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CONGREGATIO
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Du Vatican, le 8 juin 2005

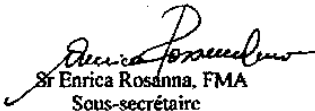
Prot. n. B 34 - 1/2005

Mon Révérend Père,

Vous avez sollicité l'approbation de quelques modifications à la Règle de Vie des Prêtres du Sacré Cœur de Betharam, votées à la majorité des 2/3 des voix par les membres du Chapitre général réuni le 23 avril 2005. Il s'agit des articles 198 (ex 155), 218 (ex 178), 231 (ex 188), 232 (ex 189), 233 (ex 190), 239 (ex 196), 251, 252 et 253 (ex 206).

Après un examen attentif de cette requête, la Congrégation pour les Instituts de vie consacrée et les Sociétés de vie apostolique approuve ces modifications. Comme convenu par téléphone le texte de l'article 198 est le suivant : *« Pour mieux gouverner la Congrégation, le Supérieur Général est aidé par le Conseil Général et le Conseil de Congrégation. Le Conseil Général est composé du Vicaire Général, du Secrétaire-Economé Général – résidant tous deux à la Maison Générale – et de deux autres conseillers ».*

Veuillez croire, mon Révérend Père, à notre fidèle dévouement dans le Seigneur.


Sr Enrica Rosanna, FMA
Sous-secrétaire


+ Piergiorgio Silvano Nesti, C.P.
Secrétaire

Révérend Père Jacky Moura
Secrétaire Général
Prêtres du Sacré Cœur de Betharam
Via Angelo Brunetti, 27
00186 ROME

NB: In this new version of the Rule of Life, the articles approved are numbered: 196, 216, 227, 228, 229, 235, 252, 253, and 254



Societas Presbyterorum
Sacratissimi Cordis Jesu
BETHARRAM

+
F V D

Superior general
Prot. Nr.040/EN/08

Subject: Declaration for the adoption of the Rule of Life 2008 *ad experimentum* from November 1st 2008 up to the General Chapter in 2011

Considering that:

1. ...the General Chapter 2005 has modified and approved the new articles of the Rule of Life concerning the Government, in view of the re-organisation of the Congregation into Regions and that the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life has confirmed that they are valid;
2. ...the Council of the Congregation in 2007, at the request of the General Chapter (nr. 52), modified a few articles concerning the formation of the Regional and General Chapters;
3. ...the commission for the revision of the Rule of Life, requested by the General Chapter, completed its work in January 2008 and presented it to the experts of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life, who have expressed a favourable opinion;
4. ...during the past two years of the Commission's work for the revision of the Rule of Life have been circulating several versions, in order to stir up the interest of the highest number of religious and their participation in this revision work, and considered that these different versions can cause confusion because of the various numeration;
5. ...the full legal value of the Rule of Life will have to be approved by the General Chapter 2011;
6. ...I have consulted all the members of the Council of the Congregation, in conformity with article 49 of the General Chapter 2005,

I declare:

that the version 2008 of the Rule of Life will be the proper law of the whole Congregation ad experimentum from November 1st 2008 until the next General Chapter in 2011.

I am enclosing the original version 2008 of the Rule of Life, in French, for the attention of all the Provincials and Vice Provincials, who will pass on to all the religious of their (Vice) Province the translation of the Rule of Life into the respective languages.

Rome, October 15th 2008

Jean-Luc Morin scj
General Secretary



Gaspar Fernández Pérez scj
Superior general

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THE FOUNDER'S MANIFESTO

It has pleased God to make Himself loved, and while we were still his enemies. He loved us so much that he sent his only Son: He gave Him to us to be the magnet which draws us to divine love, to be the model which shows us the dynamic of love, and to be the means of attaining divine love: the Son of God became man.

At the moment He entered the world animated by the Spirit of God His Father, He gave Himself up to all God's designs for Him; He took the place of all victims; He said: 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure'. Then I said: 'Here I am, I have come to do your will, O my God.'¹

Jesus began His life's work by this great act which he never discontinued. From this moment onward he remained always in a state of sacrificial offering, annihilated before God. He did nothing on His own; His actions were always directed by the Spirit of God; His disposition was one of constant abandonment to the orders of God, to suffer and do whatever He wanted: "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross"².

This is how God loves us: this is how Jesus Christ our Lord and creator became an indescribable attraction for our hearts, a perfect model and an all-powerful help. But we human beings are cold before God! Even among the priests there are very few who say as their divine master did: 'Here I am, Yes Father!'

At the sight of this marvellous spectacle, the priests of Betharram felt drawn to dedicate themselves to imitating Jesus, humble and obedient, and to working wholeheartedly to bring the same happiness to others, under the protection of Mary; she was always disposed to do what God wanted and was always submissive to what God did.

(Preface to the Constitutions of 1838)

They have taken St Michael and St. Ignatius Loyola as their patrons.

¹ Heb 10.6-7

² Phil 2.8

I THE CHARISM OF THE FAMILY OF BETHARRAM

« Why is our Society called The Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus? Because it is specially united to the Divine Heart saying to His Father: «Here I am» so that we are His co-operators for the salvation of souls. Because it is committed to imitate Our Lord in a particular way; because it forms its members to live in a spirit of humility and love with one another, following the example of the disciples of Our Lord in order to become like this divine saviour especially in his obedience to the father and in his zeal for souls. »³

« Oh! If our whole being, body and soul had only one movement, one generous impulse to place ourselves under the guidance of the Spirit of Love, saying without ceasing: Here I am: Ecce Venio! »⁴

1- The Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram, founded by Saint Michael Garicoits is an apostolic clerical religious Institute. It is composed of religious, priests and brothers, called to live to-day the Gospel of Jesus Christ by their life of prayer, community life and apostolic activity for the salvation of the world.

2- Through Saint Michael Garicoits the Holy Spirit has raised up in the Church a religious family whose particular mission is to reproduce and to manifest the impulse of the Incarnate Word saying to His Father: Ecce Venio, and surrendering Himself to all His wishes for the redemption of mankind.

«this heart calling from within, from whom we came and to whom we owe and give thanks for everything is the foundation on which we must build without ceasing and be raised ever higher»⁵

³ DS 44 « all quotations written like this are from St.Michael unless otherwise indicated»

⁴ DS 146

⁵ Letter of Fr. Etchécopar to Fr. Magendie, of Bethlehem, 12th December 1892

3- Through saint Michael Garicoits, the Holy Spirit has also called lay people to live their baptismal vocation, enlightened by the charism of the Incarnation. The sharing of this spirituality with the laity who drink from the same source, leads us religious and laity in the same family of Betharram, to a mutual enrichment and to better live the dynamic of the Charism.

4- The Spirit of the Congregation expresses itself:

- In a spiritual life of which the source and secret are the contemplation of the mystery of Christ in that dynamic of his heart, simultaneously offered to the Father to glorify Him and offered to humanity to save them.
- In a life of personal consecration through the vows
- In a community life in which we manifest «*the sentiments of charity, humility, gentleness, obedience, devotedness contained in that act of the Sacred Heart: Ecce Venio!*»⁶.
- In an apostolic life which strives to be always fully available for the service of the Church.

Spiritual Life

5- ‘God first loved us’ (1 John 4. 19) and He calls us to love Him in Christ. By the vows we pledge ourselves to follow Christ more closely and to unite ourselves more deeply to the mystery of His offering which is:

- love for His Father, in absolute fidelity to His will for salvation (John 5.30);
- service of humanity, giving oneself totally ‘in order that they may have life’ (John 10. 10).

Consecration

⁶ DS 44

6- In choosing us Jesus leads us to an experience of the love of God and sets us apart for Him. We respond to the love that God has for us by consecrating our life to Him. To Him who gave his life for us and to whom we are configured by baptism, we give ourselves more fully by the three vows of chastity poverty and obedience which helps us share in the style of life that He chose..

‘By this <configuration> to the mystery of Christ, the consecrated life models in a special way the Trinitarian pattern that characterise the whole Christian life, recognising with admiration the sublime beauty of Father Son and Holy Spirit and witnessing with joy its loving outreach to the whole of humanity.’⁷

Community Life

7- The call to follow Christ is for us a call to follow in community where he lives among our brethren. By our docility to the «law of Charity that the Holy Spirit habitually engraves in our hearts»⁸ (D.S. 342), we give evidence of a fraternal evangelical life and we proclaim the benevolent will of God to bring all things together in Christ (Eph. 1. 10; John 11.52).

8- At the heart of our community life, the celebration of the Eucharist represents and brings about the unity of brethren forming one single body in Christ (1 Cor 10.17)

«Faithful to our motto, instantly, unreservedly, irrevocably, let us shirk no sacrifice, no effort to respond to this wish, to this ardent desire of our Lord: Unum sint!⁹ Here below as in heaven»¹⁰

Apostolic Life

9- According to the intention of our Founder, the Congregation is a Religious Institute of Apostolic Life. This continues the action of

⁷ VC 16, d

⁸ D.S. 342,

⁹ That they all may be one

¹⁰ D.S. 171

the Incarnate Word offering Himself to the Father to accomplish his will of salvation. The Spirit of our vocation and our mission is « *as the spirit of Our Saviour, a spirit of gentleness, humility and devotion,, to gently draw sinners to penance and to imitate Him* »¹¹

10- To follow Christ is to pledge oneself to serve Him in the people of to-day (Mt 25. 34-40). Urged on by the charity of Christ (2Cor 5. 14) we enter into God's plan of salvation.

*« What do we preach about our Lord? Surely compassion above all: in his Incarnation, childhood, and Passion, in his Sacred Heart, his whole person, internally and externally, in his words and in his looks .. What should be the first characteristic of our own spiritual life? Christian compassion. Without this compassion we will never possess the spirit of generosity with which we should serve our God. It is as essential to our interior life and our relations with God as it is to our exterior life and our relationships with people. »*¹²

Our apostolic life takes its dynamic from our love of Christ; it belongs to the essence of our religious life.

11- Each day, the cry of the Incarnate Word: 'Father, Here I am!' will bring us face to face with our vocation and our mission among the People of God journeying towards the Father. How blessed to live both our vocation and our mission as witnesses of Jesus Christ source of our joy « *to bring to others that same joy.* »¹³

12- At the shrine of Our Lady of Betharram St Michael Garicoits received inspiration to found a new religious family ¹⁴ Like him we shall find in the Virgin Mary a wonderful model of a life consecrated to God, «*always willing to submit to all God did.* »

¹¹ MS 203

¹² MS 200

¹³ DS 41

¹⁴ DS 41

II OUR SACRED MISSION

« Oh! If only we could gather together a society of priests having for their programme the very programme of the Heart of Jesus, eternal priest, servant of the heavenly Father: absolute generosity and obedience, perfect simplicity, unchanging gentleness! These priests would be a real mobile camp of picked soldiers, ready to hasten at the first signal of their leaders, even and above all to the most difficult ministries, unwanted by others! »¹⁵

13- Religious of the Sacred Heart, we have for our programme the very programme of the Heart of Jesus the eternal priest and servant of the Father. Our apostolic life will be the continuation of the impulse of the Incarnate Word saying to His Father: Here I am, for the salvation of man.

Following the Incarnate Word, whom "the Father consecrated and sent into the world" (John 10.36), we in our turn are consecrated and sent to be in the world, by our whole religious life, a sign proclaiming Jesus Christ.

‘religious life will be all the more apostolic as the gift of oneself to the Lord becomes more interior and the common life more fraternal and the commitment to the specific mission of the institute become more ardent.’¹⁶

14- The Church is in the world a sign of Jesus Christ. As her sons we share her mission. In her we must work «*instantly and unreservedly*» to assure ‘the sacred service of the Gospel’ (Rom 15.16).

We wish to perform this service with the utmost fidelity to:

- the Spirit of God active in the heart of every man,
- the Church who, through the Congregation, sends us,
- humanity, our brothers and sisters who call us.

¹⁵ DS 43

¹⁶ VC 72 d

15- God alone is the Saviour through His Son Jesus Christ and by the gift of the Holy Spirit. « In the depths of our hearts where he fosters a ceaseless fermentation» (D.S. 144), God seeks to reveal His name and His face. Our mission is to reveal this face of God by the witness of our lives and the proclamation of the Gospel.

«The aim of our Society is not so much to preach, hear confessions or teach, etc.. as to form men well disposed to perform these ministries worthily when the bishop or leader of the Society asks them. The object of the Society is then to train and form these ministers so perfectly that at the first signal of the will of their bishop or superior they can be worthily chosen to work for the salvation of souls.»¹⁷

16- We ought therefore to be «*a mobile camp, of auxiliaries, unconstrained by any particular work, ready to go anywhere...*»¹⁸, «*ready to run wherever we are called...*»¹⁹. Our mission thus received is the concern of everyone in the community, and the community is enriched by sharing in these missionary experiences.

‘When we start again from Christ the spirituality of communion becomes a solid and robust spirituality of action of the disciples and apostles of the Kingdom. For the consecrated life, that means to commit oneself to the service of one’s brothers, in whom we see the face of Christ. In the exercise of this apostolic mission, being and doing are inseparable because the mystery of Christ constitutes the very basis of all pastoral activity’.²⁰

17- We express our fidelity to the church by being entirely available for her service. We respond within the limits of our possibilities, to the various calls of men, when the Pope and the Bishops, by virtue of their mission, make them known to us, at each stage in the history of our Congregation.

¹⁷ MS 339

¹⁸ DS 233

¹⁹ DS 43

²⁰ RdC 34

Our apostolic activity is guided only by the assessment of what is most useful and the desire to respond to the most urgent appeals among the various forms of poverty. We work with all those who, in the missionary effort of the Church, are responsible for evangelisation: bishops, diocesan priests, religious, lay people.²¹

We set our hearts on becoming «men available, apt, ready to go forward at the first signal of our superiors»,²² docile instruments in the hands of God for His work of salvation.

‘Oh the joy of Poverty! The joy of sacrifice! The joy of the Holy Spirit! With these dispositions, even the hardest work, the obscurest, the most unrewarding is easy: what does it matter whether or not we succeed in the sight of men; whether or not we enjoy their good opinion, their approval or rewards or temporal well being; all that is useful enough as a means of motivation but at root it gives us no merit in God’s sight, nor does it give us peace at the bottom of our hearts. But with an inner grace we can run, we can jump over thorns and thistles.’²³

18- Called to co-operate with the Son of God who has become one of us to save us all, we wish to share in the ‘joys and the hopes, the sadness and the anguish of men.’²⁴ Thus, we remain sensitive to the needs of our contemporaries being in close and humble contact with their lives.

‘Turning away from oneself and towards the other, is the movement of the Incarnation. It is found at all levels, personal, communitarian, and ecclesial, of a spiritual life inseparable from mission. It is the very basis of our identity as Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: to be ourselves we must be mystics of the Incarnation. The first meaning of obedience is to listen. For this we need time silence and space to seek God in our lives, to see all things as «sacraments of his will» (cf. DS 205). This is the precondition for living obedience in an incarnate fashion.’²⁵

²¹ CIC 678 § 1

²² Cf. MS 339

²³ Letter of Fr. Etchépar to Fr. Magendie, & Fathers & Brothers in America, Bethlehem, 12 .12.92.

²⁴ GS 1

²⁵ Acts of the General Chapter 1999

We are conscious of the cultural, social and religious values in the different human spheres, and seek patiently to recognise in them the signs of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. (Cf. Col 1.27).

