accept them as our rule of life and our way of living the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ. May we each grow in holiness through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Immaculately Conceived, and of St. Stanislaus, our Founder, Blessed George, our Renovator, as well as Blessed Martyrs Anthony and George.

Rome, June 29, 2023,
on the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul.

Joseph G. Roesch, MIC
Superior General

ABBREVIATIONS

- AA – *Apostolicam Actuositatem*—Decree on the apostolate of the laity (Vatican II)
- AG – *Ad Gentes*—Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (Vatican II)
- C – *Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Fathers* (2023)
- CIC – *Codex Iuris Canonici*—*Code of Canon Law* (1983)
- CD – *Christus Dominus*—Decree concerning the pastoral office of bishops in the Church (Vatican II)
- CM – *Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Fathers* (1930)
- D – *Directory of the Congregation of Marian Fathers* (2023)
- DRB – *The Holy Bible: Douay-Rheims Version*
- DV – *Dei Verbum*—Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Vatican II)
- GE – *Gravissimum Educationis*—Declaration on Christian Education (Vatican II)
- GS – *Gaudium et Spes*—Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Vatican II)
- EG – *Evangelii Gaudium*—Apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis on the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world
- ES – *Ecclesiae Sanctae*—Motu proprio by St. Paul VI (1966)
- FDR – “Fundatio Domus Recollectionis” (The Foundation of the House of Recollection) by our holy Father Founder, *Selected Writings* (Stockbridge—Warsaw, 2022)

- HC – *Heraldic Commentary on the Design of the Coat of Arms of the Congelation of Marian Fathers* (Gdańsk—Stockbridge, 2009)
- IM – *Inter Mirifica*—Decree on the Media of Social Communications (Vatican II) ”
- Instr. – *Instructiones CC. RR. Marianorum*—Marian Fathers’ Instructions (Romæ, 1959)
- J – *Journal* of Blessed George Matulatis-Matulewicz, Renovator of the Congregation (Stockbridge, 2003)
- LG – *Lumen Gentium*—Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Vatican II)
- NV – *Norma Vitæ*—First Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Fathers (1694/1698), *Selected Writings* (Stockbridge—Warsaw, 2022)
- Oblatio – “Self-Offering” (*Oblatio*) of our holy Father Founder, *Selected Writings* (Stockbridge—Warsaw, 2022)
- OE – *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*—Decree on the Catholic Churches of Eastern Rite (Vatican II)
- OT – *Optatam Totius*—Decree on priestly training (Vatican II)
- Pæn. – *Pænitemini*—Apostolic Constitution of St. Paul VI (1966)
- PC – *Perfectæ Caritatis*—Decree on Renewal of Religious Life (Vatican II)
- PO – *Presbyterorum Ordinis*—Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
- Positio – *Posnanien. Beatificationis et Canonizat. S.D. Stanislai a Iesu Maria Papczyński ...*, *Positio super Introductione Causæ et super Virtutibus* (Romæ, 1977)

- R – *The Rule of Imitation of the Ten Evangelical Virtues of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary* (Stockbridge, 2017)
- RSVCE – *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition*
- RF – *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (Basic Program of Priestly Formation, 2016)
- SC – *Sacrosanctum Concilium*—Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Vatican II)
- Testamentum I —First Testament of our holy Father Founder, *Selected Writings* (Stockbridge—Warsaw, 2022)
- Testamentum II—Second Testament of our holy Father Founder, *Selected Writings* (Stockbridge—Warsaw, 2022)
- UR – *Unitatis Redintegratio*—Decree on Ecumenism (Vatican II)
- VC – *Vita Consecrata*—Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation of St. John Paul II
- VVen – *Vita Venerabilis Servi Dei Stanislai a Iesu Maria...* (The Life of the Venerable Servant of God Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński) by Ven. Casimir Wyszyński

INTRODUCTION

EVOLUTION OF THE MARIANS' LEGISLATION

The first legislator of the Marian Institute was the Founder himself, St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński. With the intention of founding a new religious family, in the year 1671–1673 he prepared the first “Statutes” for the Marians, entitled *The Rule of Life (Norma Vitæ)*.

In this *Rule*, in addition to the goal shared with other religious institutes (“the greater increase of God’s glory, and care for your own salvation combined with serious striving for perfection”), the Marians are also instructed to pursue specific goals: spreading honor to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, supporting the souls of “the faithful departed subjected to expiatory pains” and providing assistance to pastors “in their church work” (cf. *The Rule of Life*, I, 2-3).

The Rule of Life received its first ecclesiastical approval from Bishop Stanislaus H. Świącicki on Oct. 24, 1673. The Bishop added to *The Rule* his own Statutes prescribing a strict eremitical life for the Korabiew Hermitage, the place where St. Stanislaus encountered the first candidates to his Institute. In reality, it was because of this circumstance and not the intention of our holy Father Founder that this first community of Marians began its eremitical nature, to which he had to adjust his *Rule of Life*. Soon however, as the community grew, the new Congregation began to assume an apostolic nature according to the original intent of Fr. Papczyński.

Already, during our holy Father Founder’s lifetime the laws promulgated by him for the Marians had undergone some changes as is evident in *The Rule of Life of the Clerics Recollect of the B.V. Mary conceived without stain, known also as Marians* (1687) and in *The Rule of Life of the Religious Congregation of the B.V. Mary conceived without stain, of the Marian Hermits* (1694/1698).

In 1699, by accepting *The Rule of the Imitation of the Ten Virtues of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary* (also called: *The Rule of the Ten Pleasures of the Most B.V. Mary*), the Marians obtained papal approval (acknowledged that same year by Innocent XII) and the rights to profess solemn vows. Having accepted *the Rule* the Marians were subject juridically to the authority of the Order of Friars Minor of the Observance.

On June 6, 1701, professing his solemn vows before the Apostolic Nuncio, St. Stanislaus added this clause: “I vow to observe *The Rule of the Imitation of the Most B.V. Mary* insofar as it is not contrary to our Institute,” thus intending to preserve the special character of his Institute.

The *Rule* assumed by the Marians, while enriching their Marian characteristic, was limited to the general principles of religious life. Hence it had to be supplemented by their own Constitutions, which were to provide practical norms regulating their daily life. The Constitutions entitled, *The Statutes of the Marian Fathers of the Order of the B. Virgin Mary under the title of the Immaculate Conception*, were based on the *Rule of Life*, but with an added chapter on the apostolic activity of the Marians (no longer called “Hermits”) and with certain prescripts reflecting their dependence on the authority of the Friars Minor. These *Statutes* were confirmed by Pope Innocent XIII on September 3, 1723.

In the second half of the 18th century the Congregation of the Marians (greatly) increased both in the number of its members and of its monasteries, to such an extent that its augmented progress of apostolic activities were no longer helped, but rather impeded by the norms imposed upon it by the Franciscans. Therefore, the Marians began the [legal] procedure to separate themselves from the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis of the Observance. In 1778 they published the *Statutes of the Congregation under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Marians, Clerics Regular*¹, in which every mark of their juridical

¹ “Statuta Congregationis sub tit. Immaculatæ Conceptionis Beatæ Virginis

connection with the Franciscans and the Franciscan customs that had been imposed on them, were removed. Finally, in 1786, the Congregation or Order of Marians obtained from the Apostolic See the requested separation from the Order of Friars Minor. On March 27th of the following year, Pope Pius VI approved the said Statutes (with some minor changes) as *The Constitutions of the Order of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Marians, Clerics Regular*.

In the 19th century the efforts of the Russian government, particularly intense from 1864, aiming at the suppression of religious institutes, resulted in the fact that in 1908, of the Marians enjoying full rights as Religious, there remained only one: the Superior General Fr. Vincent Sękowski (Senkus), living in Marijampole, Lithuania. In order to save the Order of the Marians from extinction, Blessed George Matulaitis-Matulewicz, with the Superior General's consent and acting in his name, secretly undertook the task of its renewal and reformation. To attain this end, he himself professed the religious vows and composed new Constitutions entitled: *The Institute of Marian Brothers under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary* according to the norms published by the Holy See in 1901. On November 28, 1910, Pope St. Pius X approved the renewed and reformed Congregation together with its new Constitutions adapted to the changed conditions and necessities of the Church by the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Religious.

Consequently, since the vows in the reformed Institute were changed from solemn to simple, the Marians were no longer obliged to observe the *Rule of the Ten Virtues* and the former Constitutions. Nonetheless, both the *Rule* and the whole spiritual patrimony of the Order of the Marians were and still are considered as very important for the spirituality of the renewed Congregation, especially since in them the Immaculate Patroness is indicated as the perennial model of evangelical perfection.

Mariæ Clericorum Regularium Marianorum". At that time the Marians were called "Regulares" as religious with solemn vows; "Congregatio... Regularium" conveyed the same meaning as "Ordo" (Order).

Blessed Archbishop George, our Renovator, prepared as Superior General a new edition of the *Constitutions*, adapting them to the norms of the 1917 *Code of Canon Law* and enriching them by numerous ascetical directions. Above all, he imbued them with his own spirit of love for the Church of Christ and of a sincere desire to serve it in every possible way. This spirit, confirmed by the testimony of other writings and the whole life of Blessed George, is a special element of the spirituality of the renewed Congregation. These *Constitutions of the Congregation of Marian Clerics Regular under the title of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary*² were approved by Pope Pius XI on Jan. 27, 1930 (precisely on the third anniversary of the death of their Author).

Because of the changed conditions, which new times brought about in the life of the world and of the Church, the Second Vatican Council recommended to all religious families to make a serious review of their way of life and laws. This renewal was supposed to bring about a renewed fidelity to the Gospel and a return to the original inspiration of the Institute, as well as a wise adaptation to the present day needs of men and to the changed conditions of this time. The work undertaken by our Congregation after the Council continued the process which had lasted for almost three centuries, particularly complementing the work already done in great measure by Blessed Archbishop George. Furthermore, the effort to bring about the “updated renewal” mandated by the authority of the Church gave our Congregation the opportunity to study and to suitably codify (express in law) the essential elements of our full spiritual patrimony, especially those handed down from our Founder and Renovator.

² In the original Latin these Constitutions are called: *Constitutiones Congregationis Clericorum Regularium Marianorum*. Later, the word “Regularium”, was omitted from the name of our Congregation (as can be seen in the 1988 edition of our *Constitutions*), because of the anachronistic connotation (we are no longer an Order—Institute of solemn vows professed according to a Rule—*Regula*, from which comes “Regularium”).

After a previous preparation—this most important work of our Congregation—was undertaken at the Special General Chapter celebrated in 1969/70. Already then, it was decided—following the advice of the supreme Authority of the Church—to divide the laws of the Congregation into two parts, namely: *Constitutions*, which are to comprise only fundamental and permanent laws, and *Directory*, comprising norms more specific and by their nature changeable, that is, if time should require adaptation.

The work of revision and composition of laws was continued in subsequent General Chapters, celebrated in 1975 and 1981. Finally, the text of the *Constitutions and Directory*, elaborated by the common effort of the whole Marian family and adjusted to the norms of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, was again reviewed and definitively approved by the extraordinary General Chapter celebrated in Rome in 1984, and then approved by the Holy See on March 25, 1986.

The General Chapters of 1999, 2005, and 2011 made further amendments and corrections to both the text of the *Constitutions* and the *Directory* of the Congregation. Following an extensive study, guided by the goal of upholding a greater fidelity to the founding charism, the 58th General Chapter, celebrated in Rome from Feb. 6-23, 2017, revised the text of the *Constitutions*. On Sept. 8, 2017, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approved the new *Constitutions*.

The 59th General Chapter, celebrated in Rome from February 6-16, 2023, during the 350th Jubilee of the founding of the Congregation of Marian Fathers, made several changes to the *Constitutions and Directory*. The most important of these was to adopt as the solemn garb “the white habit worn by our holy Father Founder in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary” (C 17). The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approved the above changes by decree of June 6, 2023.

CONSTITUTIONS

**OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

PREAMBLE—INVOCATIO DEI

*In the name of the Triune God and for His glory,
out of love and reverence for the mystery of the Immaculate
Conception of the Mother of our Savior,
under her protection and following her example,
faithful to the Holy Church,
for our sanctification and the salvation of others,
We, the Marians, accept these Constitutions
as a rule of life for living the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

PART I PATRIMONY AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE CONGREGATION

CHAPTER I NATURE, PURPOSE, SPIRITUALITY, AND CHARACTER

Character and Place of the Congregation in the Church

1 The Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary is, in the Church, an apostolic community of clerics and religious brothers as a clerical religious institute of consecrated life of pontifical right, immediately and exclusively subject to the authority of the Apostolic See in its internal government and discipline, while preserving a just autonomy of life approved by the same authority.

CIC, cann. 586 § 1; 593; VC 60; Oblatio; NV, Præfatio Informatoria; CM 1; J 23 January 1911, 12 January 1913

Essence of the Charism

2 The mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary is the essence of the charism of the Congregation and has been, from the very beginning, a particular sign, strength, and joy of the Marian vocation. From this mystery flow the identity and mission of the Congregation.

LG 65; Oblatio; NV I, 2; CM 164, Instr. I, 12

Mission

3 The Divine vision of our Congregation, imprinted by the Holy Spirit in the heart of our holy Father Founder, urges that the confreres, in the Vineyard of the Lord and with the greatest effort, devotion, and zeal: profess, proclaim, and honor the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary; assist the dying and the souls suffering in Purgatory; and spread the Kingdom of God on earth, serving Christ and the Church. The Congregation does not summarily exclude any apostolic activity but carries out its mission in every possible manner and works in cooperation with the laity. (D 1)

NV I, 2-3; FDR 6 and 9; CM 2; Instr. II, 32

Consecrated for the Glory of the Most Holy Trinity

4 Responding to the prevenient love of the Triune God, in order to bear more abundant fruit from the grace of Baptism, the confreres renounce everything and, through their religious consecration, totally devote and dedicate themselves to God the Father Almighty, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. May God truly be the center of life for the individual members and the entire Congregation.

VC 36-37; Oblatio; CM 4

Following of Christ

5 The confreres strive for their own evangelical perfection and the sanctification of others by courageously and faithfully following our Lord Jesus Christ, chaste, poor, and obedient, the Savior of the world. Meditating on the Gospel of the Lord, may the confreres contemplate His face, the face of the Redeemer, holy, innocent and unblemished, who never knew sin, yet was handed over and became our Paschal Sacrifice. May they strive

to know, love, and imitate Christ more and more with each passing day, to be imbued with and directed by the spirit of Christ, to spread the Kingdom of Christ with all their zeal and effort, and to bring Christ into everything.

PC 5; NV I, 2; CM 3; Instr. I, 12

Formed by the Holy Spirit

6 The Holy Spirit carries out Christ's mission in the world through the Church. Just as He filled Mary with holiness, He likewise bestows appropriate graces on baptized, ordained, and consecrated persons. Therefore, let the confreres frequently invoke and receive the Holy Spirit and allow themselves to be guided and shaped by Him. Let them become holy and unblemished before God, following the example of Mary. Meditating on the Word of God and discerning the signs of the times, let them strive to know and fulfill the will of God. Let them proclaim the Gospel to the whole world in the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit.

VC 19; VVen, Prologus

With Mary Immaculately Conceived

7 In the following of Christ, the Immaculate Virgin Mary assists us and shows us the way. From her conception, free from sin and full of grace and filled with the gratuitous love of the Holy Spirit, she is the fruit of the paschal victory of Christ and the first partaker of the redemption. She reveals the creative and salvific love of the Most Holy Trinity; she is the image of the new man capable of a relationship with God and others, the beginning of the new People of God and the seed of a new humanity. Contemplating the Immaculate Conception of Mary together with the whole Church, let the confreres come to know this mystery, love, profess, celebrate, and proclaim it. Let them draw inspiration from it for their spiritual life, communal life, and apostolate. By this mystery above all, Mary urges the confreres to trust in the unlimited fruitfulness of the work of redemption, to avoid all sin, to love purity of heart, to imbue life fully with divine grace and charity, and to so build up the Church in unity "that she be holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:27, RSVCE).

LG 65; Oblatio; Testamentum I; NV I, 2; CM 164; Instr. I, 12

Assistance to the Deceased and the Dying

8 The union of the living on earth with those who have fallen asleep in the peace of Christ is not interrupted. It is strengthened through the exchange of spiritual goods, which has always been the teaching of the Church. Thus, our Congregation, following the abiding faith of the Church in the communion of saints in the mystical Body of Christ and faithful to its mission, from its very beginning, greatly honors the memory of the dead and offers suffrages for them with great devotion. Therefore, the confreres should remember to aid the souls of the faithful departed suffering in Purgatory, especially by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by offering their indulgences and mortifications, by prayers and intercession, and by offering up for them their zealous deeds and other good works, for “It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins” (2 Macc 12:46, DRB). Likewise, they shall not neglect to assist the dying, who face the most critical moment of their lives, through prayers, the holy sacraments, and every form of pastoral care, bringing hope in the Divine Mercy.

LG 49-50; NV I, 2; VVen 48-49; CM 16; Instr. XVI, 8

In the Service of the Church

9 Let the confreres show the greatest care, devotion, honor, love, and sacrifice for the Church, which is the initial budding forth of the Kingdom of God on Earth and the spouse of Christ. Let them be guided by its principles and spirit, adhere faithfully to its hierarchy, and comply with its wishes and desires. Let them also serve it with all of their strength and effort and in every way possible by bravely overcoming all obstacles and dangers and not hesitating, when the necessity or the good of the Church demands it, to encounter difficulties and adversities and to expend and sacrifice themselves completely.

NV I, 3; CM 5

Out of All Nations and to All People

10 The Congregation admits with love into its fold all who are called by God and strives zealously to embrace with

its apostolate all cultures, tribes, generations, peoples, and nations. Let the confreres, following the recommendation of the superiors, be ready, with the help of God's grace, to work fruitfully in any place in the world for the good of the Church and the Congregation.

CM 6-7

Become All Things to All People

11 Let them embrace with Christian love all peoples without distinction and strive to become all things to all, in order to gain all for Christ. Let them wholeheartedly give of themselves for the good of the people among whom they live and work. Let them learn their language and prudently embrace their culture and customs. Let them strive everywhere to become good and useful laborers for the Church and society.

1 Cor 9:22; 2 Cor 8:21; CM 8

Spiritual Life and the Apostolate

12 May the confreres, open to the activity of the Holy Spirit, so strive, on the one hand, to care for their own spiritual life and evangelical perfection and, on the other, to be so dedicated to serve others and to work for their salvation that both these purposes merge into one, not hindering, but rather aiding each other.

CM 9

Characteristics of a Marian

13 Let the confreres, always open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and the power flowing from the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, confidently submit themselves to the guidance of Divine Providence. In their spiritual life and apostolate, let them draw inspiration from the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, imitate her virtues, and spread her honor. Let them embrace the Church with fervent love, zealously support the dead and the dying, and enthusiastically and joyfully proclaim the Gospel. Additionally, the Marians are characterized by mutual love and fraternal unity, a spirit of self-denial and sacrifice, diligence, hospitality, a willingness to cooperate

with the clergy and the laity, a spirit of mercy, and sensitivity to the poor and the socially disadvantaged.

NV I, 2-4; Testamentum II, 12; R; CM 10

Motto of the Congregation

14 The motto of the Congregation is: *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*.

Coat of Arms of the Congregation

15 According to tradition, the coat of arms of our Congregation consists of a baroque shield with the image of Mary, Immaculately Conceived, standing on a crescent moon and holding in her right hand the stem of a lily; Mary's foot crushes the serpent's head. Mary's head is encircled by twelve stars, while Mary's entire figure is surrounded by rays in the shape of a mandorla. A ribbon bearing the motto of the Congregation is placed under the shield. (D 2)

HC

CHAPTER II MEMBERS

Rights and Obligations

16 Joined together into one family in the name of Jesus and Mary Immaculate and subject to the common law of labor, the confreres—clerics and religious brothers—have the same rights and obligations, except for those things that result from Holy Orders and from ecclesiastical law. All enjoy active and passive voice according to the laws of the Congregation and cooperate diligently in fulfilling the mission of the Congregation.

PC 13, 15; CM 11

Attire of the Confreres

17 The white habit, which by divine inspiration our Holy Father Founder wore in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is the solemn garb

of the confreres. Daily and in the usual way, clerics may wear ecclesiastical garb according to the norms issued by the Episcopal Conference of the country where they are present. Religious brothers may wear ecclesiastical garb in the manner of the clerics according to the norms of law. In keeping with the spirit of poverty, the attire of all the confreres should be simple and modest. (D 8)

CIC, cann. 284; 669 § 2; NV, IV, 4; Testamentum II; FDR

CHAPTER III PATRON SAINTS AND SPECIAL DEVOTIONS (*DEVOTIONES PECULIARES*)

Principal Patroness

18 The titular Patroness of the Congregation is the Immaculately Conceived Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church. To her, as their Queen and Lady, very powerful Helper and most loving Mother, let them show special veneration, filial love, and devotion. Let them go to Jesus through her. Let them invoke her frequently in suppliant entreaties and run to her with the greatest confidence in all their needs. Let them contemplate her Holy and Immaculate Conception and imitate her virtues with all their strength. The titular and patronal feast of the Congregation is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (D 3)

Oblatio; Testamentum I, 4; R; CM 14

Other Patrons

19 Above all, let the confreres invoke, implore, and imitate in a special way our Father Founder St. Stanislaus, our Renovator Blessed George, our Blessed Martyrs Anthony and George, and our Servant of God Casimir. The Church has given them to us as a model of the faithful fulfillment of the Marian vocation. The Congregation also recognizes as its patrons St. Michael the Archangel, St. Joseph—the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Protector of the Church,

the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Joan of France, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Faustina, and St. John Paul II. (D 3)
NV IV, 3; CM 15

Devotiones Peculiares (Special Devotions)

20In their liturgical life centered on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, the confreres shall exercise devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, practice Marian piety, offer prayers for the dead and the dying and for the Pilgrim Church, and worship and venerate Divine Providence, the Holy Spirit, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Divine Mercy. (D 4-7, 38)

LG 66-67; NV I, 2; Testamentum II

PART II

CONSECRATED LIFE

CHAPTER I

PURSUIT OF EVANGELICAL PERFECTION

Vocation to Holiness

21 Mindful that, in the baptism of faith, they have truly been made sons of God and partakers of the divine nature, the confreres are obliged to maintain and to make perfect this holiness, which they have received from God according to the exhortation of the divine Teacher: “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48, RSVCE).
LG 40

Observance of the Evangelical Counsels

22 The holiness of the Church of Christ becomes apparent and is strengthened in a special way by the observance of the Evangelical Counsels, which, rooted in the words and examples of the Lord, are taken up gratefully by the confreres and are employed as the most apt means for the purification of their hearts and for acquiring likeness in charity to Christ and Mary Immaculate. As a consequence, let their life be for the world a visible sign of the Kingdom of Heaven—a sign which can and ought to effectively attract other Christians to the prompt fulfillment of the duties of their own vocation.
LG 44

Consecration through Vows

23 Public vows, by which, in the act of profession, confreres take upon themselves an obligation to observe the Evangelical Counsels, make more firm and stable their previous baptismal consecration to God and the Church. Simultaneously, they constitute bonds by which the professed are united in

fraternal charity with the brotherhood of the entire Congregation. Motivated by this charity, they should not only faithfully observe the evangelical vows, which they have solemnly pronounced, but should also dispose their interior and exterior lives entirely according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the laws of their own Congregation, thereby striving for the perfection proper to their state of life.

CIC, can. 598 § 2; CM 161

Mary Immaculate—Model of Virtues

24 While overcoming sin so that they may grow in holiness, the confreres should raise their eyes to Mary, who shines forth to the whole community of the elect as a model of virtues. In their apostolic ministry, inspired by the love of the Immaculate Mother for Christ and the Church and aided by her powerful intercession, they should strive to lead as many people as possible to union with God.

LG 65; R

Striving for Holiness

25 Following in the footsteps of Christ and conforming themselves to His image, faithful to the will of the Father in all things, let them devote themselves with their whole soul to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. Always holding in great esteem their own growth in perfection, let them constantly nurture in their hearts a thirst for holiness and apply themselves with persistent effort to attain it, as if always beginning anew. And, indeed, they should take great pains and use every means to advance in perfection daily, seizing every occasion for sanctifying themselves, and never considering as sufficient what they have accomplished thus far.

LG 40; CM 162

Fight Against Sin

26 Let them absolutely avoid all sin as the greatest evil; abominate, detest, and abhor it more and more each day; and eliminate it from their lives. With all their strength, let them try to diminish and annihilate the kingdom of sin

and to grieve sincerely and constantly over sins committed. Aware of their sins, let them be more humble and distrustful of themselves; more vigilant and cautious against dangers, occasions of sin and temptations; more prompt and fervent in doing penance and making reparation, in utilizing their time, in responding with love to God's love, and in striving always to have a pure conscience.

CM 163

Carry the Cross with Christ

27 Faithfully and courageously following Christ, let each one be ready, whenever necessity demands it, to suffer and endure heat, cold, thirst, hunger, lack of the necessities of life, hardships, injuries, contempt, and humiliations, as often as these would seem to contribute to the greater glory of God, the spiritual benefit of others, and the salvation of their own soul.

CM 168

Perfecting Natural Talents

28 Each member should try to form, cultivate and perfect his mind, will, heart, temperament, character, and God-given talents by solid virtues and good qualities befitting his state, so that he may become a more fitting instrument in the hands of God to whom an account of all things must be rendered.

CM 169

Cardinal Virtues

29 Together with their related virtues, they should strive after and carefully cultivate *prudence*, which is the moderator of the other virtues, pointing out to them the middle way between two extremes and taking precautions in the Lord for what must be done in order that it be right; *justice*, through which we give each his due and are well disposed not only towards ourselves, but also towards God and our neighbor; *fortitude*, by which we patiently bear adversities for the sake of the good, undertake arduous tasks, overcome difficulties, and even despise the danger of death; and *temperance*, by which we not only moderate our passions and activities, but also spurn the

greatest pleasures of the flesh for the sake of the good and even abstain from licit pleasures.

CM 170

Humility

30 As followers of Christ, who is meek and humble of heart, the confreres should make the greatest effort to acquire the spirit of humility and be its true lovers, for there is hardly any other vice that so depletes all the virtues and deprives and strips man of all justice and holiness as the evil of pride.

Mt 11:29; CM 171

Theological Virtues

31 Let *faith* inform, animate, and guide their whole life so that they may think, judge, speak, and act by the light of faith; and let it be firm, alive, and unshakable. Let them place all their *hope* and trust in God, for He is good and powerful and faithful in His promises, our exceedingly great reward in Heaven for our labors, and the one in whom we have our help and in whom we can do all things. But, above all, let them have *charity*, which is the very essence of perfection. Let them love the infinitely good God for Himself above all things and their neighbor for and in God; and let them neither seek nor use created things unless it be according to God's will, namely, insofar as they are necessary and useful for daily life, for their own perfection, for the progress of the Congregation, for the good of their neighbor, and for the glory of God.

Col 3:14; CM 172

Love of Enemies

32 Let them forgive injuries willingly; let them not return evil for evil to anyone, but rather strive to overcome evil with good; and let them pray for their enemies, persecutors, and calumniators.

Mt 5:44; Rom 12:21; CM 173

Conformity to God's Will

33 Let them strive to conform their own will entirely to God's will, submit themselves to it, and fulfill it by faithfully and generously observing the precepts of God and the Church, as well as the Evangelical Counsels and their own laws; cooperating faithfully with divine grace; attentively, discretely, and docilely following the guidance of the Holy Spirit; overcoming and enduring adversities; and patiently, bravely, and eagerly bearing their cross with Christ.

CM 174

Fulfilling One's Duties

34 Above all, let them strive, for the sake of God, to be diligent, faithful, constant, fervent, and perfect in fulfilling all the duties of their state of life, especially the ordinary ones, not excluding even the least significant.

CM 175

Industrious Life

35 The confreres should love an industrious life. They should highly prize the time given them by God and try to use it reasonably, usefully, fruitfully, properly, in an orderly way, and more meritoriously from day to day. Let them apply themselves seriously to what they are doing and see to it that they do not waste even the least bit of time in doing nothing, doing something other than what they are supposed to be doing, or doing something badly. Absolutely shunning all idleness, the source of so many evils, as long as they are in good physical health, they should keep themselves always occupied in some useful task, each one according to his strength, his natural ability, the requirements of his office, and the disposition of his Superiors.

CM 353

Work and Prayer

36 Let them carefully and diligently prepare themselves for any duty or ministry, and, having God before their eyes, let them devote themselves to any work with all their heart, with fervor and perseverance, diligently, and conscientiously, yet without doing harm to their prayer life or physical health. When anyone feels that he is overburdened with work or that,

due to a multitude of occupations, he cannot properly perform his pious exercises, he should candidly and sincerely make it known to his Superior.

CM 355

Union with God

37 In and through all things, let them be eager to aim at the closest union with God. Let them be joined to Him as much as possible, both in prayer and in all activities, and magnanimous and most generous in His service.

CM 176

Holy Zeal

38 Zeal, which is the ardor of charity, ought to fill the whole life of the confreres, and it should be:

- 1) **supernatural**: animated by a firm, lively faith and an invincible trust in God, joined with a distrust of self;
- 2) **pure**: seeking not what is one's own but only what pertains to the greater glory of God, the salvation of souls redeemed at so great a price as the blood and life of Jesus Christ, and the benefit of the Church;
- 3) **ardent and gentle**: inflamed with love for justice and hatred for evil, but gentle, knowing how to sympathize with weakness, and kind and merciful to those who go astray;
- 4) **universal**: embracing all people with a heart amplified by love, using every means at its disposal, and desiring to inflame as many as possible with the fire of love;
- 5) **prudent and well-ordered**: maturely considering and foreseeing the will of God in everything; considering the example and experience of others and also consulting experts, above all Superiors; selecting appropriate and efficacious means, considering what may bear the most fruit; proceeding in an orderly and methodical fashion; and never neglecting oneself while helping others;
- 6) **industrious and active**: seeking occasions for work when work is lacking; finding and using new and suitable means and methods to meet the new

necessities that might be brought by the changing times; not postponing what must be done; manifesting itself through good works that are adapted to the entrusted duty; and trying to do as much as possible and as well as possible;

- 7) **strong, generous, and constant:** moving him to give up his own convenience, to expend himself, to undertake great and difficult tasks, and to work and suffer tirelessly; not diverted by any adversities from the things that duty and obedience demand and rising to meet any misfortune; persevering in its efforts and bringing to completion what has been begun;
- 8) **disciplined:** never exceeding the limits of its status and office while totally and docilely subjecting itself to the guidance of Superiors.

CM 177

Fidelity to the Grace of Vocation

39 The grace of vocation is the beginning and fount of so many and such great graces, goods, and merits that each member should hold it in the greatest esteem and continuously thank God for it. Let him who has made his profession frequently enkindle this grace in his heart through the devout renewal of his vows, perseveringly cooperate with it and be faithful to it. As each one advances through the years of profession, let him strive with all his strength to make progress in the observance of the laws of the Congregation, in fraternal charity, in humility, in piety, and in obedience, as well as in other virtues and, indeed, in all perfection.

CM 106

CHAPTER II CHASTITY

For the Sake of the Kingdom of Heaven

40 By the vow of chastity, the confreres commit themselves to a life of celibacy and perfect continence for the sake

of the Kingdom of Heaven so that they may be more inflamed with love for God and men, and may readily devote themselves to the service of God and the works of the apostolate.

Mt 19:12; CIC, can. 599; PC 12; CM 214

Value of Chastity

41 Chastity consecrated to God shall be held in the highest esteem in the entire Congregation and guarded as a precious and ever-honorable gift of divine grace in the Church. The confreres, united more closely by chastity with Christ and His Virgin Mother, become a living sign of the future world, already present through faith and charity, in which the children of the resurrection neither marry nor are given in marriage.

Lk 20:35-36; PO 16

Necessary Condition

42 The confreres will be able to persevere and grow in chastity only insofar as they follow Christ as the one and only needed one and foster in themselves love for God by uniting contemplation with apostolic zeal. (D 9)

Lk 10:42, PC 5

Formation and Testing

43 Since the observance of perfect continence intimately touches the deeper inclinations of human nature, Superiors and educators should be vigilant that candidates neither approach the profession of chastity nor be admitted to it, except after a really adequate probation and unless they have attained due psychological and affective maturity. During the period of formation, students ought to be clearly and positively instructed in the teachings of the Church regarding both the excellence of evangelical chastity and the dignity of matrimony, considering them in their theological, psychological, social, and pastoral aspects so that they may accept celibacy consecrated to God as a good, serving both the integral development of their own person, and their apostolic action. (D 10-13)

PC 12

CHAPTER III POVERTY

Evangelical Poverty

44 Evangelical poverty, which is a participation in the poverty of Christ and His witness to the world, should be held in great esteem by the confreres as a foundation of the religious life. Following Christ, who became poor for our sake, and Mary, who shines forth among the lowly and poor of the Lord, the confreres, abandoning earthly possessions and excluding every inordinate attachment to them, should aim at seeking the Kingdom of God with greater eagerness, for “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3).

2 Cor 8:9; LG 42, 55; PC 13; CM 220

Poor in Fact and in Spirit

45 Adhering to God alone and trusting in His providence and goodness, the confreres should be content with the necessities of life and should rejoice if they ever truly happen to experience indigence and privations. Let them remove far from themselves every form of avarice, not use anything as their own, and not keep in their possession anything superfluous. With holy prudence, they should be inclined to prefer privation to abundance and to select things that are lesser for their personal use. The confreres should always remember that, for true poverty, it is not enough to be subject to the Superiors in the use of goods; they should also be poor in fact and in spirit, having their treasures in Heaven.

Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33; PC 13; CM 233-235

Extent of the Vow

46 By the vow of poverty, the confreres renounce the right to dispose licitly of any temporal thing that has material value and to use it without the permission of their lawful Superiors. (D 14-16)

CIC, can. 600; CM 221

Ownership of Goods

47 Every temporarily or perpetually professed member retains the ownership of his goods and the capacity to acquire other goods legitimately, but he may not add their profits to his patrimony. However, because all professed members renounce the free administration of their goods by virtue of the vow of poverty, they ought to cede this administration to whomever they wish before their first profession, being free to arrange for the use of goods and revenues as they see fit. Moreover, before perpetual profession, they should draw up their last will and testament, valid in civil law, concerning their present possessions and those they may inherit.

CIC, can. 668 § 1; CM 77, 79, 221-222

Changing Cession, Disposition, and Will

48 The confreres may change the cession of the administration of their temporal goods, the disposition of their use and revenues, and their last will and testament (acts mentioned in C 47), however, not arbitrarily, but only for a just reason and with the permission of their Major Superior.

CIC, can. 668 § 2; CM 225-226

Renunciation of Patrimony

49 After perpetual profession, confreres, with the consent of the Superior General and his Council, may totally renounce any patrimony which they have acquired or may acquire, especially in favor of the poor, so that, following the Gospel exhortation, they may be able to imitate Christ more closely.

Mt 19:21; CIC, can. 668 § 4; PC 13; ES II, 24

Acquiring Goods for the Congregation

50 Whatever a professed religious acquires by his personal endeavor, either as payment for his work or as a gift offered him in view of the community or one of its goals, and legitimately accepted, is acquired as a benefice of the Congregation. Likewise, whatever a member may obtain as pension, grant, or insurance is acquired on behalf of the Congregation. (D 17-20)

CIC, can. 668 § 3; CM 222-224

Common Witness to Poverty

51 In addition to the individual poverty of its confreres, the Congregation itself, taking into account local conditions, should strive to give, to some extent, a corporate witness to poverty. Avoiding every appearance of luxury, of excessive profit, and of the accumulation of goods, the Congregation should contribute something of its own goods to other needs of the Church and to the support of the poor, whom the confreres should love, both by Gospel mandate and apostolic admonition, not in word or in speech, but in deed and in truth. (D 21-22)

Mt 19:21-25; 25:34-36; 1 Jn 3:18; PC 13

Adornments of Poverty

52 As becomes those who have professed poverty, they should apply due diligence in caring for and protecting the community's domestic property and preserving the things that have been given for their use whole, neat, and for as long as possible, prudently striving after thrift on the one hand and avoiding miserliness on the other. Indeed, the adornments of their poverty should be order, cleanliness, neatness, religious moderation, and simplicity in all things, and especially Christian sensitivity and liberality for all those in need.

CM 238

Solicitude of Superiors

53 Superiors, with fatherly concern and utmost care, should, insofar as possible, adequately satisfy the legitimate needs of the confreres in accord with each one's age, health, duties, and other conditions, and without favoritism. Let them willingly listen to the requests and wishes of the confreres, and let them receive from each one a proper accounting of money and the administration of other goods. Moreover, in their decisions and permissions, especially those of a general character, concerning things allowed for the use of the confreres, let them be vigilant that nothing creeps in that is contrary to poverty, the common good, or the character and goals of the Congregation.

CM 237, 286

Handling of Money

54 All funds, deeds, and securities must be placed in a common safe; a free disposition of funds is prohibited to individuals; and Superiors do not have the right to permit or tolerate such a disposition. Individual confreres are permitted to have a small amount of money for frequently occurring expenses, for which they are obliged to render an account to the Superiors.

