

PRESENTATION

Our Seventeenth General Chapter took place because of the express wish of the Church, which so desired it that we might better participate in its conciliar planning.

In interpreting the true meaning of the conciliar texts contained in the decree "*Perfectae Caritatis*," which is directed to consecrated persons, any other than a literal exegesis is out of place.

In this document, the Church affirms clearly and explicitly its conciliar thesis, already evident in its title: "On the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life." Renewal is an indisputable fact. Its necessity is a phenomenon produced in the Church by the Holy Spirit. The Church simply takes it up.

The nature and characteristics which should set apart this renewal in the historical moment in which we live are expressed in very concrete terms in all the articles of the aforementioned decree.

The overriding general theme of this work of renewal is "the constant return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original spirit of the Institutes and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time" (PC 2). This renewal "under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church" is to be advanced in accordance with certain principles indicated by the Council itself. The Council presents us, also, practical guidelines to renew the religious life in itself and in certain expressions that are not essential to it" (*Ibid. passim*).

These fundamental principles, in addition to the norms for applying the Council contained in the *Motu Proprio*, "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*," were given careful consideration by our special General Chapter, and became, as it were, the vital support of all the doctrinal and legislative work which the Chapter imposed upon itself.

The Church's posture of renewal should not seem strange. This is a condition of its being as the Mystical Body -- in the dynamic of salvation -- and of its existence in time. Church history takes note of and describes numerous innovations in the religious life, manifested either in the need for new structures, or in the form of prohibitions and condemnations, or most of all in the living *magisterium* of the Church.

Our own day is not far removed from one of the principal and most complete restorations which the religious life has experienced. We refer to the intense work of renewal which religious Congregations were required to undertake, by virtue of Canon 489, in order to adopt their legislation to the new code of Canon law promulgated shortly before. That renewal, just like our own, was to have been previously discussed and approved by the General Chapter of each Institute.

We know that at the time - just as it can happen now - a kind of anxiety complex was noted in certain sectors, as if the new canonical legislation applied to Congregations would require the modification of the text of the Constitutions, oftentimes written by the Founder himself under the sign of a particular charism.

This crisis of fear also seeped into our own Congregation at that time. And the Chapter which accomplished this adaptation, in bringing its work to a successful conclusion, judged it necessary, or wise, to send to the entire Congregation a marvelous declaration which was intended to reassure everyone's feelings. Please permit us to refer here to several paragraphs which can also assist us at present:

"These retouches made in the Constitutions of religious Institutes, even those Constitutions that were written by the Founders themselves are not contrary to the spirit of the Church. Rather, they are in keeping with the way it functions. Thus, we see that when religious Institutes present their Rules or Constitutions to the Holy See for approval, the Holy See, before granting it, customarily demands that they be corrected or that many points be changed; or it even corrects them or changes them itself, without taking into consideration that the Constitutions had been written by the Founders, and even after they had been definitely approved. The Holy See does not find it difficult to grant and approve new changes, when there are reasons for them" (cf. *Anales de la Congregación*, Vol.18, 1922, p. 906).

In fact, this actually takes place in the ordinary administration of the Holy See. The objective which the Church proposed to the General Chapter of 1922 was much more of an innovation. It concerned real changes in structures. For this reason the "*Declaración*" continues by pointing out:

"But now we must do something more, because the Church itself is the one who has commanded that all the Rules

and Constitutions of the different religious Corporations be changed in everything that the new code of Canon law requires" (*Ibid.*).

And facing the will of the Church, the Chapter takes a well defined, orthodox position:

"By what has been said it may be seen how groundless is the premonition with which some persons view any change which must be made in the Constitutions, when they see that along with them we will lose the rights we have acquired, or that such changes do not belong to the rule that has been professed" (*Ibid.*, p. 908).

History is repeating itself in less than half a century, even with regard to the mentality of religious. Let us ponder the conclusion of the aforesaid "*Declaracion*" of the members of the Chapter of 1922:

"We could not exempt ourselves from such decisive precepts (of the Church), nor solicit a special dispensation from them. This would have been a vain and useless pretense" (*Ibid.*).

This was a merely juridical and disciplinary conclusion. Because the theological and religious conclusion is one of all-embracing reverence:

"If in spite of everything, someone still feels a repugnance toward these changes, let him at least follow the example of submission and docility which all our members gave upon hearing the exhortation of our Father Founder who, in the General Chapter at Gracia in 1864, had to give encouragement and to calm the "unrestrained repugnance" (sic!) of superiors and fellow members faced with a similar problem."

What posture must be adopted by the sons of the Congregation today, in the presence of our capitular renewal, the principles and applications of which are contained in the book which we present them today?

It would be out of place to take a merely passive attitude. This is a form of comfortable conformism and spiritual ignorance which produces stagnation and death. The words directed to the Angel of Laodicea, "You are neither cold nor hot" (Apoc 3,15), could be applied to anyone who would adopt this interior attitude. Renewal is everyone's obligation. "An effective renewal and adaptation demands the cooperation of all the members of the Institute," the conciliar documents proclaim (PC 4).

An interior personal decision toward renewal must be made. This decision as Paul VI teaches, has two forms of expressing itself, two directions to follow.

The first is a revolutionary form, the idea of relinquishment. It has been said, that for renewal it is necessary to relinquish many things, such a tradition, authority, theology, culture, law, institutions, forms of piety, and in this way to approach the thought of today, the apostolate of today, the world of today. Our Holy Father calls this a seductive direction, but in reality it is a false and unilateral posture.

This direction is pursued many times only as a reaction, in order to oppose the extremes of conservatism, of those who conserve only for the sake of conserving, because it has been done in this way in the past and has been done well.

The absence of adaptation thus forces those who bear within themselves and in their formation the signs of the time to search by themselves for positions and solutions that are also extreme.

There is a second direction, the right direction. The Holy Father defines it as a solution of "discovery". It is to discover and find reasons which justify and explain the concrete forms in which the life of the Church – and the Congregation, according to the spirit of our Founder – should be realized in today's world. It is to search for the way to accommodate in thought, in word, in practices, in the institution, in its historical development, our Founder's germinal idea in his Congregation.

This search and discovery will increase the desire and the need for a gradual progress, with an overhaul inside and out, motivated more by the fecundity of the charism of the Founder and by the riches of the spiritual patrimony of the Congregation than by institutional deficiencies.

In other words, and applied to ourselves, we can say that the General Chapter does not destroy but discovers and restores. And in this vital dimension it will occur to no one to state that the fruit of renewal is any kind of advantage in

the external order – on act of piety which is no longer a community act or a point of rule interpreted with greater mildness, etc. Because he who deepens and exploits the spirit encounters and gains fruits of the spirit.

In this sense, we accept the conclusion of our Holy Father, applying it to the Congregation. “If we truly wish to give a sincere testimony (of the Congregation) in its present vicissitudes and if we wish to contribute to make effective its apostolic mission, we shall strive never to separate from it this twofold by-word: “renewal and fidelity” (*Address of Paul VI in a general audience, August 9th, 1967*).

This is the thought expressed by our General Chapter when it affirms that “the process of renewal should begin with an interior effort to be faithful to our vocation and it requires of everyone a profound attitude of willingness very similar to a real conversion” (*Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation, n. 59*).

The mature fruit of the study and the discussions which were had (after a previous and generous consultation of the entire Congregation) in numerous capitular meetings, in the precapitular central commission, in the capitular assembly itself, we now place at the disposition of all the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

They consist of a clarification of the charism of St. Anthony Mary Claret, as the Founder of the Congregation; two declarations on the Spiritual Patrimony of the Congregation and on Christian Education; and seven decrees: on the Government of the Congregation, Religious Life, Coadjutor Brothers, the Apostolate, Missions to Non-Christians, Formation, and Administration.

This precious treasure, like any material that has an intrinsic value, bears its own recommendation. We believe that our Father Founder would have received these documents with a supernatural and ecclesial spirit, with an open mind and an ecumenical attitude; and that he would have read them with profit and even with a spontaneous holy satisfaction to see reflected in them his spiritual and apostolic physiognomy.

We have repeatedly heard the complaint that the capitular doctrine is very good, very profound, but almost exclusively theoretical, and that “it leaves many things hanging in the air.”

We sincerely believe that if we try to “discover it” – assimilate it – it will give an authentically Claretian meaning to all our undertakings. To renew is to create and creation is the fruit of thought and of a love that translates itself into vital action. These capitular decrees contain and express the authentic spirit of our Father Founder. If we make them our own, our undertakings will be Claretian.

This is why we have decided that everyone should have a personal copy of official text of the capitular decrees at his disposal as soon as possible.

In this way everyone will be able to read them continuously and study them. It will be the book of our meditation. In it we will be able to make our spiritual reading. We will be able to make it our guide for our daily examination, and on retreat days. It can be the text of the Congregation’s spirituality, according to which the Congregation orients and renews itself.

This morning, at the tomb of our Father Founder, we have concelebrated Mass with the Provincials of Spain. We have gathered together in sacrificial enclosure with Christ, the Eternal Priest. In the Offertory we have offered Him, through the intercession of Father Claret, our projects and the aspirations of all the sons of the Congregation.

In conclusion, let us say that our first project in taking up the mandate that we have received – rather the only one – is the renewal of the Congregation in the capitular sense: that renewal which is the task of the entire Congregation. The decrees which we now present are the vital sap of our spirituality.

Antonio Leghisa, C.M.F.
Superior General

Vic, March 15, 1968

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ABBREVIATIONS OF CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS

AA Apostolicam Actuositatem	(The Apostolate of the Laity)
AG Ad Gentes	(The Church's Missionary Activity)
CD Christus Dominus	(The Pastoral Office of Bishops)
DV Dei Verbum	(Divine Revelation)
GE Gravissimum Educationis	(Christian Education)
GS Gaudium et Spes	(The Church in the Modern World)
LG Lumen Gentium	(The Church)
OT Optatam Totius	(Priestly formation)
PC Perfectae Caritatis	(Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life)
PO Presbyterorum Ordinis	(The Ministry and Life of Priests)

N.B. The remaining abbreviations are either well known or can be identified from the context.

Declaration on the Charism of St. Anthony Mary Claret the Founder of our Congregation

I. The Charism of an Institute

1. The charism of a religious Institute, by which this Institute is fundamentally constituted, is a special donation or communication of grace which God makes to its Founder for the advantage of the Church (cf. I Cor 12,7), for the purpose of building it up (cf. Eph 4,12).

2. God chooses Founders of Religious Institutes according to His good pleasure, inasmuch as He distributes His gifts as He wishes (I Cor 12,11). Through the charism he confides to them a mission in the Church, as a work of service in it, within the Divine plan of salvation (cf. Eph 4,12).

3. Charism and mission imply one another mutually. This mission comes as a communication to the Founder to be fulfilled not only by him, but by a group of persons who, within the Church, and throughout time, must make up a special community founded on the community nature of the charism and of the service to the Church which this charism requires. The charism of Founders is not, then, an individual gift but a social one. From this comes its transmissibility and its permanence.

4. This charism or grace, and the mission which comes attached to it, supposes vocation on the part of God. God calls the Founder and all those who throughout history must be graced with a participation in the Founder's charism. By this vocation God sets aside for the members of an Institute a certain position in the Church. Each member of an Institute, participating in its charism, finds himself as it were inserted into the community nature of this charism. The actualization of the charism by the members of an Institute, although it should be a personal work, always departs from this original community nature of the charism, and this is ultimately founded on the grace of the Holy Spirit, from which all unity and community nature in the Church is derived (I Cor 12,13).

5. On the part of the Founder of an Institute, the charism is a fruit of his prophetic inspiration, a participation in the prophetic gift of Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit (LG 12; cf. Jn 2,20-27). Through that prophetic inspiration, the Founder obtains a particular knowledge of the mission which God confides to him, and which is transmissible to all those who by vocation of God must make up the Institute. By the same prophetic inspiration – and to the degree that they are comprehended in the mission which the charism implicitly brings with it – the Founder discovers also certain permanent virtualities of the Church. Although manifested on the occasion of a determined juncture in history, they will have to be made explicit throughout time by the Institute itself in the service of men's salvation and sanctification, as it cooperates in this way so that the Church might progress toward attaining its fullness (cf. Eph 4,11). It is this above all which endows an Institute with vigorous permanency.

6. Wherefore, the charism of an Institute is subjected to historical development to become more explicit in time, by reason of the progressive unfolding which the human community attains within the Church.

7. In response to the action of the Holy Spirit, an Institute's charism springs from the Church's life and holiness. Because of this, it must be recognized and approved by the Church. It is the Church which judges the authenticity of an Institute's charism and its exercise (LG 12&45).

8. It is the Church which places the seal upon the institutionalization of the charism. In religious Institutes, charism and institution are nothing else than two facets of the same ecclesial reality similar to what occurs in the Church.

9. The grace communicated by God in different degrees to each one of the members of an Institute is grace that is given for the purpose of realizing the charism. For this reason a particular spirituality is possible in each one of the Institutes. Normally, the Founders, above all if they are saints, are the ones who are the authentic models and as it were the pattern of this spirituality.

II. The Apostolic Charism of St. Anthony Mary Claret

10. Prepared from his childhood by supernatural lights and motions, our Founder felt himself forcefully called by the Holy Spirit to consecrate himself entirely to Christ and imitate His life in the proclamation of the Gospel. As a projection of the extraordinary vocation that he had, he founded his Congregation. His charism of Founder was, then, missionary, and it had this expression: the service or ministry of the Word in the style of the Apostles.

11. In order to prepare him for this mission, our Lord granted Him some special gifts of faith and charity, of abnegation and meekness. The root of his apostolic charism was an intense communication of the Spirit of Christ which led him to identify himself spiritually with the self-sacrificing and redeeming charity of Christ the Redeemer. This is the force which moved him interiorly to imitate the life of Christ and to sacrifice himself entirely for the Church's welfare and men's salvation.

His spiritual communion with Christ manifested itself in a son's profound piety toward the Father, a piety which impelled him to seek His greater glory by means of the proclamation of His grace; and in a son's tender devotion toward Mary, very especially toward her spiritual intimacy, her sorrows, her merciful love, her heart – in a word, toward everything by which Mary lived and still lives entirely consecrated to the Father in Son by the Holy Spirit, in close association with the saving work of Christ and as she is placed before us as a pre-figuration of the Church, Mother of believers and universal Help of men.

St. Anthony Mary Claret did not receive these gifts, which constitute as it were the interior root of his missionary charism, for himself alone, but in order that he might be in the Church someone who continued the life of Christ and the Apostles in the proclamation of the Gospel.

12. St. Anthony Mary Claret brought to fulfillment his particular mission in the Church while animated by a lively ecclesial and hierarchical sense and by a Catholic and universalist spirit. He was impelled by an acute sensitivity toward whatever was most pressing, timely and effective, at the same time that he showed a certain preference for the poor and humble, and dedicated a special care to the consecrated.

In the exercise of his personal vocation and his vocation as Founder, the Saint lived an evangelical life in the perfect following of Christ, with a profound sense of mission and with a powerful spirit of prayer and mortification, feeling himself directly bound up with the magisterial function of the bishops in the proclamation of the Gospel.

13. This vocation came as a gift to our Founder, as an immediate response to certain circumstances in the Church and even in the world. The Saint himself came to discover it entirely through his own environment, and through the signs of his time, for the interpretation of which God had had him prepared. The profundity with which he lived the Christian mystery permitted him to arrive at a response which, although immediately ordained to remedy the Church's needs in his time, finds itself on the level of the Church's permanent realities. It enriches its life and its ministry and has been recognized by the hierarchy and by experience itself as capable of being lived by others and contributing to the welfare of the Church and of the world, incarnated in different cultures and adapted to the needs of different localities.

III. Transmission of the Claretian Charism to the Congregation

14. The Church, in accepting our Father as a Founder and approving the Congregation begun by him as an extension of his spirit and mission, recognized the apostolic charism received by St. Anthony Mary Claret as a form of Christian life suitable to be lived by many, and of advantage to the People of God until the end of time.

15. The identity and the specific task of the Congregation within the Church consists in preserving in it, in a lively and effective manner, the gifts of grace and the Apostolic mission which the Holy Spirit awakened in our Father Founder in order to enrich the Church's life of holiness and to make its apostolate more fruitful in the world (cf. PCI).

16. The vocation to the Congregation is truly a personal vocation to live the Christian life and the life of the Church in solidarity with all those who have been similarly called, according to the gifts, the spirit, the vocation and

the mission that St. Anthony Mary Claret developed in the Church.

17. This charism, or particular gift, of the Congregation and of all its members, includes first of all those spiritual elements by which we are incorporated into the saving mission of Christ, of Mary and of the Church. The most important traits of this missionary spirit are the following:

a) A son's love toward the Father, by which we consecrate ourselves to His service in an obedient, confiding and active manner.

b) A very close union with Christ, to the point of matching His personal consecration to the Father and matching the sacrifice of His life on men's behalf. We accept this union and put it into effect by means of the profession of the evangelical counsels in our dedication to the saving mission of the Church.

c) A son's special consecration to the Heart of Mary as a means of associating ourselves more closely to Christ and to His work in union of spirit with Mary and through her intercession, and as a means also of offering ourselves as instruments of Mary's spiritual maternity over the Church and over all men.

d) All this makes us live profoundly the mystery of the Church in a particular manner its life of consecration to the Father in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and its saving mission in the world on behalf of all men. The Council's doctrine concerning the relations between Mary and the Church permits us to discover the profound consequences of our special consecration to the Heart of Mary, Figure and Mother of the Church, on men's behalf including the entire sacrifice of our life.

e) Finally, a particular solidarity with the entire People of God and with all of humanity which, in response to the action of the Spirit of Christ and of Mary, makes us especially sensitive to detect the needs of the Church and of the world, and to spread the Gospel by the most effective means in keeping with the most pressing needs of each time and place.

18. God has stirred up the spirit in us and ceaselessly stirs it up in order to send us, within the general mission of the Church, as missionaries destined to promote in all places the knowledge of His plan of salvation, the evangelization of the poor, the conversion of hearts, the renewal of Christian life and the fidelity of the consecrated. All this is what it means to say that in the Church we are collaborators of the bishops in the ministry of the Word.

19. The charism that the Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, inherited from their Founder is to live especially consecrated and associated to Christ, Son of the Father and of Mary, Who was sent to the world for men's salvation. In this way we are to be energetic helpers of the hierarchy in their magisterial ministry, through the missionary service of the Word (Const. I,2; cf. CD 12-14), exercised by all possible means (Const. II,63), for the spreading of the name of God and extending the Kingdom of Christ unto the ends of the earth (Const. I,122), thus realizing the Church's mission by offering salvation to all men.

20. In a few words, we can say that the charism, spirit and mission of the Congregation within the Church, is the missionary service of the Word. This ministry or service consists in the communication to men of the "whole mystery of Christ" (cf. CD 12; PO 8).

21. This charism of the Institute is fulfilled by all its members according to their particular vocation. For all receive the same gift, the same vocation, and all aspire in solidarity to the same goal in the same spirit: the building up of the Body of Christ by the missionary service of the Word. This missionary service of the Word requires in our day manifold ministries and new adaptations (cf. PO 8).

22. The Congregation realizes this mission in a direct and immediate manner through the human word, the primary instrument of all human communication. Through it, it makes use of all the means of communication which exist in society, be they its own or belonging to others, as circumstances suggest. Just as our Founder did, the Congregation also employs those works which by their very nature or because of special circumstances become particularly suitable for transmitting Christ's message and stimulating Christian life in the different human groups.

IV - The Common and the particular

23. The service of the Word makes us coincide with all those apostolic Institutes which have had confided to them "as their proper mission the duty of evangelization which pertains to the entire Church" (AG 23).

But as a Claretian charism, it possesses particular characteristics which taken as a whole configure us

in the Church and constitute in it our proper character (cf. PC 2,b).

24. The most important characteristics are the following:

- a) an imitation of the evangelical life of Christ as an expression of our self-gift, in order to live with Him and associate ourselves to His saving work by proclaiming His salvation to all men.
- b) a son's spirit and piety toward the Father, lived in union with Christ, the Son sent for men's salvation.
- c) We live our consecration to God and to the Church in an atmosphere of special consecration to the Heart of Mary, Temple of the most Holy Trinity, Companion of the Redeemer, Figure and Mother of the Church.
- d) a special devotion to the Eucharist and to the Word of God as primary and constant sources of our supernatural life and apostolic zeal.
- e) a special obedience and loyalty to the Pope.
- f) a closeness to the bishops and prompt obedience to their dispositions in everything which refers to the apostolate and to our cooperation on behalf of the local churches.
- g) a simple, self-denied, industrious, informal, active style of life.
- h) a sensitivity toward what is most pressing, timely and effective at each time and place, without anchoring ourselves to methods or structures in the apostolate.
- i) a willingness to employ all suitable means in the transmission of the Christian message.
- j) a Catholicity open to all localities, peoples, and forms of life, along with a decided preference for the poor and needy, children and youth, simple people and the consecrated.

25. The particular way of living these characteristics, received from our Founder, is the historical constancy and the family spirit which distinguishes us in the Church.

V - Fidelity, Multiplicity, and Unity

26. Fidelity to the charism and to the laws of its development is everyone's responsibility, especially the Superiors of the Institute. A wise understanding of the mysterious pilgrimage of the Church in time will give the congregation success in organizing its activities and establishing a hierarchy in its ministries.

27. Our identity as missionaries, by which the Institute is oriented toward the proclamation of the Gospel, brings us to preaching the message of Christ for the purpose of men's conversion and the renewal of Christian life. This missionary orientation of our ministries confers unity and hierarchy upon the manifold activities of the Institute.

28. In practice, preference will have to be shown to whatever ministry is more pressing or timely in the universal Church or in a particular Church. But as a whole, the Institute should show a character of its own in keeping with its charism.

29. Our service of the Word, by which we are cooperators of the Pope and of the bishops in their magisterial function (cf. PO.4), specially links us on that account to the body of bishops. This attachment goes beyond any local limits because of the primarily missionary character of our charism.

30. All the members of our Institute are united to one another by the unity of what is common in the missionary ministry of the Word. Although committed to different apostolic activities, they exercise one sole ministry and realize jointly an aspect of the salvific mission of the Church: the missionary service of the Word for the building up of the Body of Christ.

31. Within the universality of means desired by our Founder and the variety of activities and ministries, which develop in our Institute, all of us, priests and laity, are servants of the proclamation of the Gospel.

Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation

Chapter -I

Charism and Spiritual Heritage of Our Congregation

1. In addition to what all religious life has in common, each religious Institute has its special attribute (cf. PC 1.2.b; LG 43) by which it is constituted with its own personality within the Church. Normally, the birth of religious Institutes is the fruit of the prophetic spirit of their Founders, coupled with the approval of the Church (LG 45). Each Founder has had, thus, a prophetic gift which has made him aware of a special bestowal of grace conferred by God for the common good of the Church. This special outpouring of grace implies a social-supernatural mission within the Church itself. It is this charism, understood in its proper sense, along with what is called its "spirit," which distinguishes one Institute from another (cf. Rom 12,5-8; I Cor 12,4-7; LG 12; PC 1,2b).

2. Although "spirit" and "charism" are not identical, there is a very intimate connection between them. The concept of charism implies, in a proper sense, the essential and objective element of that bestowal of grace which the charism is in itself, coupled with the mission within the Church which it confers upon a determined Institute. The concept of "spirit," on the other hand, accentuates principally the subjective aspect, i.e., the personal manner of possessing and living those objective elements. Founders have received both elements from the Holy Spirit in the same communication of grace. The manner in which they corresponded with this grace was made more or less evident through their spirit. But the transmission of the "charism" in its objective dimension is more easily perceived and determined. The transmission of the spirit, although perceptible, cannot be submitted to such precise definition. Nevertheless, the "spirit" – the manner of living the charism – also has its exterior objective manifestation, from which it acquires the capacity to be transmitted. From this point of view, Founders can be seen as authentic representatives of the manner in which the charism should be lived, serving as models of spirituality for the Institutes they have founded.

3. Furthermore, inasmuch as the charism is manifested in the prophetic knowledge of the Founder, under the impulse of the Spirit, it represents a true explicitation of the life of the Church in relation to determined historical circumstances, i.e., to the "signs of the times." Thus understood, from the point of view of the plan of salvation as answering the needs arising with the passage of time – and operating within time itself – the charism is an authentic development of certain perennial aspects of ecclesial life, one should permanently constitute the vocational undertaking of the Institute, be it in the order of doctrine, piety, charity, etc. (cf. Eph 4,12; PC I).

Obviously, the charism is subject to historical evolution. As it is something permanent, however, it must retain with the passage of time its original, fundamental identity.

4. The charism of each Institute must be lived within the totality of the Church, which is essentially one. It must be lived with this unity, which gives form to its totality, even when different partial aspects are placed in special relief. Religious Institutes – diverse and stable forms of living the evangelical Counsels – have continued increasing, under the direction of the authority of the Church and the impulse of the Holy Spirit, branching out as a beautiful and vigorous plant in the Lord's vineyard. But they all sprout and grow from the irrevocable unity of the Church, the very variety of these Institutes is a beautiful and eloquent expression of the riches contained in the unity of the Church, and all contribute toward its realization in a very special manner (cf. LG 43 & PC I).

5. Out of love for His Church, God confers extraordinary graces upon Her whenever the circumstances of Her glorious pilgrimage through the world towards the perfection of glory require it. "This was especially necessary in the 19th Century. Because the people of that period, close to our own, distracted by new inventions and by the progress of science and technology, came unconsciously to the point of rejecting God and the Church He founded, and tried to establish other foundations of society, different from those which Christ Our Lord had given," (Pope Pius XI, Apostolic Letter, *Magnus-vocabitur*, Feb. 24th, 1934: AAS 26 (1934), 174). Furthermore, in the religious sphere, pantheism denied the transcendence of God, and rationalism denied the divinity of Jesus Christ (*Spiritual Exercises*, 1865). Within the Church Jansenism still persisted and had made its way among the faithful, and a large sector had fallen into indifferentism. On the other hand, sectarianism had impeded the two great means of spiritual regeneration, the testimony of the consecrated evangelical life and the proclamation of the Gospel. "Because of this," Pius XI has said, "among the great men of the 19th Century, God called forth St Anthony Mary Claret." (l.c.)

6. St. Anthony Mary Claret founded the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in order to foster the salvation of men, especially by means of the missionary preaching of the Gospel. He was prepared for this from his childhood by supernatural lights and inclinations. Especially through meditation on the Sacred Scriptures, he felt himself forcefully called by the Holy Spirit to consecrate himself to Christ and to imitate His life by proclaiming the Gospel. Seeing how Christian life had declined among the people through the lack of preaching, he wanted to associate himself with other priests who would dedicate themselves to the apostolic

ministry of the Word, so that they could accomplish together what he could not do alone. Along with five other priests he founded – in the city of Vich on July 16th, 1849 – a Congregation of missionaries “who would be and would be called Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”

7. The saintly Founder communicated to the first priests a high, evangelical spirituality, centered on the vocation to the apostolic ministry in the missionary state. From the beginning they led a common life, in the manner of the apostolic college, and sought evangelical perfection by following Jesus Christ more closely through the practice of the evangelical Counsels. This form of life was called by the Founder and the Co-Founders a truly apostolic life.

8. The Founder and the first missionaries gave themselves to the apostolic following of Christ in a way that was both complete and simple. Through the action of the Holy Spirit who had inspired them to make this gift of themselves, they went on to make it more explicit, first by a consecration “to the special service of God and the Immaculate Heart of Mary” with an oath of permanence and a promise concerning the evangelical Counsels. Later, by the Founder’s own will and that of the Congregation, this promise was raised by the Church to a canonical state consecrated to God, and the Church incorporated “the special apostolic service” of the Institute into her own mission. Thus, before his death, the Founder had the happiness of seeing his Congregation given definite form and of making his own profession in it (De Sacra Congregationis hereditate, ANNALES, 1950, p. 283).

The most important stages of this process may be noted. Within the Institute itself, especially with Fathers Clotet and Xifre, there began to sprout a desire to solidify, by a public profession, the personal and community practice of the evangelical life prevailing among them since the day of their existence. The Chapter of 1862, which was presided over by the Founder, decided to propagate the idea of making private vows; and the Constitutions approved in 1865 left this as something optional. In 1869 Father Xifre proposed to an assembly of priests gathered at Prades the idea of making the profession obligatory, and with the consent of all he communicated this project to the Father Founder. The Saint acceded to this idea, stipulating that the vows should be simple; and he negotiated for approval of this plan by the Holy See.

9. The mission of St. Anthony Mary Claret has been destined to endure in the Church through his Congregation. It will always be necessary for the Church to manifest itself to the world by the sign of the religious life, and the Church will always have need of “forceful helpers in the proclamation of the Gospel” who will keep the apostolic life of Jesus Christ and of His Apostles alive in the world. Furthermore, the historical circumstances from which the foundation sprung will persist – indeed we can say that the technological era has scarcely begun. For this reason, if through an appropriate renewal the Congregation succeeds in making its testimony of a consecrated apostolic life more apparent, and pledges itself to give the Church a more efficacious assistance in the service of the Word, God will neither withdraw His gifts from it, nor deny it vocations nor cease to fill it with His spirit.

10. The Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, should seek the Glory of God in everything through religious holiness, which impels them toward the salvation of all men. Since the Church is the mystery of salvation whose primary activity is the Apostolic service of the Word, our Founder wished us to be lively helpers of the hierarchy in their magisterial function (Const. I,2; CD 12-14), in all its forms and by every means (Const. II,63). Thus will the name of God be spread abroad and His Kingdom extended to the ends of the earth (Const. I,122) so that salvation may be offered to all men.

This is the charism which the Institute has inherited from its Founder and which is made effective by everyone, priests and lay-members, because all cooperate toward the same end and serve the same ministry: the service of the Word, which in our days especially requires many kinds of services and necessary adaptations.

11. In the personality of our Father Founder there are elements that pertain to his charism and spirit as Founder, to which one must always look as a source of inspiration. Besides these, however, there are individual traits to be found in him which derive from his personal psychology or his environment, and which are not transferable to the Institute.

It is necessary for us to look at the complete development of his intuition and apostolic drives in order to direct ourselves toward a knowledge of the genuine charism of the Institute

Chapter II

Elements of the Claretian Vocation

12. There are certain essential and fundamental elements of our vocation: a special consecration in Christ, to the Father, and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in order to live the evangelical and apostolic life -- praying, working and suffering for the salvation of men for the Glory of God the Father. In other words, it is the profession of a life that is truly religious and directed to apostolic action, priestly or lay, within the Church and for her service.

1- Christological

13. The primary element in the vocation of our holy Founder is complete consecration to Jesus Christ (Prop., 1843; Aut. n. 40, Not. Esp. 11, BAC, p. 605; 17, BAC, p. 612) in order to follow Him and imitate Him as closely as possible in His evangelical life and in the manner of His Apostles, working and suffering in order to lead men to the glorification of the Father (Prop. 1.860, 3, BAC, p.560). This eagerness to follow Christ closely led him not only to imitate His conduct but also to assimilate His spirit in the intimacy he enjoyed as the Son (Lucas y gracias, July 16th, 1863), as in the outpouring of energy to which his zeal for the glory of the Father impelled him. Thus, he at length experienced how Christ truly lived in him not only through the extraordinary grace of experiencing within himself continuously the Eucharistic presence (Lucas y gracias, August 26th, 1861) and importuned him in the apostolate and his own self-oblation (Prop. 1850, 19, Not. 40).

14. The Eucharist, as the sacrament of the sacrifice and the real presence of Christ, occupied a preponderant place in the spiritual and apostolic life of St Anthony Mary Claret.

The Eucharistic celebration was the most intense moment of his personal union with Jesus Christ. As he offered it to the Father for the salvation of men, he felt an ardent desire to sacrifice his life with Christ for the good of the Church and for all men. Praying in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament helped him to maintain these sentiments and to develop his activities in the sacrificial spirit profoundly penetrated with the redemptive mystery of Christ and the Church (cf. Autobiog. nn. 265, 694, 756 & 767).

We must live this aspect of the Claretian spirit today in terms of the Eucharistic doctrine and spirituality which Our Lord has developed in His Church for the good of men. Meditation on the mystery of Christ and the continual purgation of our faults makes us participate profoundly in the sacrifice of Our Lord. In every Eucharistic celebration, besides offering to the Father, with the entire Church, the Son Who was sent in sacrifice for the salvation of men, we can renew our own offering and our own religious and apostolic consecration by which we perpetuate the sacrifice in our flesh and die with Him for the sake of others, completing in our flesh what is lacking in His sacrifice for the salvation of the world (cf. Col 1,24). This participation in the Eucharist will be the primary source of our evangelical spirituality and of our self-sacrificing and tireless apostolate.

15. Christ excites in us His filial love for the Father: love which manifests itself in the first place in prayer, either liturgical or private. On the other hand, prayer transforms us into Christ; it prepares us and impels us to proclaim the Gospel: "In the fire which blazes in meditation, men are melted down and cast and molded into the image of Jesus." ("Apuntes de un plan" ... Madrid, 1934, 7, n. 6, p. 49).

Our Father Founder nourished his love for Christ with the Sacred Scriptures, studying His life in order to be able to imitate it, and His doctrine in order to proclaim it to men – retaining even its simple and popular style. The Chapter earnestly exhorts all members of the Congregation to preserve these traits of our Father, which were so highly recommended by Vatican II and are so fruitful in the life and labors of the Apostle. (cf. PC 5 & 6).

16. For our Founder the evangelical Counsels were not abstract realities but facets of the life of Christ, through which He gave testimony before men to the Kingdom of God, more by His life than by words, living in anticipation the complete sacrifice of Himself and His complete self-giving to the Kingdom of God.

Personal participation in the Paschal mystery, along with the complete abnegation of oneself to the very shedding of one's blood for the salvation of men, and testimony to the power of the risen Christ, lived so fully by the Founder, and subsequently by so many of our confreres, must be an ideal and a stimulus for a generous and ever-increasing fidelity on the part of all members of the Congregation.

2. The Heart of Mary

17. Our Sonship in the Heart of Mary is a proper note of our spirituality and apostolate. It has penetrated the life of the Congregation and sustained its energy in the pursuit of the purposes of our Institute.

The Church told us during the Council that in thinking about Mary with filial reverence and contemplating her in the light of Christ, she penetrates more deeply into the highest mystery of the Incarnation (cf. LG 65) The Church does not hesitate to proclaim Mary's mediation, which the Council called her "maternal duty" (LG 60), a motherly office which "the Church both experiences and commends to the hearts of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may unite themselves more closely to Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer" (LG 62)

The Heart of Mary signifies mainly the person of the Virgin, but the word itself centers us in the soul and spirit of Mary which exulted in God her Savior.

Devotion to the Heart of Mary introduces us to the principal root of the interior life of Mary In other words, it presents her to us as she lived the gifts with which it pleased God to enrich her when He prepared her in body and soul that she might be worthy to be His mother. As we penetrate the Heart of Mary we discover the unique presence of God in the Virgin and the singular relations which unite her to the three Divine Persons. We discover the fullness of maternal grace which relates her to the mystery of salvation. We discover the pious perfection which she enjoyed in the affective order, moral and supernatural. We discover finally the sublimity of her virtues: faith, obedience, religion, absolute willingness – "not held back by any sin" – to embrace the mission which God entrusted to her. This communion with the spirit of Mary leads us to a better participation in the mysteries of Christ, because it is certain that when Mary is known and loved "it always leads to her Son and through Him to love of the Father" (LG 65)

18. It was characteristic of our holy Founder that in his life he powerfully exemplified his relationship as Son of the Heart of Mary. He recognized himself as a Son of the Blessed Virgin, as one formed by her in the furnace of her love (Autob. II, c. 16). Our Founder strengthened himself with devotion to the Heart of Mary as a most effective weapon in his manifold apostolate. Speaking for himself and for those called to his Institute he blessed God for having deigned "to gather his humble servants as Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Your Mother" (Autob. II, c.34).

It is doubtless part of the charism of our Congregation to be Sons of the Heart of Mary. Filial piety is a consequence of the living and the connatural response to this Sonship. The liturgy itself enumerates devotion to the Heart of Mary among the principal graces which adorned our Founder. It says of him "he was endowed with many heavenly graces of devotion, especially toward the most Blessed Sacrament and the Heart of Mary and her rosary" (Lesson VI).

The Sons of the Congregation have our Founder as a model of this piety toward the Heart of Mary. He followed this devotion and brought everyone to the Virgin in order to direct himself and others to Jesus Christ. For this purpose he made use of the rosary, because, as he said, "the one who recites it, in a single day entirely reflects and meditates upon what the Church celebrates in a year through its feast days." (Colegial, I, 277). That is to say the rosary makes us live the Paschal mystery. It presents to us the mystery of Christ and of the Church through the figure and mystery of Mary. Paul VI has told us that "it teaches us to make Christ the principle and end of all our supernatural life" (May 13, 1965).

The Chapter emphasizes this facet, which is so much a part of the apostolate of the Institute of Sons of the Heart of Mary, and recognizes it as a precious inheritance of our Holy Father Founder.

19. The doctrine of Vatican II has fully confirmed the foundation of our filial piety toward Mary. Today we appreciate as never before that Mary is Mother of the entire Church and of every man "by a double title of suffering and glory," by the Blessed Virgin's cooperation in Nazareth and on Calvary which God willed should be most efficacious. Thus she, with her faith, her obedience, her love and her total surrender to the person and mission of her Son – i.e., cooperating with her Heart contributed to the restoration of the supernatural life of men (LG 61).

The Council has also pointed out Mary as the type of the Church. The Church lifts its eyes to Mary because she shines as the exemplar of virtues for all the elect (LG 65), and it sees her in heaven "as the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come" (LG 68; SC 103). This very ancient doctrine (cf. St. Ambrose, Exp. Lk 2, 7, ML 15, 1555) is harmoniously connected with our Sonship in the Heart of Mary. The Claretian missionary contemplates the Blessed Virgin as a model at the same time as he commits himself to her as a Son and submits himself to her maternal action in order to better meet the exigencies of his divine vocation.

By this means the Claretian apostle clothes himself in that maternal love which the Council recognizes as necessary in order to participate in the mission of the Church and cooperate in the salvation of men (LG 65), and thus he fulfills a desire which our Founder had that his missionaries extend the functions of the spiritual maternity of Mary through the service of the Word. In this way it may be said of them that "it is the spirit of your Father and your Mother which speaks in you" (Autob. n. 687).

This is the meaning of our consecration to the Heart of Mary, which from the beginning of the Institute was

the bond of unity and continues to be the official character and permanent attitude of our profession to the extent that we dedicate ourselves to the service of the Immaculate Heart.

The devotion to the Heart of Mary should be lived by every Claretian. The Chapter recommends to everyone, especially superiors and educators, that our spirituality and true apostolic zeal be developed in this environment.

3. Evangelical-Religious

20. The religious life primarily consists in being a special consecration made to the Father, in Christ, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit and through the Church. The specialness of this consecration does not fundamentally distinguish it from our baptismal consecration. In reality, for the Christian there is no fundamental consecration other than that of Baptism (cf. Rom 6,3). Through it we are all incorporated into the death and resurrection of Our Lord and consecrated in His own consecration to the Father (cf. Jn 17,17&19). The religious life is rooted in this baptismal consecration and carries it to its ultimate objective requirements. This is what gives it its special character (cf. PC 5). Without religious life, therefore, the life of the Church would be left unfinished in the objective order of sanctity (cf. LG 44). "To follow Christ" perfectly means, for the religious, that He achieves this consecration in his own life.

21. Consequently, the religious life is by appropriation a sign and testimony for all Christians and even for the entire world (cf. LG 44) But it is a sign and testimony through being a special consecration, i.e., a total consecration to God, and also a total renunciation on the part of the Christian who embraces it. It does not exhaust its being in the pure functionality of the sign; rather it is in itself an objective reality of perfection, and therefore has the power of being a sign and of giving witness (cf. LG 42, 43, 44, 47; PC I).

22. The Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Heart of Mary is a religious Institute in the strictest sense. The religious life it has attained, in the way previously indicated, belongs to the essence of its charism. For this reason, each and every one of its members enjoys "a particular gift in the life of the Church" and "assists in its salvific mission" (LG 43).

The life of the evangelical counsels, by which each Son of the Heart of Mary commits himself to the service of God whom he loves above everything (i.e., with a total commitment), and through which he binds himself to the honor and service of God by a new and particular title (cf. LG 44), should inform the entire life of the Claretian religious, his entire spirituality and all his apostolic actions all in the most intimate communion with the Church.

Our holy Founder, already filled with the spirit which the 2nd Vatican Council has now sanctioned, showed us how we must live our religious life. We must leave everything in order to follow Christ (cf. Mt.10,28; 19,21) and think only of His service and of His greater glory (PC 5). From this religious life, hidden with Christ in God, (cf. Col 3,3) will sprout a zeal for the glory of God and an anxiousness to proclaim the Gospel to all men for the building up of the Church (cf. PC 8)

23. The religious life is not contrary to apostolic work. St Thomas has already explained this (II-IIae 187,1) It is rather a positive disposition to exercise spiritual and charitable works "ex exercitio sanctitatis."

All the various forms of the religious life must include the essential feature: total dedication to the perfection of charity, the fulfillment of the vows of religion, an abstention from secular pursuits. But each religious institute must have the concrete practices which best suit its particular end, i.e., a concrete manner of exercising the perfect charity to which it is destined. The perfection of religious Institutes does not depend on whether they have strict practices or not, but on the perfection of their goals, and the proper ordination of all their practices in order to attain them (cf. II-IIae, 188,6 ad 3).

The religious institutes which combine the evangelical life and the apostolic ministry, and have this as their established purpose, are "very close to the perfection of bishops" (Ibid. art. 6) because they are ordained to the perfection of charity in its highest form and exercise, viz., preaching and teaching the Word of God.

4. Apostolic

24. Considered in its most essential fruit the apostolate springs from the sacrifice of Our Lord. Christ was sent mainly to fulfill the Will of His Father, by sacrificing Himself. The sacrifice of Christ culminated in His death and in His glorious resurrection which made possible the mission of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 7,39). This is how He restored the

glory of God and redeemed men, and laid the foundation for the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ preached the Kingdom of Heaven to His Apostles and to all people and instituted its fundamental structures, leaving to the Church a mandate to preach (cf. AG 5-9). But all this attained ultimate and definitive value only in His sacrifice (PC I). For this reason there is no genuine apostle who does not will to place himself truly and in a vital manner in the sacrifice of Our Lord, in order to live and establish among men the new life of the Kingdom and the Power of the Holy Spirit (cf. AG 5).

25. The name of Apostolic Institutes is given to those which have received from Christ, through the Church, the public mission of carrying on an apostolic activity, cooperating thus in the diffusion and realization of the Kingdom of God. (cf. PC 8; AG 5).

26. The Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a Congregation that is apostolic in its very makeup. By its vocation, it participates in a special manner in the Church's mission of "announcing the truth of salvation and taking it to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1,8).

This special participation in the mission of the Church comes to the Congregation through its very charism, as a religious-Apostolic-Claretian Institute, historically we know that from the very beginning it was conceived as an apostolic Institute as well as a way of living the evangelical counsels. Little by little, as if through an intimate and vital evolution of its proper being, it found itself within the official, and formally instituted religious life.

27. In the Institutes consecrated to the work of the Apostolate, "apostolic activity belongs to the very nature of the religious life, seeing that it is a holy service and a work characteristic of love entrusted to them by the Church" (PC 8). In such Institutes the unity of goal and vocation demand that the life and the institutions be simultaneously apostolic and evangelical. "Therefore the whole religious life of their members should be inspired by an apostolic spirit and all their apostolic activities formed by the spirit of religion" (Ibid.)

28. In some religious Institutes the generous commitment to the apostolate was the road which led to complete self-giving, in and by the evangelical form of life. In such instances, the religious life, which is always radically apostolic in its substance, retains an intimate union with the spirit and exercise of the apostolate: providing for the religious a full consecration to God in the apostolate, spiritual perfection in his apostolic life, and greater efficacy in the example of his own life.

29. In these apostolic Institutes, while safeguarding the primacy of the theological and spiritual elements of the religious life over the exercise of the apostolate, nevertheless, their perfection should be found in ordering everything toward the apostolic activity. In this way, the life of perfection is lived with reference to the apostolate, while the religious virtues always penetrate the apostolate as it develops.

Our Congregation is a typical example of such religious Institutes, for, historically, it came to the discovery and establishment of the religious life as an express orientation of the exercise of the apostolate.