19- As servants of the Gospel, we are especially called to be faithful servants.

To this end the whole Congregation, by its general and provincial chapters, strives to discover in what measure the choice, the orientations and the methods of our various ministries remain adapted to the mission that the Church assigns to us.

Each community periodically questions itself as to the validity of the apostolic work which has been entrusted to it.

Thus each religious can be available, under the authority of his superiors, to attempt only adaptation or research based on the needs of valid apostolate.

20- If for everyone, being an apostle means «we always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body» (2 Cor4. 10), our brethren who are ill complete in a particular way in their flesh 'what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the Church' (Col. 1.24).

With our Lady at the foot of the Cross, they thus co-operate very closely in the redemption of humanity.



John 19.26-27

III CONSECRATION THROUGH THE VOWS

« The generous soul, at the invitation and the desire that comes from god strives towards Him, overcoming any obstacles that separate him, by the vows of Poverty, Chastity and obedience, to unite himself more perfectly to Him through love, multiplying and reinforcing the links that already exist between them. »²⁶

« Jesus Christ is our mirror our example that we must never lose sight of.. His life, His interior and exterior way of life. Let us compare ourselves continually with Him; is my heart like His? at the present moment what would He do? Yes He alone is my life»²⁷

21- ‘Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect’ (Mt 5. 48).

As children of God, all the baptised are called ‘to the fullness of the Christian life and to perfect charity’²⁸, following in the footsteps of Christ, ‘the divine teacher and model of all perfection’²⁹

‘The evangelical counsels, through which Christ invites some people to share in his experience as a chaste, poor and obedient human being, demand and manifest to him that they accept the explicit desire of being totally modelled on him... ‘³⁰

22- By the practice of the vows, we follow freely and imitate more closely Christ ‘humbled and obedient to death’ (Phil 2.7-8).

He urges us :

- to remain chaste for the sake of the Kingdom (Mt. 19.12).
- to leave all for his name's sake (Mt. 19.29).
- to give ourselves completely to the will of the Father who saves all humanity

Christ becomes for us the supreme law and the reason for our life: ‘for me to live is Christ’ (Phil. 1.21) ‘for whose sake I have lost all things’ (Phil. 3.8).

²⁶ DS 278

²⁷ DS 341

²⁸ LG 40

²⁹ LG 40

³⁰ VC 18 c

23- The three vows have a community dimension: together we live as brothers in a real love, we share our goods, and we are obedient to the will of God. We are consecrated for mission, given to the Lord and the things of God for his glory and the salvation of humanity.

24- This call of God demands our daily response: ‘to love above all else Him who first loved us’³¹, to love our neighbour and to co-operate with all our strength in the work of redemption. This love will animate and guide the daily practice of our vows³²

25- The three vows pledge us to a state of life which is, in the Church, an efficacious sign of heavenly realities. Chaste, poor and obedient we bear witness that God is our sole love, our unique wealth, our only Lord. We represent in

‘the Church the way of life that the Son of God has embraced on coming into the world to follow His Father's will and which He gives to his disciples who are following him’³³.

26- At the cost of much suffering, Saint Michael Garicoits insisted that our life be consecrated by the three vows :

*« What feelings this divine initiative should inspire in us! What love, what respect for the Congregation! What awe at having being called to it! What a joyous and constant joyous task to work for its welfare and to form men worthy of her, ready willing and committed, men ready for anything, free for anything completely open to the pathway of truth. »*³⁴

27- He gave us as a pathway the programme of the Heart of Jesus: *« motives of love, humility, gentleness, obedience, and devotion, contained in this first act of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: Here I am. »*³⁵

In this way we become like our founder, more and more suitable, free and available to respond to that love with which god loves us.

³¹ PC 6 ; cf. 1 Jn 4. 19

³² Cf. PC 6

³³ LG 44

³⁴ DS 272

³⁵ DS 276

1 – CONSECRATED CHASTITY

« *The Lord has spoken to me, and in spite of my unworthiness ... I ran towards my Lord, I gave him everything, my soul, my body ..; Now I am under the sweet rule of the vow of perpetual chastity. What happiness! Oh if only the world could understand these feelings. But no, the wisdom of God is folly to men, and a stumbling block..* »³⁶

28- Jesus the word incarnate shows us that ‘*God is love*’ (1 John 4.8). At the heart of the Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit is a communion of love, both giving and receiving. The Word of God also reveals to us that God created man in his own image: ‘*in the image of God he made them male and female... And God saw it was good*’ (Gen 1.27ff).

29- Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, born of a virgin, lived in the heart of a family; he gave marriage its rightful dignity (cf. *John 2; Mt 19, 1-9*); he met both men and women without distinction; he gave his life on the cross for everyone, showing that ‘*there is no greater love than to lay down ones life for ones friends*’ (*John 15.13*). He chose to live a life of virginity, and he called certain of his disciples to follow him on this path, he valued as a *great gift of grace*³⁷ chastity chosen and lived by the celibate ‘*for the sake of the Kingdom*’ (*Mt 19.11-12*).

30- Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, drawn by the beauty of the chaste love of Jesus, we freely choose chaste celibacy to be totally patterned on Christ. We find our joy in making ‘*an unconditional gift of our lives*’ to God ‘*which is a real sacrifice*’³⁸, lived through love.

31- The total and exclusive gift of our self is a response to the love that God shows to us (cf. *John 15.15*), in a desire for a deeper relationship of love ‘*as an expression of nuptial love for the Redeemer himself.*’³⁹ By this vow we consecrate our whole life to the Lord because we have been ‘*captivated by the beauty and goodness of the Lord*’⁴⁰ .

³⁶ Letter of Fr. Etchécopar to his brother Évariste, in the College of Saint-Palais, 24 June 1852.

³⁷ Cf. PC 12

³⁸ VC 17

³⁹ Jean- Paul II, *Redemptionis Donum*, apostolic exhortation to religious on their consecration in the light of the mystery of the redemption, 24 march 1984, n° 11

⁴⁰ VC 104

32- The Spirit forms in us the feelings of the Son for the Father; he motivates us to renew each day the gift of ourselves to the Father and our brothers. For that we live chastity as a gift for which we ask the Father daily, for all perfect gifts come from him.. (James 1.17)

- We love god above all things and we devote our whole energies in the service of the people to whom he has sent us
- We freely choose to give up marriage, which we will always hold as a privileged sign of the love of Christ for his church (Eph 5.32).
- We live in complete abstinence and in total honesty.
- We adopt a lifestyle of relations based on love, respect and clarity
- We consider our prayer-life as a heart-to-heart sharing with the Lord in a deep loving intimacy engaging our whole affectivity.

33- Far from turning us in on ourselves, our consecrated chastity inflames our heart with «*a generous spirit which puts us under the guidance of the Spirit of love*»⁴¹; so that with «*our hearts mellowed with a holy happiness running and leaping in the service of God*»⁴², we cherish each individual as a child of God. With our heart open to their hopes and sufferings we exercise towards them a genuine spiritual fatherhood. (cf. Gal 4.19).

‘The consecrated person will feel capable of a radical all-embracing love that gives him strength to master himself and the discipline necessary to avoid becoming dominated by his feelings and instincts. Thus consecrated chastity will appear as an experience of joy and freedom’⁴³

34- As a sign of the fidelity of the church to ‘Christ its spouse, love lived in consecrated chastity to God, following the virgin of Nazareth, is the source of a special spiritual fecundity: it is the source of maternity in the Holy Spirit»⁴⁴. This love offered also contributes to the enrichment and growth of the church, which is a mystery of missionary communion in many vocations, charisms and services.

⁴¹ DS 146

⁴² DS 156

⁴³ VC 88

⁴⁴ John-Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, encyclical on the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the church on the road, 25 March 1987, n° 43, § 3

35- Consecrated chastity also has a community dimension. Jesus called each of us; he called us together to live fraternally together according to the gospel⁴⁵. By our active response, we gain an affective liberty, and can love according to our calling.

As brothers responsible for one another, helping one another live in love as Jesus taught us: we seek « the good of the other, with the loving watchfulness of God himself »⁴⁶. The fraternal climate of the community will also help us to mature on the effective and spiritual levels in order to realise our mission as consecrated people.

36- Sufficient maturity and an affective balance are necessary in order to be fully developed; fraternal life in community demands a personal autonomy to overcome the conflicts inherent in the common life, a capacity to live a healthy solitude with attention to ones brethren⁴⁷.

37- In order to live happily our consecration to the Lord in fraternal life and to « *use all means to procure the same happiness for others* »⁴⁸, it presumes « *that both a cordial respect and a respectful cordiality* »⁴⁹, lived in community, make us stronger, bolder and more creative in our fidelity. Dialogue, friendship and the sharing of the experience of God will help us to live chastely.

38- Our consecrated chastity takes on a prophetic dimension before a hedonistic culture. It witnesses to ‘the power of the love of God in the fragility of the human condition’⁵⁰. Our faithful witness to chastity for the sake of the Kingdom is a spur offered to all: the young, husbands, wives, families, singles, inviting them to be faithful to their own vocation. Conversely they also challenge us to a similar fidelity.

⁴⁵ Cf. VFC 12

⁴⁶ Cf. VFC 37, §4

⁴⁷ Cf. VFC 37

⁴⁸ DS 41

⁴⁹ DS 166

⁵⁰ VC 88

39- Our consecrated chastity helps us grow in freedom and responsibility; we are not polarised by success nor paralysed by failure: « *the success depends on God* »⁵¹. Taking into account the real aptitudes each individual encourages the blossoming of the gift of joyous love.

A fraternal accompaniment, assured in particular by superiors, allows us to discover personal possibilities undreamt of, and live for a mission beyond human understanding. We are configured to Christ when we put our whole heart into the mission entrusted to us, and the tasks of community service.

40- To live in love after the example of Christ we renew daily the offering of our lives; thus we show to the Lord a '*a light of true love*'⁵². Aware of our fragility & weakness, with clarity and serenity we correct and overcome '*the tendencies of a human nature marked by sin*'⁵³, to grow in the imitation of Jesus '*gentle and humble of heart*' (Mt 11.29).

In the sacrament of reconciliation we celebrate the love of God the saviour: « *Old heart, put it in the heart of Jesus! Take its place, O heart of Jesus* »⁵⁴.

41- In the paschal mystery, the way of the cross is the necessary path to the resurrection: a discipline is always indispensable to overcome temptations, to progress in fidelity and offer our lives to the furthest limits, through love (cf. *John 15.13*) : '*virginity enlarges the heart to be like the heart of Jesus and enables it to love as he has loved*'⁵⁵.

The discipline of life coupled with spiritual combat allows us to fill our hearts with a love that is free and unselfish, preoccupied with the human and Christian growth of those around us. Thus we appropriate the pathways of mission: « *from a generous heart and a willing soul* »⁵⁶. An authentic spiritual life, founded on the Eucharist, sacrament of love, nourished by daily prayer, can alone increase our intimacy with Christ, without which a joyful perseverance is impossible.

⁵¹ DS 235

⁵² DS 93

⁵³ VC 38

⁵⁴ DS 48

⁵⁵ RdC 22

⁵⁶ DS 296

42- We consecrate our whole life to the Lord in the heart of the church, of which Mary virgin and mother is the perfect model.⁵⁷ She is the witness that fertility is not simply physical :

*« in the mystery of the Incarnation, how powerful was the action of God in the heart of the virgin »*⁵⁸. She is *« the sublime model of consecration to the Father, of union with the Son and of docility to the spirit »*⁵⁹ .

43- The choice of virginity is *« like an anticipation of the world to come »*⁶⁰ towards which the whole church is journeying.. We witness to this hope ; chastity engages us in an active expectation, freeing us from desire for pleasure, and aiming for a life given freely for others.



Give everything to the poor then come follow me (Mark 10.21)

⁵⁷ Cf. LG 63

⁵⁸ DS 134

⁵⁹ VC 28

⁶⁰ VC 26

2- EVANGELICAL POVERTY

« O God I open myself in spirit and heart, ready for you to do with me as you wish. » «This is what all Christians are committed to, but humble religious rejoice in being so exposed, dead to this world's riches and incapable of possessing them. Blessed is the vulnerability that God gives. »⁶¹ « I possess nothing...I have only the breviary, the bible and my theology. I have never been more happy than today. »⁶²

‘Our great God didn’t come down to this crib which I have just visited for you other than by an act of infinite love; it was similarly through a burning love that our founder and his bold companions accepted the mission in America : rich in love for souls, like the divine Master, they were poor as he became poor, that we may be rich.’⁶³

44- The word became flesh to show us the love of God lived in the heart of the Trinity. In coming into the world Christ ‘though rich made himself poor to make us rich through his poverty.’ (2 Cor 8.9); so he showed the generosity of the love lived by the three Persons. This generosity and poverty generate our happiness, and model our life given and shared. We wish ‘to make visible the marvellous works of God in the fragile humanity of the people he has called’⁶⁴.

45- In his Incarnation, Christ chose the path of self-emptying and self sacrifice: ‘he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant’ (Phil 2.7)

All his life he was faithful to this first commitment: ‘The Son of man has nowhere to lay his head’ (Luke 9.58). He approached the poor and the little ones and brought them the good news of his Father (cf. Mt 11.25-28). He proclaimed that the poor were blessed (cf. Mt 5.3) and wanted his disciples to imitate this lifestyle of poverty : ‘Do not carry a purse a bag or even sandals...’ (Luke 10.4)

⁶¹ MS 60

⁶² Corresp. 1, 96

⁶³ Letter of Fr. Etchécopar to P. Magendie, and the Fathers & Brothers in America, Bethlehem 12.12.92.

⁶⁴ VC 20

Saint Michael Garicoits was fascinated by this self-abasement: « *The Word Incarnate, that is God, offered and devoted. From the heart of the Father to the heart of Mary .. What a leap! Leaving the heavens he went to the lowest of places, the most unpleasant in the world: to a stable!* »⁶⁵.

46- Following the example of our founder, we religious of the Sacred heart of Jesus wish to imitate Christ our master, « *Jesus humbled* »⁶⁶, to make our own his feelings of humility and to embrace evangelical poverty. We commit to become ‘poor of heart’, recognising only God our Father as our ‘true riches’⁶⁷, the source of our happiness. *For this we leave all for the sake of the kingdom* (cf. Luke 18.28-30).

47- Poverty according to the Gospel makes us men attached to the poor Jesus, trusting in Providence and detached from all ties of possession; thus with a greater inner freedom we become free ‘to announce the good news to the poor’ (Luke 4.18). We welcome all people especially the most poor, ‘with the same heart of Christ’⁶⁸.

48- Poor in heart we stay close to, and in solidarity with the poor allowing that we may be challenged and evangelised by them. We opt to labour to earn our living. We accept dependence and on occasion hardship. We put our time and our talents entirely at the service of others. We try to live a simple lifestyle like that of the most humble in our area.

49- By the vow of poverty, as religious we commit to possessing nothing: we hold in common our material wealth as well as our human and spiritual riches. The holding of all things in common obliges us to depend on the superior for their use. We give account to him for the money and goods at our disposal. This *dependence* cannot be reduced to just permission asked and granted. It is lived through a loyalty that avoids injuring one’s brothers or causing scandal. It helps foster a climate of fraternity.

⁶⁵ DS 43

⁶⁶ DS 41

⁶⁷ VC 21

⁶⁸ PC 13

We use in good conscience the goods of the community in the measure that they are necessary for our mission. Our fraternal life is characterised by sobriety and simplicity, self-denial and hospitality.