CM 238

CHAPTER IV OBEDIENCE

Scope of Obedience

55 The confreres, already consecrated to God by baptism and inspired by the Holy Spirit, offer to God in a special way, by the vow of evangelical obedience, a total surrender of their own will as a self-sacrifice and thereby unite themselves with greater constancy and security to the saving will of God.

PC 14; CM 194

Imitation of Christ

56 Just as our Lord and Master Jesus Christ did not come into the world to do His own will but the will of His Father and, “taking the form of a servant” (Phil 2:7) in submission to His Father, ministered to the brothers and surrendered his life as a ransom for many, in like manner, the confreres submit themselves in faith to the Superiors as God’s representatives and are guided by them in the service of all the brothers in Christ.

Mt 20:28; PC 14; CM 195

Like the Handmaid of the Lord

57 Imitating the life of Christ and participating in the mystery of His redemption, the confreres should keep before their eyes Mary, the humble handmaid of the Lord, who, in the Church, is a model of perfect union with Christ. For, under Him and with Him, serving the mystery of redemption, she became by her obedience the cause of salvation for herself, as well as for the whole human race.

Lk 1:38. 48; LG 56, 63

In Service of the Church

58 In submitting to the universal government of the Supreme Pontiff, whom they are also obliged to obey by virtue of the vow of obedience, as well as to the pastoral authority of the bishops according to the norm of universal law, the members should be convinced that, in this way, they are more strictly bound to the service of the Church and respond more profoundly to their own apostolic vocation.

CIC, can. 590; LG 45; CM 484, 488

Extent of the Vow

59 In a spirit of faith and love for God's will, the confreres assume through the vow of obedience the obligation to fulfill the commands and dispositions of the legitimate Superiors in those things that pertain to religious life in the Congregation according to its laws. (D 23)

PC 14; CM 196, 199

Dependence on Superiors

60 The confreres will depend with docility on the Superiors for the following: the order of pious exercises and occupations, duties, and offices; contacts with non-members; public mortifications; studies; and the undertaking of any more important ministry or work for their neighbor, whether inside or outside the Congregation.

CIC, can. 671; CM 202

Humble, Active, and Responsible Obedience

61 The confreres should make an effort to acknowledge their Superiors as ones who minister to the fraternal community while showing humble deference to them according to the norms of the *Constitutions*. Moreover, they should hold in the highest esteem an active and responsible obedience as the principle means to maintain the unity, solidity, and vigor of the entire Congregation. (D 24-29, 179)

PC 14; CM 194, 207, 210

Supernatural Obedience

62 They should not consider the one whom they obey, but rather the one on whose account they ought to show perfect obedience, namely, Jesus Christ the Son of God, “obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). Let them be guided by this expression of the Apostle: “[be obedient] not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph 6:6).

CM 208

Responsibility of Superiors

63 The Superiors, who will have to render an account for the souls entrusted to them, should first try to understand well and have a love for the will of God, which they are to reveal to others in a spirit of brotherly service, as it relates both to the entire Congregation and to each one of the members over whom they preside.

Heb 13:17; PC 14; J 25 January 1911

Manner of Governing the Community

64 Following in the footsteps of the Divine Master and Good Shepherd and sharing in the motherly love of the Immaculate Virgin, let the Superiors govern the community with reverence for both the human person and the Christian dignity of each of the confreres, prompting them by word and example to a willing obedience and to a united effort for the common good. In the spirit of true equality and kindness, let them strive to treat all as companions and brothers, so as to express the charity with which God loves them and to prompt their hearts and minds to reciprocal love of God in faithful service. (D 30-31, 180)

CIC, can. 618; PC 14; CM 213

Formation for Co-responsibility

65 From the very beginning of their religious life, all the confreres should be formed in a spirit of active and responsible obedience so that, as Superiors or as members of any community, Council, or Chapter, they may be ready

and able to cooperate in a bond of charity for the good of the Congregation and the entire Church.

PC 14; J 17 November 1910, 25 January 1911, 07 March 1911

CHAPTER V SOURCES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Cultivating the Spiritual Life

66 The confreres should, above all else, seek and love God, who first loved us, and should strive in all circumstances to foster a life hidden with Christ in God, which is the source and stimulus of love for their neighbor, for the sake of the salvation of the world, and the building up of the Church. Although charity is a gift from God, it is obtained and preserved, nevertheless, by constancy in prayer and mortification. For this reason, the confreres should, with constant effort, cultivate the spirit of prayer and prayer itself, drawing on authentic sources of Christian spirituality.

1 Jn 4:10; Col 3:3; PC 6; NV II, 1

Reading and Meditating on Sacred Scripture

67 Desiring to live according to the pattern of the Gospel, let the confreres have at hand daily, above all, Sacred Scripture so that, by reading and meditating on it, they may learn “the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord” (Phil 3:8). Let them keep in mind that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture so that a conversation may take place between God and man, for we speak to Him when we pray and we listen to Him when we read God’s word.

DV 25; PC 6

Sacred Liturgy

68 The confreres should love with all their heart the sacred liturgy, by which God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified; they shall imbue their whole interior life with its spirit. For Christ is present in the sacred liturgy by His power and in His word, as He promised, saying, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst

of them” (Mt 18:20). The liturgy is also the summit toward which the apostolic activity of the Church is directed; at the same time, it is the fount from which all its power flows.

(D 32-34)

SC 7, 10, 17

Marian Devotion

69 Each day, in a special way, they should venerate the Immaculate Virgin Mary and should strive to be imbued with her spirit. Both in the life of the Congregation and in the works of the apostolate, let them generously promote, particularly through the liturgy, veneration of her as the Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church.

LG 67

Celebrating the Sacred Liturgy

70 Let the confreres, according to the mind of the Church, with interior and exterior piety, celebrate the sacred liturgy, in which Jesus Christ fulfills His priestly office while, by visible signs, the sanctification of men comes to be, especially in the mystery of the Eucharist, which is the bond of unity and charity. Let them also strengthen their spiritual life, drawing from this richest fount. (D 35)

PC 6; SC 7

Receiving the Sacrament of Penance

71 The confreres, striving for union with God, should frequently approach the Sacrament of Penance in order to obtain pardon from God’s mercy for the offenses committed against Him and, at the same time, to be reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins, and to be confirmed more and more in the love and grace of the Father of Mercies. (D 36-37)

CIC, can. 664; LG 11; PO 18; CM 245

Competence of the Major Superiors Regarding the Faculty to Hear Confessions

72 The Major Superior is competent to confer upon any priest the faculty to hear the confessions of his own subjects and of those others living day and night in the house or residence. Superiors are not to hear the confessions of subjects unless the members request it on their own initiative. Superiors are to recognize the due freedom of their members regarding the sacrament of penance and spiritual direction. Superiors are to be concerned that suitable confessors are available to the members, to whom the members can confess frequently.

CIC, cann. 630 §§ 1-4; 968 § 2; 969 § 2; CM 260, 262-265

Restriction Regarding Formation Houses

73 A Novice Master and his associate, the Prefect of Students, and the Rector of a house of studies or of a college are not to hear the sacramental confessions of the students resident in the same house, unless the students request it in individual cases and of their own accord.

CIC, can. 985; CM 261

Appointment of Confessors

74 So as to better provide for the spiritual life of larger communities and especially houses of formation, more numerous confessors, in proportion to the number of members, are to be assigned to them; they are to be, if possible, priests of the Congregation who are endowed with learning, prudence, and piety.

CIC, can. 630 § 3; CM 258, 266

Confessor and Spiritual Director

75 The confreres should bear in mind that they will profit greatly in the spiritual life under the guidance of a good confessor who is experienced in the religious life. For this reason, they should not rashly seek various confessors, especially outside the Congregation. Each one should take care to have a permanent spiritual director to whom he renders an account of his conscience and spiritual life, especially on the occasion of retreats, and to whose direction, as to one

who takes the place of Christ, he confidently and docilely commits himself.

CM 246, 269

Sacraments of the Sick

76 The Superiors are to see to it that a confessor is called for the sick and the aged in due time and as frequently as they desire it and that they receive holy Viaticum and the anointing of the sick while in full possession of their mental faculties.

CIC, can. 1001; CM 400-401

CHAPTER VI

LIFE OF PRAYER AND PIETY

Right Intention

77 The confreres are to be directed by a right and pure intention, which they should strive to renew frequently, that is, to seek God in all things, to do all things out of love for God, to please God in all things, and to refer everything—through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ—to God and His greater glory.

CM 240-241

Liturgical Actions and Pious Exercises

78 All should hold in highest regard liturgical actions and pious exercises, which are the principal nourishment of the spiritual life and instruments of perfection. Their importance and purpose should be fully known to the members, who must strive to learn the theoretical and practical aspects of their method, performance, and application, so that they may be able to use them to their own advantage and also to instruct others who seek perfection. In the use of pious exercises, however, they are to observe the holy freedom of the sons of God and should strive to grow to the highest degree of intimacy with Him. (D 38)

CM 256

Daily Practices

79 Daily, they should zealously perform the following liturgical actions and pious exercises:

- 1) the priests will offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice, while the others, insofar as possible, participate in it and receive the most holy Body of Christ;
- 2) they will visit and adore the Lord Himself present in the Blessed Sacrament;
- 3) priests and deacons will recite in a dignified manner the Liturgy of the Hours, while the others are to recite some part of it as defined in the Provincial Statutes, but they may also fulfill this prayer requirement in some other manner, as prescribed in the same Statutes; in the morning, at midday, and evening, they should recite, insofar as possible in common, suitable parts of the Liturgy of the Hours, followed by the Marian prayers;
- 4) they will devote half an hour to mental prayer;
- 5) they will make an examination of conscience twice a day;
- 6) they will devote a suitable amount of time to spiritual reading;
- 7) they will pray one part of the Rosary, devoutly meditating on the respective mysteries;
- 8) they will pray before and after meals.

CIC, cann. 276 § 2; 663 §§ 2-4; SC 96, 99; CM 242

Purpose of Pious Practices

80 Through pious exercises and customary practices, as well as by monthly and annual retreats or spiritual exercises to be made according to the norm of the *Directory* (Part II, Ch. VI), they should constantly strive to raise their minds to God and direct their attention to Him so as to know and contemplate Him better; be intimately united with God by affection and with their hearts so as to love Him more, take pleasure in Him and enjoy Him; conform themselves by their will to the will of God and become more prompt from day to day to serve their beloved God; and, finally, foster and augment constantly in themselves the love of God and neighbor. (D 39-41)

CM 249, 252, 257

Devotional Renewal of Vows

81 The confreres should not neglect the pious practice of frequently renewing their vows. All shall renew their vows solemnly and in community on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They should do it privately and individually, at least as often as they are on their monthly retreat.

CM 251

Concern of Superiors

82 Superiors should provide confreres with adequate free time for pious exercises so that no one is deprived of his spiritual reading and prayer, especially mental prayer. Among the confreres, they should, with great eagerness, promote piety and fidelity in the sacramental and spiritual life, especially a full and, whenever possible, common participation in the Eucharist. They should guard against introducing into the community pious exercises or particular devotions that do not favor true progress in the prayer life of the confreres.

CM 254

Preaching the Word of God to the Confreres

83 For the preaching of the Word of God to confreres in our churches or oratories, the permission of the Major Superior, or at least the local Superior, is required.

CIC, can. 765

Prayers for the Living

84 The confreres should frequently pray for holy Mother Church and the Supreme Pontiff; the conversion of sinners; the expansion and unity of the Church; the diocesan bishop and all the clergy; their own Superiors, confreres and students; and the entire Congregation and its benefactors. In addition, for these same intentions, they should frequently offer up to God their customary prayers, mortifications, and other good works. (D 42-44)

CM 410

Prayers for the Deceased

85 In their prayers, all should commend to the Divine Mercy both their deceased confreres and all the faithful departed. Moreover, confreres should show solicitude to gain indulgences granted by the Church and, as much as possible, offer them for the souls detained in Purgatory. (D 45-53)

CM 416, 418

Prayer of the Superior

86 The Superior is obliged to pray frequently for the confreres who are entrusted to him and to offer one or more Masses for them. (D 54-56)

CHAPTER VII

PENANCE AND MORTIFICATIONS

Necessity of Penance

87 The confreres should wholeheartedly embrace penance as a turning away from the allurements of sin and a turning toward God, lest the old man prevail in them over the new man, “created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Eph 4:24). They should be persuaded that the Kingdom of Christ can only be entered by way of *metanoia*, that is, by that intimate change of the whole man, through which he begins to think, judge, and arrange his life in the light of the sanctity and charity of God, which, in these last days, are manifested in the Son and are fully communicated to us.

Heb 1:2; Pæn. I

Purpose of Mortification

88 Through the constant practice of mortification, they should strive to remove, purify, and subdue whatever is inordinate in human nature in order that nothing immoderate and undisciplined may remain in them so that, having become masters of themselves, they may direct and make use of all their God-given powers for pursuing some suitable good.

CM 166

External Mortifications

89 The confreres have the obligation, first of all, to perform the penitential practices prescribed for all the faithful in the universal and local Church. Each one should also assume other external mortifications that the striving for his own perfection and prudent zeal would suggest, and their practice should not be neglected since they are greatly helpful for progressing in the spiritual life. However, mortifications that are harmful to one's health or one's duties are forbidden.

CM 271

Internal Mortification

90 Without neglecting the external mortification of their bodies and senses, the confreres should apply themselves above all to internal mortification by mitigating and restraining their passions, concupiscence, affections, desires, and inclinations and by keeping constant watch over their thoughts, imagination, and heart.

CM 273

Overcoming Oneself

91 Especially, let each confrere strive to restrain inordinate self-love, which is the cause of all sin, by courageously and continually conquering himself. Having forsaken all things, even his very self, let each one deny and overcome his inordinate beliefs and desires, so that, dead to himself and the world, he may live entirely for Christ. For him, Christ should replace everything, and he should not hesitate to expend himself completely for Christ and His Church.

CM 167

Burden of Work

92 Each one should willingly accept whatever work or office that is entrusted to him or that falls to him for the common or particular good. He should not consider any occupation unworthy of himself if it is useful and honest, looking attentively at the example of Jesus Christ working with His own hands and of so many saints who considered it a joy to do even humble tasks.

CM 276

Hardships of Life

93 In the spirit of penance, they should, in the Lord, bravely, patiently, and readily endure life's hardships, the weariness, annoyances, and difficulties of their labors, occupations and offices, bodily pains and infirmities, tribulations of the soul, persecutions of the world, and any other crosses that God permits.

CM 277

Temperance and Sobriety

94 Food is to be simple and frugal, but sufficient and healthful. Both the quality and quantity of the meals are to be regulated in accord with local customs, with allowances made for work, health, or greater need. At all times and everywhere, confreres should strive for temperance and sobriety; ordinarily, they are to abstain from alcoholic drinks. Especially forbidden is the use of tobacco, except for a weighty reason and with the special written permission of the Major Superior. (D 57)

CM 236, 274

PART III

COMMON LIFE

CHAPTER I

COMMON LIFE IN GENERAL

One Body and One Spirit

95 All should highly esteem and cultivate the establishment of common life as the source of all spiritual good; they should strive to animate it with the spirit of God's family, fraternal charity, holy and true friendship, cordiality, and mutual solicitude and solidarity. They should be one body and one spirit, just as they are called in the one hope of their vocation.

Eph 4:4; CM 278

Observance of Common Life

96 Common life in the houses of the Congregation, with regard to common prayer, the apostolate, meals, living conditions, and the entire manner of life, is to be exactly observed by all. Therefore, no one is to be easily exempted from any common exercise nor, all the more, be allowed to remain alone outside the community for a longer time.

(D 58-59)

PC 15; CM 279

Lengthy Absence from the House

97 A Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, may permit a member to live outside a religious house, but for no more than one year, except for the purpose of caring for ill health, studies, or exercising an apostolate in the name of the Congregation.

CIC, can. 665 § 1; CM 280

CHAPTER II

FRATERNAL CHARITY AND CARE OF THE SICK

Gift and Precept of Charity

98 Charity, which “has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5) and by which we are united with Christ through baptism and participation in the Eucharist, is to be extended by the members to all their confreres with whom they are united by the same vocation and the same manner of life. Reciprocal fraternal charity is the soul of common life and of all that occurs in the Congregation; they should foster it among themselves by mind, heart, and deed, anticipating one another in showing respect, deference and forgiveness; correcting one another in the Lord; and inspiring one another to good.

PC 15; NV II, 4; CM 288, 292

One Heart

99 Like the early Church in which the multitude “of those who believed were of one heart and soul” (Acts 4:32), the confreres, forgetful of self, should live not only with others, but also for others, in a spirit of fraternal service. May they bring assistance, service, defense, and consolation to one another. With united forces and counsels, they should harmoniously and unanimously strive in fraternal cooperation to attain the purposes of the Congregation. Let each confrere rejoice in the successful result of the work of the others, and let him assist them so that they may fully refine their talents in God’s service. (D 60)

PC 15; NV II, 4; CM 288

Special Care

100 Special care is to be given to the sick, elderly, or disabled confreres. All, especially the Superiors, are to embrace them with love and care and are to strive to provide them such conditions that they may always feel useful. (D 61-67)

CM 394

Understanding and Tolerance

101 Carrying one another's burdens, the members should patiently bear with the faults and weaknesses of their confreres, which are inevitable in human life. In charity, they should try to understand and tolerate the opinions that are different from their own, as well as other disagreements that arise from the diversity of character, age, or nationality. In this way, let the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace be preserved in the Congregation. (D 68-71)

Gal 6:2; Eph 4:3

Union Among the Houses, Provinces and Vicariates

102 Throughout the whole Congregation, between the principal house and all the Provinces, Vicariates and houses and between these same reciprocally, the closest union, agreement and harmony and the greatest charity should reign. This should be fostered by frequent contact, communication, and notification of what is being done and is edifying, and by the works to be undertaken in common. If an opportunity for helping other houses, Vicariates, or Provinces should occur, the confreres should not be found wanting in the duty of charity.

CM 295

Hospitality

103 Let them show great charity to the confreres coming from other houses. They should offer them loving hospitality, counsel and aid them in expediting their affairs, and also assist them if they are in need. The guests, on their part, should strive to show gratitude toward their confreres and, by the example of their life, to leave behind in the house an incentive for them to strive after perfection.

CM 289

Facing a Vocational Crisis

104 If it happens that a confrere undergoes a crisis in his vocation, the community is obliged to offer him the necessary help to overcome the crisis.

CHAPTER III

GUIDELINES FOR SAFEGUARDING DISCIPLINE AND RECOLLECTION

Observance of Discipline

105 Each and every member, especially Superiors, according to his particular duty, should contribute to the welfare and progress of every house by the proper establishment of common life. For, when proper organization, order, and the observance of discipline, religious spirit, devotion, and fervor reign, the confreres will have efficacious help for their spiritual life, especially in acquiring self-mastery and attaining solid maturity. Indeed, the very works of the apostolate, which they assume, will rest upon a trustworthy and solid foundation. (D 72-74)

OT 11; CM 332, 737

Common Responsibility and Collaboration

106 Conscious of their responsibility for the good of the house, confreres should maintain careful diligence in observing the established daily order, fulfilling their duties, rendering prescribed accounts, and making reports. In fact, the Superiors should help them in the faithful fulfillment of their functions by promoting and fostering the harmonious collaboration of all, and they should see to it that matters of greater importance be discussed by the entire community. It is, however, up to the Superior with his Council to decide what is to be done. (D 72, 75-76)

GS 26; PC 14; CM 321

Continuous Recollection

107 Leading a life of recollection, we acknowledge, worship, and bless God present everywhere, and we conduct ourselves modestly, faithfully, and piously in His sight, as it is fitting for sons to conduct themselves in the presence of the Father. Let us strive to contemplate God in all creatures “for ‘In him we live and move and have our being’” (Acts 17:28).

NV, V, I

Religious Silence

108 Knowing that moderation in speech is a guardian of recollection and that it greatly favors the spirit of prayer, the confreres should not speak unless usefulness, human kindness, or charity require it. All should take to heart not to disturb any confrere at prayer, work, or rest. Let them avoid every kind of noisiness in the house, and let them see to it that religious tranquility prevails. (D 77-78)

CM 310, 312

Cloister

109 That religious life may be lived more easily in a spirit of recollection, some part of the building in each house is to be reserved for the confreres. (D 79)

CIC, can. 667 § 1; CM 296

Relations with Non-members

110 In receiving guests in the religious house as well as making visits outside the house, let them be led by the spirit of love for their neighbor and, at the same time, of religious decency, and they should see to it that, through these visits, no idle or dangerous close relationships be entered into or fostered. For receiving guests and for making visits and conducting business outside the house, the permission of the Superior is usually to be requested. General permission is to be given to those members whose office or some other just cause demands it.

CM 298, 300-304, 740

Recreation

111 Every day some free time should be foreseen in the daily order to renew one's strength for new work. Recreation should benefit not only the body, but also the soul and should nourish and foster mutual love among the confreres. Peace, cheerfulness, and also joy in the Lord are recommended to all. (D 80)

ES II, 26; CM 313-314

CHAPTER IV DEALINGS WITH HUMAN SOCIETY

Natural and Spiritual Love

112 The confreres should treat everyone with the same charity by which they are mutually united. They should be mindful that they were called to the Congregation to serve all people more efficiently by prayer and work. They should endeavor to convert the natural love for their relatives, fellow-countrymen, and fatherland into a spiritual love.

CM 192; Instr. I, 24-25; J 25 October 1910

Contacts with Family

113 They should consider their parents and relatives, whom they have left behind for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, as entrusted to themselves in the Lord in a special way. They should always remember with gratitude the benefits received from them, visit them according to the customs existing in the Province or the Vicariate, and, in case of necessity, with the permission of the Superiors, they should help them and commend their health and needs to God in prayer.

CM 192

Friends, Co-workers, and the Poor

114 Let them take care to preserve friendships and to establish a familiar acquaintance with those who, by good works, can be of help to the Church and the Congregation. They should indeed take care to show gratitude to their benefactors as well as their co-workers. To the workers that have been hired, they should not neglect to pay an honest and just wage, treating them in a friendly manner as well as caring for their spiritual good. Moreover, let them strive to preserve peace and goodwill with all and to consider, always and everywhere, the poor and unfortunate as their special concern in the Lord.

GS 67; AG 17; CM 192, 565

International Affairs and Politics

115 In relation to local government, civil offices, and persons in authority, unless they impose something unjust, let the confreres strive to be compliant. Let them show due respect and goodwill to all nations, especially the one in which they conduct their work. They are not to involve themselves in political or national parties or to participate in their agitations in any way; let them be above and beyond politics and political parties; let their party always and everywhere be that of Christ and the Church.

CM 180, 191-192; Instr. II

Meriting the Esteem of People

116 Out of love for God and the Congregation, let the confreres strive to conduct themselves in such a way that, in all things and among all people, they may appear blameless in every respect and may always merit esteem and a good name on the part of the people, according to these words of the Lord: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16). (D 81-82)

CM 178-186, 193

Bringing the Peace of Christ

117 In dealing with others, let them be human and simple, but cautious, circumspect, and prudent; in speech let them observe moderation and discretion as well as frankness and truthfulness. Let them beware of speaking evil about anyone or of injuring his good name; let them not introduce into their conversations anything that may divide minds, but let them try, to the best of their ability, to bring the Kingdom of Christ and the peace of Christ among all, foster and promote harmony and a sense of fraternity, and work for the salvation of all.

CM 182, 189-191

Practice of Social Virtues

118 Humility, gentleness, modesty, politeness, and kindness, as well as religious maturity and seriousness combined with affability are to adorn the confreres, so that, by

their exterior bearing and decorum, they may set an example for others, edify those who meet and approach them, and render their ministry more efficacious.

CM 187

PART IV

APOSTOLATE

CHAPTER I

CHARACTER AND ELEMENTS OF THE APOSTOLATE

Apostolic Nature of the Congregation

119 According to our holy Father Founder's original plan, apostolic activity belongs to the very nature of our Congregation. Therefore, the entire life of its members should be imbued with an apostolic spirit, and all apostolic activity should be marked by the spirit of our religious life. All apostolic activities should always flow from an interior union with God, which should ground it and deepen it.

CIC, can. 675 §§ 1-2; NV I, 3

Obligation

120 The whole community of the Church is "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pt 2:9), and each of its members, by the reception of Baptism and Confirmation, has a duty imposed by God to cooperate with Christ in His salvific mission. The confreres, by virtue of their religious consecration or also Holy Orders, are all the more obligated to fulfill this duty.

LG 9, 33; AA 3

Goal of the Apostolate

121 They should be prepared for every good work according to the spirit and norm of the *Constitutions*, but they should mostly direct their efforts where they hope to do more for the glory of God and the benefit of the Church; where they see the opportunity to obtain a greater, more universal, and longer-lasting good and more abundant fruits; and where the need is greater and more urgent. (D 83-85)

CM 350; Instr. I, 18, 22, 25

Marian Element

122 In carrying out their special apostolic mission, let the confreres, gazing at the Immaculate Virgin Mary, contemplate her as the perfect work of God, the best fruit of Christ's redemption, and, therefore, the universal model of Christian life. They should also strive to lead the faithful, under the guidance of the Church, to acknowledge the excellence of the Mother of God, and they should strive to prompt them to a filial love of this Mother of Mercy as well as to the imitation of her virtues.

LG 67; R

Eschatological Element

123 At opportune occasions and using various means of the apostolate, the confreres should strive to inculcate eschatological truths in the minds of the faithful in such a way that they may be strongly spurred by those truths both to attain to sanctity and to offer prayers for the dying and for the souls detained in Purgatory.

LG VII; NV I, 2; Instr. XVI, 6

Freedom and Obedience

124 In performing works of the apostolate, let the confreres both be able to act with the freedom of the sons of God and a sense of responsibility for the tasks entrusted to them, as well as join personal initiative with perfect obedience to Superiors and collaboration with their own community.

J 25 January 1911

Apostolate by Example

125 First of all, they should strive to exercise the apostolate in the spirit of their own Marian vocation by their personal example of total and profound Christian honesty and virtue, by their piety, lively faith, ardent charity, and good works, and by the collective witness of unity, justice, mutual benevolence, and joyfulness given by the entire religious community. They should expect no other reward for their apostolic works than Jesus Christ, who is our exceedingly great reward.

CM 351; Instr. I, 20; J 27 October 1910

Suitable Means

126 To attain their ends, they should use flexible and suitable means, namely, those that are more recommended by the practice of the Church and the experience of experts; those that are better suited to the signs of the times, to the conditions of persons, to the circumstances of places and to the needs of the Church; and those that seem to be more useful and efficacious.

CM 349

Action through Others

127 Let the Congregation take special care both to encourage whomever possible to good conduct and to reach others through persons of good will, especially through associations recommended by the Church. (D 86)

CM 351

Marian Fathers' Associations

128 Within the Congregation of Marian Fathers exist the Association of Marian Helpers and the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Their members, living in the world, participate in the spirit and mission of the Congregation and, under the Congregation's overall direction, lead an apostolic life and strive for Christian perfection. (D 87)

CIC, can. 303

***Viri Aggregati* (Aggregated Members)**

129 Let the Congregation care for the clergy and laymen dedicated to it. Let it ensure that they be joined more closely with it so that the Congregation may take advantage of their help in its apostolic works and share its spiritual goods with them. *Viri aggregati* are governed by their own Statutes approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. Major Superiors may permit some co-workers who make opportune promises, according to the rights and obligations defined for them beforehand, some participation in the common life and in the pious exercises of a religious house.

CM 13

Industriousness

130 Let the confreres set their hearts on an industrious life, and let them strive to be usefully occupied at all times so as to bear the most abundant apostolic fruits. The confreres should strive for perfection in fulfilling their duties and offices, in directing their institutions, and in accomplishing works undertaken for the glory of God and the benefit of their neighbor.

CM 354; Instr. I, 44

Union with Clergy

131 They should strive to preserve unity in the bond of peace and charity with the hierarchy and with the entire clergy and cooperate with them in promoting the Catholic cause. They should treat the clergy and religious communities and persons with great reverence, respect, and benevolence. They should defend all of them, show them brotherly deference, and, upon request, give them spiritual help to the extent that they are able. (D 88)

CM 352

In the Spirit of Obedience

132 The confreres are obliged to observe the laws, decrees, and ordinances promulgated by the diocesan bishop regarding various works; they are subject to his authority in matters concerning the care of souls, the public exercise of divine worship and other works of the apostolate; they should show him sincere submission and reverence. In exercising an external apostolate, religious are also subject to their own Superiors and must remain faithful to the discipline of the Institute.

CIC, can. 678 §§ 1-2; ES I, 25, §1

CHAPTER II

INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION OF YOUTH

Importance and Forms of Education

133 The confreres should be mindful of the fact that the apostolate of education is of paramount importance and that it exercises an ever-mounting influence on the social progress of this age. They should do their best to see that instruction in their schools and institutes is given with the greatest diligence, with knowledge of the matter and skill, according to the prescribed program of studies and the directives of the Superiors, with observance of the rules of sound pedagogy, and especially that it be based on Catholic religious principles. Let them be open also to the use of new techniques of education, both in schools and outside of them, so that the youth might attain to an integrated perfection of the human person and contribute effectively to the good of human society.

GE Pref., 3,4; CM 360

Well-Rounded Education

134 Students should be instructed in such a way that they would know how to regard the world with eyes illumined by faith and be willing to live according to the principles of faith. Paramount attention should be paid in their schools to religious and moral instruction. They should strive with unremitting care to refine the intellectual faculties of the students, develop their capacity for right judgment, introduce them into the cultural patrimony acquired by past generations, promote a sense of values, prepare them for professional life, foster a disposition toward mutual understanding among students of diverse backgrounds, build a stable character, fortify them beforehand against the dangers of the world, and lead them gently into the practice of Christian virtues and piety.

GE 5; CM 361

Catechetical Instruction

135 A great concern of the Church is catechetical instruction, which gives clarity and vigor to faith, nourishes a life according to the spirit of Christ, leads to a conscious and active

participation in the liturgical mystery, and spurs to apostolic action. Superiors and pastors should show as much solicitude as possible that confreres and lay people be given proper preparation for the function of teaching Christian doctrine.

GE 4; CM 362

CHAPTER III

USE OF INSTRUMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

Importance; Prudent and Cautious Use

136 Daily, astonishing technical inventions offer new and powerful aids to social communication for the spreading and strengthening of God's Kingdom and for the relaxation and refinement of hearts and minds. In accord with the mind of the Church, the confreres should zealously make use of the various instruments of social communication and propagate them so that the world may be more easily evangelized, keeping in mind, however, what is prescribed in the *Directory* (Part II, Ch. II; Part III, Ch. III) as to their prudent and cautious use.

CIC, can. 666; IM 1-2

Apostolate of the Press

137 The Catholic press should be fostered. Through it, the confreres should form, strengthen, and advance public opinions in harmony with natural law and with Catholic teachings and precepts, as well as publicly make known and correctly explain news about the life of the Church and the nations. (D 89-90)

IM 14

Writing and the Arts

138 The confreres who have the appropriate talent should also devote themselves, as far as possible, to writing books and practicing the finer arts in order to attain to the apostolic purposes of the Congregation. To publish writings dealing with religious and moral questions, they also need the permission of their Major Superior, according to the

requirements of universal law and the norms of the *Directory* (Part IV, Ch. III). (D 91)

CIC, can. 832; CM 363

Orthodoxy and Proclamation of the Faith

139 In the use of the means of social communications, in publications, and in teaching and preaching, let them, with the greatest care and diligence, strive for orthodoxy and integrity of faith and demonstrate the excellence of the Catholic Faith. Let them do their utmost to understand more thoroughly revealed and transmitted truths through solid theological research, apply them to the changing conditions of human life, and communicate them in a manner suited to contemporary people, fully submitting themselves to the norms of the Holy See and the bishops.

OT 16; PO 4; CM 368

CHAPTER IV

EXERCISE OF PRIESTLY MINISTRY

Duty of Evangelization

140 Since no one can be saved if he has not first believed, the confreres, especially priests, as co-workers of the bishops, should consider as the primary duty of their vocation the proclamation of the Gospel of God to all, according to the Lord's command: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk 16:15).

PO 4

Priestly Zeal

141 Let the confreres, especially those who are fit to do so, diligently apply themselves to catechizing, preaching the Word of God, directing spiritual exercises, conducting missions for the people, and exercising other sacred ministries; all should always strive beforehand to prepare themselves for this assiduously and seriously. (D 92-94)

CM 370

Permission of Superiors

142 No one, even if he enjoys the faculty of preaching everywhere and of customarily hearing confessions, may hear confessions or preach the Word of God without at least the presumed permission of his Superior. Superiors, on their part, under grave obligation of conscience, should not grant anyone permission to preach or hear confessions, unless they are first certain of his good morals and piety and that he has the required knowledge, proven by an examination or otherwise.

CIC, cann. 764; 969 § 1; CM 376

Staffing Parishes

143 It belongs to Major Superiors to present confreres to the diocesan bishop for the governance of parishes that have been entrusted to the Congregation. (D 95)

CIC, can. 682 § 1; CM 381

Administration of Parishes

144 The Congregation exercises the sacred ministry by assisting the secular clergy, and it itself assumes, observing all that the law prescribes to be observed, the administration of parishes; the right to assume the administration of a parish belongs to the Major Superior with the consent of his Council. (D 96-97)

CM 380

Importance of the Parish

145 In their exercise of pastoral work, let the confreres be fully aware that the parish is the vital cell of the Church and, if it is judiciously and diligently governed, it becomes an invigorating font of revival and renewal both spiritual and social. (D 98)

AA 10; J 23 January 1911

Removal from an Ecclesiastical Office in the Diocese

146 A confrere who holds an ecclesiastical office in the diocese can always be removed at the will of both the diocesan bishop, after the Superior has been notified, and by

the competent Superior, after the bishop has been notified, without the consent of the other being required.

CIC, can. 682 § 2; CM 387

CHAPTER V

ECUMENISM AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Desire for Unity

147 Moved by a desire for that unity which Jesus Christ desires, let the confreres make every effort to eliminate in their own way of thinking and living those things that make relations with Christians of other denominations more difficult. Let them consider everyone united to them through one Baptism as brothers and sisters in the Lord. Wherever possible, let them join in common prayer for unity among Christians, for ecumenical cooperation, and fraternal dialogue between Christians of different denominations.

UR 2, 4, 11

Inter-Religious Dialogue

148 In their contacts with the followers of non-Christian religions, by showing them respect, the confreres indicate the common dignity of all human beings created in the image of God. A prudently undertaken dialogue with non-Christians seeks to develop the principles of mutual coexistence, preserve peace, and establish cooperation for the good of human society. By word and the example of a good life, full of love and respect for every human being, we proclaim Jesus Christ, the only Savior of mankind.

Mk 16:15; EG 246, 250

In Union with the Church

149 In all ecumenical action and inter-religious dialogue, the confreres are to comply diligently with the decisions and instructions of the Apostolic See and the diocesan bishop.

CHAPTER VI MISSIONS

Missionary Spirit

150 The Church, which is missionary by her nature, mandates that all religious families foster and embrace a missionary spirit for the more effective preaching of the Gospel to all nations and for the salvation of all people. Our Congregation, as part of the Church, should strive to establish missions in regions where people do not yet believe in Christ.

AG 2; PC 20

Alleviating the Lack of Clergy

151 Because of the urgent needs of the Church, the Congregation should strive to exercise the sacred ministry in regions that suffer a lack of clergy and where the Catholics are in danger of turning away from their Christian life and of losing the faith itself.

PO 10; CD 6

Fostering Missionary Zeal

152 Superiors should foster and nourish among the confreres zeal for the missions and should also strive to prepare properly for missionary work those who have the inclination and are fit for it. All confreres should nurture missionary fervor both by prayer and by the promulgation of a missionary outlook among the faithful; with the permission of their Superiors, those who are fit for the task should dedicate themselves to this work.

AG 39, 40; CM 388

Qualities of Missionaries

153 No one should be appointed a missionary unless he excels so much in faith, piety, the observance of religious discipline, learning, and prudence that it may rightly be presumed that, with the help of divine grace, he will fulfill his holy task in a proper way.

CM 389

PART V FORMATION

CHAPTER I PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION

Purpose of Formation

154 The purpose of religious formation is not only the attainment of the full maturity which is required of a Christian man, but also preparation for a life to be lived according to the spirit and laws of the Congregation and for carrying out the apostolic works which are consistent with its nature and goals. During this period of formation, the Congregation and the candidate should become mutually acquainted, and the candidate's vocation should be put to the test, discerned, and strengthened.

OT 11

Christ—the Supreme Teacher

155 In our religious and priestly preparation, just as in our whole life, we strive to follow Christ, the Supreme Teacher and model, for the formation of souls, seek Him, and become like Him in all respects, by faithfully reading the Word of God and meditating upon it, as well as by actively participating in the life of the Church. We shall be able to bring Christ everywhere and to renew the world in Him only insofar as we ourselves are imbued with His spirit and strengthened by His grace.