30. In the Congregation religious life and apostolic action are intimately united in one sole vocation and form of life, with the result that they mutually imply and condition each other. Both spring and take their vigor from a profound interior life that is nourished by communion with God.

The religious life among us should be lived with a missionary preoccupation, through our discovery of the apostolic meaning of all its elements. Apostolic zeal must stimulate and guide the practice of our religious life.

The practices and customs of our religious apostolic life should so harmonize that the one does not prejudice the other. This is the responsibility of the superior, who will always keep in mind the apostolic character of the Institute.

It is necessary that the apostolate be considered in practice as part of our religious life. As a consequence, timetables should be adapted with a view to the efficient exercise of the apostolate, without it being necessary to have the same timetable for all houses, nor necessarily for all members of the same community (cf. ES II,26).

31. As a profoundly supernatural activity, the true apostolate is an exercise of faith, hope, and the charity which the Holy Spirit pours into the heart of all sons of the Church (cf. AA 3). For a faithful discharge of ministry it is indispensable to live intimately in union with Christ, Savior and Shepherd, especially through the fruitful celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice and a frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance. Pious reading of the Sacred Scriptures, the recitation of the breviary, mental prayer, the rosary, and especially the spirit of continuous prayer during all his activities is an indispensable foundation for the life and efficacy of an apostle. This is the way our

Founder lived. He considered prayer as the first means to obtain the salvation of men (Autob. 264) and thus he earnestly inculcates it in those who prepare themselves for the apostolic life (Const. I,110).

5. Priestly

32. The life and the Vocation of our holy Founder center themselves very early in the priesthood (Autob. nn. 30 & 40, Doc.Aut.7; Autob. 64, 69 & 79). Thus priestly spirituality has a first-class importance in his life and works. His apostolate is the intense and absorbing exercise of the priesthood. The missionary vocation is united in him with his priestly vocation (Autob. I.c.I). His is a missionary priesthood, a prophetic priesthood, an extension in everything of the life of the Apostles.

33. With the clarification, especially by the Council, of the meaning and scope of the universal priesthood of the faithful, which has opened wide fields of the apostolate for the laity, there has also come a purification and illumination of the function of the Sacrament of Orders within the Church. The priesthood is being freed from secondary tasks once performed by priests, with a resultant deepening of its specific mission in the direct ministry of the Word, in the ministerial function of the Eucharist and the other Sacraments, in the work of being ministers of salvation for the Church, and in a magisterial function united to the official magisterium of the bishops and the Pope.

34. There now exists in the Church a keen awareness of the need for perfection associated with the priesthood. (PO 12). The most important characteristics of this priestly spirituality as enumerated by the Council show a surprising correspondence with those discovered and practiced by our Founder in his apostolic life.

The most outstanding of these are: a profound faith enlightened by prayer and study, pastoral charity – which is the very charity of Christ the priest – sacrifice for the good of men, a life immersed in the mystery of the Church, since the priest is the man of the Church, called by God to sanctify himself by serving it in the sacred ministry. Through the spontaneous tendency of charity, Christian perfection is intrinsically apostolic, and the apostolate is a constant inducement for perfecting oneself spiritually and for the exercise of the virtues (PO 13).

35. St Anthony Mary Claret made a perfect synthesis between the priesthood and evangelical perfection. He lived the priesthood as his own way of giving himself to God, of living united to Christ and to the Church. In his priestly and Apostolic vocation, he discovered the necessity of living evangelically, in all ways imitating the life of Our Lord and of the Apostles, entirely detached from himself and committed to the proclamation of the Gospel.

In this kind of life, the evangelical vocation finds itself enriched by its association, in one and the same person, with the priestly and apostolic life. And on the other hand, the priesthood and apostolic ministry are effectively elevated and strengthened through evangelical living.

6. Lay

36. The religious state is not something intermediate between the clergy and the laity, “but rather some Christians are called by God from both these states of life so that they might enjoy this particular gift in the life of the Church and thus each in one’s own way, may be of some advantage to the salvific mission of the Church” (LG 43). Hence it seemed advantageous even to the first Claretian Community to associate some of the laity with the life and apostolic activity of the Institute.

They already have an active part in the universal apostolate of the Church because of their status as Christians, and because of the universal priesthood which springs from the character they receive at Baptism and Confirmation. In consecrating themselves more intimately to God through the profession of the evangelical counsels in our Institute, their spiritual life is also consecrated to the benefit of the entire Church according to the charism and mission of the Claretian Congregation (cf. LG 43-46). In this way, and within our Institute, they fulfill those functions which are proper to them in the field of the apostolate and the religious life, and assist the innumerable forms of the apostolate of the priests. They do this either through service to the community, as so many brothers have done and are now doing, or through association with the diverse works of the apostolate of the Institute.

37. These lay brothers realize and live the same religious apostolic consecration as the priests, and participate as well in the same mission and community life. They must live intimately united with the life and works of the community, and thus fulfill their apostolic vocation in occupations proper to consecrated laity within the mission of the Congregation.

The life and apostolate of our lay brothers, united to that of the priests, and within the one apostolic mission

of the Congregation, is closely bound to the hierarchical ministry, and occupies the highest grade of association with the priestly life and apostolate which the laity can attain in the Church (cf. AA 24,6; PC 15).

38. In recent years the knowledge and appreciation of the functions offered to the laity, both in the world and consecrated in the Church, have increased.

It is necessary for the government and the life of the Congregation to take this phenomenon into account, and this in two respects: first with respect to the lay brothers, we must recognize as more appropriate for them certain tasks which have frequently been fulfilled by our priests, either within our communities or in their outside contacts; and at the same time, care should be taken not to occupy our priests too easily with tasks that are alien to the priestly ministry.

Under a different aspect, it is necessary for us to take into account the spiritual and apostolic advancement of the rest of the laity, recognizing the proper field of their apostolic activity within the Church. If we learn to unite both apostolates the Congregation will increase its influence and renew its own apostolate in conformity with the present orientations of the Church and the needs of the modern world (PC 9; AA 25; AG 17).

7. Ecclesial

39. As an apostle overpowered by an ecclesial sense through the action of the Holy Spirit, our holy Father Founder conceived the Congregation as a living organism at the service of the entire Church, which he preferred to consider as the Body of Christ and the spouse of Our Lord. In a particular way, through his life and his doctrine, our holy Founder inculcated in us his love, reverence, and total submission to the Roman Pontiff.

40. As members of the Congregation we are closely bound to the entire Church through our religious profession and our consecration to the apostolate. It is necessary to develop among ourselves a sense of the Church in conformity with the doctrine and orientations of Vatican II, so that the Congregation may live and work closely united to the entire People of God (cf. LG 44).

41. Our apostolic vocation establishes us as helpers of the bishops in their ministry. One function of this, and in a certain way the primary one, according to the Council of Trent and Vatican II, is to preach the Word of God (cf. LG 2; Conc. Trid. Sess. V, c.2, n.9 & Sess. XXIV, c. 4).

42. With a profound and generous ecclesial sense, the Congregation should fully collaborate in the different national and international programs of the hierarchy and in the general apostolic works of the Church for the building up of the Body of Christ and the spread of His Kingdom throughout the world. Without prejudice to the universal character of our Congregation there should also be full cooperation in the pastoral master plan of the ecclesiastical territory in which each house is included.

43. Our members should be encouraged to collaborate with all parts of the people of God, in the manner most appropriate and practical, so as to contribute to the good of the Church the gifts we have received from Our Lord. The most authentic tradition of our Institute is in perfect conformity with the recommendation of Vatican II: "Let them love Christ's members as brothers, honor and love their pastors as Sons should do, and living and thinking more and more in union with the Church, dedicate themselves wholly to its mission." (PC 6)

44. Following the spirit of our holy Founder, which is one of service to the Church, in the unity of which all peoples are united, the Congregation tries to cooperate with the bishops of the entire world without any distinction of race, so that the Church may assume in its unity the diversity of all peoples. The Congregation, in order the better to serve this purpose while maintaining its own fundamental identity and charism, does not hesitate to disassociate itself from any excessive uniformity. In this way, it will integrate in itself the different modalities of the people among whom the Church requires us as collaborators in the ministry of the Word.

45. Fraternal cooperation with diocesan priests belongs to the spirit of the Congregation. This is also true of collaboration with other religious Institutes, especially those which have the goals and spirit closest to ours (Const. II,63; Propositions 1857; cf. PC 22).

According to the mind of our Founder, one of the most preferred of our apostolates must be the ministry toward priests. This ministry is especially necessary today because of the particular difficulties which the priestly life encounters in the modern world (cf. PO 8,19).

8. Exercise of the Apostolate in the Congregation

46. Inspired by the Holy Spirit our Founder pointed out to the Congregation, as a means of fulfilling its purpose of procuring the salvation of men, our cooperation with the Episcopal body in the basic ministry of the Word (Const. I,2) in all its forms and by every means (Const. II,63) in order to spread the name of God and extend His Kingdom and thus offer salvation to all men (Const. I,122). In the language of the Council this means that we are cooperators of the hierarchy in its magisterial function.

47. Our identity and our name as missionaries demand that we consider as our characteristic ministry the service of the Word as it is directed to the conversion of men or to the renewal of Christian life.

48. Within this fundamental direction, our holy Founder and our sound tradition demands of us that we be disposed to employ those forms of the service of the Word and those means of its expression and diffusion which best meet the needs of the Church (Const. II,63).

49. The criteria which must govern the selection of our ministries are:

1) the general orientation of our Institute to the missionary preaching of the Word in all its forms.

2) the necessities of the Church in each time and place, spontaneously revealed by the apostolic sensitivity of the Congregation or pointed out by the hierarchy.

3) the greatest efficacy among possible apostolic works.

4) the Congregation can never forget the great lessons of apostolic detachment of our holy founder. Financial remuneration cannot be the preferred criterion in the selection of our ministries.

50. Our Institute does not feel itself bound to any historical form of preaching, nor to any concrete method of the apostolate. It adopts in each case those which are the most efficacious, opportune, and urgent for the conversion of non-believers, for the renewal of Christian life for the faithful, or for the perfection of those who lead a consecrated life (cf. CIA 54).

51. The apostolate of Christian education, embraced by the Congregation in following the express will of our Founder, falls within our proper ministries, as an efficacious and opportune means to exercise the service of the Word, propagating and developing the faith among children and youth, among families and even all of society. (Inter rel.fam.)

52. When the good of the Church demands it, the Congregation gladly offers bishops its help in the parochial ministry (cf. Pius XI, "Inter religiosas familias"). In such instances care must be taken to maintain our religious character and our missionary function.

53. The spirit of our Founder and the situation of the Church in the world today demand particular attention to the evangelization of the poor and a social apostolate in all branches of society.

54. When making pastoral plans for the whole Institute or for each organ one should not lose sight of those preferential options required by our spirit.

55. The doctrine and example of our holy Founder in the very notion of apostolate teach us that a mandate or mission is indispensable in order that we may truly be apostles in the exercise of our ministry. Through obedience the missionary binds himself closely to the Church and places his activity within the framework of God's plan of salvation (cf. PC 14).

The Claretian missionary is disposed to accept the work which the superiors confide to him and to cooperate unreservedly in common undertakings. Impelled by the charity of Jesus Christ, He knows how to take personal initiative, but he always sincerely counts on the required approval.

Chapter III

Renewal and its Exigencies

1- General Ideas

56. The appropriate renewal described and imposed by the Council intends to invigorate the religious life in existing Institutes in the Church. For this purpose, its intention is to free the religious life professed in each one of these Institutes from elements that are extraneous or antiquated. Its final goal is to be able to increase its capacity for edification and apostolate in the world of today.

57. The primary norm of renewal of the religious life should be the same life as Our Lord Jesus Christ led with His Apostles, just as it is reflected for us in the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles and transmitted to us by the Church. This was the living model which the Apostles wished to perpetuate in their own life and in the first Christian communities. Founders always referred to this form of evangelical and apostolic life when the spirit of Christ led them to establish their communities in the Church.

Enlightened by the actual teaching of the Church, we must place an extraordinary value on our Founder's determination to imitate in all things the life of Christ (Propositions 1843), on his devotion to the persons and works of the Apostles as well as on his prescriptions and counsels in which this fundamental inspiration of his life is reflected. The return to the spirit and aims of the Founders, which the Church recommends, blends in our case with the primary norm of renewal, in our return to living the evangelical and apostolic life of our Father Founder, though adapting it as necessary to the conditions and exigencies of the present time.

58. In order to complete the adaptation of the spirit and of the religious life, the characteristics of the present time must be taken into account. The 2nd Vatican Council made an appeal to what it called the "signs of the times": "In order to fulfill this mission (continue the work of Christ) the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times, and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other." (GS 4).

Understood in a human way, every era becomes like a sign and voice, for the Church and for men, of the presence or absence of God in their midst, and, in general, of the disposition that men have toward their relationship with God. The signs of the times, in the outstanding significance they may have, are, under the action of the Holy Spirit, both means and vehicles of a greater explicitation of the identity and the life of the Church. By means of them the Church can, in large measure, achieve its historical unfolding. Into this process of historical development of the Church the continuous appearance of new forms of religious life and the continuous renewal of already existing ones enters, in order that they might be in truth a sign and testimony "of the new and eternal life acquired by the redemption of Christ, and foretell the future resurrection and the glory of the heavenly Kingdom" (LG 54).

59. The process of renewal should begin with an interior effort to be faithful to our vocation, and it requires of everyone a profound attitude of willingness very similar to a real conversion. It cannot be brought to conclusion without a total acceptance of the orientations of the Church and a detailed and precise knowledge of the characteristics and exigencies of the contemporary world.

60. The tradition of religious Institutes is fundamentally their proper charism insofar as it is lived in a communal manner and is transmitted historically from generation to generation. This tradition, as the soul of each religious Institute, continues to actualize this proper charism and confers dynamic unity on the entire Institute. Whatever things the passage of time shows not to be in line with the development and transmission of the charism cannot be called tradition in the strict sense. If anything, they may be called "traditions."

61. Though traditions as such do not pertain to the substance of the charism, still they may have their origin with the Founder himself or in the period of the foundation of the Institute. They may also be a sort of precipitate of the subsequent Institute's life, later converted into uses, customs, practices, etc., whether they pertain to the life of piety, to the ascetical religious life, or to apostolic action. Because of the content of some of these traditions, certain of them may be found in close, intimate, almost inseparable union with the charism itself. In this case, they are its natural manifestation or one of its constitutive elements, and thus these traditions have a universal and perennial value. Vatican Council II seems to have recognized their immutable character. They are, then, traditions that can be called sound in the fullest sense. As such, they pertain to the patrimony of religious Institutes (cf. ES II, 12 & 14 referring to PC 2b).

62. Other traditions may have a greater or lesser durability. Even though in their origin they may have been the expression of the authentic living of the essential spirit of the Institute or in conformity with it, and may have been so for a long time, they do not have a universal and permanent value. Perhaps they arose because of determined

historical circumstances upon the endurance of which their vitality depended. As long as the reason for their vitality remains alive, these traditions could also justly be called sound. From the moment when the very reason for their vitality declines, they become obsolete or antiquated practices, according to the terminology of the Council. The “antiquated elements” which are referred to in ES 16,c, never could have constituted traditions, but in every case were pseudo-traditions.

63. The heritage of every Institute is constituted, in the first place, by its charism considered in the original purity and authenticity with which it was transmitted by the Founder. In the second place, it is constituted by tradition, which is the charism itself as it is lived communally and historically by the Institute throughout its existence. In the third place, it is constituted by its sound traditions, which because of their close connection with the charism of the Institute display a special value of universality and permanence.

These three elements should form part of the Constitutions of a religious Institute, according to the norms of the Church (cf. ES 12&14 referring to PC 2,b). Other traditions which are not so closely connected to the spiritual patrimony of the Institute and appear as being “subject to change according to a particular era” (ES 14), must be maintained so long as they have a universal vitality in the Institute, and should be incorporated in the General Directory. If their application, on the other hand, does not surpass local limits, they should be retained in regional directories.

Antiquated traditions, as well as those which are called “alien elements”, should be eliminated.

64. The diverse elements of our charism and religious apostolic spirit were substantially constituted upon the death of our Father Founder. The subsequent tradition consists in the living and development of the substantial elements.

65. Inasmuch as its tradition is above all the vital transmission of its charism, an Institute can and should have a community consciousness of it: a consciousness that is supernaturally activated. If an Institute relaxes the lively consciousness of this tradition, or weakens its hold upon it, the authentic living of its proper spirit or of its charism thereby becomes weakened or enervated.

66. In addition to the elements that are common to all religious life, there are also primary elements in each Institute which essentially constitute its proper charism and tradition. The concrete forms of practicing these primary elements are a secondary matter and can vary according to the exigencies of its proper end and spirit; the changing circumstances of time and of the particular country must be taken into account, and sound traditions must be preserved.

These secondary elements are means. Hence, their perfection, value and development consist in facilitating and favoring the proper end of each Institute. They cannot be granted an absolute value. It must not be forgotten that the worth of particular means depends on the degree to which they aid an Institute’s members to realize their own vocation and to attain the end of the Institute.

67. The necessity of appropriate renewal is felt with special urgency in the formation of young religious (cf. PC 3). Because of their situation in life they are highly sensitive to the present problems of the Church and of the world, even though they do not always express them with exactness or solve the difficult problems which they themselves pose (cf. GS 7).

As a result, it is necessary to have a thorough knowledge of their point of view and their reactions, to allow them to express their opinions and feelings, and thus make sure that the “norm of life, of prayer and work” will be in harmony with their physical and psychological dispositions (cf. PC 3). In this matter it is necessary to avoid, on the one hand, any compromise with what is not an expression of true spiritual renewal, and on the other hand any lack of understanding or conflict arising from a lack of sincere and fraternal relations (cf. PC 8,2).

2. Chastity

68. Christian virginity, or consecrated chastity, is a true charism, i.e. a gratuitous gift of God (cf. I Cor 7,7; Mt 9,12). Not everyone is called to receive this gift, nor is everyone able to understand it (cf. Mt 19,11). Hence, it supposes a divine vocation as its subject. Christian virginity does not basically signify a renunciation. It is primarily a positive supernatural value. Renunciation comes only secondly, as a necessary consequence. It is really only in the evangelical context of the “Kingdom of Heaven,” i.e., within a strictly eschatological dimension, that the true meaning of Christian virginity can be seen (cf. Mt 22,30).

It may seem paradoxical, but Christian virginity has its basic foundation in an "espousal," i.e., in the nuptial union of Christ with His Church. The Church is virginal because Christ is virginal, and He has united her to Himself, consecrating her to the Father, in this highest dimension of His own virginity (cf. 2 Cor 11,2; Eph 5,27). Strictly speaking, every member of Christ participates in some measure in this virginity of Christ and of His Church, i.e., in His virginal espousal. But consecrated virginity, especially, carries this participation to the loftiest height possible in this life.

Christ was virginal above all through His constant consecration to the Father, and the daily realization of His sacrifice through His total commitment in love. Sent by the Father in a "fleshly" condition, – i.e., with a flesh similar to the flesh that sins, but sent for the purpose of condemning sin in the flesh – Christ by His sacrifice continued day by day to conquer His own fleshly condition (and that of all men) until He arrived at the perfect consummation in the Spirit (cf. Rm.8,1-13; Heb 5,9; 2,10; 7,28). In this Spirit, communicated to the Church, He has united Himself to her in a virginal espousal.

69. Virginity thus specially consecrated is not bound to this world whose fashion passes away (1Cor 7,31), nor to the conditions of the present time. On the contrary, set deeply in the reality of the era to come, it lives in the watchful hope of the final advent of the Bridegroom and of the Kingdom of God (cf. Mt 25,1-6). Thus Christian virginity, which is a constant manifestation of the virginity of the Church, is a sign and testimony for all Christians, even for those united in matrimony, that they do not belong to this world, but must tirelessly journey to the future city (cf. Heb 11, 10; 13,14).

Christian virginity does not choke off the fountains of healthy affection, but rather raises them to a higher sphere, more pure and more universal; and it knows how to shower all men with a divine fruitfulness (cf. LG 42). All this has a particular fulfillment in the virginity of the religious priest. For him this consecration must always evoke the total commitment and gift of Christ the Bridegroom to the Church, His Bride, from whence originates that spiritual paternity proper to the priest and which was so dear to our Founder (cf. Eph 5,25-27; 1 Cor 4,15; Colegial Instruido, V. II, sect. I c.35, art.4).

70. The Missionary of the Immaculate Heart of Mary should esteem the meaning and the apostolic value of his consecrated chastity, not only because it disposes him to the perfect love of God and of the men redeemed by His Blood, but also because of the fecundity and efficacy it adds to the apostolic ministry (cf. LG 42; PO 16).

71. Chastity is a treasure locked up in fragile vessels (cf. II Cor 4,7). We must guard it and defend it with great pains, not forgetting our nature's condition nor that the flesh militates against the spirit. "Trusting in God's help let them not overestimate their own strength, but practice mortification and control of the senses" (PC 12). These words sum up what our Holy Constitutions tell us (II, 17-19).

72. The excellence of chastity, as well as the lamentable consequences of not living it according to the requirements of the religious profession, demand that those called to profess it be carefully selected and adequately formed.

As a true virtue, it has primarily a spiritual foundation. Therefore it must be supported by a great faith, and by an ardent and passionate love of Christ. It must be embraced after a conscious, free and cheerful decision, realizing that a divine election enters into it and likewise a generous response on the part of the one who professes it.

Every distortion or falsity which sees sin or dangers where they do not exist should be studiously avoided. Those in charge of the formation of our youth, while not omitting instruction on the real dangers that beset chastity, must insist above all on the lofty motives which the practice of this vow reflect to the world: such as a total and sincere commitment of God, love for the cause of the salvation of men, and joy in following the ideal of Christian virginity (cf. PC 12; OT10).

73. In order that the chastity of our religious may incessantly grow and become stronger it must be prompt, total, firm, and confident, it must be a source of joy which sustains missionary zeal, and must be founded on a solid and profound piety. On the other hand, it also demands that the religious practice works of penance and mortification even more than the rest of the faithful (cf. ES 22 & PC 12).

The conscience of a well-formed religious will tell him in each case what is licit for him to undertake in matters of work, recreation, reading, shows, etc. He will take his particular state into consideration, with a view to the cultivation of his chastity – naturally within the norms which may have been given on particular points by the

Church's hierarchy or his own superiors.

In this matter as in everything else the prevailing environment in which our missionaries must live is different for each region. For this reason personal formation is all the more necessary so that each one may walk in truth and may be able to give the world the required testimony of his consecrated chastity, which today, perhaps, is particularly necessary. A missionary cannot successfully give this testimony by an out-dated attitude of withdrawal from the world, but through seemly contact with it, imitating Christ in His translucently human and supernatural love toward all men.

3. Poverty

74. Let everyone, but especially superiors, remember that chastity is safeguarded best when true brotherly love flourishes in the common life (cf. PC 12).

75. Voluntary poverty, for the sake of following Christ, is a sign that convinces men of Christ's presence and His powerful activity in the world. Through this virtue we live and prolong in the Church the very poverty of Christ, who being rich made Himself poor for our sakes "so that by His poverty we might become rich"(PC 13). By practicing poverty in a real and effective manner (cf. PC 13) we model ourselves upon the redemptive charity of Christ, through which he humiliated Himself and assumed their poor condition and sufferings in order to save men. For this reason, our Founder proposed our imitation of Jesus Christ and His Apostles as the first foundation of consecrated poverty (Const. II,14; cf. OT 9).

76. Instructed by the teachings of the Council, and following the example of so many generous Christians who have endeavored to respond to the recommendations of the Church and the necessities of the world by adopting a life of poverty, the Sons of St. Anthony Mary Claret must recover that sense of poverty which he possessed and practiced so faithfully, and which he considered as a basic element in his apostolic vocation.

In order to imitate Christ and the Apostles, he had no wish to possess anything. He looked for no material reward for his apostolic labors. He lived on alms and enjoyed ministering to the simplest and humblest people. He never relied upon worldly power or display. By living and acting in poverty, he wished to show his opposition to the increasing materialism which began to develop during his time and to prevent the needy from raising objections to the value and truth of his ministry. No material interest was ever apparent in his enterprises – only the desire to further the spread of the Gospel and to reach the widest possible circles with his influence.

77. If we are to follow the teachings and recommendations of the Church, our poverty must be real, both personally and collectively. It must be a reflection and an exercise of a profound sense of Providence in our lives. We must always avoid any appearance of self-interest or egoism in our relations with others, whether within or outside of the community. Our preoccupation must always be that our manner of living and our relations with others may be a reflection of the love of God and a practice of Christian charity. We must avoid any semblance of ambition or collective vanity, never equating the glory of a community nor of the Congregation with its material properties or its earthly honors.

78. As things are today, labor must be considered an indispensable element of religious poverty. It is impossible to imitate Christ or live His charity today without being subjected to the law of labor, so as to avoid being a burden to the rest, and so as to be able to attend to the needs of others. The Chapter concedes that our members may accept work for which pay is received, either as the only means of preparing the way for the Gospel in some environments, or in order to be able to carry out the apostolic ministry gratuitously later on. This is in conformity with the example of St. Paul and that of our Father Founder.

Compensation will always be something secondary in the planning and carrying out of our apostolate. Without ever asking for anything, we will gratefully receive whatever is offered us for our ministry. It is preferable that the ministers of the altar live from the altar rather than from business or accumulated capital, which would destroy poverty at its very root (cf. PC 13). In religious communities furthermore, as in the families of the poor, all should work not only for themselves but also in order to take care of common necessities and obligations.

79. Poverty must also be an expression for us of the perfect brotherhood in which we must live united in the same vocation, with an intense Christian charity that is capable of overcoming all differences and all self-centeredness. Our poverty consequently excludes any form of peculium or private acquisition whatever, seeing in this a denial of the perfect charity and the total willingness with which we must offer whatever we have and our very persons for

the service of others.

It is most important that our treasurers and administrators exercise their role without a spirit of possessiveness. Aware that they administer the goods of everyone, let them have lively solicitude for their needs and convenience, within the framework of our kind of life. And let them not forget that evangelical poverty is an exercise of charity, and cannot be confused with avarice or miserliness.

Let the superiors see that everyone is religiously cared for, that there be no unjustified differences, that all live happily and confidently like a real family united by the Father in the charity of Christ which the Holy Spirit pours forth in our hearts so that the world may believe.

80. The sharing of goods should also be practiced with true religious spirit between communities and organisms in the Congregation. It should not happen that some communities live in privation while others have more than they need (cf. I Cor 11,21).

Furthermore, our members should not hesitate to practice this sharing of goods with the poor and needy whom Our Lord places within reach of their compassion. Let them see this sharing as an aspect of our religious and apostolic poverty, which they must practice with the approval of their superiors and with consideration for the other requirements of the common life (cf. PC 13).

81. As indicated in the decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, religious poverty must be collective as well as personal. Unless poverty were collective it would not be fully personal, nor would it acquire the value of testimony which it should have in the Church and in the world. Our communities, and even our entire Institute, must be effectively poor, possessing only whatever is necessary to live and fulfill our mission in the Church. It is of particular importance today that our life of poverty be adapted to the conditions of each locale and be easily recognizable by men of good will. In this way it will be a valuable testimony to the primacy of the supernatural, which the world of today needs. Consequently, all our properties and all the manifestations of our life must be simple, functional, strictly adapted to the needs of our life and apostolate, and excluding any concession whatever to luxury or ostentation (cf. PC 13; Paul VI, Disc. 'Magno gaudio,' AAS 56 (1964), 569).

82. While never forgetting the testimony of collective poverty, and even accentuating it according to the relative needs of each country, nevertheless it must be recognized also – both in the doctrinal and practical orders – that there is a second aspect of poverty. That is to say, religious Institutes may possess and administer goods as a means of realizing their apostolic goal. In fulfilling the spirit of poverty, the Institute will not be more perfect simply because it has a greater shortage of goods. Rather is poverty fulfilled when an Institute possesses and administers its goods without losing its sense of religious poverty or its sense of the most adequate means for its proper mission. Religious must always act with this sense of proper balance, especially those responsible for temporal administration.

83. Although we must secure the supernatural goals of our Institute through diligent and religious administration of our temporal goods, we must always guard against any excessive solicitude to secure the property of all the houses in which we must live, or to aspire to develop our possessions more than necessary. Our Congregation can and should achieve its apostolate on a grand scale without embarking on financial enterprises of such a scope that they could ultimately distract us from the true interest of the Kingdom of Christ. So, though superiors must see to the conservation of our goods, and secure our houses, on the other hand we should not hesitate to accept apostolic labors which require us to live in more precarious conditions, when that is necessary.

84. Granted that the apostolate belongs intrinsically to our religious life, our apostolate must be entirely penetrated with the spirit and practice of evangelical poverty in its goals, priorities and exercise. It is a serious aspect of our renewal to recover the preference which our Founder felt for ministering to simple people. In everything we must look for the greatest efficacy and for the glory of God, without display of any kind. In any case, let those responsible see to it that the goods of the Congregation actually serve the Church in conformity with the purpose of our Institute and not hesitate to place our goods at the disposition of others when it is possible to increase their return in favor of the Kingdom of God.

And when working among simple and humble people, our members should not give any occasion to murmuring because of their style or manner of life. They must also avoid, as an obstacle to the Gospel, whatever creates a distance between themselves and those whom they must evangelize (cf. PC 13).

85. In obedience to the Council, and in conformity with the spirit of our Holy Founder, which itself is profoundly

in accord with the present viewpoint of the Church, the Chapter recommends the adoption of new forms of practicing poverty in continuity with our tradition and adapted to the needs of the Church in current world circumstances (PC 13). Some examples are: to perform certain ministries gratuitously, to encourage the formation of communities in needy environments, stimulate the practice of alms-giving and hospitality, to set aside certain quantities for charitable or social works, and so forth. Each organism of the Congregation should feel itself honored to render aid to some of our brothers if they undergo penury or deprivation for these reasons.

86. Occupations or enterprises whose apostolic purpose or whose necessity for the Congregation is not clearly apparent must be considered by us as foreign to the spirit of poverty which we inherit from our Founder and from the first missionaries. In evaluating activities account should be taken of the testimony of evangelical poverty we should be giving, and we should likewise consider the social environment in which these activities will be carried out. The Chapter recommends the re-evaluation of our current works and undertakings and the progressive and prudent elimination of those which are not in conformity with these criteria of poverty inherited from our Founder and so insistently recommended by the Church in the present situation of the world.

87. Within our collective poverty also lies the faithful fulfillment of our social obligations toward those who work together with us and deserve a just recompense for their labor. True poverty does not consent to accept a service which cannot be compensated at least according to the measure of justice. Christian poverty, which originates from charity and frees us from attachment to earthly goods, further demands that services be repaid with liberality and generosity, although without extravagance. Paltry or unjust salaries, even if they are legal, and all social relations which are not penetrated with charity, destroy the valuable testimony of evangelical poverty in the eyes of the today's world.

4. Obedience and Government

88. Through his baptism, the Christian is already dead to the world and consecrated to God for His Kingdom. Through the profession of his vows, the religious tightens his union with Jesus Christ that he may be fully and totally joined with Him in His death and participate with special fullness in His life of glory (cf. Rm. 4,11; LG 44). In an act of obedience of Christ, St. Paul finds the beginning and the fulfillment of His redemptive mission (cf. Heb 10,1-10). This obedience was the constant attitude of Our Lord throughout His life (cf. Jn 4,34; 6,38). Culminating His work of redemption He learned in His own flesh what obedience was (cf. Heb 5,7-9), obeying unto death and to the death on a Cross (cf. Phil 2,8).

The religious unites himself to Christ and participates in the Paschal mystery in a perfect manner through his vow of obedience, which on the other hand means the renunciation of his own will and the sacrifice of himself, and on the other his more complete liberation in order to grow to the stature of the perfect manhood of Christ (cf. PC 14). In Jesus Christ, dead and triumphant over death, we meet the foundation, the model, and the reward of perfect religious obedience.

89. From another point of view, obedience is profoundly ecclesial. Jesus Christ, Who was sent by the Father, in turn sent his Church "as a sign and instrument of a very closely knit union with God and likewise of the unity of the whole human race" (LG 1), so that by the might of the spirit it might herald and establish in the world the mysteries of salvation. This mission from the Father through Jesus Christ is the reason for the Church's being.

And so religious, whose lives are closely united with Christ's, are also united, through their obedience, with the mission of the Church, and they commit themselves with total availability to the service of the people of God. Both superiors and fellow members are at the service of the same common mission, and each one in his own position attempts to discover and to fulfill it – the superiors by directing, as representatives of God, and the fellow members through obedience, discovering the ultimate determination of the Will of God and of their assistance toward the common goal. Thus, together, they give an organized testimony of how faithfully and effectively the Church fulfills the commandment of our Lord and seeks His Will until the day of consummation arrives.

90. Far from having weakened the requirements implicit in the vow of obedience, Vatican Council II has rather enriched and perfected them by demanding an obedience that is voluntary, spontaneous, active and responsible.

If his vow of obedience requires it of him, the religious missionary immolates certain things of natural value to his personality on the altar of a greater supernatural good. And by that very sacrifice he finds the way to his full personal maturity in Christ.

91. St. Anthony Mary Claret, though he was always a model of gentleness and restraint in dictating the rules of our Institute adopts an exacting tone when he speaks of obedience. He wants us to be perfect in it from the beginning (Const. I,108); he wants students to obey promptly in everything that is not sinful, without complaining and without any sign of reluctance (*Ibid.* 123). In sum, out of love for Jesus Christ “made obedient unto death on the Cross” (Phil 2,8) he wants all of us to obey in everything – even in things which are not obligatory or difficult – at a simple suggestion of the will of the superiors (Const. II,19). All this should be understood without excluding the dialogue and the cordiality which should exist between superiors and their brothers.

92. Social customs and manners have greatly changed, and a crisis which could undermine religious life seems to have surrounded obedience. Vatican Council II has providentially confirmed the traditional doctrine of obedience and has shed new light upon it which will help us to live it. Those of us who have professed the following of Christ must follow the example of Our Savior, Who came to do the will of the Father in everything (Jn 4,34), as we obey in a spirit of faith those who “hold the place of God” – (PC 14) and who are for us a sign and sacrament manifesting the Divine Will.

The Council itself certainly knew the characteristics of obedience as they have been described by the masters of spirituality; but it completes this teaching by saying that religious obedience must be lived in a spirit of faith and of love for the divine will, and that it must be active and responsible, so that the religious uses his intelligence and will as well as his gifts of nature and grace in the execution of a mandate (cf. PC 14).

93. We Claretian missionaries must live obedience as a virtue that is essentially apostolic, recalling the words and examples of our Father, who as a missionary always followed the government and direction of his superiors (cf. Auto. II,c.15). There is no apostle without a legitimate mission (cf. Rm 10,15). This obtains for every occupation and ministry. In the apostolate, which is an essential part of our religious life we must practice obedience along with the other evangelical counsels. Through it we unite ourselves more closely to the Church and work within God’s salvific plan for the benefit of men (cf. PC 8.14).

94. The Council wished to perfect the practice of religious obedience. It recommends that obedience be conscious and free, so that it may be a true virtue perfecting the subject supernaturally and even on the personal level. In this way, “far from lessening the dignity of the human person it leads it to maturity by extending the freedom of the Sons of God” (PC 14). Obedience does not require that things are to be seen contrary to the way they are. It demands that a religious, in a given instance, place himself on the level of faith, and that he know how to make the sacrifice of his own judgment, even if it be ascertained and correct. He will simply recall that obedience is not established for him in the speculative but in the practical order, to which he should always sacrifice his particular opinion by acceding to the general good and to harmony, which are linked to the authority of the superior, a representative of the will and love of God.

95. According to the mind of the Council, obedience and personal initiative must be joined together. But it also is conciliar doctrine that belongs to pastors to judge the ordinary and even the extraordinary gifts which the faithful Christian can receive, both concerning their origin and nature and how they also ought to be applied (cf. LG 12; AA 3).

96. Obedience is never irrational, even when one prescind from his own opinion and judgement, because for the religious who is enlightened by faith the most reasonable in the practical order will always be to bind himself to the exigencies of the Divine Will and the common good as they are interpreted by legitimate authority.

97. Obedience practiced out of love firmly unites the religious with God’s saving will, in his life and in his apostate. It attaches him beyond possibility of deception, to the service to the Church; it rids him of egotism and leads to a supernatural fulfillment of himself as a person in communion with Christ sacrificed and glorious (cf. PC 14).

98. But the Council, which confirms and perfects the traditional doctrine on obedience, also wishes to perfect the exercise of authority. Those who carry it out among their brothers must exercise it in a spirit of service, in imitation of Jesus Christ who obeyed the Father by committing Himself and sacrificing Himself for those whom the Father had entrusted to Him (cf. Mt 20,28 & Jn 17,19). As our Founder wished, every superior must exercise his office “with charity and amiability rather than with rigor,” and “provide for the bodily and spiritual welfare of his subjects” (Const. I,37,1). If he represents Jesus Christ, he should imitate the brotherly, friendly manner of Jesus toward His Apostles, so that his government may promote in our communities the open and cheerful liberty of the Sons of God. Thus will they fulfill the conciliar recommendation and express to their brothers, through their government, the charity with which God loves them (cf. PC 14).

99. The government must always be supernatural, and must be based on faith, just as obedience is. Faith must be present in the goals which superiors propose, in the means they make use of, and in the consideration and delicacy which charity requires and the respect which is due to the Sons of God, concerning whom He will demand an account (cf. PC 14).

100. As a representative of God the superior is obliged even more than the rest to dominate his passions and inordinate affections, and to seek not "his own" (Phil . 2,4), concerning those entrusted to him but rather the Will of Jesus Christ, which later, with authority, he will propose to the others. With this end in view he must take into account the purpose of the community which he directs, the obligations which each member may have received from a higher source, and likewise physical, psychological, and moral circumstances in which his fellow members may occasionally find themselves, and the necessity of fostering their maturity and the perfection of all their faculties.

101. An attitude of service is easy for the superior who recalls not only the words of Our Lord: "Whoever wishes to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all" (Mk 9,34), but also that his fellow members may be greater than he in the eyes of God (Const. II 23; cf. Phil 2,3). Animated by this spirit, he always receives them graciously and pays attention to what they have to say, since he knows that God can also make known His will to him through them, and that he himself cannot extinguish the Spirit (cf. I Thes 5,19). For their part, let the religious respond with a sincere friendship in Christ, in such a way that the community may always live in a climate of confidence and joy.

102. The Council wishes the superiors to foster "the active and responsible obedience" of religious (PC 14). This will be accomplished when in a true spirit of family and fraternal sincerity there is a dialogue in the community about undertakings, about ways and means of pursuing common activities, and about expenses and improvements. It is regrettable that the religious should alienate himself from his superior, but socially it would be even more regrettable were a superior to alienate himself from the community, isolating himself in order to do and undo by himself alone. And where common enterprises are concerned, although the good and obedient religious pours out his energies and fulfills his mandate with a sense of responsibility even when he may not have been consulted, and it may even be contrary to his opinion, nevertheless religious cannot feel responsibility as sensibly if they participate in no way in the planning or the execution of enterprises.

103. The superior and his fellow members should speak to one another with sincerity. Let the superior explain his plans and let the rest express their opinions and perhaps suggest improvements upon his projects. With the same sincerity, and the same sentiments of charity, let the religious make known their own projects, their capabilities, and their limitations. Let interests and goals be held in common, and let projects be studied in a constant dialogue which will facilitate the government and progress of the community. And if in the end the superior must take a decision, let him not relinquish his authority, but choose a solution inspired by faith and charity. Let the rest accept it on the basis of the same faith, and in virtue of their commitment and consecration to God, Who directs them by means of His representatives.

104. The spirit of service with which superiors must exercise their authority dictates the following as the goals of their government: sanctification of those whom Our Lord and the Church entrusted to them by means of religious observance and the other elements which enter into their vocation, and the advancement of the apostolic work of the community in accordance with the norms and necessities of the Church.

105. The local consultors contribute greatly to the good government and well-being of the house if, on the one hand, they support the superior and in union with him always lead by their example (Const. I,37,3), and if, on the other hand, according to the wishes of the Church, "they express more the cooperation and care of all the members for the good of the entire community" and in the Chapter tell the preoccupations and the desires of their brothers (cf. PC 14).

106. It is desirable that the competencies of each authority should be established and distinguished as far as possible, in such a way that higher levels do not absorb the scope of those below them, but rather strengthen and perfect their management by providing them assistance in matters which are beyond their capabilities.

Intermediate superiors should assume the responsibility of their charge without hesitation and without recourse to other superiors of a higher level in resolving matters within their competence. In this way it will be possible to maintain a government more adapted to the real circumstances of each community, while avoiding friction and unnecessary complications with higher authority. This will help to secure the healthy decentralization which the Council seems to have had in mind and which the Church is carrying out.

5. Community

107. Community life, as it must be lived in religious families, is a complete, effective and visible exercise of fraternal charity by which Our Lord, overcoming divisions of nature and sin, unites us in His Church by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 3,28). This is the way Christ lived at Nazareth and later on with His Apostles; and this is the way they themselves organized the primitive Christian communities (cf. Act 4,32.)

Our communities are thus a visible realization of the unity and catholicity of the Church: a protraction, in this sense, of the complete sensible realization of this unity in liturgical assembly, and a sign and testimony of the resurrection of Our Lord and of the mission of the Holy Spirit until the consummation of His Kingdom.

Each one of us should strive to live consciously, with his community brothers, this mysterious fraternal unity by which the Church is one with the Son in the presence of the Father by the Spirit. And altogether we must endeavor to live, through this common life, the mystery of the oneness of the entire Church, each of us feeling himself deeply united with all members of the People of God, not only because of our condition as Christians, but particularly because of the form of our religious-apostolic life. In this way, in our relations with the hierarchy, with other religious, with faithful Christians and with all men we will always render visible the supernatural and fraternal love which Christ infuses into His Church and offers through Her to all men (cf. LG 3.7.44; PC 6)

108. Our common life corresponds with the desire of our Father Founder to imitate the apostolic life, i.e., by following Christ as He unites His Apostles together with Himself in fraternal charity.

When the Saint joined with his first collaborators so that together they might accomplish what they could not have done separately in the service of the Word, he brought together, in charity, a true family which enjoyed the presence of Our Lord and made manifest His future coming. From this unity issued a great apostolic force. The common vocation to the apostolate and the desire to imitate Jesus Christ in everything created one common spirit and one bond of fraternal affection among the members of the nascent community. The shared life and shared ministry led them spontaneously to accept one authority and a set of common norms.

109. By reading the documents of the Council attentively one easily discovers the nature and the multiple benefits of the common life: namely a common and effective fraternal life; a common direction and authority in the perfect exercise of charity according to the evangelical counsels; a complete sharing of material goods; and a community organization of life – all for the purpose of a more perfect and fruitful apostolic ministry, capable of giving testimony. The Council emphasized the idea that life in community, household observances, and the very practice of the evangelical counsels serve to foster and attain this common life of brotherhood which is a value essential to Christian perfection and the apostolic life (cf. PC 6).

110. As a perfect exercise, deriving from fraternal charity and the other Christian virtues, this community life is a supernatural gift of God. It cannot be obtained except through the action of the Holy Spirit, by means of assiduous prayer “given new force by the teaching of the Gospel, the Sacred Liturgy and especially the Eucharist” (cf. PC 15), and by sincere repentance for faults against God and against our neighbor.

111. Community prayer must be the exercise and the expression of this perfect charity in Christ, as a notable part of common life. The community celebration of the Eucharist, and liturgical prayer in common, occupy the first place and should be favored among us to the fullest extent that the character of our apostolic vocation permits, and that prudent evaluation of circumstances suggests. The other community acts of piety, compatible with our tradition and with the apostolic traits of our Institute, are also an important means of fostering common charity and strengthening the life and apostolic effectiveness of our communities.

112. Community life is not a uniform thing, to be brought into being by all the different Institutes in the same way, at all times. In each one of them it is adopted to the characteristics of the life of perfection which the particular Institute professes, and with the traits and goals which individualize it. Speaking specifically of the apostolic religious Institutes, the common life, just like the other elements of the evangelical and apostolic life, is practiced as one way of living entirely for God and for the Church in the exercise of the apostolate. And therefore the common life not only encompasses the disciplinary elements adapted to the safety and personal perfection of the religious, but likewise embraces these elements in the manner most suited to the exercise of the apostolate.