50- Everything that a religious acquires by virtue of his labour or his skills, everything given to him, belongs to the Congregation. This includes even pensions, retreats stipends and insurances ... «In imitating his poverty the consecrated person recognises Christ as Son who receives everything from the father gives to him everything out of love.»⁶⁹

51- In a fraternal community the practice of the vow of poverty demands ‘humility, simplicity, recognition of the gifts of others, respect for hidden sacrifice, the valuing of the lowliest, the devotion to causes unrewarding and unfashionable ...’⁷⁰. ‘We avoid all appearance of luxury, excessive gain and hoarding of wealth’⁷¹

52- ‘No one called anything his own, but between them everything was held in common’ (Acts 4.32). To the witness of each of its members the community adds its own witness to poverty: the holding of wealth in common, the sharing with other communities and the solidarity with the poorest. Thus we anticipate the Kingdom of God where all things will be in common between the children of the one Father.

Holding all goods in common is a sign for the church and the world. It is to be lived between communities, vicariates, regions, as an authentic witness of love which unites the members of the same family. It is considered as a natural witness of love that unites the members of the same body.

⁶⁹ VC 16, c; cf. *Jn* 17, 7-10

⁷⁰ VFC 44

⁷¹ PC 13

53- Attentive to the world in which we live we examine ourselves in the community about the reality of our poverty and the effective value of our witness.. We also take part in actions of solidarity for a greater justice in the world ⁷².

We remain vigilant to give a witness to social justice regarding a just salary for employees of our communities and for the co-workers of our enterprises.

We also exercise justice in the administration of all the responsibilities relating to our properties.

54- A religious will conserve his 'inherited goods' and remain open to receiving more. Before first religious profession, he will concede the administration usage and interest to one or more persons of his choice.

Before final profession the religious will dispose, by a will, valid in both civil (and Church) law, of the goods he possesses at that moment and of those he could expect to receive in the future. A copy of this document is sent in a sealed envelope to the Regional Superior. Permission to change his will and the transfer of the administration of his goods, may for a just cause be granted by the Regional Superior⁷³.

55- In a spirit of self-emptying and a more total abandonment to the hands of God, and for the better service of Christ in the church, a finally professed member (of at least 40 years of age) can request in total freedom and with full knowledge to definitively renounce all personal benefits present and future.

The request is made in writing and can be authorised by the superior general, who each time will establish the conditions.⁷⁴. This act of transfer will be made according to the prescriptions of civil law, and a copy will be sent to the regional secretariat.

⁷² Cf. VC 89 & 90

⁷³ Cf. CIC 668, 2

⁷⁴ Cf. CIC 668 § 4

3 - BETHARRAMITE OBEDIENCE

«What is the most perfect motive, which implies all the others? The adorable will of God. Such was the motive of every act of our Lord Jesus Christ,. My food, the used to say, is to do the will of Him who sent me and I always do what is pleasing to Him »⁷⁵

«God from whom all good things come asks for instruments emptied of everything especially of self, whole-heartedly given to the action of the holy spirit, to the laws of love and charity which he is wont to inscribe within them, and his great law of obedience following the example of Our Lord. .. Everything on our conscious conduct must respond to the Holy Spirit and to our superiors: Here I am, with out hesitation, without reservation, without looking back, out of love for the will of my God! »⁷⁶

56- At the heart of the Trinity, the three divine Persons live in trust, communion and co-responsibility which govern their relationships of love. Our consecrated life is a ‘reflection in this world of the relationships of love within the three divine persons’⁷⁷.

57- The life of Jesus, Word Incarnate, is an act of obedience to the love of his Father :

« At the moment He entered the world animated by the Spirit of God His Father, He gave Himself up to all God's designs for Him.. »

« Here I am, I come to do your will My God. He began this course from which he never deviated. From this moment he lived always in the state of victim, sacrificed before God, never doing anything of himself but always through the Spirit of god, constantly abandoned to God commands, to suffer and to do what he wished: he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Phil 2.8). »

This is the picture of Jesus « humbled and obedient », which came to overwhelm Saint Michael Garicoits and which he transmitted to us in the founder’s text, the manifesto of 1838.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ DS 92-93

⁷⁶ DS 45-46

⁷⁷ VC 21 §4

⁷⁸ Cf. DS 40

58- For St Michael Garicoits, what mattered was obedience « out of love rather than any other motive »⁷⁹, from the moment of his conception till his death : « In his death on the cross he accomplished the gift of God to himself, in which he gave himself to lift up and save humanity – this is love in its most radical form. »⁸⁰. To obey, is to choose to offer oneself in love, to renounce self, as Jesus did in Gethsemane: ‘Abba, Father, to you all things are possible, take this cup away from me! But not as I will but what you will be done!’ (Mark 14.36).

59- Our founder set before us the same vision as the basis of our own obedience. With him we wish to know love and follow, « Jesus humble and obedient » who devoted his life to the will of his Father: « Our Lord obeyed but gladly; he gave his life, but freely. No one could take it from him; he could take it up and lay it down as he wished. What willing obedience, even to death, death on a cross! »⁸¹ Our aim is to turn totally towards Christ, to place « our life wholly in his hands so that he will make it a masterpiece according to God’s plan. »⁸² Obedience out of love, contrasts with a « me first »⁸³ attitude.

In obeying through love our life displays and reproduces the generosity of spirit of the word Incarnate in his offering to his Father: « here I am without delay, without reserve, without looking back, out of love of the will of my God! »⁸⁴

60- Filial obedience through love is the soul of our Congregation: « What should mark us is the spirit of obedience ... If obedience is missing then so is our whole *la raison d’être*. »⁸⁵ By our religious profession we offer our will as a total gift of ourselves to God the, taking as our model the obedient heart of Christ, passionate to realise the will of his Father: « My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to accomplish his works » (John 4.34). We long to share in the love of the heart of Christ for the saving of the world.

⁷⁹ DS 209

⁸⁰ DCE 12

⁸¹ DS 200

⁸² RdC 22, §6

⁸³ DS 83

⁸⁴ DS 46

⁸⁵ DS 196-197

61- Without the «*Interior Master*», our rules appear as constraints that diminish human freedom and responsibility; «*but under the direction of the Holy Spirit they become like our eighth sacrament.*»⁸⁶

Each day we ask in prayer that the Holy Spirit bring to birth in our hearts «*a fire of true love.*»⁸⁷

62- By the vow of obedience,

- we seek, in community and with our superiors, the will of God
- we make use of all our gifts in order to realise with the support of our brethren this will of God, as it is expressed in the community and apostolic project
- we submit ourselves in faith to our superiors as they take decisions according to the Rule of Life and the options defined together for the common good
- we obey our sovereign pontiff as our supreme superior⁸⁸, as well as the directions of the bishops of the church with whom we live our mission.

63- Our vocation is to put ourselves at the service of mission in a free and responsible manner learning how to pass from what please us to what pleases the Father. (John 8.29).

‘There is no contradiction between obedience and freedom. In effect, the attitude of the Son reveals that the mystery of human freedom is the path of obedience to the will of the Father and that the mystery of obedience is the path of the gradual victory of true freedom.’⁸⁹

64- We live our religious obedience in the perspective of the mystery of the Incarnation. United with Christ by the offering of our whole selves in love we become free, in giving up even our most legitimate aspirations by fidelity to the mission of the community. Thus we truly become disciples of Jesus «*who walk with hearts quickened by a holy joy, running and leaping in the service of God.*»⁹⁰

⁸⁶ DS 221

⁸⁷ DS 93

⁸⁸ Cf. CIC 590 §3

⁸⁹ VC 91

⁹⁰ DS 156

65- Evangelical obedience leads to the growth of the person and to the development of all his human capabilities. It requires a clear intelligence for a good discernment, a firm desire to live faithfully, and a heart totally directed towards mission. It calls for grace to recognise the call of God in the happenings of one's life and to respond positively in faith to our superiors.

66- We live our religious consecration at the heart of a community: this is the « *privileged location in which to discern and welcome the will of God, and to advance together in unity of heart and spirit* »⁹¹. The religious of the community, the vicariate and the region will willingly support all genuine progress towards obedience in their brothers.

67- « *In the service of God for the common good* » (Rom 13.4), the superior animates the community; he encourages unity and fraternal life around the charism, he encourages each one to live his vocation in fidelity to the Spirit « *with a large heart and with willingness* »⁹². He encourages them to be creative and bold in the mission confided to them, he brings out the aptitudes of each one; in this way the brethren « *run, and even fly in the steps of Our Lord Jesus Christ* »⁹³.

The exercise of authority is lived in a spirit of service (cf. Mc 10.41-45) and of friendship (cf. John 14.14-15), following the example of Jesus: « *And yet I come among you as one who serves* » (Luke 22.27). After having listened to his brethren, to better serve them, he takes the final decisions and watches over its accomplishment..

68- In the community, we witness to a particular kind of bond, marked with trust, openness and respect for the brother who serves us in authority. In each community, this service is necessary « *for the growth of fraternal life as well as for the spiritual journey of the consecrated person.* »⁹⁴

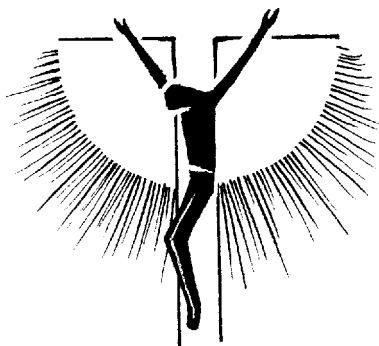
⁹¹ VC 92

⁹² DS 296

⁹³ DS 111

⁹⁴ CN 48, §3

69- Following Christ «*who came not be served but to serve*» (Mk10.45), our obedience manifests the absolute primacy of the Lord over the whole of creation, which finds in him its fulfilment (cf. Eph 1.9-10) ; in sacrificing our own freedom to opt to accomplish the will the Father, we wish to announce already, that day on which, «everything is subjected to him, when the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all » (1 Cor 15.28).



He was humble, even accepting death, death on a cross. (Phil 2.8)

IV THE BETHARRAMITE LIFE OF PRAYER

*«How can you learn the law of love? In prayer and meditation. The soul acquires the habit of uniting itself with God; silent and recollected at his feet, it becomes enlightened and disposed for everything. May your life be a continual prayer! Let each of your acts be a living prayer growing and increasing in the life of the Holy Spirit. Be less men of prayer than prayer itself.»*⁹⁵

70- Offered to His Father, at the outset of the incarnation Jesus makes his life a great act of filial piety; ‘I am in the Father and the Father is in me.’ (John 14.11). He prays in a lonely place to the Father who is present (Mark 6.6; Luke 5.16). He prays among his community, amongst men (Luke 10.21-22; John 11.41-42); he prays for the redemption of the world and the unity of his church. (John 17). This face of Christ ‘humble and obedient.’ witnesses to the total bounty of the mercy of his Father, and absorbs St. Michael Garicoits in his contemplation.

71- With Christ, in Christ, through Christ, we wish to live in the Father, seeking his presence, hearing his word, welcoming his love, so our life of prayer is:

- Filial (personal), for ‘God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son who cries: Abba, Father!’ (Gal 4.6);
- Communitarian, for ‘although being many we are one body in Christ’. (Rom 12.5)
- Apostolic, for ‘from the hidden life in God with Christ, springs the power of love for the salvation of our neighbour and our world and the growth of the Church.’⁹⁶

72- With the church and following our founder, we nourish our spiritual life from the wells of Scripture and liturgy, especially in the mystery of the Eucharist: *«the body of Christ and the word of God: These are the two tables, where the heavenly food is served, which nourishes and fortifies our souls.»*⁹⁷.

⁹⁵ DS 149

⁹⁶ PC 6

⁹⁷ DS 153

Personal prayer

73- «To be less men of prayer than prayer itself»,⁹⁸ said St. Michael. Savouring God's word, praying, joining ourselves to Christ in all life's circumstances, attentive to our duties: this is how we exercise that immense love from within our human limits.

74- As sons of God by baptism, we have at heart to live constantly in a filial attitude of adoration, praise, and offering, but also to seek the will and wishes of the Father, remembering that prayer is His gift. 'Called to contemplate and witness the face of Christ, who on the cross was disfigured, without beauty, we are called to live a transformed existence by the firm conviction of God's love, which is poured into our hearts.'⁹⁹

75- Love means consecrating our time to him: we are faithful to daily prayer, for at least half an hour, a privileged moment, where God speaks to us. 'Face-to-face as a man converses with a friend.' (Exodus 33.11).

76- Our Spiritual life must be penetrated by the word of God by *lectio divina*, the true religious culture always renewed and realised in prayer, is 'the strength of our faith, the food of our soul, the pure and permanent source of our spiritual life.'¹⁰⁰

77- A lengthy visit to the Blessed Sacrament during the day unites us intimately to the person of Jesus and engages us in the dynamic by which the Lord offers all creation to the Father.

78- We are aware of our poverty and that we are sinners:

- Daily we review our life before the Lord by an examination of conscience;
- we frequently celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation, 'a happy experience of forgiveness, which makes the heart open and helps us to be faithful.'¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ DS 153

⁹⁹ V. C. 35b.24a

¹⁰⁰ DV21

¹⁰¹ V. C. 95, 4

79- The Spirit helps us imitate the suffering and humble Christ so gaining a joyful and balanced asceticism. Accepting life's trials and sufferings, showing ourselves reliable in work, and daily duties, choosing self-deprivation and fasting, alone and in community; this is the spiritual combat which frees us from self that we may love God and our brethren more.

80- Spiritual accompaniment will help us to examine our life with a director who will help our spiritual growth.

Community Prayer

81- The Eucharist, the memorial of our redemption, is at the heart of our life of personal and community prayer.

82- Daily, the priests will celebrate Mass and the other religious will actively participate. The sacrament of love, sign of unity, bond of charity, concelebration is always preferable. Each community will regularly celebrate the Eucharist together.

83- The Liturgy of Hours prolongs the praise of Eucharistic prayer. It unites our voice with that of the Church, which unceasingly gives praise in the name of all humanity with the living Christ who ever intercedes for us.¹⁰² Each community recites in common a part of the office. Priests and deacons are obliged to say the entire office each day.

84- Times of sharing & celebrating God's word, prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, are important times for the community, especially in Advent & Lent, times of thought & reflection needed to deepen and strengthen our religious commitment.

‘Brotherly life in common favours equally the rediscovery of the ecclesial dimension of the word of God: we need to welcome it, meditate on it, live it together, share experiences, which flow from it and advance in this way to an authentic spirituality of communion.’¹⁰³

¹⁰² VC95 4

¹⁰³ RDC.24, 5

85- The annual retreat is notably an important time of personal encounter with God. It is obligatory for all religious; it lasts six complete days; silence, prayer, review of life, walking together makes it a time of grace.

86- Silence, respect for the mystery of God within us and in others, favours listening to God, work and genuine exchanges between each other. It will be a ministry of charity.

87- Each day there will be a least two occasions of community prayer. It depends on each community, following the general apostolic activity that it has in arranging the rhythm, and fixing the times and places for silence.

Apostolic Prayer

88- By prayer, we renew each day the sense of our apostolic vocation uniting us ever more perfectly to Christ, who prays for all humanity. This prayer is the soul of all apostolate.