Eph 1:10; PC 2

Mary Immaculate—Exemplar of the New Man

156 In Mary Immaculate, under whose maternal protection Jesus grew in wisdom and grace before God and men and attained the full perfection of His human nature, we recognize the admirable exemplar of that new man who lives

with the fullness of Christ's grace and virtue. The confreres, as sons and devotees of Mary, should diligently strive to learn about her privileges and her functions in the salvific plan of God and to impress upon their souls her virtues by filial love and imitation.

LG 67; R

Liturgical Formation

157 The principal supports for formation derive from the sacred liturgy, in which Christ performs the work of our sanctification. In our houses of formation, the study and celebration of the liturgy should be arranged in such a way that the students can be imbued with its spirit, unite themselves more intimately with Christ, and strengthen the bond of common life.

SC 17; CM 62

Full Maturity

158 The entire education of the confreres, based upon principles of sound pedagogy, should be suited to their age, disposition, and development. This education should organically unite in them supernatural gifts with the virtues proper to a mature man. This maturity is proven chiefly by a certain stability of character, a right manner of judging events and people, an ability to make circumspect decisions and carry them out faithfully, as well as the habit of joining the spirit of initiative with obedience. (D 99)

OT 11; CM 34

Spiritual Heritage

159 With the help of their teachers, let the students learn with reverence the *Constitutions*, the other laws of the Congregation, and its entire heritage, so that they may be more imbued with its spirit, better perceive and know its distinctive character, and adhere to it with filial affection as to a mother who nurtures, supports, and protects them in this life and after death.

PC 2; CM 61

Formation for the Apostolate

160 Throughout their entire course of formation, all students—clerics and religious brothers alike—are to prepare themselves diligently for ministries and apostolic works proper to the Congregation, and they should gradually enter into them under the guidance of directors and others who are experienced in apostolic activity. In addition to the formation that is common to all, each student, insofar as possible, should be prepared in a special way to undertake apostolic activity in some definite field of pastoral work, science, or the arts. Therefore, from the very beginning of formation, the students' natural inclinations and special gifts should be carefully ascertained so that they may be prudently developed and suitably employed for the greater glory of God and the good of their neighbor.

OT 19-21; PC 18; CM 130

Qualified Formators

161 Although formation is perfected principally by the action of God and the cooperation of the member himself with His grace, the assistance of the educators is still of great importance. Hence, the Congregation should never hesitate to designate and prepare the best men for preserving and perfecting its organism. Those members are to be chosen for the function of formators and teachers who excel not only in understanding the students and in having diverse experiences of people and things, but also in prudence and piety. Indeed, the educators, together with their student-members, should strive to grow in holiness and knowledge; they should show them understanding and confidence, so that by the example of their own lives they may inspire in them zeal for perfection and learning, joy in their vocation, and also, in those things which pertain to God, a willingness for undertaking even difficult tasks. (D 100-104)

OT 5; PC 18; J 23 October 1910

Phases of Formation

162 The process of formation should already be initiated with the candidate's first contacts with the Congregation. It is accomplished, however, in a proper sense,

according to the prescribed laws and methods, during postulancy, novitiate, and temporary profession. It is also to be continued through the subsequent periods of religious life in which, however, the immediate assistance of the formators is diminished, while greater emphasis is placed on personal effort and consciousness of one's own duty.

Mutual Solicitude

163 The Congregation itself, sparing neither work nor expenses, should do its utmost to prepare and train for itself suitable men, who, first of all, are provided with the best possible spiritual formation in the ways of perfection and, then, diligently and appropriately instructed and trained to perform the works that the Congregation undertakes. All should remember that the Congregation's vigor and progress depend most of all on the men who are its members—on their formation, spirit, knowledge, aptitude, devotion, and zeal. (D 105)

CM 359

CHAPTER II

FOSTERING VOCATIONS

Seeking Candidates

164 We should meditate frequently on the words of Our Lord: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Mt 9:37). Therefore, the Congregation, in its desire to meet the apostolic needs of our time, should try in all possible ways to find for itself and for the entire Church suitable candidates who, endowed with a good character and well-educated by family, would be fit to receive priestly and religious formation. All confreres, together and singly, should realize that they are personally responsible for seeking out and cultivating workers for the Lord's vineyard. (D 106)

PC 24; RF 15

Prayer and Example

165 The confreres should express concern for new vocations primarily through daily and fervent prayer to

“the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Mt 9:38). They also should remember that the example of their own life—lived with a humble and cheerful spirit—and mutual brotherly love are the best recommendation for the Congregation and an encouragement to embrace religious life. They should also strive to attract youth to God’s service by their own apostolic work, performed with diligence and eagerness. (D 107-111)

OT 2; PC 24; CM 356

CHAPTER III

ADMISSION TO THE CONGREGATION

Gradual Incorporation

166 The confreres gradually and ever more completely bind themselves to the Congregation. The first and introductory step of this bond is admission to postulancy. It is followed by admission to the novitiate; then, temporary profession, which is to be renewed several times; and, finally, the unconditional and complete offering and consecration of the confrere to God and the Church, along with his final incorporation into the Congregation, through perpetual vows.

CM 97

Right to Admit Candidates

167 Major Superiors admit with the consultative vote of their Council, candidates to the postulancy; with a deliberative vote, candidates to the novitiate and novices or members to profession, whether temporary or perpetual.

CM 17, 44, 51, 86

Proper Selection of Candidates

168 Just as the Congregation rightly rejoices in the Lord if the number of members increases daily, so it is filled with sorrow and bitterness if there should be admitted to it through ignorance, negligence, or false mercy—whether on the part of Superiors, formators, or any others—those who

are unworthy, unfit, uncalled, lack a religious spirit, do not seek the things that are Jesus Christ's but their own, or have notions and desires that are alien to the purposes and the spirit of the Congregation. Certainly, confreres should be greatly concerned about fostering vocations and increasing the number of laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, but, at the same time, all who are responsible for it should remember well that it is never lawful for any reason to admit anyone to the postulancy and novitiate—and, more so, to the profession or renewal of holy vows—unless, after careful consideration of all the particulars, it can be ascertained with a just probability that, with the aid of divine grace, he will be able to—and will, in fact—fulfill properly that which pertains to his vocation.

CM 38

General Rule

169 Any Catholic can be admitted into the Congregation who is free from any juridical impediment, is led by a right intention, and is fit to bear the hardships of life in the Congregation. During the entire process of admission to the Congregation, the prescripts of universal law are to be diligently observed (CIC, cann. 641-645). (D 112-113)

CM 18

Postulancy

170 Candidates, before they are admitted to the novitiate, should complete the postulancy, which is the preliminary probation of the candidate. Its purpose is not only the judgment of his suitability and of his vocation, but also the completion of his Christian training if it would seem to be insufficient and, lastly, the gradual transition from a secular life to life in the novitiate. (D 114-121)

CM 42, 47

CHAPTER IV NOVITIATE

Purpose of Novitiate

171 The novitiate is the fundamental initiation of the candidate to the religious life and is also a probation of his intentions and suitability for the Congregation. During the novitiate, the candidate arrives at a more profound understanding of his own vocation and is strengthened in it, forming always a more intimate bond of friendship with Christ and embracing a way of life that is proper to the spirit and character of the Congregation. (D 122-126)

CM 50

Erecting, Transferring, and Suppressing a Novitiate

172 Having obtained the consent of his Council, the Superior General, by means of a written decree, erects, transfers, or suppresses a novitiate house.

CIC, can. 647 § 1

Place of the Novitiate

173 For the validity of the novitiate, it is required that it should be completed at a house properly designated for this purpose by law.

CIC, can. 647 § 2

Exceptions to the Place of the Novitiate

174 In particular cases and by way of exception, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, has the right to grant permission for a candidate to make his valid novitiate in another house of the Congregation under the guidance of an experienced priest, who acts in the place of the Novice Master. The Major Superior may permit a group of novices to stay for some time in another house of the Congregation or another place designated by him.

CIC, can. 647 §§ 2-3

Duration of the Novitiate

175 A valid novitiate must last twelve months and be completed in the novitiate community, in such a manner that a novice would not be absent from the group and the novitiate house for more than three months, whether in a continuous or intermittent manner. An absence exceeding fifteen days must be made up. An absence from the novitiate house that exceeds three months, with due regard to the exceptions in C 174, makes the novitiate invalid.

CIC, cann. 648 § 1; 649 § 1

Other Conditions for Validity of the Novitiate

176 For the validity of the novitiate, in addition to the conditions listed in C 172-175, it is also required that the candidate:

- 1) has completed the seventeenth year of age before the beginning of the novitiate;
- 2) be free from the impediments established by universal law (cf. CIC, can. 643 § 1).

Before the candidates are admitted to the novitiate, they must present the testimonies required by law.

CIC, can. 643 § 1; CM 55-57

Appointment of the Master and His Associate

177 The Novice Master and his associate are appointed by the Major Superior with the consent of his Council. The term of office of the Novice Master and his associate is specified in the *Directory*. (D 127-128)

CM 604

Qualities of the Master

178 The formation of novices is to be directed by a Master, who is to be a priest and a perpetually professed religious, conspicuous for his learning, prudence, charity, piety and religious observance, so that he is able to teach the novices by word and example the way of perfection and transmit to them the charism of the Congregation. (D 129-131)

CIC, can. 651 § 1; CM 601

Competence of the Master

179 Only the Novice Master has the right and the duty to take care of the training of the novices, and the government of the novitiate pertains to him alone. In fulfilling this office, he is subject only to his Major Superiors. In all matters pertaining to the discipline of the entire house, however, the Master and the novices are subject to the Superior of the house. (D 131-134)

CIC, can. 650 § 2; CM 605

Efforts of the Novices

180 The novices should have the highest esteem for this most precious period of probation and utilize it in such a way that each one may put himself and his vocation to the test, acquire self-knowledge and the habit of self-restraint, exercise himself diligently in virtues, be imbued with a religious spirit, and learn to conform his life to the norm of the *Constitutions*, so that, having renounced the world, he may put off the old man and put on the new man—Jesus Christ.

Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:9-10; CM 67

Obligations and Privileges

181 The novices are subject to the Novice Master and the Superiors, and they are obliged to obey them and to observe the laws of the Congregation as they come to know them. Likewise, they enjoy all the privileges and spiritual graces granted to the Congregation, and, if they die, they have the same rights to suffrages as the professed members.

CM 72-73

Fundamental Goals of the Novice

182 Since the religious life, above all else, is directed to this, that confreres follow Christ and be united to Him through the profession of the evangelical counsels, the time of the novitiate is used, first of all, with this purpose in view, that the novice may learn those things that are fundamental and essential for the religious life. Striving in fact for the perfection of charity, already at this period of probation, let him fervently

practice chastity, poverty, and obedience, to which, in due time, he will commit himself through profession.

PC 2; CM 60, 67

Elements of the Spiritual Life

183 These are to be chiefly fostered in the novices:

- 1) a right and pure intention to seek God in all things and that which is pleasing to Him;
- 2) love for Christ and the entire Church, nourished constantly by reading and meditating on Sacred Scripture and by active participation in the Eucharist and the other mysteries of the Church;
- 3) a life of prayer and intimate union with God, especially through pious exercises that have been recommended by Christian tradition and are imbued with the spirit of the sacred liturgy;
- 4) truly Christian and filial devotion toward the Immaculate Virgin Mary, as modeled in the doctrine and devotion of the Church;
- 5) zeal for assisting the deceased;
- 6) fortitude in completely rooting out the seeds of vices, in directing the tendencies of the heart and mind, in forming character, and in acquiring virtues.

CM 60, 608

Program of the Novitiate

184 The novitiate program, in addition to a more detailed study of the history and *Constitutions* of the Congregation and of the other sources of its character and spirit, should also include a suitably adapted course of spiritual theology as well as of the theology and history of religious life.

CM 61, 66

Preparation for the Apostolate

185 Activity that has as its object the good and salvation of our neighbor pertains to the very nature of our Congregation. Therefore, for the novices to be fully introduced into the religious life of our community, it is necessary to acquaint them both theoretically and practically with the apostolic

activities of the Congregation. In this way, let those seeking God above all things and only Him learn from the very beginning how to combine contemplation, by which they would adhere to Him in mind and heart, with apostolic love. (D 134)

PC 5, 8

Novitiate and Communal Life

186 Since common life is of the greatest importance for our community and for the training of novices, the novitiate should take place in a community or in a group of novices, who are united among themselves in fraternal charity. In the house in which the novitiate is found, a truly fraternal common life should flourish in such a way that novices may actively participate in community life in order to acquire a more solid and complete formation.

Leaving and Dismissal

187 A novice may freely leave the Congregation, or he may be dismissed for any just reason by his Major Superiors with the consent of their Council.

CIC, can. 653 § 1; CM 80

Decision Concerning Suitability

188 Having completed the novitiate, the novice, if judged suitable, is admitted to profession. Otherwise, he is dismissed. Should a doubt remain about the novice's suitability, the time of probation can be prolonged by the Major Superiors, but not more than six months.

CIC, can. 653 § 2; CM 81

CHAPTER V RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

Concept of Profession

189 Religious profession is an act whereby a member pledges by a public vow to observe the three Evangelical Counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience; becomes, in a special way, totally consecrated to God out of the greatest

love; and, for the sake of God, commits himself to the Church of Christ and in the Church to the Congregation, with all the rights and duties defined by law. In turn, the Congregation, in the name of the Church, firmly accepts this commitment and assumes the responsibility to assist and sustain the professed in the way of his vocation and to direct and engage him according to its own character. (D 135-137)

CIC, can. 654; CM 83

Requirements for Validity of Profession

- 190** 1) For the validity of any religious profession, it is required:
- a. that the one who admits to it be a competent Major Superior, with the deliberative vote of his Council, in accord with the norm of law;
 - b. that it be expressed and made without force, grave fear, or fraud;
 - c. that it be received by the legitimate Superior personally or through another.
- 2) In addition, for the validity of the first profession, it is required:
- a. that the novice has completed at least the eighteenth year of age;
 - b. that the novitiate has been made validly.
- 3) Then, for the validity of perpetual profession, besides the conditions mentioned above (no. 1) it is required:
- a. that the member has completed at least the twenty-first year of age;
 - b. that there has been the previous temporary profession for at least three years, according to the norm of law.

CIC, cann. 655-656; 658; CM 84, 85, 93

External Form of Profession

191 The profession is made publicly so that it may be well known in the external forum, with the observance of the rite prescribed in the Congregation.

CM 94

Formula of Profession

192 The profession is made according to the following formula: “I, N. N., for the glory of the Triune God and to honor the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, to assist the dead, and to spread the Kingdom of God, in the presence of the entire community, through your hands, Reverend Father, vow to almighty God in the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, according to its Constitutions, the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience for one year (*or*: forever). May God accomplish this in me with the help of this holy Gospel and the intercession of Mary Immaculate, Saint Stanislaus our Founder, and all the Saints.” (D 138-139)
NVI, 6; CM 94

Duration of Temporary Profession

193 After the completion of the novitiate, profession is made for one year. The period of temporary profession may not be less than three years or longer than six years, unless in rare cases the competent Superior, with the consent of his Council, extends this period, however not beyond nine years.
CIC, cann. 655; 657 § 2; CM 88-89

Bond with the Congregation

194 Through profession, the Congregation accepts in a maternal way each member as a son into its temporal and spiritual care, protecting him, nourishing him, utilizing him in the Lord, directing him, and governing him. Likewise, each member, on his part, through his profession, commits himself wholeheartedly to the Congregation to live and die in it, completely entrusting to it all of his cares, and dedicating his talents and energies to attaining its purposes; let him docilely allow himself—and even desire—to be corrected, instructed, and led by it, and let him honor and love it sincerely as his mother.

CM 107

Profession or Departure

195 When the period of time for which the profession was made has been completed, the member who freely asks and is judged suitable is admitted to a renewal of profession or to perpetual profession; otherwise, he is to leave. But even during the time of temporary profession, if he himself, for a grave reason, asks permission to leave the Congregation, he can be granted an indult of departure by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

CIC, cann. 657 § 1; 688 § 2; CM 90

Anticipated Profession

196 The competent Major Superior, for a just reason, may permit that a profession be anticipated, namely:

- 1) first profession, but not by more than 15 days;
- 2) temporary profession to be renewed, but not by more than a month;
- 3) perpetual profession, but not by more than three months.

CIC, cann. 649 § 2; 657 § 3; CM 91

Transfer from Another Congregation

197 One who has made his perpetual profession in another religious institute may, with the permission of the Superior General and the consent of his Council, be admitted to perpetual profession in our Congregation, according to the norm of law, after a period of probation determined by the Superior General with respect to duration and manner.

CIC, cann. 684-685

Possibility of Re-admission

198 One who, after completing the novitiate or after profession, has lawfully left the Congregation can be re-admitted by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, without the obligation of repeating the novitiate; it is up to the same Superior to determine an appropriate probation prior to temporary profession and the length of time in temporary vows before making perpetual profession, according to the norm of C 193 and C 195.

CIC, can. 690 § 1

Separation from the Congregation

199 In dealing with cases that, in any way whatsoever, concern a separation from the Congregation, the pre-scripts of universal law presently in force must be accurately observed by all.

CIC, cann. 684-704

Relation to Former Members

200 Those who leave the Congregation lawfully or have been dismissed from it lawfully, cannot claim anything from it for any work done in it. The Congregation, however, should show equity and evangelical charity toward the member who becomes separated from it.

CIC, can. 702; CM 482-483

CHAPTER VI

PRIESTLY FORMATION

Goal of Priestly Formation

201 The confreres who are destined for the priesthood should receive not only religious, but also priestly formation, with the purpose that their vocation may be more clearly and fully developed and that, after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd, they may be formed as true shepherds of souls and trained for the ministry of teaching, sanctifying, and leading to pasture the people of God.

OT 4; RF 30

Houses of Studies and Institutes

202 Let the Congregation do its utmost that this preparation be accomplished, if possible, in its own houses of studies and in appropriate institutes, whether its own or others, set up according to the laws of the Church and adapted to the needs of the region where the confreres work. (D 140-144)

OT 1; RF 188

Formators

203 For institutes and houses of studies, formators should be carefully selected and painstakingly prepared. Let the Congregation see to it that the confreres who direct the formation of students be mature in the religious life, prudent, endowed with solid doctrine, and distinguished by charity, an understanding of youth, and teaching experience. The formators, taking into consideration the individual character and ability of each of the students, should, with all zeal and by word and example, imbue them with sound doctrine and an upright, truly Catholic, ecclesiastical, and religious spirit and also should form their character and their will with solid virtues. (D 145-149)

OT 5; RF 132; CM 116-117

Program of Studies

204 During the entire period of studies, the presently binding laws and directives of the universal and particular Church, in regard to both the duration and method of instruction and the courses to be taught, must be observed. For their own institutes of learning, if they have any, an appropriate program of studies should be drawn up by a competent prefect and committee of formation and be approved by the immediate Major Superior with the consultative vote of his Council. For the entire Congregation, a general program of studies should be developed and should be approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

OT 1, 4; RF 3, 4, 10, 57-58; CM 120

Intermediate or Secondary School Studies

205 Before students are admitted to those studies that are properly ecclesiastical, i.e., philosophy and theology, they should have completed their intermediate studies, generally before their admission to the Congregation. Care must be taken that this education be consonant with the teaching which is usually imparted in schools of the region and which gives the right to attend higher studies. (D 150)

OT 13; RF 22; CM 121

Philosophical Studies

206 In their study of philosophy and its allied sciences, students should acquire a solid and systematic knowledge of man, the world, and God, based on the light of natural reason. Applying themselves to these studies for at least two years, they should also acquaint themselves with the problems by which the people of our time are strongly stirred, so that they can establish a dialogue with them.

OT 15; RF 158; CM 123

Theological Studies

207 Theological studies, which should last at least four full years, intend that the students may more fully penetrate the doctrine drawn accurately from divine revelation in the light of faith; that, under the guidance of the Magisterium of the Church, they may convert it into nourishment of their own spiritual life; and that they may be able in their priestly ministry to defend, preach, and explain it for the spiritual benefit of the faithful.

OT 16; RF 165; CM 123

Preparation for the Apostolate

208 The life of the students, as well as their study of philosophy and theology, should be so set up as to be a preparation and a gradual introduction and initiation into apostolic works. (D 151-155)

OT 4, 19, 21

Spiritual Formation

209 The program of spiritual training should be designed and implemented so that students, during the time of their formation, may learn to follow Christ more closely; may make progress in the spirit of prayer and in apostolic zeal; and may acquire firmness of spirit, an aptitude to live and work with others, and a freedom founded on their own self-mastery. It is necessary that they, through constant effort, convert their formation into self-education. (D 156-158)

OT 4, 8-11

Promotion to Orders

210 Before any of the confreres is promoted to the order of diaconate or priesthood, care should be taken that all the requirements of universal law be properly fulfilled.

Declaration of Candidate Before Sacred Orders

211 In order to be promoted to the order of diaconate or priesthood, the confrere is to present to his competent Major Superior a declaration written in his own hand and signed, in which he attests that he will receive the sacred order of his own accord and freely, will devote himself perpetually to the ecclesiastical ministry, and, at the same time, asks to be admitted to the order to be received.

CIC, can. 1036

Right to Confer Ministries and Dimissorial Letters

212 A Major Superior, following the directives of law, has the right to confer on confreres subject to him the ministries of lector and acolyte and also to grant them dimissorial letters for the diaconate and the priesthood.

CIC, can. 1019 § 1

Document and Notification of Ordination

213 The same Major Superior should take care that an authentic document of the order received be obtained from the ordaining bishop, that it be preserved in the appropriate archives, and that notification of every ordination conferred be sent to the pastor of the parish in which the ordained was baptized.

CIC, cann. 1053 § 2; 1054; CM 159-160

CHAPTER VII

FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS

Apostolate of Religious Brothers

214 Each brother should not only be distinguished by a life of prayer, skill in performing various ministries, and his example as a truly religious man, but he also should

be guided to exercise a special apostolate according to his talents; for religious brothers can bring Christ into many places, sometimes even to where a priest is denied access.

LG 47; PC 10; J 23 January 1911

Goal of the Formation

215 All religious brothers are to be formed, not only that they be well versed in some profession or field of knowledge, but also and above all, that they learn well whatever pertains to faith and the interior life. They should be imbued with an apostolic spirit so that they can stir up in human hearts the life of the children of God. (D 159-160)

PC 18; CM 131

CHAPTER VIII ONGOING FORMATION

Knowledge to Be Continuously Perfected

216 Our progress in the spiritual life and the fruitfulness of our apostolic work requires that the confreres not only preserve the knowledge acquired during ordinary studies, but that they always and continuously perfect and enrich it while rethinking its effective use in view of the changing circumstances in the course of time. No one should ever neglect the further cultivation of his mind, but rather should always be concerned with diligently pursuing further studies. Moreover, the Superiors should give the confreres the opportunity and some time for engaging in studies, and they should also support them and see to it that these studies are pursued properly, usefully, and fruitfully. (D 161-163)

CIC, can. 661; PC 18; CM 137

Special Studies

217 After completing their ordinary studies, those who excel in mental ability and feel so inclined should endeavor, if the Superiors consent to it, to thoroughly learn and practice some special field of science or liberal arts, so that they may even become outstanding in it. They should also acquire,

if possible, an academic degree in it. In these studies, attention should be zealously directed towards the universal good of the Congregation and the Church.

OT 18; CM 127, 132

Spiritual Renewal

218 Every fifth year after the profession of perpetual vows, each member, having been freed from all other cares, should devote a longer period of time to his spiritual renewal. The time, place, program, and direction will be appropriately determined by the Major Superior with the consultative vote of his Council according to the Provincial Statutes.

CM 253

Nurturing a Spiritual Culture

219 All the confreres should greatly esteem spiritual formation, which contributes to progress in the life of religious. It is recommended to the confreres that, in addition to the doctrinal and practical formation connected with their responsibilities, they wholeheartedly embrace a spiritual culture by seizing every occasion for engaging in the study of subject matters that, at a given time, are of major importance, especially in the area of the spiritual life.

PART VI STRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I RELATION WITH ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

Obedience and Devotion to the Holy Father

220 The Congregation and all of its members should show the greatest reverence, fidelity, love, and devotion to the Holy Father. They should make an effort to adhere to him wholeheartedly, in all things comply with his ordinances and wishes submissively and docilely, defend him, pray for him, undertake any ministries or works for the Church according to his will, be completely at his disposal, and instill in others this same spirit. (D 164)

CM 484, 486

Report to Be Sent to the Apostolic See

221 In order that the communion of the entire Congregation with the Apostolic See be better promoted, the Superior General is to send a brief account of the state and life of the Congregation to the same Apostolic See in the manner and at the time determined by it.

CIC, can. 592 § 1; CM 678

Profession of Faith

222 The following are personally bound to make a profession of faith according to the formula approved by the Apostolic See:

- 1) in the presence of the local Ordinary or his delegate: pastors, at the beginning of their term of office; and those who are to be promoted to the order of diaconate;
- 2) in the presence of the Chapter that elected them, the Superior who appointed them, or their delegate:

Superiors, both Major and local, at the beginning of their term of office; the Rector and the teachers of theology and philosophy, in their own institutes of studies.

CIC, can. 833; CM 369

Submission to the Bishop

223 Members are to exhibit due reverence, love, and submission to the diocesan bishop; they should defend his authority, obediently request from him the necessary faculties for exercising ministries, aid him as they are able, give him a report whenever he wishes on the things they are planning to do or are doing in his diocese, and try to be devoted to him as much as possible. (D 165)

CM 488

CHAPTER II

STRUCTURE OF THE CONGREGATION

Provinces

224 The Congregation is divided into Provinces to which the confreres are ascribed and in which they enjoy active and passive voice according to the norm of law; to constitute a Province, at least three houses are required in which the confreres are placed by the Superiors. Provinces are ordinarily delineated by territorial boundaries.

CM 688

Founding and Suppressing Provinces

225 It belongs to the General Chapter—or outside of its time, to the general Council acting collegially—to divide the Congregation into Provinces, join together already existing Provinces or change their boundaries, set up new ones, or suppress those already established.

CM 689

Founding and Suppressing Vice-Provinces

226 The Superior General, with the consent of his Council and for special and serious reasons, may establish a Vice-Province out of less numerous communities or suppress it. (D 166)

Vicariate

227 If it seems useful to him, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, may establish a General Vicariate from some of the houses or communities that are immediately subject to him. Likewise, outside of the time of the Provincial Chapter, after consulting with the Superior General, the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, may establish some houses or communities subject to him into a Provincial Vicariate. The Vicariate Superior, appointed by the respective delegating Superior with the consultative vote of his Council, enjoys the authority which this Superior has deemed appropriate to grant to him.

Religious House

228 Each local community ought to live in a religious house, legitimately established under the authority of a Superior who is designated according to the norm of the *Constitutions*. Each house is to have at least one oratory in which the Eucharist is celebrated and reserved so as to be truly the center of the community.

CIC, can. 608

House Subject to the Superior General

229 The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, having heard the opinions of the confreres involved, can, for a serious reason and for a certain time, subject a religious house directly to himself. (D 167)

CM 671

Erecting a House

230 A religious house is erected by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, having previously obtained the written consent of the diocesan bishop.

CIC, can. 609 § 1; CM 721

Need for Erecting Houses

231 In establishing new houses, the welfare of the Church and the Congregation are to be kept in mind, and care must be taken to safeguard everything that is necessary for the confreres to lead their religious life in accordance with the purposes and spirit of the Congregation.

CIC, can. 610 § 1

Required Conditions

232 No religious house is to be established unless it is foreseen that at least three confreres can be permanently assigned there in the future and that their needs will be suitably provided for.

CIC, can. 610 § 2; CM 719-720

Suppression of a House

233 A legitimately erected religious house may, for grave reasons, be suppressed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after having consulted the diocesan bishop.

CIC, can. 616 § 1; CM 726

CHAPTER III SUPERIORS

Power of Superiors and Chapters

234 Superiors and Chapters, in addition to that power over members which is defined by universal law and the *Constitutions*, also possess ecclesiastical power of governance for both the internal and external forum.

CIC, can. 596; CM 495

Supreme Power in the Congregation

235 Supreme and immediate power in the entire Congregation is exercised, in an ordinary manner, by the Superior General with the assistance of his Council and, in an extraordinary manner, by the General Chapter.

CM 496

Superiors of Provinces, Vicariates, and Houses

236 Besides the Superior General, there are to be designated Provincial Superiors who preside over Provinces, Vicariate Superiors who preside over Vicariates, and local Superiors who govern individual houses. (D 168)

CM 497

Chapters

237 General, Provincial, General Vicariate, and local Chapters are to be held in the Congregation.

CM 634

Major Superiors

238 The Superior General, Provincial Superiors, Superiors of Vice-Provinces, and their Vicars are Major Superiors.

CIC, can. 620; CM 499

Required Conditions for Election or Appointment

239 To the office of Major Superior should be elected priests who have been perpetually professed for at least seven years and who have completed 35 years of age in the case of the Superior General, and 30 years of age in the case of other Major Superiors. For the office of local Superior, perpetually professed priests are to be appointed, with the time after perpetual profession determined by the norm of the *Directory* § 170. Religious brothers may be elected to the office of Major Superior, subject to the above mentioned conditions, in individual cases and on an exceptional basis, according to the applicable norms of universal law. To the office of local Superior, however, a religious brother is appointed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. (D 169-171)

CIC, can. 623; CM 503; Pope Francis, Rescriptum ex Audientia from May 18th, 2022

Profession of Faith

240 At the beginning of the term of office that they have undertaken, all Superiors are obliged to make a

profession of faith according to the formula approved by the Apostolic See.

CIC, cann. 833 § 8; CM 369

Term of Office

241 Major Superiors are elected for a period of six years. They may be re-elected after the first six-year term, but neither the Superior General nor Provincial Superiors in the same Province may be elected to a third term. The term of office of the Vicariate Superiors is regulated by the Statutes given by the competent authority. Local Superiors are appointed, after prior consultation, for a three-year term. They may be reappointed to another term, but not to a third consecutive term, unless this has been confirmed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. If the office of Vicariate or local Superior becomes vacant, the new Superior is appointed only to complete the three-year term. Councilors and other officials, on the other hand, may always be re-elected or re-appointed. (D 172-174)

CM 505-506, 691

Loss of Office

242 The authority that is competent for electing, appointing, admitting, or confirming a Superior may, for a serious reason, transfer the same Superior during his period in office to another office, remove him from office, or even deprive him of office, in accordance with universal law and their proper law. If the removal or deprivation concerns a general Councilor, the Superior General, after obtaining the consent of the other Councilors, presents the matter to the Holy See, to which the final decision belongs.

CIC, cann. 147; 184 § 1; 624 § 3; CM 514

Visitation

243 Major Superiors should, personally or through a delegated visitor, visit the communities entrusted to them in order to get to know them better, as well as to strengthen and order their religious life and apostolate. (D 175-178)

CIC, can. 628 § 1

Frequency of Visitation

244 The Superior General should visit all the Provinces and houses of the Congregation every three years; the Provincial Superior should visit the houses of his Province once a year.

CM 677; 700

CHAPTER IV COUNCIL AND COUNCILORS

Council

245 A Council, whether General, Provincial, Vicariate, or local, is made up of a Superior, as the President, and his Councilors; they all, by law, are members of the Council, and they alone have the right to vote.

CM 519

Councilors

246 The Superior General, as well as Provincial Superiors, should each have four Councilors, and Vicariate and local Superiors, as a rule, should each have two Councilors. All of these are to be perpetually professed. First Vicariate Councilors and first house Councilors do not have the power of a vicar. The General or Provincial Vicar takes the place of his Superior, should the latter die, be absent, or be impeded, in accordance with the norms of *Directory* §§ 192, 254, and 266. (D 183-192)

CM 498

Consent of the Council

247 When universal law or the law of the Congregation requires the consent of the Council (see the list of such matters in the *Directory*, Part VI, Chapters XI and XII), the Superior acts invalidly unless the consent of the absolute majority of the Council members who are present is obtained. In such a case, the Councilors cannot abstain from voting. Should the one presiding or any of the Councilors ask for a secret ballot, the voting must be held in that way.

CIC, can. 127 § 1; CM 524-525

Consultative Vote

248 If only a consultative vote of the Council is required by law, it is sufficient for the Superior to hear the opinion of the Councilors in order to act validly. The Councilors cannot withhold their opinion. As often as it would seem appropriate to the one presiding or to any of the Councilors, a consultative vote may also be arrived at by secret ballot.

CIC, can. 127 §§ 1-2; CM 524-525

Duties of Councilors

249 The duty of the Councilors is to give counsel and aid to their Superior in governing the Congregation, Province, Vicariate, or house, and also to cast their votes in more serious matters and elections and to propose those things that they deem useful for the good of the Congregation, Province, Vicariate, house, or even for individual confreres. (D 193-196)

CM 531

CHAPTER V

SECRETARIES AND ARCHIVES

Secretaries

250 Secretaries are to be appointed for writing acts and letters: a Secretary General for the whole Congregation, Provincial Secretaries for the individual Provinces, Secretaries of Vicariates and, if it will prove necessary, even local secretaries for individual houses. The office of secretary may be assigned to one of the Councilors, as long as—in the case of a Secretary General or a Provincial Secretary—he is not the first Councilor. (D 197-199)

CM 501

Archives

251 There should be General, Provincial, Vicariate, and local archives for documents, acts, and writings pertaining to the administration, the undertakings, and works,

and the present status and history of the Congregation, Provinces, Vicariates, and houses. The archives are to be set up in a convenient and safe place so that they are not exposed to the danger of fire or any other damage. (D 200-205)

CM 538

CHAPTER VI ELECTIONS

Active and Passive Voice

252 In elections, all confreres in perpetual vows enjoy active and passive voice. (D 206-207)

CIC, cann. 274 § 1; 588 § 2; Pope Francis, Rescriptum ex Audientia from May 18th, 2022

Election Rules

253 The right to participate in an election belongs to those who are present on the day and in the place determined in the convocation lawfully made. For a just cause, however, the possibility of casting a vote by letter is admissible. The possibility of casting a vote by proxy is excluded, as is the supplying in any way of substitutes for those who are absent, except in the case of election or appointment by the Council, as indicated in the *Directory* (Part VI, Ch. IV). Election by compromise is excluded; each must be elected by separate secret ballots with the exception of the election of members of committees at Chapters. (D 208)

CIC, can. 167 § 1; CM 615, 622

Ballot of an Ill Elector

254 If one of the electors is present in the house in which the election takes place, but cannot be present for the election because of ill health, his written ballot is to be obtained by the tellers or by two Council members. (D 209)

CIC, can. 167 § 2; CM 616

Validity of Vote

255 For a vote to be valid, it must be free, secret, certain, absolute and determinate, as explained in the *Directory* (Part VI, Ch. VI). (D 210-212)

CIC, can. 172; CM 619

Defects to Be Avoided

256 All are to be on their guard against the direct or indirect solicitation of votes both for themselves and for others. Likewise, they are to beware lest they be moved in voting by human consideration, partiality, or any other inordinate feeling; even more so, they are to beware lest someone dare to draw others to his side with promises or threats.

CM 620-621

Voting Results

257 Elections that have the force of law, except for the election of General and Provincial Superiors, require an absolute majority of votes, i.e. more than half of the votes cast; or a relative majority in the third ballot after two indecisive ballots have been cast. But, if the results are tied, he who is first in profession is considered elected, and if they made their vows at the same time, the senior in age is elected. (D 213-218)

CM 626

CHAPTER VII GENERAL CHAPTER

Purpose of the Chapter

258 The purpose of the General Chapter is primarily to protect the patrimony of the Congregation, to promote the Congregation's continuing progress and current renewal according to its own character and mission, to treat matters of major importance, and to issue appropriate decrees. Every General Chapter should be prepared and arranged in such a way that, while representing the entire

Congregation, it may express the fraternal love and unity of all of its members and their concern for the common good.

CIC, can. 631 § 1; ES II, 18-19; CM 635

Ordinary and Extraordinary Chapter

259 The ordinary General Chapter, the task of which is, among other things, to elect the General Government, shall be convoked every six years. For problems of greatest importance to be resolved at another time, an extraordinary General Chapter may take place. A General Chapter, whether ordinary or extraordinary, is convoked by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. (D 219-222)

CM 635-636

Members of the Chapter

260 Members of the General Chapter are:

- 1) the Superior General;
- 2) the General Councilors;
 - these remain members of the Chapter even if others are elected in their place, who also are to be called to the Chapter;
- 3) the General Treasurer (Econome)
- 4) the Secretary General;
 - these two remain members of the Chapter even if others are nominated in their place, although the newly nominated do not participate in this Chapter;
- 5) those who had previously filled the office of Superior General for six full years;
- 6) Provincial Superiors;
- 7) Superiors of the Vice-Provinces;
- 8) two delegates from each Province and one from each Vice-Province and General Vicariate, elected by the respective Chapter;
- 9) in addition, the delegates elected according to the proportions defined in the *Directory* (Part VI, Ch. VII).