113. The organization of the life of the community, should correspond as much as possible to the common and individual obligations of its members, so that community life may be an effective support for everyone's fidelity and

an instrument to attain unity of life in a common spirit: a means which fosters fraternal charity, the solicitude of one for another, which helps us to realize our religious-apostolic vocation, fully aware that in the community we are responsible for one another.

114. In apostolic Institutes, the apostolate is related to the religious life, and for this reason the apostolate should somehow be lived in common. Thus it is necessary that the very works of the apostolate should be considered as a community good and a community responsibility even when they are performed by a single individual. And so, in organizing community life, account must be taken of the apostolic obligations of each and everyone which have been imposed, or which are recognized by the responsible authority. Timetables and regulations cannot therefore be the same in all communities, perhaps not even for all the individuals in the same community (ES 26).

Variations, or differences in regulations which are adopted for this reason cannot be considered as a mitigation or dispensation, but as a more perfect, more suitable arrangement for attaining apostolic goals more easily and efficiently.

115. To the extent that the proper form of the religious life, the demands of the apostolate or the circumstances of the era necessitate the reduction of common observances, it is indispensable to strengthen the spiritual and personal aspects of community life. Those practices should be favored which foster the dependence of the individual upon the superior and the community, spiritual union and sound friendship, and fraternal cooperation between religious, for example by establishing teamwork, by forming smaller and more homogeneous communities and by having community meetings, pastoral councils, etc.

For the same reason, in the selection and formation of our members, we have to bear in mind the missionary's need to acquire the personal capacity to live and to protect his spiritual life.

116. The following recommendations will be very helpful for the attainment of this fulfillment of community life:

1. The necessary selection and formation of candidates, requiring of them and developing in them the human qualities and supernatural virtues that are indispensable for the perfect practice of fraternal charity in community life.

2. Careful attention to the social and community aspects of asceticism and the Christian virtues.

3. A supernatural evaluation and progressive practice of dialogue, of living together, of collaboration and of teamwork.

4. The formation of communities with fewer members, as homogeneous as possible, primarily for apostolic undertakings.

117. To simulate and develop this supernatural vision of our living together is necessary, so that true and effective fraternity in Christ may always reign in our communities despite the normal differences in mentality, nationality, race, etc. To foster such a community life constitutes one of the most serious obligations of the evangelical profession and of the religious state within the Church.

118. In giving general norms for community life, instead of providing detailed regulations, it would be better to list the different acts or observances which should be inserted in all timetables, whether common or personal. It should be left to each community, then, with the guidance of the respective superiors, to organize its own timetable and regulations with greater variety and flexibility.

The effort to establish the timetable most suited to each house, to reconcile the different requirements, adapting them to common and particular needs will in itself be an extraordinary exercise of charity and the social virtues, and furthermore will result in timetables that are more convenient and more easily accepted by everyone. It will also illuminate the true reasons for the different acts and the limits imposed on each one in deference to the rest, because of the demands of the common good and of the individual's spiritual life, study, etc.

Community life organized in this way will be a most important help for the spiritual perfection of our members and for their apostolate. It will be both an outstanding exercise of theological and moral virtues, and a stimulus for a realistic and demanding asceticism. It will constitute a great testimony of charity and of the power of the Spirit, and will increase the apostolic capabilities of our communities.

6. The Apostolate

119. The missionary apostolate is a fundamental reason for our Institute and for our vocation. The apostolate,

therefore, must be considered as an essential part of our perfection and of the religious life which is professed in our Congregation. The formation of our youth must be directed toward the apostolate, and likewise the organization and existence of our houses and the very government of our Institute.

120. Our apostolate, as a part of our religious life, must always be inspired by supernatural motives. It must be penetrated with religious virtues and with the evangelical counsels, must be incorporated into the Church through obedience and lived in community in whatever manner possible.

121. The apostolate of our Institute is always an exercise of the mission entrusted to it by the Church; more concretely it is an exercise of the mission which each community or individual receives from legitimate authority. From this we realize the part we play in the general mission of the Church and of Christ. The apostolate, consequently, should be directed by the superiors and should constitute one of the primary preoccupations of their government.

122. The community nature of the apostolate of religious recommends and favors teamwork. There would be nothing better for us, united as we are by the same vocation and spirit, than to assume and carry out this type of community undertaking.

123. In present circumstances it is necessary for us to renew the traditional forms of our apostolate which have retained their vitality and to search for other, new ones, which are in keeping with the character and tradition of our Institute which best meet the needs of the Church and which are best suited to the actual conditions of the time and the needs of each place, "so that the preaching of the Gospel may be carried out more effectively in every nation" (PC 20).

It is necessary to guarantee sufficient freedom of movement for missionary action, without tying ourselves too much to structures or institutions which can easily lose their vitality.

124. During our times, the Church has extended the feast of the Heart of Mary to the entire Church, and the Popes have repeatedly consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart. Most recently, the Marian doctrine of the Council has placed in relief that the Blessed Virgin is the spiritual mother of all men because of the overflowing richness of her heart. All these facts bind us, as Sons of the Heart of Mary, to assume as one of the characteristic obligations of our apostolate, the task of spreading Marian doctrine and piety in the Church of today.

7. The Priesthood

125. The very spirit of our Founder, plus the growing awareness of the priestly office in the Church, and the necessary diversification of vocations which is now being accomplished in its intimate life, makes it necessary that the priestly character of our spirituality of our form of life, and of our apostolate stand out in still higher relief.

126. In judging the vocation of one seeking admission with hopes of becoming a priest, it is necessary to consider whether he has the vocation and the qualities for the priestly life and apostolic ministry in the particular way that they are practiced in our Congregation. This was a preoccupation of our Father Founder, and appears in various places in the Constitutions (n. 35 & 139).

This supposes that the candidate possesses a sufficiently clear idea of what the apostolate of the Congregation must be at this precise time, and that he is aware of the natural qualities and virtues required of him, and of the intellectual formation he needs. It supposes, too, that he has sufficient knowledge of the Church and the world, of the movements and methods of the apostolate, and finally of the religious and moral problems and the cultural and social factors that affect people's religious lives.

127. There has always been a lively and fervent devotion to the Holy Father in the life of the Congregation. At present, and due in great part to the work of the Council, the figure of the bishop has been enhanced both spiritually and pastorally, and the consciousness of priestly unity has been developed. All this makes more pressing our collaboration with bishops and with all priests in a true spiritual union (cf. LG 28 & P0 8).

According to this conciliar mentality, which is in accord with the spirit of our Founder and the best tradition of our Institute, it will be necessary to review and project for the future the distribution of our houses, their composition, and individual assignments, within the pastoral master plan of each territory. At the very least it will be desirable to formulate a program which may then be effected little by little as our limited possibilities at any moment permit.

128. In the establishing and development of our community life this priestly character of the majority of its members dedicated to the apostolic ministry must be taken into account. This should have a bearing on the nature of our acts of piety, on the importance we assign to study, etc.

128. *bis.* The Chapter acknowledges that the permanent diaconate is in tune with the charism which we have received from our Founder, and desires that it be instituted in our Congregation when and where the General Government believes it opportune, for pastoral reasons.

8. The Laity

129. Although the Congregation is basically priestly, by reason of its particular apostolic character, it cannot carry out its mission the way it was received from our Founder without the presence and fraternal collaboration of our lay brothers. The priests of the Congregation know how much these excellent helpers contribute to the fulfillment of the apostolic mission which all of us together have received, and they are convinced that they cannot by themselves live the life of the Congregation or carry out its apostolic enterprises (cf. LG 30).

130. Our Coadjutor Brothers are Christians, laymen, and religious consecrated to God and to the Heart of Mary for the goal of the Congregation. They demonstrate a particular realization of the common priesthood of Christians, because of their baptismal state, because of the apostolic duties imposed by confirmation, and because of the elevation of these characteristics to a higher level through their religious consecration.

In the Congregation, they fully realize the dignity of their vocation in the service of the Church, along with the other members of the Institute, and they participate, in keeping with their lay-vocation in the charism and common apostolic vocation of the Congregation. As members of the Institute in the fullest sense, they participate fully in its spiritual heritage and enrich their own life by linking it with that of their priestly brothers in one sole spirit, one sole vocation and one commission.

131. The General Chapter recommends that in whatever concerns our Coadjutor Brothers account should be taken of what the Church has taught about the dignity and role of the laity in the Church (cf. LG 32), about the fullness of the lay-religious life (cf. PC 10), about the appropriateness of certain priests and laity uniting in a common apostolic action (cf. AA 24), and about living intimately associated in a common life and undertaking (cf. PC 15).

Accepting and putting into practice the viewpoint of the Church obliges us to review the standards of selection and the methods of formation of our Coadjutor Brothers, as well as our effort to unite them closely with the life and work of our communities (cf. PC 15). The Chapter hopes that all this will bring great benefits for the internal life of the Congregation and for its apostolic work in the Church and in the world.

Priests and laity of the same community should place themselves at one another's service, feeling themselves made brothers by one same religious and apostolic vocation. They should not refuse to perform works that will benefit others, and all should contribute their best talents to common action. In this way they will render a multiple testimony of the unity and charity of the Body of Christ (LG 32).

132. The religious formation of our Coadjutor Brothers should be such that they may be able conscientiously to live their consecrated life and efficiently fulfill their mission in the service of the goals of the community and in the undertakings of the total apostolate of the Congregation (cf. PC 18).

9. Piety

133. The spirit and practice of prayer are irreplaceable nourishment for spiritual perfection and for the apostolic life (cf. PC 6 & 8). It is desirable that we promote the appreciation of mental prayer and defend it against the difficulties of excessive activity or psychological instability, which at times accompany our modern life. In order to achieve this it is important to develop a love for the Sacred Scriptures. We, like our Father Founder, will attain sublime knowledge of Christ through reading and meditation upon the Sacred Books (cf. Phil 3,8).

134. Taking into account the apostolic nature of our Institute, recognition should be given in the arrangement of our life of piety to the primacy of liturgical acts over the common exercises of local prayer. In order that liturgical piety may be the foundation and source of vigorous spiritual life it is necessary for our members to be sufficiently instructed to be able to understand its meaning easily, as well as to express their personal piety spontaneously through it.

Mental prayer disposes us to participate intimately and profitably in the sacred Eucharistic mystery and in

the public prayer of the Church.

135. The formularies of our acts of piety, and the distribution of them, must be suitable to the spiritual characteristics of our heritage and to the present perspectives of the Church. From this criterion we deduce the value of liturgical acts (Mass, Breviary), an esteem for the most traditional practices of Marian piety (Rosary), and the validity of exercises of piety practiced with the people during the practice of the ministry, etc. (cf. PC 13).

Insisting on the priestly character of the piety of our Institute, we will point out that this was profoundly the mark of our Founder: in his Christocentrism, in his Eucharistic piety, in his love for Sacred Scripture, in his particular way of living his Marian Sonship in close relationship with his missionary vocation, and in devotion to the Apostles and to other saints especially distinguished for their apostolic zeal, etc.

10. Study

136. Within the context of fidelity to our religious apostolic vocation, study has a value of the first order. Our Founder says this expressly (Const. I,121; II,50,51,52). This is a matter in which the superiors must answer decisively in order to review the present situation in depth and correct its deficiencies. This is so because it is a problem which profoundly affects our life and one upon which many spiritual and apostolic order depend.

137. The missionary vocation of the priest requires an intellectual formation over and above what is common to other priests. This is what our Founder wished (Positio Ia, page 35). Every individual member of the Congregation should receive a specialized formation in preparation for the exercise of the missionary apostolate, a formation which will prepare them to exercise the ministries which prove most necessary in each time and place. It may be that our ministries are now impaired by a lack of fundamental and specialized formation. Both must be assured. No true specialization is possible unless it is based upon a solid fundamental formation. Along with an appropriate professional or pastoral specialization our Coadjutor Brothers need the religious formation which will permit them to know and solidly live their proper religious and apostolic vocation (cf. PC 18).

138. On the part of those called to the priesthood, it must be admitted as a counter-indication of a vocation to our Congregation if they lack an aptitude for the necessary intellectual formation, even the evident lack of a love for study. For the brothers, it must be required that they have the necessary aptitude to receive the human and religious formation which they need.

139. It is a grave exigency of our vocation to continue perfecting ourselves intellectually throughout life. It is urgent to provide our missionaries with means of periodically renewing their doctrinal and pastoral formation, prodding their conscience and allowing them the time and necessary means.

140. The Congregation should not be absent from the apostolate of scholarship, whether it be by research proper, by teaching, through publications, or by any other means which the needs of the Church demand (cf. GS 62) Our Institute can aspire to influence people on a higher level by offering an elevated and universal teaching, above all today; and it can aspire to contribute to the restoration in Christ of culture, civilization, and technology, in conformity with our particular vocation and in accordance with the instructions of Vatican II, principally in the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*.

This demands that the Congregation make a great effort to consolidate its members' spiritual formation, and prepare true specialists in the field of research and teaching so that it may be equipped to fulfill this high mission. It is equally necessary to assure that our missionaries be constantly brought up to date. This is what our Founder wished and what is especially necessary today.

DECREE ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

1. This special Chapter, conscious of the importance it has for the development of the Congregation in its religious life and apostolic activity, and aware of how its government must be exercised according to the orientations of Vatican II, desired that the particular determinations contained in this present decree and which, in part, modify the Holy Constitutions and our Code of Additional Law, be preceded by a preface, generally summarizing the practical principles of religious government. The theological foundations concerning this matter were already established in the Capitular Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation (nn. 88-106).

With this present decree, the Chapter feels it has fulfilled the desire of the Council that the Government of Religious Institutes be renewed and adapted in conformity to the actual conditions of persons and things.

CHAPTER I

General Principles of Government

1. The Church and Religious Institutes

2. Religious Institutes, as a sign and testimony in the world through their consecration to God, form part of the Church of Christ and should be always vivified by His Spirit.

The Church, or the People of God, is the Mystical Body and it is organized in this world in a social manner (LG 7,8). As a result, each religious Institute, as a chosen portion of the Church, should constantly participate in its life and imitate its forms of organization to the degree that this form of organization corresponds to it.

3. The spiritual life possesses the primacy which corresponds to the purpose of religious Institutes. External and social organization are necessary instruments in religious communities as in every human society for the realization of its proper goals. The direction of authority and the collaboration of obedience are two forces which converge and are directed toward the attainment of the same goal. This goal is the welfare of the community and of each of its members, attained through the love of all and in the service of God and submission to His Will.

2. Religious Government in the Revision of Rules

4. The twofold problem of authority and obedience should be a preoccupation in the revision of rules and in the evolution of the religious mentality. This is a theme that needs attention, prudence, and confidence if it is to arrive at solutions which our times suggest and the Council calls for (Aloc. of Paul VI, 1-12-67).

3. Government in Religious Communities

5. "Superiors, who have to give an account to God of the souls entrusted to them" (Hb 13,17) "and responsive to God's Will, should exercise their authority in a spirit of service to their brothers expressing in this way the love with which God loves them. They should govern them as Sons of God, respecting their human dignity. In this way they make it easier for them to subordinate their will. They should be particularly careful to respect their liberty in the matters of sacramental confession and direction of conscience. Religious should be brought to the point where they will cooperate with an active and responsible obedience Superiors should gladly listen to their brothers and foster harmony among them for the good of the community and the Church, provided that thereby their own authority to decide and command what has to be done is not harmed" (PC 14).

6. "Chapters and deliberative bodies should faithfully discharge the part in ruling entrusted to them and each should in its own way express that concern for the good of the entire community which all its members share" (PC 14). This will be accomplished principally if the religious fulfill a truly effective role in the selection of members of Chapters and Councils. Equally, let the exercise of authority be more efficient and flexible, according to the exigencies of the present times (cf. MPr. ES.8).

4. Principles concerning Government in Religious Communities

7. These two fundamental documents (PC & ES) clearly underline the following ideas which confirm, illustrate and adapt the evangelical and ecclesiastical doctrine concerning government at the present time.

8. a) Superiors should exercise their authority in the spirit of fraternal service, with submission to the Divine Will and with the purpose of realizing, humanly and in community, the Kingdom of God in this world.

b) Let them foster the voluntary obedience of their fellow members, in a spirit of faith and love for the saving Will of God and as a sacrifice of themselves in example of Jesus Christ Who came to fulfill the Will of His Father (Jn 4,34-5,30; Hb 10,7; Ps 39,9). They should also submit out of love for the person of the superior, since obedience is "consent offered to a proposal" (Enc. "*Ecclesiam suam*" AAS 56 (1964) p. 658

c) The correct exercise of government, the same when it counsels or teaches as when it imposes precepts, is an act of charity which helps toward perfection. "Religious obedience, far from stifling human dignity, brings it to maturity by means of the higher liberty of the Sons of God" (PC 14). "Religious families offer their members a liberty strengthened by obedience" (LG 43) "All men should take note that the profession of the evangelical counsels, though entailing the renunciation of certain values which undoubtedly are to be esteemed, does not detract from a

genuine development of the human person. Rather, by its very nature, it is most beneficial to that development” (LG 46).

d) The relation between authority and obedience always remains the same with regard to its divine origin, its necessity and its reason for being. But government must now assume new forms, in consonance with the general evolution which has taken place in modern times. “The scope and the spirit of religious life would appear to be seriously compromised if authority and obedience should finally be lacking. Both the one and the other require new forms, of a higher nature, more worthy of ecclesial society, more virtuous and conformable to the spirit of Christ” (Aloc. of Paul VI, 1-12-67).

These forms are principally simplicity, dialogue, generous fraternal cooperation with an apostolic spirit and an ecumenical sense of adaptation.

e) The physical and psychological conditions of his fellow members require special attention on the part of the superior, along with needs of the apostolate and of modern culture, due consideration given to individual and common welfare.

f) Through a sincere and fraternal dialogue, proper to a religious family, the “cooperation of an active and responsible obedience on the part of the fellow members,” (PC 14) will be accomplished. Such a dialogue in no way diminishes the prestige of authority. Rather it takes advantage of useful proposals and necessary harmony of spirits.

g) In all questions which allow it and which belong to the common interest let the superior see to it that members of the community collaborate not only in the execution but in the very planning of works of the apostolate and the arrangement of community life.

5. Participation of the Community in Government

9. The most common form for the community or its members to participate in government is the consultation which the Superior undertakes, or the explanation which he freely presents to the community. Under both forms participation can be achieved personally when each member explains his view to the superior, either spontaneously, or when he is requested to do so, or is consulted, or it can also be achieved collectively when the community participates in government by means of Chapters and Councils, either with a consultative or deliberative vote. On other occasions the community acts in the form of a plenary assembly.

10. For the community to participate in government by means of Chapters and Councils, it is not necessary that the community elect in the strict sense the members of the Chapters and Councils. At times it will be convenient that this be done. At other times it will be sufficient that the community participate in the selection of these members by means of a general report which each one can make and which should be facilitated as much as possible. This second form of participation fulfills in itself the desire expressed in the words of the *Motu Proprio, “Ecclesiae Sanctae”* 18. Requests for information on important matters should be widespread and frequent, principally when they touch upon factual circumstances.

11. The deliberation which intervenes between information and decision will be at times a personal act of the superior, at other times a joint act of the superior with his consultors or with experts. When circumstances allow and suggest it, the collective deliberation of the community is also desirable.

12. Whatever the form of government, the directive action of the superior is entirely personal in the act in which he decides what must be done. This has application even in those cases in which the validity of the act is subject to a majority of required votes (can. 105,1).

In his decisions, the superior must proceed “with charity and amiability” rather than with harshness (Const. I,37). In this way, his fellow members will feel themselves induced to accept his decision and second it spontaneously.

6. Government according to our Holy Constitutions: Their Adaptation

13. The criteria and forms of government are outlined in our Holy Constitutions, principally in Part I, Chapter IX, where they treat of local superiors. A comparison between what our Holy Constitutions set down concerning the government of the community by the local superior and what the Conciliar decree PC14 teaches on the same subject, reveals no opposition whatever between both texts. However, the Conciliar text is more elevated in spirit, more rich in ideas and is better accommodated to the psychology and needs of the present time. Therefore, the Chapter has decided to insert in the Holy Constitutions what refers to government, from the words “Superiors, however, will render an account...” to the words “what must be done” (PC 14).

CHAPTER II

Chapters and Councils

14. Chapters and Councils, whatever their composition, designation or competency, must be authentically representative, whether of the entire Congregation (General Chapters) or of a part of it (Provincial or Local). By the same token, all those having an interest in it must cooperate in the selection of those composing them and in the preparation of topics (cf. ES 2).

15. Chapters and Councils must be prepared suitably with sufficient time by means of consulting and requesting information of all those who are affected by their decisions. Their preparation is always the task of the General or Provincial Government, taking into account all those elements in which the Congregation or Province consists, and having the service of the necessary commissions or experts in each subject. For the Local Council, it is sufficient to announce in advance to the community or consultants what must be treated in it.

16. All Chapters (General or Provincial) must be preoccupied with evaluating the conduct of the respective governments during the period to which they correspond. Nevertheless, this task must be subordinate to other more important work involving constant revitalization of the religious and apostolic life, through continued renewal and adaptation.

17. For this purpose, the Chapters must be very alert to detecting the directions of the Church and the hierarchy, universally considered as well as on the level of the different regions and dioceses. They must accept the directives and norms of Episcopal conferences and collaborate loyally with other religious Institutes and their confederations in pastoral master plans.

A. The General Chapter

18. The General Chapter is the supreme authority of the Congregation and its competency is actually sufficiently set forth in the Holy Constitutions (I, 49).

19. The task of the General Chapter, outlined in the Holy Constitutions, will have to be renewed and adapted in each Chapter, in conformity with the indications made previously.

20. As a sign of this supremacy of the General Chapter, the material in the Holy Constitutions referring to it should be arranged before the Chapters which treat of the Superior General and his government, inasmuch as the Chapter elects them and sets down for them norms and directives how they must conduct their government.

21. The composition of the General Chapter is of the highest importance considering that it profoundly affects the representation of the entire Institute and the functioning of the Chapter itself. This representation must be based on two principles: the institutional principle or representation of organisms, through their superiors; and the principle of representation of the personnel of the Congregation through the election of delegates. For this election it is impossible to attempt solutions that are numerically equivalent but poorly expressive of the diversity of factors which exist in the organisms represented and which should be taken into account with diverse criteria.

22. Concerning the matters which must be treated in General Chapters, what is set forth in the *MPr.*, "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*"¹³, always retains its value as a principle, i.e., that the close union of the spiritual and juridical elements should always be carefully sought after. The criteria which must be followed are principally contained in the decrees PC 3 and ES 16-17.

23. It is also the prerogative of the General Chapter to exercise the function of teaching and guidance by means of declarations which establishes policies and apply the directives of the Church concerning the religious and apostolic life of the Congregation, in accordance with our proper charism.

24. In conclusion, as its exclusive prerogative, the General Chapter must consider giving capitular rules according to the meaning expressed in our Code of Additional Law (ed. 1953, n.34). These rules concern the application of the common law to the Congregation, the interpretation of the Holy Constitutions and their fulfillment.

25. The ordinary General Chapter will be celebrated every six years. With regard to an extraordinary General Chapter, the actual legislation is to be retained (Const. I,50).

26. Composition of the General Chapter:

The following shall assist at the General Chapter:

- a) The Superior General, the General Consultors and General Officials.
- b) The Provincial Superiors.
- c) The Superiors of independent Vice-Provinces.
- d) Independent Visitors.
- e) A delegate for each Province, Vice-Province and Independent Visitorship. Provinces that number 175 perpetually professed members have a right to a second delegate.
- f) The General Government may designate two priests and one or two brothers.
- g) With regard to the delegates from General Houses and Inter-provincial Houses, it is to be left to the General Government to determine the manner of designating them.

B. The Provincial Chapter

27. The Provincial Chapter must realize in its own sphere what has been said concerning the General Chapter with regard to the entire Congregation, both concerning its preparation by means of appropriate inquiries, consultation and commissions, as well as in what touches upon its functioning and its policies with relation to the regional hierarchy and its pastoral council.

28. It should apply in its territory the norms and guidelines of the General Chapter after taking into account the modifications that may be imposed by local or personal circumstances. This applies both to the arrangement of religious and community life, as well as to apostolic activities. With regard to the latter, the Chapter should seek a very close collaboration with the apostolic activities of the diocesan clergy and of other religious Institutes.

29. The so-called Business Chapter should consider itself as a true Chapter. Its decisions have juridical force, even though they require the ratification of the Superior General.

30. This Chapter must occupy itself with evaluating the conduct of the Provincial Government in the six-year period of its mandate, so as to obtain a clear consciousness of the state of the Province and of its most urgent problems. A plan or program of action for the following six-year period must also be elaborated. During the Chapter, its members will send in adequate information concerning the persons who are capable of constituting the future government of the Province.

31. The ordinary Business Chapter will be held every six years, at the conclusion of the term of each Provincial Government.

32. It will be beneficial for each Provincial Government to convoke occasional meetings or gatherings of the entire Provincial Government and the Superiors of the communities. These meetings will have a consultive and informative character. Other representatives of the Province may also be called to these meetings by designation of the Provincial Government.

33. The Chapter of Elections, as its name indicates, has as its objective the election of the delegate or delegates which the Province shall send to the General Chapter. In it will also be formulated the proposals, petitions and other matters which the Province feels desirable to refer to the General Chapter for the benefit of the spiritual and apostolic development of the entire Congregation.

- 34.** The following shall make up the Provincial Chapter of Elections and assist with voice and vote:
- a) The Superior General or his delegate; the Provincial Superior, consultors, Treasurer and Secretary. The latter two shall attend even if they are not consultors.
 - b) The Superiors of formed Houses and of independent Residences.
 - c) A delegate for each formed House and two for those which have at least 15 perpetually professed members. The residences shall group themselves in sections of 6 to 12 individuals in accordance with what is set down in our Code of Additional Law (287,4d).
 - d) With regard to the Brothers, a Provincial Government may call one or two of them, in the event that they

have not been elected as delegates of the Houses.

35. In addition to those listed in the preceding number, the following shall assist at Provincial Business Chapters:

a) The Master of Novices and the Prefects of Professed Students.

b) One priest delegate, elected directly by means of ballots by all the students of perpetual vows living under a special regime in a center of formation.

c) The priests and Brothers residing in the inter-provincial Houses and center-, when they reach six in number, shall elect a delegate of their own. If they are less than six in number, the Provincial Government shall determine where they will exercise their right.

CHAPTER III

Right of Active and Passive Voice

36. At present the Church has been very explicit in recommending greater participation and cooperation of members of Religious Institutes in elective and governing functions. (PC 15; ES II, 27,18). And it has urged Superiors that they consult and listen to their fellow members in the manner most suitable. (PC 4,14).

37. In Institutes of men that are not composed entirely of lay persons, and supposing the required conditions, gradual amplification in favor of lay members has been authorized, not only in the exercise of the active voice, but also of passive voice for certain and determined offices (PC 15; ES 27).

38. The right of active and passive voices is one of the most fundamental manifestations of personality and a general way of participating in government, by making it more representative and effective. The form of representation and participation corresponds in our Congregation to the three levels of which modern Institutes consist: House, Province, Institute (can. 488).

39. Each religious should be enrolled in his Institute through a determined House and a determined Province and exercise in them his rights of active and passive voice, except by rare exception.

40. For this reason, the first basis of the right of representation is the organic structure of the Institute, which should imitate the structure of the Church (cf. CD 40,2).

Conclusions

41. All priests, students, and brothers in perpetual vows shall enjoy active voice, at least on the third or local Chapter level for the election of the Superior General and his council, by participating in the election of local delegates for the respective Provincial Chapter. They can be deprived of this right only for concrete and very grave reasons of incapability or unworthiness. The non-formed Houses will associate among themselves according to the determination of the Provincial Government in such a manner that they form a group of voters not less than six nor more than twelve in number. The exercise of this right can be made by mailed ballots according to the judgment of the Provincial Government.

42. The election of delegates of the independent major organisms is to be accomplished in Chapter or by mailed ballots.

The major organisms dependent from a Province, as integral parts of it, exercise their right of active and passive voice within it.

43. Students of perpetual vows, who are not grouped together in formation, exercise the right of voting under the same conditions as the priests and brothers of the House in which they live.

CHAPTER IV

Organs of Government

44. In addition to Chapters, the various governments are constituted by the Superior (General, Provincial, Local) along with the consultors and officials, i.e., with those who have voice and vote in the Council (consultors) and those who assist in the execution of the decisions. So also the corresponding Chapters (General, Provincial, Local).

45. In the designation and composition of these organisms let special attention be given to the homogeneity and mutual understanding of its members, in such a way that the consultors may be efficient collaborators with the Superior, by means of their counsel, their moral support, their help in work, and their brotherly advice, when they believe it appropriate in the Lord.

46. Since these governments must be representative of their respective organism and promoters of its welfare, all those who have a legitimate interest should be involved in the appointment of their members, at least through thorough inquiries.

A. General Government

47. For its unity, the Congregation needs a General Government with power over all its organisms and over each of their members according to the Holy Constitutions. Let its object and mission be to promote the Institute's welfare, to see to its development, to sustain the unity of action of all its components and to foster the religious and apostolic life by every possible means.

48. The work of the General Government should always be directed toward participation in the life of the Church and the fulfillment of the Church's goals throughout the entire world (LG 44; PC 2c). At the same time, the General Government should safeguard and support the proper character of our Institute, thus fulfilling the will of the Church (LG 44; PC 14).

49. In conformity with the M. Pr. "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*", 18, and to guarantee greater exactness in the selection of those who must constitute the General Government it is proposed that there be prior formal inquiries conducted by the members of the Provincial Chapters of Elections. The inquiries should be private, secret and not limited to the individuals of one's own Province. In addition to these formal inquiries spontaneous reports from all those who wish to submit them, are to be admitted.

1. Superior General

50. The Superior General, the highest ordinary authority of the Congregation, shall be elected in the General Chapter and by the Chapter's members, by an absolute majority of votes.

51. The Latin name, "Superior Generalis" is to be adopted, but it may be translated into different languages by the expression that is most suitable for the different countries.

52. The Superior General's office shall last for six years, and then he may be re-elected for another six years by an absolute majority of votes.

53. He may be re-elected a second time provided he receives a two-thirds majority of votes.

2. The Vicar General

54. The Vicar General, just as the other general consultors, is to be elected in the General Chapter by an absolute majority of votes. If this majority is not obtained in the first three ballots, passive voice is to be restricted on the fourth ballot to the two candidates favored by the greatest number of votes. In case of a tie, the procedure set down by common law is to be followed.

55. The office of Vicar General is meant to replace the office of the Sub-Director General. He is to be selected by the Superior General from the consultors elected by the Chapter. He is to be the first consultor and to substitute for the Superior General in his absences and when he may be impeded, and is to have, furthermore, the opportune personal delegations.

3. General Consultors

56. The general consultors shall be elected by the General Chapter.

57 There shall be six general consultors, including the Secretary and the Treasurer General. Their office shall be of the same length as the mandate of the Superior General, and they may be re-elected.

58. Although the general consultors are to be elected with a view to the prefectures, the prefectures are not necessarily to be attached to the office of consultor

59. The general prefectures, particularly those of formation and apostolate, will include a certain number of experts and should be restructured.

4. Representativity

60. It is greatly to be desired that the General Government be elected from among the individuals of the diverse regions of the world where the Congregation is established.

5. Precedence

61. The order of precedence in the General Government is as follows: Superior General, Vicar General; the precedence of the remaining consultors shall be determined according to the norms of the common law and of our particular law.

B. Provincial Government

62. In the hierarchical order, the intermediate level between the General Government and the Local Government is occupied by the Provincial Government, which has proportionately within its jurisdiction the attributions and duties assigned to the General Government.

63. As established by the Holy Constitutions (I, 28) the Provincial Government has two finalities, which are its reason of being and the measure of its action. They are: a) to assure the Congregation attains its goals within the Province and b) to collaborate effectively with the proper government of the Superior General and subordinated to it. As a consequence, the attributions of the Provincial Government will be:

To promote the welfare of the Congregation in its sphere, by applying the general laws of the Institute to its communities, according to the particular conditions of the country in which it is established, and by earnestly promoting native vocations.

To initiate, approve and encourage new apostolic experiments within the spirit of the Congregation, collaborating for this purpose with the Episcopal Conferences and the Conferences of Religious, and in keeping with the directives of the diocesan Pastoral Councils in the undertaking of apostolic works.

To practice and foster in the Province a generous open-mindedness toward the universal Congregation, analogous to what collegiality exacts from the bishops with respect to the universal Church, always placing the welfare of the Congregation above particular interests.

64. The Province, along with the Provincial Government which represents it, enjoys its own juridical personality and in accordance with the sacred canons and our own particular law it should have the facilities, faculties and means which are necessary for the fulfillment of its goals. The Provincial Superior represents the Province in the ecclesiastical and civil orders. With reference to these considerations, No. 217, 1 of our Code of Additional Law has great importance. It says: "The respective Provincial and Vice-Provincial Superiors represent respectively their Province and their Vice-Province, and serve as their personality. They have the right to obligate and to release their Province or Vice-Province both canonically and civilly as well as morally, in accordance, however, with the common law and our own particular law..."

Conclusions

65. a) The Provincial Superior is the guide, leader and coordinator of the entire religious and apostolic life of the communities of the Province. Let him love every one without distinction. Let him diligently and gently look after every one, especially the sick, the elderly and those who suffer. Let him listen with an open mind and in a brotherly spirit to whatever is presented to him with regard to both common and individual needs and with regard to the enterprises of the apostolate in all its forms. Let him organize these works on the provincial level and even the inter-provincial level, in cooperation with members of other Provinces, in agreement with the respective Superiors and through the inter-provincial Conferences, when the case requires it.

b) The most important mission of the Provincial Superior is the arrangement of each House with a view to combining personnel and facilities for work, in the most suitable manner possible, so that all the Houses might be able to undertake their individual and community activities. With regard to the arrangement of the Houses, let him conduct extensive inquiries throughout the Province.

c) What the decree "Christus Dominus", n.16, says of bishops is applicable to Superiors, but especially to Major Superiors: "In exercising their office of Father and pastor, let them stand in the midst of their people as those who serve. Let them be good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them. Let them be true Fathers who excel in the spirit of love and solicitude for all and to whose divinely conferred authority, all submit themselves. Let them so gather and mold the whole family of their flock that everyone, conscious of his own duties, may live and work in the communion of love." Within the necessary subordination to higher authority, the Provincial will enjoy whatever autonomy is suitable or necessary so that matters of his competency may be executed with efficiency and dispatch (ES II,18).

66. The Provincial Superior is to be named by the General Government after extensive prior formal consultation to obtain information from all professed members of the Province.

67. His office shall last for a period of six years.

68. The Provincial is not eligible for immediate re-election for another six-year period in the same province, unless by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Government.

69. Provincial Consultors

There shall be four provincial consultors and their office shall last as long as the Provincial's. They shall be named by the General Government. However, the list of consultors proposed to form the government is to be presented first to the Provincial Superior, so that he may enjoy the faculty of expressing any reservations he may have.

70. Similar to what has been established for the General Government the Provincial Superior shall also be able to choose his own Vicar from among the consultors. The Vicar is to occupy the place of first consultor. The precedence of the remaining consultors is to be regulated by the norms of the common law and our own particular law.

71. The Provincial Treasurer

The Provincial Treasurer shall at the same time be a consultor. He shall be appointed by the General Government.

72. Provincial Secretary

He shall be appointed by the Provincial Superior if he is one of the consultors. The Provincial Superior needs the consent of the consultors if he is to be appointed from outside of the council.

73. Prefectures

They are to be organized in the same way as the prefectures of the General Government. There is to be no necessary connection between them and the office of consultors, although ordinarily they would be undertaken by the consultors. Permanent commissions shall be organized, to cooperate with the functions of each prefecture.

74. The prefecture of Administration is always to be directed by the Provincial Treasurer and that of Archives by the Secretary.

75. The prefectures should be very effective in their work, and have a spirit of adaptation in their respective activities.

76. For this purpose the prefects must be granted the necessary habitual faculties to allow them deftly to fulfill their role of informing, initiating and stimulating.

In their work, the prefects are to be under the supervision of the Provincial Superior.

In addition to the meetings and briefings arranged in their own Provinces, it is desirable that the prefectures arrange for interprovincial seminars or meetings, with the consent of the respective Major Superiors.

C. Government of Vice-Provinces and Visitorships

77. The Government of these organisms shall be appointed by the General Government.

78. Their obligations, their attributions and activities are proportionately the same as Provincial Government's.

79. The duration of the Government of a Vice-Province will be for six years; that of a visitorship, for three years.

D. Inter-provincial Conferences

80. The General Chapter has decreed the substitution of interprovincial conferences for the Assistancies. They should be given great importance, and the General Government is entrusted with organizing them.

E. Local Government

81. Our Houses, true communities of religious-apostolic life, accomplish the works of the Congregation in their multiple forms.

82. Each House fulfills a part of the Congregation's mission, principally in the diocese in which it is located and in relation to the House's apostolic activities. Its members should fulfill it in a spirit of charity,

83. Every community should have one or several works entrusted to it, without thereby impeding individual subordinated activities, personal initiative and teamwork in certain ministries.

84. The Provincial Superior with his consultors, according to the Holy Constitutions, appoints the Local Superiors, after a prior general inquiry. The Provincial Superior shall appoint the two local consultors and the Treasurer after listening to his own consultors.

85. In the community, the Local Superior appropriately directs, teaches, coordinates and leads the activities of all its members by word and action. Leading by example, and proceeding with charity rather than severity, he shall see to it that all become his true collaborators in accomplishing community works. When he fulfills his office correctly, the Superior obeys the Will of God and is in a permanent state of service to his brothers.

86. Let the Superior listen to the suggestions of the members of the community, dialoguing amiably with them and endeavoring to harmonize community observances with the needs of the apostolate (PC 8). Let him also learn how to unite the apostolic work of his community with the pastoral program of the diocese, the parish and the laity. Let him likewise cooperate with civil authorities in every enterprise that promotes the spiritual or material well-being of others, after due consideration to our particular religious character.

87. The consultors, along with the Treasurer, are the Superior's immediate collaborators. With the entire community, they should evince solidarity in the house's organization and government, and in the execution of the Congregation's and Province's apostolic works. Our life and charism should be incarnated in them in a lively and personal manner.

88. The entire community must have a special concern for awakening and cultivating vocations, so that future apostles may succeed them in the Church of God and in the Congregation.

89. In order to assure everyone's cooperation, the Plenary Meeting of the community is to be instituted. All professed members shall take part in it. In our centers of formation, the Superior will determine the manner in which the Students are to participate in this meeting.

The Local Superior shall convoke a Plenary Meeting at least once every three months. Topics to be discussed should be announced in advance. The Superior, acting alone or with his council, according to the norms of the common law and our own particular law, will make the decision.

The Plenary Meeting of the community does not substitute for the Local Council.

CHAPTER V

Decentralization

90. Let the exercise of authority be made more effective and responsive, in accordance with actual needs. Consequently, let superiors on each level be granted the necessary faculties so that useless or too frequent recourse to higher authorities may be avoided. (ES 18). This will be accomplished by an equitable distribution of power throughout the organs of religious government.

91. Appropriate decentralization, and requisite and responsible autonomy on different levels of government, should be recognized. But this should always include the necessary unity and coordination of powers.

For this purpose, it will be necessary for a higher government to divest itself of those activities which are proper of lower governments and reserve for itself, as an ordinary norm, that which affects the life and government of the Congregation or of a province.

CHAPTER VI

Deliberative and Consultative Vote

92. Participation in authority and in government in societies finds expression in the exercise of voice and vote. The usage of this exercise in Chapters and Councils on the part of those who legitimately compose them is not merely a right which the law grants them. It is a duty which the common welfare imposes upon them, and in which everyone should cooperate, but especially those designated as representatives of the community.

93. In religious-apostolic Institutes, this common welfare is the attainment of the Institute's proper goals: the perfection of its individual members, and the salvation of men. As a result, the exercise of voice and vote must be governed by supernatural ends, by the canonical prescriptions common to the entire Church and by the particular canons of our own Institute.

94. Admitting the utility and even the necessity of voting, it cannot be denied that its excessive use can hinder the actions of the Superior or organs of government, delay the solution of problems and impede the flexible response demanded by actual conditions. For this reason, there has been a tendency to restrict the use of the vote, especially the deliberative vote, in the same measure in which there has been a tendency toward decentralization.

In accordance with what has been said, the Chapter sets down the following conclusions with regard to voting on the different levels of Councils: General, Provincial and Local.

A. The General Council

95. The deliberative vote of the General Government will be required only in cases prescribed by common law, by Pontifical documents and by our Constitutions. This is applicable whenever mention is made of the Superior with his Council, and even though a deliberative vote is not expressly mentioned and, with greater reason, if the act is attributed to the Council as a collegial act.

96. The intervention of the Council with two-thirds of its members (five out of seven) is to be required in all those cases in which, supposing the necessity of a vote or of a collegial act, it is a matter of business which legally or by its nature may be of greater or more serious consequence. The appointment of the governments of major organisms (provinces, vice-provinces, independent visitorships), in addition to the appointment of a general consultor or the Procurator if a vacancy occurs in these offices in the period between Chapters, has already been considered as very serious business.

97. During the present period of experimentation and concerning whatever bears upon the faculty which M.Pr. "Ecclesiae Sanctae", n.7, grants to General Governments to modify provisionally the text of the Constitutions, the General Chapter requires that in such an important matter all members of the General Government should always intervene and in each case.

98. The Superior General is bound to seek a consultive vote only in those cases prescribed by the common law, by Pontifical documents and by the Holy Constitutions. Notwithstanding, consultation is recommended in those important and perplexing cases which frequently occur.

B. The Provincial Council

99. The distinction between the full Council (5) and the incomplete Council (3 or 4) is to be maintained. A

deliberative vote is linked with the first; a consultive vote, to the second (CIA 223 sq.).

100. With regard to appointing to local offices, the deliberative vote is to be restricted to naming Superiors, Masters of Novices and Prefects of professed students, whether for the three-year period or for the substitutions which occur within the three-year period.

101. As a consequence of greater decentralization and the wider autonomy of the provincial governments in relation to the General Government, a deliberative vote is to be required in those matters which until now were reserved to the General Government and which in the future may be within the purview of the Provincial Government.

102. In particular cases of delegation, the one delegating is to establish the conditions under which the Provincial Government must resolve the matter delegated.

C. The Local Council

103. The deliberative vote in the local council is to be reserved to the following cases:

1. The approval of budgets;
2. Contraction of debts, in conformity with the requirements of Canon Law;
3. Extraordinary expenses.

CHAPTER VII

Major Organisms

104. The vitality of an Institute is manifested particularly in the existence and development of new major organisms. This always supposes the recruiting of vocations to assume in turn that there will be sufficient personnel to constitute it.

105. The creation of these organisms in the form of Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Visitorships is the purview of the General Government. It is judged desirable that those which are founded in the future depend from some Province and not attain the condition of major organisms until they can take care of themselves not only in financial matters but in personnel as well.

106. Houses should be attached to some major organism, and only exceptionally are General Houses to be permitted.

107. Inter-provincial Houses may also be allowed, with the approval of the General Government. They will be set up according to agreement between the interested Provinces and with the approval of the General Government.

108. The Province enjoys its own juridical personality and, in accordance with the sacred canons and our own law, should have the faculties and its own means for the fulfillment of its goals.

109. In keeping with the Council's tendency toward decentralization or distribution of powers, it is desirable that the autonomy (not absolute but relative) of the Provinces be augmented with regard to formation, government, and finances.

110. Provinces will maintain as necessary their right of ownership and capitalization, for their support and their apostolate. Every appearance of luxury, excessive profit and accumulation of goods should be avoided while the principle of subordination and coordination characteristic of our administration is to be preserved.

111. Every major organism must spur itself to acquire the necessary self-sufficiency in personnel and financial resources.

A. Expansion of the Institute at the Present Moment

112. Our holy Father Founder, on an apostle whom the Holy Spirit's action enthralled with an ecclesial sense, conceived the Congregation as a living organism at the service of the Church. For this reason, the expansion of our Institute is an unavoidable and vital necessity. Like the Church, which is essentially Catholic and apostolic, the

Congregation must continue to extend itself until it attains a truly universal identity.

113. The most efficacious manner of extending the Congregation is before all else to assure the increase of its own personnel, by assiduously and perseveringly cultivating native vocations in all parts of the world.

114. A certain prudent restriction must, nevertheless, be imposed in order not to accelerate the rhythm of expansion sustained up to the present; inasmuch as the crisis of vocations now being suffered by almost all Institutes has affected us as well.