89- Holy Scripture, as the Church teaches, enables us to understand more deeply the history of salvation, to judge the true sense of temporal realities, to participate in the expectations of men, in their sufferings and hopes¹⁰⁴.

90- The Eucharist, centre of our community and spiritual life is the centre of our apostolic life too. Fêting the Paschal mystery, we see the Lord's action in the signs of love and sharing we experience and which we join to his offering to the Father.¹⁰⁵

91- In the same way that Christ taught his Apostles to pray, we are the educators in prayer of the faithful in teaching them especially¹⁰⁶ 'to celebrate the Lord with all their heart through psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, always giving thanks for all to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.'¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ VC 94

¹⁰⁵ E. E. 13

¹⁰⁶ Eph 5. 19-20

¹⁰⁷ NMI, 33 to 34

Devotions of the congregation

92- The traditional devotions of our religious family are signs of God's love for us. We celebrate in a particular way;

- the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which all members of the congregation regard as their particular model, their treasure and their own heritage, the seal which they ought to imprint on their entire life.
- The Passion: St Michael Garicoits founded the Institute at the foot of the Calvary of Betharram; on September 14th, we solemnise the feast of the Triumph of the Cross, we practice and make the way of the cross by which we rejoin Christ in his supreme offering to the Father.
- The Blessed Virgin: following St Michael's example, we love with a filial love the Blessed Virgin Mary, considered in the mystery of the incarnate Word. We express our love for her by the daily recitation of the rosary, either individually or together, and by the celebration of her feasts, notably those of the Annunciation and of our Lady of Betharram;
- St Joseph, special protector of the church and the Institute;
- St Michael Garicoits, father of our religious family, and perfect model of union with the Sacred Heart in the accomplishment of the will of the Father. We also add the accomplishment of his disciple Father Auguste Eche copar, servant of God.
- St Jeanne Elizabeth Bichier des Ages about whom our founder St Michael said: 'It is this good sister, who did everything. I have only put into effect her plans.'¹⁰⁸
- Blessed Miriam of Jesus Crucified who dearly loved our family.

¹⁰⁸ Mieyaa Vol 1 p500

V FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

«My God, look not on my sins but upon this Society which your Sacred Heart has conceived and formed. Design to grant it your peace, that peace according to your will which alone can pacify it and unite more closely all its members with each other, with their superiors and with your divine Heart, so that they may be one as you and the Father and the Holy Spirit are one. Amen! Fiat! Fiat!»¹⁰⁹

My God! What can return can I give you for this proof of your presence in the midst all your children? What can return can I give them for this wonderful sign of their love for you, or their tender affection for us? For Lord, we are weak and only obstacles. Be then yourself the reward for this entire community! And since they are all one heart, and one soul in you, be more and more their heart, their life, their strength, their joy; and consume them in your union with the Father and the Holy Spirit: ut unum sint! ut sint consummati in unum.¹¹⁰

93- Brotherly life in community has for its model and source the life of the Trinity itself.

«Father, Son and Holy Spirit, What a model for a community! These three persons, perfectly distinct between themselves, united and acting in the same nature, in the same thought, in the same will, in the same operation and forming one perfect and adorable society. »

¹¹¹

94- Fraternal communion, the ideal of the first Christian communities, is today still the manifestation of the presence of Christ in the midst of men.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ MS 359

¹¹⁰ Letter of Fr Etchecopar to Fr Magendie from Bethlehem 21 Feb.1893

¹¹¹ Letter MS129-130. 'that they may be one! That they may be consumed as one!'

¹¹² Acts 2.42 Matt 18.20

In the church, the mystery of missionary communion and ‘the people of God, who draw their unity from the Father to the Son and the Holy Spirit’, each of our religious communities is the sign of Jesus Christ's love, bringing together all men in the unity of the same love. ‘That all may be one as you Father in me and I am in you, but they also may be one in us, in order that the world may believe that you have sent me.’¹¹³

95- For his first apostolic community, composed of fathers and brothers, St Michael Garicoits held, whatever the cost, to this brotherly communal life *‘as a means of raising themselves and leading others to perfection.’*¹¹⁴

96- Fraternal life in community enables us to live the spirituality of communion. Four dispositions characterise this spirituality:

- A focus of the heart on the mystery of the Trinity, which dwells within us, and whose light must also be recognised in the faces of our brothers, who are with us;
- The capacity to look on a brother in faith, ‘as one of us’, and understand how to share his joys and his sufferings;
- The capacity to see, especially, what is positive in another person, to welcome him and to value him as a gift of God;
- Knowing how to give space to our brother, ‘carrying each other's burdens’¹¹⁵, and in opposing competition, careerism, suspicion and jealousy.’¹¹⁶

97- Each religious member of a community which is his place of life should make his own contribution so that the common life becomes a true brotherly and community life.

¹¹³ Acts 2.42; John 17. 21

¹¹⁴ DS 331

¹¹⁵ Galatians 6.2

¹¹⁶ N. M. I. 43

98- The community under the conduct of a superior is composed at least three religious, who receive from the regional superior in accordance with the local Bishop, a common mission, even if their activities may be diverse. The common life supposes that the members live together in a house, legitimately constituted.¹¹⁷ If, for any Pastoral reasons, some religious employed in certain apostolic tasks cannot live continually in the same house, the regional superior, fixes the means of living as a real community.

99- A religious cannot live outside his community. For an exception and for a just cause, permission must be asked for. The regional superior with the consent of his council can give his permission, which cannot last any longer than a year, except for reasons of health, study or exercising apostolate in the name of the Institute.¹¹⁸

100- Our fraternal life in community is a valuable sign:

- * through our fraternal charity
- * through our common prayer
- * through our apostolic work.

101- So that our community life is real and bears witness, all members of the community must feel themselves responsible for the climate of brotherly charity, necessary for the harmony and the development of each religious member. The community is a place of communion.

Where relations are less formal and where welcome and understanding are fostered. One discovers there equally, the divine and human value of the fact of being together freely, as were the disciples around Christ, their master, in friendship, and in sharing moments of relaxation and leisure.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ CIC608

¹¹⁸ CIC665

¹¹⁹ R D C. 29, 3

102- A common mission requires a strict collaboration between members of the same community under the direction of the superior. Each religious is responsible for the mission entrusted to the community.

103- Each year, the community establishes its community project, where the means of establishing a fraternal life are clearly defined:

- the common objectives,
- the way of realising them,
- the times for prayer in common,
- the times of silence,
- the times to meet together,
- of sharing and of relaxation.

Under the guidance of the superior, regularly and at each visit of the regional superior, the community assesses its manner of life in the light of this community project.

104- Our common vocation, respect of each other, and mutual trust contribute in overcoming inherent difficulties in life together. The process of forgiveness, words and gestures of reconciliation, build up brotherhood. Each puts at the service of all his gifts and his talents received from God.

105- The superior holds an important role in this communion of persons, which should be built up unceasingly. He is the first one responsible and the animator of all life in the community: *«superiors should employ themselves in the first place with the greatest zeal by uniting all hearts.»*¹²⁰

106- So as to favour the common life, some places for the community should be put aside in every house: the oratory, common room, etc.

¹²⁰ DS 360

107- Modern means of communication must favour a real deep encounter amongst each other and exchanges within the community, and outside. Their use

‘must facilitate a better knowledge of the complexity of the world, allow the opportunity to challenge and question and know how to put these means at the service of evangelisation.’¹²¹

Their restrained and prudent involvement should be accompanied by enlightened and communal discernment

108- Visits to family and holidays are decided in community; the agreement of the regional superior is required for exceptional journeys.

109- In regard to religious habits, and external dress, we conform to common practice.¹²²

110- Nothing should be spared to care for elderly or sick religious; they are a blessing on the communities.¹²³ Each region will study the best way in order to make this fraternal service a reality

111- Our deceased brothers are present in our prayers. The Council of the Congregation rules on what each religious must offer after the death of a brother.



John 17.21

¹²¹ VFC 34, 4 V. F. C. 99, 2

¹²² C I C. 669. 284

¹²³ DS 174

VI

OUR MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

«To work for our own salvation and perfection, the salvation and perfection of our neighbour that is our task; to fully involve ourselves which for us is life; but to do this negligently is to languish; and not to do it is to die.»¹²⁴

112- For us religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus mission :
‘before it shows in our external works must show the presence of Christ himself in our personal witness. This is the challenge. This is the first end of consecrated life! The more one lets oneself be transformed into Christ, the more one makes him present in the world for the salvation of the souls.’¹²⁵

Our Betharramite vocation in all the apostolic activities needs to cultivate an intimacy with the Lord through prayer, to live one's consecration and brotherhood in community and give the gift of oneself in pastoral activities.

113- Apostolic work means devotion to announcing Jesus Christ and the presence of the church everywhere where the culture of tomorrow is forged.

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the spirit of the incarnation are called to evangelise by being free and available, prepared, anxious to be animators, visible signs of the presence of God in history.

Lay people, especially those who drink from the same spiritual fountain as we do, share our concern to announce the Good News.

¹²⁴ MS 164

¹²⁵ VC72 b

OUR PRIORITIES

In service of the Local Church.

114- Our founder used to say:

«we wished to offer priests to the Bishop entirely disposed to fulfil all the works that he would entrust to them; entirely obedient, always ready to say: Adsum, here I am!»¹²⁶

In faithfulness to this spirit, the establishment of the community responds always to a Pastoral project shared by the Bishop and the Regional Superior with the approval of the Superior General.

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in community and individually participate in the life of the local church; they are actively engaged in the Pastoral work of the diocese, in collaboration with the Bishop and Pastoral authorities.

From the beginning of the Institute, our first priority was to preach the Gospel. The international character of our religious family highlights the links between the local church and the universal Church.

A presence with all humanity in differing forms of poverty

115- With men and people affected by all kinds of injustices and poverty, we contemplate the disfigured face of Christ, who «put himself in the place of all victims»¹²⁷

In all our works, we should make ourselves present to all people in their different forms of poverty.

116- Presence among the poor presupposes an authentic discernment of our position in mission. It reflects on our personal and community lifestyle. It makes us always more attentive to the most deprived.

Religious and the communities should take part in initiatives concerning human rights, protecting the environment, the quality of life, and the protection of the weakest.

¹²⁶ DS 197

¹²⁷ Founder's Manifesto

AREAS OF WORK

Pastoral work with the young

117- United with the church, religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will encourage and sustain all movements and institutions engaged in education of the young; these are the hope of the world and of the church of the future.

Our communities should find their way of welcoming the young, notably among those seeking a meaning in their life, and with care to walk with those called by the Lord.

Each region has a duty to form a project of Pastoral work with the young in conjunction with the local church, where the characteristics of openness, generosity and Betharramite concern are clearly apparent.

The mission of education

118- From the beginning, education has been part of the mission of our congregation. This mission is always desired and encouraged by the Church. It is realised in schools, and in other new forms of teaching or social development

In schools

119- In colleges to ensure the right ethos, in fidelity to our founder and the church, the regional superior and his council will guarantee the protection of each establishment according to the law of that country and of the local church. This responsibility is shared by all the laypeople concerned to undertake the same educational mission.

The regional superior entrusts posts of pastoral animation, teaching posts, administrative and economic posts to competent people. After the necessary consultation with his council, he appoints a headmaster and gives his approval for the

appointment of others to different organisational posts. The Regional Superior will check that the project remains true to the initial project. The regional superior spells out the role and place of each one in the religious educational community according to the regional project.

The congregation remains the point of reference for the development, the spirituality and the mission, which must animate the life of the teaching community.

Other forms of teaching or social development

120- In other forms of teaching or social development the regional superior oversees the clear formulation of each project, the structure of management, and the means of evaluation and development with the religious and the persons entrusted with this task.

Pastoral work with families

121- Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, having been called to live in community like a family we recognize the value of human love as a response to the love of God; we promote the culture of life in all its aspects, we help families in difficulties, we support parents in their duty as educators.

Whatever touches pastoral work with the family becomes our duty.

Relations with families, especially own family enriches community life.

Pastoral work in the parish

122- At the request of bishops religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus can accept the responsibility of a parish or take on ministries in a parish. In parochial ministry, we work to «procure for others the same happiness» which we experience. We live in the community in simplicity, availability for all, with a particular care for the most vulnerable.

123- We are attentive in genuinely sharing tasks, putting in common the riches of each to ensure a better ministry. All brothers in community should live as brothers, with the care of promoting communion in the local church, where we are present. Attentive to being faithful servants we put into effect diocesan projects, being careful to leave to lay people the place which belongs to them.

«Not so much men of prayer as prayer itself » We try to be teachers of prayer, in particular in sharing the word of God, celebrating the Eucharist and the sacraments.

S1 If a community takes total care of a parish as their ministry in a diocese, this must be the subject of an agreement between the regional superior and the Bishop of the place.

Animation and spiritual accompaniment

124- As inheritors of a spiritual tradition, related to the Sacred Heart of Jesus we put at the service of all who are searching for a spiritual guide, the treasures of the experience of St Michael in his search for the will of the Father in imitating the Heart of Jesus.¹²⁸ In all places where we are present, religious will offer their availability to those who desire to be accompanied in their spiritual life. Regional superiors will watch over the formation of those who have a charism for this precious and delicate ministry.

¹²⁸ I wish to encourage members of your Institute to undertake and to follow the intuitions of St Michael. To teach our contemporaries to pray, to know and love Christ and to follow him according to their particular vocation.

Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Superior General 5th of July 1997

The development of the human person

125- We follow the model of the incarnation: ‘he was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty.’¹²⁹ He cured the sick, freed the oppressed; he has done all things well.

Religious the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we employ ourselves in caring for those who are in pain and suffer. Especially where we can in community, we participate in works which enable the development of people, the whole person, all humanity.

We should be able to take initiatives in favour of those who are marginalised; without delay for those who need help, or by very important works when it is a matter of combating precarious situations of injustice and poverty.

‘The service of the poor is an active evangelisation, and at the same time, it confirms fidelity to the gospel and invites personal conversion.’¹³⁰

Initial evangelisation

126- Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we are missionaries in our different places of apostolate.

Some of us left our native land, as members of our family, and in our name, to live as disciples of Christ in the midst of people who do not yet know him. All should be supportive of these missionaries and of the peoples amongst whom they are sent; we are in communion with them.

‘The mission of Christ the Redeemer, confined to the church, is yet far from being fulfilled. It is as yet at its beginning, and we ought to be engaged with all our strength in its service. To announce the gospel is not a badge of glory, it is a necessity, which I should fulfil. Yes, I should be punished if I didn’t preach it.’¹³¹

¹³¹

¹²⁹ 2Cor 8.9

¹³⁰ V. C. 8 2

¹³¹ 1 Cor 9.16. RM1

Ecumenism

127- In different parts of the world under the influence of the Holy Spirit, numerous efforts, prayers, by word and deed are undertaken so as to arrive at the perfection of unity wished for by Christ.¹³² Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we should take an active part in ecumenical initiatives every where we are present. Like all other religious, we are called to be in the church, and in the world, witnesses and artisans of this unity project, found at the heart of God's designs.

Dialogue between religions and dialogue with other cultures.