The number of Chapter members chosen by election should be equal to or greater than the number of *ex officio* members. (D 223-226)

CM 639

President of the Chapter

261 In the General Chapter, the Superior General or, if he is lacking, the Vicar General performs the duty of President until the election of a new Superior General; once this election has been lawfully carried out, the latter shall, if present, preside over the Chapter; if he is absent, the same President continues to preside over it. (D 227-232)

CM 649

Reports on the State of the Congregation

262 The Superior General is to render to the Chapter an accurate account of the personnel, the disciplinary and material status of the Congregation, works being done, difficulties, and the administration of the common goods of the Congregation. Provincial Superiors are to make similar reports on the state of their Provinces. All reports are to be submitted for discussion in a plenary session.

CM 646-647

Matters to be Treated

263 After the discussion of these reports, the consideration of matters concerning the entire Congregation should be undertaken. (D 233)

Proposals of the Confreres

264 Not only does each Chapter member have the right to propose matters to be treated that seem to him to contribute to the good of the Congregation, but individual confreres may also submit proposals for deliberation by the Chapter, sending them either by letter or by Chapter members to the President of the Chapter. (D 234-235)

CM 642

Way of Deciding Matters

265 In dealing with matters, those which receive an absolute majority of the votes of those present have the force of law; but if, after two ballots, it is still a tie vote, the President may then break it by his vote. Whenever the one

presiding or one of the Chapter members asks for a secret ballot, it should be carried out accordingly.

CIC, can. 119 § 2; CM 626

Elections

266 Elections are to take place on the day determined by the Chapter; all that is prescribed for them by universal law and our own law is to be accurately observed. (D 236-239)

CM 647

Election of the Superior General

267 The Superior General is to be elected first. If, in three consecutive ballots, no one has received an absolute majority of votes, a fourth ballot should take place in which only those two have passive voice who received a relative majority in the third ballot; these two, however, in the fourth balloting, do not cast their vote. If both should have an equal number of votes in this balloting, he is considered elected who made his profession of vows first; if both made their profession at the same time, the senior in age is elected. (D 240)

CM 656

Other Elections

268 After the election of the Superior General, the Chapter should proceed to elect in separate ballots the general Councilors, who, insofar as possible, should be taken from different Provinces and even different nationalities. (D 240)

CM 658

Conclusion of the Chapter

269 The Chapter is to be concluded only with the consent of the Chapter members, which is determined by their vote. (D 241-243)

CM 667

CHAPTER VIII PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

Convocation

270 Having informed the Superior General, the Provincial Superior or his Vicar convokes the Provincial Chapter and presides over it. This convocation requires the consent of the Provincial Council and is to be made at least three months before the beginning of the Chapter.

CM 705-706

Time for the Provincial Chapter

271 A Provincial Chapter is to be convened every three years. It must always be convoked before the celebration of a General Chapter, especially for electing delegates (according to C 259) for that General Chapter and for electing other members who would substitute for the elected delegates if they could not attend the General Chapter. The same Provincial Chapter has another session, which is to be convoked within three months after the conclusion of the General Chapter, in order to conclude or hold the election of the Provincial Superior and to elect his Councilors. (D 244)

CM 706, 709

Chapter Members

272 The Provincial Statutes determine who, besides the Provincial Superior, his Councilors, and the local Superiors, would participate as an *ex officio* or an elected member in the Provincial Chapter. The number of Chapter members chosen by election should be equal to or greater than the number of *ex officio* members.

CM 707

Report and Other Matters

273 In the Provincial Chapter, the Provincial Superior gives an account of the personnel, the disciplinary and material status of the Province, the works the Province is engaged in, and its difficulties, as well as the administration of its material goods. When these things have been discussed,

other matters that concern the entire Province should be considered. (D 245-246)

CHAPTER IX LOCAL CHAPTER

Purpose and Procedure

274 The local Chapter consists of all the professed confreres of each house. It must be convoked before the celebration of a Provincial Chapter in order to discuss matters to be proposed at the Provincial or General Chapter, to hold a consultative vote before electing a Provincial Superior in accordance with D 250 and D 261, and also to elect delegates to the Provincial Chapter in accordance with *Directory*, Part VI, Chapter IX; in these elections, only the perpetually professed confreres have the right to participate. In addition, substitute delegates are to be elected for those delegates who might be legitimately impeded from attending the Provincial Chapter. The Superior of the house presides over the local Chapter. It is the same Superior who, with the deliberative vote of his Council, determines such a date for the Chapter as to make it easier for all to be present. (D 247-250, 261)

CM 746, 749; C 231

CHAPTER X CONVENTIONS

General Convention

275 Three years after the conclusion of an Ordinary General Chapter, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, after consulting the Superiors of Provinces and General Vicariates, should convoke a General Convention for discussing more important matters. (D 251)

Provincial Convention

276 In a year in which a Provincial Chapter is not held, the Provincial Superior, having obtained the consent of his Council, should convoke a Provincial Convention to consider matters of greater importance to the Province. (D 252)

Consultative Voice

277 General and Provincial Conventions ordinarily enjoy only a consultative voice; however, Major Superiors should value them greatly.

Local Convention

278 Every month the local Superior is to convoke the house members for a convention in which matters of greater importance and works that have been or are going to be undertaken by the community are discussed. All confreres should offer their collaboration, in a spirit of charity and unity, to discover efficacious means for the progress of the house. (D 75)

CM 742

CHAPTER XI GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Power and Responsibility of the General

279 The Superior General has power in the whole Congregation over the individual Provinces, Vicariates, houses, and members, and it is to be exercised according to universal law and the proper law of the Congregation. The Superior General should take care that the plans of the Congregation be faithfully accomplished and that its apostolic works develop successfully for the good of Christ's Church. (D 253, 257)

CIC, can. 622; CM 670

Collegial Decisions Made by the General Council

280 The Superior General, together with his Council in a plenary session, shall collegially make the following decisions:

- 1) dismissal from the Congregation of a perpetually professed member (cf. CIC, cann. 699-702);
- 2) establishment, division, joining, or suppression of a Province outside of the time of the General

- Chapter and disposition of the goods of a suppressed Province (D 233, pt. 2, C 225);
- 3) interpretation of the proper laws according to C 306.

Matters to Be Decided with the Consent of the General Council

281 The Superior General, after obtaining the consent of his Council:

- 1) transfers the seat of the General Curia;
- 2) removes from office, deprives of office, or accepts the resignation of a General Councilor (in accordance with C 242), Secretary, Procurator, General Treasurer, or General Prefect of Formation, Provincial Superiors (whether by their own will, or by confirming the decision made by a Provincial Chapter), and Superiors of General Vicariates; and also nominates a substitute for the offices listed above;
- 3) nominates a Provincial Superior and other members of the Provincial Administration when the Provincial Chapter cannot take place for a long time (C 289);
- 4) reviews and approves the Statutes of each Province, Vice-Province, and General Vicariate, as well as the decrees and dispositions of Provincial Chapters (C 308);
- 5) designates a general visitor, who is not a member of the Council, to visit the entire Congregation, or some considerable part of it, or some Province (D 175);
- 6) accepts the resignation of the superiors of houses immediately subject to the Superior General and of their Councilors and other officials, or removes and deprives them of their office;
- 7) transfers members between Provinces and General Vicariates after those involved have been consulted;
- 8) issues an indult of exlaustration (CIC, cann. 686 § 1; 687);
- 9) issues an indult of departure to professed members in temporary vows (CIC, can. 688 § 2);

- 10) readmits to the Congregation without the obligation of repeating the novitiate (CIC, can. 690 § 1);
- 11) erects and suppresses General Vicariates (C 227);
- 12) erects houses with the previous consent of the diocesan bishop, as well as suppresses them after consulting with the same bishop (C 230-233);
- 13) establishes, transfers, and suppresses novitiates (C 172);
- 14) approves reports on the administration of goods (D 286);
- 15) determines, outside of the time of the General Chapter, the annual contribution for the upkeep of the General Curia and institutions of common usefulness for the Congregation;
- 16) administers goods in accordance with D 276;
- 17) designates the time and place of the General Chapter and the General Convention (C 258, 275);
- 18) grants Statutes to the Associations of the Congregation of Marian Fathers (C 128; D 87);
- 19) issues directives on concerns of greater importance, and also makes decisions regarding the implementation of the *Constitutions* and matters to be treated by the Apostolic See;
- 20) treats other matters in which universal law requires the Superior General to seek the consent of his Council for their determination.
(D 255-256, 258)

CM 682

Appointments

- 282** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council:
- 1) appoints a Procurator General, General Treasurer, General Secretary, and General Prefect of Formation; and, after accepting their removal, privation, or resignation, he appoints another confrere to serve in their place (D 101, 197, 256, 258);
 - 2) appoints the General Vicariate Superior;
 - 3) presents the General Postulator for approval (D 260);

- 4) appoints the Superiors of the houses immediately subject to the Superior General as well as their Councilors and other officials.
(D 255-256, 258-260)

CM 682

Incompatible Offices

283 The Superior General cannot simultaneously be a local or a Provincial Superior.

CM 673

Love of the Congregation

284 The Superior General should hold the Congregation entrusted to him in such great esteem and love that he be ready to take upon himself every labor, endure all things, and sacrifice himself entirely for it; with strenuous effort, he should provide for the perfection and progress of the Congregation.

CM 674

Loss of Office

285 If the Superior General feels he ought to resign from his office, he should present his reasons to the Holy See, which will accept or reject the resignation. If it seems necessary to remove the Superior General from his office, let the members of the General Council refer the matter to the Holy See and submit to its decision. (D 192, 254)

CIC, can. 184 § 1; CM 680-681

CHAPTER XII PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Elections

286 Elections of the Provincial Government are to take place after the General Chapter, in the manner established by the *Directory* (Part VI, Ch. XII). (D 261-263)

Confirmation of Election

287 The election of the Provincial Superior and of his Vicar requires the confirmation of the Superior General. Should it not be confirmed, the election is to be performed a second time by the Provincial Chapter.

CIC, can. 625 § 3

Election of Councilors

288 Provincial Councilors are elected by the Provincial Chapter.

Administrative Appointments

289 If, for a grave reason, the Chapter of some Province cannot be celebrated for a prolonged period of time, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, and, insofar as possible, after consultation with members of the said Province, should appoint a Provincial Superior and the other members of the Provincial Government.

Resignation of the Provincial Superior

290 If a Provincial Superior wants to resign from office, he should present his petition to the Superior General and his Council, having consulted beforehand his Provincial Council. (D 192, 264-266)

Superior and Council

291 The Provincial Superior has power over all the houses and members of his Province according to the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and Provincial Statutes. The Provincial Council, for its part, offers aid to the Provincial Superior in governing the Province and is co-responsible with him in conducting the affairs of the Province.

CM 692

Matters to Be Decided with the Consent of the Provincial Council

292 The Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council:

- 1) admits postulants to the novitiate, dismisses unsuitable novices, and prolongs the novitiate;
- 2) admits novices to the profession of first vows and allows professed members to renew temporary vows or profess perpetual vows;
- 3) admits to ministries and to the reception of orders;
- 4) grants permission to live outside the community, but not for more than a year, except for reasons of studies, apostolic work, or illness (CIC, can. 665 § 1);
- 5) appoints the Provincial Secretary, Provincial Treasurer, Vocation Director, and Prefect of Formation; Novice Master, formators, and instructors in houses of studies; local Superiors and their Councilors and Treasurers; and he accepts their resignation from office (C 177; D 101, 197);
- 6) erects, transfers, or suppresses—for their own students—residences, schools, and religious dormitories (D 143);
- 7) accepts parishes and missions, even to non-Catholics, and relinquishes them, having previously obtained the consent of the diocesan bishop;
- 8) presents pastors and rectors of churches to the diocesan bishop for approval and recalls them (C 143, 144);
- 9) approves the reports on the administration of goods;
- 10) administers goods in accordance with D 276;
- 11) designates a provincial visitor who is not one of the Councilors (D 175);
- 12) designates the days and place of the Provincial Chapter and the Provincial Convention (C 271, 276).

CM 696-699

Matters to Be Decided with the Consultative Vote of the Provincial Council

293 The Provincial Superior, with the consultative vote of his Council:

- 1) admits candidates to the postulancy and dismisses from it those who are unsuitable;
- 2) appoints the director of postulants;

- 3) transfers members of his Province from one house to another, after consultation with those who are to be transferred and with the respective Superiors;
- 4) sends selected members outside the Province for the purpose of studies, according to the norms of law (C 291);
- 5) approves the guidelines for the province's own houses of studies (D 144).

CM 698

Reports on the State of the Province

294 Every year, the Provincial Superior should submit a report on the state of the Province to the Superior General, according to the form accepted in the Congregation, in a document signed by himself and his Council. Likewise, during the year, he should frequently inform the Superior General about the things that are carried out and that take place in his Province and its houses, especially if anything has happened of major importance. He should desire that everything that pertains to the Province be fully known to the Superior General.

CM 701

CHAPTER XIII LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Members of the Administration

295 A religious house is administered by a local Superior, who is assisted in his governing by two Councilors, whose opinion he should not neglect to obtain. The local Superior and his Councilors, as well as the treasurer of the house, are appointed for a three-year term by the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, after consultation with the members of the respective house. (D 267-275)

CIC, can. 625 § 3; CM 727

CHAPTER XIV
TREASURERS
AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

Juridical Faculty

296 The Congregation itself, each Province and each house, as juridical persons by virtue of the law, have the capacity to acquire, possess, administer, and alienate temporal goods for the attainment of their own aims. The goods of an extinct house are destined for the Province; the goods of an extinct Province are destined for the entire Congregation, with due regard for the laws of justice and the will of the founders.

CIC, can. 634 § 1; CM 547-549, 690

Administration of Goods

297 The administration of temporal goods belongs to the Superiors with their Councils, who, however, conduct it, for the most part, through the treasurers. In addition to the Superiors, the treasurers also perform legally valid juridical acts as long as they do not go beyond the limits of their competence. (D 276)

CM 559

Treasurers

298 For the administration of temporal goods of the entire Congregation, a General Treasurer is to be appointed; of the Provinces, Provincial Treasurers are to be appointed; of the Vicariates, Vicariate Treasurers may be appointed; and of the individual houses, local Treasurers are to be appointed. All the treasurers carry out their office under the direction of the Superior with his Council. (D 277-283, 285-286)

CM 500, 587

Deposits and Foundations

299 Superiors should not accept deposits, except with necessary caution and prudence, and only when this is requested by some person to whom the community owes

much, or when denial would without doubt cause damage. It is forbidden to accept foundations connected with burdens of more than 20 years duration. For any acceptance of a foundation, the consent of the Major Superior and his Council is required. (D 284)

CM 556, 581

Liquidating Debts

300 If the Congregation, a Province, a Vicariate, or a house has contracted any debts or obligations, it alone is responsible for them. If some member has contracted debts or obligations without permission from his Superiors, he himself is responsible for them and not the Congregation, Province, Vicariate, or house.

CIC, can. 638; CM 577

Prudence and Diligence

301 Mindful that the goods of the Congregation are the goods of the Church, the Superiors and their Council members and treasurers shall, in the administration of these goods, use the greatest diligence and faithfulness. When necessary, they are also to seek the counsel of men who are honest and skillful in these matters. They are to be assiduously vigilant that the goods entrusted to their care should not perish, suffer damage, or be dissipated and that money not be spent for superfluous, useless, or excessively expensive things. They should be on their guard lest burdens be imposed on the Congregation, the Province, or the house that they are unable to sustain. Let them indeed be concerned that, by using material things well and in a way appropriate to religious life, all the confreres may give before the world both a personal—as well as a collective—witness of charity and poverty.

CIC, cann. 635; 640; CM 564

CHAPTER XV

LAWS OF THE CONGREGATION

Reasons for Fidelity

302 The confreres are to strive to conform their entire life to the Gospel as expressed in the laws of the Congregation. They should have a high regard for these laws as means of attaining holiness that are well-suited to their vocation; they should become familiar with them and observe them faithfully. Let them remember that both the personal progress of each confrere and the prosperity of the entire Congregation depend above all on this fidelity. Therefore, it is not so much the fear of sin or punishment as the desire and striving for evangelical perfection, the love of God, of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Congregation that should incite all the confreres to the exact, faithful, and constant observance of the laws of the Congregation.

CM 770

Obligation to Faithful Observance

303 The *Constitutions*, as well as the *Directory*, do not of themselves oblige under sin; however, he who transgresses them in matters pertaining to the precepts of God and the Church or to the vows, or with scandal to others, or out of contempt, cannot in any way be free from sin.

CM 769

Dispensation from the Norms Contained in the *Constitutions and Directory*

304 The right to dispense from the norms contained in the *Constitutions* belongs to the Holy See, while from those contained in the *Directory* belongs to the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

CIC, can. 85

Power of Granting Dispensations

305 The right to dispense from the *Constitutions and Directory* for a determined amount of time in the things pertaining to religious discipline with regard to individual

houses and members of the entire Congregation belongs to the Superior General; with regard to individual houses and members of a Province—to the Provincial Superior; and with regard to his house and its members—to the local Superior. A dispensation ceases when a new Superior succeeds the one who granted the dispensation. (D 287-288)

CM 772-776

Interpretation of By-Laws

306 The highest authority in the Congregation for interpreting the *Constitutions and Directory*, for practical direction, belongs ordinarily to the general Council acting collegially and extraordinarily to the General Chapter. The interpretation of the *Constitutions*, however, will be considered authentic only when the approval of the Apostolic See is obtained.

CM 779

Changes of Laws

307 Changing the *Constitutions and Directory* pertains to the General Chapter. Any change in the *Constitutions* requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the Chapter members and is not valid unless confirmed by the Apostolic See.

CM 780

Provincial Statutes

308 In addition to the *Constitutions and Directory*, each Province and Vice-Province should have its own Statutes. Their elaboration is the responsibility of the respective Chapter, and they must be approved by the Superior General and his Council. Also, in each Vicariate, it belongs to the delegated Superior to draw up the Vicariate's proper Statutes, which must be approved by the delegating Superior and his Council. (D 289-290)

EPILOGUE

“Since no community can remain without the protection of the law, nor is it fitting that anyone living on this earth should be bound by no law: therefore, you who are gathered together in one society...under the government of one Superior...should strive to zealously observe these few Statutes. This will give you interior calm and peace of conscience.”

Holy Father Stanislaus, our Founder,
Norma Vitæ

“It is true, nevertheless, that unless the internal voice of a pious conscience and of the law of love—which the Holy Spirit is accustomed to inscribe on our hearts,—guides us, even the best Constitutions will hardly do much good to us. And yet, far be it from us that we do not value them most highly, as we ought. For it is known that just, good and wisely proposed laws contribute much in a wonderful way to the promotion of all good, if they are put into practice [...] Anyone who follows this rule, may the peace and mercy of God rest upon them (cf. Gal 6:16).”

Blessed Archbishop George, our Renovator,
Circular Letter on the Constitutions

DIRECTORY

**OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

PART I

PATRIMONY AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE CONGREGATION

CHAPTER I

NATURE, PURPOSE, SPIRITUALITY, AND CHARACTER

Ministries and Works

1 The confreres fulfill their mission by performing such ministries and works as preaching the Word of God, including through mass media; acquiring and promoting Christian knowledge; sacramental ministry; ministry to the sick and dying; promoting the dignity and sanctity of life; caring for the poor and socially disadvantaged; supporting the diocesan clergy; fostering the unity of Christians; founding and administering Marian, Divine Mercy, and other shrines; establishing and running centers of Marian and Divine Mercy formation, academic institutes, schools and colleges; printing and publishing; founding and guiding confraternities and Catholic associations; administering parishes, rectorates, and retreat houses; and establishing and conducting works of mercy and other forms of ministry and apostolic work according to the needs and circumstances of time and place. In every ministry and work that the confreres undertake, they shall embody and express the Congregation's charism in its fullness. (C 3)

CM 2

Coat of Arms of the Congregation

2 The pattern and the description of the Coat of Arms is kept in the Archives of the General Curia and is protected by law. Modification to the Coat of Arms belongs to the General Chapter with a qualified majority (two-thirds of the votes). (C 15)

CHAPTER II MEMBERS

CHAPTER III PATRON SAINTS AND SPECIAL DEVOTIONS (*DEVOTIONES PECULIARES*)

Celebrating the Patrons of the Congregation

3 The commemorations of the Patrons of the entire Congregation, individual Province, Vicariate, house, or apostolate should be celebrated. In accordance with the Marian Calendar, the titular solemnity of the Congregation, as well as the feasts of our Founder and our Renovator, should be celebrated in a special way. These may be preceded by appropriate novenas or triduums. (C18-19)

Remembrance of the Death of the Lord

4 Every Friday, at the hour when Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, died on the Cross for our sins, let the confreres who are not impeded call to mind the memory of the Lord's agony by making a brief mental recollection and prayer. They are encouraged to make the Way of the Cross or recite the Divine Mercy Chaplet at this time. During the Easter Season, they may make the Way of Light—*Via Lucis*. (C 20)

CM 244

Devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary

5 With a particular love, let the confreres practice and spread devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, among other ways by venerating and proclaiming God's love and mercy; invoking the Holy Spirit that He may make us holy and unblemished before the Face of God; spreading reverence and love for Mary Immaculately Conceived; practicing acts of entrustment (consecration) to Mary Immaculate; celebrating frequently a Mass in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary; reciting the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary; praying litanies and novenas to the Blessed Virgin

Mary, as well as the chaplet of the Ten Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary; promoting images of Mary Immaculate; and propagating the Confraternity and the Blue Scapular of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. In addition, liturgical regulations permitting, each Saturday, let them recite the Liturgy of the Hours from the *Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday* and celebrate the Holy Mass, using one of the Masses in honor of Our Lady. (C 20)

Devotions for the Dead

6 Let the confreres continuously assist the dead, not only individually and in community, but also with the faithful entrusted to their care. On the day of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed and on the seven following days, as well as during the whole month of November, let the confreres particularly strive to promote devotions (prayers) for the dead. In addition, liturgical regulations permitting, on a designated weekday, let them recite the Liturgy of the Hours from the Office for the Dead and celebrate one of the Holy Masses for the Dead. The Statutes of the Provinces and Vicariates should designate one of the days of the week as the day of prayer for the dead. (C 20)

CM 419

Some Marks of Identity

7 Let the confreres use and cherish signs that express and enliven their Marian identity, such as the coat of arms; the motto; the hymn of the Congregation; the invocation *Immaculata Virginis Mariæ conceptio, sit nobis salus et protectio*; the scapular and the medal of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the image of Our Lady Immaculately Conceived (painted by Franciszek Smuglewicz from St. Vitus Church in Rome); and the antiphon *Tota Pulchra Es*. (C 20)

Principles Regarding the Solemn Garb

8 The white habit, which our Holy Father Founder wore in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, belongs, among other things, to the inalienable spiritual patrimony of our Congregation. Normally, it is received during

perpetual vows. It consists of a simple white cassock with a fascia. The design of the habit and the time and manner of its reception in particular jurisdictions is confirmed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. The confreres are encouraged to wear it at least on the following days:

- 1) January 27, Feast of Blessed Abp. George, the Renovator;
- 2) May 18, Solemnity of St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papeczyński, the Founder;
- 3) August 29, Anniversary of the Renovation of the Congregation;
- 4) September 17, Anniversary of the passing to eternal life of the holy Father Founder;
- 5) November 2, Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed;
- 6) November 5, Memorial of All the Deceased of our Congregation;
- 7) December 8, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
- 8) December 11, Anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation.

(C 17)

NV, IV, 4; Testamentum II; FDR

PART II CONSECRATED LIFE

CHAPTER I PURSUIT OF EVANGELICAL PERFECTION

CHAPTER II CHASTITY

Concern for Preserving Chastity

9 The confreres are bound not only to cherish a chaste life but also, trusting in the help of God and the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin, with the greatest effort and diligence, to avoid anything that might contaminate or stain it or obscure its splendor. They should use appropriate means to keep it perfectly intact so that they may offer their hearts and bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, pleasing to God. Also, they should not neglect natural means that favor health of mind and body. (C 42)

Rom 12:1; PC 12; CM 215

Helps in Preserving Chastity

10 The confreres should be concerned to guard, protect, and cultivate evangelical chastity, for which the following means will be of the greatest help: continuous mortification of the body; unceasing custody of the senses, imagination, affections, and thoughts; avoiding occasions of sin and idleness; modesty and decency; constant prayer to God and incessant mindfulness of His presence; frequent Holy Communion; the ardent invocation of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, one's Guardian Angel, and Saint Joseph; and, in temptation and danger, trusting recourse to our Savior Jesus Christ and to His wounds. (C 43)

CM 216

Vigilance

11 Let the confreres shun excessive care of their own body and every form of effeminacy; freedom from restraint of the eyes and an unbridled imagination; imprudent use of social media, which would constitute a danger to their chastity; and all inordinate affection. Likewise, let them avoid every incautious and dangerous association, relaxation, and reading; superfluous, useless, and idle visits and conversations; singular signs of affection; excessive familiarity, especially with persons of the opposite sex; as well as everything that may have the appearance of evil or produce scandal, injure a good name, or arouse suspicion in lay people, who are easily scandalized in these things. (C 43)

CIC, can. 666; CM 217

Chastity in Community

12 By the profession of chastity, the confreres not only consecrate themselves fully to God, to Christ, and to His Church, but they are also united by religious family ties. Let all, but especially Superiors, remember that chastity is more easily preserved when a true fraternal love thrives among the confreres in their common life and a spirit of family and friendship prevails. (C 43)

PC 12

Obligations of Charity

13 True religious charity imposes an obligation to admonish seriously a confrere in the case of any external danger that threatens the virtue of chastity of any member or of any other person because of him; and, if this does not suffice, the Superiors are to be informed. Let the Superiors, on their part, guided by the same charity, counteract the evil without delay with appropriate and efficacious remedies and remove all scandal—even the slightest—as quickly as possible. (C 43)

CM 218-219

CHAPTER III POVERTY

Permission of the Superiors

14 Generally speaking, the confreres are not allowed, by their own will, without the permission of their legitimate Superiors, to possess or retain any temporal thing for any reason whatsoever, either with themselves or with others; to administer, use, or dispose of it; or, for any reason, to sell, receive, lend, exchange, transform, or dispense it. (C 46)

CM 230

Special and General Permission

15 Confreres shall make sure that they obtain special permission from their legitimate Superiors for all those actions; but they may also obtain general permission from their Superiors for some of those actions for a limited time. (C 46)

CM 231

Presumed Permission

16 In more urgent and unforeseen cases, a prudently presumed permission is sufficient, and any member may act on it, having considered the matter carefully before God; afterwards, he should render an account of it to his Superior. (C 46)

CM 232

Gifts Given to Confreres

17 Unless proven to the contrary, it is presumed that those things that are given to confreres are given in consideration of the Congregation. However, when it is obvious that something was donated in consideration of the member himself and for his use, it is permitted to comply with such an intention of the donor only if the spirit of our poverty would allow for it. (C 50)

CM 282

Donations

18 A donation or offering of greater value made to or for the benefit of a church or religious community, may not

be refused except for a just reason approved by the Major Superior. The confreres, however, should not excessively seek donations. Rather, they should strive to acquire by their own work whatever is necessary for their livelihood and endeavors. Goods lawfully entrusted to a member for pious causes extraneous to the Congregation are to be spent faithfully according to the donor's intention. (C 50)

CIC, cann. 1300; 1302 § 3; PC 13; CM 223, 550

Juridical Acts

19 In spite of their vow of poverty, confreres may, with the permission of their lawful Superiors, perform juridical acts of ownership, as prescribed by civil law. (C 50)

CM 227

Transfer Restrictions

20 He who is transferred from one house to another is not allowed to take anything with him, except those things which are strictly for personal use and which the Superior, taking into account the circumstances, has permitted. (C 50)

CM 229

Mutual Aid in the Congregation

21 Houses and Provinces should share their material goods with one another so that those that are better supplied may assist those that suffer indigence; let these communities, as an expression of their religious consecration, strive to live on a rather small amount of money, not taking into account at all greater revenues coming from works or other sources. (C 51)

PC 13

Sense of Justice and Charity

22 A budget, which lists the anticipated income and expenses of the community, the economic state of the house (a report of assets and liabilities), and the statement on the actual spending on the sustenance of the confreres should be presented at the proper time for their common consideration. All should desire and be vigilant that, in our dealings with others, a pro-

found sense of social justice and charity be observed and that special privileges, as if owed to our status, not be sought. (C 51)

CHAPTER IV OBEDIENCE

Formal Command

23 A command is formal, which means that it imposes a grave obligation of conscience, if it is expressly given as such by the Superior General or Provincial Superior, with the consent of the respective Council, in writing or at least in the presence of two witnesses; the Superiors should rarely, cautiously, and prudently impose an order using the power of a formal command and only for a grave reason. (C 59)

CM 197-198

According to the Letter and the Spirit

24 With all their strength, let the confreres observe perfectly, both in regard to matter and manner, and according to their implied intention, the orders of the Superiors and the *Constitutions*, as well as the other laws of the Church and the Congregation, with attention always to their purpose and spirit and not to the letter alone, for “the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Cor 3:6). (C 61)

CM 199, 201; Instr. I, 11

Accepting Duties

25 Let each confrere strive without refusal to accept the duties or offices that are lawfully entrusted to him and to fulfill them diligently as “good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:10). If however, something were imposed on someone that is too burdensome, or if anyone should perceive that something is harmful to himself or to others, or that he needs some help, or that the command itself is without just foundation, let him reverently and humbly inform the Superior, modestly assenting to his decision. (C 61)

CM 200, 211

Attitude toward Superiors

26 Let the confreres beware lest they dare to do or say anything against their Superiors or to criticize their acts or words, thus causing scandal to others. (C 61)

CM 207

Suggestions Spontaneously Offered

27 At the right time, out of personal initiative, let them spontaneously present to the Superiors appropriate information, observations, suggestions and projects that are useful for promoting the glory of God and the good of their neighbor, so that the Superiors may be better able to direct the entire activity of the community. (C 61)

PC 14; CM 210

Recourse

28 A confrere who has been refused something by his immediate Superior may have recourse to the Superior of the higher level, mentioning, however, the refusal and explaining the reasons for making recourse. The Superior to whom the recourse is made should not grant a positive answer unless the direct Superior has been consulted. (C 61)

CM 212

Positions of Honor not to Be Sought

29 No one is permitted, either directly or indirectly, to seek out or to strive after any position in the Congregation nor any dignity or office outside the Congregation. Everyone is bound to refuse ecclesiastical or secular offices offered to him, unless, for grave reasons, he is obliged to accept them by a Major Superior with the consent of his Council. (C 61)

CM 203-204

Acquaintance and Dialogue

30 In governing the family of God, let the Superiors have before their eyes the character and mission of their own community in the Church; let them strive to ascertain the strengths, talents and needs of the confreres, and the difficulties in the given circumstances of the time and the place; and let

them undertake fraternal dialogue so as to hear the opinions of the confreres about common matters. (C 64)

PC 14; CM 213

Manner of Governing

31 Aware that they can err, let the Superiors always take into consideration the teachings of the Gospel and the Church and the prescripts of the *Constitutions*; let them weigh carefully in the Lord the motivations and reasons for their decisions and, whenever possible, reveal them to the confreres; in that which pertains to the fulfillment of a responsibility entrusted by them, let the Superiors prudently grant appropriate freedom according to the maturity and capability of each confrere. Mindful, however, of their responsibility before God and the Congregation, let them assume the fortitude necessary to decide and to command whatever should be done. (C 64)

PC 14; J 25 January 1911; CM 213

CHAPTER V

SOURCES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Master of Ceremonies

32 At least in the larger houses, the Superior should appoint a master of ceremonies who should diligently see to it that, in performing the sacred celebrations and offices, the rules of sacred liturgy be observed. (C 68)

CM 379

Suitable Preparation and Thanksgiving

33 All should prepare themselves for liturgical actions both by proper preparation regarding the significance and manner of celebrating them and by prayer and a fraternal joining of hearts and minds in Christ. After the celebration of the Eucharist, they should not neglect to give thanks to God. (C 68)

SC 17-19, 29-30; CM 248, 378

More Important Feasts

34 In the course of the liturgical year, let the confreres strive to direct their attention to those celebrations that correspond to the character and spirituality of the Congregation and are more related to it. In addition to their own patrons, let them especially venerate the saints of the region in which they live and work. In the liturgy, it is recommended that they follow the Congregation's own calendar and the diocesan calendar. (C 68)
SC III; CM 14-15

Concelebration

35 To manifest the unity of the priesthood of Christ, His sacrifice, and His Church, unless there is some other necessity, the priests should concelebrate the Holy Mass; however, the right for each one to celebrate an individual Mass is retained. (C 70)
SC 57

Sacrament of Penance

36 Let the confreres strive to approach the Sacrament of Penance twice a month. (C 71)

Function of the Confessor

37 The confreres who exercise the function of confessors in the houses of the Congregation, insofar as it depends on them, should willingly receive every penitent approaching them for direction and formation in the spiritual life. Let them truly direct each one gently, firmly, and prudently by instructing, admonishing, and spurring him on with their counsels and instructions, so that each may abhor sin more and more and become inflamed with striving for virtue and with the desire for progress. Let the confessors and spiritual directors be on their guard lest, through their excessive indulgence, negligence, or lack of concern, souls become lukewarm and evils creep into the communities; the unworthy or those who have no vocation approach vows or orders; or those who are called turn away from the path of perfection or even lose their vocation. Moreover, they are to be solicitous for the good of every penitent and truly zealous for his progress. (C 71)

CM 270

CHAPTER VI LIFE OF PRAYER AND PIETY

Seasonal Devotions

38 They should celebrate the customary devotions, if possible with the faithful participating: in May, to the Blessed Virgin Mary; in June, to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; in October, the Rosary. (C 20, 78)

CM 250, 419

Retreats

39 Each month confreres shall make a one-day retreat, and each year they shall make spiritual exercises lasting about a week, either in community or separately, as determined by the Provincial Statutes. (C 80)

CM 249, 252

Manner of Commutation

40 Should it occasionally occur if any confrere omit some liturgical action or pious exercise because of work dedicated to God, let him try to make up for this even while being occupied, at least by more frequently calling to mind God's presence and by brief prayers; let him also offer up to God, with greater affection, the very works he is performing. (C 80)

CM 255

Private Prayer

41 In addition, let them pray in private frequently, fervently, and with confidence, especially before undertaking any more important matter or work. By whatever means prudent piety suggests to them, they should foster in themselves a spirit of continuous prayer, walk continuously in the presence of God, and eagerly nourish their interior life. Let them also vigilantly examine their consciences, look more frequently into themselves, and reflect upon themselves and their actions. May they often raise their minds to God through ejaculatory prayers, call forth acts of virtues, and be inflamed with holy desires for better things. (C 80)

CM 243

Mass and Prayers for the Entire Congregation

42 Annually, each of the priests is to say one Mass for the entire Congregation, that it may grow in merit and in number. On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with the participation of the community, the Superiors, on their part, must celebrate Mass for this same intention. Once a month, if possible on the day of the monthly retreat, the individual confreres shall offer their whole day's prayers and pious exercises also for this same intention. (C 84)

CM 411

Mass for the Superior General

43 Once a year in every house, with the community participating, one Mass is to be celebrated for the intention of the Superior General. (C 84)

CM 412

Masses for Parents, Relatives, and Benefactors

44 Likewise, every year in each house, two Masses shall be celebrated for the living and deceased parents and relatives of the confreres, and one for the living and deceased benefactors. (C 84)

CM 413

Masses for all the Deceased Confreres and the Faithful

45 Each priest shall say one Mass each year for all the deceased members of the Congregation. One Mass is to be said once a year in every house for all the faithful departed. (C 85)

CM 418

Place of Burial

46 The professed are not allowed to choose for themselves a church for funeral services or a place for burial; each house may have its own cemetery, separate from the public cemetery. But, if they do not have one, an effort should be made, insofar as possible, that confreres be buried at least in a decent place, apart from the other deceased. (C 85)

CM 409

Notification of Death; Description of Life

47 The Superior of the house shall immediately notify the Superior General, Provincial Superior, and every house in the Province of the death of a member so that the prescribed prayers may be initiated as soon as possible; he should, likewise, notify the close relatives of the deceased. The local Superior, according to custom, should see to it that a brief description of the life of the member is drawn up, which is to be sent to the Major Superiors for completion; this description should be conserved for the edification of the confreres. (C 85)

CM 404

Prayers and Masses for a Deceased Confrere

48 After the death of each member, whether professed or a novice, thirty Masses should be celebrated for his soul, either in the house to which he belonged or elsewhere, according to the disposition of the Superior; in the other houses of the Province to which he belonged, one Mass is to be said for him. In addition to this, all members of the same Province shall offer up for a month their daily rosaries for the deceased. (C 85)

CM 416

Masses for the Superior General and Provincial Superior

49 For a Superior General who has died in office and for a former Superior General, in addition to the regular prayers, all the priests of the Congregation shall say one Mass; all the priests of a Province will do the same for a deceased Provincial Superior. (C 85)

CM 416

Masses and Prayers for a Postulant and Internal Co-worker

50 Five Masses must be said for the soul of a deceased postulant or an internal co-worker in the house in which he died, and the confreres of that house shall offer a part of the Rosary. (C 85)