115. As a consequence, the General Chapter decrees the following:

a) Let the normal development of actually existing organisms be assured before the creation of new ones is attempted.

b) Each of these existing organisms should have a development plan, with an objective study in each case. This plan should determine the personnel which, for the moment, the organism would have to receive from outside in order to revitalize itself and obtain new momentum. Let the General Government, as the supreme overseer and guide of the entire Institute, uncover the most effective way whereby developed organisms may contribute personnel to those that are weaker. In particular cases, these weaker organisms could have a direct understanding with the stronger ones, with the previous approval of the General Government.

c) Without sufficient guarantees, let no enterprises which could otherwise compromise their development be entrusted to these weak organisms.

d) In the creation of new organisms, let great foresight be used. Generally, let a strong Province make itself responsible for the enterprise until it is brought to full development, by adopting the system of major dependent organisms, when they cannot suffice for themselves.

116. For the purpose of assuring this plan of development, let strong organisms be allowed to retain their vigor, but always with a view to rendering essential and generous aid to the entire Institute.

117. With respect to new foundations:

a) Let a strategic selective policy be adopted which will not impede the indispensable development of organisms in their formative stage and which will allow a response to the services which the Church requests of us in particular cases. Of course, it is the sphere of the General Government to preoccupy itself diligently with implanting the Congregation in new places which offer positive hope.

b) In the face of the Church's appeal to succor the urgent pastoral needs of Latin-America, there should be a prudent disposition of the Houses which have lost their reason for being, either because they no longer fulfill in the religious or ministerial sphere the purposes for which they were established, or because they hinder a notably greater good.

c) Let those communities which, for different reasons, have lost the purpose for their foundation be transformed ministerially, provided they offer assurances of effectively developing a new apostolate.

B. Distribution of Personnel

118. With a view toward greater fruitfulness and efficacy in the use of its priests, the Church wishes them to be more equitably distributed throughout the world (CD 6 & PO 10; ES I). The General Chapter makes these desires its own and charges the General Government with adopting the means most conducive to obtain this goal.

119. The meager growth of some organisms throughout the years must prompt all those who compose these organisms to foster and form mature vocations as a prime preoccupation.

120. The solution to the problem of strengthening and providing sufficient personnel to weak organisms must be based on these principles: common service to the Church, unity of the entire Congregation, mutual assistance among brothers who seek the same goal.

121. By reason of their general membership in the Congregation, the Superior General can destine individuals, priests, students, and brothers, to any part of the Congregation and to any service.

122. There is a provincial membership, one of origin, by virtue of profession. By itself this membership is

definitive with permanent effects, but is not immutable.

123. There is, in addition, a provincial membership by reason of assignment which is acquired because of a special appointment or mission. It has juridical effects and will be provisional or permanent depending whether it be for a determined period or an undetermined one. When this permanent membership is acquired the former one is lost. The juridical situation of those who find themselves in a Province that is not their own, with a special commission, is not modified.

124. The equitable distribution of personnel corresponds first and principally to the Superior General, who as the highest moderator and director should be abreast of what is necessary and desirable for the entire Institute.

125. By a prior agreement between Major Superiors, a religious can be sent to another province or major organism for service within it, under the jurisdiction of the Major Superior of the place where he is destined for a limited time. After a period of not more than five years, this provisional assignment should be replaced by a definitive arrangement, by mutual agreement between the respective governments and after listening to the religious who is the interested party. This definitive solution may be either the full incorporation of the religious into the Province where he has worked in the last period of time, or his return to his province of origin. The agreements between major organisms, arrived at with the approval of the Superior General will remain intact.

Both the provisional transfer and the definitive assignment should be communicated to the General Government. The latter should be confirmed by it.

126. It is, nevertheless, more in accord with the spirit of the Congregation and of the Council to feel a generous willingness toward any kind of assignment or ministry.

One major Organism can establish a foundation in the territory of another major organism by a previous agreement between the two parties and with the authorization of the General Government.

C. Mutual Help

127. Mutual assistance within the religious life of an Institute is a natural exigency of the Church and represents the flowering of Christian charity, whether it be on the general, the provincial, or the local level. This mutual assistance supposes a lofty missionary ideal, sustained by a spirit of faith and prayer, of sacrifice, of detachment and renunciation of the very comforts related to the religious life.

128. "The spiritual gift which priests received at their priestly ordination prepared them not for a limited and narrow mission, but for the widest and universal mission of salvation even to the ends of the earth." (PO 10).

129. Let the norms of incardination and excardination be revised in such a way that while this most ancient institution may remain steady, it may also respond better to the needs of today (PO 10).

130. Let sincere and perfect cooperation, which apostolic action demands today more than ever and which Vatican Council II requests with such appreciation, be promoted in all the members of the Congregation, even during the time of formation (CD 6; PC 23; AG 33; ES I,2; II,42-45).

131. The General Chapter exhorts all the members of the Institute, Superiors and fellow members and all its organisms, to a real and effective cooperation. This is all the more necessary since our means, above all our personnel resources, are limited and our responsibilities before the Church and the world are very great.

132. Provincial Superiors should consider not only what is desirable for their jurisdiction, but let them keep in mind the needs of the weaker provinces and of the Missions. This includes the means and tools of the apostolate, financial matters and principally their personnel (PC 13). "Whatever is left over in one house, should make up what is lacking in another" (Letter to Fr. Xifre, Nov. 30, 1858).

133. The General Chapter recommends to the Superior General and his government that they foster, favor and direct cooperation between provinces, with a view to a more effective missionary apostolate. It especially calls them:

a) to have an attentive solicitude toward the poorest organisms.

b) to foster vocations in areas where there may be the greatest possibility of obtaining them, and to take care that they do not lack the means necessary for their formation, both in the realm of personnel and in finances.

c) to make the Congregation respond to the most urgent needs of the universal Church in the measure of its capabilities.

134. Let the religious sent to foreign countries consider it a great honor not only to learn the language but also the history and customs of the country of his assignment. Let him endeavor to learn the mentality and sensibility of the country (PO 10), adapting himself to its uses and customs. On the part of his brothers in Religion, let the missionary be received at his new destination with true charity. Let them help one another fraternally, so that imitating along with the faithful the apostolic community, they may constitute one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 4,25, 2,42; 4,32). For “the division of Christians (and much more so of Missionaries among themselves) damages the most holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature and blocks the way to the faith for many” (AG 6).

CHAPTER VIII

Visits

135. Vatican Council II promoted dialogue throughout the life of the Church as an excellent means of gentle and effective government. It says more particularly to religious: “And so, Superiors should gladly listen to their subjects and foster harmony among them for the good of the community and the Church” (PC 14). Our holy Father Founder repeatedly calls for dialogue between Superiors and fellow members in the Holy Constitutions (I, 37; II, 41, 14, 20, 27).

The most generalized expression of dialogue in the religious life is the visit to communities and provinces.

Every visit of a Superior must have a pastoral character, which seeks the welfare of the Congregation and its individuals. It must prudently join the activities of the provinces and houses with the general activities of the Church and of the diocese in which our members reside. Visits are also an effective means of fostering personal relations between authority and the members of the Congregation and Province. In this manner, everyone will feel himself an object of true personal preoccupation and brotherly love on the part of his superiors.

Following the Council’s direction and faithful to the thought of our Founder, the Chapter takes the following resolutions for the purpose of making the religious life flourish, of intensifying and updating our apostolate and of fostering brotherly union among everyone in the love of Jesus Christ and the most Holy Virgin Mary, our Mother.

136. Official Visits

a) The practice of the General visit to major organisms at least every six years is to be re-confirmed, before the respective governments are renewed or before the Provincial Chapters are celebrated. The Superior General will make his visit either personally or through a delegate.

b) In consideration of the six years duration of Provincial and Vice-Provincial Governments, along with greater decentralization and the greater intensity of life, it will be desirable to have a General visit of Curias and centers of formation every three years to gather information.

c) Major Superiors should undertake the canonical visitation of all their communities (Const. I,30) every year. On this occasion they can have a Plenary Meeting of the community.

137. Non-Official Visits. It is desirable that they be made by:

a) the Superior General or his delegate, to a major organism on the occasion of the inauguration of some very important work that is apostolic, cultural, or financial in character.

b) The Provincial Superior, on some occasion, to his students taking courses in interprovincial centers of formation, and more often during the year to larger communities, especially if they are centers of formation, schools for externs, etc.

138. Specialist Visits

a) They are to be undertaken by specialists from the General or Provincial Prefectures, whenever it is considered desirable for a major organism or a community, in order to plan or promote a work of great importance.

b) There will be occasions on which a visit from the General Treasurer to Provincial Curias will be desirable, or from the Provincial Treasurer to Houses of the Province, as delegates of their respective Superiors, for the purpose of providing more firm, secure and effective development for our administrations.

DECREE ON COADJUTOR BROTHERS

Preface

The lay religious vocation has been re-evaluated by the Council (PC 10). The Congregation, aware of the urgent need of studying in depth the serious problem of our lay brothers in the light of the Council's documents, sent numerous recommendations to the Chapter. The Chapter has collected and studied attentively whatever pertains to our coadjutor brothers at the present time and in the documents of Vatican II. With the present decree, it believes it has interpreted the Council's norms and is responsive to the ardent desires of the entire Institute.

I. Vocation and Spirit

1. The coadjutor brothers Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, by means of the vows, by which they oblige themselves to the practice of the evangelical counsels, make a total consecration of themselves to God loved above all things, in such a way that they direct themselves to the service of God and to His Glory by a new and special title (cf. LG 44).

Furthermore, since the evangelical counsels especially unite those who practice them to the Church and its mystery, it is necessary that the spiritual life of the coadjutor brothers be consecrated also to the advantage of the entire Church. At once there arises the duty of working according to one's own energies and vocation, be it through prayer, or through temporal activities or those directly apostolic, so that the Kingdom of God may be established and consolidated among men and be spread throughout the entire world (cf. LG 44).

2. The brothers, by profession of the evangelical counsels, are also a sign offered to all the Church's members, to attract them to the unfailing fulfillment of their Christian duties. They also demonstrate to all the faithful that the eternal goods are already in part present in this world. They give testimony to the new and eternal life Christ won for everyone. They prefigure the future resurrection and glory of the heavenly Kingdom. They represent perennially in the Church the kind of life which Christ adopted in coming into the world. They proclaim the superiority of the Kingdom of God above everything earthly, and they are also a manifestation before men of the greatness of the power of Christ and of His Spirit (cf. LG 44).

By their profession, the coadjutor brothers participate fully in the nature of the Congregation, in such a way that their entire life and activity is religious and apostolic (cf. LG 44). Through any office or duty whatever, then, they live their consecration to God, Whom they love more than anything else, and serve men apostolically in the Church.

3. Thus, then, identified with the crucified and risen Christ, they renounce the world and leave temporal concerns (Const. I,74,5; 108), in order to live only for God (cf. PC 5) following and imitating Jesus Christ more closely in praying, working, suffering, and seeking always and only God's greater glory and men's salvation (Autob. 494).

4. By their special surrender and consecration to the Heart of Mary the incessant maternal action of the Virgin (LG 63), whose life is a teaching for all (PC 25), shapes them particularly to Christ as sons and prepares them and sustains them as instruments of the apostolate.

As sons formed in the furnace of Her love, the brothers not only receive Her as their Mother, but also recognize Her as the Mother of the entire Church. As missionaries, by their prayer, by the testimony of their life and by their work, they cooperate according to their vocation in proclaiming the Gospel, so that Her maternity might extend to all men.

5. By their profession they are fully associated to Christ in a sacrifice of praise and redemption. In this way they exercise intensely their spiritual priesthood, offering themselves with Christ and offering their work for God's Glory and the world's salvation (cf. LG 10).

Wherefore, the coadjutor brothers, without leaving aside their appreciation of the apostolic works of the laity, which they should gladly promote, honor with particular veneration and love their priestly brothers who fulfill publicly in the name of Christ the priestly ministry on men's behalf (PO 2).

Let the priestly brothers esteem and love the coadjutor brothers and help them to collaborate more effectively in the apostolic action of the Congregation.

6. Urged by charity, they form with the other missionaries a true family consecrated in our Lord's name, and they show one another expressions of deference in their brotherly conduct (Rm 12,10; Const. II,82). They help each other mutually in carrying on their offices (PC 15), everyone cooperating in different ways in the Congregation's

apostolic commitments.

That this bond of brotherhood may be more intimate between all the missionaries and that all may cooperate “for the object for which this Congregation is constituted” (form. Prof.), the coadjutor brothers are united closely to the life and works of the community (PC 15). They carry out those duties and offices proper to their lay function, so that the priests can dedicate themselves more freely to the ministries which are proper to them (ES II,27).

7. In the carrying out of temporal affairs – household tasks, professional offices, etc.,– as well as in the fulfillment of directly apostolic tasks, they should have as a norm the conduct of Jesus Christ Who did not come to be served but to serve (Mt 20,28) and to fulfill in everything His Father’s Will (Jn 6,38). They should act in such a way that they seek in everything God’s greater glory (Const. I,2) and provide for men a lucid and priceless testimony that the world cannot be transformed nor offered to God without the spirit of the beatitudes (LG 31) and without the force of the Spirit already present in the world by the work of the risen Christ (cf. LG 44).

8. In order to fulfill their apostolic mission perfectly they should join contemplation with apostolic love for the purpose of uniting themselves in mind and heart to God, Who has moved them to associate themselves with the work of redemption and extending of His Kingdom (PC 5). Wherefore, they should cultivate with assiduous effort the spirit of prayer and prayer itself, daily taking into hand the Sacred Scriptures and satiating their spiritual life in the inexhaustible fountain of the sacred mystery of the Eucharist (cf. PC6).

Thus, they will acquire the sublime knowledge of Jesus Christ (Phil 3,8) and a clear consciousness of their vocation to follow Him faithfully by means of the evangelical molding of their own conduct, and by humility and meekness in their social bearing. In this way, they will make present among men “the goodness and love of our Savior” (Tit 3,4; cf. LG 46).

9. Let them found their spiritual and apostolic life on the knowledge and acceptance of the nature and exigencies of their own vocation. Let them valiantly undertake, in response to the impulse of the Holy Spirit and through intelligent cooperation with the Chapters and Superiors, the renewal and adaptation sought by the Council. In this effort of renewal, let them submit themselves conscientiously to the action of Divine Providence (Luke 12,31), with peace and joy for the gifts which each one has received and for the role each one has been assigned in the world and in the Church by our heavenly Father.

II. Integration of the Brothers into the Life and Works of the Congregation

10. The renewal of the religious life sought by the Council (PC) requires that our coadjutor brothers be closely united to the life and works of the communities of the Congregation, so that this might reflect better the life of the primitive Church, in which the group of believers had one heart and one soul (cf. PC 15).

11. This perfect integration, then, should nourish itself on authentic charity, the first virtue of the Claretian missionary (Autob. 438 & 494), in all its manifestations among those of us who form the Claretian family.

12. This integration should manifest itself in the first place in community prayer life. As much as possible, the acts of community should be had together and in the vernacular, as they unite themselves daily with Christ and their brothers in the Eucharist, sign and source of community unity.

13. The family life of our communities should be the object of a studious integration. For this purpose, the coadjutor brothers will depend directly from the Superior, and will not ordinarily form a distinct section.

In the fulfillment of their offices and duties, the coadjutor brothers will have an autonomy proportionate to the responsibility which is confided to them.

Family life will not be submitted to the norms of precedence. These norms remain in effect only for official acts, in which the clergy precede the laity; and within each one of these categories the order of profession is to be followed. Let all the brothers – priests, students, and coadjutors – contribute to creating and preserving a family atmosphere, all participating in the common family tasks as a sign and expression of brotherly love and service.

14. Being members of an apostolic Congregation, the coadjutor brothers will be intimately integrated into the apostolate of the community, by cooperating in the most effective manner possible, in proportion to their qualities and the specific goal of the community.

15. The Chapter grants to coadjutor brothers in perpetual vows passive voice for the office of Local Treasurer. With regard to other administrative and directive offices in the Congregation, the Chapter accepts in advance very gladly all the possibilities which the Holy See may concede in this matter to Institutes of our character.

16. The Chapter confers on coadjutor brothers in perpetual vows active and passive voice for local, provincial and general Chapters, within their lay function and according to the clerical character of our Institute. The Chapter grants to the General Government and to provincial governments the faculty of calling to the respective Chapters one or two coadjutor brothers.

17. Let Superiors use every care in order that religious equality may reign in our communities among our brothers – priests, students, and coadjutors – in their social life, habit, relations with families, the use of the communications media, and in rest and vacations (cf. CIA 579; ES II,26).

III. Formation of Coadjutor Brothers

18. In order that our coadjutor brothers may understand their vocation better and may be more faithful to it, and so that they can be integrated intimately into the life and works of our communities and of the Congregation, it is necessary and urgent that they have a painstaking formation. For this purpose it is necessary to elaborate a plan for the formation of all our brothers.

19. For the brothers who are already professed this formation should be programmed:

by means of courses, conferences, and spiritual exercises in which they may be instructed on the mystery of salvation, the nature of the Church, and its mission in the world, the sacramental and theological foundations of the spiritual life, the apostolic nature of the Congregation and its mission within the Church, on the vocation of the Claretian lay brother and his proper role.

by means of a concrete plan of religious, cultural, and professional advancement according to the brothers' capabilities and the apostolic perspectives of the Province, a plan to be elaborated by a mixed commission of priests and brothers and effective immediately.

20. The apostolic mission which the Congregation realizes in the name of the Church (PC 8) requires a careful selection and formation of all those who are called by God to this apostolic service as coadjutor brothers.

21. Fostering the promotion of lay vocations for the Congregation should be the proper task of all our missionaries. Prayer and the personal and collective testimony of our life consecrated to God and to the service of men are the first means. Let them utilize, further, whatever means may be suitable for this purpose. In each major organism, there should be, if possible, a coadjutor brother who belongs on the staff of vocation recruiters. Let him and the other recruiters present to the faithful the vocation of the coadjutor brother as it is in itself, "a particular gift of God in the life of the Church in order to contribute to its mission of salvation" (LG 43).

22. Let the general principles contained in the Decree on Formation be applied proportionately in the formation of our coadjutor brothers. With these as a point of departure, and taking into account the content and direction of this present Decree, the General and Provincial Prefectures of Formation will formulate more concrete programs, adapted to the circumstances of each country.

23. The plan of formation of our coadjutor brothers, then, should comprehend all the aspects of an integral formation: human and social formation Christian-ecclesial formation, religious-evangelical and apostolic Claretian formation. In formation, attention should be given not only to general culture as a basic necessity, but also to specialization in an office or a branch of the apostolate. A serious approach should be followed through appropriate policies, and as a goal the corresponding recognized diplomas should be sought.

24. This plan of formation should comprehend the following stages: the period before the novitiate, the novitiate, the juniorate, the preparation for perpetual profession or apostolic novitiate and the renewal of formation.

25. In the period before the novitiate our brothers should be provided a personal formation which takes on the characteristics of each country. It should be equal or superior to what has been made obligatory by the respective country's educational laws. Wherever these laws are deficient, we believe that that cultural foundation which is necessary for further training as professionals or technicians should be required of them.

26. Without neglecting to initiate them into their work and even into some kind of specialization, our coadjutor brothers' education during this period should be concentrated on establishing a solid and balanced foundation for the development of the person. This should be done in such a way that they may be capable of understanding their vocation clearly and responding to it faithfully.

27. Special attention should be given, during this period, to forming our coadjutor brothers in an atmosphere suitable for the gradual maturing of their religious–Claretian vocation.

28. Concerning the observance of the Church's laws, the period of canonical postulancy should be sufficient to provide the aspirant initial knowledge of the religious life and of the Congregation, and for the Congregation to ascertain whether the candidate evinces the requisite qualities to begin the year of probation.

29. The novitiate prepares all future missionaries for the same religious apostolic vocation, which is initiated by the identical religious profession. Hence, it has for everyone – priests, students and brothers – the same fundamental characteristics with regard to its methods, place and duration.

Since the primary task of the novitiate is to establish the foundations of the religious apostolic personality (I,104), every activity which hinders or distracts from this goal should be set aside.

30. The coadjutor brothers “should not be destined immediately after the novitiate to works of the apostolate” (PC 18).

“The formation of the lay brothers after the novitiate should generally be prolonged during the entire period of temporal vows,” (ES II,35), in Houses that are suitable for receiving an appropriate religious, apostolic, doctrinal and professional instruction. Suitable diplomas should also be acquired (PC 18; CIA 354 & 580).

The major superiors should see to it that no coadjutor brothers are deprived of this period of formation. If the Provinces themselves cannot fulfill this duty, they must establish fraternal agreements with one another or with other religious Institutes. Or they should send the coadjutor brothers to public schools (ES II,37; cf. Const. I,128).

31. At the conclusion of the period of temporary vows and before perpetual profession, our coadjutor brothers should be provided with a sufficient period of time for intense dedication to prayer, reflection, spiritual direction, instructions, etc., so that they can acquire their vocational synthesis and, with greater deliberation and maturity, decide upon definitive attachment to the Institute through perpetual profession (CIA 356,2).

32. The departments of postulant and junior brothers might be established in the same House of formation and utilize the same equipment, under the direction of competent spiritual directors and professors, who are well chosen and prepared (PC 18). Both groups might be integrated respectively into our existing minor seminaries and those of philosophy.

In those Provinces where junior brothers may have to attend centers belonging to other Religious Institutes, or public schools, let the general formation they receive there be completed by the formation that belongs to the proper nature of our Congregation (ES II,33).

33. Let our brothers make an effort during their entire life to continue perfecting their spiritual, doctrinal and professional development (PC 18), in the conviction that not to advance in the road to perfection is to go backwards (Const. II,27). Let Superiors, for their part, use their efforts to provide opportunity, help, and time for this (PC 18).

Urged by apostolic charity and by the spirit of sacrifice, let the coadjutor brothers strive to perfect their skill or offices by means of theoretical and practical courses, in such a way that they may even be able to obtain suitable diplomas (PC.18) and thus cooperate more effectively in the Congregation's apostolic mission.

IV. Special Recommendations

34. The formation of the coadjutor brothers and their intimate integration into the life and works of the Congregation constitute a most urgent task which brings with it manifold requirements. For the Congregation to fulfill this task, the Chapter seeks everyone's cooperation, but especially of the General and Provincial Governments.

35. The coadjutor brothers should primarily be clearly conscious of the nature and requirements of their vocation to the Congregation and valiantly strive for the kind of renewal sought by the Council, with confidence in Our Lord and a spirit of obedience. Let the brothers be undismayed by the sacrifices inherent in this renewal and

cooperate with the efforts of the entire Congregation concerning their formation.

Let the priests and students cooperate in the formation and integration of our coadjutor brothers with an open mind and generous heart.

36. The Chapter recommends to the Congregation's General Government the formation of a General Commission on brothers whose purpose will be:

- a) to guide the application of the norms contained in this decree
- b) to direct, promote, and lead efforts for the formation of our coadjutor brothers;
- c) to study more profoundly the nature of the vocation of the Claretian brother in all its aspects;
- d) to cooperate with the Provincial Superiors in the application of these present dispositions in order to plan their formation more effectively and to accomplish the inclusion of the coadjutor brothers in the life and the works of our communities.

37. The Chapter recommends to Provincial Governments:

- a) that they apply this present decree in their own provinces, maintaining contact with the central organism;
- b) that they form in their own provinces a mixed commission of priestly and lay brothers with the mission of studying the situation and perspectives of the lay brothers in the Province, of planning the formative improvement of the actual brothers and of developing a detailed plan for the selection and formation of future brothers;
- c) that they establish contact with other provinces of the Congregation or with other religious Institutes in order to develop an interprovincial or intercommunity center for the formation of brothers.

V. Modifications in Legislation

38. Part III of the Constitutions is almost totally antiquated, and local in character as to detail. It should be eliminated in its actual form from the fundamental text of our legislation (ES II,12-14)

39. The Chapter proposes that the Postcapitular Commission for revision of the Constitutions, following the principles of renewal and adaptation of the religious life (PC 2), include a chapter in them on the nature and role of the Claretian lay brothers and another on their way of life, offices, and activities.

DECREE ON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Preface

Vatican Council II urges: "Let each of the faithful called to the profession of the evangelical counsels carefully see to it that he persevere and ever grow in that vocation God has given him. Let him do this for the increased holiness of the Church, for the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity, which in and through Christ is the fount and the source of all holiness" (LG 47). Hence, "the more fervently they are joined to Christ by this total lifelong gift of themselves, the richer the life of the Church becomes and the more lively and successful its apostolate" (PC I; cf. LG 44).

As a consequence, the 17th General Chapter of our Congregation, opening itself wide to this exhortation of the Church, proposes to accomplish in the best manner possible that appropriate spiritual renewal which must always be granted first place in the promotion of external undertakings. For without it the best adaptations to the necessities of our time will not achieve any effect whatever. (PC 2).

Rooting itself in the principles of this renewal, above all charity toward God "which both excites and energizes that love of one's neighbor contributing to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church" (PC 6), this Decree on Religious Life intends to treat of the spiritual life of our brothers in the Congregation and its interior and exterior realization in the practice of the evangelical counsels, principally chastity, poverty, obedience, and community life.

The Constitutions proposed by our Founder to the companions who attached themselves to him are intimately penetrated with that particular and special charism of the perfect, evangelical and apostolic life proper to our Father.

Thus they present themselves as a norm for the spiritual life of the Congregation. The “divine gift” of vocation (LG 43) impels us to understand and embrace it more and more each day.

CHAPTER I

Spiritual Life and Observance

Doctrinal Considerations

1. “The Son of God, to whom with the Father and the Son we proclaim you along are holy,” loves the Church as His spouse, committing himself to Her in order to sanctify Her (cf. Eph 5,25-26). This sanctity of the Church is manifested and should be manifested ceaselessly in the fruits of grace which the Holy Spirit produces in the faithful. In a singular manner it appears in the practice of what are commonly called the evangelical counsels. Through the impulse of the Holy Spirit many Christians have embraced this practice either privately or in a situation or state accepted by the Church. This state provides the world a splendid testimony and example of that sanctity (LG 39) and proclaims the presence of Christ to believers and non-believers more and more (cf. LG 46).

2. “With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the authority of the Church has preoccupied itself with interpreting these counsels, regulating their practice and even determining stable norms for living them” (LG 43). “It accepts the rules presented by outstanding men and women and authentically approves them after reviewing them. By its vigilant and safeguarding authority, it aids those Institutes established everywhere for the strengthening of Christ’s Body in order that they may grow and flourish according to the spirit of their Founders” (LG 45).

3. In order that the pre-eminent value of the life consecrated to God through the profession of the counsels, and its necessary role in the actual circumstances of our time, might redound to the greater good of the Church, Vatican Council II prescribes an appropriate renewal of life and discipline of Religious Institutes (cf. PC 1). It exhorts the members of all Institutes that “in searching for God alone they join their contemplation which unites them to Him intimately, with apostolic love through which they endeavor to associate themselves in the work of redemption and the spread of God’s Kingdom” (PC 5). Thus, “exercising their ministries sincerely and unceasingly in the Spirit of Christ, they will attain sanctity in their own way” (PO 13).

The Council itself proclaims the primacy of the spiritual life. It insists that whoever professes the evangelical counsels should above all seek and love God Who first loved us (cf. I Jn 4,10) and strive to foster earnestly and in all circumstances the life hidden with Christ in God (Col 3,3). This love of God both excites and energizes the love of one’s neighbor for the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church (PC 6).

4. The renewal of the consecrated life is the renewal of the evangelical spirituality of each institute. For us it is a renewal of that spirituality which our Founder practiced during all his life, which he proposed to his companions by word and example, and which comes down to us in the Constitutions. This Claretian spirituality is centered on the perfect imitation of Christ, “the missionary of the Father.” St. Anthony Mary Claret tried to reproduce in his life and apostolic enterprises, the most outstanding traits of Christ precisely in the form of the missionary whom the Father sent to the world to save men. The Council requires of us that our renewal be a continual progression in the imitation of Christ in conformity with the genuine spirit of our Founder, so that we may project to the world of today the life of Christ.

5. The Constitutions are an authentic expression of the action of God and call us to follow and perfectly imitate the evangelical life of Christ in His Church in the manner realized by our Father Founder through the action of the Holy Spirit. Our Founder expressed this evangelic life in the Constitutions, and later they were officially admitted by the Church for the glory of God and the permanent good of His people. Observance is the fidelity to a motion of the Holy Spirit which inclines us to give reverence and cult to the evangelical values which we encounter in our Holy Constitutions, according to the charism of our Holy Founder. This fidelity translates itself into an appropriate, fully personal and community response in our manner of life and in our apostolic action.

6. There is a profound interdependence between spirit and observance. Spirit maintains observance: “The best adjustments made in accordance with the needs of our age will be ineffectual unless they are animated by a renewal of spirit” (PC 2e.). In turn, observance fosters spirit inasmuch as it predisposes us to obey the laws through which the Will of God is made manifest to us and strengthens our feebleness in the life of Grace.

We must take into account that in the New Alliance law is not opposed to grace nor to charity but is rather

the stable and authorized expression of its common and social exigencies. Therefore, it can be affirmed that law and liberty are not opposed when both are truly Christian. Being for the most part an expression of a spirit and the practical norm for its exercise, the Constitutions possess more perfectly than other ecclesiastical laws this aspect of spiritual and holy law.

As a result, observance moves us to fulfill them tranquilly. It spontaneously originates in faith and in the docility with which we respond to the call of God and the exigencies of His grace. This is true whether He manifests this to us through the laws of our Institute or of the Church, or through other concrete circumstances of life. This also supposes the personal guidance and authority of superiors who are the living representatives and immediate interpreters of the Providence and the exigencies of the love of God for each and every one of us.

7. The missionary apostolate is the fundamental reason of our Institute and of our vocation. As such, it pertains to the very nature of the religious life which is professed in the Congregation. As a consequence it must always be inspired by supernatural motives, penetrated by the religious virtues and the evangelical counsels. The religious life in our Congregation, according to the wishes of the Church (PC 8), must be steeped in apostolic spirit, and all its apostolic activity must be in turn imbued with the religious spirit.

8. The work of adaptation includes accommodating our manner of living, working, and praying in perfect harmony with the physical and psychological conditions of the members of our Congregation (cf. PC 3). Since the practice of the evangelical counsels in community does not impede general development of the man, but by its proper nature favors this development (cf. LG 46), our spirituality depends upon human qualities, subordinates them to supernatural values and transforms them with these values (Ib; PC 12-14).

9. The religious consecration does not transform the members of our Institute into strangers of their fellow men (LG Ibid.). United to the Church in a special way (Ib. 44), they feel in themselves the joys and the hopes, the grieves and the anxieties of the men of their time in the solidarity which the Church has with the entire human family. They form a community composed of men (GS 1,3). The characteristics of modern man and hence of those who aspire to become members of our Institute are: a more dynamic concept of reality (Ib. 5), the consciousness of the dignity of the person (Ib. 26), a more penetrating critical judgment (Ib. 54), a sense of independence and responsibility (Ib. 55), a social consciousness by which man is defined above all by reason of his responsibility toward his fellow men and toward history (Ib. 55). These realities must be taken into account in order to elevate what is positive in them and oppose whatever is contrary in them to the evangelical counsels.

10. These traits of the modern man will be reflected in the spirituality of the religious of today, who will seek a personal total response to the call of Jesus Christ Who preaches holiness of life for each and every one of His disciples (cf. LG 40). This religious will endeavor to experience personally the attraction of the Person of Our Lord in the daily spiritual reading of the Sacred Scriptures, in meditation and in the celebration of the Eucharistic banquet, dedicating to it his mind and heart (cf. PC 6). He will seek to transform his life in the furnace of charity by means of the practice of the evangelical counsels and the exercise of the virtues (cf. PC 5), and his community consciousness will find expression in uniting himself more and more closely to the Church, and then reflecting Christ to the world. He will define himself as a religious in terms which speak of a purified love and of a service to all his brothers in Christ, knowing that in loving men he is certain to bring himself closer and closer to Christ Himself (1 Jn 4.20).

Particular Applications

11. The goal of making charity increase in the soul as a good seed which will fructify, requires listening with pleasure to the Word of God and putting His will into action with the help of grace. It also requires frequent use of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and participation in the Sacred Liturgy (LG 42).

12. In order to correspond fittingly to our vocation to religious and apostolic holiness, we must strive above all for a lively consciousness of this vocation through prayer and reflection. Furthermore, we need a sincere desire of attaining this holiness, ardent and efficacious enough to transform itself each day into a proposal for spiritual renewal. Finally, we must do everything with a sincere intention and fervor of spirit, with the love and solicitude of someone who is preoccupied with the things of his Father (cf. Const. II,27).

13. Our daily or monthly examen, whether particular or general, assures us that grace will not be in vain for us. This means, prescribed by our Constitutions and to which our holy Founder was always faithful, should be renewed and adapted (cf. Const. II,31; Autob. no. 351; "El Colegial Instr.," I.P.I., c.20).

14. The principal mission of the community in the religious sphere must be to ensure through every possible means that his fellow members attain the fullness of charity by following Christ in the evermore perfect practice of the evangelical counsels and the Constitutions. Hence, the superior should consider as his first duty to secure for his brothers the means of evangelical perfection consistent with our Constitutions and Directories.

15. In order to assist the superior in fostering the spiritual life of the community, let him have a priest associated with him to promote its spiritual vitality along with whatever will achieve not only observance but its goal: a greater fullness of the Spirit. This priest will be available for the Sacrament of Penance and for the spiritual direction of those who confide in him. With the superior's consent he can organize piety, readings and the preaching of the Word of God. This matter will be arranged principally in larger communities.

Since it is not possible that each and every one of our communities can have someone responsible for its spiritual life, superiors should see to it that there are various priests in the major organisms who will be at the disposition of everyone and who can be called upon to give retreats or exercises or simply to facilitate spiritual direction.

In keeping with what is said here, a new formulation for the text of our Constitutions I, 27, will be necessary.

16. Although it cannot be imposed, spiritual direction should be encouraged even for those already formed (cf. PC 18) because it is an excellent means to discern the Will of God, to maintain our fervor and to persevere to the end (cf. "Colegial Instr." l.c.cap. 34; Const. II,41).

17. Joy in one's own vocation is a great means of advancing in holiness. In order to avoid boredom and indifference, it should be provided that each one occupies a position for which he has received his grace and as the needs of the Church and the Congregation permit. Assignments, offices and ministries that are fulfilled tranquilly and joyfully and effected out of love for God, give joy to the Church and the Congregation and are conducive of holiness (cf. Const. I, 74,6). For this reason, each one should love his work and should have the means of fulfilling it with perfection whether it be study, or household duties or specialized assignments.

Notwithstanding, even though idleness must be shunned (Const. II,43) overburdening with work, either in extension or intensity, can diminish one's energies to such a degree as to impede the benefits of the exercises of piety, especially in view of the pace of modern life. Rules 32, 72, and 73 of the second part of the Holy Constitutions which treat of the way of sanctifying the ministry and Rule No. 35 of the second part on household occupations, shall always remain in force. Let there be a healthy balance between work, prayer and rest, and, likewise, timetables "are always to be arranged so that the religious, aside from the time given to spiritual things and to works, should have some periods to themselves and be able to enjoy suitable recreation" (ES 26).

18. Community life must be a continuous stimulus for the perfection of love. Let each one contribute to create a favorable environment. Let everyone be willing to receive advice and for his advantage to accept fraternal correction, one of the ways of manifesting a true friendship (Const. II,27). A concrete manner of fermenting spiritual and apostolic life in community is to be found in community meetings and, with the required adaptations to our proper character, the practice of a "re-examination of life".

19. All the importance it deserves should be given to the monthly day or recollection, as a positive means of spiritual renewal.

20. Legislation that is wise, not oppressive, adapted to the different regions (cf. PC 4 & ES 26) favors the flourishing of the spirit. Care must be taken, nevertheless, to safeguard the necessary unity of the Institute.

21. During the one hundred eighteen years of its existence, the Congregation has had priests, students, and brothers who have given extraordinary testimony to the sanctity of their religious and apostolic lives. This testimony will provide the Congregation with an efficacious impulse toward a greater fidelity and commitment to living the personal and community life of consecration. At this hour of renewal and adaptation the Chapter recalls with satisfaction this exceptional proof of love provided by our brothers. Along with the canonized holiness of our Founder, it proposes it to the entire Congregation as a lively example which presses us onward to a spiritual life and dynamic apostolate in the Church of God.

Changes in the Constitutions :

22. a) In Part I, Chapter IX, no. 37.

Actual text: *"suos subditos sacerdotes semel saltem in hebdomada visitabit, de statu vero aliorum subditorum per immediatos officiales edocebitur."*

The rendition of the definitive text will be the responsibility the Commission assigned for this purpose. At this time we merely propose two changes:

1) That the word "*sacerdotes*" be suppressed. the Constitutions approved by the Holy See in 1870 (as well as the text of 1865) merely said: "*suos subditos visitabit.*" But in the petition of the General Chapter of 1912, the Sacred Congregation of Religious approved the actual text which appears then with the Constitutions of 1913 (Madrid Typographia Iberica Stanislai Maestre)

We will now return to the primitive text in order not to make any discrimination between priest- and coadjutor brothers and in order to integrate them more into the life of the one community.

2) That in place of "*semel saltem in hebdomada visitabit*", the general obligation be instilled without any determination of a weekly visit. It could be: "*frequenti sermone ac sincera sollicitudine alloqui curet*" or some other equivalent.

b) In Part I it is proposed to make a new rendition of Chapter XVII and to add or transfer to it elements of Chapter XXXI of the Part I. These changes are:

- 1) Spiritual Father in place of Prefect of Spiritual Things.
- 2) That there be some in each major organism without requiring one for each House.
- 3) To give him a more positive rule in promoting the spiritual life.

CHAPTER II

Charity and Common Life

Doctrinal Considerations

23. Responding to the exigencies of our vocation and moved by the charity which the Father pours forth into our hearts through the intervention of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 5,5), as Claretian Missionaries we must live each day more for Christ and for the salvation of men, in resemblance to our Savior who "loved us and gave Himself up for us" (Eph 5,2). "Always walk in love," the Apostle himself tells us. Because only by living the life of Christ and imitating His charity do we respond to the commandment He made His own by appropriation: "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15,12).

24. In the early Church, where "all continued steadfast in prayer with Mary the mother of Jesus" (Act 1,14), charity was an outstanding mark because all those called were "of one heart and one soul" (Act 4,32). Thus, among us who recognize ourselves as united by the common bond of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, a flawless charity of affections and deeds must reign. This is so because our title lays claim to greater demands of delicacy, meekness, and mutual service. By our charity everyone will know that we are disciples of Christ (Jn 13,35) and true Sons of the Heart of Mary. Also by our charity will we respond fully to our vocation, because he who loves his neighbor fulfills the entire law (Rom 13,8 & 10).

But the missionary knows no barriers or limits to his love. He loves his brothers in community and loves the entire Congregation in its different Provinces, its missions, and its enterprises.

Furthermore, out of a truly ecclesial and ecumenical sense, our charity is always open and gives testimony to the life of perfection, thanks to our friendly contact and frank cooperation with other Institutes, with local churches in general and especially with the hierarchy of the Church.

Nor does the universality of the Church place any limits on our charity. It extends itself to all men and wishes everyone the greatest good. And it begins with our own family with which as religious we preserve the contact, relations and affection instilled in us by the virtue of piety.

25. Impelled by love of the Father, Jesus Christ fulfilled His mission by immolating Himself in sacrifice (Jn 14,13). Accordingly, the missionary is faithful to his vocation only when he feels all the force of "the charity of Christ presses us" which moved our Father Founder.

Charity compels him to seek the Glory of God. It kindles in him an eagerness to save all men by every possible means. It confers on him his capabilities and gives force to his words (Aut. 439-441) and makes him tireless

in his labors.

Charity makes of the religious life in community a sign of the coming of the Lord (cf. PC 15). Through charity, which is the bond of perfection (Col 3,14), we give testimony of having passed through death (or natural life) to the true life of the grace of Christ (1 Jn 3,14). It is the best means of imitating the life of the Trinity in whose image we have been created. Through it we realize the unity desired by Jesus Christ: "As you, Father, in me and I in You, that they all may be one with us so that the world may believe that You have sent me" (Jn 17,21). For many reasons, charity and union among us will be an efficacious means of apostolate .

26. We who have believed and experienced the love of God for us (1 Jn 4,16) know that He loved us so much that He sent us His Son in expiation for our sins. This obliges us to love one another mutually because only in this way does God remain in our midst and our love for Him made perfect (1 Jn 4,10-12).

This is the spirit which He has given us. It is entirely supernatural and tends to overcome whatever in our fallen nature can be contrary to perfect charity. Proceeding further, it must transform our entire being and inform all our human activity, our will and our affections.

Further still, the charity with which we love our brothers is a theological virtue, because we love God in our neighbor and our neighbor in God. Yet, it makes us discover how much being and perfection God has conferred upon them even in the natural order. Consequently, a mature understanding and a sensitive spirit, which makes us recognize and appreciate mutually the values of the person, will be a good foundation disposing us to the more easy exercise of charity and Christian friendship.

27. The Council pondered the benefits of community life. These benefits are increased by the teachings of the Gospel and by liturgical participation, especially in the Holy Eucharist (cf. PC 15). Our Missionaries will cultivate community life and make it a "true family gathered together in the name of the Lord, which rejoices because He is present among them" (PC 15). Thus, they will respond not only to the will of Him who preceded them with a love to which they must reply, but also to the mandate of offering to the world a testimony of God, because "where two or three are gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them" (Mt 18,20).

It belongs to the Church to regulate the practice of the evangelical counsels through wise legislation (cf. LG 45). Although they may be different for various Institutes, these laws or statutes by which each religious should abide are like a foundation and norm for community life. They imply community of goals and ideals in conformity with the proper charism, community of certain observances which assure order in a state of life, community of goods and mutual assistance and even a certain community of traits of conduct derived from living the same spirituality or imitating a common model, which in our case is our Holy Founder. For us "what principally and primarily distinguishes the missionary, what always and everywhere should characterize him and what should constitute his goal and the object of all his actions, is charity" (Espiritu de la Congregacion, I, a IX, l).

Particular Applications

28. In order to live the Gospel fully, consecrated as we are to its diffusion and as Sons of the Heart of Mary, we must always give the primacy to charity "which is the fullness of the law" (Rom 13,10), "the bond of perfection" (Col 3,14), the goal toward which the vows aspire, the most luminous testimony of the presence of Christ (Jn 13,35) and the force of the effectiveness of our apostolate.

29. In order that charity may reign in the community and that everyone may enjoy the warmth of family life, let each one contribute his own generous efforts. Let everyone cultivate painstakingly the social virtues, especially good manners, sincerity and mutual respect in a climate of confidence and healthy friendship. In this way, the defects of self-centeredness, cold-heartedness and stubbornness in one's own opinion will be avoided.

Everyone should watch for defects against charity, like detraction, criticism, gossiping, insults, backbiting, etc., and the superiors should take care of their correction and extirpation.

30. The fraternal harmony necessary for the common life and as a testimony in the apostolate might justify the creation of major organisms in determined areas, but every kind of racism, nationalism, or political contentions must be avoided.

31. Unless the service of the Church indicates otherwise, the communities should consist of at least three members. For his time and for the type of apostolate that was exercised, our Father Founder proposed as an ideal a community of twelve members. If for reasons of the apostolate or formation they must be larger, suitable means

should be employed so that a family spirit pervades, along with “true brotherly love” (PC 12).

32. Care should be taken that differences of rank, order or ministries, or different outlooks or opinions, however legitimate, do not diminish the “communion” in fraternal charity.

Though differences of priestly character, ministries and occupations imposed on the priests, students, and brothers will persist, equality of life and treatment should also be preserved.

It will help to foster charity if the works of the community and its ministries are accomplished as much as possible through teamwork and according to a plan developed with the participation of the community.

33. The elderly and those who are burdened with any physical or moral suffering, fatigue, exhaustion, etc., should be the object of special love in the Province and in the community. The suffering members of the Body of Christ should be cared for with solicitude and without considering costs when it is a matter of health or relief.

Charity toward our sick members will be materially improved if old age and health insurance is planned for all our religious.

The warmth of a family should also be experienced by all the members of our Institute who are guests in the community, but particularly those who return for rest from the missions.