128- We recognize that 'he exists among so many individuals and peoples, thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit, as an expectation, even unrecognized, to understand the truth of God, of man, of the way, which leads to freedom from sin, and from the death.'¹³³

We wish to be faithful to the teaching of our founder:

*«I know that God doesn't stop speaking in the depth of souls. I know that in these depths, there is something like an incessant fermentation, excited, brought about by the hand of the Creator, and which asks as from an infinite distance, in the midst of darkness, of groaning and noise of all kinds, to answer and to abandon oneself to the divine pursuit of God».*¹³⁴

129- As religious of the Sacred Heart we seek in other religions and other cultures, those longings for God, 'rays of that truth, which enlightens all men'.¹³⁵ 'seeds of the word.' and 'riches that by his generosity, God dispenses to all nations'¹³⁶ 'sown in the spirit and in the hearts of men through the rituals and customs of peoples.'¹³⁷

¹³² UR4

¹³³ RM 45

¹³⁴ DS 144

¹³⁵ NA2

¹³⁶ N. A. 2

¹³⁷ L. G. 17

CRITERIA FOR DISCERNMENT OF WORKS

130- Sons of St Michael Garicoits should imitate the quality of his listening to what the Spirit says to the churches¹³⁸ in order to respond to the needs of the church and of men.

131- We should choose what serves humanity best, particularly, the most deprived, and procure for them that happiness of knowing they are loved by the Father.

132- We should favour places, which are most suitable for the ministry of the Word incarnate, «those places, where others would not wish to go.»¹³⁹

133- We should measure the competence and charism of each religious in the choice of works confided to them.

134- We should choose situations where activities and habitation, favour the greatest witness of the fraternal life of the community.

135- We should consider that sharing our mission with lay people is a priority.



Go and make disciples of all nations .. *Matt 28.19*

¹³⁸ Revelation 2.7

¹³⁹ DS 229

VII BETHARRAMITE FORMATION

«Give me a heart that truly loves! It believes, and tastes the things of God, it leaps and runs along the path of our Lord Jesus Christ. Love is what leads a man forward; it is the secret spring necessary to discover in postulants and novices; and there is found the divine seed to develop in the heart. If it is lacking, you can do nothing.»¹⁴⁰

136- To consecrate all our life to God, by following Christ in brotherly community is to be engaged in the mission of the Church.

«In view of this wonderful spectacle, the priests of Betharram, should feel urged to devote themselves to imitate Jesus, humble and obedient, and strive to completely procure for others the same happiness. »¹⁴¹ In the church, we have to work without delay, *«without condition, and without reward through love.»* to ensure the announcing of the Gospel.

137- Betharramite formation has for its objective, the accompaniment of the person who feels himself called by God to live in our religious family. It is a time of conversion and interior transformation which requires total commitment by a person to the person of Christ; an effort which lasts throughout life. It is a matter of progressively assimilating the sentiments of the Son's offering to the Father:

«Yes, if you do that on your part, soon your heart will be able and know how to beat, love and act in union with that of our Lord; and from then, what progress will take place in imitation, and in his love! Your heart will no longer be your heart, but the heart of Jesus; your interior and exterior life will be the interior and exterior life of Jesus himself. »¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ DS111-112

¹⁴¹ DS111

¹⁴² DS 47

138- God the Father takes the initiative in every vocation; his son Jesus is the pathway taken by every disciple; the Holy Spirit is «*the interior master that we must listen to; under his direction we must place ourselves.*»¹⁴³ Formators who participate in this action of the Father are as elder brothers who accompany each one on their journey. They will share the beauty of following Jesus ‘humble and obedient’. They will help to form the ‘truly free new man’ by discerning their vocation and their regular personal dialogue.¹⁴⁴

They are chosen for their competence, and human and religious abilities. It is required that they obtain a recognised qualification and are willing to pursue their own ongoing formation.

S2. The Formation Guide of the congregation develops the objectives and the means to ensure Betharramite formation; it serves as a basis for the establishment of projects for formation of each region. The Superior General may establish a team to ensure unity of formation throughout the congregation.

THE PATHWAY OF INITIAL FORMATION

Accompaniment and vocational discernment

«A vocation can only come from God: woe betide any man who attributes it to himself!

But it is necessary to know the voice of God, to make it more recognisable, to strive to overcome obstacles that arise, and what holiness is needed to do that!

*It is necessary to have a soul and heart empty of the things of earth and filled with God.»*¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ DS 145

¹⁴⁴ VC 66

¹⁴⁵ DS 278

139- ‘The task of cultivating vocations falls to the whole Christian community.’¹⁴⁶ We pray and beseech the Lord to send workers into his harvest. We urge ourselves to watch out for among the young any desire for the religious life and the priestly ministry, to discern, to welcome and help those who desire to consecrate themselves to God.

140- Our witness as a religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, happy to live our own vocation in a brotherly and apostolic community is a living invitation to follow Christ in the footsteps of saint Michael Garicoits. Each vicariate will put in place, a pastoral project for vocations. Our communities must willingly welcome those who desire to come, see and experience our life. We help them fraternally to discern what the Lord expects of them.¹⁴⁷

The Postulancy

*«When a person presents himself as called ... we must help the postulant with the grace of God».*¹⁴⁸

141- The postulancy consists in helping the young to know themselves, to accept themselves and to develop in clarifying the motives of their vocation. At first it is necessary to have a basic Christian formation.

It is a time of reciprocal discovery and initiation into the Betharramite life in its entirety, through a discernment, which promotes freedom and responsibility for both the candidate and the congregation

This is realised in a community of the congregation under the direction of a qualified formator.

142- To enter the postulancy, the candidate presents his demand in writing to the superior of the vicariate who after receiving advice from the vocation director or the formation team will notify him of his decision.

¹⁴⁶ OT 2

¹⁴⁷ R.D.C. 16

¹⁴⁸ DS 286

The postulancy begins with a community celebration. When the postulant so desires, and when those responsible for him judge him ready, he can make his request in writing to enter the novitiate.

The novitiate

143- The religious life begins by a novitiate of two years, which includes the canonical year and a time of living in community, and an experience of apostolate.

Admission is the responsibility of the regional superior with a deliberative vote by his counsel after being satisfied that the conditions required by canon law are fulfilled¹⁴⁹. Candidates are not admitted to the novitiate before the age of 17 years. A retreat of at least five days precedes entry to the novitiate. The novitiate begins with a community celebration. The moment, having arrived the beginning of the canonical year is recorded by the master of novices.

144- For a novitiate to be valid, it must be in a house established by a document written by the superior general with the consent of his counsel.¹⁵⁰ An absence of three months (continuous or interrupted) during the canonical novitiate year invalidates the novitiate; an absence of more than 15 days must be made good.¹⁵¹ The duration of the novitiate must not exceed two years.¹⁵²

145- The novices will engage in an experience of the love of God, and commit to follow Christ, humble and obedient, in order to consecrate their life to him by religious profession in a brotherly community where their mission is lived. The master of novices accompanies them on their journey; he is their spiritual accompanier.

¹⁴⁹ CIC 642-645

¹⁵⁰ CIC 647

¹⁵¹ CIC 649

¹⁵² CIC 648

146- The formation of the noviciate consists principally in initiating the novices progressively in the following of Christ (*Sequela Christi*): attachment to Christ and detachment from what ever is not in accord with the kingdom of God; humility, chastity, poverty, obedience, prayer and habitual union with God in openness to the Holy Spirit; sharing faith and goods in brotherly communion; availability for service and work, even manual work.

147- The sacraments of the Eucharist and reconciliation are at the centre of the spiritual life. The novice nourishes himself with prayer, with *lectio divina*, the liturgy of the hours, study of Holy Scripture, internalising the charism of St Michael Garicoits, theology of the religious life, knowledge of the Congregation via its history and its present reality, and reading spiritual authors.

148- The master of novices is a religious, perpetually professed, appointed for 4 years (renewable) by the regional superior with the consent of the Council of the region and the approval of the Superior General, and his council. The novitiate is placed under the direct authority of the Superior General.

149- The master of novices and the novices draw up a programme for the novitiate; with the community they participate in the development of the community project; these two projects are submitted for approval to the superior general. He takes care to support the participation of the novices. *'By an active and responsible obedience as well as accomplishing their task in taking initiatives.'*¹⁵³

Having been called to share in the mission of the congregation vowed to the apostolate the novices undertake also apostolic experiences; the master of novices helps them to read over and review their experiences. They learn also to unite contemplation and action.

¹⁵³ PC 14

150- At a suitable time before the end of the novitiate, the novice is invited to make an evaluation with the master of novices. If he perseveres in his desire to consecrate himself to the Lord in our family, the novice presents in writing to the superior general a request for admission to religious profession.

151- After having consulted those who assist him with formation, the master of novices composes his report. The superior general, taking account of this report and having verified that the canonical conditions are fulfilled, with the deliberative and secret vote of his counsel, admits to religious profession.

A retreat of a least five full days precedes this event.

The vows are received by the superior general, or his delegate.

Temporary vows are made for three years or for a shorter time.

152- Formula of profession

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit I N.N. pledge myself to live the Gospel in imitation of Christ humble and obedient and in your hands N.N. the delegate of N.N. Superior General, I consecrate my life to the Lord in making vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience (for 1 year... .. 3 years .. for life) according to the Constitutions of the Congregation of the priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram.

I give myself with all my heart to this family without hesitation, without condition, and without seeking anything in return, through love rather than any other motive. I wish to live in community the joy of this consecration and to obtain for others the same happiness. May Our Lady of Betharram and our Father Saint Michael and all Betharramites in heaven and on earth intercede for me so that I can remain faithful.

153- The novice with the agreement of the master of novices can add to the beginning or the end of the approved formula certain expressions which must be appropriate to the seriousness of this undertaking.

The Time of temporary vows

154- Temporary vows can be renewed several times. For the renewal of vows, after having consulted those who help in formation, the master of scholastics draws up a report. In taking account of this report, the regional superior, with the deliberative and secret vote of his council, admits to the renewal of vows.

The minimum period of temporary vows, which must precede the perpetual profession is 3 years. The regional superior, with the consent of his council can prolong it, but not beyond 3 years. For exceptional reasons, the superior general with the consent of his council can prolong it again, but not beyond 3 years

155- All temporary professed, who intend to be religious brothers or religious priests form part of one single community; they are all under the care of the master of scholastics, whether he is superior or not of the community.

156- The Master of scholastics is a priest perpetually professed, appointed for four years (renewable) by the regional superior with the consent of the Council of the Region and the approval of the Superior General and his council. For matter pertaining to the scholasticate he is under the direct authority of the regional superior.

157- During this period, accompanied by their formators, the temporary professed engaged in their human, intellectual, spiritual, theological and pastoral development, to respond according to the prescriptions at the church to the challenges of our times.

158- Spiritual formation aims to promote growth by a free and personal attachment to their profession to Jesus Christ *'let them be involved closely in doctrinal and pastoral formation'* ¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ OT 8

In faithfulness to the life of prayer, the young religious is asked to give a special importance to:

- meditation on the word of God
- community prayer in the liturgy of the hours
- the daily celebration of the Eucharist
- the sacrament of reconciliation.

Spiritual accompaniment is also indispensable. Experience of the Evangelical life is made by the practice of the Evangelical counsels following the road traced by each son of St Michael Garlcoits in our Rule of life.

159- The master of scholastics and his assistants in the house of formation draw up together with young scholastics a project for the Scholasticate submitted for the approval of the regional superior. In the community of the scholasticate this will be carefully integrated with the Community project.

160- Under the direction of either qualified priests, religious or lay people the young religious develop an apostolic spirit in different fields. In community and with the master of scholastics they reflect on these experiences, which form part of their formation.

S3 *Sometimes in view of a more mature and specific engagement, the regional superior can authorise or ask for a stage outside the house of formation. In strict accordance with the community of formation, this stage is overseen and guided by a religious appointed for this purpose.*

S4 *For a better service of the mission of the church Major superiors will familiarise themselves with the desires and abilities of the young religious*

Perpetual profession

161- Perpetual profession is preceded by a year of special preparation, disengaged from all academic activities.

162- After discernment made by the spiritual accompanier and the one responsible for formation, the professed draws up his request for perpetual profession, addressed to the Superior General.

After consultation with the Superior and community of formation, the master of scholastics draws up a report; he attaches to it the letter of request and sends everything to the Superior General.

The regional council pronounces on this by a secret and deliberative vote. The regional secretary transmits to the Superior General, the dossier of the candidate containing the documents required. They take care to verify that the canonical conditions have been fulfilled.

Before perpetual profession, the professed must draw up a valid will recognized by civil law.

The Superior General or his delegate, will receives his vows.

PARTICULAR FORMATION

Religious clerics

163- Religious clerics prepare themselves for the priestly ministry in the religious life at the school of St Michael Garicoits. Even if they study in theological centres, in several institutes or dioceses they must deepen that charism of the congregation in the house of the Scholasticate. For programmes of study and methods of teaching must be conformed to the instructions of the Holy See.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ CDC 232-264

164- Religious clerics, should acquire a true philosophical, theological and biblical learning, which puts them in communion with the mystery of Christ, so that it becomes part of them and spreads to the church and the world.

165- The presentation of scholastics for the instituted ministries is made to the regional superior by the master of scholastics after consulting the religious of the community in perpetual vows as well as those responsible for their formation. Admission to the diaconate or the presbyterate depends on the superior general and his council. They follow the same procedure for admission to perpetual vows.¹⁵⁶

Religious brothers

166- After first vows, the religious brothers continue to place themselves in the School of St Michael Garicoits and deepen the charism of the Congregation. They will follow their theological, biblical, pastoral and spiritual formation.

Up to their perpetual profession, they live in the community of formation with the religious clerics and can follow the same courses as them.

It is also time for them to acquire and complete a professional qualification if they haven't already got one.

*'While exercising various works with faithful laypeople, the brothers do this in the capacity of their consecrated identity.'*¹⁵⁷

167- In response to pastoral needs, the superior general can propose the permanent diaconate or priesthood for a brother, who would fulfil the required conditions.

¹⁵⁶ See above No.162

¹⁵⁷ V.C. 60

PERMANENT FORMATION

168- The objective of permanent formation is to enable the religious to grow in his vocation. It is essential to the life and mission of the congregation in the church. That is why it is specifically entrusted to the care of the Superior General.

169- This formation is necessary throughout life; each one remains the principal agent of this formation. It fosters development in the spiritual life, confronts personal and contemporary problems in a constant conversion to the gospel. It encourages renewal in apostolic activities.

170- Our permanent formation touches all the aspects of our life. The ordinary means of pursuing our formation are by personal work, exchanges in community, regular participation in professional, doctrinal and pastoral sessions.

171- From initial formation, formators should foster among young religious a genuine desire to pursue their formation, once they are engaged in mission.

Superiors in every way should sustain common projects and encourage personal efforts. An adequate preparation should be guaranteed to all religious called to fulfil a new ministry.

S5 *For permanent formation, apart from the ordinary practice in each region, superiors of regions and vicariates will take care to make practical proposals; they will take the necessary means to make them effective. The Superior General with the agreement of the regional superiors will organise special sessions of study and of spirituality for the whole congregation. Such initiatives will serve to tighten the bonds which unite us, and permit the participants to profit by the diverse experiences realised in the congregation.*

VIII GOVERNMENT

A GENERAL PRINCIPLES

«The first of governments and the model for all the others is that of the church, and Jesus founded it on love: ‘Simon do you love me?... then feed my lambs»¹⁵⁸

«Without doubt the art of government is difficult; but not only do we have grace, but our lord himself is with us. Fill yourselves with his Spirit and its ways. Let go and trust without limits. Seize the plan of the Lord and try to follow it »¹⁵⁹

172- Christ chose to exercise in a spirit of service the authority that the Father gave him (John 17.2) “The Son of man did not come to be served but to serve” (Mk 10.45). The authority of the church strives to follow this manner of exercising authority.