CM 416

Masses for the Parents of a Confrere

51 For the recently deceased father or mother of a confrere, three Masses should be said in the house in which he lives, and all the members of that house shall offer a part of the Rosary. (C 85)

CM 416

Mass and Prayers for the Pope and the Ordinary

52 One Mass should be offered and a part of the Rosary recited for a week in all the houses of the Congregation after the death of the Supreme Pontiff, and after the death of the diocesan bishop in all the houses located in his diocese. (C 85)

CM 417

Prayers for Benefactors

53 Superiors should see to it that special prayers are said for the recently deceased more distinguished benefactors. (C 85)

CM 417

Mass Intentions for Self, Family, and Friends

54 All priests of the Congregation are obliged to offer Holy Masses for the intentions assigned by the local Superior; however, he has the right to permit professed confreres to offer, or request to be offered, one or more Holy Masses for themselves or for their relatives and friends. (C 86)

CM 414

Announcements of Common Devotions

55 The Superior should notify the whole community one day in advance of about the common prayers to be offered according to the laws and customs of the Congregation. (C 86)

CM 420

Prayers for Those in Need

56 Ill confreres or those who find themselves in special difficulties or straits should be zealously aided by the

prayers of the confreres; likewise, for just reasons, the Superiors may commend various works and also both individual members and non-members to the prayers of the confreres. (C 86)

CM 415

CHAPTER VII PENANCE AND MORTIFICATIONS

Attire and Living Quarters

57 The attire and furniture of the living quarters of each of the confreres should be adapted to their occupations, preserving, however, a modesty which is proper to those who “have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal 5:24). (C 94)

PART III COMMON LIFE

CHAPTER I COMMON LIFE IN GENERAL

Contact with Those Living Outside the Community

58 A confrere who lives outside the community for some time, with the permission of his Superiors, is bound to observe the laws of the Congregation as much as possible and to render to his own Superior an account of this observance, as well as of his actions and their outcome. The Superior, on his part, should, either personally or through another, visit him and, by means of letters, instruct and direct him. (C 96)

CM 281

Small Communities

59 In order that members of small communities may find mutual assistance in fostering their spiritual and intellectual lives and that they may be able to cooperate more closely in the apostolate and be rescued from the dangers that might arise from loneliness, let there be set up among them, with the help of the Superiors, some kind of common life by means of frequent meetings and other suitable aids according to the different personal and pastoral needs. (C 96)

PO 8

CHAPTER II FRATERNAL CHARITY AND CARE OF THE SICK

Mutual Love

60 Let them hold true friendship in great esteem and cultivate it among themselves; they should take care, however, lest they exclude certain confreres from camaraderie, and let them

avoid whatever bears the mark of recklessness or sensuality. Let mutual love flourish, and let it be spiritual, active, and universal, that is, a love that extends to all the confreres and embraces all of them. (C 99)

CM 290

Care for One's Health

61 Just as excessive care for those things that pertain to the body is reprehensible, so a moderate and prudent concern for the body's strength and health, which is a precious gift of God, is recommended to all, so that they may be able to apply themselves more intensely and for a longer time to God's service. Therefore, prudent care should be taken to maintain healthiness and the rules of hygiene. Should anyone notice that something is more seriously harming his health, let him simply and humbly make it known to his Superior. (C 100)

CM 393

Vacations

62 Each year sufficient vacation time should be granted to the confreres, which should be spent in a manner agreed upon with the Superior. (C 100)

Social Assistance

63 Individual communities, being concerned with the care of confreres, can avail themselves of insurance, social security, and pensions laws. (C 100)

Convalescent Homes

64 Insofar as possible, let the Provinces show solicitude to have certain houses in more healthful locations for the recuperation of the strength and good health of the confreres. (C 100)

CM 394

Infirmarian

65 In each house, one of the confreres is to be designated, if possible, to provide for the ill all the help and services they need. (C 100)

CM 396

Complete Care for the Sick

66 It is the duty of the Superior of the house together with the infirmarian to be vigilant that a doctor be summoned at the right time for the sick, that the remedies prescribed by the doctor be accurately applied, and that all their other just needs and conveniences be taken care of. Let the members of the entire community support the ill with special prayers and provide them with spiritual help. (C 100)

CM 396-400, 403

Patience in Illness

67 The ill should moderate their demands in the spirit of penitence and poverty and accept the illness itself as a gift of God and a special instrument from the hand of God for their sanctification, and they should bear it with patience and a tranquil mind and with complete submission to divine providence. Without rejecting human assistance or renouncing the hope of recovering their health, let them, nevertheless, above all, desire that the will of God be perfectly done in their regard. Those who are more seriously ill should, without fear and at the right time, prepare themselves for death. (C 100)

CM 398

Controversies to Be Settled

68 If any controversy should arise among the confreres, it should ordinarily be settled peacefully, charitably, and justly within their home. All controversies and judicial processes with non-members should all the more be avoided, insofar as possible. (C 101)

CM 333

Unpleasantness Borne or Remedied

69 If anyone feels that he is undergoing an unpleasantness from someone in any matter, even from his own Superior, either let him bear it patiently as meritorious for his eternal life or let him sincerely and candidly, personally or through another, reveal what is oppressing him to the same Superior; but if the Superior should be unwilling to remedy

the matter or cannot do so, then, observing the proper order of authority, it is permitted to have recourse to the Major Superiors, who should settle the matter prudently and apply a remedy in the Lord. In ordinary matters, the command of the immediate Superior must be accepted until a Superior of a higher level has decided otherwise. (C 101)

CM 334

Penal Remedies

70 If scandal or serious disturbance of order should arise from the behavior of some member, the Superior should admonish him personally or through another, even in writing. If the admonition and reprimand should remain without effect, an order should be given with a threat of punishment in the event of its transgression. (C 101)

CM 341-345

Prescripts of the Law to Be Observed

71 In settling disputes and in conducting processes, the pre-scripts of Canon Law are to be observed, and, in imposing punishments, uppermost in mind should not be the punishment of the fault, but rather the correction and emendation of the member, as well as the healing and edification of the community. (C 101)

CM 335, 340

CHAPTER III GUIDELINES FOR SAFEGUARDING DISCIPLINE AND RECOLLECTION

Distribution of Jobs

72 The local Superior, with the consultative vote of his Council, having also heard the opinion of the confreres, appoints the necessary officials according to the needs and possibilities of the house and distributes the various jobs. (C 105-106)

CM 317, 320, 730

Daily Order

73 After deliberation with the community, the Superior should draw up an appropriate daily order of pious exercises and other actions that are performed in common. This schedule can be flexible, having regard for the various duties and the different personal circumstances of the confreres. If anyone were unable to be present for some common exercise or work, he should give to the Superior the reasons for his absence. (C 105)

ES II, 26; CM 318-319

Order in Private Rooms

74 If possible, let all confreres have their own rooms, which should be sufficiently furnished, but in a way that is in accord with the spirit of vowed poverty. Everyone should personally maintain his room and the things entrusted to him neat and in order. An exception is made for those who, in the judgment of the Superior, should be given help because of some more important occupations or ill health. (C 105)

CM 323-324

Review of the Common Life

75 Each month at the local convention, with the Superior presiding and having before their eyes the Gospel precepts and the laws of the Congregation, they will review their common life and its defects. On this occasion, the Superior will add exhortations and opportune admonitions so that the religious spirit in the community may continually flourish and grow. (C 106, 278)

CM 331, 742

Account of the Exterior Life

76 At least every three months in a talk with the Superior, they should render an account of their exterior life, namely regarding the exterior observance of the rule; the fulfillment of the obligatory pious exercises; their office, works, studies, and occupations; relations with confreres and non-members; and their needs and difficulties. (C 106)

CM 328

Stricter Silence

77 It is up to the Superior, having heard the opinion of his Council, to establish the times and places where silence is to be more strictly observed. (C 108)

CM 310

Reading at Table

78 In each house, the community itself, with the Superior presiding, is to decide when reading at meals is to take place and what is to be read. (C 108)

CM 311, 739

Cloister and Parlor

79 Superiors should not admit any non-member into the quarters reserved for confreres only, unless just reasons demand it. Ordinarily, a parlor should be set up where guests are to be received. (C 109)

CM 297

Instruments of Communication

80 Let the confreres form for themselves an honest conscience on the use of instruments of communication so that, in this use, whatever is harmful to their own vocation may be avoided. Let all take care that these instruments serve the good and progress of the community; let them also be vigilant lest their abuse result in a waste of time and in a detriment to religious recollection. (C 111)

CIC, can. 666; IM 5

CHAPTER IV**DEALINGS WITH HUMAN SOCIETY****Decency to Be Observed in All Things**

81 Let them keep away entirely from anything that is unbecoming to the religious state; they should observe decency in the practice of the arts; they should not take part in inappropriate games, shows, and gatherings. Let them not

accept offices and employments that, although decent, are unsuitable for the religious state or are forbidden by the laws of the Church. (C 116)

CM 178-185

Evangelical Witness in Travels

82 Let confreres who are traveling for a just reason and at the command of the Superior or with his permission observe the laws of the Congregation insofar as this can be done. Desiring to please God in all things and mindful of His presence in the people whom they meet, let them manifest sincere goodwill toward them and offer them a testimony of evangelical life. (C 116)

CM 305-307

PART IV APOSTOLATE

CHAPTER I CHARACTER AND ELEMENTS OF THE APOSTOLATE

Planning of Apostolic Works

83 Chapters as well as the Superior General and the Superiors of Provinces and of the General Vicariates, with their Councils, are obliged to foresee and select the tasks and apostolic works that should be carried out by the entire Congregation and by individual Provinces and General Vicariates. (C 121)

Apostolate in the Eastern Rite

84 Confreres responding to the needs and the desires of the Church, especially those who are baptized in the Eastern rite or also ordained in it, may, after due preparation, assume pastoral work in the Eastern rite, carefully observing what is prescribed by both universal and proper law; for this, however, a mandate is necessary, given by the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council. (C 121)

OE 6, 24

Moderation in Undertaking New Duties

85 When undertaking and carrying out new apostolic works, let the confreres with humility begin from small works. They should not begin various works, unless they have at their disposal a sufficient number of qualified men for the duties already assumed as well as for the new duties to be undertaken. (C 121)

Preparation of the Laity for the Apostolate

86 Lay Christian faithful should be prepared assiduously for the apostolate by the use of various suitable aids. Above

all, they are to be helped to acquire a deeper knowledge of sacred Scripture and Catholic doctrine, to deepen their spiritual life, and to discern rightly world conditions. (C 127)

AA 32

Statutes of the Marian Fathers' Associations

87 The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, grants the Statutes to the Associations of the Congregation of Marian Fathers, in which he defines the Associations' goals, headquarters, government, membership requirements, ways of functioning, and other requisites deemed indispensable. In addition to stating their main goals, the Statutes should contain specific goals flowing from our spiritual heritage to help the faithful in the Associations to live out the charism of the Congregation in accordance with the needs of the time and place. (C 128)

CIC, cann. 298; 304

Contacts with Other Religious

88 Let them strive to enter into fraternal relationships with other religious families, especially with those who operate in the same region or in the same kind of apostolate; let them mutually share experiences of pastoral work, asceticism, and learning, providing help in cases of need, praying for one another and rejoicing in the success of others no less than in their own. (C 131)

CHAPTER II

INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION OF YOUTH

CHAPTER III

USE OF INSTRUMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

Appropriate Use

89 Let the confreres keep away entirely from morally unacceptable spectacles and harmful books, and let them try to dissuade others from using them. They should, however, promote those good works which are expressed by instruments

of communication, especially by circulating Catholic books and periodicals and by establishing libraries. (C 137)

CM 367

Preparation of Confreres

90 Let the Superiors take care to prepare the confreres properly for the apostolate of the press and of the other instruments of communication so that, cooperating with others in the same field of activity, they may be able to bear more fruit. (C 137)

IM 14

Ecclesiastical Permission

91 In regard to censorship and permission for publishing written compositions and for employing other means of communication, the norms established by universal law, the local hierarchy, and our Congregation are to be observed. For each publication, the confreres should have the permission of their Major Superior; permission can be granted only after obtaining the opinion of a confrere designated for this purpose, who will judge whether this publication will be useful and appropriate under the circumstances. (C 138)

CIC, can. 832; CM 364

CHAPTER IV

EXERCISE OF PRIESTLY MINISTRY

Manner of Preaching the Word of God

92 They are to observe faithfully what the Holy See prescribes for preachers of the Word of God: they should especially refrain completely from worldly and convoluted arguments; let them especially expound, with a lively faith and simplicity and in a manner adapted to the comprehension of the hearers, that which is to be believed and done; but most of all, let them preach “Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor 2:2) and His Holy Gospel, with the Spirit and power. (C 141)

CM 371

Manner of Hearing Confessions

93 Let them devote themselves to hearing confessions, eagerly, diligently, persistently, charitably, graciously, and zealously; they should not quickly dismiss penitents who are ill disposed, but should try to dispose them to receive the grace of absolution. Those who are assigned to hear the confessions of nuns should in no way interfere in the internal or external government of their community. They should not discuss with either non-members or among themselves confessions they have heard. (C 141)

CM 373, 375

Promotion of Piety

94 They should animate, support, and promote piety in the souls of the faithful and especially urge them to participate in the Holy Mass and, if they are rightly disposed, to receive Holy Communion—not only on Sundays and holy days of obligation, but also on weekdays as frequently as they can; to visit and adore the Blessed Sacrament; to revere and worship our Savior Jesus Christ and His mysteries; and to venerate the Immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, with a filial devotion, above the other inhabitants of heaven. (C 141)

CM 377

Double Subordination

95 A confrere who holds an ecclesial office in the diocese remains bound by the observance of the vows and the *Constitutions*. Therefore, in all things pertaining to religious discipline, he is subject to the Superior, who has the right, without the obligation to consult the diocesan bishop, to inquire into his conduct and to admonish him, should the need arise. In his pastoral ministry, however, a confrere who holds an ecclesial office in the diocese is subject to the diocesan bishop. (C 143)

CIC, can. 678; CM 382, 385

Material Goods Acquired

96 Whatever goods are offered to a member of the Congregation in consideration of the parish for which he works, he acquires for the parish; all other goods he acquires as other religious. (C 144)

CIC, can. 668 § 3; CM 383

Donations

97 In spite of his vow of poverty, a member is permitted to accept and collect donations offered in any manner for the good of the parish and the parishioners, for Catholic schools, or for places or objects of worship within parish boundaries, and he may administer the donations, accepted or collected; likewise, he may spend them according to his prudent judgment, observing the will of the donors. (C 144)

CM 384

Duties of Pastors

98 In fulfilling their office of shepherd, let the pastors first of all take care to know their own flock. Since they are servants of all the sheep, let them foster the growth of the Christian life in the individual faithful as well as in families; in associations, especially those dedicated to the apostolate; and in the entire parish community. Therefore, they should visit homes and schools as their pastoral ministry demands, pay special attention to adolescents and youth, attend the poor and the sick with fatherly love, and also have a particular concern for workers, and make an effort that the faithful would offer help to the works of the apostolate. (C 145)

CIC, cann. 529-530; CD 30

CHAPTER V**ECUMENISM AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE****CHAPTER VI****MISSIONS**

PART V FORMATION

CHAPTER I PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION

External Decorum

99 Religious formation should not neglect those qualities of behavior and external decorum which render Christ's laborer agreeable, such as observing proper rules of hygiene, politeness in treating others, and modesty combined with charity in speech. (C 158)

CM 63, 187-188

Programs of Formation

100 Besides the prescripts of the *Constitutions and Directory* and other instructions and decrees that are common for the entire Congregation, each Province should have its own program of religious and priestly formation, taking into account the particular conditions and needs of the Church and of the Congregation in various regions. (C 161)

Prefect and Committee of Formation

101 In each Province, a prefect and a committee of formation are to be appointed, whose task will be to assist the Superior and the educators of the Province in fulfilling their duties pertaining to formation, especially by elaborating the program of formation as well as other directives and instructions in regard to formation. The manner of appointing the committee and of its work under the direction of the prefect is to be defined by the Provincial Statutes. If it seems necessary or useful, the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of his Council, may also set up a similar committee and a general prefect of formation for the entire Congregation; the Superior General, with the consultative vote of his Council, may also define their duties. (C 161)

Matching of Duties

102 Professors, formators, and students are not to be assigned to offices and works that might impede them in fulfilling their primary duty. (C 161)

CM 111, 603

Assistance of Experts

103 If necessary, experts in various branches of knowledge and in apostolic works are to be invited to the houses of formation to share their experiences. (C 161)

Consulting Physicians and Psychologists

104 A prudent medical and psychological consultation regarding the fitness and maturity of the candidates should be obtained before their admission to the Congregation. Should a consultation with a psychologist be needed for a just reason after the member's admission, his consent is required. (C 161)

RF 145-147

Solicitude of All the Confreres

105 Let all the confreres, especially those who more frequently deal with the students, strive to foster the vocations of the students and their preparation for life in the Congregation by their prayers and their own example of life. (C 163)

CM 599

CHAPTER II FOSTERING VOCATIONS

Vocation Director

106 Each Province should have its own vocation director, appointed by the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council. The Provincial Superior, if it seems opportune, having consulted the local Superiors, should appoint from each house an assistant vocation director. The task of recruiting vocations should also be done in a sincere and close

cooperation with institutions and persons concerned with vocation work in the dioceses. (C 164)

RF 15

Partnership with Families

107 Vocations are born principally in good Christian families, and that is where they should be sought. Hence, the faithful should be instructed often on the need for—and the sublimity of—priestly and religious vocations, and they should be invited to help the entire Church actively in this aspect by prayer and by other means available to them. (C 165)

OT 2; PC 24

Youth Associations in Parishes and Schools

108 Confreres who minister in parishes and schools, teaching religious education, or who take care of altar servers or other youth associations should, in a special way, pay attention to those boys who manifest signs of a vocation or from whom a vocation may be expected. (C 165)

OT 2

Our Own Educational Institutions

109 Let the Congregation endeavor to establish apostolic schools, other similar institutions, boarding schools, or student residences, in which students may hopefully be educated for the Congregation and the Church. In these institutions, under the paternal supervision of the Superiors and with the opportune cooperation of the parents, the young men should lead a life that is suited to their age, mentality, and development. (C 165)

OT 3; CM 358

Other Means

110 For seeking vocations, any other means that seem to be useful are to be used, such as establishing vocation camps and vocation days; disseminating special pamphlets and flyers; directing and instructing the young by correspondence; or, if the need should occur, arranging for

them to reside with pious families so as to be able with their help to attend the appropriate schools; as well as employing the new means of social communication. (C 165)

OT 2

Vocations in Mature Years

111 All concern and solicitude should be shown also to those who heard the voice of the Lord calling them to serve the Church in their maturity. (C 165)

OT 3

CHAPTER III

ADMISSION TO THE CONGREGATION

Inquiries

112 Before the admission of a candidate, the respective Superiors should gather opportune information and testimonies and make inquiries about the candidate's family, former life, morals, reputation, and character. (C 169)

CM 26-32

Required Qualities

113 The following are the principle qualities required for admission into the Congregation:

- 1) sufficient physical and mental health so that it can be prudently hoped that they will be fit for assuming and performing works in the Congregation;
- 2) maturity of intellect, will, and emotions, corresponding to their age;
- 3) a lively faith, which is to become evident in an eager participation in the life of the Church and in truly Christian dealings with their neighbors;
- 4) a certain knowledge of our Congregation and a sincere will to serve Christ and the Church in it.

(C 169)

OT 6; CM 23

Proof of Maturity

114 During the entire probation period in the postulancy, the candidate's capability for religious life should be tested in a particular way so that his necessary qualities of maturity can be discovered and give promise that he will be fit to undertake properly the obligations of the religious state and so that, in this regard, he will make continuous progress toward a fuller maturity, particularly during the novitiate. (C 170)

Formation of Postulants

115 During the postulancy, the candidates should be given at least general information about the aim of the Congregation, its character, its works by which the confreres serve the people of God, the difficulties which can occur to them, prayer, and the religious life. If the postulancy takes place in a religious house, the postulants should gradually be introduced into the discipline and order of the house. (C 170)

CM 47

Requirements of the Postulants

116 It is not expected that postulants already be perfect, but that they demonstrate such a good, sincere, and firm will and such a desire to strive persistently for perfection and to serve God in this Congregation that it may be prudently hoped that, with God's help and their own persevering cooperation, they will acquire virtues and habits and, thus equipped, will be able both to sanctify themselves and to help the Congregation profitably in attaining its purpose. (C 170)

CM 36

Postulant Director

117 The admitting Superior, with the consultative vote of his Council, appoints a fit member for directing and forming the candidates in the postulancy, even if it takes place outside a house of the Congregation. There should be close cooperation between the Postulant Director and the Novice Master, with the goal of providing continuity of formation. (C 170)

CM 45

Duration of Postulancy

118 For the probation in the postulancy to obtain its aim, its duration should neither be too brief nor, usually, be longer than two years. The decision in this matter pertains to the Superiors accepting the candidate for probation with the consent of their Council. (C 170)

Place of Postulancy

119 It is advisable that this probation take place outside the novitiate house. It might even be advantageous that all or part of it be done outside a house of the Congregation. (C 170)

Dismissal of a Postulant

120 The Major Superior with the consultative vote of his Council—or, in an urgent case, even the local Superior with the consent of his Councilors—may dismiss a candidate from the postulancy after consulting with the confrere under whose care he was. The postulant is allowed to leave the Congregation at any time. (C 170)

CM 49

Report on a Postulant

121 The confrere under whose care the postulants remain, shall submit a report at an appropriate time to his immediate Major Superior on their behavior and progress. This report is to be presented in writing, especially before the admission of the candidate to the novitiate. (C 170)

CM 48

CHAPTER IV NOVITIATE

Retreat Before Novitiate

122 Before beginning the novitiate, the candidates are to devote themselves to spiritual exercises for a period of time defined by the Provincial Statutes. (C 171)

CM 52

Rite and Recording of the Act of Admission

123 The novitiate begins with the liturgical rite as prescribed in the Marian Ritual. An act attesting to the reception into novitiate is to be registered in an appropriate book by the admitting Superior or his delegate. (C 171)

CM 53-54

Place of First Profession

124 Generally, the first profession should take place in the novitiate house. But the Major Superior, for a just reason, may allow that the first profession be made outside the novitiate house. (C 171)

Profession in Danger of Death

125 A novice who finds himself in danger of death may be admitted by the local Superior to profession. If he recovers, he remains in the same state as if he did not make any profession. (C 171)

CM 74

Retreat Before Vows

126 Before pronouncing his vows, the novice is to spend six days in spiritual exercises. (C 171)

CM 82

Assistant Novice Master

127 The Novice Master may be given an associate who is immediately subject to him in matters pertaining to the government of the novitiate. (C 177)

CM 602

Term of Office of the Novice Master

128 The term of office of the Novice Master and his associate is three years. The same men may always be appointed again. (C 177)

Duty of the Master

129 The Novice Master carries a grave responsibility of carefully introducing his novices into religious disci-

pline according to the laws of the Congregation; of teaching and forming them properly; and of testing and strengthening them appropriately in their vocation. May the Master remember that he was commissioned with a matter of great importance since the progress of the novices and the hope of the Congregation depend particularly on their education and formation. (C 178)

CM 606

Preparation of the Master

130 Because a weighty responsibility has been entrusted to the Novice Master, he should himself be a fit instrument in the hands of God. In addition to his general formation and his knowledge of the religious life and of our Congregation, let him acquire a thorough knowledge, both theoretical and practical, of the doctrine of Christian perfection and of human psychology. Moreover, in order that his teaching may become consonant with the mind of the Church, as well as with the conditions of social life, he should devote himself to appropriate studies so as to acquire greater expertise in these matters. (C 178)

CM 607

Account of Life

131 Each month, the Master is to require of each novice an account of his life. Let him deal frequently with each of them on an individual basis and strive to be well acquainted with all of them so that he would be more useful to them. (C 178, 179)

CM 609

Novitiate Books

132 The Novice Master should have a book in which he is to enter each novice's name, surname, parents' names, age, place of birth, dispensations obtained for him, the time of his entry into the novitiate and the day of his profession; he should also see to it that a chronicle of the novitiate is drawn up. (C 179)

CM 610

Reports on Novices

133 At least twice a year, the Novice Master should give a written report to the competent Major Superior on the behavior and progress of each novice, as well as on their character, abilities, and qualities. (C 179)

CM 611

Apostolic Exercise

134 With the consent of the Major Superior, it is up to the Novice Master to:

- 1) indicate novices who should devote themselves to an apostolic exercise;
- 2) determine the number of practical exercises and the duration of time for each of them;
- 3) establish the nature of the exercise which they are to undertake;
- 4) determine the manner of performing it;
- 5) direct the exercise itself in its performance.

(C 179, 185)

CHAPTER V**RELIGIOUS PROFESSION****Required Evaluation**

135 A duty of the Major Superiors is to require at an appropriate time, from the Superior and the Council of the house in which the member who is about to make his profession lives, an evaluation concerning him and to examine it carefully. (C 189)

Preparation for Perpetual Vows

136 Each member who is about to make a perpetual profession must prepare himself through an appropriate period of time. The time, place, and director of this preparation are determined by the Major Superior with the consent of his Council. (C 189)

CM 92

Rights and Obligations

137 The years of profession are counted from the date of first vows. The professed with temporary vows have the same obligations and rights as the professed with perpetual vows, unless stated to the contrary in the law. (C 189)

CM 98

Additions to the Formula of Profession

138 In their Statutes, individual Provinces may make additions to the essential and obligatory formula of profession that correspond to the circumstances of time or place. According to custom, after making their perpetual profession, confreres make a promise to persevere in the Congregation, even if it is most difficult to do so. (C 192)

CM 94

Document of Profession

139 A document attesting to every profession made, whether annual or perpetual, signed by the professed himself and at least by the one before whom the profession was made, is to be preserved in the archives of the Congregation. (C 192)

CM 95

CHAPTER VI
PRIESTLY FORMATION

Our Own Institutes of Studies

140 Our own academic institutes are established by the immediate Major Superior with the consent of his Council, having obtained the approval of the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council. Our own schools of philosophical and theological studies should not be established unless all the required conditions for a solid instruction and education of the students are present. (C 202)

CM 108

Studies in Other Institutes

141 If the Congregation or one of its Provinces cannot have its own educational institutes properly set up, the students are to be sent to a properly organized institute of another Congregation, to a diocesan major seminary, or to a Catholic university. The decision in this matter pertains to the immediate Major Superior with the deliberative vote of his Council. (C 202)

OT 7; CM 112

Houses of Studies

142 Let Superiors take care to have suitable houses of studies, even inter-Provincial or international ones, close to the educational institutes that our confreres attend. These houses are to be set up in such a way that they provide good conditions, not only for studies themselves but also for spiritual and apostolic formation proper to our Congregation. (C 202)

CM 108

Authority to Found and Suppress Houses of Studies

143 These houses of studies are erected, transferred, and suppressed by the immediate Major Superior with the consent of his Council. (C 202)

Instructions for Houses of Studies

144 Suitable instructions which govern our own institutes and houses of studies are prepared by a competent committee and the prefect of formation with the aid of experts, and they are approved by the immediate Major Superior with the consultative vote of his Council. (C 202)

CM 109

Prefect of Students

145 Every community of students is to be entrusted to the care of its own prefect, who is to be appointed by the immediate Major Superior with the consent of his Council. This prefect, after the manner of a Novice Master,

directs the students in all things that pertain to discipline, health, fulfillment of religious duties, the entire common life, and spiritual formation. The duty of the prefect of students ordinarily also comprises helping the students in accomplishing their studies. In small houses, this task may be joined to the office of the local Superior. (C 203)

CM 114-115

Other Formators

146 When necessary, especially where the Congregation has its own institute of studies, other formators, namely, a Rector and a Prefect of Studies, as well as qualified teachers, are to be appointed in a manner determined by the Provincial Statutes. (C 203)

RF 133

Spiritual Director

147 The competent Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, should appoint, at least for the major houses of studies, a spiritual director, who, along with instructions and exhortations given in common, should provide assistance to individual students in the pursuit of perfection, strictly in the internal forum, both by sacramental means as well as by addressing matters of conscience. (C 203)

RF 136; CM 115

Report on Students

148 Each year, the prefect of students is to draw up a written report about the character, conduct, and progress in studies of each of the students and send it to the competent Major Superior. (C 203)

CM 118

Vigilance of Major Superiors

149 Let the Major Superiors strive in a particular manner to visit personally the institutes and houses of studies; watch carefully over the instruction, whether academic or ecclesiastical, which is imparted to the students; and form for

themselves a more complete knowledge of the piety, spirit, and progress of the students. (C 203)

CM 119

Completing Intermediate (Secondary) Schooling

150 If the students in intermediate schooling have not obtained a sufficient knowledge of Latin, Christian doctrine, or other subjects, it is up to the Superiors to see to it that these deficiencies be opportunely corrected. (C 205)

CIC, can. 249; OT 13; RF 156; CM 121

Pastoral Formation

151 Students are to be instructed in the subjects that relate in a special way to the sacred ministry, especially as it is carried out in catechetics and preaching, in liturgical worship and administering of sacraments, in works of charity, in the service of helping those who are in error and non-believers, and in other pastoral duties. They should receive careful instruction in the art of guiding souls. They should also be taught to use the aids which the sciences of pedagogy, psychology, or sociology can offer. If this training is not available in a seminary or a university that our students attend, it is the responsibility of the Superiors to see to it that this training is provided in other ways. (C 208)

OT 19-20; CM 124

Apostolic Exercises

152 During the course of studies, let the Superiors provide some periods, especially during the summer break, for exercises in the various works of the apostolate. These exercises should be done in a methodical way under the guidance of directors who are experts in the apostolic ministry, and they should also serve as a test of one's vocation. (C 208)

OT 12, 21

Diaconal Ministry

153 To test their vocation and to expedite their apostolic preparation, after completing their theological studies, the students may spend one or more years exercising the duties

of the diaconate according to the decision and directives given by their own Major Superior with the consultative vote of his Council. (C 208)

OT 12; RF 74-75

Permanent Deacons

154 Wherever conditions require it, especially where there is an acute shortage of priests, the possibility should be offered to the religious brothers, observing all the requisites of law, that, having received the appropriate training, they may devote themselves to the practice of pastoral duties as permanent deacons. (C 208)

Pastoral Year

155 Superiors, according to their own prudent judgment, may introduce a pastoral year, during which the young priests can devote themselves to pastoral studies and apostolic work in parishes under the guidance of experts. (C 208)

RF 124

Studies and Religious Life

156 Let formators and students take care that studies and religious life be mutually supportive and blend harmoniously. Superiors may dispense students periodically from certain communal activities of the community as often as this would seem necessary for academic work. (C 209)

CM 111

Common Life and Discipline

157 In the houses of studies, a perfect common life should flourish, for which the zealous observance of discipline is a powerful help. Let this discipline, however, be put into practice in such a way that, with profound conviction and for supernatural motives, the students may accept it as a necessary means for achieving self-mastery. (C 209)

OT 11; CM 110

Suitable Freedom

158 Students should be allowed some measure of freedom with respect to the time and manner of prayer and

in observing discipline, since young men grow in maturity and responsibility when trust is shown to them and when an appropriate freedom is permitted. (C 209)

GE 1; OT 11

CHAPTER VII FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS

Post-Novitiate Formation

159 Religious brothers are not to be destined immediately after the novitiate to fulfill more important and burdensome duties and offices in or outside of the Congregation, but they should be given training, both spiritual and doctrinal as well as professional and apostolic, according to each one's intellectual endowment and talent, in the appropriate houses of the Congregation or outside the Congregation. The time and manner of this formation is to be determined by the Provincial Statutes. (C 215)

PC 18

Director of Religious Brothers

160 Each Province should have a director of religious brothers, appointed in the same way as the prefect of students, endowed with good qualities, who is to direct the special formation and education of the religious brothers for a period of at least three years after their first profession. (C 215)

CHAPTER VIII ONGOING FORMATION

Monthly Meetings

161 Confreres should get together once a month to consider and resolve various problems pertaining to theology, liturgy, and other areas of ecclesiastical knowledge. In meetings of this kind, they should consider opinions and principal trends in human society, as well as matters of greater importance presented by mass media, more significant new books, needs,

demands and dispositions of the Church, institutions, and good apostolic works that exist elsewhere and can be usefully introduced into our community. Let Superiors take care, especially where their own meetings cannot be organized, that the confreres attend similar meetings of the diocesan clergy. (C 216)

CM 139-140

Duty of the Prefect of Formation

162 It belongs to the office of the prefect of formation to suggest and prepare topics for these meetings. It is also his duty to organize Provincial or inter-Provincial gatherings of the confreres engaged in various fields of the apostolate. (C 216)

Libraries and Museums

163 The Superiors are to show solicitude that, in every house, necessary and useful periodicals, as well as well-equipped libraries, be available to the confreres. Also, things that should be preserved are to be prudently collected in the museums of the Congregation. (C 216)

CM 141-142

PART VI STRUCTURE AND GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I RELATION WITH ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

Decrees of the Holy See

164 Every Superior is to strive to promote among his subjects knowledge of the documents and observance of the decrees issued by the Holy See, especially those that pertain to religious. (C 220)

CIC, can. 592 § 2; CM 487

Pastoral Ministry

165 Let Superiors see to it that the confreres appointed by them—while observing religious discipline—willingly perform pastoral ministry, whether inside or outside their own churches or public oratories, especially in the dioceses in which they live, when it is required by the bishops or pastors, in order to satisfy the needs of the faithful. (C 223)

CM 489

CHAPTER II STRUCTURE OF THE CONGREGATION

Vice-Province

166 The precepts of universal law and of our own Congregation that refer to a Province also apply to a Vice-Province, with the exception of the admission of candidates to perpetual vows and the number of delegates to the General Chapter, which is defined in C 260, pt. 8. (C 226)

Residence

167 A residence is a house that is not canonically established, in which only one or two confreres, who belong to some local community, live and work by mandate of the Major Superior with the consent of his Council, by way of exception, and because of true necessity. The Superior General can subject a residence immediately to himself, in the same way as he does with a house. (C 229)

CM 719

CHAPTER III SUPERIORS

Monitor

168 Each Superior is to appoint for himself a monitor, who is to watch over his manner of life and should, if necessary, admonish him. (C 236)

CM 498

Superiors' Age Limit

169 Those who are 75 years of age or older are not eligible for election as Major or local Superiors. (C 239)

Local Superior

170 Normally, a priest, perpetually professed for no less than three years, should be appointed to the office of local Superior. Whereas a religious brother may be appointed to the office of local superior by the Superior General with the consent of his council and not earlier than after three years of perpetual profession. (C 239)

CIC, can. 623; Pope Francis, Rescriptum ex Audientia from May 18th, 2022

Criteria of Election

171 Let the confreres not hesitate to assign the best men, endowed with suitable qualities, for governing and for providing for the common and universal good. (C 239)

CM 504

Presence, Duty, and Concern

172 Local Superiors should not be absent from their houses, nor Vicariate Superiors from their Vicariates, nor Provincial Superiors from their Provinces for a length of time that would be detrimental to the confreres and to religious life. The length of time that Superiors may be absent from their houses, Vicariates, or Provinces is to be defined in the Vicariate and Provincial Statutes. Nor should they take on occupations that may hinder them from properly fulfilling their duty. They are to have an assiduous concern for the common good. In carrying out their many tasks, in addition to their councilors, they should consult also other people, especially experts. (C 241)

CIC, can. 629; CM 509, 515

Remaining in Office

173 Every Superior should remain in office, retaining all the faculties conceded to him, until his successor has taken possession of his office, even though the prescribed term of office has elapsed. (C 241)

CM 508

Limitation of Permanence in Office

174 A confrere who has held the office of local Superior for at least nine years without interruption, even if in various places, is not to be appointed to the office of local Superior immediately afterward, except in a case of necessity and after the confirmation by the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council. (C 241)

CIC, can. 624 § 2

Appointing a Visitor

175 Should the Major Superior be impeded from personally making a visitation, then, if he wants to select someone outside of his Council, he must obtain the consent of his Council for appointing a delegate. If a delegate is selected from among the Council members or if it concerns just one house or one matter, the Major Superior may appoint him by his own authority. (C 243)

CM 712

Visitor's Questions

176 The visitor has the right and the duty to question the confreres who, in his judgment, should be questioned and to obtain knowledge of those matters that are within the scope of the visitation. All confreres, on their part, are obliged to reply truthfully in a spirit of charity. It is not lawful for someone in any way to divert them from this obligation or otherwise to hinder the aim of the visitation. (C 243)

CIC, can. 628 § 3; CM 715

Visitation Protocol

177 The visitor draws up a record of the performed visitation in the book of visitations and writes down appropriate directives, which remain in force only until the next visitation, unless they are confirmed. The visitor is to take along a copy of the record and also put down in writing those things that he has noticed that were either good or bad in the house in order to present the report to the Superior who delegated him or to the Council. He is prudently to observe necessary discretion and secrecy in regard to what he has heard. (C 243)

CM 718

Assistance of the Provincial Superior

178 At the time of the general visitation, the Provincial Superior is to refrain from making decisions of greater importance, and he should help the visitor to fulfill his duty in the best possible way. (C 243)

Initiative and Obedience

179 Let Superiors try to help the confreres so that they may be able to combine personal initiative with humble and perfect obedience. (C 61)

J 25 January 1911

Example of Life

180 Superiors should set a good example for the confreres, both in prayer and in action, of a life intimately united

with God, love of the Church and one's own Congregation, religious observance, apostolic zeal, mutual respect, and fraternal cooperation. (C 64)

CM 516

Principles and Goals for Superiors

181 All Superiors have the duty:

- 1) to be constantly concerned that they faithfully fulfill the office committed to them, mindful that they will have to render an account to God of their stewardship (cf. Lk 16:2);
- 2) to be zealously watchful for the faithful observance of the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and *Statutes* and for the fulfillment of directives;
- 3) to distribute the duties and offices to the confreres in such a way that each of them may develop his talents, knowledge, or practical skill and bear as much fruit as possible for the Church of Christ;
- 4) to exercise their authority in a spirit of service so that it may be flexible when necessary, firm when circumstances require it, and that they may be clement, always open and sincere;
- 5) to diligently seek and receive with gratitude the opinions and suggestions of the confreres and to foster common deliberation of the questions brought for consideration;
- 6) to require from all that, at the proper time, they give an account of their exterior life and duties;
- 7) to take care that the confreres be properly informed concerning the status, life, and activity of the Congregation, the Province, the Vicariate, and their own house, in order that fraternal communion may be increasingly strengthened and that the collaboration of all be developed more efficaciously for the common good;
- 8) to strive, insofar as it is possible, to acquire and maintain the goodwill of those outside the Congregation and to show their gratitude to benefactors;

- 9) to make every effort, insofar as their office allows, that, in the entire Congregation, in Provinces, in Vicariates, and in houses, life may be disposed perfectly in accordance with the Gospel and the laws of the Congregation; that religious discipline, fervor, and zeal may flourish; that temporal goods may be properly administered; that studies and works undertaken for the glory of God and the salvation of souls may prosper; that the houses, Vicariates, Provinces, and the Congregation itself may be preserved in good condition; that they may grow in perfection; and that the Congregation may increase in number and merit.