In imitation of the ineffable goodness of Jesus Christ, a hand should be extended to those who have committed any failure. By our deeds, they should be made to see that everything is forgiven and forgotten, and that they continue being vital and efficient members of the community, which does not hesitate either because of the past, or for the present and the future.

34. Charity should be extended to the communities of other Provinces, to the religious of other Institutes, to diocesan priests, as well as to lay-apostles. In this way, obedient to the bishops and to our own superiors, we will all integrate ourselves according to the vocation of our Institute in the work of the Kingdom of God.

In imitation of our earliest forbears who were so assiduous in visiting prisons, hospitals and refuges of every sort, our charity should be practiced primarily and to the point of sacrifice in the spiritual works of mercy, as well as in alms-giving and moral assistance to whomever experiences necessity (cf. PC 13).

35. With regard to Part II, Paragraph 69 of the Constitutions which concerns silence at meals, in a period of more intense apostolic ministry and considering that these circumstances are analogous to those habitually obtaining in a great number of our communities and also taking into account our present psychological conditions, it is judged opportune that this rule be a norm to follow in all the communities of the Congregation. Consequently, a determined amount of time should be set aside for reading, which then should give place to fraternal conversation.

Changes in the Constitutions

36. a) In No. 24 of Part II:

1. Include some expression in which the value of Christian friendship is recognized.

2. Hence, admit that certain mutual attachments can be justified, while avoiding “excessive attachments and everything can be offensive to community charity”

b) In No 25 of Part II:

Whereas in the actual text of the Constitutions every kind of diversity seems to be condemned without distinction, it is proposed to.

CHAPTER III

The Religious Vows in General

Doctrinal Considerations

37. The religious profession of the evangelical counsels is the consummation of our baptismal consecration. Our baptismal consecration has transformed us “by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man we may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called us out of darkness into this marvelous light (cf. I Peter 2,4-10) Therefore, all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should present

themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (Rom 12,1) Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them" (1 Peter 3,15; cf. LG 10)

By the priestly character of baptism, our baptismal consecration introduces us into the Paschal sacrifice of Christ. In this way, in celebrating the Eucharist in which this sacrifice is actualized, we can make it our own and can offer ourselves in union with Him to the Father as living victims.

38. Our baptismal consecration attains its fullness through the religious profession. This is so, because it associates us to the Paschal sacrifice of Christ precisely in its heavenly consummation toward which our association with Christ in the mystery of His death and resurrection leads. And if our baptism makes us die with Christ and rise again with Him in order to be one day glorified with Him, the power of Christ and the infinite potency of His Spirit works through the profession of the counsels so that thousands of men and women are capable of living on earth from the future reality of the consummated life They do this in order to offer to all men, as a manifest sign and as a proclamation and testimony, that future life to which the entire Paschal sacrifice of Christ tends (cf. PC 5)

39. The essence of a life consecrated by profession is to be Sign lived in the church and for the entire Church and even for all of humanity of the life beyond (cf. LG 44). It is, therefore, a presence of the power of Christ "the Lord" and of the infinite potency of His Spirit, which takes up the religious and impels him to a self-giving as ample as the love of Christ and the fire of the Spirit. Whatever renunciation is to be found in the religious profession is only the effect of an immense enlargement of human love when it is elevated to the level of the love of Christ and united with an indestructible bond to His Church. It is a sign offered to the world that heavenly goods are not something only for the future but that they are already present in part in this world (cf. LG 44).

The religious profession is not a renunciation of love but an elevation to the fullest love with which Christ loves His Church. It is even offered as a sign for Christian love in matrimony, so that it may be capable of elevating itself to the sacramental level which converts it into a sign of the union of Christ with His Church (cf. LG 44; cf. PC 12).

Religious poverty is more than a renunciation of worldly goods. It is a life lived according to heavenly goods, which have been acquired for us by Christ and which will one day be the true goods for everyone (cf. LG 44).

Obedience is not a waste of one's own personality. It is the attainment of true liberty, gained by Christ, who made Himself obedient to death and to the death of the Cross, and by which God exalted Him to consummated glory (cf. LG 3). And if our consecration springs from the fullness of our love for Christ, it brings us to a total self-giving of love in Christ.

40. The total consecration of the religious life, as a consummation of the baptismal consecration, is likewise realized in the Church, not only because Her religious life springs from Her very being and holiness (cf. LG 44) but also because the Church is the universal sacrament of salvation (LG 1,9,48; SC 5; GS 45). In the liturgy, She associates the religious life with the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist. In this way the religious life becomes transformed into a true sign for all men live on earth in anticipation the life of heaven. This sign is given either to those who are in the Church or those who have not yet entered but who are invited to enter because religious give them reason for that hope of eternal life which is in them (LG 10,45). Our consecration obliges us to follow Christ according to the Gospel. This following of Christ is the ultimate norm and highest rule of the religious life (cf. PC 2).

41. From this is derived the total ecclesial character of the religious profession. Through its liturgical celebration, it is even associated with the Eucharist in its reality as a sacrifice of Christ and sacrament of the unity of the Church.

42. Profession requires that the one professing possess the psychological and spiritual maturity of someone who is capable of possessing himself in order to be able to give himself. In effect, the profession is a free self-gift of the person and of his life with all the wealth of his most profound aspirations: love, ownership, liberty, social relationships. As a response to eternal Love in a testimony of this Love in the world, profession is a self-gift for always. But since we do not possess more than the actual moment, we give the future through an irrevocable promise. Whence follows the obligation of keeping the world we have given. Our personality does not come out impoverished by this self-gift but rather enriched and consecrated because it has been united more intimately with God.

43. The vows in our charism. In our Congregation, its first missionaries committed themselves to the apostolic following of Christ in a manner that was both entire and simple. In response to the action of the Spirit who had

inspired it, this self-gift continued to make itself more explicit, first through a consecration “to the special service of God in the Immaculate Heart of Mary” with an oath of perseverance and a promise to live the evangelical counsels. Later, this promise was raised by the Church to a canonical state of consecration to God (cf. LG 45), and the Church itself incorporated in its mission the “special service” of the apostolate of the Institute.

44. The vows in the face of the modern mentality: A revitalization of the primacy of charity should not lead us to a depreciation of the religious vows. The Council reminded us that the evangelical counsels free us from the impediments of the perfection of love. Religious vows are the greatest expression of charity (cf. LG 42).

The act of love which establishes the vows must be spontaneous, free of constraint. Nevertheless, in the notion of perfect love the element of perfect self-giving necessarily enters, and this is total and for always.

The sincerity accompanying this commitment obliges us to be faithful, even after the first impulse of fervor may have been lost. Furthermore, the profession represents the indestructible bond which unites Christ to His Church and must be a testimony in the face of changeability and lack of security of the modern man.

Man, though he is temporal, nevertheless, is not completely measured by his temporality. On the contrary, he is designed for eternity. Even more, Christ has already incorporated us into eternal life, by which we can commit ourselves for always.

Particular Applications

A) The Constitutions

45. The doctrine on the vows in Chapter VI, VII, and VIII of Part II, of our Holy Constitutions is very valuable. Suffice it to note in this respect that, with restraint, the Council’s doctrinal, psychological, and sociological orientations should be added (cf. ES 12a).

B) Profession

46. Our rite of profession should be adapted to the orientations of the Council: “Religious profession should preferably be made within the Mass” (SC 80c). It is logical that just as our consecration is united with the sacrifice of Calvary, so also our profession should be more attached to the Eucharistic sacrifice. This could imply a change in what is prescribed by our Holy Constitutions in the Appendix, “De professione”.

Note should be taken that according to the norm of the Constitution “Sacrosanctum Concilium”, no. 80 b, the “Consilium” for the execution of liturgical reform with publish a rite of profession within the Mass for those religious who wish to make use of it.

C) Our Houses

47. Our houses should contain a consecrated atmosphere, although respecting the sensitivity of today in the way of expressing it and at the same time fostering their family character and fraternal hospitality.

D) Indoctrination

48. The Prefecture of Spirituality should promote a sound doctrine concerning our consecrated apostolic life as well as plan and coordinate the accomplishment of our religious renewal and adaptation. It should be recalled how insistently Paul VI has spoken on this matter: it is necessary that religious appreciate “religious vows to the highest degree. Although the conditions of man’s life have changed very much and as a consequence the manner of life of religious must be necessarily adapted to them; whatever is deduced from the very nature of the evangelical counsels preserves its entire force and cannot in anyway whatever be impaired.” (Audience to various Gen. Chapters, 5-23-64).

CHAPTER IV The Vow of Chastity

Doctrinal Considerations

Cf. “Declaration of the XVII General Chapter on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation,” nn. 68-74

Particular Applications

Changes in the Constitutions

49. a) In Part 2, Chapter VII, “De Castitate” express mention should be made of perfect and consecrated chastity and not only chastity in general, as it now appears.

b) Leaving aside the predominantly negative tone which the present explanation of this matter contains, the positive aspects of consecrated chastity should be introduced into the Constitutions. Note should be made that in addition to being a divine gift, it is a work of undivided love which God has awakened in those who pertain to the New Alliance.

c) It should be noted that consecrated chastity is an eschatological reality, which anticipates the future life, and that is an excellent disposition of soul for work in the apostolate.

d) It would be of advantage, furthermore, to take note of the motives which the apostolic man has for the practice of perfect chastity, among others, identification with Christ and Mary.

e) However, there should not be lacking some sober suggestions concerning the precautions which the missionary needs to have in this matter, whether concerning the cultivation it deserves, or the testimony which he must give among men.

f) The repeated references scattered here and there in the Constitutions concerning relations with women should be suppressed. This matter should be explained only once in an adequate matter that avoids any appearance of obsession surrounding this subject, or which could create such an obsession among the sons of the Congregation.

g) In Par II, No. 18 of the Constitutions not only the means to overcome temptations against chastity ought to be pointed out, but also the means to cultivate it. On the other hand, in this chapter, those means which are rather generic and applicable to every type of temptation and which might be better included elsewhere, could be eliminated.

h) Along with prayer, humility, mortification and the custody of the senses, by means of which perfect chastity is cultivated, the suggestions of the Council (PC 12) should be followed and “natural means, useful for health of mind and body,” should also be pointed out.

i) According to the Council itself, it should not be forgotten by anyone, above all by superiors, that chastity is guarded more securely when true brotherly love flourishes in the common life.” (Ib.).

The elements here mentioned will have to be introduced in the text of the Constitutions.

For the Directory

50. For the faithful and generous preservation of perfect chastity, it is necessary to persevere in the sincerity and fervor of a singular and personal love of Jesus Christ, and in heartfelt and cultivated intimacy with God. consecrated chastity is borne of this love and is conserved only in the climate of this love. It is not a gift that is received once and for always, but requires continuous assistance from the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit, operating admirably in the church, as the Council says in general of the entire religious life (LG 44). Consecrated chastity should lead to a greater love of Christ, intensified each day. Only thus is it authentic.

51. This virtue should be cultivated with singular attention in imitation of our Holy Father Founder. Chastity should not be looked upon only as an element of personal sanctification but as an efficacious means of apostolate because those consecrated to chastity, by their life alone, are a testimony of the value and reality of heavenly goods and of the power of grace in this world (cf. PC 12; cf. LG 44, 46; PO 16)

52. Another motive of faithful perseverance in this evangelical counsel should be the liberty of heart and spirit which are borne of it and which singularly empowers the energies of the religious for a more generous dedication to the divine service and to the apostolate (cf. PC 12). For this purpose it should be remembered that when he was a young seminarian (Autob.101), singular lights concerning his vocation to the apostolate, in relationship to his victory over strong temptations, materialized in the life of our Founder.

53. The practice of perfect chastity should be accompanied by supernatural prudence which recognizes the reality of dangers and one’s own weakness (cf. 2Cor 4:7). This will lead us to practice the means set forth in the Constitutions (II, c8), and confirmed by the Church (cf. PC 12; PO 16; OT 10). But at the same time, coupled with a maturity and apostolic serenity and patterned after the example of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, it will take

advantage of the cooperation of everyone, men and women, for the work of the Kingdom of God and His Church.

54. Evangelical chastity, through divine grace, is a gift that is extra-ordinary and of great value (cf. LG 42). The members of the congregation, therefore, cannot confide in their own resources to maintain themselves in this great love toward God and toward all men (cf. PC 42). By means of a life of mortification and of a consecration renewed once and many times any by means of repeated resolutions, each one will arrive at attaining the full measure of the plenitude of Christ (cf. Eph 4:13). Furthermore, the members of our Congregation should adopt those natural means which favor mental and bodily health (cf. PC 12).

Each one should take care of his physical and emotional health, and be disposed to recognize the signs of alarm which bring on a crisis in his life. On such occasions, he should seek the help of his superior, or of wise and experienced counselors, well-versed in the science of psychology. Superiors, for their part, should respond with sensitivity to the signs which indicate that one member of his community is unhappy, or manifests a prolonged personal preoccupation or a serious emotional maladjustment. Above all, they should endeavor by whatever means possible to promote for all their members community life full of true warmth and affection, so that feelings of loneliness, which are the greatest danger to chastity, will be reduced to a minimum in our communities.

CHAPTER V

The Vow of Poverty

Doctrinal Consideration

Cf. "Declaration of the XVII General Chapter on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation," nn. 75-87.

Particular Applications

Changes in the Constitutions

55. The Chapter "De Paupertate" which our Founder bequeathed to us is truly rich in evangelical doctrine and practice, to an extent that it corresponds rally to the actual manifestations of the Church. Notwithstanding, its text should be perfected with the following elements:

- a) a reference to the obligation of working as a fulfillment of poverty.
- b) the necessity to live poverty not only individually but also collectively, so as to transform it in practice into a "true sign" corresponding to the exigencies of today's world.

56. With regard to modifying Part II, No. 16 of the Constitutions, note should be taken that it is not intended to forbid acceptance of compensation for the sacred ministries for the Congregation, but only for oneself. This is evident:

- a) from the very context of the entire number.
- b) from the official response of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars at the petitions of the Chapter of 1976.
- c) From the fact that this is the way the members of the General Chapter of 1922 understood it and those who formulated the present CIA, in its last edition of 1953. Hence, the Commission feels that declaration suffices, without it being necessary to change the text of the Constitutions.

In any case, in modifying the text, this should be done in the meaning of the actual context itself. Thus "nihil muneris aut pecuniae sibi in mercedem..."

This does not preclude in any way that the Congregation, attending to the ideal which our Founder had, resolutely may proceed to the undertaking of certain apostolates that would be totally or partially gratuitous, as we shall propose later on.

For the Directory

57. In order to respond to the will of the Council (PC 13), the renewal of religious poverty in the Congregation should comprehend individual practice of poverty and its collective testimony before the world. Concerning our individual practice, we should live this evangelical counsel sincerely, faithfully, and generously.

For evangelical perfection, it is not enough to use things with dependence on superiors. It requires that each one be poor in spirit and reality, not having anything precious, unusual, or superfluous, even though the superior should be easy in granting it. Only thus does it correspond to the goal proposed and lived by our Holy Founder, who wrote of the primitive life of his Congregation: "We live a life that is truly poor and apostolic" (Letter to Caixal, Sept. 5, 1849).

58. Each one should acknowledge his obligation to work, because the poor make a living by working (cf. PC13). Each one should rejoice whenever fidelity to the common life makes him experience some effect of poverty (Const. II, 14-15).

59. The Claretian Missionary must always remember the teachings and the examples of our Holy Father, i.e., the chapters De Paupertate and De Corpori Necessariis of the Holy Constitutions and Chapter 24 of his Autobiography (BAC nn.357-371).

Like St. Anthony Mary Claret, we will not be preoccupied with the things of this world, "without wanting anything or refusing anything." We shall seek in everything simplicity and poverty. It will seem natural to us to lack certain means and facilities which only the rich can have.

It is certain that the object or the practical applications of poverty can change with the times. But the spirit and the principles must remain. Applied to today, they must make us live as the poor do in the way we travel, in our recreation and rest, and the use of equipment or apparatus that may be useful but can only be permitted to the powerful of this world and which certainly do not abound in a modest and poor family.

With a poverty that is lived perfectly, the Congregation must give an efficacious testimony of the doctrine of Jesus Christ and of the imperishable goods to which we aspire. But the Congregation should give this testimony through its undertakings and enterprises and in each one of its Sons. If it is authentic poverty, it will always be authentic testimony.

60. With regard to its collective practice, the Congregation will strive to live in the most perfect manner possible the ideal of our Holy Father Founder that our preaching, particularly missionary preaching, will appear before the eyes of the people with the efficacy of a zeal completely free of any gainful interest. Although accepting compensation for works of preaching is not contrary to the practice of evangelical poverty, although accepting it may be necessary to support our missionaries and maintain the apostolic undertaking of the Congregation, and although living from this income is to live from the fruit of one's own labor, like the poor, (PC 13), we should nevertheless resolutely strive to acquire a sufficient endowment that would permit the gratuitous acceptance of the ministry of missions or of other similar preaching, either partially or totally. This should be done in the measure in which this might be suitable for the exigencies of an efficacious apostolate and as an apt means for evangelical testimony before the world. In this way, we would accomplish what our holy Founder had in mind (Const. 1857, nn.69-70).

61. To receive for the community Mass offerings, parish fees, or fees from other works that can be compensated, alms or subsidies is not contrary to the collective testimony of poverty nor to the meaning of our Holy Constitutions (P II, c VIII, n.16; c XVII, n.70). Whatever might give the appearance of excessive concern for money should be avoided.

To receive or seek alms for goals of the immediate or mediate apostolate would not be contrary to Part II, Chapter XVII, No. 70 of our Constitutions, "nec ad functionum pompam, neque alio quovis praetextu pecuniam a populis nec explicite nec implicite efflagitent aut postulent." This refers to the time of missions, as appears from the very title and purpose of the Chapter in which it is located and from the historical circumstances in which it was written. But even this norm was tempered by our Founder himself when he said in the first Constitutions of 1857: "The superior is exempted from this rule. In case of necessity, he can by himself or by means of someone else seek and receive alms either for the community or for distributing or printing books, cards, medals, etc. (Const. 1857, Poverty No. 70).

62. Our communities and even our entire Institute must be effectively poor, possessing only whatever is necessary to live and fulfill our mission in the Church. It is of particular importance in the present times that his life of poverty be adapted to the conditions of each environment and easily understood by men, so that they might be able to appreciate the value of the testimony of detachment and the primacy of the supernatural which the world needs today. For this reason, all our properties and manifestations of our life must be simple, functional, strictly adapted to the necessities of our life and apostolate, and excluding any concession to luxury and ostentation (cf. PC 13; Paul

VI, Disc. "Magno gaudio" AAS 56 (1964), 569; cf. "Declaration of the XVII Gen. Chapter on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation," n.81). It would be worthwhile to strive for a greater exchange of goods even with other persons or Institutes, occasionally offering our buildings or halls, or having, if suitable, buildings in common with other religious, etc.

63. We should all feel ourselves in solidarity with those of our brothers who by chance experience necessity. And it would be worthwhile that the entire Congregation be informed of these cases which at times affect entire regions or major organisms.

In the administrative budget of our communities a proportionate quantity will be set aside to alleviate the necessities of the poor. Let this be done generously. With greater reason this should be done in the case of public disasters. And superiors should take care that our poverty be shared, by associating ourselves with the poverty suffered by so many men. Let it also be remembered that compassion and hospitality should form a part of our religious poverty.

64. Religious life cannot be equated with the denial of earthly values. The practical and efficient use of material things is not a concession to the spirit of the world, but rather occupies an appropriate place in the religious life. Our Lord's creatures should not be rejected as if they were evil. Rather they must be used with moderation and prudence.

They should be appreciated and even enjoyed in a spirit of gratitude and happiness: "Grateful to His Benefactor for these creatures, using and enjoying them in detachment and liberty of spirit, he is led forward into a true possession of them, as having nothing, yet possessing all things. All are yours, and you are Christ and Christ is God's" (1Cor 3:22,23; GS 37)

CHAPTER VI

The Vow of Obedience

Doctrinal Considerations

Cf. "Declaration of the XVII General Chapter on the spiritual heritage of the Congregation," nn. 88-97.

Particular Applications

65. According to the Motu Proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae" 12a, the Constitutions must contain "the evangelical and theological principles of the religious life and of its union with the Church and suitable and clear words in which the spirit of the Founders and its specific aims are preserved..."

Furthermore, among the tasks committed to the Precapitular Preparatory Commission with the General Chapter, one was "...in 2nd part of the Constitutions, where they treat of the obligations of the religious life, the text of the Claretian Constitutions should be adequately accommodated to conciliar formulas" (Ordo servandus, XIV).

Changes in the Constitutions

- 66.**
- a) Our obedience is consecrated. This essential aspect should appear in the Constitutions.
 - b) The motive for obedience should be amplified in such a way as to include testimony and service to the Church and its apostolate, in addition to the theological and Christological elements already expressed.
 - c) There should be in our Constitutions an indication concerning the use of authority in the spirit of service. This could be in the chapter "De superioribus localibus."
 - d) It should be indicated that an active and responsible obedience, and not only a total submission of our judgment and will, is to be expected from members of the Congregation.
 - e) The formula "et si contra eorum iussa..." (II,20) should be amplified by more positive elements which indicate cooperation with the superiors in their undertakings, in virtue of the very spirit of obedience.

For the Directory

67. Obedience is one of the necessary elements in the field of human relations. Effectively, we find that in human relations obedience is present with different characteristics and on different levels. The necessity of obedience is founded on the fact that authority is the source and cause of the organic union of each group and the dynamic principle by which all members of the group are united in seeking and attaining proper goals.

Religious obedience benefits from the union which authority brings in the determination and assurance of attaining the temporal and apostolic goals of the community.

68. Religious obedience essentially consists in uniting oneself totally with the will of God. In order that the will of God may really be discerned in those things which affect the religious, it is the responsibility of superiors not to make decisions without having first listened attentively to the opinion of the interested individuals. Thus, the two can endeavor to find the will of God in a determined matter, although finally it is the superior who has the responsibility to make the decision, which should be considered the will of God.

69. Obedience “is and will continue to be what is called a holocaust of one’s own will offered to God. This sacrifice of oneself consists in that obedience is offered with submission to lawful superiors (whose authority should be exercised within the limits of charity and with the regard for the human person) even though our times summon the religious to the performance of many and heavy burdens, and to carrying out these duties more cheerfully and more promptly” (Paul VI, Alloc. 5-23-64).

70. Priests, students and brothers should discharge their own tasks with true personal responsibility. Superiors should foster this spirit of responsibility principally by means of opportune delegations for the better discharge of duties.

71. If an individual is convinced that a decision of the superior is not in accord with the general good of the Church, the apostolate, or the community, or of his own spiritual welfare, he has a personal responsibility to explain to the superior, with all humility and charity, the reasons which support him in thinking thus. All this should be done in the spirit of the Constitutions (II,20).

CHAPTER VII

Mortification

Doctrinal Considerations

72. As proclaimers of the Mystery of Christ, our testimony will only be efficacious in the measure in which we have realized that mystery and its twofold alternating action: death in Christ, through which one passes to life; dying again each day in Christ in order to continue passing more intensely to the new life. “If the grain of wheat does not die, it will not give fruit” (Jn 12:24-25).

To die in Christ each day is to assure that the death of Christ is introduced into all those redoubts where sin was entrenched. It is mortification which prolongs this death in Christ, so as to dislodge from our senses and powers whatever sin is hidden in them. We die each day, filling up in ourselves through mortification what is lacking of the passion of Christ in us, carrying within ourselves the mortification of Jesus Christ (2Cor 4:10-12).

Thus do we dispose ourselves in order to be a true testimony of the Paschal Mystery of Christ before the world.

73. Within the context of a spirituality that is as typically apostolic as Claretian spirituality, ascetical teaching as strong as what is contained in the chapters, “De Sensuum Custodia”, “De Modestia”, and “De Mortificatione Interiori”, needs to be set in a framework of a theology of the apostolate in which the concept of testimony also intervenes along with the concept of consecration which is always of the highest order. This concept of testimony, which in a very real sense safeguards these chapters of the Holy Constitutions, should be the force which maintains their substantial value.

74. The personality and life of St. Anthony Mary Claret was organized around his primally apostolic vocation. Precisely, the place and emphasis which he confers on this matter of the custody of the senses, moderation, etc. is explained in his life and in his doctrine from this point of view. In Part II, Chapter XXIII, of his Autobiography he speaks of: “the virtues which I knew I had to have in order to bear fruit.” On the other hand, “the missionary is a spectacle before God, before angels and before men, and for this reason should be very circumspect and cautious in all his words, deeds, and gestures.” (n.384). This implies a profound internal transformation: “I know I could not be moderate without the virtue of mortification” (n.390). And this same mortification is appreciated by the Saint in its missionary sense (cf. n.392).

75. This part of the Constitutions should be studied from the point of view of the theology of testimony.

Because, for our religious apostolic Institute, our holy Founder takes very much into account the value of testimony in the life of the missionary in respect to the building up of the people of God.

All the theology of testimony is founded on Christ, who came to give testimony to the Father, as is repeated insistently in the Gospel of St. John. Christ, by His words, by His deeds, by His entire life and by His death and Resurrection, confirmed all of revelation by divine testimony (cf. DV 4).

The Church, an extension of Christ, offers itself to the world as a universal sacrament of salvation (LG 1,48; GS 45), not only by the preaching of the Gospel and through the sacraments, but also through the life of its members, who are made a sign and sacrament of salvation for all men (cf. LG 31, 35, 41, 42).

76. The testifying value which all of Christian life brings with it has particular characteristics when it is a question of the religious life. This religious life in a very special manner is an inestimable sign and testimony that the world cannot be transformed nor offered to God without the spirit of the beatitudes (cf. LG 31). The life of the evangelical counsels is a sign of Christ in His Church, moving everyone to a more intense Christian life. It is also a sign of faith and hope offered to the world as a proof that eternal goods already are a reality here below.

Above all, it places constantly before men the kind of life which the Son of God underwent in coming into this world and which He proposed to the disciples who wished to follow Him (cf. LG 44).

77. The testifying value of the religious life is a fundamental element of all evangelization. And it should be so in our Institute because of the very particular exigencies of our Founder, who wished that our entire external conduct, regulated by moderation, as well as our internal and external mortification, which conforms our life to Christ in His sacrifice, should stand out in our ministry in order to make our apostolate more efficacious.

78. However, let it also be noted that the character of our religious life as sign is in the Church a sign of salvation for the world. It is an intelligible sign for the world. Even when the world does not wish to understand it, it will still be a sign for it and against it, and the world will be judged for not having wanted to accept the directions of God.

The manner in which religious life presents itself as testimony before the world can vary and has constantly varied in the history of the Church.

The Claretian life, offered to the world according to our Founder's charism, has a permanent value of testimony. But those forms of presenting it to the world as a sign of Christ should be adopted which better respond to the model of our Founder and which will make our apostolate more convincing today.

And if the Church invites us to adopt new forms of poverty, we will have to adopt also those kinds of mortification and custody of the senses which would have been adopted by our Founder who was so careful to be a faithful witness of Christ. Let us also set aside other forms, if he would have done so, because they no longer have efficacious value.

79. Neither our interior and exterior mortification nor our moderation will attain the level of true testimony for the world if they are reduced to more or less isolated acts. Testimony comes to us as it is given through the totality of life. In this totality, interior mortification is also made manifest in a secret but indisputable manner, by animating and giving convincing meaning to exterior mortification and illuminating our moderation with its spirit.

The letter and spirit of these chapters of our Holy Constitutions tend to this unity of a mortified life. And this should be the primary preoccupation of every Claretian, convinced that he will be a truly apostolic sign for the world by his mortification only if it envelops his entire life.

Particular Applications

A) Mortification of the senses and moderation

Changes in the Constitutions

80. The Chapter agrees that there are many details in Part II, Chapters II and III of the Holy Constitutions which need a revision according to the criteria given by the decree "Perfectae Caritatis", nn.3 and 4 and by the Motu Proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae", n.12b.

81. For this reason, it believes it opportune to reduce the text of both chapters by eliminating everything that

is too particular, and joining the rest in a single chapter and placing in order the material remaining from both.

82. It is also proposed to add a few phrases indicating the apostolic meaning which, according to our Founder, this exterior mortification has. It is proposed also to include a small addition referring to mildness.

83. This chapter will be titled “De sensuum mortificatione.”

84. The norm concerning tobacco will be retained in the Constitutions in this way: “With a purpose of edifying more and more, let our Missionaries choose the forms of external mortification and penance in food, drink, travel, etc., in keeping with the different times and places where they exercise the ministry. And equally, following our tradition, let them abstain from smoking, unless for a just cause and with the permission of the Major Superior.”

For the Directory

85. Collective testimony of mortification: Faithful to its mission of being a sign (cf. ES 17), the Congregation gave from the very beginning a collective testimony of mortification in its houses, in its manner of living and traveling. This testimony cannot be lessened, though we may take into account the diverse environments where the Congregation has extended itself and the change of sensitivity of the times.

One of the elements of our collective testimony of mortification has been the austerity, the poverty, and the apostolic testimony of our holy Founder in food and drink, clothing and furnishings, the use of tobacco, entertainment, and games, and in trips (Autob.410: “For the purpose of edifying more and more, I have abstained from smoking and taking snuff . . .”). It cannot be affirmed that everywhere this particular sign preserves the same efficacy. Nevertheless, everyone is exhorted to embrace this mortification in fidelity to the practice adhered to in the Congregation. In any case, they should not exclude themselves because of this from other forms of austerity which our testimony demands of us in different places.

86. The religious habit: They should wear the religious habit as a sign of their consecration to God (cf. PC 17). Let it be in keeping with the exemplary priests of the country, follow the rules set down by the bishops and not leave it at least unless some just cause requires it.

87. Periodicals: Our religious consecration does not make us strangers to men (LG 46). Therefore, the Congregation will promote among its members a suitable knowledge of men’s conditions and the times and of the necessities of the Church (cf. PC 2). We will do this not only “to make them share in the most intimate possible manner the dispositions of Christ” (LG 46), but also that our apostolic action may be more opportune and efficacious.

Newspapers and periodicals are a source of information in this respect. In order that they may fully serve our goals, serious and responsible publications should be selected (cf. IM 14). Their use should be moderate and self-controlled, and efforts should be made to understand in depth both problems and situations (cf. IM 10) “in such a way that, judging current events wisely in the light of faith and burning with apostolic zeal, they will be able to assist men more effectively.” (cf. PC 2d).

88. Radio, Television, Movies: Radio, television and movies can be considered as means of social communication and what has been said about newspapers and periodicals is applied to them. They can also be considered as a means of relaxation, and in that case they should be limited to the place which diversion occupies in our religious and apostolic life, with regard to their time, their content, and their goal of fostering fraternal communication and care of health. As pastoral and cultural means, they are regulated by the principles and criteria which direct our cultural formation, whether human, religious, or apostolic.

Because of the consequences the use of these means can have on our community life and the apostolic activities of the community, the Superior will regulate their use with a view to the criteria that have been indicated.

The Superior can also authorize their personal use, especially for reasons of culture, as long as the requirements of poverty are kept intact.

B) Interior Mortification

Changes in the Constitutions:

89. At the end of Part II, No. 11 add:

a) A phrase to indicate our participation in the Paschal mystery.

b) Another phrase which, as in the Constitutions of 1857, makes us see the apostolic value of mortification. It said: "Fortunate are those who arrive at this degree! Those who wish to be true apostolic missionaries must attain to it, so that each and every one of them might be able to use that expression of the Prophet: 'Like sharp arrows in the hands of a warrior.' For this purpose they must arm themselves with the most complete self-abnegation and a continuous mortification, without which they would never arrive at the degree of perfection which is absolutely necessary for them to fulfill their ministry."

"I am like an arrow placed in your powerful hand" (St. Anthony M. Claret, Prayer to the Blessed Virgin at the beginning of Missions, Autob. 270).

For the Directory

90. As religious, we must participate more intimately in the Church's pilgrimage and live not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Our apostolic action as servants of the Word is a new exigency of uprooting and pilgrimage. By means of us, the Word must traverse the world. This supposes the acceptance of difficult assignments, either in themselves or in the circumstances which make our uprooting more painful. It might be the effort of adaptation, the difficulty of language, the expending of our personality, having to give up a project after working on it and leaving a field in which the seed has already borne fruit. But this will all be done with joy for having glorified the name of the Father.

91. Death to sin and to the flesh is also an attitude of apostolic religious life which makes us live more intensely a life hidden in Christ. Its fruit is interior peace and the capacity to be able to give peace as a missionary should.

92. Our Father Founder wants us to arrive at a stage where we can be happy in privations, labor, calumny, and persecutions. This happiness is the beatitude that Christ proclaimed in the Gospel (Mt 5:10-11). In effect, we thus conform ourselves through love and in truth with our Master who manifested His love by freely accepting death for the salvation of the world. In this way we enter into participation with His Paschal triumph: "If we suffer with Him we shall also be glorified" (Rom 8:17). Thus, also, as Christ entered into Glory through His Passion and sent us His Spirit to produce marvels in His Church through His Power, so also efficacy in our apostolate comes to us through His Spirit, out of our communion in His Passion.

CHAPTER VIII

Household Regulations

A) Background Historical Elements

93. Community life, which has such an importance for us in order that we might be able to establish a true fraternal life together as a family united in Christ, should direct itself in an adequate manner toward the religious apostolic vocation of our Institute.

This must be manifested in a particular way in the arrangement of time dedicated to spiritual things, to ministerial or household work, to free time and to sufficient recreation (cf. ES 25,26).

94. St. Anthony Mary Claret and our first priests felt the necessity of regulating the time of our missionaries, both for their life at home and for the ministry. The first Constitutions contained not only some prescriptions on the acts of piety and other occupations, but also a detailed timetable for each period. Subsequent experience and the advice of the Roman censors made them understand that it was not possible to impose by Constitution the same timetable for the entire Institute. Nevertheless, the principle of a timetable for each house was left standing.

95. In every religious or apostolic community, the "Order for the Day" has the double finality of favoring community life, setting certain occasions of encounter between its different members, and of facilitating the realization of the personal and ministerial obligations of each one. Nevertheless, this timetable has a different extension in diverse Institutes. In monastic and conventual orders, it comprehends the entire arrangement of the life of the house, centering it on the celebration of the Eucharist, in the recitation or chanting of the divine office, in the meals, establishing further times for recreation and rest. In the Society of Jesus, an Institute that is eminently apostolic, normally only two meals are prescribed as community acts. The hour of rising is also determined, and meditation and the exams are made in private. In the Society, there is no community act of piety by rule. In modern

Congregations, an intermediary system is encountered in which more room is made for community piety.

96. St. Anthony Mary Claret prescribed for us in the primitive and the actual Constitutions two different "Orders", relative to the two periods in which the year was divided for us, one for the seven months of ministries and the other for the five of life at home. The second contains more elements than the first. Today, however, there is practically no difference of times in our life, but rather of houses dedicated to different ministries: schools for externs, parishes, houses for preaching, headquarters, and centers of formation. We believe that in dealing with a tradition of our Institute which arises from the year of its foundation and which is quite significant, these two different "Orders" should be maintained in the constitutions though revised as required. The "Order for the Time of Missions" preserves its value for our missionaries in the time in which they found them-selves occupied intensely in some extraordinary ministry (Missionary campaigns, conducting of retreats, etc.).

97. The problem arises not when we treat of missionaries dedicated temporarily to a ministry, but of communities which find themselves the entire year involved in an intense ministerial work. Let us say clearly that this was not foreseen by our Founder and as a consequence we do not find any "Ordo" for them in our Constitutions. But it is clear also that the "Order for Time of Missions" cannot be applied to them without reservation. For it does not foresee more acts of the community than the meals and reduces the missionaries' piety to the Mass, Office, half-hour meditation (at least) and exams (Const. II,65ss). And the problem is aggravated if it is recalled that today these communities of intense and constant work form the greater part of the Institute. It seems evident that some general norms must be established which will permit the ex-ercise of this ministry as central to our vocation, at the same time as they safeguard our community life.

98. The solution for this can be found by a return to the manner in which the Founder conceived of community life. In the primitive and actual Constitutions, he did not prescribe any other act of community than the meals, certain recreations, conferences during times of rest meditation on retreat days and the act for Sundays.

"There was a species of regulation which concretized and animated the precepts of the household regulations of the Constitutions. It must have been April 15th, 1865 on which Father Clotet copied it, being Superior of Vich. To such an extent was this so, that it embraced all the moments of the day and all the activities of the individuals who paradoxically became subject to a continuous and strict common life, except in those things which later on by appropriation were called acts of community, viz., the religious acts like morning and night prayers, meditation, the rosary, which were made particularly by priests in their respective rooms" (Fr. Cristobal Fernandez), *La Conqreacion de Misioneros...* "vol. I, pp. 447-450)

Later on there had been a process which tended to convert into community acts those acts of piety which our Founder had fixed as personal ascetical practices. This began with the recitation of the rosary, then the reading and examen, to which "noon prayers" were added (1867). At last, after our Founder had already died, weekly confession was imposed. And in the Chapter of 1876 it was determined that all acts, including morning meditation, should be made in common and the Visit separated from the rosary so as to create another act for after siesta. All this, of course, was applied in the period of life at home and only proportionately in the time of missions.

B) Regulations in General

Conclusions concerning our regulations:

99. The establishment of the timetable is reserved to the local superior, but for its formulation it is appropriate that all members of the community participate, even when its formal approval is reserved to the superior with his council. During the year, the superior can introduce those variations which circumstances require. The major superior will review the timetable during the canonical visitation.

100. Our timetables must contain only some fundamental norms in which the time of the acts of community are determined. The acts of community for all houses are: a) the acts of the piety which may be determined by the Directory, b) lunch and dinner, c) the hour of rising in the morning, d) some recreation.

101. Care should be taken that the time for these acts should be fixed at an hour which everyone can assist. Because of the ministry or for some other legitimate motive, the superior, after hearing the interested party, will grant him a particular timetable, when it is not possible for him to follow the general one (cf. ES II,26).

102. The general principle inspiring the formulation of the timetable, especially with regard to the hours of rising and retiring and of eating, should be to adapt it to the exigencies of the ministry and the customs of the country.

103. Though not held daily, the following are community acts: the practices which should be made according to the Directory; the conferences which must be held; the acts on days of recollection and during spiritual exercises upon which the Directory confers this character.

Changes in the Constitutions (II, c. XI: Order for the House)

104. The following clause in No. 33 is suppressed: "*Vesvere quoque suum lectum praeparet unusquisque.*"

105 No. 36 concerning silence should be rearranged, and formulated in the most positive manner possible, so as to make it understandable according to today's mentality which rejects coercive norms if it does not see their meaning.

106. The following is proposed for No. 37: "*Per tempus a Superioribus determinadum requiescant.*" The criteria and the time will be determined in the Directory.

107. The following is proposed for No. 44 which treats of departures from the house: a) suppress the entire reference to a companion. b) make more realistic the one concerning the superior's permission for leaving and the obligation of presenting oneself to him on returning to the house.

For the Directory

108. Silence has a profound religious meaning and a great actuality, because today the theology of the Word has been placed in great relief. The Word of God, nourishment of the soul, is the support of the energy of the Church (cf. DV 21); and the word of man, dialogue between brothers, is an instrument of communion of the Word of God in fraternal union.

Silence in the Liturgy and in the spiritual life is the welcome we offer to the Word of God within ourselves in order to assimilate it in meditation. In other times, silence is the boundary within which we prepare our personal response to our Lord, and which later is exteriorized in our response together with the gathered assembly.

In the life of community, silence creates the environment in which the capturing of truth in study and in work is made possible. Truth acquires maturity through silent meditation and contemplation, so that it can be transmitted later to the rest through the ministry or through fraternal communication.

With regard to our brothers, silence will be the acknowledgment of our respect and charity toward their work, study or their rest.

And if in the Liturgy there are moments which are called powerful because of the intensity of their content and for the special manner in which we should live them, similarly there exists powerful moments of silence, surrounding work, study, meditation and contemplation, or even the very rest our brothers take. In this way, the theology of the Word responds to a fecund theology of silence, because silence, so lived, makes possible the acceptance of the Word, the whole capturing of the Word and of the Spirit, a personal response to the same Word, and our respectful love for our brothers as they give themselves to prayer, to work, or to rest.

109. Rest: It is left to Provincial Superiors to determine the number of hours of rest for their respective Provinces, which, nevertheless, should not ordinarily exceed eight hours.

The principles which must be kept in mind for this decision are the following: the health of individuals, the exigencies of the apostolic life, and the spirit of religious mortification.

The establishment of the hour for retiring and rising will be the responsibility of the superior of each house with his council.

110. Fasting:

a) Our communities should manifest collectively their sense of penance by the weekly practice of fasting prescribed by the Holy Constitutions and by traditional abstinence. Each province will decide how to put it into practice.

b) It is recommended that the saving resulting from this practice of penance be set aside in favor of our foreign missionaries or for a similar purpose.

111. Work: We insist on the obligation of avoiding idleness. We should dedicate ourselves to work as a requirement and consequence of our vow of poverty and as a service in the community.

Household work by our priests within our communities should be encouraged without prejudice to the apostolic ministry and the preparation which it requires.

112. Vacations:

a) Following the spirit manifested by the Council in PO 20, the Superiors must assure all members of the Congregation that they “enjoy a suitable and sufficient time for vacations.” The Major Superiors, will take note of the differences of each country, in setting the standards which must be kept in this matter. The purpose of vacations shall be to maintain good human relations in our houses and efficacy in our apostolic action, along with good health for our brothers. On the other hand, it is recommended to everyone that they keep in mind the requirements of religious poverty, and the testimony of apostolic austerity at every moment.

b) Missionaries who work outside their Province of origin in foreign countries will be authorized to return there periodically in order to enjoy some months of rest and renewal, in keeping, however, with the attitude described above.

C) Concerning the Acts of Piety

Doctrinal Considerations

113. cf. Conclusions of the Declaration of a General Chapter on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation, nn. 133-135.

114. Liturgical Renewal and our Life of Piety: In exhorting religious to cultivate the spirit of prayer and prayer itself, the Council invites them to accomplish it by drinking from the “genuine fountains of Christian Spirituality: i.e., the Sacred Scriptures and the Eucharist (PC 6; cf. PO 14,18). This is not a matter only of a principle proclaimed in theory. The document itself explains: “They should celebrate the Sacred Liturgy especially the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with both lips and heart as the Church desires and so nourish their spiritual life from this richest of sources” (Ib). The Mass unites in a marvelous way both Scripture and Eucharist in its two complementary parts comprising one sole celebration: the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic Liturgy (SC 56). The Divine Office accompanies this central act of worship, and it is a public prayer of the Church through its meditation and proclamation of the same inspired Word.

If the piety of our communities respects the primacy of the Eucharist and the Divine Office, it certainly will live according to the rhythm of the liturgical year, throughout which the Church celebrates the mystery of Christ. Our piety will be, through it, ecclesial and Paschal.

The principle which should regulate the other forms of community piety is also provided by the Council: they should “be so organized that account is taken of the liturgical cycle, in such a way that they coincide with the liturgy and in a certain way are derived from it and lead towards it.” (SC 13; Instr. “Inter Oecumenici”, 17).

115. Points for Orientation. For a proper and prudent arrangement of piety in the Congregation certain fundamental criteria must be taken into account: a) the intrinsic nature of acts of piety. b) the specific nature of our common life in the Church. c) the requirements of appropriate renewal.

a) The intrinsic nature of the acts of piety differs according to whether they are liturgical or devotional exercises, whether they are immediately directed to our personal sanctification or to the glory of God; whether by their nature they are community, collective or private acts.

b) According to its nature our religious apostolic life (cf. PC 8) is truly a life in common though it is neither monastic nor conventual (cf. PC 9). In effect, the principle office of monks is to render to the Divine Majesty a service which is at the same time humble and noble, within the walls of the monastery. Conventuals can dedicate themselves to an intense apostolate even outside the monastery, but they must preserve the office in choir and monastic observances. In Institutes such as ours which have received apostolic action as their mission in the Church, we must strive above all for that union with Christ which must precede our apostolic action. Nevertheless, we should adjust our observances to the requisites of the apostolate to which the Church has dedicated us.

c) The requirements of appropriate renewal. In the first place, a return to the Gospel according to the original inspiration of our Founder is necessary. In the arrangement of piety, our Father Founder took into account

our mission in the Church. On the one hand he inculcates the value of prayer (“quod ipsis ante omnia est curandum” Const. I,110). He points out the forms of piety which coincide with the character of our apostolic religious vocation of worship, of interiorization of the Word, of formation. In order to make the arrangement of our piety and our apostolate easier, he did not impose on us by Constitution either office in choir or collective prayer. Our Chapters and Superiors have continued to adapt this fundamental alignment to each time and place.