173- In the Congregation those who receive the responsibility of authority are in the service of communion, of discernment of the will of God, of the support of the vocation of each person, of the unfolding of the mission of the Congregation in fidelity to the charism received by St. Michael Garicoits. In this sense, they rightfully receive by election or nomination the commission of authority to take decisions and to supervise their implementation.

174- By their perpetual profession all religious equal in dignity and their activity, participate in obedience «willingly and lovingly»¹⁶⁰ confident and creative¹⁶¹ in the family project as defined by the authority of the Congregation. They work then to build up the body of Christ according to God’s design, careful to live in the footsteps of Christ in communion with the Congregation and the Church.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Corresp 1.141

¹⁵⁹ Corresp 1.97

¹⁶⁰ DS 199,200

¹⁶¹ CIC 212

¹⁶² CIC 209

175- The superiors govern the group of religious confided to them, respectful of each one and his vocation. Their care is to put into practice with all, the Rule of Life, to encourage all in the unity of the family faithful to its purpose. For this they promote fraternal life in community, where faith, prayer and goods are shared. Each one is to be respected for who he is, so as to be encouraged and supported in the path of the common mission.

176- Communion is an essential value in the church, and in our Congregation. The exercise of authority, even if it is carried out by one person, demands the participation of each individual: chapters and councils will display this.¹⁶³

B **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

THE GENERAL CHAPTER

177- The general chapter represents all religious and is the supreme authority of the congregation. The sign of unity and charity for all religious, it is an ecclesial event. Prior to its activities or even its manner of acting, it is a manifestation of this unity, of which the church is the sacrament.

178- The general chapter is composed of those there by right and elected members; the number of elected members must be at least equal to those members there by right;¹⁶⁴ those there by right are members of the General Council and regional superiors; elected members are the deputies from the regions.

179- By law a Superior General calls an ordinary general chapter every 6 years. For grave reason, the Superior General can call an extraordinary general chapter, with the agreement of the General Council of the Congregation obtained by a deliberative vote. In case of death, resignation or serious illness of the Superior General, the vicar general convokes that same year an ordinary general chapter with a view to electing a new superior general.

¹⁶³ R D. C. 14

¹⁶⁴ CIC 631

S. 6 For the delegates of the Region to the General Chapter (and their substitutes) the Regional Chapter will establish a list of the fully professed of each vicariate.

- They will elect one delegate for every 15 religious (or fraction of 15) in perpetual vows for each vicariate.
- For the first and second ballots an absolute majority is required. On the third ballot a simple majority suffices.
- In the event of a tied vote, the oldest by religious profession is elected, or if need by age.
- The Regional Chapter elects the substitutes in the same way

180- The general chapter is presided over by the superior general in charge, or by the assistant general up to the completed election (acceptance, profession of faith and oath) of the new superior general.

181- The general chapter at a secret ballot elects firstly the superior general, and then each member of the General Council: the vicar general, the secretary-bursar general and two other councillors.

182- The election of the superior general is made by:

- a majority of two thirds of valid votes at the first ballot, and at the second ballot;
- If necessary, at the third ballot, the election is made by an absolute majority of valid votes.
- If the result is not obtained one proceeds with the fourth ballot, in which the two religious who at the third ballot had the highest number votes have only passive votes, not active.
- If there is still a tie, the oldest by religious profession is elected, then if need be by age.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ CIC 119,1

183- The Superior General is elected for six years by members of the General Chapter from among the priests in perpetual vows, who are at least 40 years of age and 10 years in perpetual vows.¹⁶⁶

He can be re-elected for a second consecutive mandate.

The election for a third consecutive mandate must be exceptional: it requires two thirds of the votes of the General Chapter from the first ballot; failing that the electors must seek another religious.

184- If the elected superior general is not present, he who presides at the chapter calls him immediately in secret; while awaiting his arrival, all business is suspended. On his arrival, the moderator notifies him of the result of the vote before members of the reunited chapter.¹⁶⁷

185- The elected superior general, before taking up his office, makes his profession of faith and oath of fidelity before the members of the general chapter.¹⁶⁸

186- The election of other members of the general council is made by an absolute majority of valid votes at the first and second ballot; and then by a relative majority, after two ballots without results. If in this third ballot, several religious obtain an equal number of votes, the most senior by first profession, and if need be, by age is considered as elected.

187- The Vicar general is elected by the general chapter among religious priests in perpetual vows who are over 35 years old and 10 years in perpetual vows. Before taking up office the Vicar general makes a profession of faith and oath of fidelity before the superior general.

The secretary general bursar and two other councillors are elected among the religious in perpetual vows.

¹⁶⁶ CIC 623

¹⁶⁷ If he refuses to be elected for serious reasons, the election is begun again. CIC 177, 2

¹⁶⁸ CIC 833.8

188- If the general chapter chooses a member of the General Council outside of the chapter, the elected Superior General calls him, but without suspending business. On his arrival, the president notifies him of the result of the votes before the members of the chapter. Once his election is accepted, he becomes a member of the General Chapter.

189- The chapter examines the situation of the Congregation from a spiritual, apostolic, disciplinary and financial point of view. Its principal duty is defined by the code of canon law:¹⁶⁹

- It watches over the doctrinal and spiritual patrimony of the Congregation, faithfully respecting the special intentions and designs of the founder as well as the living traditions of the Congregation, ratified by the authority of the Church.¹⁷⁰
- It deals with problems of great importance to the Congregation and takes all measures judged useful for the well-being of the congregation;
- It gives directions; it elects the superior general and his council;
- It expresses the obligatory standards for all members of the Institute. It takes the required decisions regarding the financial situation; it fixes the ordinary contributions.

190- If a modification of the constitutions must be made, the decision must be taken by two thirds of the votes by the General Chapter. Moreover it is necessary to obtain the approval of the Holy See on whom falls their authentic interpretation.

191- For the validity of Acts of every Chapter, it is necessary that all the members of the Chapter elected or by right have been convoked and that two thirds be present.

192- The General Chapter implements its rule, and decisions are taken by an absolute majority for immediate problems.

¹⁶⁹ CIC 631

¹⁷⁰ PC 2 B.; CIC 578

S 7 *At least one year before the calling of the chapter the superior general communicates the subjects to be dealt with to all religious. He invites them to make known their suggestions to the regional chapters, which will present to him their propositions. Each religious can also respond directly to the Superior General.*

S 8 *The Superior General, with his council appoints a working commission who will collate the proposals of the different regional chapters and establish programmes in view of the General Chapter and prepare the necessary documents.*

S 9 *All professed religious in perpetual vows have an active and passive vote, save exceptions noted in canon law & Rule of Life.*

S 10 *The Superior General and his council study the means of inviting to chapter other members of the Betharramite family.*

S 19 *Advisers and experts, as well as additional secretaries, without a right to vote for helping the secretary of the chapter can be invited by the Superior General or at the request of the chapter itself.*

SUPERIOR GENERAL

193- The Superior General is a major Superior with ordinary power throughout the congregation; he governs it in conformity with canon-law, the Rule of Life and decisions of the General Chapters.

194- In union with the whole church, the Superior General exercises the mission of sanctifying, teaching and governing:

- he pays particular attention to the spiritual life of his brothers;
- he fosters unity throughout the whole congregation and its fidelity to the spirit of the Gospel, to the directives of the church and to the charism of St Michael Garicoits;
- he constantly recalls the value of the mission entrusted to us, as well as the importance of co-responsibility lived in a real spirit of service and active availability.

- 195-** The Superior General follows the course of each region;
- He has direct and immediate authority over the whole congregation: religious, communities, vicariates, regions, persons and goods;
 - He definitively welcomes into the congregation religious at the moment of their perpetual profession;
 - He incardicates into the congregation, as a cleric, a religious in perpetual vows when he is ordained deacon;¹⁷¹
 - He encourages and supports all religious by ‘using his authority when it will be necessary to decide and command.’¹⁷²
 - He can dispense from some disciplinary points of the rule of life and some rules of the general chapters, in particular cases, and for a determined time;
 - He can, with the agreement of his Council extend the mandate of a regional superior for a short period, or appoint an interim administrator;
 - he alone can make known decisions taken in the councils & chapter

196- For the better government of the congregation, the Superior General is assisted by a General Council and the Council of the Congregation.

The General Council is composed of the vicar general, the secretary-bursar general, both resident in the Generalate, and two other councillors, whose role will be determined by the General Chapter.

These two will not take part in the government of the regions or communities.

The Council of the Congregation is composed of the General Council, and regional superiors. The Superior General can appeal to religious or lay experts for different needs: administration of goods, formation, missionary projects.

¹⁷¹ CIC 266, 2, 8

¹⁷² PC 14

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

197- The general administration is composed of the Superior General, the vicar general and the secretary-bursar general living in the same house and the other general councillors having other roles or activities. Moreover, it includes the members of the office of the bursar general.

The General Council

198- The members of the General Council remain in charge until the election of the new Superior General.

199- At the beginning of each year the General Council establishes its calendar of meetings, where all are convoked. In addition the Superior General can always call his Council any time. In order that decisions are valid, it is necessary that there are two present with the Superior General.

200- The General Council (outside cases foreseen by canon law) makes a deliberative and secret vote on the following questions:

- * the admission of a religious to perpetual profession;
- * the presentation of a professed to diaconate or the presbyterate
- * the appointment of regional superiors, their assistants, and superiors of the vicariate, within the four months which follow the ordinary general chapter;
- * all lawsuits which concern the congregation;
- * the appointment of a visitor from outside the General Council;
- * the deposition of a member of the regional administration.

201- The General Council (outside cases foreseen by canon law) gives a deliberative vote on the following questions:

- the determination of the place and date of the General Chapter;
- all extraordinary expenses, transfers or financial operations in accordance with the prescriptions of the Holy See;¹⁷³
- the closure of a house, after consultation with the diocesan bishop;
- the erection of houses for the novitiate;
- taking decisions reserved to the Council of the Congregation in cases which require an immediate decision;
- approval of the appointment of local superiors, masters of novices and masters of scholastics
- approval of the opening of a house, with the written consent of the diocesan bishop;¹⁷⁴
- approval of the change of institutional activities of a community or its apostolic purpose, with the consent of the diocesan bishop;
- approval of the convocation of an extraordinary regional chapter.

202- If in the interval of one chapter to another, it becomes necessary to replace one of the members of the general administration, the Superior General and his council after consultation with other members of the Council of the Congregation appoints a replacement.

203- A member of the General Council can, for serious reasons, be relieved of his responsibility by the Superior General with the consent of the rest of his council.

¹⁷³ CIC 683,3

¹⁷⁴ CIC 609, 1

The Vicar General

204- The Vicar General is a major superior, with ordinary power of government in vicarial mode.¹⁷⁵ He is the first collaborator of the Superior General in confidential matters and communication. He represents him on occasions in the name of the Congregation.

205- If the position of the Superior General becomes vacant, the Vicar General governs the congregation and convokes the General Chapter within a year and presides at it. His responsibility terminates with the election of the new Superior General.

206- The Vicar General is also Procurator General, the intermediary between the Congregation and the Holy See. He depends on the Superior General superior when dealing with the Holy See about the business of the Congregation.

THE SECRETARY-BURSAR GENERAL

207- The secretary sees to official correspondence, writes and countersigns official documents and draws up legal documents of the council, brings up to date the general state of the members of the congregation, the different activities, works and houses.

- He is responsible for archives and preserving the legal Acts, Instruments and other writings, deemed useful.
- He requires copies of all important legal acts and instruments from the different regions or communities, in particular of those which require authorisation of the Superior General.
- He is responsible for preparing and ordering different documents, and all the material necessary to facilitate the General Chapter.

208- As bursar, the bursar-secretary directs the general bursar's office and looks after the business of the congregation.

S 12 *In his work, the Secretary General can be helped by an additional secretary, either religious or lay.*

¹⁷⁵ CIC 620, 131, 2

The Bursar General's office

209- The economic administration of the Congregation is entrusted to the bursar general's office, presided over by the Superior General and directed by the general bursar; it is composed of religious and lay members, selected by the General Council in accordance with their expertise.

210- The general bursar's office is to administer the goods belonging to the Congregation and those of the Generalate.

- Every important operation, major payment, investment, loan and other extraordinary operation of administration, must receive the approval of the general Superior and his council
- The office supervises the administration of the goods of the Congregation, regions and communities along the path of putting in common, what is established by the Rule of Life, and the Acts of the Chapters and Councils of the Congregation.
- He receives the balance sheets from the administration of the Regions and their provisional budgets; every six months, bursars send him their balances, and those of their communities.
- Regions and their provisional budgets; every six months, bursars send him their accounts, and those of their communities.
- He himself presents, his monthly balance sheet to the Superior General, and his council, (he also presents) the accounts of the preceding period to each Council of the Congregation and General Chapter.
- He keeps an inventory of the title deeds of properties and valuable possessions, contracts, debts, loans, donations, to be kept in the archives. He requires from the regional bursars exact copies of documents to be kept in the archives.

The Council of the Congregation

211- Every two years at the least and after the General Chapter the regional superiors meet with the General Council to form the Council of the Congregation. The Council of the Congregation examines the general state of the Institute, is responsible for implementing decisions of the last General Chapter and defining the practical of helping to pool resources for mission. It assesses the decisions, which have been made at all levels in regard to their general objectives fixed by the Congregation in the Acts of its Chapters. It also examines reports on the financial state presented by the general administration and regional administrations.

212- It gives a deliberative vote on the following questions:

- the convocation of an extraordinary General Chapter;
- the founding, modification or suppression of a region or a vicariate;
- modification within the interval between 2 General Chapters of ordinary contributions to the funds to the Congregation;
- determining the extraordinary financial contribution to the funds of the Congregation;
- fixes the financial ceilings after which recourse to the general administration is needed
- the change of location of the Generalate after having notified the Holy See;
- the date of the next general chapter, which must be held in twelve months when the congregation is governed by the Vicar General.

CANONICAL VISITS

213- The canonical visit made by the Superior General aims to promote unity both within, and between communities; the visit allows him to witness their fidelity to the charism, and helps stimulate the spiritual and apostolic life of the religious.

214- The Superior General visits all the communities of the Congregation at least once every 3 years. He meets each religious and presides at a reunion of each community. He takes an interest in the mission, and the works confided to the communities and religious. He examines and signs the accounts, after they have been examined by an expert. He can delegate (this task) to a member of his council or another member of the Congregation.

215- The regional superior also makes a canonical visit of the communities of his region at least once a year. In a particular case, he can delegate the visit of a community to a religious that he believes more adapted to this mission.

S 13 Every canonical visit is prepared with care by those who undertake it and those who receive it.

S 14 The General Visitor meets at the beginning and at the end of the visit the regional superior and his council to have a global view of the problems of the region.

S 15 During canonical visits authority is in the hands of the visitor. But he can leave to the local superior the task of ensuring the ordinary progress of the community.

C. THE ORGANISATION OF THE CONGREGATION: THE REGIONS

216- To promote greater unity, to show in a better way the life of the family, to ensure a more immediate and direct animation in regard to the different cultures, the Congregation is organised into regions, 'union between several houses, which constitute an immediate part of the congregation under the same superior.'¹⁷⁶

217- It falls to the Superior General with the Council of the Congregation to establish, to modify or to suppress a region.