Lk 16:2; CM 518

Use of the Seal

182 The seal of the Congregation used by the Superiors, as well as by other officials of the Congregation, bears the image of the Most Blessed Immaculate Virgin Mary holding a lily in her right hand and crushing the head of the serpent with her foot. An inscription that is proper to each respective Superior encircles it.

CM 781, 783

CHAPTER IV

COUNCIL AND COUNCILORS

Presence of Councilors

183 For proceeding with elections and appointments, as well as for treating more serious matters, the President is to invite all the Councilors; those who are invited are bound to attend unless some serious reason excuses them. (C 246)

CM 520

Validity of Decisions

184 For the validity of Council decisions, it is necessary and sufficient that a majority of the members of the Council be present, with the Superior or his Vicar presiding. In an extraordinary situation, the Council may be convened by the

Vicar, either upon the request of the Superior or with his presumed consent. (C 246)

CM 521

Elections or Appointments

185 Elections or appointments should take place with the complete Council; and, unless the matter is urgent, let them, rather, be deferred until all the members of the Council can be present. However, if one of the Councilors cannot take part in some foreseen election or appointment, another member in perpetual vows is to be elected by the Council to take his place. (C 246)

CM 522

Consulting Experts

186 Besides his Councilors, the Superior can also call in other confreres who are experts in the matter under deliberation, but they have no right to vote. (C 246)

CM 523

Council Meetings

187 The Council ordinarily meets once a month; additionally it meets as often as the Superior or a majority of the Councilors deem it necessary or useful. (C 246)

CM 526

Manner of Proceeding

188 Matters should be so dealt with in a Council meeting that each one, successively, can reveal his mind freely. The matter having been exposed, it will be prudent on the part of the Superior to refrain from expressing his own opinion until he has heard the opinions and reasons of the other members of the Council. (C 246)

CM 527

Necessary Information

189 Superiors are to inform their Councilors not only about those things which they ought to know on account of their office but also about those which would seem to be useful

and opportune for them to know; therefore, they should show them letters, writings, and other documents that pertain to the subject under deliberation so that, being well informed, they may be able to vote in a right way. (C 246)

CM 528

Council Minutes

190 The secretary should draw up the minutes or acts of the Council meetings, and they are to be signed by the members of the Council who were present and by the secretary himself. (C 246)

CM 529

Promulgation of Acts and Need for Discretion

191 The President alone has the right and duty to promulgate the decisions of the Council, and before this promulgation, it is not allowed to reveal them to anyone; nor is it allowed, after the promulgation, to reveal anything that was done in the Council meeting that could injure authority or charity; it is especially most severely forbidden to divulge what someone said or what opinion he expressed about another person or for whom he voted. (C 246)

CM 530

Vacancy in the Office of the General or Provincial Superior

192 If a vacancy in the office of the General or Provincial Superior occurs in the first year of his term, an extraordinary electoral Chapter must be convened in order to elect a new Superior to complete the term and possibly restore the complement of Council members. (C 246, 285, 290)

Concern for the Common Good

193 Let each Councilor strive, together with the Superior and depending on his judgment, to safeguard discipline and observance; nourish a religious spirit, piety, and zeal; foster studies and works that are proper to the Congregation; cultivate fraternal charity and harmony; carefully watch over the proper fulfillment of duties and the administration of goods;

strive for perfection and progress in all things; and, with all his strength, promote the common good and the growth of the Congregation. (C 249)

CM 533

Collaboration with the Superior

194 Let Councilors show fidelity, obedience and respect to the Superior; let them be united among themselves and with him in the greatest charity; let them support his authority by word and example; let them inform him of everything that has a bearing upon his office. When asked for their consent or counsel, let them express their opinion with due respect, trust, and sincerity. Should they disagree with him, let them freely explain their reasons to him with due modesty and humility; however, once the decision has been made, let them wholeheartedly, as far as they are able, assist its fulfillment, setting aside their own opinion. Let them be careful not to usurp any part of his authority nor to be influenced by their preference, an individual confrere, or a particular issue; but rather, in all things, let them become true lovers of the common good. (C 249)

CM 534

Substitute for a Superior

195 A Councilor who temporarily substitutes for a Superior impeded from fulfilling his office should not, except in real necessity, introduce any changes without first having consulted the Superior. If the matter is urgent, he should request the other Councilors for a vote, and he should not act contrary to the majority vote. (C 249)

CM 536

Dependence upon the Superior

196 In exercising their office, General, Provincial, and Vicariate Councilors depend directly on the General, Provincial, and Vicariate Superior; in all other matters they depend on the Superior of the house. (C 249)

CM 537

CHAPTER V SECRETARIES AND ARCHIVES

Appointment of the Secretary

197 Secretaries are appointed as follows: the Secretary General by the Superior General, the Provincial Secretary by the Provincial Superior, the Vicariate Secretary by the Vicariate Superior, and the local secretary by the local Superior, with the consent of the respective Council. (C 250)

Duties of the Secretary

198 The responsibilities of the secretary are:

- 1) to faithfully preserve documents, acts, and writings, properly arranged and safely locked in the archives; to add to them new writings in due time as appropriate, and to have a properly drawn up catalog or inventory of everything;
- 2) to be present at Council meetings, to write up the minutes or acts, and to add his signature after those of the Superior and his Councilors who were present at the meetings;
- 3) by order of and in the name of the Superior, to write letters and draw up other documents that pertain to the matters of the Congregation; to submit them for the approval or signature of the Superior; to preserve copies of them; and, in registers, to record letters, whether sent or received;
- 4) to keep a catalog or inventory, which is to be updated each year, of the personnel status listing the name, surname, parents' names, time and place of birth, time and place of religious profession, education, practical skills, talents, office, and occupation held by each confrere, as well as other things useful for governing;
- 5) General, Provincial, and Vicariate Secretaries are also to keep a catalog of the houses which is also to be updated each year and in which are to be noted both what is useful to be known about the houses themselves for their administration, as well as the

members residing in each house and the duties performed by them;

- 6) to keep other books necessary or useful for administrative purposes;
- 7) to keep a chronicle of the house, Vicariate, Province, or the Congregation; moreover, it is the duty of the Secretary General, under the direction of the Superior General and his Council, to compose the annals of the Congregation;
- 8) to give to the Council members necessary information and explanations concerning all those things which are preserved in the archives and which pertain to the matters under consideration by the Council.

(C 250)

CM 544

Keeping Secret

199 Secretaries should observe strict secrecy regarding all matters that have been entrusted to them in confidence, both in and outside the Council meetings. (C 250)

CM 546

Preservation of Documents

200 The following acts and documents are to be put aside and preserved:

- 1) in *the General archives*: those acts and documents that pertain to the Congregation, copies of acts and documents of greater importance regarding the individual Provinces and houses, and other writings of this kind that are to be preserved because they are of special importance to the Congregation;
- 2) in *the Provincial and Vicariate archives*: those acts and documents which pertain to the Province and the Vicariate, copies of documents of greater importance regarding the individual houses, and those documents concerning individual members of the Province or Vicariate that they do not need for their own use;

- 3) in *the local archives*: those acts and documents that pertain to the house and institutions, as well as everything that is important from a legal or historical perspective.

Moreover, in the respective archives, all directives and similar documents that, in some way, are or can be useful in the future are to be preserved. (C 251)

CM 539

Writings to Be Kept Secret

201 Writings that could harm someone's good name are to be kept secret; they are to be kept in the common archives but, nevertheless, must be locked up and guarded most cautiously in a special safe or container, and each year, those that, in the opinion of the Superior, no longer need to be preserved are to be destroyed as quickly as possible. (C 251)

CM 543

Catalogue of Documents

202 A catalogue of documents in the archives is to be kept and updated each year. It should be drawn up with all diligence and solicitude and should include a brief synopsis of each document with it. Both the Superior and the secretary are to search diligently for papers and writings that have accidentally been removed or dispersed, and they should use whatever means necessary to restore those writings to the archives. The most important documents should also be stored in paper form. (C 251)

CM 540

Copies

203 At the end of each year, the more important acts and documents should be sent—in the form of photocopies, microfilms, or digital files—to another place for safekeeping. (C 251)

Archivist

204 Care should be taken that, at least for the larger archives, a confrere other than the secretary be appointed to the office of archivist. (C 251)

Submission of Publications

205 All members of the Congregation are required to submit their publications (printed and electronic versions, if possible) regarding the Congregation, its members, history, spirituality, mission, etc. to the General Library in Rome. Also welcomed is the submission of other documents, especially those dealing with Mary and Mariological themes, as well as annually compiled lists of all publications produced by the members of the Congregation. (C 251)

CHAPTER VI ELECTIONS

Right to Vote in the Province

206 Members of the General Government retain the right to vote in their own Provinces and, given the opportunity, they may use it. While carrying out the mandates entrusted to them, the General Councilors, General Procurator, General Secretary, and General Treasurer cannot be elected to the office of a Provincial Major Superior or a Provincial Councilor. (C 252)

CM 613

Loss of Voice

207 Active and passive voice may be lost by the following:

- 1) those who have submitted to the Superiors a formal petition for exclaustation or secularization or have obtained an indult of exclaustation;
- 2) those who have been deprived of it, either by universal law, proper law, or a decree of the Superior.

Should any of the above-said be admitted to balloting, his vote is null, but the election is valid unless it is certain that, by deducting this vote, the one elected did not receive the required number of votes. (C 252)

CM 614

Convocation

208 The President, in the prescribed manner, time, and place, is to convene all who should be convoked to carry out an election. (C 253)

CM 615

Ballot of the Sick

209 In the case treated in C 254, the tellers or two of the Council members are to approach the ill elector, collect his ballot with the vote written on it, place it in a closed container, and then add it to the other ballots. (C 254)

CM 616

Only One Vote

210 Even if someone has the right to vote in his own name by more than one title, he may cast only one ballot. (C 255)

CIC, can. 168; CM 617

No Outsider

211 A person who is not a member of a Chapter or Council gathered in session cannot be admitted to balloting; otherwise, the election is *ipso facto* null and void. (C 255)

CM 618

Requirements for a Valid Vote

212 A vote is null and void unless it is:

- 1) *free*; therefore, a vote is invalid if the elector has been forced, directly or indirectly, to elect a certain person or various persons separately through great fear or fraud;
- 2) *secret*; no one is allowed to reveal the name of the person for whom he is voting;
- 3) *indubitable*; that is, either indicating directly the person to be elected by giving his proper name and surname, or expressing it with certainty in some other way; hence, a vote is questionable and, therefore, null and void if it: lists several names of candidates, is illegibly written, is incomprehensible

as to its meaning, or is delivered by a blank or white ballot;

- 4) ***absolute***; namely, not subject to a condition that weakens or restricts its efficacy. Conditions added to the vote prior to the election are to be considered as not added;
- 5) ***definite***; thus, an ambiguous or doubtful vote is null;
- 6) ***cast for an eligible person***; unless a person is postulated whose election is hindered by an impediment that can be dispensed.

(C 255)

CM 619

Postulation

213 For a postulation to have effect in an election, at least two-thirds of the votes are required; a vote for postulation must be expressed by the term, “I postulate” or equivalent. In addition, universal law is to be observed in the case of postulation. (C 257)

CIC, cann. 180 § 1; 181; CM 630-631

Duties of Tellers

214 Before proceeding to the election itself, two tellers are to be selected by voting, and they:

- 1) are to take care that the votes written on ballots are given secretly, carefully, and individually by each of the electors, and that they collect them in a container;
- 2) having collected all the ballots, they should count them in the presence of the President and ascertain that the number of ballots is the same as the number of electors.

(C 257)

CM 623, 653

Null and Void Ballot

215 If the number of ballots exceeds the number of electors present, nothing has been accomplished; that is, the vote is considered null and void; neither is it to be reckoned among inefficacious ballots, but a new voting

is to be carried out. The same is true if too few ballots are found. (C 257)

CM 624

Verification of Ballots

216 If the number of ballots is the same as the number of electors present:

- 1) the tellers should open the individual ballots and unfold them so that both the President and the tellers themselves can see the name of the one that has received the vote, and, at the same time, they should investigate whether any ballot is null and void for some reason;
- 2) one of the tellers should publicly read aloud the individual ballots so that the name of the one who has received the vote can be heard by all the electors;
- 3) meanwhile the secretary should make a written note of the names of those receiving votes with the number of votes for each one;
- 4) the tellers should count the votes and make known publicly how many votes each one has received and determine whether one of the candidates has obtained the required majority of votes.

(C 257)

CM 623, 653

Voting Result

217 The President promulgates the result of each ballot, and the secretary annotates it exactly. After the first inefficacious ballot, they should proceed to the second and, if this is also inefficacious, then to the third. When the voting is concluded, the ballots are to be destroyed. (C 257)

CM 623, 625

Proclamation of the Election

218 He who has received the required number of votes is to be proclaimed elected by the President. If the one elected feels that, for serious reasons, he cannot accept the office, let him explain the reasons to the electors, and, if they

refuse to consider these reasons as sufficient, let him, in the spirit of obedience, endeavor to accept the office committed to him. (C 257)

CM 627

CHAPTER VII GENERAL CHAPTER

Preparation

219 The Superior General, with the consultative vote of his Council, prepares the order and the agenda of the entire Chapter concerning matters of greater importance in regard to the entire Congregation and sends them to the Provincial and General Vicariate Superiors at least three months before the celebration of the General Chapter. (C 259)

CM 663

Manner of Convocation

220 A General Chapter should be convoked by circular letter six months before its beginning. The place and date of the General Chapter, as well as the prayers that are to be offered before it by the confreres, shall be indicated by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after consultation with the individual Provinces and General Vicariates. (C 259)

CM 637-638

Date of the Ordinary Chapter

221 The ordinary General Chapter is to begin on a selected day in the first quarter of the year that concludes the General Council's term of office. (C 259)

Manner of Celebration

222 In the General Chapter, besides observing universal law, the prescripts of the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and instructions on the manner of celebrating a General Chapter, as approved by the Chapter itself, are to be observed. (C 259)

Additional Delegates

223 In addition to the two delegates, each Province that has more than 30, but not more than 60 professed confreres, elects one delegate for the General Chapter; the one that has more than 60, but not more than 120 professed confreres, elects two delegates; the one that has more than 120 confreres elects three delegates. (C 260)

Other Delegates

224 In General Vicariates and in houses and residences immediately subject to the Superior General, a Chapter is to take place, if possible, or at least elections of delegates to the General Chapter. One Chapter delegate from each General Vicariate is to be elected. Likewise, one delegate should represent at least every ten perpetually professed members of those houses and residences immediately subject to the Superior General. It is up to the Superior General with the consent of his Council to determine which houses or residences will be joined together and in what manner. (C 260)

Presence of Participants

225 All who are called to the General Chapter are obliged to participate unless someone is lawfully excused by the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council. However, for the validity of its proceedings, it is required and suffices that at least two-thirds of those called be present. (C 260)

CM 640

Presence of Experts

226 Besides its members, the President also has the right to invite experts to the Chapter who are proficient in the matters to be considered, but only for the duration of consultation and without the right to vote. (C 260)

CM 641

Spiritual Exercises

227 At the beginning of the Chapter, at least one day is to be devoted to spiritual exercises. (C 261)
CM 648

Roll Call

228 When the Chapter members gather for the first time in the Chapter Hall, the General Secretary should read their names off a list prepared conveniently in advance so that the presence or absence of those who were called may be well known to all. (C 261)
CM 651

Tellers and Secretary of the Chapter

229 The President of the Chapter will appoint two temporary tellers from among the members of the Chapter. Then he proposes to the Chapter members candidates for the two tellers and for the secretary. Elections for each candidate are held separately and a relative majority of votes is sufficient. The tellers, along with the President, must take an oath to discharge their office faithfully and to observe secrecy regarding matters of the Chapter. (C 261)
CM 652

Duty of the Secretary

230 The secretary is to record in writing, accurately and faithfully, all the acts of the Chapter and present them to the Chapter for approval. (C 261)
CM 654

Various Committees

231 Before proceeding to other matters, Chapter members form committees: one to examine the way in which the common goods of the Congregation are administered and one or more to examine and formulate the proposals, requests, or observations presented by members of the Chapter or by other confreres. (C 261)
CM 644

Election of Committees and Their Officials

232 Committees are to be elected by a relative majority of votes, and, in like manner, each committee is to elect its own President, secretary, and relator from among its own members. (C 261)

CM 645

Significant Matters

233 The General Chapter should primarily consider such significant matters as:

- 1) making changes to the *Constitutions* or *Directory*, according to the norm of C 307;
- 2) erecting Provinces and Vice-Provinces, defining their boundaries, suppressing them, as well as disposing of the goods of a suppressed Province or Vice-Province;
- 3) erecting and maintaining institutions that are of use for the whole Congregation;
- 4) issuing instructions and dispositions that seem opportune for the good of the Congregation and its development, as well as for overcoming any difficulties that arise;
- 5) determining the appropriate means to uproot possible abuses and defects, foster religious discipline, renew the spirit, and increase zeal;
- 6) issuing norms for the administration of goods as well as determining the contributions for the use of the General Curia;
- 7) assuming works to be undertaken and developed by the Congregation, especially in the near future, which would increase the glory of God and benefit the Church.

(C 263)

CM 662

Presentation of the Proposals in a Plenary Session

234 No proposal is to be presented in a plenary session unless it has been examined and recommended by the committee to which it pertains. However, a proposal

rejected by a committee may be presented in the plenary session if twenty percent of the Chapter members would support it. (C 264)

CM 645

Manner of Deliberation

235 In deliberations, effort must be made to keep the speeches brief, substantive, delivered in a peaceful manner, and without repeating what others have said. (C 264)

CM 664

Prior Deliberations

236 It is permissible and expedient for Chapter members to deliberate privately among themselves and to gather information about the persons to be elected, their qualities, and their suitability for offices. They should have common and public sessions in which they consider those things that could contribute to conducting the elections in a right and proper manner, as long as the electors do not determine among themselves the result of an election before they enter the Chapter hall and that do not persuade others to vote for their own candidate. (C 266)

CM 643

Preparation for Elections

237 On the day of the elections, Mass is to be celebrated and the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* sung; it is also recommended that an appropriate conference be given to the Chapter members. (C 266)

CM 648

Oath of the Electors

238 Before the election of the General Government, each and every elector must promise under oath that he will elect those whom he considers before God as worthy to be elected. (C 266)

CM 655

Promulgation of the Election

239 The President of the Chapter, or, should he himself be elected, the secretary of the Chapter, promulgates the election and declares that it has been carried out according to law. (C 266)

CM 657

Elected to Be Summoned

240 If an elected man is not present at the Chapter, he is to be summoned immediately; the Chapter, however, is not to be interrupted. (C 267, 268)

CM 666

Minutes and Closing of the Chapter

241 The Acts of the Chapter are to be read publicly in the presence of the Chapter members, and, once approved, they are to be signed by all at the end of the Chapter. At the conclusion of the Chapter, all should gather to give thanks to God. All the Chapter members are prudently to hold secret the matters that were accomplished in the Chapter. (C 269)

CM 668

Promulgation and Editorial Changes to the Resolutions

242 The promulgation of the resolutions of the Chapter belongs to the Superior General, who can make editorial changes to them without modifying their essential content. (C 269)

Obligatory Force of the Chapter Resolutions

243 The resolutions of the General Chapter bind all conferrers by force of law until the next Chapter, during which they may be revised if deemed necessary. (C 269)

CM 669

CHAPTER VIII

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

Rules to Be Observed

244 In the preparation and celebration of a Provincial Chapter, as well as in holding elections and treating other matters during it, the norms given above for the General Chapter are to be observed, applying them correspondingly. (C 271)

CM 708

Matters to Be Treated at the Chapter

245 The most important matters to be discussed in the Provincial Chapter are the following:

- 1) drawing up or changing Provincial Statutes;
- 2) setting up or suppressing a Provincial Vicariate;
- 3) issuing instructions that seem useful for the welfare and the progress of the Province, promoting religious discipline, renewing the spirit and increasing zeal, and gaining vocations;
- 4) deciding upon the undertaking, development, and maintenance of various works, especially those that serve the common good;
- 5) setting norms for the administration of goods, as well as determining the contribution for the Provincial Curia;
- 6) defining the limits of expenses which local Superiors may not exceed without the permission of the Provincial Superior;
- 7) in the Provincial Chapter that is celebrated before the General Chapter, considering matters which are to be proposed to the General Chapter.

(C 273)

Acts of the Chapter

246 The text of the protocol and the resolutions of the Provincial Chapter are to be sent to the Superior General and his Council for review and approval. (C 273)

CM 711

CHAPTER IX LOCAL CHAPTER

Houses to Be Joined

247 It is required that at least four perpetually professed members reside in a house for a local Chapter to be celebrated there. If the houses do not have four perpetually professed members, the members of the houses are united with each other or with a larger house to hold the local chapter. The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, decides which houses should be joined and in what manner. (C 274)

CM 747

Elections of Delegates Outside the Chapter

248 If a great distance separates houses to be joined, thus making it difficult for their members to assemble in order to elect delegates for the Provincial Chapter, the elections should take place by ballots which are to be sent from each house to the Provincial Council. Individual electors of such houses should write the name of the member for whom they decided to vote on a ballot, which they should fold well. Then, gathered together with the local Superior, the electors place their ballots in a common envelope, which is to be sealed in the presence of all by the Superior and sent to the Provincial Council. The Provincial Superior or his substitute, in the presence of at least two Council members, is to open the ballots, promulgate the names of those elected, and, if necessary, see to it that the elections be repeated. (C 274)

CM 748

Proposals for the Provincial Chapter

249 Each confrere can submit in writing to the delegates elected for the Provincial Chapter matters, requests, wishes, and projects that he considers in the Lord as appropriate for submission to the Provincial Chapter. (C 274)

CM 750

Second Session of the Local Chapter

250 Before the session of elections of the Provincial Chapter, the local Chapter should have its second session, in which the ballots of the confreres are collected for a consultative vote before the election of the Provincial Superior according to the Provincial Statutes. (C 274)

CHAPTER X CONVENTIONS

Participants of a General Convention

251 Participants of a General Convention, besides the members of the General Government, are the Superiors of Provinces and Vice-Provinces, or their Vicars, General Vicariate Superiors, as well as members with greater experience and expertise in religious life or apostolic activity, according to the subject matter of the convention, who have been proposed by the Superiors of the Provinces, Vice-Provinces, or General Vicariates and approved by the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council. (C 275)

Participants of a Provincial Convention

252 Participants of a Provincial Convention, besides the members of the Provincial Government, are the Superiors of houses, or else their Vicars, and members representing the various works of the Province, appointed by the Provincial Superior with the consultative voice of his Council, according to the prescripts of the Provincial Statutes. (C 276)

CHAPTER XI GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Service for the Good of the Congregation

253 The Superior General is to consult his Councilors frequently in regard to matters pertaining to the Congregation. He should often communicate with Superiors,

especially Provincial and General Vicariate Superiors. Whenever necessary, he is to issue opportune directives, which will be binding until he revokes them or steps down from his office; also, he should not neglect to address the confreres by letters as the occasion warrants it. (C 279)

CM 675

Changes in the General Council

254 After the death or resignation of the Superior General, his Vicar assumes full authority over the Congregation, which he exercises until the next ordinary General Chapter, in accordance with the norm contained in D 191. If the office of the Vicar General or of other Councilors becomes vacant, others are elected by the Superior General and his Council to complete the six-year term. (C 285)

Procurator General

255 The Congregation is to have a Procurator General, who handles its matters with the Apostolic See. (C 281, 282)

CM 684

Appointment of a Procurator

256 The Procurator General is appointed for a six-year term by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. One of the Councilors may perform the office of Procurator. (C 281, 282)

CM 685

Dependence on the Superior General

257 The Procurator is not to undertake any matter to be arranged without the mandate or knowledge of the Superior General, and he should faithfully hand over to him all the rescripts of the Apostolic See that pertain to the Congregation. (C 279)

CM 686-687

General Treasurer

258 The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, appoints the General Treasurer for the period of six

years. One of the general Councilors can be made the General Treasurer. (C 281, 282)

Postulator General; Vice-Postulators

259 The Congregation is to have also a Postulator General, whose duty is to promote canonization causes and to handle them with the Apostolic See. Outside of Rome, he is assisted by Vice-Postulators. (C 282)

Appointment of the Postulator and Vice-Postulators

260 The Postulator General is approved by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints upon the presentation by the Superior General after obtaining the consent of his Council; Vice-Postulators, in turn, are appointed by the Postulator General. (C 282)

CHAPTER XII

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

General Consultative Vote for the Provincial Superior

261 The Provincial Superior is elected by the Provincial Chapter. All members of the Province who have active voice participate in the general consultative vote before the election of the Provincial Superior at the Provincial Chapter. The votes of individual confreres are sent to the Provincial Chapter according to the Provincial Statutes. (C 274, 286)

Opening of Ballots

262 In the Provincial Chapter, the tellers first verify the validity of all the ballots; then they collect, count, and open them and publicly read the names of those who have received votes. (C 286)

Election by the Chapter

263 There can be four ballots in the Chapter for the election of a Provincial Superior. If, in the first three ballots, no one has obtained an absolute majority of votes, then in

the fourth ballot, only those two who in the preceding ballot received a relative majority of votes have passive, but not active voice. In the case of a tie, the procedure is to be followed as outlined in C 267. (C 286)

Loss of Office by a Provincial Superior

264 Privation or removal from the office of a Provincial Superior can be put into effect either by the Superior General—with the consent of his Council and upon the request of the Provincial Council or at least after hearing its opinion on the matter—or by the Provincial Chapter if its decision is confirmed by the Superior General and his Council, in accordance with the norms of canon law. (C 290)

CM 693

Loss of Office by a Provincial Councilor

265 The Provincial Superior, after obtaining the consent of his Council, has the authority to accept the resignation from office of a provincial Councilor; however, for the privation or removal from this office to become effective, it must be confirmed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, in accordance with the norms of canon law. (C 290)

Changes or Substitutions after Vacancies

266 The vacant office of a Provincial Superior is to be filled by his Vicar, who governs the Province until the end of the six-year term, in accordance with the norm contained in D 191. When the office of Vicar Provincial or one of the Councilors is vacant, another confrere is elected by the Provincial Superior and his Council to complete the six-year term. (C 290)

CHAPTER XIII

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Expanded Council

267 The Provincial Superior, having heard the opinion of his Council, may decide that the house Council will consist of a greater number of members who are in perpetual vows and live in that house. (C 295)

Example of the Superior

268 The local Superior is to exemplify to all the confreres obedience towards the Major Superiors, whom he should regard as taking the place of Christ; he should be aware that the welfare and the progress of the entire community depend most especially on the upright and diligent fulfillment of his office, for which he must render an account to God. (C 295)

CM 731

Primary Concern of the Superior

269 His foremost effort should be to sustain, invigorate, and inspire the entire community by his prayers, holy desires, self-sacrifice, personal zeal, devotion, and example. (C 295)

CM 732

Fostering Fraternal Unity

270 Let him with utmost care foster fraternal unity among the confreres and not tolerate mutual anger and dissensions among them; if something of this nature should occur, he is to see to it that, with due forgiveness, they immediately return to mutual friendliness. (C 295)

CM 733

Fatherly Care

271 Let him converse with his confreres frequently and with great charity; with fatherly care, let him provide not only for their bodily needs, but even more for their spiritual needs. He should defend them from anything

that could harm them, either at home or outside, both by preventing evil and, if it has already occurred, by employing opportune remedies. (C 295)

CM 735

Information on Special Qualities of Confreres

272 The local Superior shall inform the Provincial Superior about the special talents of the house members so that they may be promoted to occupations and offices to which they are better suited. (C 295)

Specific Duties of the Superior

273 Local Superiors should take care:

- 1) that the occupations that were entrusted to confreres be fulfilled and accomplished by them in the best possible way;
- 2) that members have the possibility to approach the Superior and to express to him their own needs, difficulties, opinions, and desires;
- 3) that, ordinarily at least once a month, a spiritual conference be given to the confreres;
- 4) that, at least once a year, the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and *Statutes* be read completely by all the confreres.

(C 295)

CM 738

Report on the State of the House

274 Each year, in a document to be signed by him and his Councilors, the local Superior is to send to the Provincial Superior a report on the status of the house according to the formula that is customary in the Congregation. The Council members on their part are to write separately to the Provincial Superior whenever they have something special to communicate to him. (C 295)

CM 744

Information for the Successor

275 The Superior who is leaving office must show his successor the house inventories, give him any appropriate information, and honestly disclose to him everything that can contribute either to the good governing of the house or to the management of its affairs and works. (C 295)

CM 729

CHAPTER XIV TREASURERS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

Administration of Goods

276 The term “administration of goods” signifies: acquisitions, exchanges, rentals, investments, construction, and repairs, as well as the alienation of property (cf. CIC, can. 1254 § 1; D 14). The administration is considered *ordinary* if it concerns acts pertaining to the daily functioning of a juridical person in the Congregation and of entities entrusted to the Congregation, regulated by systematic approval by a competent Superior and if it does not exceed the legally defined limit. All other cases, including those comprising the designated amounts, are regarded as *extraordinary* administration.

- 1) The legal limit for ordinary administration consists of an amount determined by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. The amount is determined for particular countries for a period of three years.
- 2) Extraordinary administration comprises:
 - a. alienation (CIC, can. 638 § 3) that exceeds the legal limit;
 - b. mortgaging either precious articles or other goods that exceeds the legal limit;
 - c. contracting debts that exceed the legal limit;
 - d. the construction of new buildings or the renovation of existing buildings that exceeds the legal limit;

- e. entering or rescinding contracts that seriously burden the Congregation in terms of its personnel or finances and are in excess of the legal limit
 - f. other acts regarding goods donated to the Church through a vow or goods that are especially valuable due to their artistic or historical value (cf. CIC, can. 1292 § 2) that exceed the legal limit;
 - g. financial investments of higher risk that exceed the legal limit.
- 3) Superiors, as well as others who represent juridic persons in the Congregation and those who represent entities entrusted to the Congregation, invalidly undertake acts that go beyond the manner of ordinary administration, unless they first obtain written authorization from the Superior General (cf. CIC, cann. 638 § 3; 1281 § 1).
- 4) The Superior General must obtain the general Council's consent for a decision concerning extraordinary administration.
- 5) Both ordinary and extraordinary administrations, except for those principles listed above, are governed by the *Code of Canon Law* and the norms contained in the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and *Statutes* of the Provinces, Vice-Provinces, and General Vicariates (C 297)

Compatibility of Offices

277 The Superior himself may not discharge the office of General and Provincial Treasurer. However, the office of local Treasurer may be combined with that of the Superior if necessity would require it, even though it would be better to keep it separate. General and Provincial Treasurers may also be, at the same time, Councilors, but not first Councilors; they are elected or appointed for a six-year term, whereas local Treasurers are appointed for a three-year term. (C 298)

CM 500

Drawing up an Inventory

278 Before any treasurer assumes his office, an accurate inventory of both the immovable goods and the more valuable movable goods is to be drawn up by the outgoing and incoming treasurers, and it is to be signed by the Superior; or a previously drawn up inventory is to be approved, annotating those things that, in the meantime, have been lost or acquired. One copy of the inventory is to be preserved in the house archives and another copy in the Provincial, General Vicariate, or General archives. (C 298)

CM 589

Duties of the Treasurer

279 Each treasurer, under the direction and vigilance of the Superior, should strive to fulfill his office well, faithfully, and with the greatest diligence, and above all he should:

- 1) be vigilant lest any goods of the Congregation entrusted to his care in any way be lost or damaged;
- 2) observe the precepts of canon law, civil law, and our own law, and those given by a donor or by legitimate authority;
- 3) collect, accurately and at the proper time, income and revenues from goods; keep them in a safe place; and spend them according to the will of the donor or according to established laws or regulations;
- 4) keep the income and expense books in good order;
- 5) arrange and properly safeguard the documents on which the rights to the goods of the Congregation are based and store authentic copies of these documents in the Provincial or General archives.

(C 298)

CM 590

Rendering of an Account by the Treasurers (Economes)

280 Every six months and as often as the Superior or the Council should request it, the General, Provincial, and General Vicariate Treasurer must render an account of his entire administration by presenting the books that he has compiled. These books are to be examined by the Superior

and his Council, and, having compared them with the money and all the rest that is kept in the safe, if they find them written up accurately, they are to be approved. In the same manner, the books of the local treasurers are to be examined every three months by two confreres chosen by the local community. (C 298)

CM 593

Manner of Transacting Business

281 In transacting business, let each treasurer strive to preserve a great interior and exterior peace; edify neighbors by word and example; preserve friendly relations with those whose service he needs in transacting business; seek the advice of experts; avoid every form of trading; settle controversies, when possible, peacefully and concordantly; provide all things at the right time, especially those that last a long time; and expedite rightly what must be arranged at the proper time. (C 298)

CM 591

Investing or Spending Money

282 The Superior, with the consent of his Council and having heard the treasurer, should try to invest, safely and advantageously, the money that is not needed for ordinary expenses; any appearance, however, of commerce or the accumulation of goods is to be avoided. To the extent that the financial condition and prudence allow it, out of love for God and man and under the guidance of the government, monetary gifts for pious causes are highly recommended. (C 298)

CM 561-562, 576

Surplus of Money

283 It is desirable that, at the end of the year, the Provinces or General Vicariates, in a spirit of poverty and trust in the Divine Providence, send the money they themselves do not necessarily need to the General Curia for the needs of the entire Congregation. (C 298)

CM 557

Contracting Debts

284 Superiors are to be careful that they do not permit debts to be contracted unless it is evident and certain that the interest on the debt can be paid from the ordinary income and that the capital sum can be paid off through legitimate amortization of the debts within a time that is not excessively long. (C 299)

CIC, can. 639 § 5; CM 578

Limits of Expenditures

285 The General Chapter sets the limits of expenses, which Provincial Superiors may not exceed without the permission of the Superior General, granted with the consultative vote of his Council. Likewise, the Provincial Chapter sets the limits of expenses for local Superiors. Even within these limits, for expenses exceeding the customary administration of goods, the Superiors should obtain the consent of their Council. (C 298)

CM 560

Annual Account

286 At the end of each year, an account is to be given of the administration of goods by the local Superior to the Provincial or Vicariate Superior; by the Vicariate Superior to the Provincial Superior; and by the Provincial or General Vicariate Superior to the Superior General. (C 298)

CM 594

CHAPTER XV

LAWS OF THE CONGREGATION

Petition to Seek Dispensation

287 Dispensations from the *Constitutions and Directory* are to be sought from the competent authority, in accordance with the norms of canon law. Major Superiors, for their part, should not grant dispensations without first obtaining the opinion of the immediate Superiors. (C 305)

CM 777

Recourse to a Major Superior

288 If an immediate Superior has refused a dispensation, the Major Superior should not be approached without informing him about the denied dispensation; otherwise, the granted favor is invalid. (C 305)

CM 778

Binding Force of Statutes

289 Statutes, in which prescripts relating to the needs of certain regions are contained, are equally as binding as are the *Constitutions* and the *Directory*. (C 308)

Statutes of a Vicariate

290 According to the needs of each Vicariate, those matters are to be defined by its Statutes that, in our laws, are indicated as requiring definition by the Provincial Statutes. (C 308)

APPENDIX

COLLEGIAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

INTERPRETATION OF **C 188** — EXTENSION OF THE NOVITIATE [*CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY*, 2018 EDITION]

Responding to a question from the Superior of American Province regarding the extension of the novitiate in accordance with **C 188**, the General Council, meeting in session on October 7, 2022, acting collegially in accordance with C 306, explains:

C 188, following the norm of common law contained in CIC, can. 653 § 2, establishes that, “At the end of the novitiate, ... If there is doubt about the suitability of a novice, the Major Superior can extend the time of probation ... but not beyond six months.”