The second requirement of appropriate renewal is the will of the Church manifested in the Council and in the Post-Conciliar Documents. It tells us to strengthen our acts of piety according to their nature and purpose, to purify our vocational piety from extraneous elements and to adapt ourselves to actual psychological and physical conditions.

It will be recalled that while our Founder lived, the following acts were private in our Congregation: meditation, reading, examen, morning and night prayers. The following were community acts: visits after meals and later on the rosary, which took place after the ascetical and mystical conference before dinner. During missions, morning and night prayers, as well as rosary, were community acts with the people.

Particular Applications

Changes in the Constitutions

116. In the revision of Part II, Chapter XI (The Order of the House) and XVII (Rules for the Time of Missions) of the Constitutions, norms concerning the acts of piety for each day remain unchanged without specifying more about how they should be fulfilled. The detailed norms explaining our universal tradition are left for the Directory.

117. In Part II, No. 41, referring to the day of recollection, details added in 1862 should be suppressed, and determined by the Directory.

118. In No. 42, which concerns the spiritual exercises, the word “twice” should be suppressed. The Directory should authorize that they may be made all at one time, in six complete days, or twice a year, with four complete days each time.

119. In consideration of our apostolic work, No. 40, referring to the act of community on days of obligation, is suppressed.

120. In Chapter XII, No. 48, on the Order for Priests, details concerning the time to recite each hour of the Divine Office are suppressed, since they are not in conformity with the actual liturgical norms.

For the Directory

Acts of Community Piety

121. The following are declared to be community acts in all our houses:

- a) the recitation of lauds.
- b) the recitation of vespers or compline.

It is stated “vespers or compline”, because in some countries dinner is had very early, at the end of the afternoon. In this case, vespers can be recited as an act of community, while compline is considered an individual act for immediately before retiring.

122. In our centers of formation and our schools for externs, in large communities where the ministry does not prevent it, and for Coadjutor Brothers whenever there is a group of them in a house, the Mass, concelebrated if possible, should be considered the fundamental act of community.

In our novitiates, as well as our centers of philosophy and theology, both the recitation and the singing of lauds, vespers or compline, should be accommodated to what is said in the “Instruction for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy...” nn.16,18 and the “Instruction on the Liturgical Formation of Seminarians,” n.26 (cf. canon 1367,3) if the number of students permits. (cf. also “2nd Instruction on Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy nn.19 & 21, May 1, 1967).

123. It is desirable that the recitation of the holy rosary be in common whenever it is possible to do so.

Individual Acts of Piety Required by the Constitutions

124. The following are individual acts of Piety:

a) Mental prayer, which normally should last one hour for priests (including lauds). The Major Superior can declare in what houses, because of constant ministerial activity, they can apply the norm for the time of missions, which prescribes at least a half hour (excluding lauds). Since it is a matter of extending to the entire year a norm which originally referred only to a part of it, and considering the importance of mental prayer in our apostolic spirituality, this norm is not to be applied in an habitual manner except for serious reasons of the ministry. In this case, our brothers should try to find some time for prayer during the day and the superior should assist them to realize this objective (cf. ES II,21).

As a general rule, mental prayer would be made at the same time, after the community recitation of lauds, in the public place that is most convenient and suitable for each one.

b) The mid-day examination predominantly has the character of mental prayer. But according to the mind of our Holy Founder, brief vocal prayer can also be made, and various optional formulas can be recommended. It shall last fifteen minutes, and at home a signal will be given to begin it. It will be made in the place most suitable for each one.

c) Spiritual reading, which should be done at the time and in the place which is most opportune for each one.

125. Preserving the healthy tradition of the Institute, each one should endeavor to recite the rosary and make a visit to the blessed sacrament whenever it is not done in community (cf. Const. II,33; PO 18).

126. In our centers of formation and always whenever Mass is celebrated in community, the prayer of the faithful for the Church and for the Congregation should be included as a substitute for noon prayers.

127. According to the desire of the Church frequent use should be made of the sacrament of penance. In order to encourage the liberty recommended by the Council, each one should make use of it on the occasion most opportune for him (cf. PC 14).

128. On Sunday, "the Lord's Day", our members should live the Paschal mystery more intensely in the liturgy and in personal prayer, in fraternal happiness and in an apostolic service of the faithful (cf. SC 106).

129. The day of monthly recollection should preserve its eschatological character. It can be practiced in different ways, according to the different situations of our houses. On this day, meditation should be made a subject of religious or apostolic life and there should be an examination of half-an-hour." This can be made in the form of a community "re-examination of life. A spiritual conference should follow the examen. Where the sacred ministry does not prevent it, a Eucharistic act should also be made. According to the practice of our holy Founder and of our first communities, the common recitation of an additional part of the Divine Office in addition to those prescribed is recommended. The detailed arrangements for the day of recollection are left to the local superior.

130. The spiritual exercises can be made either at one time a year in six complete days, or in two periods of four complete days each time. Silence and retreat will be observed during them and normally they will work. The concrete arrangement of all this is left to the director of the exercises with the approval of the local superior.

131. The following are recommended as a traditional expression of our piety: the common celebration of the month of May, the novena to the Heart of Mary, the triduum to our holy Founder and the triduum to St. Joseph on the days preceding this feast on May 1st. Let them be made in a simple form, inspired by the liturgy, according to the different formularies suggested by the particular directories. But if they are not celebrated along with the community Mass, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament should be given, according to liturgical norms. The regional directories will indicate which possible devotions our communities will be bound to practice in the different regions.

CHAPTER IX

Bodily Needs, and Impediments to the Sacred Mystery

Changes in the Constitutions

132. By taking out the various circumstantial, local or unnecessary elements, Part 2, Chapter XIII, No. 54, could be rendered as follows:

“Alimenta sint salubria et iuxta loci productiones: sepe tamen frugaliter, non exausita sed communia, et eadem pro omnibus, nisi causa infirmitatis aliud suadeat. Nemini liceat habere in cubiculo vel cella . . .”

133. It would be worthwhile to give another rendition to No. 61. The phrases which inculcate separation from one’s family for motives of the ministry in the present Constitutions seem to be less nuanced than those of 1857. In the latter, there was an exhortation to transform carnal love into a spiritual one “by loving them with a love of piety, with a well-ordered charity” and for the same reason giving preference to the love of Jesus Christ.

134. The Chapter suppresses surveillance of individual correspondence, outside of the most serious cases foreseen by moral theology. As a result, Part I, No. 32 of the Constitutions is suppressed.

135. In eating and drinking, we must follow the norm and example of the doctrine of our Father Founder, which was inspired by the Gospel and the Saints. The first standard is temperance and moderation in their quality and quantity, eating what is necessary in order to work, (Const. 1857-1862, No.76). “Before eating I will say: ‘Oh Lord, I eat these things in order to have energy to serve you better’” (Propositions 1863, 13). We must adapt ourselves to different countries and not be demanding or troublesome. In addition to temperance, our Founder proposed positive mortification in order to increase the life of prayer, in order to render fruit in the apostolate and to give testimony (Autob. no.404, 405, 406). He was encouraged by the example of Jesus Christ, our Blessed Lady, and the Apostles, and received a special heavenly inspiration which he proposed to his missionaries in the Constitutions of 1862, no. 73: “We also remember that the most celebrated missionaries were men of few means and who ate as the poor. This is the way to preach with words and examples and to render fruit, both with a good example that is given and also through the grace which our Lord communicates to such preachers” (l.c.; cf. Autob. 408-410).

136. The following of Christ for the works of the apostolate is in itself demanding and it implies the kind of detachment which permits and assures an absolute dedication. The duty of piety with regard to one’s own parents and family does not oppose this detachment and as a consequence does not constitute as such an impediment for the sacred ministry, nor is it contrary to the consecrated life. Therefore, our missionaries will fulfill their duties with respect to their parents with a spiritual consciousness proper of persons consecrated to God. In agreement with these norms, superiors will be able to grant our members permission to visit their families when there are reasonable causes.

DECREE ON

1. In order to establish the Kingdom of God, our Lord Jesus Christ “founded His Church as the sacrament of salvation and sent His Apostles into all the world just as He Himself had been sent by His Father” (AG 5). The Church continues and develops this mission of Christ by impulses of the Holy Spirit.

The apostolate is every contribution to the Kingdom of God, principally through prayer, the works of penance and the testimony of one’s life (cf. CD 33). More precisely, it is an apostolate when it is done in the name of Christ and by mission of the Church, in order to make this Kingdom known to men and established among them (AA 2 & PC 8).

2. The Congregation receives from the Church the mission to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God and realizes this according to its proper Claretian charism:

a) As an apostolic religious Institute which imitates very closely the life of the Son of God on earth and prolongs it, it should appear as a sign that moves men to the fulfillment of their Christian vocation, that manifests the presence and transcendence of heavenly goods, that gives testimony of the new and eternal life, that announces in advance the glory of the future resurrection and that makes evident to all the infinite power of Christ and His spirit (cf. LG 44 & 46).

b) As an apostolic missionary Institute, the charity of Christ impels it to seek the salvation of all men (cf. Consti. I,2), commits it to those sectors of greatest evangelical urgency and sensitizes it toward all possible means (cf. Const. II,63) in order always to use those that are most efficacious.

c) As an apostolic Institute dedicated to the Heart of Mary, it is fashioned in the furnace of the love of Mary (cf. Autob. BAC 270) and assimilates “that maternal affection with which all those must be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of men” (LG 65).

3. Obedient to all the appeals of the Supreme Pontiff and docile with “self-sacrificing submission to the

bishops as true successors to the Apostles” (CD 35,1; cf. ESI, 22-40), we will work “zealously and diligently in building up and increasing the whole Mystical Body of Christ and for the good of the particular churches” (CD 33).

In the exercise of our apostolate in the Church and for the Church, we will act in accord with all the other apostles, priests, (cf. LG 28 & PO.8), religious (cf. PC 23) and laity (cf. AA 25) so that the unity of all of us who proclaim the Gospel will bring the world to belief in Christ as the one sent by the Father (cf. Jn 17:21).

4. Our apostolic mission, which implies a union with the mandate of Christ and obedience to His representatives, also implies continuous fidelity to the personal urgings of the Spirit.

5. Our substantive title of Missionaries obliges us to be at the forefront in the apostolate, as servants of the Word for conversion to faith.

6. Conscious that without Christ we can do nothing (cf. Jn 15:5), we will live our apostolate with a committed and intrepid faith, in a constant attitude of prayer, in communion with the Paschal Mystery which we daily renew in the Eucharist, and with an imperturbable hope that can accomplish everything in Him who strengthens it (cf. Phil 4:13). And we will use in a spirit of poverty all the means which our apostolate requires, “but fully knowing that it is God Who makes His Kingdom come upon earth” (AG 42).

7. Heralds of the Incarnate Word and men among men of our time, we should incarnate ourselves in the human communities to which we are sent, so that there may be nothing truly human which does not find an echo in our hearts (cf. GS I). This will oblige us to live apostolically attentive to the signs of the times, to translate the Gospel into a language that is intelligible for each human situation and to offer a Christian solution to all the problems of our brothers in mankind (cf. AG 10).

8. Our missionaries must know how to unite their Claretian impatience, born of zeal, with the hope of those who know that the Kingdom of Heaven grows slowly like a seed. Our sense of responsibility will prevent us from any offhandedness or fickleness. Our consciousness of mission will sustain our initiative and assure our humility. And our total self-gift to the Kingdom of God will make easy for us a renunciation of comfort, human expectation, affections of the heart, and of our own native culture, characteristic of the missionary.

CHAPTER I

Reorganizing and Planning our Apostolate

Article I: General Reorganization

9. Within the Post-Conciliar Church and being the Church renewed, the Congregation must realize its mission of salvation in the world of today. Therefore it should:

a) renew its apostolic mentality through a constant return to the Gospel and to its original Claretian inspiration and through an adaptation to the conditions of our times (cf. PC 2).

b) adopt a new style in its missionary activity.

c) provide for itself highly responsive and flexible legislation in order to assure itself constant adaptation.

d) establish a new organization of its apostolate on the basis of specialists

e) execute its apostolic task in efficient work groups.

f) participate in pastoral masterplans, and cooperate in specialized pastoral programs.

10. The entire mechanism of our Institute should be ordained toward our apostolic finality and we propose a new organization of our apostolate which establishes as a basis the creation of a Pastoral Council in each province and terminates at the top with a revitalized functioning of the General Prefecture of the Apostolate.

11. It is indispensable that those in charge of our formation programs have an enlightened apostolic sensibility and that they have acquired a “convenient pastoral experience” (OT 5).

12. Within our general charism, the specialization and assignment of each individual must be determined by his proper and personal vocation, by the needs of our Institute and by the exigencies of the Church. All our basic formation is always to be preserved, this specialization should already be begun during the years of formation, both for clerics (cf. “Sed. Sap.”, Stat.Gen.III art.46) as well as for coadjutor brothers.

13. That our missionaries may be provided with constant pastoral renewal, the present arrangement of our community conferences shall be substituted by an efficient program on the provincial level and through the responsibility of the Pastoral Council of each major organism.

14. It is urgent to adopt a scientific statistical system to be implanted in the entire Institute in an appropriate manner, for the purpose of a realistic evaluation of our apostolate.

15. The name "Prefect of Ministries" is to be substituted by "Prefect of Apostolate", General or Provincial, whenever it appears in our legislation.

16. For its task, the General Prefecture of Apostolate shall have at its disposal sufficient specialist and support personnel residing in Rome or in the Provinces.

17. The responsibilities of the General Prefecture of Apostolate will be:

a) To ascertain the progress of the universal apostolate of the Church to determine what is most urgent and most effective.

b) To be at the service of the entire apostolate of the Congregation principally through contact with the Pastoral Councils in the provinces.

c) To promote apostolic coordination among the Interprovincial Conferences, though always leaving the liberty of action of each organism intact.

d) To establish the specialized study of reports, experiments, proposals and statistics from the entire Congregation, in order by this means to inform and stimulate the pastoral action of all organizations.

18. In order to facilitate the apostolic role of the government in each province, there shall be constituted in each one a Pastoral Council, consisting of the Provincial Prefect of Apostolate, the Provincial Prefect of Formation and one member representing each one of the principal apostolates prevailing in the province. These representatives will be elected by direct vote of all the perpetually professed members, priests, students, and brothers of each respective major organism.

19. While safeguarding the rights of the Provincial Superior, the responsibility of the pastoral commission will be:

a) to be attuned to the pastoral master plan of the respective dioceses

b) to detect the most urgent apostolic needs in the confines of each province, so that our entire apostolate may emerge from a realistic basis.

c) to coordinate policies, activities and methods.

d) to preoccupy itself with updating the missionaries of the province with regard to knowledge and methods, and to foster contact and interaction between our professors of ecclesiastical sciences and the other missionaries of the Province.

e) along with the Pastoral Councils of other provinces of the Conference, to involve itself in the more encompassing responsibilities of the national and international levels of pastoral action.

20. Teamwork, along with other reasons such as our living together and our giving testimony, demands that each community be pastorally specified. Communities of two or three ministerial purposes should be avoided as much as possible. And the timetable at home shall be adapted to this pastoral specification.

21. It would be desirable to establish a "re-examination of apostolic life" in all our communities. In this sense, advantage might be taken of the one envisioned for the day of recollection, by orienting it also to a community apostolic re-examination.

22. The superior of each house should serve the community apostolically. He should be attentive to the directives of the pastoral plan of the diocese and the indications of the Pastoral Council of the province.

23. The fundamental norm of coupling all apostolic activity to a pastoral master plan obliges us to incorporate ourselves, in spirit and in fact, to the pastoral plan of the diocese, and to link our ministries preaching, communications media, education, etc. with similar ministries undertaken by other religious Families, particularly

those which have our "Letter of Brotherhood."

24. Our fundamentally supraparochial character as missionaries fits in perfectly with the exercise of the various specialized pastoral programs among workers, professionals, university students, migrants, tourists . . .

25. All Claretians, superiors and fellow members, should have an open spirit for the creation and adoption of new movements, organizations or other forms of the apostolate. They should also have a suitable aptitude and preparation to undertake those to which they feel called, as well as fidelity to respective methods and goals of each movement or organization.

26. Our "forms of apostolate must be suitably adapted to the present necessities, taking into account not only the spiritual and moral conditions of men, but also social, demographic and economic" (CD 17). We should "sufficiently employ in pastoral care not only theological principles but the findings of the secular sciences especially of psychology and sociology. Thus, it will bring the faithful a more adequate and mature life of faith" (GS 62).

Article 2: Postcapitular Pastoral Planning

27. *The Non-Christian World.* We must effectively strengthen our apostolate in it, in conformity with what is said in the capitular Decree on the Missions.

28. *The De-Christianized World.* (Either because it has broken with the Church because it takes no account of its faith in its life). In this field of the apostolate, which is spreading in older Christian countries, and in the farflung world of atheism, all the Congregation's sons must reawaken their consciousness of their essentially missionary vocation, and should renew their own mentality and their own activities according to the directives of the council.

29. *Our Separated Brethren.* All our members in their ministries, publications and relationships, must assume a posture that is sincerely ecumenical in keeping with the sensitivity of the Church and according to the norms of the hierarchy. Furthermore, we should have some specialists in ecumenism, either because they might have an aptitude for it or because necessity requires it.

30. *Practicing Christians.* In conformity with Vatican II, we should foster their vocation to sanctity (LG c.V), their liturgical life (SC 19), their apostolic restlessness (AA) and Christian responsibility in their temporal commitments (GS).

31. *Catholic Lay-Leaders* (Leaders in thought or action). We must value highly their ecclesial identity and their key efficacy, according to the doctrine of the Council (LG, AA, GS, passim); further them effectively, sincerely overcoming any possible clerical paternalism. In our apostolate among them we must also prefer pastoral master planning, and work in those movements and organizations which have the greatest effectiveness and the widest ecclesiastical scope.

32. *The Consecrated* (Religious, priests, seminarians). The Institute shall revitalize its traditional apostolate in this field, furthering the renewal of the consecrated within the Council's guidelines and in their full ecclesial dimension (PC, PO, OT, ES). This is to be done on the parochial, diocesan, national and federated scale.

33. *The Displaced.* The Congregation shall see itself committed, more each day to work in a missionary manner among the diverse human groups of "the displaced" in the internal and external migration movements, among workers' cells, in the slums, among vagrants, perhaps by a discreet work of pre-evangelization, in order to fulfill among them also the call of the Council: "The Church must be present in these groups through her children who dwell among them or who are sent to them" (AG 11).

We see the necessity of establishing our communities in these environments. Their manner of living, particularly "the practice of poverty" (ES II,23), should give a greater efficacy to their apostolate.

For this apostolate, it will be necessary on some occasions even, to "displace" some of our communities, by disengaging them from apostolates that are sufficiently provided for.

34. Immigrants.

a) Within our specific objective, we must establish certain communities consecrated to the apostolate among immigrants.

b) Resolutely adapting themselves, the missionaries dedicated to this apostolate should fully enter into the world of the immigrants which they serve and into the social and ecclesiastical environment which they have acquired. This supposes a careful schooling in the mentality, languages, and cultures of these people.

c) With regard to immigrants who are not transitory, who have an intention of permanently residing in a country, one of the principal commitments of the missionary will be to facilitate their defective and full incorporation into the new human and ecclesial community they have recently joined.

35. *In the Social Field.* We must involve ourselves apostolically in the current fields of social action. This includes the direction of thought and formation of consciences, as well as a decided reform of our own testimony. This will affect both the policies according to which we accept foundations and ministries and the manner of fulfilling them, in order to "perfect the work of justice under the inspiration of charity" (GS 72 & Enc. "Populorum Progressio", passim).

36. *The University.* In the ministry to higher education, we should work for the simple direction of residences to develop toward an authentic apostolic penetration into the university. This will be done through authentic evangelical testimony in community life, through the creation of cells of ferment, through the service of spiritual direction in a renewed form, and through any type of pastoral care at the university in its most missionary forms.

37. *Latin-America.* Because of the pressing appeals of the Church and the requirements of our Claretian vocation, we must respond to the most urgent necessities of Latin-American by sending a greater number of personnel, and in effective and significant concentrations.

CHAPTER II

Direct Service of the Word

38. "The Word of God is living and energetic" (Heb 4:12). "Apostolate and preaching in a certain sense are equivalent." "Preaching is the first Apostolate" (Enc. "Ecclesiam suam", MS LVI (1964) 648).

The Congregation proclaims with the Council, "the force and power in the Word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church" (DV 21), and exhorts its priestly missionaries as ministers of the Word of God that they endeavor to seek "how they can bring more adequately to others what they themselves have contemplated" (PO 13).

Furthermore, the Congregation accepts the viewpoint of the Church which "is rehabilitating the function of the living word in the economy of its pastoral office" (Paul VI, "L'OSSERV. ROM." Feb.13,'64) and encourages its members to "study new forms, to multiply and concentrate on particular talks, to have greater contact with the public, to step down from platforms that are too lofty, to go out from the church if necessary to present oneself with respect and esteem before any audience whatever" (Ibid.).

39. All legitimate forms of rendering the Word fit into the dimensions of our charism, the expression of which can develop in the life of the Institute the way it developed in the life of our Founder. And through them all, the Congregation maintains and fulfills "with fidelity its proper objectives" (PC 20).

40. In order to revitalize in practice the specific vocation of our priestly missionaries to the direct service of the Word, it is fitting to follow the policy of freeing ourselves from the administration of schools or of other similar administrations, from parochial bureaucracy and from other functions which can suitably be undertaken by coadjutor brothers or competent lay persons.

41. The salience of the Word of God in the Liturgy requires of all Claretian priests a specific knowledge of liturgical preaching, a careful and realistic preparation of each homily and a painstaking pastoral administration of all the sacraments (cf. SC 52 & 59).

42. We should value catechesis as the foremost means belonging to the Church in its educative role (GE 4), and as the first ministry indicated in our Claretian legislation (Const. II, XVI, 63). We should give special attention to adult catechesis. A considerable number of our members should be catechetical specialists. Our catechetical work should be renewed and operate within the channels of the Episcopal Conferences and diocesan catechetical secretariats.

43. All our members dedicated to teaching, spoken and written, or to researching the Christian message fulfill a lofty direct service of the Word. Let our Missionaries who are professors of ecclesiastical sciences exercise their

function with a true apostolic sense (cf. OT 16817) and endeavor to amplify the radius of action of their teaching with publications, participation in meetings, etc.

44. Popular Missions:

a) We esteem according to their rightful value the efforts of pastoralists and missionaries in the Church today to bring up to date, where it still retains its efficacy, a ministry which is so traditional in our Institute. And we support any joint effort that may be made among us in this respect.

b) Our missionaries should follow with interest the actual dynamic of popular missions. This includes their recent programming on the diocesan, national and international scales, and their scriptural, theological, and sociological enrichment.

c) The Provinces where this ministry flourishes should establish a community which would be a center for missions, and it should be suitably staffed.

d) The Chapter supports the development of the traditional mission into "missionary campaigns" to the People of God, be they in the form of missionary teams on campaign, or in the form of communities in missionary areas. Both experiments could be construed in the following manner:

1. Missionary teams on campaign:

would suppose a devitalized area or region.

would rely on the existence of ordinary pastoral activity.

would not include the care of souls.

would require missionaries who are specialists in the pastoral needs of the area for children, families, workers, religious, etc.

the missionaries would live together or not, according to the requirements of missionary strategy.

its duration would be approximately for one year.

its objectives: the same as the traditional mission, i.e., intensification of the service of the Word, conversion of hearts and Christian revitalization of structures.

2. Communities in a Missionary area:

would suppose an area or country that is de-Christianized and especially uncared for.

would depend on some insufficient structures for ordinary pastoral activity.

would not exclude the care of souls.

the missionaries would live in community, with a special testimony of poverty.

they would admit the possibility of acquiring jobs.

its duration would be indefinite.

its objectives: re-Christianize the area in order to hand it over to ordinary effective pastoral activity.

3. Both forms could rely on the participation of our coadjutor brothers and of teams of lay apostles.

45. Spiritual Exercises

a) the conducting of Spiritual Exercises continues fully in the direction of our Claretian charism.

b) the internal dynamic of the Ignatian method is still valid and should not be adulterated with extraneous elements from other methods of the apostolate. The Exercises should be conducted, nevertheless, according to the new biblical, theological, liturgical and pastoral mentality expressed in Vatican II.

c) the Chapter accepts the validity of the other types of exercises, which, though not Ignatian, we can make or direct, for motives of efficacy, especially in a series or in other diverse circumstances.

d) the goal of new retreat houses for ourselves is to be subordinated to a more integrated pastoral care, within each diocese or nation.

e) in time, individuals having aptitude and inclination for this ministry should take special studies in it, in addition to as many as possible of those already dedicated to it.

46. Recommended for their special efficacy in the preaching of the Gospel to adults are Institutes, Courses or special Weeks directed to special segments - professionals, married couples, youth..., or oriented to special subjects - Bible, Liturgy, Sociology, Ecumenism, etc.

47. Where novenas, septenaries, etc., are still conducted, we should preach them with the missionary spirit they had in the hands of our Father Founder and with a new doctrinal depth which the Council acclaim: "It is necessary that all preaching be nourished on Sacred Scripture and enriched by it" (DV 21).

CHAPTER III

The Communications Media

48. These media are of the highest importance because of their capacity to permeate and express modern society, and even to create it. Responsive to the Church, therefore, which exhorts us to "strive to make use of the various media at hand nowadays for proclaiming Christian Doctrine" (CD 13), and following the inventive example of our Father Founder as well as our Institute's traditional involvement in communication, we should adopt a posture that is apostolically responsible and professionally competent toward the communications media.

49. Every Claretian should:

a) cultivate his human and pastoral sensitivity toward the communication media.

b) suitably use them personally in order to live in tune with the prevailing climate of culture, information, and social ferment.

c) utilize them as instruments of the apostolate, either occasionally or habitually, according to his own capabilities and special preparation. (IM 13 & 15; OT 2).

50. The Congregation should take a decisive collective attitude toward the communications media:

a) on the general level, through the formation of all seminarians and brothers.

b) on the specialized level, by selecting some missionaries with the qualities and vocation to dedicate themselves to the organization and direction of this apostolate or to its immediate and habitual exercise (IM 15).

c) in the attitude that should prevail in our communities and centers of formation (IM 16), that these media will be used responsibly, as a means of formation, and for information.

d) and in the effective organization on the general and provincial level or on the level of Interprovincial Conferences, of a ministry of communications media, so that we may finally rise above mere improvisations, ingenuous well-intentioned attempts, and individual efforts.

51 - With special pains we should further the apostolate of the laity in the communications media. For "the laity especially must strive to instill a human and Christian spirit into these media" (IM.3). To this purpose we will:

commit them to this apostolate, so that they bring to it their personal skill or their financial support, according to the Council (Cf. IM 17)

support and direct in a Christian manner those who are professionals in these media (cf. IM 11 & 15).

52. Immersed in a society that is shaped by these communications media, our missionary vocation especially obliges us to form day by day, as readers hearers or spectators, all those who may be within reach of our ministry. Therefore the programs which are suitable to this purpose should be encouraged, increased in numbers and organized according to Christian moral principles (IM.16).

53. Considering the technological and economical complexity of these communications media and their gradual socialization, it will be apostolically more effective to introduce ourselves into the formidable organizations owned by others than to create our own. Our missionaries, with suitable preparation, should collaborate in these organizations, whether they depend from the hierarchy or not, in order to participate there, too, in a pastoral master plan, or to influence the masses in a Christian manner (cf. IM 14).

Where it may seem pastorally necessary, e.g., in our mission territories and in less developed countries, our members should establish these media, but always using apostolic judgments and professional standards.

54 As servants of the Word, all our priests should achieve a mastery of the art of writing as well as speaking. The majority of them must be able to write effectively even though they may not dedicate themselves, properly speaking, to the ministry of the press. Many of them, however, must end up coupling their diverse apostolic activities with a relative succession of writings, on different levels of specialization and publication.

Those most highly gifted in the art of writing should specialize in it, with sufficient studies for a degree and career in journalism.

55. In the publication of books, magazines, leaflets and other pamphlets an account should be taken objectively of the editorial situation and the needs of each country. And for reasons of efficacy, care should be taken to attune them with the signs of the times in their content and presentation.

56. In general our periodicals cannot be numerically increased inconsiderately. They must be conducted on the provincial level or the level of Interprovincial Conferences, in order to adapt them better to the scope of a nation or country.

These publications demand an unselfish cooperation from our members.

57. The exchange and cooperative publication of periodicals, translations and editorial collections should be studied and controlled, using realistic judgments that will result in an effective apostolate.

58. Each of our periodicals must have its editorial staff and the trained directors required in each locality.

59. A very simple but effective "news service" office should be established on the General level, edited by the Prefecture of Apostolate, for the purpose of feeding information on our publications, to the Holy See's communications media and to the media of the countries where Claretians are working.

CHAPTER IV

Parishes

60. The parish, although it is not the only form of Christian community, is the primary local community of the faith, of worship and charity.

Beyond its juridical aspects, which are being re-evaluated today, its Eucharistic (cf. SC 42) and missionary (CD 30,1) polarities are being accentuated.

Religious sociology establishes the fact that there is a crisis in the traditional parish, especially in the great urban centers.

Hence, a living parish calls for a pastoral activity awakened to its Eucharistic-missionary exigencies and to the sociology which conditions it.

61. The congregation, which originated in the Church with a supra-parochial mission, but which in the course of its history has been accepting parishes by the force of its very apostolic adaptability, shall in the future offer its services to the Church in order to respond to the explicit calls of Vatican II (cf. CD 33, 34, 35) and in response to the requirements and potential of the ministry of the Word in the parish of today (cf. CD 30,2).

In order to retain our fidelity to our own charism within this ministry, the Institute requests of its missionaries an open attitude to new perspectives and structures in the mission-parish of today, in order to make each one of our parishes an authentic "missionary community."

62. In accepting the parochial ministry, we should balance equally the needs of the Church and the exigencies of our charism. For this reason we will give preference to parishes that are strictly missionary in character. And in response to the call of the bishops, we will generously accept the care of parishes even on a temporary basis (cf. CD 35,1).

63. In the exercise of the parish ministry, we will be authentic missionaries, by the quality of our preaching, by our special concern for catechetics, (CD 30,2) by our commitment to winning over those who have been alienated or on the margin, by our furthering of the laity, by fostering priestly and religious vocations, by our cooperation in social works, which will be frequently a work of pre-evangelization.

64. All our parishes, though part of particular Churches, must live in openness to the Universal Church by collaborating through prayer and action to this total endeavor, missionary, ecumenical and pastoral, because, "the grace of renewal cannot grow in communities unless each of these extends the range of its charity to the ends of the earth, and devotes the same care to those afar off as it does to those who are its own members" (AG 37).

It would be very useful if our parishes maintained communications "with some parish or diocese in the

missions, in order to make visible the communion between communities so that mutual edification may abound.” (AG 37)

65. In order better to develop the parish as mission, the spirit of collaboration and testimony of unity should be fostered (CD 30,1 & 3) by a life of priestly teamwork, by the effective functioning of a lay-council in parish organization and administration, and with a sincere involvement in the pastoral master plan, both local and diocesan.

66. Let our priests and coadjutor brothers who form the Claretian parish communities live with fraternal love the gift of their priesthood and their religious and missionary life. Let them give a transparent testimony of piety, above all in the liturgy, and of their generous practice of the evangelical counsels. Let them maintain a perennial “unity of life” in the midst of their many duties (cf. PO 14), and receive all the faithful with an affable spirit of service.

67. Let our pastors see to it “that the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice be the center and culmination of the entire life of the Christian community. They should labor without stint that the faithful are nourished with spiritual food through the devout and frequent reception of the Sacraments and by intelligent and active participation in the liturgy.” (CD 30,2). Let them show themselves especially prompt to hear the confessions of the faithful, remembering how much the sacrament of Penance favors the increase of the Christian life (cf. CD 30,2). Let them not disregard exercises of piety, according to the recommendation of the Council (SC 13).

68. Let them give singular attention to the apostolate of personal contact. This includes visits to families and schools, consideration toward the sick, solicitude for the needy, dialogue with youth, with the estranged, and with transients, etc. (CD 30,2).

69. Interior and exterior migration and other similar phenomena of displacement or the urgent needs of certain de-Christianized areas can impose upon us other types of parish service:

a) accepting mission areas with the purpose of creating Christian communities from which would result new parishes, to be transferred in due time to ordinary pastoral care.

b) making ourselves present, as missionary teams or especially adapted communities, in precariously situated parishes.

70. Let care be taken that our missionary pastors “enjoy the stability in their office which the good of souls requires” (CD 31).

71. Guided by a realistic and universal vision, and with a view to the actual expansion of our Institute, we invoke for our parish communities the principle of greatest possible flexibility. Let the Claretian parish apostolate be studied and concretely determined after considering the sociological circumstances of the place in which it is developed.

CHAPTER V

Apostolate of the Laity

72. “The laity derive the duty and the right to the apostolate from their union with Christ the Head. Incorporated into Christ’s Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by our Lord Himself” (AA.3).

73. From the beginning of his priestly ministry until his death, St. Anthony Mary Claret was a tireless promoter of the apostolate of the laity. He entrusted to the laity the organization and direction of his people’s libraries, and wrote these prophetic words: “In these last times it seems that God wishes the laity to have a part in the salvation of souls” (“Las Bibliotecas Populares Y Parroquiales”, Madrid, 1864, pg.18). The Supreme Pontiffs Pius XI and Pius XII have presented our Founder as a precursor of the lay apostolate of today.

74. In order to live the apostolic intuition of its Founder, the Congregation today accepts the doctrine of Vatican II with regard to the origin, meaning and scope of the apostolate of the laity, which ranges from the testimony of their life to their characteristic obligation of restoring the temporal order in a Christian manner (cf. AA 6 & 7).

75. Our missionaries’ promotion of the lay apostolate must be oriented to foster the development of the laity’s proper ecclesial vocation and to increase the work of evangelization of our Holy Church (cf. LG 33).

76. In our common Christian vocation and in this common ecclesial work, the laity collaborates with us, and we collaborate fraternally with them. We bring to their common priesthood and baptismal consecration the gift of our priestly ministry and of the religious and apostolic consecration of our priests, brothers, and seminarians.

77. At the same time, the Congregation can do no less than accept with joy and gratitude the assistance of those lay-persons, either as individuals or in groups, who wish voluntarily to serve the Church within our own charism, participating in the works proper to our Institute.

78. The promotion of the lay apostolate on the part of the Congregation is realized as a consequence in three ways:

a) through the spiritual formation of the faithful, whether they belong to an association or not, helping them to attain to their apostolic charity.

b) through our priests' involvement as assistants and counselors in the general movements of the lay apostolate, and in our brothers' and students' active participation in them.

c) with the foundation or furthering of some lay work proper of our Institute, wherever it can be sustained within the pastoral master plan (CD 17).

79. Our Congregation, which has as its proper trait collaboration with the Bishops whom the Holy Spirit has set in place to rule the Church, (Heb 20,28), exhorts its members, particularly those who are consecrated to the care of souls, educators, and those who have special qualities to be counselors or assistants, to participate actively and unselfishly in the national and international movements of the lay apostolate recommended by the hierarchy: specialized movements such as Catholic Action, Young Christian Workers, Cursillos of Christianity, Legion of Mary, Christian Family Movement, Scouting, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

In all these works let our members strive to foster "the particular characteristics of the spiritual life that are proper to them" (AA 4).

80. In their apostolate among youth, our missionaries can accomplish an extraordinary service for the Kingdom of God. For this purpose let them dedicate themselves to cultivate preferentially smaller groups of youth having a spirit of leadership. Let them give them a clear personal testimony of commitment to our Lord and to His Church. Let them foster intensely in them a Christian conscience and their ecclesial vocation and, without prematurely determining them, project them to a committed and supernatural apostolate, and one carried out as a team. Let them place them in contact with persons and institutions which embody in an exemplary way the mission of the Church. Let them organize among them retreats, hikes, vigils, etc., in which they experience the warmth of Christian apostolic community life.

In these youth groups, very good religious and priestly vocations can arise and especially Claretian vocations. Those who do not feel themselves called to a special vocation will be magnificent lay-apostles, in any case.

81. In the conservation and development of its proper works, the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Youth of the Heart of Mary, Claretian Guilds, we should follow with generous obedience the will of the Church manifested in Vatican II, to seek "the good of the Universal Church and of the diocese." We should adapt these works "to the requirements of time and place e, employing appropriate and even new programs and abandoning those works which today are less relevant to the spirit and authentic nature of the community" (PC 20),

82. Conscious of the general crisis of pious associations, the Chapter urges our missionaries who are responsible for our associations to develop their spiritual heritage and that they involve them in a true lay apostolic activity, according to the spirit of the Council and in relation to the missionary requirements of the local churches.

83. A very effective manner of joining the lay apostolate with the apostolate of our Institute will be through the utilization of lay groups in our different missionary campaigns in Christian countries, and the incorporation of lay apostles, foreign or native, in our missions among non-Christians.

84. In order to respond to the desires of many of the laity, our alumni, Claretian ex-seminarians, members of our families and certain members of our associations, the Chapter affirms in principle the opportune of a Claretian lay body in the missionary dimension of our charism, bearing the stamp of our consecration to the Heart of Mary and even taking the shape of a true secular Institute.

DECREE ON MISSIONS TO NON-CHRISTIANS

Preface

“Divinely sent to the nations in order to be ‘a universal sacrament of salvation’,” (AG 1), the Church “is wholly missionary, and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God” (AG 35). For this reason, Vatican Council II has invited “all to a profound interior renewal, so that having a lively consciousness of their own responsibility in the spread of the Gospel, they may accept their commitment to missionary work among the nations” (Ibid.), to which the Church feels itself called with a greater urgency in the present state of affairs. (AG 1)

The Council asked that religious Institutes preserve under all circumstances their missionary spirit and that “they be adapted, as the nature of each community permits, to modern conditions so the preaching of the Gospel may be carried out more effectively in every nation” (PC 20).

Our Congregation, like the pilgrim Church, is “missionary by its very nature” (AG 2). It is also missionary by the will of its Founder and by the weight of its authentic tradition. At this moment of renewal the Congregation asks itself if, according to the mind of Vatican II, it can sincerely before God extend its activity for the expansion of the Kingdom of God among the nations; if it can leave off some other ministries, so that it may dedicate its energies (employed in them) to the Missions (cf. AG 40).

Let all the sons of the Congregation recall, then, this missionary summons of the Chapter, which is the same anguished call uttered by the Church.

With Vatican Council II, the Congregation gives thanks to God for so many services rendered (cf. AG 40) by those heroic sons of hers who in their work to expand the Kingdom of God have died, or are currently giving their lives, or will sacrifice themselves tomorrow in increasing numbers in mission lands. Because they fulfill, in its most genuine missionary expression, the Institute’s reason for being in the Church of Jesus Christ.

I. Missionary Character of the Congregation

1. Although the Congregation does not have missions to non-Christians as its exclusive goal, the Institute is essentially missionary and properly so, by virtue of its orientation to the ministry of the Word and the catholicity of its spirit.

2. In adapting the Holy Constitutions according to the mind of our Founder (cf. AG 40,3), a specific place will be given to the conciliar expression, *Evanqelium Dei apud gentes diffundere*.

3. All the members of the Congregation, by virtue of their missionary vocation, must be ready to exercise the apostolate among non-Christians (Const. I, 74,6). Furthermore, let those who feel themselves especially called to this ministry offer themselves to their superiors in imitation of our holy Father Founder. Their superiors ought to favor and support this vocation once they have recognized and tested it. This applies even to the most gifted members, inasmuch as the missionary vocation is a grace and blessing of God for their respective organisms.

4. Let those missions to non-Christians assigned to the Congregation be regarded as one of the basic works of the Institute. In order to foster missionary spirit and cooperation, let a competent and effective secretariat or procuratorship be established on the general and provincial levels.

II. Missionary Action of the Congregation

5. The Congregation wishes in this Chapter to be aware of its missionary duty “among non-Christians” (LG 64; CC I) and bestir itself to respond in the measure of its capabilities and in the proportion of its ministries to the urgent insistence of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God among non-Christians (cf. AG 40).

6. The Congregation recognizes that its first missionary obligation at the present time is to review and reinforce its activity in those missions already in its charge.

7. While safeguarding the right and duty of the General Government (Const. I,8,6) the missions will be undertaken and fulfilled not on the general but on the provincial level.

8. All the provinces should have their own mission, providing it with personnel and financial means.

III. Formation of the Missionary

9. a) "Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and the origin of the whole apostolate of the Church," let those in charge of formation instill in the minds of our young seminarians that "the success of their future apostolate depends on their living union with Christ in keeping with the Lord's Words: "He who abides in Me and I in him bears fruit for without Me you can do nothing" (AA 4; Jn 15:5).

b) Let those in charge of formation foster the missionary vocation. Let them cherish it rightfully and sustain it in its crises, securing it by true zeal, by sacrifice, by renunciation, and by love for all men and for all peoples (AG 23-25).

10. In the new Order of Studies the following should be kept in mind:

a) "Doctrinal training should be so planned that it takes in both the universality of the Church and the diversity of the world's nations." (AG 26) It should also take in the learning of languages, above all the international languages, from the first years.

b) "Mission theology should be so incorporated in the teaching and development of theological doctrine that the missionary nature of the Church may be fully brought to light. In addition, the Lord's plans of preparing for the Gospel and the possibility of salvation for those to whom the Gospel has not been preached are to be examined, and the necessity of evangelization and incorporation in the Church is to be made clear" (ES III, I).

11. Among the virtues which the future missionaries must acquire and practice are those derived from apostolic zeal and highly recommended by the Council. These virtues include: ability of initiative, constancy in undertakings, an open mind and a generous heart, ready adaptability to foreign customs and to the various circumstances of peoples (AG 25).

12. Those members assigned to the missions should suitably be assured of a special preparation, both doctrinal and practical (AG 26), in their own country; and they should, wherever possible, finish the last years of their formation in the country where they must evangelize.

Likewise, coadjutor brothers, who provide such valiant services to the missions, must take courses in catechetics (AG 26) and receive sufficient training as professionals and technicians to become capable of directing schools and workshops (PC 8).

13. Let a period of pastoral preparation and missionary adaptation be established for those recently arrived in the missions. Let the superiors arrange a suitable program. Let them watch over its fulfillment and not be easy in granting exemptions. During this time let the new missionaries study the customs, social structures and history of the peoples they must evangelize; let them try to understand their religious soul; let them be eager and persevering from the start to learn their language, till they can speak it fluently and elegantly (AG 26).

14. Some Missionaries, after a certain time of pastoral experience in the territory of the mission, may appropriately be assigned to special studies in universities and graduate schools (AG 26).

15. Let Superiors foster research studies in the region which they are evangelizing, creating, if possible, a center of higher culture with a specialized library and museum, so that the missions may be present in the cultural development of the country imbuing that development with a sense of Christianity (AG 26).

IV. Government and the Missions

16. Let Provincial Superiors, upon whom each mission depends, try to visit their mission as soon as possible so that they may be acquainted with the mission's needs and the missionaries' problems. Let Superiors endeavor by their repeated visits to provide for their missions reasonable needs, and let them support and encourage the missionaries in their difficult undertaking through effective cooperation on the part of the Province.

17. In mission territories dependent on a Province, let there be a superior delegate to whom wide faculties are granted so that his government may be more effective (ES II, 18).

18. Let our missionaries maintain cordial and respectful relations with ecclesiastical authorities, always regarding themselves as their constant helpers (Const. I, 2; CD 35, 1). Likewise, let them generously cooperate with the diocesan priests and religious communities whom they may find working in the same mission territory.

19. Giving to God what is God's, let our missionaries not neglect to give to Caesar what is Caesar's. Let them support, then, the civil authorities' initiative for improvements and progress, and on scheduled holidays, let them not consider it belittling to show their respect and loyalty (Rm 13:1-7). Let our missionaries avoid involving themselves in political questions which could impede and even annul their ministry (Const. II,64). Let the supernatural motive of their presence in the country always be evident, and let them show their love for the people confided to them (cf. Autob. nn.522-523).

20. Let our missionaries be provided an opportunity to enjoy a reasonable vacation period each year and let them be allowed to return to their province of origin more easily than other members of the Congregation, according to the judgment of the Major Superior.