¹⁷⁶ CIC 581. 620

218- Exceptionally, some communities or religious can be directly attached to the Superior General and his council.

219- Aid between communities, vicariates and regions is the natural sign of the bonds which exist between members of the same religious family. It is shown firstly by exchanges between religious. It can appeal, in cases of need, for the availability of religious according to the obedience, which characterises us.

220- A religious normally belongs to the congregation as a member of the region, which admits him to first profession. After having heard regional superiors, and all the parties concerned, the superior general can ask a religious of the congregation to make himself available for a specific period of time to a region other than where he has made his first vows.

221- Religious in residence in another region, exercises his right of voting in the region where he resides; he acquires there by the same fact, an active and passive voice.

S 16 Good information on local situations and the needs of each region facilitates this interchange. Regional secretaries send each month to the secretary general information of interest to all our brothers to strengthen the links which unite them.

S 17 Generally the agreement of a religious going from one region to another is arranged by a written agreement between the regional superiors concerned.

S 18 Economic interchange, which circumstances occasionally make necessary and urgent, express a solidarity which unites members of the same body; the regions and communities 'should share with each other their material goods, the wealthier helping the more deprived.'
(cf. PC 13) Regional & local authorities should go about this with brotherly love. The Superior General, in accord with the Council of the Congregation can ask for extraordinary contributions to come to the aid of communities which are in need.

S19 *Welcome and hospitality in regard to all our members are a duty and a joy for the members of the congregation. As a matter of course, religious priests, staying with a community over several days, will celebrate the Eucharist for the intentions of the community which welcomes them.*

REGIONAL CHAPTER

222- The Regional Chapter meets before the General Chapter under the presidency of the regional superior who calls it, and ensures its preparation and organisation with the aid of the Council of the Region.

223- The Regional Chapter is composed:

- of members by right: the regional superior and members of the Council of the region, all the superiors of communities, masters of novices and masters of scholastics;
- of members elected in each vicariate: one representative for every five religious clerics, one representative for every five religious brothers, a representative of religious in temporary vows.
- The members who have a temporary engagement, have a consultative voice in determined cases, i.e. for the appointment of the regional superior, and superior of the vicariate.

Method of Election

S 20 Delegates to the regional chapter are elected as follows:

i) In each vicariate a list is made of perpetually professed religious clerics, perpetually professed religious brothers; members by right (who have an active but not passive voice) are notified; each list of 5 religious or a fraction of 5 elects a delegate and a substitute.

ii) delegates require an absolute majority in the first ballot; if all are elected one proceeds to the election of the substitutes, who only require a relative majority.

If all the delegates are not elected on the first ballot, they make a second and last in which they elect, in one go, with a relative majority the delegates or the delegates which remain to be elected plus all the substitutes.

In a single ballot slip, each elector writes the names of the candidates of his choice, distinguishing those that he votes for as delegates from those that he votes for as substitutes.

Those who are elected as delegates; are those who obtain the most votes as delegates; those who are elected as substitutes are those who gained most votes as delegates and as substitutes, these votes being additional.

One cannot elect the same person as delegate and as substitute on the same list.

iii) religious in temporary vows of the region elect one delegate.

iv) the ballot papers will be sent to the regional superior. He with this council counts them and makes known the complete results of each ballot.

S 21 Some religious and lay people of the family of Betharram can be invited as advisers or experts without the right to vote by the regional superior or at the request of the chapter itself.

224- For Acts of the regional chapter to be valid, all entitled or elected members must be called and two thirds must be present.

225- The regional chapter examines the state of the region and communities from a spiritual, apostolic, economic and disciplinary point of view. The regional chapter evaluates the application of resolutions of the preceding general and regional chapters; it studies the theme of the General Chapter proposed by the Superior General, and takes up propositions made by the vicariates, the communities or the religious of the regions; it formulates concrete proposals for the General Chapter. It elects delegates of the region to the General Chapter.

226- Reports and resolutions of the regional chapter approved by the superior general and his council are then made known to all members of the region. The regional superior will make every effort to put into effect the regional project.

THE REGIONAL SUPERIOR

227- The regional superior is a major superior who directs and administers the region dependent on the Superior General.¹⁷⁷ He governs the region, in conformity with the rule of life, the decisions of the general and regional chapters according to the directives of the Holy See.

228- The regional superior is chosen from among the religious priests, with 10 years in perpetual vows. He is appointed by the Superior General with the consent of his council, within 4 months after the General Chapter; his mandate lasts up to the next ordinary general chapter. He can be appointed for a second consecutive term in the same region. Unless revoked by the appointing authority, every superior, and his administration remains in charge until his successor is installed. At the beginning of his first term of office, the regional superior makes profession of faith and an oath of fidelity in the presence of the superior general, or his delegate.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ CIC 620

¹⁷⁸ CIC 838, 8

229- For the appointment of the regional superior, all the religious of the region propose names of 3 candidates to the superior general by order of preference whom they judge most capable. This consultation is secret.

230- The regional superior is the spiritual and apostolic animator of religious of the region. He maintains a strict line of collaboration with the superior general for the mission that he has received from him; he keeps him continually informed of all the developments and situations of the vicariates, the communities and religious of his region.

231- He exercises the service of authority for the religious of his region; he takes care to know them; he is always ready to listen and talk with them, so as to help them realise their happiness in being faithful to their vocation; he seeks in every situation, the spiritual and human growth of each and everyone. He oversees the application of the regional project for putting into effect decisions of the chapters and councils of the Congregation. He cultivates the spirit of the founder in the region; he fosters union between the vicariates and communities and the whole of the Congregation. He oversees attentively the administration of goods in the region.

232- He organises vocation promotion and interests all religious of the region in this. He has particular concern for formation of religious: he oversees the good progress of the houses of formation, according to the regional formation project, and the *Formation Guide* of the Congregation; he encourages the formators to be in a state of permanent formation; he supports discernment of the capabilities of each young member in formation; he accompanies with particular attention the religious beyond their first years of perpetual profession and priestly ordination. He proposes and supports many different paths in permanent formation.

233- He takes care of the communities of the region: he visits each one at least once a year; he takes time to spend some days with the community that he visits; he meets each of the members, he takes an interest in their activities; he constantly assesses the good founded on the presence of the community in the mission, where it is inserted.

234- In order to serve the local church, he maintains genuine contact with the bishops of the dioceses, where our communities are present.¹⁷⁹ Each time that they think of any change, he informs the ordinary concerned.

S 22 The regional superior will take care to send to the secretary general, for the archives of the congregation a copy of the acts of regional administration, as well as a copy of the public documents concerning the region.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

235- In the exercise of his mandate a regional superior is helped by a Regional Council and a Council of the region. The Regional Council is formed from the regional vicar and the superiors of the vicariate. The Regional Council chooses from within itself or outside, a regional secretary. The Superior General, with his council appoints a regional bursar from within or without the Regional Council. The regional secretary, and the regional bursar, are perpetually professed; the same person can perform both roles. The Council of the Region is formed from the regional council, and from religious elected from each vicariate.

The Regional Council

236- The Regional Superior convokes his Council as often as necessary but at least every six months. All members must be convoked, and at least half be present. The Regional Superior may invite qualified persons to give advice on particular issues.

¹⁷⁹ MUR 52

237- The regional Superior discerns with his Council the mission and the composition of the communities and in fraternal dialogue gives the appointments to each religious; he informs the Superior General of all changes.

238- The vote of the regional council is deliberative and secret on the following questions:

- admission to the novitiate, the first profession and to the renewal of vows
- prolongation of canonical novitiate, in particular cases;
- renewal of temporary vows
- presentation for instituted ministries
- demand for admission to perpetual profession addressed to the Superior General;
- requests for presentation to the diaconate or presbyterate addressed to the Superior General;
- the request addressed to the Superior General for the sending away of a professed in perpetual vows or in temporary vows;
- the appointment of local superiors submitted for the approval of the Superior General and his Council;
- the appointment of local bursars

Council of the Region

239- The Council of the region is called at least once a year by the Regional Superior. It is also convoked after the Council of the Congregation following a General Chapter to take account of its decisions and to form a regional project to implement them.

*S 23 The agenda of the Council of the Region is sent in good time to councillors by the Regional Superior.
All members are convoked, and for the validity of the proceedings, it is necessary that at least two thirds be present.*

240- The Council of the Region is the competent authority to consider a foundation, closure or change of mission of a house or a community and to study the legal and economic consequences. It examines in particular, the state of the region as a whole, and the implementation of decisions of the General Chapter and Councils of the Congregation as well as the regional project.

S 24 The Council of the Region is specifically in charge of preparing the regional chapter.

241- It has a deliberative and secret vote, subject to the approval of the Superior General and Council on these issues:

- the appointment of the master of novices, the master of scholastics and superiors of houses of formation,
- the founding of a house or community, change of pastoral orientation of a house or community and accepting a parish, the rights of the diocesan bishop being reserved (CIC 520)
- the suppression of a house or a community
- the convocation of a extraordinary regional chapter,
- the determination of extraordinary contributions of communities for the regional fund.

242- The vote of the Council of the region is deliberative on all the following questions:

- the use of funds of the region for important expenses, the rights of the Holy See and Superior General notwithstanding.
- The approval of the provisional budget and the balance sheet of each community,
- the determination of ordinary contributions of communities for the regional fund
- fixing the budgetary ceilings for each community, of payments, investments and all financial operations above which the permission of the regional administration is needed
- actualising the legal status of the Congregation according to the laws of each country, and the recognition of Associations linked to works according to the demands of the Rule of Life.

The Regional Vicar

243- The Regional Vicar is a major superior¹⁸⁰ who has ordinary power of government when in vicarial mode. ¹⁸¹ He assists the Regional Superior in the administration of the region.

244- Chosen among religious priests with perpetual vows he is appointed by the Superior General and his Council.

245- If the position of the Regional Superior becomes vacant, the Regional Vicar manages the ordinary business of the region until the appointment of the new Regional Superior.

The regional secretary

246- The Regional Secretary edits and countersigns official correspondence, and draws up legal documents of the council; keeps up to date with the general state of the members of the region, the different activities, works and houses.

He has the responsibility for the archives and keeps safe the acts and instruments and other important documents of the Region, and sends copies to the General Administration.

He receives a copy of all acts or important instruments of the vicariates and communities and sends a copy to the General Administration.

He is responsible for preparing and ordering different documents for the orderly procedure of the regional chapter.

S 25 *The regional secretary can be assisted by an additional religious or lay secretary.*

¹⁸⁰ CIC520

¹⁸¹ CIC 620

The regional bursar and the regional bursar's office

247- The Regional Bursar is in charge of the Regional Bursar's office and sees to the business of the region. With each vicariate superior, he ensures sound running of the vicariate's economic business according to local laws. The Regional Bursar reports on the Region's economic state to the Regional Chapter. Annually he presents a Regional financial report to the Regional Chapter for the last year and a budget for the next year. He will also present for approval, a similar report and budget for the communities.

248- The economic administration of the Region is confided to the Regional Bursar's office, presided over by the Regional Superior. It comprises religious and lay members chosen by the Regional Superior and his council for their expertise.

249- The task of the Regional Bursar's office is to manage the Region's goods. The office tends the management of the goods of the Region and communities, pooling resources as established by canon law, the Rule of Life, the Acts of the Chapters and Councils of the Congregation. Every transaction of importance, major payment, investment, loan and other transactions of extraordinary administration must receive the approval of the Regional Superior and the Council of the region. The office sends regularly the contribution of the Region to Congregational funds.

250- Regional Bursar's office receives the communities' accounts and provisional budgets; every six months, it sends their accounts to the Bursar General's office. He keeps an inventory of property deeds, valuable items, contracts, debts, loans, donations, kept in the archives. He requires from bursars of the Region a copy of similar documents kept in their archives.

251- The Regional Bursar's office aids the Regional Bursar. With him it helps community bursars in their economic administration; it guides Directors of Works in economic management at vicariate level; in particular it helps them separate community accounts from those of Works so as to work out expenditure & provisional budgets, in line with the Congregation's model of administration.

The Vicariates

252- Each region is subdivided into vicariates erected by the Council of the Congregation and placed under the authority of a Vicariate Superior, who is also a Regional Councillor.

253- The Superior of the vicariate animates the vicariate in the name and under the authority of the Regional Superior. Chosen from the religious-priests in perpetual vows, he is appointed for six years by the Superior General with the deliberative vote of the General council, after consultation with the Regional Superior. For this appointment all the religious of the vicariate propose to the Superior General the names, by order of preference of three candidates whom they judge most suitable.

254- The Superior of the Vicariate is helped by the Council of the Vicariate. It is composed of the superiors of the communities, or failing that by two councillors elected by the Assembly of the Vicariate.

- He is the legal representative of the Congregation before the local civil authorities.
- He is the spiritual and apostolic animator of the religious of his vicariate;
- He accompanies the religious and the communities, overseeing their fidelity to the Regional Project;
- He helps to elaborate and follow up community projects:
- He fosters the union of communities with those of the region;
- He informs the religious of what happens in the communities;
- He participates in vocations promotion in the vicariate and encourages zeal and prayer of the religious for vocations.

255- He fosters a close link of collaboration with the Regional Superior for the mission that he has received from him; he keeps constantly up to date with the development and the situation of communities and persons of his vicariate.

The Assembly of the Vicariate

256- After the appointment of the Regional Council, the Vicariate Superior of the calls a Vicariate Assembly in the course of which the religious of the vicariate elect their delegates to the Council of the Region.

At least once a year the Vicariate Superior, gathers all the members of the vicariate in an Assembly. The object of this Assembly, presided over by the Regional Superior, is to foster sharing, unity, permanent formation etc. Before the Regional Chapter is called, the Assembly examines the situation of the vicariate and shapes proposals to present to the Regional Chapter

E THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Communities

257- The communities of the Congregation dispersed in the world for the service of the Kingdom of God and the mission of the church form one family, united by the bond of charity, under the authority of the Superior General.

Aware of this truth, we religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are ever ready to commit ourselves wherever our superiors send us.

258- The religious community is composed of at least three religious who to love their mission lived together under the authority of a superior, in a properly constituted house.¹⁸²

Some religious who as an exception live alone or in twos are attached to a community; they participate in the life of that community in relation to the community project established by the Regional Superior.

Circumstances can lead to appointing the same superior for several little groups of religious living in different house properly constituted; all thus form a single community. The Regional Superior will oversee how this community project develops.

¹⁸² CIC608

The local Superior

259- The local superior is the animator of the community and has principal responsibility for it. Taken from among the priests with perpetual vows, he is appointed by the Regional Superior, after consultation with the community, and with the deliberative and secret vote of the Regional Council. The appointment is submitted for approval of the Superior General and his council. He is also a Councillor to the Vicariate Superior. Before taking up his responsibility, the local superior makes a profession of faith and an oath of fidelity before the Regional Superior or his delegate.¹⁸³

260- The local superior remains in charge of the community where he lives for three years; his mandate can be renewed for a second and, exceptionally a third time consecutively for the same community. The regional superior takes care not to keep a religious too long without interruption in a post of government.¹⁸⁴

261- Following the example of the Good Shepherd, the local superior fulfils his ministry of authority, as his first mission:

- He governs the community according to the rule of life; he fosters participation by all and makes necessary decisions;
- In line with the Regional Superior he establishes with his community a plan of community life and tends its application;
- He fosters brotherly union in Christ, based on personal & community prayer
- He helps each of the members to remain faithful to their vocation and mission received in the community, and fosters every step of permanent formation;
- He animates the community as a place of evangelical life, following the charism of the congregation;
- He watches over a genuine placing of resources in common, and a witness to evangelical poverty by the community;
- He accompanies & supports each brother with respect and love
- He takes particular care of elderly or sick brothers.