1. “At the end of the novitiate” – The norm refers to the novitiate defined as validly completed (12 months spent in a house legally designated for this purpose and under the guidance of the master of novices, taking into account all the requirements as well as the exceptions present in CIC, cann. 647-649);

2. one of the conditions for a valid first profession is precisely that “the novitiate has been validly completed” (can. 656, 2°);

3. the Major Superior, in case of doubts about the suitability of the novice, may extend the time of probation acting on his own initiative or responding to the request of the novice himself, taking into account the following conditions:

- a. for no longer than six months;
- b. taking into account that the novitiate has been validly completed, the probationary period may be carried out in another house of the Congregation and under

- the guidance of a moderator different from the master of novices;
- c. the Major Superior shall make this decision (length of probation, place of probation, moderator in charge, duties to be performed, etc.) after obtaining the consent of his council (C 293.1);
 - d. for the order of things, a decree should be issued in which all the conditions mentioned in 3c are described in detail: “An administrative act which regards the external forum must be put in writing” (CIC, can. 37).
 - e. The common law norms, as well as our *Constitutions*, as to the length of probation define only that “no longer than six months.” That is, the length of probation can also be less than six months.

Rome, October 7, 2022

Andrzej Pakuła, MIC
Superior General

Zbigniew Piłat, MIC
Secretary General

**INTERPRETATION OF C 273 — MEMBERS
(OF THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER)
[CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY, 2018 EDITION]**

Responding to a question from Provincial Superiors regarding *ex officio* and elected members of the provincial chapter and their delegates, the General Council, meeting in session on October 21, 2022, acting collegially in accordance with C 306, clarifies:

C 273 The provincial statutes should specify who, in addition to the provincial superior, his council and the superiors of the houses, is to participate in the provincial chapter either *ex officio* or by election. The number of elected chapter members should be equal to or greater than the *ex officio* members.

According to our law, **C 272**, the elective chapter of a province has two sessions: the first, celebrated before the general chapter, “especially for electing delegates,” and the second, “another session ... in order to conclude or hold the election of the Provincial Superior and to elect his Councilors.” So it is always the same chapter, although held in two session-parts. The fundamental issue is the constitution of the chapter members. The *ex officio* members of the chapter are not subject to election and their participation is self-evident; consequently, the constitution of the provincial chapter takes place with the election of delegates and alternates. This is the decisive moment for the personnel composition of the chapter. Therefore, the following rules should be observed:

1. Each elected delegate has an alternate. If a delegate was unable to attend the first session of the chapter and was represented by an alternate, the alternate delegate, that is, the same alternate who attended the first session, shall attend the second session of the chapter. If the alternate delegate who attended the first session is unable to attend the second session, no one replaces him.

2. If an *ex-officio* member could not attend the first session of the chapter, he can attend the second session. The *ex officio* member does not have an alternate.

3. If an *ex officio* member participated in the chapter in the first session, and after that lost the title to participate in the chapter before the second session (due to loss of active and passive voice or due to loss of office), no one in his place shall participate in the second session of the same chapter.

4. If a delegate elected in a house for a provincial chapter is transferred to another house before the first or second session of the provincial chapter, he retains the right to participate in that chapter. The same rule should be applied to his alternate.

In view of the above, it is strongly recommended:

1. That house chapters for the purpose of electing delegates to the provincial chapter and their alternates be held after personnel changes have already been made in the province;

2. That, without absolute necessity, no transfers or nominations for house superiors be made between the house chapter and the celebration of both the first and second sessions of the provincial chapter.

Rome, October 21, 2022

Andrzej Pakuła, MIC
Superior General

Zbigniew Pilat, MIC
Secretary General

THE RULE OF LIFE

Proposed
TO THE RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
CONCEIVED WITHOUT STAIN OF SIN,
OR THE MARIANS HERMITS,
assisting the faithful departed,
especially soldiers
and those who died of pestilence,

and corrected

by the Most Eminent and Reverend
Lord Leander Cardinal Colloredo,
member of the Commission of the Congregation
for Regulars and Bishops

In Rome,
in the Year of the Lord 1694



Venerabilis Pater Stanislaus a Jesu Maria Fapce
Generis Clonorum Marianorum animabus in
torio suffragantium Ords. Im. Concep. Pmice Virg
MARIA Congregationis Polono-Marianae
Praepositus Generalis, ac Institus
tor Obiit Aō. Dñi. 1701. Aetatis
suae 70.

Cujus Petitionis causa agit Romae

INFORMATIVE PREFACE¹

1. This Congregation of the Immaculate Conception, about which we provide to you, most benevolent reader, this information, was canonically erected in the eremitical status² by Bishop Stephen Wierzbowski, Ordinary of Poznań and Archbishop-elect of Gniezno, who has laudably passed through this life. The Congregation was endowed with certain indulgences and a Confraternity by the Most Holy Father Pope Innocent XI of happy memory,³ and it was approved and assumed in perpetual protection by the most august and invincible Prince John III, most happily reigning King of Poland⁴ together with the whole Polish Republic in the General Diet celebrated in Warsaw in 1677.⁵

2. [...] the life of Hermits ... is approved in the status of penitents [...]. Hence, they do not need any approval, once

¹ This Preface was written by St. Stanislaus Papczyński, probably in 1697 when the Marians were getting the *Rule of Life* ready for publication. In fact, on February 20, 1698, they obtained the necessary *imprimatur* from Bishop N. Popławski, but the text was not printed, because after the death of Bishop Witwicki (March 4, 1698), the Marians decided to try once again to obtain pontifical approval for their Institute (the present *Norma Vitae* would have had to be updated if this effort were to meet with success)

² The date of the canonical erection: April 21, 1679. See the text of the document in *Positio*, pp. 392-400.

³ The reference is made to the *breve* “Cum sicut accepimus” of March 20, 1681. This was the first pontifical recognition of the Marians. In fact, it is difficult to see in the *breve* of the indulgences the asserted concession of a Confraternity of the Marians. It is true that the text contains the phrase “Confraternity of the Faithful,” but it seems that it crept into it only by the inadvertence of the one who was writing the *breve*. Nonetheless, Bishop Wierzbowski (and the Marians) concluded from this phrase that the Holy See gave permission to establish a Confraternity. Accordingly, from that time on, the Marians started to erect the “Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception Assisting the Souls of the Faithful Departed” at their own churches; cf. below, Ch. VII, n. 8. See the text of the *breve* in *Positio*, pp. 404-409.

⁴ Saint Stanislaus speaks here about King John Sobieski (1674-1696).

⁵ The document of the Approval is published in *Positio*, pp. 376-378.

they are admitted juridically and canonically by the Ordinary of the place.

[...] The one who has embraced this [eremitical] status, especially in some Congregation of Hermits approved at least by a Bishop, and has made the profession [of the vows] in it, may not change this status, unless he has been dispensed by the Roman Pontiff at the request of the Superior of the said Congregation on account of the most just and grave reasons involving harm to the third party. Such declaration was made by the Sacred Penitentiary in 1691 when it was consulted by a certain Superior of this kind of Hermits.⁶ Such Hermits, once they stay in small monasteries, are not included among those who are prohibited to receive new houses,⁷ and those who live in a Congregation may have a way of life approved by a Bishop. [...] And nobody can doubt that the same may be ordained with the title of Poverty or Congregation (whichever is more favored in Rome).

3. These things have been prefaced briefly in order to inform those who feel and speak unfavorably about the present Institute, partly because of ignorance, partly due to bad information. If they will look with more a kindly eye into the few chapters that follow, and which are proposed for observance for these Marian Hermits, certainly they will be more benevolent towards them, who seek or desire nothing else besides God and His glory, the honor of the Virgin, the salvation of souls and their own, and to assist the dead. For the rest, although this Congregation is erected in the public status of Hermits, it does not insist so much on solitude as to consider unmeritorious for itself to sometimes engage also in spiritual services for the neighbors — as far as it is lawful — without

⁶ Most probably the Preface makes reference here to Fr. Stanislaus himself, who was in Rome in 1691. He wanted to obtain such a declaration from the Holy See, because he hoped that it would help to stop the desertion of members from his Institute, who in increasing number were taking advantage of the opinion of some moralists according to whom any confessor could absolve a religious from simple vows. Cf. *Positio*, pp. 514–515.

⁷ Maybe because of the contrary opinion the Marians were not able to accept some foundations offered to them; cf. *Positio*, pp. 531–532.

doing harm to anybody else. Nor does it absolutely request the eremitical title in order to make itself equal to anybody. In truth, it is convinced that it should venerate each of the most holy, ancient, and pious Orders and all Institutes to such an extent as to profess itself the last of all and recommend itself humbly to their protection and charity.

4. From all these things, each one can conclude that this present Institute of Marians Hermits, founded in the status approved by Canon Law, does not need any other approval.⁸ For when the Superior General applied to the Holy Apostolic See for its confirmation,⁹ the whole affair was first examined for almost a year by the Apostolic Nunciature in Poland. Then, on the basis of its information, the matter was also discussed for a longer time in Rome. Finally, the answer came, through the aforesaid Cardinal,¹⁰ that it is enough for the Institute to have the approval of the Ordinary of the place and this *Rule of Life*, which has been studied by His Eminence with utmost assiduity and corrected with the highest of wisdoms.¹¹ Such an answer is contained in the authentic letter of His Eminence directed to the Superior and his companions,¹² the letter which has been presented to and accepted by the present Bishop of Poznań.¹³

⁸ This fact is stressed by Fr. Stanislaus, because some people claimed that the Marians, without a Pontifical approval, had no right to exist as a religious Institute.

⁹ Fr. Stanislaus made a double petition in this sense in 1692; cf. *Positio*, pp. 515-519.

¹⁰ He speaks here about Cardinal Leander Colloredo, whose name figures on the front page of the *Rule of Life*.

¹¹ It is impossible for us to know the extent of the corrections made in the *Rule of Life* by Cardinal Colloredo because we do not know if the text presented by Fr. Stanislaus for approval was exactly that of 1687. Hence it is possible that Fr. Stanislaus himself is responsible for some differences between the *Norma Vitae* of 1687 and that of 1694.

¹² This letter is no longer available to us, not even in a copy.

¹³ He speaks here about Bishop John Stanislaus Witwicki, Ordinary of Poznań (1687-1698).



CHAPTER I

THE AIM OF THE COMMUNITY AND ADMISSION TO IT

1. Since no community can exist except under the guidance of laws, nor would it be possible for one to live without law in this earthly existence: because of this, you, who have been gathered together in one society and enclosed in monasteries under the governance of one Superior, will strive to observe these very few Statutes (over and above the *Rule of St. Augustine*),¹ for your inner peace and the security of your consciences.

2. First, consider diligently and assiduously what the aim of your Congregation is. [It is] the one that all the Orders have in common with you: the greater increase of God's glory, and care for your own salvation combined with serious striving for perfection. What does it profit a man, teaches the Savior, "if he gains the whole world, but suffers the loss of his own soul" (cf. Mt 16:26)? But lest you remain without work in the Vineyard of the Lord (cf. Mt 20:31), to the utmost of strength you will promote devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God, and with utmost zeal, piety and fervor assist the souls of the faithful departed subjected to

¹ This reference to the *Rule of St. Augustine* is a real mystery to us. The fact is that the 1687 edition of the *Rule of Life* did not contain this parenthetical reference. Was it one of the "corrections" made by Cardinal Colloredo? Probably not, because he said that it was enough for the Marians to observe the *Rule of Life* (cf. *Informative Preface*, no. 4). Father Stanislaus himself in no other document or writing speaks about the *Rule of St. Augustine* as a possible or actual Rule binding the Marians. But we cannot exclude the possibility that he decided to adopt this Rule (at least as a spiritual orientation) towards the year 1697, as he was preparing the publication of his own *Rule of Life*, in order to strengthen the position of his Institute (which was still being accused of insufficient ecclesiastical approval). This kind of "spiritual" (and not juridical) adoption of the *Rule of St. Augustine* (which was one of the four Rules approved by the Holy See since 1215) did not bring with itself Pontifical approval of the Marians, but at least it gave them the semblance of an Institute firmly rooted in the sound religious tradition of the Church.

expiatory pains — especially the souls of soldiers and those who died of pestilence.

3. Since the contemplative life is not binding you so strictly, although you are founded in the eremitical status, those gifted with such talents will not be prevented from humbly helping pastors in their church work, if they would be called upon by pastors, and have previously obtained faculties from the Ordinaries and the Superiors.²

4. Those seeking to enter your Society should be well known to you, or at least they should have been recommended. They should, as well, present letters of legitimate birth. They should come with the intention of living their life in a more perfect way, of accommodating their conduct to the norms, of striving toward the goal of their vocation; entangled by no censures, debts, or lawsuits.

5. In the education of novices, let the Apostolic Constitutions³ be followed, nor let novices be judged fit for the profession of vows and the oath of perseverance before they have been proven in every kind of mortification, prayer, penance, interior silence, or in zeal for all other virtues. Let them know that having made profession, the way of deserting their vocation is perpetually blocked (except to go to a stricter observance of an approved Order, with the permission of the Superior of the Congregation and with Apostolic dispensation).⁴ If anyone

² While the Marians are still called “Hermits” by reason of their juridical status as hermits, which proved to be the only way to bring about their canonical foundation within the structure of the Church, right from the beginning, Fr. Stanislaus tried to free himself and his religious from the restrictions imposed upon their apostolic activity by the eremitical status. Thus, he succeeded in having the right of the Marians to external pastoral activity recognized even in this *Rule of Life*. It is a rather timid formulation, but we know that in the last decade of the 17th century the Marians were already *de facto* a full-fledged *active* Institute, with members engaged in extensive missionary and pastoral work outside their own monasteries

³ This refers to Clement VIII’s constitution *Cum ad regularum*, 1603.

⁴ This declaration was intended to counteract the growing phenomenon of desertion from the ranks of the Marians. We can easily understand

is found incorrigible, a plotter, a disturber, giving scandal, after the third admonition he should either be shut in a small room for six months, and unless he returns to his senses, he should be dismissed from the Congregation, or, if he chooses for himself some approved Order, and he will find those who will receive him kindly, let him be commended to this Order.

6. This will be the formula of the making profession of vows when the time of probation is completed:

I, N., son of N., of the Diocese of N., of N. years of age, freely and of my own will, out of pure love of God, for His greater glory, and the honor of the Virgin, for the assistance of the dead who lack suffrages, especially soldiers and those who died from pestilence, I offer myself to the Divine Majesty, and the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, in her religious Congregation of the Immaculate Conception of Clerics Recollect, or Marian Hermits. This [I do] perpetually and irrevocably.⁵ And I vow Poverty, Chastity and Obedience to its Superior. May God and these holy Gospels help me.

how difficult it was to observe this austere and strict *Rule of Life* and how, after the initial period of spiritual zeal, the temptation to give up this kind of strict life came to the minds of quite a number of Marians. Father Stanislaus knew that some canonists and moralists did not think much of the binding force of simple vows (which were considered more in line of mere promises, dispensable by any confessor; in fact, the *Rule of Life* of 1687 in the formula of the profession had “I promise” instead of “I vow” — poverty, chastity and obedience). So, he reinforced the simple vows of the Marians with an irrevocable oath of perpetual perseverance in the Congregation and tried to obtain in 1692 a decree from the Congregation for Regulars and Bishops stating that only the Holy See could dispense the Marians from their vows, and only for most grave reasons (cf. *Positio*, pp. 514-15). It is interesting to note that in the 1687 edition of the *Rule of Life*, the Marians were forbidden to leave the Congregation even “under the pretext of wanting to follow a stricter observance”, since — Fr. Stanislaus argued — “any of you may profess such a strict observance in your present institute” (cf. *Positio*, p. 463, footnote “b”). What he meant, was probably that each Marian could apply for the residence in the Korabiew Forest house, which was bound to a much more strict — penitential and eremitical — observance than the other Marian houses.

⁵ At that time, in the legislation of Religious Institutes, there was no practice of temporary vows.

CHAPTER II

LOVE

1. [St. Paul] the Teacher of the Gentiles has best compared a servant of God who is not glowing with true love to a tinkling bell and a clanging cymbal (cf. 1 Cor 13:1). For the attainment of eternal life — and the value of meritorious works — is rooted in love. Therefore, more than any other good, each of you should try to gain for himself [this love], this pearl of great price, this treasure hidden in the field (cf. Mt 13:44-46). Although love is a gift of God, it is obtained and preserved, however, by constancy to prayer and mortification. Therefore, let everything you do be done in love (cf. 1 Cor 16:14).

2. The commandments of God and the Gospel counsels, the laws of the Roman Catholic Church, its prescriptions, decrees, rites, usages, dogmas; as well as this present *Rule*, (and if at some time further prescriptions are given): let all of these be observed out of the love of God. This is what [Jesus Christ] the heavenly Lawgiver said: “If a man loves me, he will keep my word” (Jn 14:23). And this is to be understood not only of His teaching and of Scripture, but equally of His Church, which He Himself forms and governs by His Holy Spirit, and its orders and documents, and the dispositions of the Superiors which flow from her or are confirmed by her.

3. Out of the love of God, you will perform every good and flee every evil; you will exercise every virtue possible, and detest every vice and sin. Out of the love of God, you will bear, with willingness and fortitude, mortifications, afflictions, reproofs, injuries, calumnies, labors, pains, destitution, austerity, and other situations like these. Out of the love of God you will carry out in a most perfect way your exercises, duties, jobs entrusted to you, and whatever concerns your state and vocation. You will consecrate to divine Love all of your entire life, daily actions and sufferings, and each and every moment, particulars, circumstances, changes. Each and every action and suffering by due submission, confidence, and piety [will be consecrated] for all eternity on the altar of love, by a pure

heart joined to the merits of Christ the Lord, His Immaculate Mother, all of the saints, and the universal Church.

“[Y]ou shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” (cf. Dt 6:5; Mt 22:37). This, which Divine Wisdom wanted to be most recommended in both [Old and New] Testaments (cf. Mk 12:30, Lk 10:27), should be your common rule and the safest way to Heaven.

4. Concerning mutual love: let it be known that the one who excels in mutual love is dearer to the Divine Majesty. Each of you should keep in mind that the soul of his Institute is love, and to the extent that he withdraws from love, he withdraws from life. Therefore, even as he will promote the good, reputation, integrity and holiness of the whole Congregation, so he will render to the individual members of this same Congregation all those things which he would wish for himself. And so, he will avoid these contagious diseases very opposed to love: envy, hatred, rancor, rivalry, suspicion, calumny, exclusive attachment, antipathy, jealousy, secret accusation, jeering, whispering, verbal abuse, annoyance, ambition, contempt for others, disturbances, agitations, quarrels, contentions. As he will watch over the tranquility of his own spirit, so the zealous guardian of love will also give great care to guard the tranquility of others and the whole house. He will suitably drive away any evil both from the whole Congregation and from each of its members. Call to mind the love of the early Church, about which the writer of the Acts of the Apostles says, “Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul” (cf. Acts 4:32).

5. You should always be mindful of the works of mercy⁶ which, done to His members, are done to Christ the Head. On all (cf. Mt 25:31-46) occasions, you will not neglect to show outsiders every possible love. You will surround with devoted love not only those you find benevolent to you, but adversaries as well, and enemies (whom our Lord rightly

⁶ Cf. *Mystical Temple of God*, Ch. 21.

commanded us to love). These works alone will triumph at the Last Judgment⁷ (cf. Mt 5:44; Lk 6:27-35).

Chapter III

OBEDIENCE, POVERTY, CHASTITY

1. Firstly, you ought to obey God, the Roman Pontiff, the bishops, Superiors of your Order; then, their Vicars, local officials, and the bell calling you to common exercises. This you ought to do quickly, promptly, perfectly, patiently, humbly, decisively, and perseveringly. Nor should you be ashamed to be subject to men, since the Apostle [Peter] would wish us to be subject to all creatures, more so to every authority (cf. Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13; 1 Tim 2:2). For there is no authority, he says, unless it is from God. He who resists this authority resists the divine will and that is the highest form of stupidity. You should assume the motive and example of obedience of our Redeemer Himself, who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). He who would refuse to imitate [Christ] would appear not to want to reign with Christ if he did not obey the due authority who takes the place of Christ. The following order must be kept in obeying: the lesser power should yield to the greater power, nor should that lesser power attempt to weaken the greater. [Concerning what has been ordered:] if a previous order will clearly have been revoked, a later order should be given adherence. You should all respect the Ordinaries of the locality with due submission and be most ready to obey them. Nonetheless, in order to avoid many disorders and confusion in jurisdiction, only the Superiors will attend to the just orders of the bishops.⁸ The members, on the other hand, will obey the Superiors and the laws without any reluctance and pretense. Nor should they believe they have

⁷ For the sake of clarity, the sentence order was rearranged in this paragraph.

⁸ This was the time when the Marians were still a diocesan institute dependent juridically on the bishop of the place. Only in 1699 did the Marians gain the privilege of exemption from this jurisdiction.

any right or privilege to take the Superior to an outside court. This is stated to avoid many quarrels, scandals and rebellions. If ever any [of these] controversies should happen, or any less notable deficiency, then it should be settled and corrected within the Congregation itself, in an ordinary way, peacefully and justly. Through this *Rule*, we nonetheless do not intend to contradict anything of in Canon Law, or anything regarding the decrees and views of the Roman Church. If anyone among you has been found stubbornly disobedient, or a firebrand, or a wicked agitator of others, let him be restrained by the common action of all those who favor interior peace and good government (first, however, having given the possibility for a just defense and apology, with the due process of law having been kept). If necessary, even the force of civil authorities may be employed.⁹ Truly it is right that a servant of God be a peaceful man. Should he consider the person he should obey? Or shouldn't he consider the love on account of which he obeys? You should fulfill, with divine assistance, humbly and joyfully, all the penances and mortifications assigned by a Superior, although they may seem burdensome. You should not murmur against the Superiors or complain, but you should love and honor them. But if anyone should have been truly burdened by some Superior, let him either endure patiently what he finds oppressive for the merit of eternal life, or by himself or through another, present, with the greatest meekness and humility, a petition to the Superior, by whom he is pressed, so that he might use due moderation in the situation.

2. The essence of your poverty is found in this: that no one keeps anything privately without the consent of the Superiors, nor would he dare to call anything his own. However, those things given for his use let him preserve them neatly, carefully and for as long as possible. Let all income be turned over for common use whether it comes from alms or other sources. Let them observe, absolutely and strictly, the manner of collecting, saving and dispensing this income,

⁹ It was common practice for civil authorities to aid in ending rebellions in monasteries.

the manner contained in the papal decrees¹⁰ under the penalties specified there. Without the permission of the Superior, let none keep for himself either money or food or drink, under the penalty of losing active and passive voice. Such permission can be granted only for some good reason and for a short time, for all ought to live from common resources and the common table. However, foreseeing all the harm [that could come from its use], this permission is to be granted chiefly and only to the aged and the sick. No member should receive anything from anybody without the permission of the Superiors, whether it be from a house member or an outsider; nor should he give anything to anyone. Before profession, he should dispose of his inheritance and his goods in the world, if he had any. If he was hindered by something, then he should settle his affairs as quickly as possible after profession, since our Lord openly stated: “whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple” (Lk 14:33). The Superiors will provide the members, as much as they will be able in the Lord, sufficiently in all things according to our norms, but not superfluously however. Otherwise, on account of more rigorous want, the members would be found slothful in their service of God. It is fitting for each one to be mindful that he is rather the imitator of the Heavenly King in need, who, it is said, had neither His own home (cf. Mt 8:20; Lk 9:58) nor when He was thirsty was ashamed to have asked for water (cf. Jn 4:7). So you, once you find yourself in a situation of utmost poverty¹¹, rejoice

¹⁰ Clement VIII, *Nullus omnino*, 1599.

¹¹ As a Piarist, Fr. Stanislaus was very much attached to the legal and ascetical concept of “utmost poverty” that he had learned in the novitiate. Due to the reform of the Piarists in 1656, he was already not able to profess it. (Later he was evidently trying to preserve or bring back at least some of its elements, by writing the *Apology for the Utmost Poverty*.) We do not have any evidence that in his own Institute he ever tried to introduce the “utmost poverty — either in that most strict, of the Capuchins; or in that less strict of the Piarist since 1622 — in the legal sense. Nevertheless, he cherished utmost poverty as an actual experience in religious life and insisted on the need of being satisfied with the true necessities of life, and with the utmost simplicity of life (cf. for example,

exceedingly, because then you can be the true disciples and followers of Christ the Lord.

3. Obedience guards chastity, and poverty nourishes chastity. Therefore, the one eager for purity exercises himself in obedience and poverty, and then he will possess chastity. The following means will be able to greatly aid anyone to preserve this angelic virtue [of chastity]: modesty of the eyes and the constant elevation of the mind to God; the flight from laziness, idle conversations, useless reading; prudent avoiding of dangerous company; love of one's cell, and respect for the cloister; an ardent invocation of the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mother of God, your guardian angel, St. Joseph, and the holy virgins. The Superiors will take pains lest they throw anyone into a situation endangering so great a virtue, or that they would neglect someone so endangered, seeing that they will have to render to God a most strict accounting of those entrusted to them.

CHAPTER IV MORTIFICATION

1. Concerning internal mortification of passions, desires, and your own judgment and will — without which the old Adam can in no way be cast off — and in which it is fitting that you be most experienced: bodily chastisement greatly contributes to internal mortification. “Put to death therefore” — says St. Paul in Colossians 3 — “what is earthly in you” (Col 3:5). Therefore, let your food be moderate: such that prevents hunger, but does not fill your stomach. Food should not be prepared in an exquisite way, using vegetables, herbs, roots and relishes. You will not eat meat (the sick, the weak, aged, and travelers excepted). However, butter or some fat will be allowed to be used as a condiment. But, outside your

below, Ch. 5. n.9, towards the end). In 1679 Bishop Wierzbowski witnesses to the “utmost poverty” in which the Marians were living (cf. *Positio*, p. 399, n. 12).

houses, what will have been put before you, with God's blessing, you will eat moderately (cf. Lk 10:8).

2. Your ordinary drink ought to be water. Should you have any other drink, it will be up to the Superior to allow you to drink it sparingly, with the exception of vodka, which is absolutely prohibited to you.¹² Away from the community meal or outside of the house, it is not allowed for anyone to eat or drink anything without the Superior's permission. Frequently think: food is destined for the stomach, but the stomach is destined for worms. By limiting yourselves to a small amount of food, you will render your nature satisfied, your spirit — vigorous. Certainly water and bread were the staple food at the beginning of humankind. When man thus feasted, he lived longer. The abundance of meals now brings about sicknesses, shortens life; opens up hell. Certainly, that one who feasted splendidly every day was buried in hell (Cf. Lk 16:19). Be content, therefore, with little and simple food and drink. Do not murmur on this account against anyone. If the Superior would see in the Lord that he can provide something beyond two courses — especially at the time of great celebrations and the monthly recreation¹³ — then this is left to his prudence, since his authority will be able to mitigate, in the fear of the Lord, this norm in consideration of persons, places and times, both in quantity as in quality.

3. Besides the Church's fasts and those customary in the region, you will observe the following: the Vigils of the seven Feasts of Our Lady, and of Saints Michael the Archan-

¹² This prohibition was stressed by Fr. Stanislaus also on April 10, 1701 in the first addition to his *Testament* (cf. *Positio*, p. 498). Probably shortly after, in *Praecepta*, he specifies that the use of vodka is forbidden to Marians both at home and outside "under the loss of Divine blessing" (cf. *ibid.*, p. 502, n. 5). This absolute abstinence from strong alcoholic drinks was in striking contrast with the prevalent customs of the Polish society of that time. Fr. Stanislaus saw how much moral, physical and material evil was caused by these customs. Hence, he tried to oppose them at least by the example of his abstinence and that of his religious.

¹³ By the first half of the 18th century, the practice of weekly recreation was introduced, but the General Chapter of 1754 restored the original observance: one day of recreation per month.

gel, Joseph, Stanislaus¹⁴ and Anna, with one meal or by limiting yourselves to bread and water. Also, you will use Lenten foods, according to the custom of the place, from the Feast of St. Martin to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and from the Octave of the Immaculate Conception to the Solemnity of Christmas. While you will hard press the body by abstaining from food, try all the more to abstain from vices. One fasts in a disorderly way if he is hard pressing the body while he neglects the spirit. Nor is food fruitfully taken away from the body unless the mind is recalled from evil.

4. Because softness of garment incites not only pride, but also lust, you, as hermits, will wear clothing from the simplest, roughest and thickest material: you will wear a habit stretching to the ankles — not one which trails on the ground or shows the ankles too much — and a short mantle reaching to the knees, and a shirt from coarse linen or some other harsh material. All of these will be white in color¹⁵, in honor of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, and the greatest cleanliness of them should be observed, because dirty poverty can please no one.

5. At least when inside the house in summer, wooden sandals will be worn with bare feet. Outdoors, for the sake of propriety, and in the winter in cold regions for reasons of health, simple, uniform but not extravagant shoes are permitted. Hats lined with sheep's wool are not forbidden to be used to protect the body in a cold climate after the Superior General of the Congregation has been consulted.

¹⁴ This is not a reference to Stanislaus Kostka, SJ, who was only canonized in 1714, but to Stanislaus, bishop and martyr (d. 1079), the principal patron of Poland and patron of the Servant of God. His feast is celebrated in Poland on May 8.

¹⁵ Thus the white habit was designed by Fr. Stanislaus for the Marians as one of the means by which they were propagating the devotion to the Mary's Immaculate Conception. Later, he said: "I assumed the white habit in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (cf. *Positio*, p. 495). Strangely enough, the 1687 version of the *Rule of Life* gives a different significance of the white color of the Marians' clothing, namely: "in honor of Our Lord mocked [ridiculed?] by Herod."

The brother-workers will have to wear a different habit from the priests: a habit reaching to the ankles, of gray color, and a mantle without a collar. (“Worker” meaning those who in choir cannot perform the Office of the Dead and devotions with the others in the Latin language.)

You must be very strict regarding modesty. When you are about to give your body rest, you will lay it down in the straw and cover it with your own mantle, or with some simple woolen cloth, or with a rough blanket.

All will have the uniform clerical tonsure, according to the size proper to each order.¹⁶ Everyone will also shave their beard and mustache monthly.

6. Common flagellation will be on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for your own sins and those of others, especially for the dead. However, anyone will be able to make use of flagellation on any day on rising or before going to bed to honor our Lord, who was whipped, and as often as it will be imposed by the Superior.

CHAPTER V RECOLLECTION

1. Your continual interior silence will consist in this: that you will acknowledge, worship and bless God present everywhere, and thus you will walk in His sight modestly, faithfully and piously as it is proper for servants to behave in the presence of the Master. Make an effort to contemplate God in all creatures, and not only in yourselves, since we live and move and exist in Him (cf. Acts 17:28). In this way, He will never slip away from your mind.

2. Examine yourselves each hour to see how much you have progressed in the Love of the Lord or have failed. In this way, correct the failure and bring about your progress. Each hour, think that you are about to die, or at least that these

¹⁶ That is the minor and major orders such as porter, exorcist, etc.

hours slipping by will not return. In this way, you will work hard to merit continuously as much as possible, with the help of God, expecting the day's wage, which is infallibly given to faithful servants (cf. Mt 20:2).

3. In church, or as often as you will find yourself in chapel, think that you are in Heaven. As many times as you cross before the Sacrament of the Altar, you will humbly kiss the ground, adoring the Lord of Heaven and Earth really present, and worthily giving thanks for so admirable a memorial.

4. May silence — the custodian of blessed recollection — be continuous among you, especially in the chapel, the sacristy, the dining room and in other places designated for the community.

After the evening blessing¹⁷ and before the morning blessing, no one is allowed to say anything. If anyone should need to speak to another, let it be done with the Superior's permission. He should precede his words with, "Blessed be God!" and the other replying, "Forever!" You will speak in a more subdued voice to the bishops or any Superiors — venerating Christ in them — having first asked for their blessing.

5. Each day, you will spend two hours in meditation. Each month, taking turns one after another, you will make a retreat — which we call "Spiritual Exercises." We do not wish to have the Superiors exempt from this unless they are prevented from doing so by their duties. It will be the Superiors' duty to be certain that someone is continually on retreat, with all fervor praying the Divine Goodness on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, Christian leaders, the Order, the house, benefactors and the dead.

6. So that you will be mindful of your vocation, and avid for the rewards prepared for those who loyally struggle until death, each day renew your vows privately before the Blessed Sacrament.

¹⁷ This is the blessing given by the Superior at the end of Night Prayer.

7. Any of the novices after entrance — and as well before profession — as well as those to be ordained, will diligently spend at least two weeks apart in their cell in private retreat.¹⁸ The time will be spent in assiduous mental and vocal prayer, in a general examination of conscience, and in considering their calling.

8. Lest you also be disturbed by outsiders, the door of the house will always be kept locked. No one is allowed to bring in anyone from the outside without the Superior's permission, nor will it be allowed for any of the members to go out (under severe punishment) without the same permission from the Superior. As often as anyone will be sent outside the house, he will always go out with a companion unless the most important reason would demand otherwise. When outside the house, he will direct his attention to the good edification of men by words and actions, neglecting nothing of his Rule, praying intently while on his way. Having returned at the assigned time, he will candidly tell the Superior all the things he has done.

Once the signal for nightly rest has been given, no one will dare to wander through the corridors, in which (according to papal decree) a lamp should be lit for the whole night.¹⁹

9. In order that you may have tranquility also in the house, no one should venture from his cell for any reason unless forced to do so by a legitimate necessity. Even less should he enter another's cell, or admit anyone to his cell.

This cell should always be kept clean, the bed made, holy water present along with a picture of [Christ] Crucified, or of the Blessed Virgin or some patron saint — a simple picture in printed reproduction rather than a painted one.

Always be mindful here of the Divine Presence, the angel watching over you. Never be idle, but always occupied either in reading, or writing, or prayer, or with some other useful

¹⁸ "In private retreat" is not in the Latin, but is implied.

¹⁹ Clement VIII, *Nullus omnino*, 1599: "lamps will be lit in the middle of dormitories for the whole night."

work. Without the Superior's permission he should not sleep in his cell outside the accustomed time.²⁰ He should be cautious in using light. He should not keep in his cell anything, which would not be in agreement with utmost poverty. Let him love his cell as if it were a temporary Heaven, and desire to go out of his cell, by the mercy of God, only to Heaven.

CHAPTER VI SCHEDULE

1. "The day evolves by God's arrangement."²¹ Therefore, the day is to be passed, for God's glory, in good order. Rising a little after the middle of the night, you will move together to the church, when the second signal has been given. There, during the verse *Tantum ergo Sacramentum*, you will adore the Blessed Sacrament. Then you will say devotedly, distinctly, with attention and clearly, the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception²² to the end of None (according to the Roman Correction, approved by Pope Innocent XI in the brief sent to Emperor Leopold I on December 18, 1678) together with the first part of the Rosary, in the vernacular because of the brother-helpers. After the Rosary, you will spend an hour in mental prayer, at the end of which you will receive the Superior's blessing with holy water.

2. From six to nine o'clock, devote your time to reading, studies, or works according to the Superior's wishes. At nine-thirty you will recite the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer of the Office of the Dead. At ten, you have the conventual Mass; at eleven, an examination of conscience, reflecting on the Four Last Things,²³ then the Litany of the Name of

²⁰ or, "take rest."

²¹ Latin proverb: "*ordinatione Dei perseverat dies.*"

²² Cf. Lucien Ceyssens, OFM, *Le Petit Office de l'Immaculée Conceptions Prétendue Approbation, Condamnation* (1578). *Tolérance* (1679), in *Virgo Immaculate XVII*, Romae 1957, pp. 41-124; *Positio*, p. 474, footnote 67.

²³ i.e., death, judgment, Heaven, & hell.

Jesus, and the meal preceded by the blessing and customary prayers. The meal will be seasoned with the reading of Sacred Scripture — especially the New Testament — or the lives of the saints, your Rule, and spiritual books, for growth of the soul and perfection. All will remain silent, trying to keep the reading in their memory and to apply and imitate it.

3. After having given thanks, everyone will sit together and the work of some moral theologian of good standing will be read to them.

On other days will be read the rubrics of the Mass or the Roman Breviary together with the explanation of an approved author, which they will then observe. Following the reading, they will pray another part of the Rosary with the usual litanies of the Blessed Virgin. Until three o'clock they will be occupied with spiritual reading, writing, or manual works, according to the disposition of the Superior.