V. Mission Spirituality

21. Identified with Christ and feeling themselves bound to His mission as the One sent by the Father, "let them bear His death within them" (1Cor 4:10) for the life of men. Let our missionaries, then, be living witnesses, who strive to make themselves "all things for all men" (1Cor 9:22) through an entirely apostolic life. With an open mind in a spirit of service, let them build up the Church, composing in the community of pastors and faithful "one heart and one soul" (Acts 2:42; AG 24-25).

22. Let the attitude of sonship and apostolic spirit proper to our special consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and our confidence in Her intercession as Mother of the Church (LG 53 & 65) live continuously within our missionaries; and let them grow in the perfect imitation of our Holy Father Founder, in his "life hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:3), in his self-immolation and apostolic dynamism.

23. Let our missionaries live evangelical perfection in its fullness, as the greatest form of apostolate to the nations of the world and the guarantee of its fruitfulness (PC I).

24. In a spirit of adaptation and renewal (PC 3 & 8):

a) A special set of regulations for each mission territory should be arranged (ES 2,26).

b) The timetable, approved as required, should be adapted to the demands of mission life (ES II,26).

c) In particular cases, the competent superior will be able to grant dispensations from acts of piety or a commutation for other acts which are undertaken for motives of apostolate.

25. Superiors, according to their means, should give missionaries the opportunity, assistance and time to refine their spiritual, doctrinal and professional development (PC 18). They should also assure the missionaries' participation in the benefits of common life by avoiding situations in which anyone must live alone (AG 27; PC 12).

26. Once a year, let the Spiritual Exercises be made together and in suitable houses, taking advantage of the presence of the missionaries by having, either before or after the Exercises, encounters to help bring about common pastoral renewal (AG 24).

VI. Missionary Activity

27. Evangelization of peoples must constitute the basic activity of the missions. Care must be taken, however, not to present the Gospel as sweeping away old beliefs and customs, but as a refinement of whatever may be good in them and as a germ of brotherhood, unity and peace among people (AG 8-9).

28. In order better to adapt missionary preaching to the mentality of the peoples who are to be evangelized, it would be desirable to have in each missionary region a center of information. This center would provide missionaries with necessary information on the history, sociology and religion of the people (cf. AG 26).

29. Actively included in our missionary works, our coadjutor brothers will provide most valuable assistance in the manual offices and arts, as well as in catechesis.

30. To give greater impulse to the propagation of the faith and the Church, let our missionaries make use of native catechists, who are full of apostolic spirit. These people should be provided with a means for a decent life and social security by paying them a just wage. To provide them with as complete a religious and pastoral formation as possible, courses should be arranged, and schools of religion (or catechetical schools) established. In this way the

most qualified will be able to be proposed as candidates for the order of diaconate (cf. AG 26).

31. The Church is not formed, nor does it live fully, nor represent Christ perfectly if no true laity exists to work with the hierarchy. Hence, the formation of the laity must be sought with all interest so that the Gospel may penetrate deeply the life, and the individual consciences of the people (cf. AG 21).

32. Let our missionaries greatly appreciate the active apostolate of the laity, whether they are from the same country as the mission, or from other countries. And the principal function of the provincial Secretariat of missions should be to form, instruct and initiate lay-missionaries before they are sent to the field of operations (cf. AG 21).

33. All possible interest should be taken so that the pastoral care during the catechumenate may be an initiation into the Christian life that embraces not only the mere explanation of dogmas and precepts, but also the exercise of Gospel morality and participation in the sacred rites permitted to the catechumens (AG 14).

34. Since the principal means of communication is direct contact with people, our missionaries, with greater reason than their lay collaborators, should "acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of men among whom they live, let them share in cultural and social life by the various undertakings and enterprises of human living" (AG 11). But let them avoid everything that might wound national interest, so that they can exercise their sacred mission with greater influence.

35. With ecumenical openness and within the norms established by the Directory and Decree on Ecumenism, the missionary should support the activity of all persons and institutions, religious or civil, whether they are Catholic or not, as long as they are dedicated to doing good under any form whatever.

36. Social welfare works, especially those which concern teaching, pertain fully to missionary activity and are an extraordinary instrument of apostolate. Provision must be made, however, to lead to Christ those who receive through them the opportunity to dignify and elevate their human condition (AG 12).

37. Care should also be taken that at least some of our missionaries know how to use practical tools and the communications media, whose great importance everyone must appreciate (AG 26).

38. The apostolic zeal of our missionaries should spur them on to establish in each mission country a major organism of the Congregation made up of native Claretians, who, in turn, should also launch themselves upon missionary expansion. This should be considered the greatest service which the Congregation can offer to missionary work.

39. Since a principal goal of missionary activity is to implant a local Church with its own clergy and hierarchy, let our missionaries make the greatest effort to foster native priestly vocations. With equal interest let them foster vocations to the religious life, considered by the decree "Ad Gentes" as indispensable for the development of the Christian community (AG 15 & 18).

DECREE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I. Christian Education, an Apostolic Ministry of the Congregation

1. Our Congregation of Missionaries should cooperate effectively with the bishops in the ministry of the Word (Const. I,2), and should diffuse the Word in all its forms by every means (Const. II,63), thus helping to announce the message of salvation to all men.

2. Christian education makes an important contribution to the service of the Word. It offers special opportunities to prepare nonbelievers for acceptance of the Gospel, while at the same time it consolidates and develops the faith in those who already believe. Moreover, it makes possible in a great part contacts with segments of society habitually alienated from the influence of the Church (GE.8).

Because of this, the Congregation has cultivated teaching and Christian education in all its forms as a proper ministry, realizing that it is especially appropriate for developing the Congregation's missionary activity in the world (cf. "Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage," 51).

Our Founder wanted it thus, and ten General Chapters have declared it so, as well as the Holy See itself in

its decree of August 22nd, 1947.

3. The Congregation, through its Extraordinary General Chapter, is ready to follow the exhortations of Vatican Council II, and review in depth its ministry of Christian education. It hopes, thus, to respond adequately to the most urgent needs of the world today and the anguished calls of the Church.

II. Community of Apostolate

4. Those who with outstanding zeal and self-sacrifice are dedicated to this ministry of Christian education in any of its forms, or who in the future may be assigned to it by their superiors should feel themselves inwardly driven by their spirit and their missionary vocation, to confront all the difficulties which this ministry presents and convert these difficulties into a true exercise of the Congregation's missionary vocation. Teaching, in any of its forms, should in our hands be transformed into a means of announcing the Gospel, propagating and developing the faith, inspiring in the faithful a missionary spirit, and radiating this spirit to areas deprived of the saving influence of the Church.

5. The Claretian educator, to be an authentic educator, should by his life of prayer and sacrifice steep himself in the mystery of Christ; he should impregnate his teaching activities with a true apostolic zeal.

With his life, then, full of the spirit of Christ, he will place at the service of this teaching function all of his endowments of soul and heart, and employ every possible diligence in generously preparing and renewing himself (GE 5).

6. Both the mission which we have in the Church as well as the diverse ministries which carry it out are community realities which unite all of us in the same spirit and in one common task. This obliges us always to consider the activity of each missionary within the totality of the duties of the entire Congregation. It obliges us, too, to consider the activity of the Institute within the mission of the entire Church, in keeping with the words of the Council: "Even though priests are assigned to different duties, nevertheless they carry on one priestly ministry for men. Whether they engage in parochial ministry or whether they devote their efforts to scientific research or teaching, all are, indeed, united in the building up of the Body of Christ" (PO 8).

7. The Congregation generally pursues its educative-teaching ministry today within the complex of the Catholic school:

- a) creating there an environment of charity and of evangelical freedom (GE 8).
- b) illuminating human culture with the Faith (GE 8).
- c) exercising frequently the immediate ministry of preaching and the life of the sacraments.

According to this global structure of the Catholic school, the apostolic effectiveness of teaching should be prized. The action, then, of all the personnel of the center must tend harmoniously to this community function. And the personnel must accomplish this by the testimony of their life, by their teamwork, and by the same rule of life.

III. The Scope of our Teaching Apostolate

8. In keeping with our vocation as missionaries in the direct service of the Word, and aware of the scarcity of priests in the Church, the superiors should within the ministry of education:

- a) dedicate our priests, preferably, to spiritual direction and to teaching those subjects which more directly form the mind.
- b) prepare spiritually and professionally those brothers who manifest a vocation for education
- c) integrate with us as many laity as possible who are competent not only on a professional level, but principally on the spiritual level because of their outstanding Christian lives and their apostolic posture.

9. All types of centers of education proposed by the Council can be accepted by us within the requirements of our charism and according to the needs of the Church in each time and place.

When because of external difficulties, or pastoral exigencies, or lack of personnel, it may not be possible to establish centers of Catholic education, let other forms of education, which have a positive influence on the Christian formation of students, be fostered – such as chaplaincies, professorships of religion, etc. – taking care to form apostolic groups among the students from public as well as private schools.

10. So that our apostolate of Christian education may, according to the mind of the Church, foster the maturity

of the human personality, bring about a greater consciousness of the gift of faith, help the development of the new man toward the age of the fullness of Christ, make the students contribute to the growth of His Mystical Body, students who, in turn, will give testimony and aid to the Christian re-shaping of the world (GE 1 & 2), we should prolong our activity as missionary educators by cultivating apostolically our former students. Moreover, we should habitually extend this same influence over the families of the students we educate (GE 8); we can do this through Parent Associations, Claretian Guilds, and other similar organizations.

11. In residences and similar educational centers, formation should not be restricted to being preventive in nature and providing a good environment for students and young men. It is necessary to foster among students apostolic and charitable works. It is also necessary to awaken possible priestly and religious vocations among them, and, in every instance, their ecclesial responsibility as Christian leaders. For this purpose individuals should be placed before them who are humanly and spiritually well-trained, and who, if possible, have degrees.

IV. Social Aspects

12. While it is true that the Congregation directs numerous free schools, the Chapter desires that this aspect of its educational apostolate become widespread in schools that charge tuition, in the measure of our real capabilities.

We would contribute in this way to a greater freedom for families to choose schools for their sons (GE 6). For this purpose it would be desirable to promote efforts before the civil authorities, by means of Parent Associations or other similar groups whose aim would be to obtain in practice the equal rights that all men have to culture and to education (GE 1).

13. It is a grave responsibility of those directing our schools and similar centers to fulfill faithfully the social obligations of each country; it is also a grave responsibility to fulfill the requirements of Christian charity toward lay-personnel engaged to help us in our work; and disbursements or expenses of the center should be prudently managed with a sense of social responsibility.

14. Following the wishes of our Holy Founder (Letter to Fr. Xifre, July 16th, 1869) and of Father Xifre (Esp. de la Congreg. Trat. II, Cap.2, art.5) let the major superiors preferably assign to teaching those who possess a decided vocation for it.

It will be possible in this way to assure more easily that the professors will enjoy stability, something that is indispensable in this ministry, and that they also may be specialists in the various branches of teaching. With regard to the latter, it would be desirable that those who are active in these branches of teaching have the respective academic titles (GE 8).

V. Principal Characteristics of our Centers of Education

15. Let our centers of Christian education be above all centers of apostolic insight and activity, in which the educators "intimately linked in charity to one another and with their students and endowed with an apostolic spirit, by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ, the unique Teacher"(GE 8).

Let these centers of education, therefore, endeavor to form students who are noted for their Christian spirit, for their mature and well-defined personalities, for their achievement of an intellectual and social formation oriented towards a life of Christian service to others in their future professions. Let these students become, as it were, a saving ferment in the human community (GE 8).

16. Sufficient order must be established in our schools to guarantee over-all progress and harmony, and as a necessary element for the personal formation of the students. It should be provided that they exercise responsibility and participate in the organization of the various spiritual, cultural and recreational activities.

17. The Spiritual Director, supported by the team of educators, must create a climate of piety which brings the students to a conscious and active participation in the liturgical Mystery (GE.4), to a frequent reception of the sacraments, to a filial love for our Mother and imitation of her virtues (LG 67). He will foster the kinds of piety recommended by the Church and by the Congregation, though in a renewed and adapted form.

18. Our apostolic-missionary work of Christian education, in any of its forms, must reach its culmination in the formation of select groups aiming to fit themselves into the modern movements of the apostolate. Priestly and

religious vocations will result spontaneously from these groups. All our educators should make a great effort to support and cultivate these vocations, above all by the example of their religious and apostolic lives. This is the best recommendation for our own Institute and an invitation to embrace the religious life (PC 24).

VI. Recommendations

19. Finally, the Chapter recommends the formulation of a manual of education developed by experts from the different parts of the Congregation. The manual should sum up the fundamental lines of our ministry of Christian education, with due attention to the permanent values of our teaching tradition and resolutely incorporating the doctrine which Vatican II has bequeathed to us in this matter.

So also the Chapter desires that in some section of the Holy Constitutions, the ministry of Christian education be cited in an explicit form.

DECREE ON FORMATION

Preface

1. With the Council, an era of personal and collective renewal has been opened up in the Church, one of sincere conforming with the Gospel in order to show God's plan of salvation to men in an intelligible and attractive way.

We can say that the salvation of humanity is bound up with renewal of the Church, in its sons and through them in the Church's structures. But this renewal depends on the formation of priests, of religious, and of laity (OT, Preface). Formation has been entrusted to the sense of responsibility of educators and students (cf. OT, Concl.; PC 18; GE Intr.; AA 28-32).

In response to these teachings of the Council, this Extraordinary General Chapter, assembled with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and enjoying the protection and presence of the Heart of Mary, the Mother of the Church, wishes to pay very special attention to one of the most serious problems which the Congregation has at present: the selection and formation of educators and students.

CHAPTER I GENERAL CRITERIA

A) The Over-All Purpose of Formation

2. All formation should be oriented toward a set goal. This over-all purpose should be set forth clearly and concretely, so that it may have effective influence upon all parts of the educative process.

Consequently, it is necessary to establish as precisely as possible the full meaning of Missionary Son of the Heart of Mary, as it expresses the charism of the Congregation within the Church. The superiors and other educators have the serious responsibility of organizing the entire educative process in the light of this principle (cf. GE I; PC 2,3; ES II,17).

The apostolic formation should in a certain way guide all aspects of formation, bearing in mind that the Claretian apostolic spirit postulates a form of religious life (cf. OT 4,19,21).

B) Principles of Integration

3. **Definition:** An integral formation embraces the harmonious development of all the facets of the personality of the Claretian missionary:

- a) human formation
- b) Christian-ecclesial formation
- c) religious-evangelical formation
- d) Claretian-apostolic formation
- e) priestly formation, for those called to the priesthood

a) Human Formation

4. We should aim, in formation, to create genuine human personalities, cultivating all the higher values of humanity, but particularly those that most directly constitute personality: the capacity for facing events decisively and judging them calmly; the force of character to undertake one's own mission; the virtues of social living, which will allow the one to be educated to integrate himself into the community and harmoniously make his contribution to the fulfillment of the Institute's mission. There should be a cultivation of the virtues which have the most influence on society today and which best prepare the path for the message of the religious priest: "love for truth, sincerity of mind, a constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's promises, refinement of manners, modesty in speech coupled with charity" (cf. OT 11). The aesthetic sense should also be cultivated, and sensitivity toward all human values.

5. In the basic formation of our members, let the necessary attention be given to their progress and attainment of full liberty in Christ, through an increasing and more responsible exercise of Christian liberty. This is highly important in formation, even on the level of the human community. Let discipline be presented to them as a necessary part of all formation, in order that they may acquire self-mastery (cf. OT 11).

Let it be pointed out to the one being formed that this liberty is not rightly understood except when it is united with a keen respect for the rights of others: with a deeper and deeper sense of responsibility to God, to men, and even to himself. In order to achieve this education in the right use of human liberty – so that the intervention of the educators may be less and less necessary – it is indispensable that those in charge confidently grant to those they are forming such responsibilities as are suited to them in the life of the community, in accordance with each member's age and disposition, and that a prudent, yet favorable hearing be given to their initiatives (cf. OT 11).

6. It is necessary that a prudent development of a psychological balance be given attention so that mature and healthy development of the affective life may be attained, and likewise a readiness for establishing interpersonal relationships.

It is also necessary to provide for moderate, systematic physical education in our centers of formation, granting its importance for the complete and balanced development of the apostle. Systematic medical examinations should be given before the admittance of a candidate and during his formation. Let the necessary means be provided for the practice of physical exercise, and let habits of hygiene and cleanliness be insisted on.

b) Christian-Ecclesial Formation

7. The entire formation of our members should be based on an intense Christian education, answering to the exigencies baptism has impressed upon our being:

- A life of profound faith.
- Integration into the pilgrim Church, with a lively sense of responsibility and solidarity with the entire people of God, which constitutes the basis of the apostolate of every Christian.
- Being bound up with the Paschal mystery of Christ, both under the aspect of death to sin in Christ, which gives meaning to Christian mortification, and under the aspect of our association with His Resurrection, which is the foundation for Christian hope and disposes us for understanding of the life of the evangelical counsels.
- The cultic character of baptism, which permits us to feel ourselves part of the liturgy, and led to the Eucharist, in which the Paschal mystery of Christ gathers and unifies the entire Church.

8. This Christian formation should be completed through the apostolic features implied in the sacrament of Confirmation. This will ease their passage to the new realization of apostolic life offered by the religious or priestly vocation. Although this Christian formation should ideally be given during the years of the junior seminary, or in equivalent periods outside the seminary, it should nevertheless be continued throughout the entire period of formation. We ought to make sure that it is accompanied by a profound doctrinal formation, a steady growth in Christian virtues, and a suitable formation in the apostolate, so that it enables those to be formed to be conveyors of the mystery of Christ to men.

9. All this formation should really be made personal and alive through a deeper and deeper friendship with Christ the Redeemer. The youth should feel called to follow Him with a generous spirit and a pure heart, so that he may acquire the temper of spirit which abnegation and Christian virtue demand. These latter should be presented and understood in a way that is in keeping with the psychology of the adolescent and the norms of sound pedagogy (cf. OT 3,8).

10. This formative process should lead the student to the conviction that God has a design for him. All his life

should be a generous answer to this divine call which gives him a special place in the Church and in the world. This response cannot be a forced submission; it must be a psychologically free and loving response to a providential plan of grace and salvation, in the recollection "that man would not exist were he not created by God's love and constantly preserved by it; nor can he live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and devotes himself to his Creator" (GS 19). This total abandonment to divine providence and faithful and self-sacrificing dedication to the plans of God should be translated into an unconditional commitment to the service of the Church and the saving work which Christ entrusted to it.

It must be acknowledged that many of those who begin their studies in the seminary or prepare to enter it will not in fact, for lack of a religious or priestly vocation, actually become members of our Congregation. But even where these students are concerned, the care taken to give them a Christian and apostolic formation will provide them with an intense awareness and dedication to their Christian vocation as holy and excellent apostles in another position in the Church.

c) Religious-Evangelical Formation

11. Although from the very first years of their formation, our members' future religious and priestly life should be considered, the approach should generally be made indirectly, the objective being that they themselves may feel the necessity of searching for and being faithful to the vocation which each of them has in the Church according to the gift of the Spirit.

Directors of formation should do their best to see that this search – personal and psychologically mature – takes place in complete liberty, before candidates enter the novitiate.

Once the religious meaning of life has been made clear, and has been sufficiently matured and after there has been a response to the first promptings of a vocation to belong to our Congregation, the Novices should be given a clear vision of religious life in the Church, so that they may understand and be prepared to live the fullness of the so-called evangelical counsels. Toward this end it is imperative that they be enlightened with the proper idea of the religious vocation, which is to leave everything for Christ (cf. Mk 10:29), to follow Him (cf. Mt 19:21) as the one thing necessary (cf. Lk 10:42), to hear His Words (cf. Lk 10:39) and to feel a solicitude for His interests (cf. PC 5). The entire religious life is ordained to this following of Christ. Our holy Father Founder lived this union with Christ intensely, imitating the life of the Apostles, and following Christ as they did, in complete abnegation, for the Kingdom of Heaven.

12. Our students should understand that "by professing the evangelical counsels they responded to a divine call, so that by being not only dead to sin (cf. Rm 6:11) but also renouncing the world, they may live for God alone. They have dedicated their entire lives to His service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that of baptism and expresses it more fully" (PC 5).

13. An adequate formation includes not only a more and more thorough elucidation of the meaning of the religious life, but also the practice and living of its requirements, particularly the religious vows. This faithful practice should be related to the fundamental idea of consecration and should be completed by the idea of service to the Church. The religious should not only respond to "his vocation" but he should also give testimony before the world to the holiness of the Church (cf. LG 39).

Those who profess the evangelical counsels show the faithful and all men that the heavenly goods are already present and at work in the Church. They give testimony to the new life won by the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and they prefigure the holy life and the universal brotherhood of the Kingdom of Heaven to which all men are called. Thus they are the first fruits of the redemption of the world and the arrow which points to the true meaning of its hopes, within the saving plans of God (cf. LG 44)

14. The aim of directors of formation should constantly be that those being formed reach these convictions and begin to put them in practice not out of a passive, artificial response to the environment and to the influence of their guides, but through the conscious free, and generous response of the whole self. This guidance should be carried out in such a way that later on, even though the director should be absent, and the environment unfavorable, these convictions not only would not disappear, but would continue developing to the point of authentic religious holiness. On the part of the one entrusted with the guidance of formation, there is nothing that will do more to clear the path for the generous response of the one being formed to the action of the Holy Spirit than the testimony of a life that is holy and full of enthusiasm for one's own vocation. This is what will vividly set before the youth the face of Christ, the first Religious dedicated to God the Father.

15. This living testimony should be given to the youth not only by the individual particularly assigned to the task of formation – the member to whom the youth has been directly confided – but should likewise be given collectively, through the testimony of the entire Community and even of the entire Province, since the candidate first sees the Congregation reflected in them. Major Superiors, sensitive to the purity of our religious and apostolic spirit and to the problems of each time and country, will strive both in their pastoral care and in their governing functions, to fashion this testimony into concrete works which will vitally translate the very being of the Congregation, presenting a magnetic ideal to confirm in their vocation those who are called to our Institute.

16. Let chastity in particular, professed out of love for the Kingdom of Heaven, be presented as an outstanding gift of Grace which uniquely frees the heart of man, consecrates it entirely to the Kingdom of God, and evokes the mysterious nuptials by which the Church is espoused to Christ as her only spouse. The faithful profession of this chastity should be based on a profound faith in the Word of our Lord, on confidence in His help, on supernatural charity, which is nourished by the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and by sincere and constant piety, principally toward the Virgin most Faithful. Educators should take pains to form the consciences of our youths properly, so that by themselves they acquire a solid virtue. This virtue, on the one hand, will avoid needless fear and disturbance in the face of what in this matter is a consequence of our present human condition, or in the face of dangers that are unavoidable for the missionary; on the other hand, it will avoid a presumption prone to disregard the advice of the Church, which recommends the practice of mortification, the custody of the senses, and the avoidance of unnecessary dangers (cf. PC 12).

17. Directors of formation should also take into account the special difficulties which can be encountered by the religious of today through the assimilation of false doctrines which present perfect chastity as impossible or harmful to human personality development.

Finally, in the process of formation, there is no need to avoid recourse to the natural means that are useful for bodily and especially for psychological health. If necessary, and in accordance with the norms of the Church, recourse should be had to the help of psychotherapy that is reliable and Catholic in orientation. This consideration should especially be borne in mind when making the necessary prior evaluation before deciding to allow those candidates whose psychological equilibrium may be in serious doubt to make the profession of chastity. In this prior evaluation concerning psychological as well as moral and religious fitness, let the norms and criteria set forth by the Holy See be followed. For the good of the Church and of the candidate himself, both the superiors and the young aspirant, after he has been advised by the counsel of a prudent spiritual director, will not decide to make the profession of chastity or allow it to be made except after a sufficient trial, and assurance of due psychological and emotional maturity (cf. PC 12), so that they may act in this decision with a moral certainty that excludes every prudent and serious doubt.

18. Lastly, let directors of formation see to it that they advise the young missionaries about the dangers besetting chastity, so that they may really know the difficulties of this new life. But let them also inspire the new members to respond to a call that is supported by the greatness of the virtue of Christ, and by the infinite power of the Spirit, who so nourishes the Church that the life of the counsels may germinate. With such an outlook they will be able to accept celibacy consecrated to God even as a good for the integrity of the person (cf. PC 12).

19. The formation of the new religious in evangelical poverty requires that from the beginning he be given a correct perspective and that he be nourished by a real practice of it along with being given the individual and collective testimony of the directors of his formation. Let it be pointed out repeatedly to the young religious that the poverty he chooses is voluntary and accepted for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, i.e., not because of narrowness of spirit, nor out of avarice, but in order to participate through it in the poverty of Christ, Who being rich, made Himself poor out of love for us, in order that we might be rich by His poverty (cf. 2Cor 8:9; Mt 8:20; PC 13)

It is necessary that directors of formation explain poverty to the one undergoing formation, and assist him in the practice of the evangelical counsel in such a way that he may clearly see that what he has chosen is not simply detachment of his affections from temporal goods – something proper to every Christian – but the effective and real imitation of Christ, the poor man, within the modality of his integral religious-apostolic vocation. This formation will preserve him from any later confusion between appropriate evangelical poverty and mere dependence from others in the use of goods.

20. It should likewise be the preoccupation of directors of formation that the young religious feel himself

obliged, by conviction, to the general law of labor, according to the goal of his community; and that, furthermore he learn from his youth to lay up his treasure in heaven, and to leave every undue anxiety in the hands of the Providence of his heavenly Father (cf. Mt 6,25- PC 13). but those in charge should never grow tired of their watchfulness for the formation of the new religious, until they see that he understands and practices poverty in its social and collective aspects, so that this new member of the community not only will not hinder but rather will contribute generously, with his youthful spirit, so that the Congregation may give, in the Church, a testimony of the evangelical poverty which is required of it.

Let directors of formation meditate with the young members on the orientations which the Council and this very Chapter, applying the conciliar doctrine to the Congregation, have said on this point. Let these instructions of the Church concerning evangelical poverty both in its individual and in its collective aspects, be clearly realized in the practical life of the young religious and in the environment of the houses of formation so that the life and environment which make up the novitiate may from the first moment be a reflection of the thought of the Church and of the Congregation and an encouragement to love this voluntary poverty sincerely as a sign, greatly esteemed by everyone today, of the presence of Christ in the world.

21. Accordingly, let the young religious be given the opportunity of living really poor – let him have a prudent and gradual experience of work, paid or otherwise, within the house or outside of it, or perhaps other experiences or forms of work which directors of formation will arrange prepare and carefully ascertain through their personal contact. The buildings in which our youth live, although functional and even beautiful, should be – along with their food, their clothing, their belongings, their trips, their vacations – “the kind that the poor have,” as our Holy Constitutions say (II, 6,15). This breadth of view and this generosity of practice will gradually shape in the religious the true sense of poverty, which is derived from and leads to the love of God and of one’s neighbor, in imitation of Jesus Christ Who made Himself poor out of love for us.

22. The understanding and living of religious obedience can offer special difficulty to the young religious. Since this counsel and religious vow have so much importance in a Congregation such as ours, in that its Founder wishes that his Sons be perfect in obedience (cf. Const. I,108), directors of formation and those undergoing formation must endeavor to attain by the action of the Holy Spirit, the best and wisest development of this aspect of vocation.

23. It is necessary above all, that the new religious acquire an exact concept of what the choice of religious obedience calls for in his life. Toward this end, directors of his formation should progressively illustrate the value of learning from and listening to others, as well as the capacity of doing so, which is the basis of every dialogue. This docility is necessary for him even in the natural order, to enable him to learn certain theoretical and practical concepts; and in this respect he is no different from other youths of his age who do not have a religious vocation. At the same time it is fitting that the religious who is receiving his education should not forget that obedience is necessary, by God’s design, in every human society, to enable it to attain its community goals. Along with the knowledge and practical acceptance of these values as they apply to all men, he should learn the supernatural value of obedience in the Church, as a consequence of his membership in it, through baptism, in which his vocation coincides with that of every Christian. This being granted, it behooves directors of formation by word and still more by their example, to nourish the flame enkindled by the Holy Spirit in the soul of this youth, so that he may learn and generously embrace, from his first years, true religious obedience, by which “he offers to God as a sacrifice of himself the full dedication of his will, and thereby unites himself more constantly and fully to the salvific Will of God” (PC 14).

This commitment must be made each day in union with the obedience of Christ Who “came to fulfill the will of His Father” (cf. Jn 4:34; 5:30; Heb 10:7; Psalm 39:9) and “taking on the form of a servant (Phil 2:7),” “to learn obedience through his sufferings” (cf. Heb 5:8; PC *ibid.*).

24. As a concrete Way of realizing this commitment, the Spirit of Christ will lead him to obey his superiors with confidence, out of a motive of faith, as representatives of God, and in accordance with the rules and Constitutions of his own Institute; in this way he will be conducted to the effective service of his brothers and of the entire Church as Christ Himself served His brothers as a consequence of His submission to the Father, and dedicated His life for the redemption of many (cf. Mt 20:28; Jn 10:14-18).

The young Claretian religious will thus be prepared to build the unity of his life on solid foundations; for his apostolic action intimately united to the mission it receives from the Church, finds its support and the most authentic source of vitality in religious obedience.

25. It is of the greatest importance that superiors of the young religious discharge their duties toward him in

accordance with the norms of the Vatican Council itself: with charity and respect for his person (cf. PC *ibid.*). They should assist him by their attitude of faith to obey humbly, and avail themselves of the energies of his intelligence and will and of his gifts of nature and grace, especially in his execution of duties they entrust to him. They will avoid, thus, forming a wayward and proud spirit, or fostering timidity, or destroying the youth's spirit of initiative and his healthy confidence in his superiors. In this way, above all through establishing a clearly supernatural motivation, the exercise of religious obedience "far from lessening the dignity of the human person, by extending the freedom of the Sons of God leads to maturity" (PC 14c).

26. In the mind of our holy Father Founder, the perfect following of Jesus Christ by the evangelic law of poverty, chastity and obedience brings with it an exalted spirit of Christian mortification, which he wishes his missionaries to practice from their youth. And so it is recommended to all directors of formation that they assist and orient the young religious to resemble Christ in the generous self-denial of their life of the senses and faculties, in the control of their passions, and in the practice of all the virtues which flow from their condition as Sons of God but which are still more appropriate to those who live consecrated to God. The young religious themselves should combine a great spirit of faith and confidence in God with sincere humility. In this humility He wishes that they ground themselves with the greatest concern (cf. Const. I,107,122)

27. Let directors of formation take care to orient and to animate our members in this self-denial, but not by proposing it as a human effort for the sake of the individual alone, or as a negative and meaningless asceticism, or as a collection of merely external practices. This self-denial must spring from their love of Christ and the desire to live, in themselves, the mystery of the sacrifice of Christ.

Let them not forget that the perfected condition of the Sons of God has not as yet been manifested, and that no one can attain resurrection with Christ if he does not die with Him, uniting himself to His Cross in which alone he should glory (cf. Gal 6,14; Const. II, 11).

28. Their self-denial should be united each day with the offering of Jesus Christ, the High Priest, on the altar and be penetrated by the charity of Him Who gives Himself to them as Eucharistic Bread, so that they may later be witnesses and apostles for the salvation of many.

This doctrine and practice should be presented full of optimism and Christian hope, and lived in keeping with the age and psychology of youth in its different stages.

If the one undergoing formation does not succeed in correctly assimilating this doctrine, and generously sacrificing himself out of love for Christ in the ordinary conditions of his life, he does not offer guarantees of persevering and developing his first decision of following Christ in His evangelical life.

29. The entire religious life of the youth should tend to the development of perfect charity toward God and toward his neighbor. For this reason he must understand that among the different fruits and advantages of the evangelical profession is brotherly union in the service of Christ (cf. LG 43). After the example of the Apostolic College, and of the primitive Church gathered in the name of Jesus, which had one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 4, 32), religious, too, should possess this spiritual union, which is the true support of community life. For this purpose our youth should be educated in the first place in a great respect for the person and the vocation of others, especially in acquiring the social virtues: mutual respect, sincerity, benevolence, understanding, and the attitude of service. This community attitude should be displayed in the interest they have in one another. Everyone's responsibility for the vocation of his brothers should move especially by good example, brotherly correction, and the many services which daily living together makes possible.

Finally, our students must be led to the conviction that they will not develop suitably in their own vocation if they do not have this family sense of the religious life. Community life reinforces the apostolate, not only because there are enterprises which require the union of forces but also because community life is the expression of the charity which the Holy Spirit has poured forth in our hearts (cf. Rm 5,5) and the climate in which the religious encounters peace, brotherly understanding and support for his spiritual and apostolic life.

31. Let our youth be educated in such a way that they do not form self-enclosed community circles, insuring that the Congregation may be a family closely united to the other sectors of the People of God and open to the needs of men.

d) Claretian and Apostolic Formation

32. Together with their religious formation, our members should be educated carefully in the apostolic and Claretian aspects of their vocation. This dimension must be comprehended not as something isolated from the Church, nor as a collaboration which arises from the outside, as it were, but as the expression of an aspect of the Church itself which is realized in us as a group of particular modalities for the good of the entire people of God.

Our religious life is oriented to apostolic action (cf PC 8), more specifically to missionary action. God called us to the service of the Church as ministers of His Word, in order to continue in the entire world the life and the work of salvation of Christ (cf. "Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation," no.47).

33. Our youth should place all of their abilities at the service of this apostolic missionary life. In the service of the Church, their religious vocation is to be energetic cooperators of the bishops in the ministry of the Word, employing all means, with a special sensitivity toward what is most pressing and effective at each particular time. Their apostolic vocation should increase, in openness to all peoples and countries. The vocation of the Claretian is centered on a generous communion with the charity of Christ, which impels us to sacrifice our life, sharing His work of redemption in the apostolic ministry. This sharing the mystery of Christ is realized in us by a special participation in the charity of Mary, Mother of the Church. Our Congregation is apostolic, and in it we sanctify ourselves to the extent that, impelled by the charity of Christ, we work for the salvation and sanctification of others. This is the source of the great responsibility of directors of formation and those entrusted to them, because, in fact, the fulfillment of this mission of the Congregation principally depends upon its members' sufficient spiritual and scientific or professional formation (cf. Declaration on the Charism, nn.18-19)

34. The assimilation of this apostolic spirit, in the Way that our holy Father Founder lived it, will be possible in so far as our students know our charism and our particular identity among the numerous religious families. The Chapter has striven to present the entire Congregation with a synthesis of that spiritual heritage in order that our youth, especially, may make an effort to know it through study and above all through meditation. This synthesis should be completed by living in almost continuous contact with the life and writings of our Founder, with the history of the Congregation, and with the biographies of those missionaries of ours who have lived their vocation best, so that all may be formed in the love of the Institute, our Father Founder's favorite work. This formation should be sufficiently achieved in the novitiate, but it should be carried forward with greater depth of doctrine and lively practice during all the remaining years of preparation.

35. As a most important aspect of this Claretian formation let our formation directors see to it that our youth acquire a profound knowledge and experience of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, understood within the dimensions and the outlook proposed by this general Chapter. Let care be taken to unite doctrinal depth and certainty with the characteristic traits our Founder's Marian piety, taking into account also the spiritual and psychological situation of the students.

Our young missionaries must learn to live in spiritual communion with Mary and to place their constant effort to know Christ within themselves and conform themselves to Him through the action of her spiritual maternity.

Devotion to the Heart of Mary, figure and mother of the Church, should help them discover the spiritual exigencies of their consecration to the Father in the Holy Spirit, in full association with Christ in the work of men's salvation. Assiduous contemplation of the consecration of Mary to Christ and His work of redemption will assist them to live their own consecration in a climate of true willingness, humility, self-denial, interiority and fidelity. In this way, through the Mother of God's intercession they will prepare themselves to spread the Kingdom of God throughout the world and through their life, to give a testimony of Christ's coming and of the power of His Resurrection (cf. LG 46-65; PC 25; Const. I,25, 122-123).

Likewise, our members should live their apostolic vocation in an express relationship to Mary's maternal action on the Church and on the whole of mankind. They should feel themselves, in accord with the mind of our holy Founder, as an instrument of Mary's maternal action, which continues to nurture and to provide for the Sons of God. Mary's charity and abnegation is the maternal example of the affection which must animate all those who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for men's regeneration (cf. LG 64). In her they will find encouragement, example, and efficacious assistance to promote among men obedience to the Gospel and perfect docility to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

36. Our Lord, in order that the faithful might form one sole body, in which "not all the members have the same function" (Rom 12,4), instituted from among the faithful themselves some as ministers, who "in the society of the faithful are able by the sacred power of Orders to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins, and perform their priestly office

publicly for men in the name of Christ" (PO 2). In many of our members, the Claretian religious life will have its consummation in this priestly ministry.

Those called to the priesthood must be given a progressive doctrinal, spiritual and pastoral formation, since their future ministry, by being united to the episcopal order, participates in the authority with which Christ Himself builds, sanctifies and governs his body (cf. PO 2).

The priestly, religious, and missionary elements should be integrated in our Claretian seminarians into a full unity, so that their entire religious life may eventually be laid open to the priestly apostolate and their entire priesthood may be penetrated by the religious-evangelical life. Let them fill themselves with a genuinely catholic spirit which will habituate them to transcend the limits of their own country and to launch themselves toward helping to meet the needs of the entire Church with a spirit willing to preach the Gospel everywhere (cf. OT 20).

Granted the unity of the Church's priesthood, let the common norms given by the Church in the decree, "Optatam Totius", be followed though adapting its directives to the particular condition of our vocation as the decree itself indicates (cf. Preface)

37. Let directors of formation take pains that their students progress toward the highest realization of this priestly mission, as they learn it through study and meditation based on Tradition and the Sacred Scriptures, and presented by the living Magisterium of the Church (cf. DV 9-10). In this way, little by little, they will continue to steep themselves in a thankful esteem and admiration for the great gift of the priesthood, and thus unite themselves most intimately in charity with all their brothers in the priesthood, living with Christ, the Eternal Priest, a life of immolation, which prolongs what they accomplish with Him in the sacrifice of the altar (cf. PO 8).

38. This consciousness of their exalted mission should not lead them to a mistaken self-conceit. They should consider, rather, that their priestly ministry, which is most necessary for the people of God, does not make them any the less disciples of Our Lord together with all faithful Christians. With all those regenerated in the font of Baptism priests are brothers among brothers. Therefore they should prepare themselves to preside in such a way that, seeking not their own interests but those of Jesus Christ, they may work together with other religious and with the rest of the faithful, conducting themselves like Our Master, Who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life for the redemption of many (cf. PO 9).

39. "The whole pattern of seminary life, permeated with a desire for piety and silence and a careful concern for mutual help, must be so arranged that it provides, in a certain sense, an initiation into the future life which the priest will lead" (OT 11).

C) Spiritual Formation

40. Christian formation, as well as religious, apostolic, Claretian and for those called to the priesthood priestly formation, all require an intense cultivation of the spiritual life as an irreplaceable source of supernatural vitality. The Chapter takes for its own the call of the Church which, directing itself to those who profess the evangelical counsels, exhorts them to "seek and love above all else God who has first loved us (cf. Jn 4,10), and to strive to foster in all circumstances the life hidden with Christ in God (cf. Col 3,3). This love of God both excites and energizes that love of one's neighbor which contributes to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church" (PC 6).

41. Spiritual formation must be given in such a way "that the students may learn to live in an intimate and unceasing union with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit" (OT 8). Their spiritual formation should be centered on that point of convergence of the Divine life of the Trinity. Let directors of formation strive to make this Trinity-centered piety of our religious life a living reality in their own lives, according to the mind of the Council. In this way, they will succeed in bringing their students to live by this piety, in a striving for renewal, and thus make it approach the center and fountainhead of all Christian life (cf. LG cc. I-II,V).

42. The mystery of the divine life, communicated to men, has been realized in Christ, through the mystery of His life, death, and Resurrection and by His entry into Glory. From there, constituted in power, He sent the Holy Spirit "on the day of Pentecost, in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus all those who believe would have access through Christ, in one Spirit, to the Father" (LG 4,5).

"All ought to be molded in His likeness until Christ be formed in them (Gal 4,19). For this reason we who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him, and risen with Him are taken up into the mysteries of His Life, until we will reign together with Him" (LG 7).

From this is deduced that our directors of formation should strive to enlighten our students concerning the place which this patterning upon Christ should occupy in their spiritual formation, in such a way that they become habituated to uniting themselves to Him as friends, in an intimate companionship throughout their life (cf. OT 8). This is likewise the fundamental orientation of the spiritual life of our Holy Founder, who thought of nothing but how he would follow and imitate Jesus Christ in working, suffering, and always seeking exclusively God's greater glory and men's salvation (BAC Autob. 494) He united himself to God intimately through His life of faith and of charity, until he was able to say with St. Paul that it was no longer he who lived, but Christ Who lived in him (cf. BAC, Escritos, p. 657)

43. Those undergoing formation should keep in mind that the sending of the Holy Spirit is the foundation of the entire interior life. In formation of this sending of the Spirit should be inculcated as the indispensable foundation of a true interiority. He is in effect "the spirit of life, a fountain of waters springing up to life eternal. To men, dead in sin, the Father gives life through Him, until, in Christ, He brings to life their mortal bodies. The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple. In them he prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons" (LG 4).

44. Together with this fundamental christological orientation of the spiritual life, let directors of formation strive by word and example to instill in their young religious a deep veneration and a son's love toward the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who was handed over as Mother, to the disciple, at the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. This Marian piety, necessary for every Christian, should be enriched with the perspective belonging to our Founder's chairsm.

In this spirit they must live their entire life of piety, striving to read and probe the Scriptures in union of spirit with Mary, who meditated upon them in her heart. They must participate in the Eucharistic communion with the faith and charity of her who was associated with the Redeemer. They must always contemplate in her the supreme example of perfect dedication to God's plans for salvation and place under her protection the supernatural efficacy of their apostolate. A suitable renewal of our traditional practices will assist in promoting this living of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, correctly understood.

45. Our students will attain this intimacy with the Father through Christ in the Spirit, by living intensely the Paschal Mystery of Christ which primarily comes to them offered in the Church itself, as a sacrament, sign and instrument of intimate union with God (cf. LG I; OT 8). This mystery is made present for everyone in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist (cf. OT 8). Therefore let the primacy in acts of cult be given to liturgical action in such a way that our youth participate in it, as the summit to which the activity of the Church tends and likewise as the source from which all the Church's energy derives (cf. SC 10,14).

46. As the Eucharist constitutes the center of liturgy and worship, all efforts of formation in spirituality and piety should converge toward it. Following the outstanding example of our Founder let our students live the Eucharist in all its fullness: first, as the Sacrifice of Christ and of His Church, with which they should associate themselves personally joining with Christ in His obedience in order to dedicate themselves afterwards to others, impelled by the same charity that impelled Christ; second, as the Sacrament of the community and unity of the Church, striving to project that unity on the collective life of the community signified and realized by the Eucharist; and third, as the permanent Sacrament of the presence of Christ, Who in the tabernacle invites them to approach His presence and render Him worship, to activate their faith and their response before Him in order to dispose themselves better to participate in the sacred agape and in order to make themselves more worthy ministers of His Word for the purpose of spreading His kingdom throughout the world (cf. Const. I,122).

47. Directors of formation will see to it that the ones being formed understand and live the meaning of the entire Liturgy and the sacraments in the light of the Eucharist. Let this be done principally with reference to baptism, penance, and holy orders, which those called to the priesthood will one day receive. Following the recommendations of the Church itself let those in charge encourage students to participate frequently and fruitfully in the sacrament of Penance both in its individual and in its community aspects.

48. Although the liturgy is the center of worship and of the Christian life itself, nevertheless, liturgical action does not exhaust spiritual life (cf. SC 12). For this reason, each one of our members, although called by vocation to pray in common, should nevertheless, according to the recommendations of the Gospel, pray to the Father in secret. And furthermore, they should pray without ceasing (cf. SC 9-12). It was certainly a notable preoccupation of our Founder, from the beginning of the formation of our missionaries, that they develop an intense life of prayer (cf.

Const. I,120,121). That spirit of prayer, and even prayer itself, which the Church requires all religious to practice assiduously (cf. PC 6), should be presented as a personal search for God, leading toward a greater interior supernatural knowledge of Christ, which they will later on provide for the people of God in their life and their words.