¹⁸³ CIC: 833, 8

¹⁸⁴ CIC624,

262- The religious on their part, conscious of their responsibility in what concerns their own religious life and the mission of the community seek with their superior through obedience God's designs for themselves and their apostolate.

263- The superior guarantees the community project, by regularly animating at least once a month through a meeting with the community to foster the spiritual, apostolic and community life of the religious. All the religious will participate actively in it.

264- With the deliberative vote of the Council of the Region and the approval of the Superior General, the Regional Superior can for serious reasons relieve a local superior of his responsibility before the end of his term of office.

Local administration

265- In communities two religious with perpetual vows will assist in a special way is superior: the Assistant-Secretary, elected by the community, and the bursar appointed by the Regional Superior. All business of any importance is proposed by the superior for the opinion of the community. They will regularly examine the accounts presented by the bursar and determine the use of funds for extraordinary expenses, notwithstanding the rights reserved to major superiors.

S 26 In houses of formation the Assistant-Secretary is appointed by the Regional Superior and his Council.

266- For major or extraordinary expenses the community must always present the plan, the estimate and the method of payments to the regional administration or if necessary to the General Administration and the Holy See.

The assistant secretary

267- The Assistant is the first adviser to the superior. He is elected by secret vote by all the religious of the community. He replaces a superior, during his absence and collaborates with him for animation. As secretary, he takes notes of all meetings; he conserves, classifies in archives, all the documents which can be of interest to the community or the history of the Congregation.

THE BURSAR

268- The bursar is appointed by the Regional Superior with the consent of his council from among the religious. He is responsible, under the guidance of the superior, for administration of goods and for the material interests of the community. He has recourse if necessary to the help of an expert in accounts and finance.

269- At the beginning of the financial year, the bursar establishes a provisional budget that he submits to the opinion of the community.

- He keeps the accounts with the greatest care, following the format used by the congregation.
- He takes care to keep the inventory of the house up to date
- For payments, investments and other financial operations which exceed the determined ceiling set by the Council of the Region, he must have recourse to the Regional Bursar.
- He will send regularly to the Regional Bursar, the different economic statements demanded. He will send at fixed dates contributions determined by the Council of the Region.
- He oversees the good condition of buildings, and all property.
- He ensures that a fair wage is given to people who work for the community, being attentive to the needs of social justice.
- If the community is in charge of an apostolic work, the financial management of the community must be separated from that of the work.

IX ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

General Norms

270- The Congregation, consisting of the Generalate House, the regions, and vicariates as legal persons have the capacity to acquire, possess and dispose of temporal goods with stable revenues and to administer them in accordance with the Rule of Life and the requirements of law. The right of a local community to possess property is limited; it is determined by the Regional Superior, and the Council of the Region. The local community enjoys the benefits of goods put at its disposition.

271- Avoiding luxury, exaggerated gain and the accumulation of wealth, everything must be directed towards pooling resources for mission. This management is ordered in such a way that goods of the community are in keeping with the life of the vicariate and the Region, and the goods of the Region in keeping with the life and the mission of the whole Congregation.

272- The Regional Superior and his Council pay attention to determine the legal mechanism which connects each work, college or other institution, and its management to the Congregation.

273- All the goods of the Congregation as such, the Generalate, Regions, Vicariates and local communities belong to the church and are regulated by canon law, and the Rule of Life.

274- The Superior General and the Regional Superiors are helped in the management of goods by the bursar's office, presided over by the superior and directed by the bursar.

S 27 The bursar's offices manage goods, dependent on their respective superiors. They report on their management at fixed dates and produce accounts and provisional budgets. The superior signs the accounts after they have been approved by his council.

ORDINARY ADMINISTRATION

275- Every superior, and every religious bursar regularly appointed for this task by the superior authority validly spends and carries out legal acts of ordinary administration within the limits fixed by the Rule of Life and by ecclesiastical and civil law.

276- Before exercising his responsibility, the bursar should promise by oath made before the major superior or his delegate to be a 'good and faithful administrator'.¹⁸⁵

277- Among other normal tasks:

- he must draw up a clear and precise inventory of real estate and movable goods, which he has to administer.
- He protects the goods through insurance contracts, understands and invests the revenues and rents, pays interest on loans or mortgages, observes the laws on conditions of work and salaries, gives an account to benefactors of the use of their gifts received.

S 28 *If a religious receives a mission from the major superior to manage a work, his administration is submitted to the control of the council for administration of that work. He also accounts for it to his major superior.*

S 29 *Attention to the poorest begins by sharing between brothers of the same Congregation. It must not stop there.*

S 30 *The bursar pays the bills for current expenses. Money put in reserve is kept safely or deposited in a bank in the name of the community with the signature of two or three religious, in accordance with the decisions of the Council of the Region.*

S 31 *For thrift he will abide by the ceilings fixed by Council of the Region*

¹⁸⁵ CIC 1283

EXTRAORDINARY ADMINISTRATION

278- With the required deliberative vote of the Council of the Congregation or of the Council of the Region, and after necessary recourse, the major superior alone can initiate acts of extraordinary administration which includes all legal acts: acquisition and transferring goods, loans, mortgages. With the deliberative vote of his council he can give a written order authorising explicitly, his bursar or another person to initiate an act of extraordinary administration.

279- Debts, loans and other obligations cannot be contracted by public or private acts without the deliberative vote of the General or Regional Council; the same applies in regard to undertaking a mortgage or an investment.

280- To acquire extraordinary goods, to accept gifts bound by conditions, to seek help to finance the work of the Congregation, written permission is needed from the major superior and the local bishop.

Gifts made to the superior or to the bursar always belong to the lawful person to which they are destined.

S 32 Each work like a legal body, is equipped with a governing body, of which members by right are the major superior and his bursar or those whom the superior delegates.

S. 33 The Regional Superior with the Council of the Region determines what funds can be administered by the local communities. In case of important transfers (sales, loans) it takes the economic measures demanded by the council of the congregation, and those that it judges opportune for a better brotherly sharing of financial resources.

S 34 *No religious accepts without the authorisation of the major superior to administer the goods of other people or takes responsibility for a deposit (of which the amount must be fixed by the Council of the Region). No authorisation will be given without the necessary guarantees.*

S 35 *Bursars in their accounting role must make a separation between ordinary and extraordinary receipts. To pay extraordinary expenses, they conform to the prescriptions of the Holy See and decisions of the General Chapters and Councils of the Congregation.*

LEGAL SAFEGUARDS

281- When a religious contracts debts, loans or other obligations, they are entirely his own responsibility, unless he has been expressly and legitimately authorised to act on account of the community. It is the same when through his own fault he is the cause of damage to a third party.

282- If a person (physical or moral), a stranger or not to the Congregation appears before the civil law as proprietor of our goods, the legal representative of each juridical entity (Congregation, Generalate, Region....) takes every measure necessary to safeguard the rights of the community.

283- In case of disputes, appeal should be made to the higher authority of the Congregation before having recourse to ecclesiastical courts, or civil courts in the last resort.

X LEAVING THE CONGREGATION

Leaving by a Temporarily Professed

284- At the end of his temporary commitment a member of the Congregation is always free to leave.¹⁸⁶

285- The religious in temporary vows who asks in writing for a serious reason to leave the Congregation can obtain an indult of departure from the Superior General with consent of his council.

286- The major superior with consent of his council can always for just reasons not admit a religious to renewal of temporary vows or final profession, bearing in mind Canon. 689 and the right of the religious not admitted to appeal to the Superior General.

Leaving by a Perpetually Professed (i) Exclaustation

287- A religious in perpetual vows cannot enter into another institute without the permission of the Superiors General of the two institutes, each with the consent of its council.¹⁸⁷

288- For a serious reason, but not beyond three years, the general superior with the consent of his council can give an indult of exclaustation. If he is a cleric, the consent of the Bishop of the place where the person lives is needed. For a duration of more than three years, permission of the Holy See is needed.¹⁸⁸

(ii) Laicisation

289- A religious in perpetual vows can only request an indult of departure for very grave reasons after reflecting in prayer with the help of a spiritual director. The request written and signed containing the clear reasons for the request is freely addressed to the Superior General. He with the consent of his Council transmits the request to the Holy See. When the indult of departure is legitimately conceded, notified and accepted the religious is dispensed from vows, and of all obligations of profession.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ CIC 688, 1.

¹⁸⁷ CIC 684, 1

¹⁸⁸ CIC 686, 687

¹⁸⁹ CIC 686, 687

290- If the religious is a cleric and wishes to remain one, he can first ask for an indult of dispensation, which will be given once he has found a bishop disposed to receive him into his diocese, with the intention or not of incardinating him.¹⁹⁰

DISMISSAL

291- If one is obliged to expel a member of the congregation (either perpetually or temporary professed) one follows the norms fixed by canon law¹⁹¹. The decision must be taken by the Superior General and his whole Council together.¹⁹² One will try hard to preserve the reputation of the person leaving and will help him in every way as required by charity.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

292- Subjects who leave the congregation of their own free will and those who are expelled conforming to the dispositions of law and the Rule of Life can be given no indemnity for the work done or services rendered to the congregation. It is the same for those who leave in the course of the postulancy or of novitiate.

293- The Superior General with the consent of his council can re-admit a religious to temporary or perpetual vows, who has legitimately left the congregation, without demanding him to re-do the novitiate. The superior general will fix in each case the manner of his integration¹⁹³.

¹⁹⁰ CIC 693

¹⁹¹ CIC694-703

¹⁹² CIC699

¹⁹³ CIC690

XI

PARTICULAR SITUATIONS

294- Our Congregation is a Pontifical Institute of the Latin rite and conforms to the legislation of that Roman Catholic Church: the Sovereign Pontiff is the supreme head of it.

RELIGIOUS OF AN ORIENTAL RITE

295- Bearing in mind the principle, that no one may pass from an Oriental Catholic Rite *sui juris* to the Latin Rite without the accord of the Holy See, and written accord of his oriental bishop,¹⁹⁴ the Congregation can accept members of an Oriental Catholic Church, and agree to open a house in an Oriental Catholic diocese.¹⁹⁵

296- The Regional Superior with the consent of his Council can admit to the novitiate a faithful Catholic of an Oriental rite who will normally keep his rite of origin, after obtaining the consent of his Oriental bishop¹⁹⁶. Where the candidate to the novitiate requests entrance to the Latin Rite the major superior must obtain the consent of the Holy See.¹⁹⁷

297- The religious of the Oriental rite presented to the diaconate receives ordination in his own rite, or in the Latin rite; if he is presented for the priesthood he receives ordination in his Oriental rite. Now sufficiently instructed in his rite and enjoying bi-ritualism the religious priest keeps close to his church of origin.

298- The Superior General, and his council before approving a foundation of a house, which is at the service of an Oriental diocese must obtain the consent of the Holy See. The religious of this house, follow the legislation of that church in their apostolic activities, and our Rule of Life in community

¹⁹⁴ CCEO 32

¹⁹⁵ See above No.128

¹⁹⁶ CCEO452

¹⁹⁷ CCEO 451, 517,

RELIGIOUS RAISED TO THE EPISCOPATE

299- A religious raised to the episcopate remains a member of the congregation without being tied to obligations incompatible with his condition; but he has neither active nor passive vote. In virtue of his vow of obedience he depends exclusively on the sovereign Pontiff.¹⁹⁸ For his vow of poverty, he follows the norms of law.¹⁹⁹

300- The Congregation will welcome into one of the houses of the Congregation the retired religious bishop, who so requests. He recovers his rights and duties as a religious.²⁰⁰

CONCLUSION

**We wish to conform our life to this Rule of Life
We strive to observe it**

«It is important to study our rules, since they are the expression of the form of life that we have embraced.»²⁰¹

«Our rules are the means of co-operation with grace, the right ways to go to God and to put ourselves under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Outside these rules is merely individual interpretation, the reign of our own love. »²⁰²

Rome, January 2007
Bethlehem Easter 2007

¹⁹⁸ CIC705, CCEO 431, 1, 2

¹⁹⁹ CIC706; CCE0431, 3

²⁰⁰ CIC 707 CCE0431, 2, 2

²⁰¹ M3 26

²⁰² DS 22,224

INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS

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T. III : Nouvelles lettres, Ed. Bergeret, Bordeaux, 1975
- DS DUVIGNAU Pierre s.c.j., La Doctrine Spirituelle de Saint Michel Garicoïts, Beauchesne, Paris, 1949, 390 pages
- MS DUVIGNAU Pierre s.c.j., Un Maître Spirituel du XIX^{ème} siècle, Saint Michel Garicoïts, Beauchesne, Paris, 1963, 373 pages.

Official Church Documents :

- AG Vatican II, Ad Gentes, Decree on the missionary activity of the church, 07.12.1965
- CCEO Codex canonum ecclesiarum orientalium, Code of canon law for oriental churches promulgated by John Paul II, Rome, 18.10.1990
- CEC Congregation for Catholic Education, Tria iam lustra, Fundamental Plan for the formation of priests, 19.03.1985
- CIC Codex iuris canonici, Code of canon law promulgated by John Paul II, Rome, 25.01.1983
- DCE BENEDICT XVI, Deus Caritas Est, encyclical on Christian Love, 25.12.2005
- DV Vatican II, Dei Verbum, Dogmatic Constitution in Divine Revelation, 18.11.1965
- EE JOHN PAUL II, Ecclesia de Eucharistia, encyclical on the Eucharist and its relationship with the church, 17.04.2003
- EEVR Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, Essential elements in the Church's teaching as applied to institutes dedicated to works of the apostolate, document, 31.05.1983
- GS Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, Pastoral Constitution on the church in the modern world 07.12.1965
- LG Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, dogmatic constitution on the church, 21.11.1964
- MuR Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes and Congregation of Bishops, Mutuae relationes, notes & directives, 14.05.1979

- NA Vatican II, **Nostra Aetate**, Declaration on relations between the church and non-Christian religions, 28.10.1965
- NMI JOHN PAUL II, **Novo millennio ineunte**, apostolic letter for the end of the Grand Jubilee of the Millenium, 06.01.2001
- OT Vatican II, **Optatam Totius**, Decree on priestly formation, 28.10.1965
- PC Vatican II, **Perfectae caritatis**, Decree on the renewal of religious life, 28.10.1965
- PI Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes , **Potissimum institutionis**, directives on formation in Religious Institutes , 02.02.1990
- PO Vatican II, **Presbyterorum Ordinis**, decree on the ministry and life of priests.12.1965
- RdC Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes , **In contemplating the Face**, instruction on « **Starting again from Christ** : a renewed commitment for the consecrated life in the third millennium », 19.05.2002
- RM JOHN PAUL II, **Redemptoris Missio**, encyclical letter on the eternal validity of the missionary mandate, 7.12.90
- SC Vatican II, **Sacrosanctum Concilium**, Constitution on the Divine Liturgy, 04.12.1963
- UR Vatican II, **Unitatis Redintegratio**, Decree on Ecumenism, 21.11.1964
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- VFC Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, **Congregavit Nos in unum Christ amor**, Document on fraternal life in community, 02.02.1994
- S Statute