4. When the bells of three o'clock have been heard, you will pray Evening Prayer of the Little Office and the Office of the Dead. You will spend a whole hour in meditation, first saying the Psalms of the Name of Mary. After this hour, say the third part of the Rosary.

5. At seven o'clock you will go together to the dining room to eat supper with reading. When supper is finished, sitting together, you will discuss — modestly and not jokingly — either religious perfection, promoting the glory of God, or cases of conscience.²⁴

At eight, after an examination of conscience, the profession of faith and acts of contrition, love and gratitude have been made, and having received the blessing of the Superior,²⁵ prepare yourself for rest, falling asleep in the saving wounds of our Redeemer.

6. The decrees of the Supreme Pontiffs should absolutely be read at a prescribed time at meals. The Superiors should

²⁴ Referring to matters regarding confession and spiritual counseling.

²⁵ After Night Prayer.

not think that they have the right to interpret them.²⁶ Rather, they should try to keep them with the utmost effort and let the penalties contained in them be applied to transgressors.

7. When the Canonical Hours are said in common, any of the Superiors has the power to change this schedule for the convenience of their house and better order, provided nothing which is prescribed here has been left out.

CHAPTER VII SUPERIORS

1. One Superior will govern your whole Congregation for a six-year term. At the end of this term — as indicated below²⁷ — you will either choose another or confirm the same one. It is his office to admit or dismiss members, to approve confessors, preachers and Novice Masters, moderators of your Confraternity, to approve books to be published, to create or depose Local Superiors, to accept endowments, to make visitation of the houses, correct those erring and, if it be necessary, also to punish them. It is also up to him to establish, impose and carry out other responsibilities which are proper to the office of General Superiors.

2. Let all of the Superiors remember this warning of the Divine Spirit: “If they make you ruler, do not be puffed up, [but] be among them as one of them” (cf. Sir 32:1) [*LV*].²⁸ Therefore, be not a dictator, but be an example that the flock can follow” (cf. 1 Pet 5:3). Let him then first do by example what he is about to order others by word. He is equally an observer of the law with others, not only its custodian. Let him be endowed with piety, discretion and prudence, moderating zeal with mildness and moderating mildness with zeal, lest through too much strictness or indulgence he hurts the

²⁶ Evidently, interpret in the sense of relax or ease.

²⁷ Ch. 9, n. 1.

²⁸ This Scripture quotation was directly translated from the Latin Vulgate to better convey the meaning intended by Stanislaus.

Institute, rather than contributing to its good. He should not aggravate his own men with rigid penances or commands. Rather, he should burden each with what conforms to his strength, talents and abilities. Since his subjects are bound to obey without any excuses, the one in command must foresee that he imposes on each such things as they will be able to fulfill for God's glory and their own merit.

3. For their part, the members should not trouble the Superiors either by their impudence or stubbornness, but they should agreeably acquiesce, in the Lord, to the Superior's wishes, respecting them out of love rather than being afraid of them out of empty fear. If any one of the Superiors should seem to someone somewhat negligent or less than exemplary, he should not — because of the Lord — on that account cease to honor and obey him. The Lord himself warns, "practice and observe what they tell you, but not what they do" (Mt 23:3). Indeed, the Superiors are worthy of much compassion, since while they serve all, they are at times forced to neglect themselves. Therefore, the members will always pray for the Superiors, so that God may enlighten, direct, help and keep them in His grace.

4. The Superior of the entire Congregation will visit the whole Congregation every three years; the Provincial,²⁹ his houses every year; but the Local Superior will visit the rooms of all the members almost every single month, lest anything be found in them not according to your vocation and poverty, or neatness. All Superiors will unanimously apply themselves to this, that there may flourish: an ever greater worship of God, in their churches; peace, recollection, love, uniformity, in their houses; holiness, in their members; and conservation of temporal goods. They may not give away these goods of the Congregation to outsiders, under ecclesiastical penalties.

5. If it will be necessary in any of your churches to preach the Word of God, this task is to be given by the Superior to

²⁹ The Latin term "*Diocesanus*" probably supposes a division of the Congregation into Provinces according to the lines of dioceses, i.e., houses in a diocese form a separate Province.

such ones who have been instructed in the necessary doctrine and who have virtuous qualities, so that their preaching may bring salutary fruit to the listeners, enlightening by their teaching, stirring by their persuasion. Let them always attempt to speak those things which would bring forth more praise of God than [praise] of themselves; those things which would call forth in the people, with God's help: edification, correction of behavior, love and fear of God, the exercise of virtue and good works, contempt for the world, and fervent desire for and striving after eternal happiness, just as in their own churches they will not preach without the mandate of the Superior, so in other churches, they will not preach without the blessing of the Ordinary.³⁰

6. Let the professors perform the duty of teaching imposed on them (if at some time it is appropriate to institute them) for the glory of God, carefully and diligently and for the progress of the students. Let them use the textbooks of the most acknowledged authors, rather than fatigue themselves and their students with writing. Let them, however, not so immerse themselves, together with their students, in their subject matters that they forget prayer and mortification.

7. Novice Masters should be appointed who are exemplary, prudent, industrious, endowed with discernment of spirits. They should teach their novices all of the [spiritual] exercises perfectly. Likewise, they will occupy and exercise them in denial of themselves and of what belongs to them, in the following of Christ the Lord, in contempt for passing goods and the desire for the eternal, in patience, humility, modesty, silence, penitence, zeal for prayer, regular observance, and most of all, in the love of God. Novice Masters will always have before their eyes the care of those to be formed that has

³⁰ In the 1687 edition of the *Rule of Life*, Fr. Stanislaus had more extensive instruction included in this paragraph concerning preaching the Word of God (see: *Positio*, p. 477, footnote "p" and p. 478, footnote "g"). Obviously, he was giving here the fruit of his own experience as a preacher. The Marians partially restored the missing text in their *Statutes* of 1778.

been entrusted to them — the care, first of all, for attaining the salvation of their souls, and in the second place, for the honor and advantage of the Congregation.

8. The Superior [General] will assign to each house a promoter of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception³¹ assisting the souls of the faithful departed. Let the Confraternity be erected in your churches, if not already done, on the basis of the permission granted by Pope Innocent XI on March 20, 1681, and on the basis of the admission of this document on the part of the Ordinary. He to whom this duty, full of merit, shall be entrusted will in every way apply himself to this, so that he may bring forth as many fervent and devout members, lovers of the Immaculate Virgin, and helpers of the dead as possible. Let him administer this Confraternity prudently, so that he may obtain great profit for souls. To this end, he will especially exhort and incite those who become members of this Confraternity by inspiring them to the frequent and salutary use of the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist, as well as to works of charity and the abandonment of vices.

9. The same Superior [General] will take care to have other officials throughout the whole Congregation — Procurators, Economes, Zealots³² — who will try to fulfill their duties most diligently from a love of God, for the merit of obedience, so that they may one day receive an assured reward for their love and their labors from our Lord Jesus Christ.

³¹ See footnote 3 (p. 53).

³² The task of the “Zealot” was to “proclaim” or denounce the faults of others in the Chapter of the Faults (cf. Ph. Schmitz, *Chapitre des Coulpes*, in *Diet. Theol. Cath.* II/1, col. 485). It is surprising that Fr. Stanislaus does not mention “Zealot” in the paragraph dedicated to the Chapter of the Faults (see below, p. 78).

CHAPTER VIII
**ON THE RECEPTION AND ADMINISTRATION
OF THE SACRAMENTS**

1. Both clerics and brother-helpers will receive Holy Communion with the utmost reverence on each Sunday and on feasts, and as frequently as the Superior wishes (the domestic family will receive once a month). It should be preceded by sacramental confession and some prayerful recollection. In the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament — which we wish to be done very seldom — the greatest care both in decoration and lighting should be observed. At least one member should be engaged in continual prayer.

2. The priests, as far as they are allowed to do so, will offer the Sacrifice of the Mass each day for the sacristy intention, not being forgetful of the dead who lack assistance. They should be aware that, on the basis of a pontifical decree, only two [personal] Masses are granted them each month. So that for their part, they may perform their duty worthily, let the priests never approach the altar with some sin on their conscience, nor without the greatest interior silence or sufficient preparation. Let them be exemplary, sober, modest, devoted, expert and observant of the rubrics and rites of the Roman Church. In celebrating Mass, let them neither hurry nor protract it; rather, reading everything distinctly, attentively and with devotion, not protract this divine work beyond half an hour. Let them recite the canonical hours³³ in common rather than privately. Let them give themselves to spiritual reading and the study of moral theology insistently, and to pray without ceasing. Thus, by integrity of life and the works of piety, they will not only render illustrious support and promotion to the Congregation but they will, at the very least, be of spiritual help to the whole Catholic Church.

3. The Superior of the whole Congregation will promote only members endowed with solid virtue and sufficiently instructed with doctrine to this royal priesthood. They are to be

³³ i.e., the Breviary.

ordained under the due title³⁴ with the intention that a more abundant worship of God may flourish among you, and that the help of the dead — to which you have been called — may be more effective and frequent. So that he may appoint to this place and office those who would hold and exercise it worthily and well, the Superior will have a good knowledge of the qualities of all members of his Congregation.

4. It would be expedient for preserving the spirit of humility if, as much as possible, the priests themselves would sweep out the church, clean the linens and vessels, and attend to the decoration and maintenance of the churches and their furniture. Nor should they pompously push themselves ahead of others whom they surpass in [the] dignity [of their office], even though the greatest esteem is owed them on account of the reverence due to Christ. In hearing confessions, let them join sweetness to prudence. They should be cautious in examining the consciences of penitents, especially the simple folk. They should be careful in assigning penances, careful about becoming friends with outsiders, and learned in resolving doubts and scruples. They should not be ignorant of those cases reserved to the Apostolic See, or the bishop or the Superior, knowing that absolution is not always to be given to all. These laws [this *Rule*] do not oblige under any pain of sin whatsoever, except for the obligations which come from simple vows and the oath [of perseverance].

CHAPTER IX ON HAVING MEETINGS

1. You will gather together one or more [delegates]³⁵ for the following reasons: first, every six years for choosing or confirming a Superior of the whole Congregation, his Assistants,

³⁴ No one can be ordained without being “attached” either to a bishop or a religious community; those being ordained are being ordained “under the title” of a Congregation.

³⁵ “*Singuli, vel aliqui.*” This is a difficult phrase to translate, but this appears to be the sense intended.

and the Diocesan (Provincial) Superiors. Those who have an active and passive voice — three from each diocese (or Province) — will gather, having been called to one house by the letter of the Superior [General] concluding his term. There, having spent one day of abstinence and having sung the Mass to the Holy Spirit, they will be cloistered until, by secret vote, they have chosen one noted for integrity, prudence, religious discipline and outstanding in learning. The secretary and the discretus³⁶ will sign the certificate of the one elected by the consent of the greater part of the electors. All will kiss the hand of the elect as a sign of reverence and obedience. After the election, they will go to the church to sing the hymn *Te Deum laudamus*. If anyone [during the election process] will have been noted for his ambition, let him be perpetually declared unfit for all offices. Afterward, the election of Assistants, the Procurator General, then of the Provincials shall be held — also by secret ballot. If anything will be decreed in this meeting, let it be inscribed in the General Acts.

2. The Diocesan Meetings will be held every three years, for establishing some good or abolishing evil; and for [the election of] those to be sent to the General Chapter, according to what was noted above. To these meetings will go the local Vicars³⁷ of each house, along with the delegates chosen by secret vote.

3. The Local Superior will call together the members twice each week. On Fridays, he will gather them to assign adequate penance in order to make up for their faults. Kneeling, each one will manifest his faults clearly, openly, with pious disposition, and without excusing himself. He will humbly accept the penance imposed there. If someone is falsely accused at that time [by another], he will not respond; afterwards, meeting with the Superior, he will testify to his innocence (unless he would prefer to innocently suffer with Christ). A liar will be punished, without being pardoned, with the penalty that would have been

³⁶ Probably the one who verifies the vote.

³⁷ The Local Superiors were considered the Vicars of the General (or later, the Provincial Superior).

given to the one he accused.³⁸ Absent from this distinguished Tribunal of Love should be hatred, envy and excessive zeal. In fact, in telling another's faults — unless there is a risk in delay — it is praiseworthy to follow the Gospel's rule: remind him privately; [then] with a companion, admonish him; [and then,] unless he has come back to his senses finally, bring him to the Church (cf. Mt 18:17). But concerning the faults of outsiders, consider that nothing about it pertains to you — so much so that, unless you seem to be moved by good zeal, you should think that it is not your job to give an opinion about their faults.

4. The second time that the Local Superior will gather his members together is on Sundays, after evening meditation (or at another suitable time) for a spiritual conference in Latin (or in the vernacular) using simple, clear, passionate language in order to kindle their spirits to the practice of virtues, eliminating disordered affections and pursuing holiness. Or you may read a good book on this matter — namely, one that will exhort everyone quietly, yet efficaciously to loving God, following in Christ's footsteps, observing religious discipline and persevering in holy penance. After the conference, some mortification or prayer or act of virtue will be assigned to be exercised by everyone during the coming week. If the occasion or necessity shall have demanded it, during the same gathering, the Superior with the senior [members] will be able to treat whatever concerns the welfare of the community.

5. Lastly, everyone will be gathered together — by the common signal of the bell — to help the soul of any member departing from this human life. They will commend him with pious admonition, prayers and humble tears to God's goodness and mercy, striving with all fraternal strength that in this agony no one would be in danger concerning his own salvation. Indeed, the Superior will, with greatest charity, be certain to give the sick not only the bodily medicine they need at the right time but especially to give them the remedies for eternal life. These are: earnest confession of sins,

³⁸ Literally, "will be punished with the law of retaliation," i.e., the Old Testament "eye for an eye." Cf. Dt 19:21.

and detesting of them, public declaration of [one's] faith, protesting against the plotting of the Devil, the handing over of his soul to the hands of God and his confessor, devoted reception of the Holy Eucharist and of Extreme Unction, the invoking of heavenly aid, and absolute hope and confidence in the merits of our Savior.

6. The Church's customary prayers at the side of the dying³⁹ are to be said devotedly. Their soul should be fervently entrusted to God. The body of the deceased should be fittingly washed, and piously laid to rest within three days. As quickly as possible, the news of the death should be spread amongst the other houses, so that the deceased [member] may be helped — with the sacrifice of Masses and with prayers and mortifications — by everyone. Together, all of you may bless the merciful God of Heaven, who, though unworthy, you serve on earth.⁴⁰

³⁹ Literally, “the agonizing [one].”

⁴⁰ Other editions close with the inscription “God’s Honor and Glory alone.”

**THE RULE
OF THE TEN PLEASURES
OR TEN VIRTUES
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

or

**THE RULE OF IMITATION
OF THE TEN EVANGELICAL VIRTUES
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

on which the Marians professed their vows
until the renovation of the Congregation
on November 28, 1910



PREFACE

O dearly beloved, you who are specially dedicated to devotion to the Mother of God! It is expedient first and before all else to keep the Virgin herself constantly before your eyes, directing your thoughts and your gaze upon her, as the Astrologers gazed upon the Star. Let the Virgin be your Model, your Oracle, your Rule. May you have no other greater eagerness than to render yourselves perfectly pleasing to the Spouse of your souls by imitating the Virgin. Certainly for you, Prudence, Counsel, Vocation, Religion, and Purpose in life lie in this: that you always serve God sincerely. Since the complete way of imitating the Virgin and of pleasing God according to her example—as laid down in your *Rule*—is derived from the Gospel, you must know what the Gospel says of the Virgin's thoughts, words, and actions. In these three ways, the Virgin is presented to you as one who can shine forth in you and who can be imitated. If you make her shine forth in you, you shall have eternal life. Know then that, although the Virgin Mary was full of all grace and virtues, the Holy Spirit willed and caused that only 10 of these were mentioned by the Evangelists. You should possess these 10 virtues which, according to the testimony of the Gospel, the Virgin possessed. As these shone forth in Mary's life in thought, word, and deed, so they should equally make you think, say, and do the same. And thus prompted by each of these virtues, you should imitate Mary in your *hearts, on your lips and in your actions*. All perfection and the true observance of your *Rule* consist in this.

CHAPTER I THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY

*The Virgin Mary's **Chastity**, among her virtues the first mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and practice in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

Unable to enumerate in detail all the virtues of the Virgin Mary, we shall recall only those that are specially mentioned in the Gospel. It is the virtue of *purity* which holds first place, so that devout souls may know that first of all they must direct and apply all their faculties to please Christ, as true brides, in chastity, in imitation of the Virgin, and think, say, and do that which the Gospel says Mary thought, said, and did on account of her purity. We read in the Gospel that the Virgin, in order to please God most perfectly in her virginal purity, first, made a vow of virginity; second, we read in the same Gospel that she was engaged to Joseph [cf. Lk 1:27]; and finally, that she asked Gabriel: "How can this be, since I do not know man?" [cf. Lk 1:34].

The members of this Order, according to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, in order to please Christ their Spouse, take the vow of perpetual chastity, and take the true Joseph (namely, Jesus) for their Spouse: They seek after nothing vain, nor say or listen to any empty word of love, but they strive to be intimate with Jesus, their Spouse, alone. How sweet and joyful be the death of the one who during life has had no other Lover than Jesus!

In order to possess this virtue of purity, let them avoid idleness, drunkenness, suspicious companionships, and dealings with others; vain adornments of face and body; and singing to please men. They must seek and strive to please Christ alone, who is all desirable [cf. Sg 5:16], all lovable, and more beautiful than anybody else. How many have been lost through idleness and drunkenness! How many are those whom worldly companionships, familiarities, letters, or small gifts have brought to damnation!

How many consciences have been led to evil through vanity and song! Happy the one who can say with heart, lips, and deeds: *Jesus, my Love! Jesus, my Spouse! Jesus my God and my All!* How beautiful and great will be the kingdom received in the world to come by the one who in this world, for Christ's sake, imprisoned himself in the cloister—especially if he has been faithful not merely to the place of enclosure, but to the true enclosure of the heart: through the window of the senses allowing nothing vain to enter and not allowing the heart to go out through the affections, but, in all this, loving Jesus alone with all his heart and seeking in Jesus alone his delight and consolation.

CHAPTER II THE VIRTUE OF PRUDENCE

*The Virgin's **Prudence**, among her virtues the second mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most prudent*. From her prudence, in order to please Christ, she thought, spoke, and acted as follows: She thought within herself about Gabriel's manner of greeting her [cf. Lk 1:29], and she kept all these words, pondering them in her heart [cf. Lk 2:19; cf. Lk 2:51]. She fled into Egypt [cf. Mt 2:13-14] for the safety of her Son, nor did she return from there until after the death of Herod [cf. Mt 2:19-21]. Finally, she avoided the country where Archelaus reigned [cf. Mt 2:22].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, and seeking to please Christ and the Virgin, devout souls shall not lightly break silence, but they shall speak only after deliberation [cf. Jas 1:19]. Before opening their lips they should ponder in their heart what they are going to say. Let them be on their guard against all lies or foolish talk, for God will destroy all those who speak a lie [cf. Ps 5:7]. Since perfect wisdom consists in knowing how to please God [cf. 1 Thes 4:1], and avoiding all

sin by which God is offended, they must continually look into their hearts as to their observance of *The Rule of the Blessed Virgin Mary* and as to their life, whether it is pure and pleasing in the sight of Jesus. Above all, they must beware of Herod and Archelaus. It is not without spiritual significance that the Virgin fled from these two kings: because Herod personified the vice of the flesh; and Archelaus, that of ambition—two sins better overcome by flight than by combat. After the example of the Virgin, those professing the *Rule* must avoid all familiarity, and shrink from all office and positions of authority.

Moreover, they may be said to have truly fled from Herod when they are so dead to the flesh and so far from ambition that it is only by force of obedience that they accept the offices assigned to them. For the more perfect practice of this prudence of the Virgin, no one may be admitted to Mary's House except angelic persons, that is, sound in mind and body, of good reputation, true and faithful Catholics, sufficiently educated, and bound to no one by worldly ties.

CHAPTER III THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY

***Humility**, the third virtue mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most humble*, and the Lord regarded her humility. Out of this humility [cf. Lk 1:48], in order to please God, she thought, spoke, and acted in the following way: She was troubled and made fearful by Gabriel's praise, and replied with humility, saying: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say" [cf. Lk 1:38].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, members of this Order should be troubled and afraid when they are praised or placed in office. There is true humility in

the one who, when praised from outside, is sad and troubled within; while pride is found in one who is cheerful and glad to be raised to special office or receive the praise of others. Let them conduct themselves with humility in Chapters and in Council meetings, neither excusing nor defending themselves, not preferring personal opinions to those of the community, nor following their own inclinations. Let them always say: “Let it be done to me as you say,” and not as I say.

For greater perfection in the virtue of humility, they will choose one of the members of the community as Superior, whom they are to obey, to love, and revere as the vicar of the Virgin Mary, since, in fact, he holds her place. His orders should be received as coming from the lips of the Virgin; they should be greatly on their guard not to criticize these orders, but let them simply, in all things, obey him.

The Chapter of Faults is ordinarily held every Saturday. There, for their faults, salutary penances are received. Remember: For the humble souls, this kind of Chapter is a purgatory.

The Superior should punish faults with discretion, applying—as did the Good Samaritan—oil with wine [cf. Lk 10:34]. The Superior General of the Order should visit all houses once a year, since it pertains to him to devote his attention to them and to watch over their correct establishment. The Visitor, in this visitation, should specially inquire about chastity, charity, and fraternal peace, about poverty and obedience, about the Divine Office and holy prayer.

With regard to the Chapters—during which elections or removals [from offices] should be made for each house, or Province, or the whole Order—and with regard to the manner of conducting these and many other things: the sacred canons and Apostolic Constitutions already issued, or to be issued in the future, together with the Statutes passed by the Chapters themselves concerning the government of the Order, must strictly be observed.

CHAPTER IV THE VIRTUE OF FAITH

***Faith**, the fourth virtue mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most firm in faith*, and from this faith, in order to please God, she thought, spoke and acted as follows: She conceived the Son of God in faith, humility and obedience. She went up to the hill country, and, entering Zechariah's house, she greeted St. Elizabeth. Indeed, in view of all this, St. Elizabeth congratulated her: "Blessed is she who trusted the Lord's words to her would be fulfilled" [cf. Lk 1:45].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls, in order to please God, must be firm in faith [cf. 1 Pt 5:9], because without faith it is impossible to please God [cf. Heb 11:6]. Through faith, they must also conceive Jesus and climb the mount of perfection, so as to be able to do some good in Zechariah's house, that is, in the Church or in the religious institute. To truly greet St. Elizabeth is to share in the good works of the saints.

No one, therefore, can be received into this Order who is not faithful Catholic, or is suspected of heresy, or is excommunicated from the Roman Church. For how could anyone be received into this Order that is totally dedicated to pleasing God unless he is faithful and orthodox?

In order to possess the virtue of faith more perfectly, let them most diligently avoid tangling themselves in inquisitive or scrupulous ideas about faith, but rather they should simply believe that which holy Mother Church believes.

The Superiors are bound to ask the Holy Father for one of the cardinals of the Roman Church to be Protector of this Order. The members will owe obedience and reverence to him, and will be subject to the Apostolic See, to the Roman Church,

and firm in their faith, will practice the virtues of the Virgin Mary and do what she was pleased to do.

CHAPTER V THE VIRTUE OF DEVOTION

Devotion, the fifth virtue mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.

The Virgin Mary was always *most devout*, and to please God, out of her devotion, she thought, spoke, and acted in the following ways: She praised God with great attentiveness and joy, saying: “My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord” [cf. Lk 1:46]. Every year she went up to Jerusalem, and, following her Son, she listened with the greatest devotion to His preaching. She returned often to Nazareth, and finally, with the Apostles, also persevered in prayer [cf. Acts 1:14].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, and in order to please Christ, devout souls ought, above all, to learn the art and science of praising God and of praying. They must say the Divine Office according to the rules given for the Roman Breviary and every day should have a special commemoration of their patroness, the Blessed Virgin Mary, added to the regular office. Where the houses are founded under the [titles] of the Annunciation, the [Immaculate] Conception, or the Blessed Sacrament, or Our Lady of Piety, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Lady of Consolation, or Our Lady of Virtues and similar titles, they will say the Office of their patronal feast on its day and throughout the octave, and they will have its daily commemoration added to the office [of the day]. Persons not obliged to the canonical Office shall say the *Corona of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, which contains 72 *Hail Marys* and seven *Our Fathers*. All the members of the Order shall, as well, say 10 *Hail Marys* once a day, in honor of the 10 Virtues of the Mother of God, preceded by one *Our Father* for the Pope and the well-being of the Church. Further, they shall perform each

and every one of the devotions, vocal as well as mental, which are recommended to or imposed upon the men and women of the Third Order as well as the Confraternity of this holy Association. When they hear the clock strike the hour, day or night, let them say a *Hail Mary* in praise of the Virgin, and for her intercession with her Son for the peace of the holy Catholic Church. Then, once a day, they shall recite five *Our Fathers* and as many *Hails Marys* in honor of the Five Wounds of Christ and the five principal Sorrows of the Virgin Mary. Furthermore, when they hear the bells announcing the celebration of Mass, they shall say a *Hail Mary* for the priest who is to celebrate it and the people who will attend it, and they shall attend (or if they are priests, celebrate) Mass each day. They are never to speak in church, except words of prayer. Those who are not priests ordinarily will receive communion every two weeks, and on the feasts of the Lord and the Virgin Mary, on Holy Thursday, the Sundays of Advent, and on the Feast of the holy Apostles. And those who have been raised in the Order to positions of authority by the Holy See should direct brothers professing *The Rule of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Besides, all will go up to Jerusalem by devoting themselves to mental and not just vocal prayer. Superiors will endeavor to have sermons preached to those serving the Lord according to this Rule, especially in Advent and Lent and on the principal feasts throughout the year. All should listen with attention and devotion, for whoever is of God hears the words of God [cf. Jn 3:47]. To return to Nazareth is to return (their duties completed) to their cells or to chapel, so that, their duties completed, they may not spend their time uselessly and may not lose the merit they have acquired. To persevere in prayer is to be often in church and attend Divine Services. In order to possess this virtue of prayer more perfectly, the devout souls should above all love devotion to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Superiors must be vigilant that by word and example they teach the members to seek this first. When it is possible, they should arrange that constant praise of such a great Sacrament should take place for the whole octaves, for the principal devotion of the Virgin was to the Mass or the worthy Sacrament of the Altar.

CHAPTER VI THE VIRTUE OF OBEDIENCE

*The Virgin's **Obedience**, among her virtues the sixth mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most obedient*, not only to God, but for God's sake, also to men. Out of her obedience in order to please God, she thought, spoke, and acted in the following ways: In obedience she conceived God, and when the days of her purification were completed [cf. Lk 2:22], she presented her Son in the Temple, there offering a pair of turtle doves or pigeons. In obedience to Caesar, she went to Bethlehem, and there she declared her submission to the Emperor [cf. Lk 2:1, 4-5].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls, in order to please Christ, must obey God by following the Ten Commandments, must offer turtle doves by making a confession of their sins, and must offer pigeons by loving God with their whole heart. At the completion of the day, before going to bed, they must present their work to God, rendering him an account of it. For God's sake, they must therefore obey their Superiors, considering how the Virgin not only out of obedience conceived, but, while remaining in obedience to Caesar Augustus, gave birth to the Lord. Without obedience, man cannot conceive anything good or bring to completion any good work.

In order to possess this virtue of obedience more perfectly, they must have one Head elected by the Chapter, and they must firmly obey him. Since this Head takes the place of the Virgin, it is expedient for him to be a vessel of Election [cf. Acts 9:15], of virtue, and of all perfection. Concerning local Superiorships and particular elections of community officials, let them observe their own Constitutions. Further, all should remember that when they entered this Order, they renounced their own wills on account of God, and to take back their own wills and inclinations would be sacrilegious.

No one may make profession of vows before his 16th year is completed, or be received before his 14th year, or after his 40th, unless there is some very urgent reason for his reception. When they make profession, they shall say: *In the name of the most Holy Trinity: Father, and Son and Holy Spirit, and of the most worthy Mother of God Virgin Mary, I, N.N., promise, and vow to God, and the Virgin Mary and all the saints and to you, (express the title of the Superior into whose hand the profession is made) to observe all the days of my life “The Rule of the 10 Pleasures of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” living in Chastity, Obedience, and holy Poverty, conforming my conduct to this Rule, under the obligations by which those who profess it are obliged and bound in it and by it.* The one receiving the profession shall say: *If you observe these things, I promise you that you will obtain the reward from the Lord Jesus in Heaven.* And all those who attend shall respond in a loud voice: *Amen.*

CHAPTER VII THE VIRTUE OF POVERTY

*The Virgin’s **Poverty**, seventh among her virtues mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The *poorest* Virgin Mary always lived in greatest poverty, and out of this poverty, in order to please God, she thought, spoke, and acted in the following ways: She lodged in a poor place, since there was no room for her at the inn [cf. Lk 2:7]; she laid Jesus in a manger, wrapped Him in cheap swaddling clothes [cf. Lk 2:7], and nourished her Son at her breast, having no other food to give to him.

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls should love and observe this Gospel pearl of poverty, without which nearly all foundations of perfection fall to ruin. Riches and devotion: These two rarely are found in the same cloister. Therefore those professing this *Rule* should live

as pilgrims [cf. 1 Pt 2:11] in the houses of their Order; their buildings should be without splendor and simply constructed. They lay Jesus in the manger when they love frugal cells and simple bedrooms; they wrap him in swaddling clothes when they wear coarse and rough garments; and they nourish him with virginal milk when in their hearts they do not receive evil thoughts.

In order to possess this virtue more perfectly so as to please Christ, they must hold all things in common, and nothing as their own. Let them also attend to two points: First, regarding novices, under no agreement may they be received with the dishonor of simony; second, regarding possessions and income, that they be sure not to buy, receive, or seek the superfluous, nor look for books or seek after clothing or desire unusual items. Instead, let them be busy with their work so as to avoid idleness, and so to earn their food by the work of their hands, in this following the Virgin, who worked with her hands [cf. Ps 128:2; cf. 2 Thes 3:10-13]. Accordingly, let them also imitate the praiseworthy customs in spiritual and corporal works of other Orders. Everyone must take better care of the community's property than of what is given to one particular member. All, especially the sick, should be provided with necessities, each according to his need, in accord with the poverty they have professed. At the appropriate times, provisions should be made, especially of those items which at a later time may be scarce. Let the Superior beware, lest, showing more favor to one, he offend the others.

CHAPTER VIII THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

*The Virgin's **Patience**, eighth among her virtues mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most patient*, and out of her patience, in order to please God, she thought, spoke and acted as follows: She endured patiently the persecution of Herod and of the Jews; she searched for her Son sorrowfully for three days, and when she joyfully discovered him, with a maternal voice she said, "Son, why have you done this to us? You see that your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow" [cf. Lk 2:48].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls, in order to please Christ, should desire to endure something for the name of their Spouse [cf. Acts 5:41], they should rejoice when they suffer persecution unjustly because the Lord Jesus said: "By patient endurance you will save your lives" and the Apostle [Paul] says: "If only we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him" [cf. Rom 8:17; cf. 2 Tim 2:12]. Therefore, souls who endure evil in this world for Christ will receive honor in Heaven from Christ.

In order to possess this virtue of patience more perfectly, devoted souls should console themselves if it happens that God does not answer their pleas quickly or if he is not immediately found by them. Yet, they should persevere in patience seeking Jesus for three days, namely: by contrition, Confession, and satisfaction. And finally, in affectionate complaints, they should have familiar conversation with and pose questions to Christ, as the loved one would speak to his Lover; since there are many people who do not find Jesus, because they do not look for him for three days, but only for two days, inasmuch as they do not make a good and valid Confession, hiding or passing over in silence some sins. Let them therefore realize: There is no better way for a soul to be so special a friend of Jesus than to joyfully bear injuries because of him.

CHAPTER IX THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY

*The Virgin's Piety or **Charity**, ninth among her virtues mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary always had *the most ardent love and abundant piety and mercy*, and from her charity, in order to please God, she thought, spoke, and acted as follows: She nourished her Son with her own milk, saved Him from the persecution of Herod by carrying Him to Egypt [cf. Mt 2:14]; showed solicitude for her neighbor, asking for wine in Cana of Galilee [cf. Jn 2:3]; and finally, gave salutary instruction to the servants, advising and enlightening them [cf. Jn 2:5].

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls, in order to please Christ, should nourish Jesus with milk, that is, love with holy feelings none other than Christ, and seek intimacy with no one except Jesus. Let them carry Christ to Egypt, that is, meditating in times of temptation on death (which Egypt signifies). They will minister wine and instructions to their neighbor when they practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Since the members of the Order are, and are claimed to be, special and particular imitators of the Virgin Mary, even as the Virgin was full of abundant mercy, they also should be full of mercy. The Order should surpass all others in humility, piety, and purity, because the glorious Virgin delighted in these three particular virtues more than all others.

In order to possess this virtue of piety more perfectly, they should consider that the house in which there is no mutual love is the house of the devil, that Christ is not there, for he has made his home in peace [cf. Ps 76:3-4], and that they lose whatever they do without love. Let them daily among themselves bring about peaceful conversation according to the devotion shown by the Virgin, that is, let them always bring about and maintain peace among themselves,

reconciling adversaries, excusing all, and acting always as advocates in the interest of peace. Even more, they should easily forgive others their offenses, if they want God to forgive them theirs [cf. Mt 6:14-15]; neither should they see the sins of others, but always keep before their eyes their own sins [cf. Mt 7:1-5], for this is the condition for true charity and humility. It follows, then, that the person constituted as Superior must be solicitous and give no rest to his eyes until he has reconciled those who have quarreled among themselves, or who relate to one another in hatred, or who slander others or speak evil of them, because many have perished by the malicious tongue.

Lastly, let them show even more abundant and greater pity to the sick; the healthy members should serve them as they would wish to be served and reasonably helped if they themselves were sick [cf. Mt 7:12]. And they ought to consider carefully that the virtues are sisters, and that as such they should not expel Sister Charity from the house.

CHAPTER X THE VIRTUE OF COMPASSION

*The Virtue of Sorrow or **Compassion**, tenth among the virtues mentioned in the Gospel, which you should possess and cultivate in three ways, in imitation of the Virgin.*

The Virgin Mary was always *most sorrowful* and was always full of compassion for the death of her Son. In order to please God, from compassion of her Son, she thought, spoke, and acted in the following ways: She often pondered the words of Simeon: "...and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword..." [cf. Lk 2:35]. She stood near the Cross of her dying Son [cf. Jn 19:25], often contemplated His wounds, and kept visiting the stations of the Passion.

According to the example and in imitation of the Virgin, devoted souls, in order to please Christ, should always carry in their hearts a packet of myrrh. This 10th virtue, of the Cross,

is the last and final, because in it, while we live in this valley of sorrows, consists the perfection of our souls. In order to possess this grace of the Cross, or of compassion for the Crucified and for his Virgin Mother [cf. Eph 4:24], the members should consider that this grace is not found in the land of those who live a carefree life [cf. Jb 28:13]. So the member who wishes to arrive at this virtue of necessity must live a life of abstinence and sobriety, and seek consolation in his Spouse alone; and that he may reflect the death of his Spouse even in his clothing, he should mortify his body, and clothe himself with rough, cheap clothing. As regards abstinence: Members of this Order, besides the usual vigils, the Ember Days, and Lent prescribed in the Church, must fast, for their whole life, every Friday and Saturday, for the Virgin was in mourning and greatest sorrow on these two days. May those who (having first obtained permission) would wish to fast during Advent be blessed by Christ the Lord and His Virgin Mother. Regarding the habit, the following dispositions will be observed: They will be clothed in the same way and form as were Jesus and his mother. Since the devoted souls will conform, in actions and in dress, to their Spouse, Christ, and his Virgin Mother, it is necessary that both Mother and Son be reflected in their clothing, namely: by the white color in their habits and the red in the bands of the scapular of the Immaculate Conception. To this scapular, worn beneath the outer garment, will be attached an image of the Mother of God, adorned in blue. They shall wear publicly on the outside, hanging from the cincture, 10 black prayer beads, i.e., 10 *Hail Marys* in memory of the 10 virtues of the most pure Virgin.

Finally, that those who make the profession of *The Rule* according to the form given above may serve Christ and His most holy Virgin Mother with joy and peace, with secure conscience, free of any scruples and gloominess of disquiet, they should know that they are obliged under pain of mortal sin only to observe the three vows; those, on the other hand, who have made only simple vows with an oath of perseverance must observe also this oath. They are bound to

the other Good Works of the Virgin only under the sanction of punishment or discipline.

Now that we have shown all of the ways found in the Gospels in which the Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, should shine forth in you and be imitated, we conclude this *Rule* on the note of Perseverance: for also in Sacred Scripture at the end it is said that they all persevered in prayer with Mary the Mother of Jesus [cf. Acts 1:14]. Let the devoted members of the Order therefore persevere in the observance of their Rule, for whoever perseveres to the end will be saved [cf. Mt 10:22].