Practices of piety are earnestly recommended to our members in formation, especially those which for us have been the most solid and traditional, like the rosary. Nevertheless, they should be oriented and arranged and even renewed by taking into account the liturgical seasons, in such a way that they remain in accordance with the Sacred Liturgy, and in a certain way derive from it and lead to it (cf. SC 13).

49. Personal response to the entire liturgical life and above all to the Eucharist springs exclusively from lively faith, nourished principally by constant meditation on the Word of God (cf. PC 6). Our youth should be progressively educated and encouraged in the exercise, with special care, according to our Founder's desire (cf. Const. I,95). Let the young religious note that this interior life of prayer, which makes room for the action of the Holy Spirit, requires sufficient recollection. This recollection creates the personal atmosphere in which the Word of God is heard, and in which is obtained "that faith clarified by the gifts of understanding and wisdom" (DV 5; cf. LG 11; SC 9,12,33,59). Nevertheless it is necessary to orient the future apostolic missionary to find, even amid the manifold occupations of modern life, that unity of life which cannot be obtained either by external organization of ministerial work, nor by exercises of piety alone though these things help a great deal but through the imitation of Christ Our Lord, Whose nourishment was to fulfill the Will of Him Who sent Him to accomplish His work (cf. PO 14).

50. In any case the students of our Congregation should convince themselves that without an intense life of prayer, without a continuous meditation on the Word of God, without frequent moments throughout the day in which personal prayer is sought and found, a true response cannot be given nor can one go out to encounter Christ, Who comes to us in the Sacrament and Who brings us to Him by faith.

51. As an effective complement of this interior life, as a means of helping the one being formed to be consistent with his vocation not allowing himself to be led by false motives and in order to obtain a greater purity of conscience and intention, it should be recommended to him that he strive to acquire with God's help a clear knowledge of himself. For this purpose the constant practice of the examen of conscience, recommended by our holy Father Founder (cf. Const. II,31,32), will be a very useful means which will bring him to a true personal encounter with himself and with God.

52. Along with the more and more intense, continuous and progressive study of the Word of God, in which are followed the fundamental lines of that history of salvation whose center and culmination is Christ our students should make use of the Sacred Scriptures, following the example of our Father Founder, the preferred book of their spiritual reading in the measure in which they progress in its study. They should dedicate some space of time to it every day. They should assure that this is a period of the greatest recollection. Thus the Bible can become the basis of their daily meditations, and it will enable them to live what they believe, and one day teach what they live.

53. One of the principal means of obtaining a true and intense interior life is spiritual direction, especially recommended by the Church for those who are preparing to be priests (cf. OT 8), as a means of humbly learning the Will of our heavenly Father. This is true above all in the important decisions which are required by the exalted mission to which they are destined. The use of this great means of formation should be favored and facilitated for our young religious to the greatest possible extent, thus fulfilling the wise dispositions of the Church, which simultaneously protects both the liberty of the individual and the rights of the Church itself (cf. nn. 81-82 of this Decree).

Summing up the teaching of the Council, the Chapter earnestly exhorts our youth to use this truly important means of formation to the end that they may have light and sufficient spirit to reach the fullness of their vocation in the midst of the difficulties and doubts which they may encounter.

CHAPTER II

Criteria of Adaptation

A) General Principles

54. The principle of adaptation, required by the accelerated evolution of our times and so urged by the Council, should be one of the basic points of our system of formation, in such a way that our formation may correspond to the type, mentality, and psychology of those in formation, to cultural differences, and to the needs of our times (cf. PC 2-

3; GS 5; GE 5)

This adaptation should be flexible in itself, i.e., susceptible to continuous renewal in the dynamic evolutionary sense of reality today, and keeping in mind that the one in formation today is the apostle of tomorrow (GS 5).

55. In order for our formation to achieve this adaptation it is necessary to have an adaptation of the legislation (structures and norms) of our system of formation, an adaptation of our seminaries and an adaptation of the very directors of formation.

B) Adaptation of the Structures and Norms of Our System of Formation

56. It is necessary that our legislation and directory of formation be general, and that our structures be decentralized in character, merely providing a fundamental nucleus of documents and organisms, professionally and pluralistically constituted, and leaving to different countries and provinces sufficient liberty to concretize them and apply them as suits their own needs and circumstances, keeping in mind the greater service of the Church and of the Congregation (cf. OT I).

C) Adaptation of Our Centers of Formation

57. The Congregation will take to heart what the Church advises concerning adaptation of centers of formation, accepting such recommendations faithfully, either for the entire structure or for parts of it, adopting them either as permanent modifications or as tentative experiments. Let there also be a frank dialogue with other Institutes, for the purpose of interchanging ideas and experiments.

58. In centers of formation organized in the fashion of a boarding school, let a painstaking educational presence be provided, so that there may be full utilization of the advantages thus offered: a sense of discipline, exercise of social virtues, harmonious atmosphere and cocentration of formative efforts. At the same time the utmost care should be taken to avoid the drawbacks of such a system: above all that depersonalization toward which massive scholasticates have a tendency. For this purpose, internal centers can be divided into groups, always in accordance with educational and religious objectives.

59. Academic and financial reasons can suggest the expedient of interprovincial or even international seminaries. But such seminaries should be especially organized so that the formation may be the most direct and personal possible, and so that the weight of numbers may not be an obstacle to the attention the individual requires (cf. OT 7). Their organization should likewise take into account what was said in No.58.

60. Let our members cooperate with a generous and disinterested lending of our personnel, in the formation of other seminarians and religious. (cf. Const. II,63; ES II,37).

61. When the convenience of the entire Church or our own needs advise it, and having secured the required authorization, let there be cooperation in the establishment of common centers of studies with other religious or with the diocesan clergy. In every such case, however, let due provision be made for the formation of our members in the aspects proper to our vocation and for the fulfillment of its exigencies. (ES II,37).

62. Let the land, building and location of our seminaries their situation, organization and construction be suitable for a complete and modern formation.

63. The discipline will be adequate for each particular region, era, and human situation. It will neither impose an excessive authoritarianism nor permit an individualistic freedom. It will endeavor in an orderly and systematic fashion to inculcate in the one being educated the religious values necessary for a select formation. Account should be taken of the student's age and development, of differences in character, the demands of each culture, and the requirements of the spirit of true supernatural obedience.

64. Disciplinary regulations will be revised in accordance with the positive contributions of psychology, pedagogy, and sociology. Responsible initiative concerning the individual's own vocation, personal authenticity and conviction, and the ability to interiorize discipline in the seminary as an integrating element in all formation, all should be fostered (cf. OT 11; PC 3; GF I).

65. Let discipline be presented not as an external imposition, but as a defense of the common life and of fraternal charity, and as an element indispensable to all formation, in order that one may acquire solid maturity of the person and of the soul's dispositions. Both these will assist toward orderly and fruitful labor in the Congregation for the service of the Church (cf. OT 11).

66. All this means that the moving force of discipline should be internal conviction, that of conscience, in virtue of which the authority of superiors is accepted. Only in this way will it attain its purposes and succeed in impregnating the life of the seminary with an atmosphere of piety, with a taste for silence, and with an interest in work (cf. OT 11).

67. Attention should be given that the application of discipline be so graduated according to age that the students can learn little by little to govern themselves, to use liberty prudently, to work according to their own initiative and responsibility, and to cooperate fruitfully with their brothers and with the laity (cf. OT 11).

68. The Constitutions, regulations, timetables, activities, etc., will be presented within a hierarchy of values, so that in practice, the recommendations, counsels and sanctions may observe that hierarchy. Only thus harmonizing the practical recommendations with objective and written requirements is it possible to create in those of our members to be educated an interiorized and effective scale of values.

69. A balanced integration of the students in the total life of the seminary supposes the elimination of artificial distinctions and separations which are not pedagogically necessary, and the fostering of a suitable participation in the disciplinary planning of the seminary, with an intensification of interpersonal contact, of dialogue accompanied by a true supernatural spirit of active and responsible obedience.

70. At the same time social contact will be extended progressively to spheres outside the seminary: one's own family, student and worker circles, and society in general, according as the needs of the maturation of the personality and the initiation of those being educated in the ministry dictate it, and as the character of Our religious and missionary apostolic vocation suggests (cf. OT 11,19; PC 2,d; Const. II, XV).

D) Adaptation of Directors of Formation

71. For our members' formation and emotional equilibrium it is believed necessary that superiors and directors of formation take the initiative in possible changes and go forward in dialogue with their fellow members when circumstances and signs of the times demand it. Furthermore, all directors of formation should strive to continue acquiring the capacity for adaptation through an open mentality, one that is disposed always to seek God in all things, modern and ancient (GE 5).

72. Each center must be so established that all those who participate in any way in formation directly experience their mutual solidarity and are committed to formation, each one in his own position. All must strive for the closest union of spirit and action, under the leadership of the superior, and they should likewise form such an intimate closeness with the students that it will verify Our Lord's prayer: "That all may be one" (Jn 17,11) and that it will spark in the students a joy in being called to be a member of the Congregation (cf. OT 5). This must be extended, in due proportion, to all directions of formation and ultimately to all the personnel of the province and the Congregation.

73. Particularly with regard to the professors, efforts should be made that at least the principal roster of professors be stable, strongly rooted in the college, in such a way that they feel attached to it, that they have their interests in it. Moderate activity outside of the seminary is not opposed to this goal, especially if it is directed toward gradual formation in various aspects of the ministry.

E) Adaptation of Methods of Formation

74. Since education today is an art which has attained a high professional perfection, our system of education should aspire to the highest possible competency in each and every aspect of formation. Thus provision should be made for the application of the techniques of modern education and psychology to the extent that the nature of the priestly and religious education permit. Worthy of special consideration is the personal dossier which must be developed on each student, from his first years, with the involvement of all those responsible for his formation. Copies of this dossier must be passed on to the higher centers for further completion at the opportune time (cf. OT 6, Pius XII, "Menti nostrae", AAS 42(1950)p 684; SC Sacra., Circ. Ltr. "Magna equidem", Dec. 27,'35,10; St. Gen. art. 33; Paul VI, "Summi Dei Verbum" AAS 55 (1963), pp. 987ss; Const. I,92-97).

CHAPTER III

Directors, and other Responsible for Formation

75. All members of the Congregation, and in particular of each Province, each one in his own position, are responsible in a certain way for the formation of our young members. But in a more direct way each superior is responsible within his own compass. In the seminary itself, the entire community to which our seminarians have been entrusted is responsible. But within the seminary, superiors, who are directors of formation, have a particular duty in this respect, and under the rector's leadership should form a closely knit and family like educational team in which everyone is interested in seeking integral formation (cf. OT 5).

76. Suitability and Selection of Directors of Formation

Since formation certainly depends on wise provisions, but above all on capable educators the superiors, prefects, and professors of our seminaries must be selected from among the best (cf. OT 5). There should be no hesitation in "taking them away from other charges which appear to be more important but which in reality cannot be compared to this essential ministry, which nothing else surpasses" (Pius XI, "Ad catholici sacerdotii", Dec. 20, '35, AAS 28 (1936) p. 37; cf. Pius XII, "Apostolic Letter to the Ordinaries of Brazil", Apr. 4, '47, in "Discorsi e Radiomessaggi", IX, pp. 579-580; Const. I, 90, 131, 146; St. Gen. 25, 4, + notes).

77. Qualities and Preparation of Directors of Formation

Our directors of formation must have a profound ecclesial sense, a heightened missionary sensitivity, a refined love for the Congregation, a proven fidelity to superiors, an intense life of prayer and an unblemished exemplarity. Let them keep in mind "how much the success of the students' formation depends on their manner of thinking and acting" (OT 5; cf. Const. I, 132, 1).

They must possess an emotional maturity which will make them capable, with the impulse of the Holy Spirit, of bringing to fulfillment their mission for the building up of the Body of Christ: in its most selective aspects (cf. Const. I, 90). In relation to those in formation, let them be true leaders who communicate their religious and apostolic enthusiasm.

78. Also required of them is an interior balance, which shows itself in the authenticity and sincerity of their lives and in their self-control; in the objectivity of their judgments concerning reality; in their ability to understand the subjective world of those being educated and their capacity of creating, through mutual cooperation, an intimate educational atmosphere all of which will make them appear as a testimony of the ideal Claretian (cf. Const. I, 132, 133).

79. It is the duty of superiors to see to it that our directors of formation and our professors be carefully formed (cf. PC 18), especially in the theology of the Religious Life, with solid doctrine, suitable pastoral experience, and special spiritual and educational formation (cf. OT 5).

80. To achieve this, an Institute or Center for the preparation of individuals naturally endowed for this ministry will be established in the Congregation. They will be able to attend other centers outside the Congregation, but they will have to complete this general formation with other materials more directly related to our spirituality and our goals. They will have to have a licentiate in theology or Sacred Scripture or degrees that are equivalent. The Chapter also desires that a special commission prepare an organic program for this center for directors of formation. Furthermore, it would be of advantage to organize suitable courses and meetings of our seminary educators at established intervals (cf. OT 5). These meetings should be on the general or on the provincial level, embracing directors of formation on all levels, in order to obtain better coordination between these directors. Nor should taking part in conventions and meetings with other educators of priests and religious be neglected.

To the General Government is recommended a wise and generous distribution of formative personnel for the service of all the provinces.

81. Prefect of Students and Spiritual Direction

The Chapter desires that the traditional figure of our Prefect as the one in charge of the formation of our seminarians be maintained, but that it be adapted to criteria which differ according to the circumstances and degrees of formation.

The Prefect, in his proper sphere, will conduct the formative direction of the seminary according to the

Church's and the Congregation's highest standards, but always in accordance with the policies of the competent superiors. He will consult with the rector on the application of these educational standards, and he will support the superior's role so that effective coordination in their common task might be achieved by all the directors of formation (cf. n. 72).

82. With regard to the function of spiritual director, spiritual master and the other functions of our Prefects, let them take into account the norms of the Church, to which the Congregation subscribes, and which we synthesize as follows:

1. Let spiritual direction be promoted according to the norm of the Church (c. 530,2; c. 588 & parallels cc.1358, 1360,1; St. Gen. art. 28,3,1; Instr. SC Rel. 1961, passim, n.17sg.; OT 3,8).

2. a) Among us the Prefect fulfills the function of spiritual director by his own right (cf. Const. I,131,132; 133; cf. 90; St. Gen. 28,2,3).

b) He should be chosen with special care (cf. Instr. de candidatis Feb 2, '61, n.37; "Litteras a vobis" Leonis XIII ad Episc. Brasiliae, July 2, '94), and should be endowed with such natural and supernatural characteristics and with such dogmatic and ascetical doctrine that he can exhort and lead students to perfection by his example and teaching (cf. Epist. "Fin da principio" Leonis XIII ad Episc. Italiae, Dec.8, '02 in EC n. 704; Litt. "The Sacred Congregation" ad univ. SFAS Ordinarios May 26, '28 in EC 1245,1246).

3. In order that the necessary liberty may be given to the students in this matter (PC 14) though without harm to the singleness of direction (cf. cc. 1358, 1-3 & 588,1; Instr. SC Sem. 1943 /reserved/ St. Gen. 28,3,2) the prefect can be assisted and complemented by a spiritual director in the strict sense (St. Gen. 28,2,9). And although the documents of the Church take for granted that spiritual direction is something different from confession (cf. cc. 1358, 588 cf. 566; 530, 2 with 518; Instr. SC Sem.1943), and that the prefect cannot be the ordinary confessor (St. Gen. 28,2,10), there is nothing to prevent one of the confessors from being a spiritual director in the strict sense (cf. Instr. SC Sem. 1943; St. Gen. 28,3,2).

4. If any student requests a special confessor or spiritual director and it is seen that he needs one, let the superior readily grant his request (St. Gen. 28,3,2). The documents of the Church are not opposed to the normal plurality of spiritual directors, as occurs in the French-Sulpician or Anglo-Saxon School (cf. Ord. Sem. p.15,27sg.), but they weigh and insist upon their qualifications in such a way that not all the priests living in the seminary will possess them by the mere fact of their being there; rather, "superiors are vehemently exhorted to select confessors and spiritual directors with the greatest care." (Instr. de candidatis, Feb. 2, '61, n.19).

5. Periodic interviews for spiritual direction can be established (Ibid. 3,1). The Sacred Congregation of Seminaries considers a monthly interview, by turns, necessary and sufficient (Instr. 1943).

6. Our prefect, inasmuch as he has also been entrusted with the external forum, can be interrogated, should give reports, and will even be able to cast a vote on the occasion of professions and ordinations (St. Gen. 28,2,10; cf. Instr. SC Rel. 1961, n.39 & the Instr. "Quantum Religiones" 1931, n. 14). But he cannot reveal anything of what he knows exclusively from the internal forum.

7. a) The Spiritual Director's function is limited exclusively to the internal forum. He can bring nothing to the external forum except with the express permission of the student, given in writing (Instr. "Religiosorum Institutio" nn. 17818 and Enc. "Ad Catholici Sacerdotii" AAS. 1936, p. 41).

b) The Spiritual Director should know the students to such a degree that he can render a sure judgment in the internal forum concerning their vocation, i.e., if they can or cannot make their perpetual profession and receive sacred Orders (Pius XI, "Ad Catholici Scerd." in EC 1388; Instr. de candidatis n. 17; SC Sem. "Per direttori spirituali dei seminari", n. 1).

8. In what concerns the discipline and external regimen the prefect may be assisted by one or several associates, who will report directly to him on these matters (St. Gen. 28,2,11)

9. Superiors should strive to know the mind of the Church concerning spiritual direction and should discreetly ascertain that each one is guided by it (Instr. SC Sem. 1943).

10. Superiors should foster a vigilant and uniform manner of working among all those who are dedicated to the formation of our young members, so as not to permit that the unfit are advanced to Orders (cf. Instr. Religiosorum institutio, nn. 19,18 & 52 Instr. SC Sem. 1943). "It is indispensable that confessors (external and internal) have contact and an exchange of opinions with the Spiritual Director, for the purpose of assuring the identity of criteria and methods, especially in vocational matters. The rector, therefore, should foster such exchanges, and

should find a way to make them meet at least at the beginning and the middle of each scholastic year in order to discuss those questions which should be resolved through common principles and in a uniform manner” (ibid.).

83. When special circumstances require it, let the following conciliar norm be applied: “In seminaries where there are many students, while retaining a unity of direction and of scientific training, the students should be conveniently divided into smaller groups so that a better provision is had for the personal formation of each” (OT 7). Let the assistants be responsible for the external discipline of our seminaries, though under the authority of the Prefect (cf. Const. I,99; CIA, 333,1&2). Let the same thing be said with regard to the professors and to what pertains to order and discipline in their classes.

84. Superiors responsible for formation

Principles of subordination and subsidiarity.

a) *In Planning*: Since all religious should have a “Program of Training” (St. Gen. I9,1), the General Prefecture of Formation should develop a General Plan which sums up the general principles of the Church and of the Congregation in this matter. In each province and region the prefecture or provincial prefectures will adopt the General Plan, and complement it in accordance with local needs. In doing so, they will take episcopal and civil laws into account (cf. OT I), but without losing sight of the fact that the missionary must have a broad formation coupled with a universalist spirit.

85. The following, in addition to developing the General Plan, falls within the competence of the General Government: 1) to interpret and apply the general principles given by the Chapter for the entire Congregation 2) to ratify the appointments to the principal offices of formation made by competent superiors (cf. St. Gen. 25,3,2); 3) to approve provincial and regional plans of formation 4) to minister to and visit all the centers of the Congregation.

It falls within the competence of the Provincial Government: 1) to develop the Provincial plan of formation, applying the regional and general principles in accordance with what has been said above; 2) to name those in charge of formation, without prejudice to what has been said above; 3) to approve local rules which apply and implement the regional or provincial plan; 4) to minister to and visit the educational centers of the province and enter with them into a frequent and cordial dialogue which manifests the provincial government’s interest in the problems of those in charge of formation and those being formed.

The local team will be formed by the rector, the prefects of students and of studies, the assistants and the professors, and, for the sacramental forum, the confessors. They will meet periodically in order to examine and coordinate the seminary’s progress and its formative aspects.

86. b) In the admission of candidates

1) Admission to the Postulate is a matter to be decided by the local superior, in consultation with the prefect or his equivalent, the vocation recruiters, directors of vocation weeks...

2) Admission to the novitiate is to be decided by the Provincial Superior with the vote of his council according to the common and particular law. For this purpose, the prefect of postulants or the vocation recruiter should inform him in advance, according to the case. In addition the examiners should act effectively in the exercise of their function (cf. Const. I,75).

3) First profession: approval is to be given by the major superior through a deliberative vote of his council. The master of novices, the superior, the community, and, especially, the novice’s companions should report seriously. The provincial examiners will act with the same effectiveness referred to above.

4) Temporal renewals and Holy Orders: approval belongs to the major superior with the consultive vote of his council. Beforehand, the director, the prefect, the team of educators, the companions and the entire community should report seriously. A trimester evaluation of the students should be introduced. It should be developed by the team of those in charge of formation, and it should be given to the student. This refers to the external forum only; i.e., to discipline and to studies.

5) Admission to perpetual profession and to major Orders is determined by the major superior with the vote of his council, according to Canon law and our own particular law. The persons listed above should send in reports beforehand.

87. Norms for international or Interprovincial Seminaries: The General Government or the interested major superiors, on whom these seminaries depend, will approve the corresponding statutes for their proper func-

tioning, with the following or similar criteria: 1) If they are under the authority of provincial superiors, the highest authority can be confided either to a council of interested provincials (with one provincial elected from their number as president or to a provincial delegated by the council; 2) full, immediate authority, in keeping with the higher corresponding authority, can be granted to the local government; 3) the statutes should provide concrete solutions for the problems which these seminaries present, particularly concerning approval for professions and Holy Orders for the students, the many expenses of the seminary and the manner of covering them, etc.; 4) government and formation demand a unity of local regime and that the students depend directly on this regime. Consequently, let all the dispositions which may be necessary be communicated to the students through the local regime, with the exception of the privileged correspondence with their major superiors, concerning which the students have a right.

CHAPTER IV

Stages of Formation

88. The general criteria expounded in the first part of this document must be applied with varying education implications. There must be a clear awareness that one of the first principles of the formative process is the necessity of adaptation to the different developmental phases of the one being formed. Not everything explained in the preceding section can be applied totally and indiscriminately, nor in the same manner in all stages of formation.

89. Taking for granted the accepted principles and conclusions of education in general, both spiritual and human, the Chapter now wishes to explain its viewpoint concerning topics of special interest in this varying task of formation: particularly in matters concerning the different stages of the integral education of our missionaries.

A) Fostering Vocations

90. Religious and priestly vocations are a gift of our celestial Father for the good of the entire Church. Therefore, "the duty of fostering vocations pertains to the whole Christian community" (OT 2). By means of an easily understood analogy, Claretian vocations should be the object of a decided interest in all those sectors of the people of God who particularly benefit from our apostolic action and from the testimony of our religious life. Therefore, we should very carefully foster in the faithful the formation of an attitude and awareness of their common responsibility toward the problem of vocations. If we do not attain this objective, our vocational recruiting will suffer from a lack of cooperation which will make it, to a certain degree, sterile.

91. At the same time the Congregation should be conscious of the fact that the fostering of its vocations should be envisioned within the vocational activity of the entire Church. Special account should be taken of what the council indicates by these words: "The work of fostering vocations should in a spirit of openness transcend the limits of individual dioceses, countries, religious families and rites. Looking to the needs of the universal Church, it should provide aid particularly for those regions in which workers for the Lord's vineyard are being requested more urgently" (OT 2).

92. The Christian community, in general, and the individual units in which this community is realized such as the Christian family, the parish, etc., must strive, above all, to foster these vocations by living a fully Christian life. For from this fertile fullness of life will be born, so to speak, the vocations which these same communities and others need. Therefore, in our members' vocational activity for the Congregation it is to be presumed that they have an expansive ecclesial vision; and they will take great pains to cultivate the fullness of Christian life within the communities placed in their care, especially:

1) Christian families, which, as the Council says, if "they are animated by the spirit of faith and love and by the sense of duty, become a kind of initial seminary" (OT 2).

2) Our parishes, "in whose rich life the young people take part" (OT *ibid*).

3) Catholic associations and educational centers entrusted to our care or direction. For the Council orders that "teachers and all those who are in anyway in charge of the training of boys and young men, should carefully guide the young people entrusted to them so that these will recognize and freely accept a divine vocation" (OT *ibid*).

93. As the priestly or religious vocation is a gift of God, deposited in the form of a seed in the soul of those who are chosen, and is a gift to which the chosen should correspond freely and generously with the help of grace, all vocation recruiting activity should be carried out with an educative, orientation purpose, in order to form a favorable

climate for the young man and to assist him personally to perceive this call and to respond to it. In their pastoral activity for vocations, therefore, let our members avoid everything which in any way imprudently pressures anyone toward the priestly or religious state, or simply obliges him to realize his vocation precisely in our Institute. The wise directions of the Church in this matter should be respected (cf. OT 2,6; Const. Apost. "Sedes Sap.", II; SC Rel. Instr. de candidates 1961; c. 971).

94. Our Holy Father Founder, with particular insistence, entrusted this task to Superiors (cf. Const. I,8,1-5; 30,4-7; 72-73; 74); on all levels, they should feel a special responsibility and solicitude for fostering, developing and preserving vocations for our Institute. The General Chapter, with a lively awareness that it is especially burdened with this responsibility (Const. I,49) exhorts all superiors that they methodically and coherently plan the entire pastoral activity of fostering vocations; and that they further this activity with equal prudence and zeal. In this matter, use should be made of all the opportune aids which modern psychological and sociological research has to offer (cf. OT 2).

95. For this purpose, a permanent secretariat for vocations should be established on the General and Provincial level. This secretariat will be a service bureau, without executive or governmental character, but effective in its own sphere, which will provide information, give impulse and coordinate vocation activities. But too much centralization is to be avoided. The director on the provincial level will report directly to the major superior, who should assure him the greatest possible stability in his appointment, and who should name effective regional assistants in the work entrusted to him. It is suggested that one of these vocation recruiters be a Co-adjutor brother who, preferably, will dedicate himself to fostering vocations to the brotherhood. At the same time, however, he will integrate his activity with the other members of the recruiting team, working with them in the over-all effort. Through these instruments the General and Provincial Governments should, in their spheres, develop a vocation recruiting plan which includes the following: necessary socio-religious and statistical data, choice of means and their effective adaptation, coordination with the pontifical and diocesan work of vocations, when applicable.

96. As the Council recommends, the primacy of common supernatural means must be maintained in the fostering of religious or priestly vocations, especially, "urgent prayer, Christian penance and a constantly more intensive training of the faithful by preaching, by catechetical instructions, or by the many media of social Communication that will show forth the need, the nature and the importance of priestly (and religious) vocations" (cf. OT 2; PC 24).

97. Yet a special importance should be given to the individual and collective testimony of our members, considering that "there is no better way than their own example to commend their Institutes and gain candidates for the religious life" (PC 24). Let this be carefully taken into account above all in the communities and among the individuals who have most contact with youthful environments. Recently, serious studies on this subject demonstrated that other means of fostering Vocations fail where this testimony does not exist; and, on the contrary, although the other means may be lacking, this testimony alone still has a very great efficacy.

98. Let superiors and those responsible for vocation activity devote themselves to forming youth groups in our parishes, educational centers for externs, university residences, high schools, etc. These youth groups, called in some places "apostolic groups," with not too large a membership, enroll young men who manifest special human qualities along with the potential of a deep spiritual life. Membership in these groups might develop as much as possible the virtualizes of the members' condition as baptized, confirmed Christians, and thus be translated into a more excellent desire and dedication to the apostolate.

The admitted effectiveness of these "apostolic groups" depends almost indispensably on the presence, testimony, and pastoral activity of a priest or brother who is suitably prepared for this most delicate mission. The priest or brother prepares himself for this work through the necessary studies and, above all, through an intense spiritual life, which almost instinctively affects these young men with the desire for a more generous dedication to a full life of holiness and apostolate.

If these groups are given sufficient time and concern, and are not mingled with other activities that sap energy and dedication from the principal goals, they will, through wise pastoral guidance, provide that the young men will live intensely their baptism and confirmation. And, when they arrive at the age of option for a place in the Church they may be especially prepared to feel the call to the religious and priestly vocation, frequently in our Congregation.

An essential element in this prevocational and vocational formation is that these youth see realized in a

small scale in their small group, yet at no time isolated within itself, the ecclesial community of the Sons of God. Inconspicuously, the guidance of the Claretian priest or brother will give to this group a connatural modality proper to the Claretian family, through all of which the young people who may feel themselves called will receive a suitable preparation that, in a few cases will be equivalent to the formation which other candidates opportunely receive in our minor seminaries.

99. Among organizations for promoting vocations, certain associations or “clubs” (eg. “Serra Club”) can be very useful. Without acquiring all the characteristics of “apostolic groups,” they fulfill a systematic work of promoting and forming vocations among families and youth.

100. Those deserve special mention who, regularly although in a more directly personal manner, dedicate themselves to spiritual direction, whether it be full-time in educational centers or associations, or in the confessional, or separately to youth who do not belong to any association. This method will have greater application among the independent university element or among more adult vocations. These persons will attain through a spiritual direction that is seriously undertaken, a good formation prior to the novitiate. A complement to this spiritual direction, and even a source of this type of personal relationship, is to be found in the conducting of Spiritual Exercises. These Exercises should be organized systematically. And if possible held in Retreat Houses, which might then foster contact with our seminaries.

101. The full value of the work undertaken by our regular recruiters or regional coordinators should be appreciated. They are the necessary link with those who have been chosen by God, but who do not live within reach of our stationary sources of vocational information. These coordinators should enjoy sufficient freedom from other duties (which might interfere with their charge), and they should have at their disposal the necessary means for providing information, for contact and for freedom of movement. In any case, their greater flexibility should not be confused with improvisation, lack of necessary planning and technique. The recruiters’ activity can be directed toward candidates being considered for direct enrollment in our minor seminaries or else toward those making their seminary preparation with their own families and with whom they maintain an extensive, recurrent contact, truly formative in character.

102. All the cases outlined above demand a sufficiently prolonged period of trial before admission to our seminaries or novitiate. This period should be used to obtain comprehensive knowledge of the candidate’s family and personal background. In this way, a gradual screening is provided for, even from the beginning (cf. OT 2&6). Prudent use should also be made of the services of centers using psychometrics for vocational guidance. These centers may have been established by the Congregation, or by other religious Institutes, or by lay persons having the required religious and professional training. This prior examination of candidates, while avoiding extreme measures, will lessen the need for rigid application of the same process within our seminaries. This will be to the advantage of those who are truly called, especially in terms of their formation, and will also provide great savings of time, personnel, and money.

103. It is advisable to organize on the general and provincial or interprovincial levels in harmony, however, with what is done by other religious and dioceses yearly or periodical campaigns to furnish vocational information and to promote vocations. The campaigns should be organized, and should respect the dispositions of the Council, which calls for necessary prudence in this matter and for subjection to the dispositions of the Holy See and local ordinaries (cf. PC 24).

In their effort to provide vocational information, the characteristics of our vocation should be appropriately set forth, though the required modesty will prevent us in every case from making comparisons and exaggerations. The competent superiors should encourage these campaigns with opportune measures. They should foster everyone’s cooperation in the yearly observance of vocation day, or of other observances, in our communities and educational centers. Let them provide whatever is necessary for the expenses required for these efforts.

104. As a necessary element in the vocational process and in cooperation with the action of the providence of God, the Church should intervene by its judgment in the approval and selection of vocations. The entire people of God has an interest in this judgment, as indicated in the rite of ordination. However, it is especially incumbent on the Church’s pastors definitively to exercise this judgment, in accordance with the norms and recommendations of the Council itself (cf. OT 2 & 6; PC 24); the Holy See (cf. “Sedes Sap.” II); our Holy Constitutions (I, cc 18, 19, 20); and the CIA. and Circulars of our Fathers General.

This judgment should be made with every care and with a sense of heavy responsibility. It should be made in light of the wise criteria of the Church, which, in this case, indicate that a healthy rigor is necessary for the good of the candidates themselves and for the good of the entire Church (cf. OT 6; PC 12; Instr. SC Rel. 1961,n.16).

105. The following must be an object of special study: the right intention on the part of the candidate, his full liberty in choosing this state, and the required qualities not only for the religious priestly life in general, but also for our Congregation (cf. Const. I, 139, 2). He must have not only the spiritual and moral qualities, but the intellectual, psychological and physical qualities as well. The influence of hereditary factors must also be taken into account. This study should be made in all seriousness, although always using supernatural criteria. The candidate himself should cooperate with all interest and sincerity, in the conviction that this cooperation is greatly pleasing to God. This process should not be considered concluded until definitive profession is made in the Institute so far as the religious life is concerned, and with final ordination, so far as the diaconate and priesthood are concerned. These last steps should not be taken as long as serious doubts persist and positive moral certitude concerning the fitness of the candidate is not obtained.

B) Minor Seminaries and Similar Centers

106. In keeping with the directives of the Council the Congregation recognizes the educational advantages of minor seminaries or postulates, as long as they are adapted to the needs of the times and various localities and to the present or future directives of the Holy See.

Notwithstanding, "with equal concern the seeds of vocation among adolescents and young men are also to be fostered in those special Institutes, which, in accord with the local circumstances, serve the purpose of a minor seminary as well as among those who are trained in other schools or by other educational means. Finally, those institutions and other schools initiated for those with a belated vocation are to be carefully developed" (OT 3).

107. The Claretian minor seminary is not an educational institution destined to form young men who have already decided upon their vocation. Its purpose, rather, is to give a group of young men who for their age show special aptitude and sufficient inclination to embrace the Claretian religious life the necessary means to study and to bring to maturity these first seeds of vocation which have appeared in them and which must culminate in a conscious and free decision either to begin their Claretian formation or to occupy another place in the Church. Consequently, the Claretian minor seminary should treat its students so as to give them a profound human, Christian, ecclesial and apostolic formation, in accordance with our own special character. Such a formation should prepare them for the religious life, without making them religious before the proper time.

108. Our minor seminarians develop in very diverse and complex stages in their life. Yet, the influence of these years is decisive for their future. Therefore it is to be understood that the varying developmental, educational and psychological criteria must qualify the general statements which will follow (cf. OT 3). In each Province an over-all plan must be developed to give direction to formation during these years. The age, cultural background and development of the adolescents of the particular country must be taken into account. A personal formation, adapted to individual differences, must be aimed at, avoiding the disadvantages of indiscriminate lumping together and of other implications of boarding school life.

The unitary concept of personality points out that physical, intellectual and emotional formation cannot be separated from Christian formation, and granting the seed of a vocation from orientation to the Claretian ideal. With an adaptable and well thought out approach, one or the other aspect of formation will be emphasized without ever neglecting the others.

109. The seminarians must be helped to discover their apostolic vocation in the Church and make it personal. In particular, let them be given help so that they can examine and form the motives and signs of their possible Claretian vocation. Let them be so educated that seeing what God wills for them, they may commit themselves freely to follow Christ their Redeemer more closely, with a spirit of generosity and purity of intention (cf. OT 3).

110. Those in charge should not try to establish too many formulas and the same acts of piety for all Claretian seminarians. Let the educator have the leeway to establish these things freely, according to the criteria he judges fit. But he must avoid arbitrariness and constant change, which would undermine the stability necessary for our system of formation.

In the spiritual formation of our students let the principles which were fully expounded in the first part of

these conclusions be taken into account, duly adapting them to the psychological situation of the students.

111. The understanding and personal direction which the adolescent needs are very important in order to make spiritual direction effective. Spiritual direction must be individualized, must respect personal freedom, and must guide the man and the Christian as he proceeds toward his total maturity. And all of this must take place in a climate of confidence and sincerity.

112. In order that the young men may experience the joy of feeling themselves called (cf. OT 5), a close climate of family understanding between the team of educators and the students must be striven for. It is necessary that the adolescent find himself in his own kind of environment: happiness, confidence, cooperation and spirit of service must reign in this family climate. In addition, the seriousness called for by the goals of the institution, and a feeling for authority and for the common good must also be fostered. Only in this way will the youth's emotional life develop normally.

113. With regard to the formation of chastity in this period, let account be taken of the principles and orientations that were explained in the first part of this decree especially with regard to spiritual formation. Nevertheless, in their application, the principles referred to should be adapted to the great developmental variability of these years, in accordance with sound psychology. And there should not be any neglect of the necessity that "they be given also, as they advance in years, a positive and prudent sexual education" (cf. GE I).

In step with the students' advance in age, let them be directed to a sufficient understanding of the ideal of consecrated chastity, in such a way that those who feel themselves called to it may begin their novitiate with a suitable knowledge of what they are choosing. Nevertheless, it must be considered that true maturity in chastity is present when there exists at the same time a sufficient maturity in the use of freedom and a sufficient maturity in love. Therefore let what has been said concerning this point be integrated with the aspects which are treated below.

114. Seminarians, especially in the last years of this period, should be educated in the use of freedom, as long as close attention is paid to the principles explained in Part I, no. 5.

Efforts should be made for an adequate social education, so that students may understand, accept and relate themselves apostolically to human persons. Let help be given them to overcome self-centeredness and to understand that true human, Christian maturity consists in placing oneself at the service of others in the charity of Christ.

115. This formation likewise includes a reasonable contact with and experience of human affairs, and contact with one's own family (cf. OT 3).

In effect, the adolescent in his education must not be separated from his family. Even in vocational matters parents are responsible for the education of their children, and in order that there may be a healthy emotional balance, it is necessary that there be relatively frequent contact between adolescents and their parents. Let the families be instructed and educated so that they can offer their cooperation in the work of the seminary.

Finally, in accordance with the orientation of the Council cited above, and with the apostolic formation which our members must have, our young seminarians will have prudent direct contacts with youth groups, with the communications media, with parish life, etc. This should be a gradual and planned contact, not given as a concession to a natural desire for escape, but according to an educational and pastoral judgment.

C) Novitiate

116. The novitiate constitutes the fundamental phase of the formation and religious-apostolic life of the aspirants to our Institute. The specific goal of the novitiate, then, consists in assisting the candidate to:

- discern and verify the special characteristics of his vocation (cf. St. Gen., 31,2; 33).
- initiate and establish the foundation of his religious-apostolic formation, according to its Claretian character (cf. PC 18; ES 33; Const. I,103,104).
- confirm his choice of state, in a personal and free manner that is in itself definitive, as a response to the call of God and of the Church, which should, by means of the competent superiors examine the objectivity of the signs of vocation (cf. OT 2, 12; St. Gen., 37,1).

117. Entrance into the novitiate supposes a vocational decision which generally does not seem possible today

before 18 years of age. In the period of preparation, which can be made in our minor seminaries, or outside of them (in the manner explained above: cf. n. 106), special pains above all should be taken to apply what the Church has prescribed analogously in the Decree, "Optatam_Totius," n.6. Special attention must be paid to the human and Christian maturity of the candidate, especially in its emotional aspect (cf. OT 11), and to his capacity for being integrated into our community of apostolic life.

118. Bearing in mind the present and future orientations and dispositions of the Church in this matter (cf. St. Gen., 37,1) the following qualities should be fostered as the basic attitude in our novices: willingness toward the divine call, through faith (cf. Const. I,105); confidence in God (ibid. 106), and humility (ibid. 107); intelligent cooperation with those in charge of formation by means of obedience (ibid. 108); and a constant purification and conversion, in the framework of a life of prayer (cf. ibid. 110), in such a way that their lives may properly be based upon charity toward God and their brothers (cf. ibid.109,&II,c.9) and upon a generous spirit of apostolic service, prompt for any privation or sacrifice (cf. ibid. I,111,112)

119. In accordance with the perspective imprinted by our Father Founder on formation, from the novitiate on, the arrangement of this period should strive for the spiritual grounding of the Claretian in the full reach of his vocation. Consequently, its missionary-apostolic aspect should not be disregarded. Its arrangement thus inspired by the apostolic nature of the Institute, the novitiate should maintain a proper balance between the necessary withdrawal which the purpose of this phase of religious formation requires, and the prudent social-apostolic contact which is appropriate for one who is being formed in a spirit of initiative, responsibility and cooperation in order to be a missionary (cf. ES II,33).

120. According to the opinion of not a few, the specific nature of the novitiate and the psychological characteristics of the youth of today seem to demand that the time of the novitiate be better distributed, and over a more extended period.

In accordance with the norms of the Motu Proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae" prudent experiments can be fostered, under the direction of Provincial Governments as the need and convenience of each territory may demand, concerning the duration of the novitiate, the form of completing it, and the variations which may be demanded by the considerations explained in the preceding number, so that it may later be possible to formulate the proper and adequate norms (cf. ES II,36 & 38).

The congregation will receive with submission all the orientations and suggestions of the Holy See referring to these experiments.

121. The Master of Novices should possess, besides the qualities wisely outlined by our holy Father Founder (cf. Const.I ,90), those qualities, too, which the Council mentions (cf. OT 5). He especially needs an ecclesial sensibility toward our times, a proven capacity for dialogue, special preparation in Claretian spirituality, and "continuing readiness to renew and to adapt" (GE 5). When his appointment is made, his age should be considered, so that it may not be an obstacle between him and the young men whom he has to educate.

D) Period Prior to perpetual Profession

122. Before beginning ecclesiastical studies, for those called to the priesthood, and for the purpose of opening up the intelligences of the new religious to the mystery of Christ, which affects the entire history of the human race, an introductory course should be given, lasting as long as necessary, in which there is proposed to them "the mystery of salvation in such a way that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be given help to establish and penetrate their own entire lives with faith, and should be strengthened to embrace their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart (cf. OT 14). This course should be introduced after the canonical year of novitiate or also during the novitiate itself if it is prolonged for a longer time, in accordance with what was said in No.120. These concepts will be complemented by necessary elements from the sacred liturgy which make the novices' progressive participation in it more conscious and fruitful.

123. In the period previous to perpetual profession, which is perhaps the most difficult and decisive period of formation, the religious formation and education begun in the novitiate must be completed (cf. St. Gen. art. 7,1), with a view to the candidates' total dedication of themselves to God and to men, by means of their perpetual profession.

Guarantees of a definitive commitment to God and to the Church require that the student has attained a secure discipline of his emotions, lucidity of religious judgment, and a mature use of his freedom.

124. One should be prepared for probable crises of love and freedom, and even of faith, in this period of profound psychological transformation especially when the ideal of holiness, almost tangible in the novitiate, gives way to the impact of a monotonous and harsh reality. When the young man arrives at the height of his capacity of intuition and assimilation, there will easily be awakened in him an insatiable yearning for the values which nature placed at his disposition. At that time, a singular competency is required of the one in charge of formation in order to forestall the student's fall into a practical naturalism, into self-sufficiency, or into rebellion, together with a forgetfulness or depreciation of the supernatural and of authority. The same competence is required to prevent the similar danger of the student's succumbing to timidity over the difficulties involved in overcoming these crises.

At that time, let the one in charge strive to assist the young man by enlightened spiritual direction which orients him in the meaning of the crises and the value of the renunciation which the following of Christ requires. Above all, let him form in the student an awareness of the necessity of personal dialogue with God and instruct him in the art of praying and contemplating. In this supreme task it is of the greatest importance that the one in charge of formation can call upon the testimony of his own experience. Let him encourage the young man to nourish his spirit with reading, especially of the Holy Scriptures. All this should bring the one to be formed to a profound friendship with Christ the Redeemer (cf. nn. 40-52 of this Decree).

125. During this time, the studies that are necessary must be so arranged that sufficient time be left to these young religious to cultivate the spiritual life, and dedicate themselves to apostolic activity under the direction of those in charge of formation.

This moderate exercise of the apostolate will be an attraction and a training for their missionary spirit, which should not disturb the suitable development of their obligation of preparing their studies.

E) Interruption of Studies

126. The General chapter accepts the present and future norms of the Church (cf. St. Gen. 13 & OT 12), referring to the interruption of studies in order that our young religious may experience their vocation better and acquire the necessary religious and apostolic maturity.

Those who interrupt their studies should be employed in those ministries most suitable for the personal needs of each student, and not sent strictly to solve particular interests or problems of the community.

127. Consequently, this interruption should not exclusively have as its purpose, teaching or instructing. It could be pastoral activity in our communities or churches or other centers; or a prudent trial according to the judgment of the major superior. In any case, each student should be suitably prepared. He should know in advance the work or ministry to which he should dedicate himself during the aforesaid period of interruption. He should take care above all of his spiritual and educational preparation. It is suggested that students undertake these works in groups or teams. They should have particular assistance in the spiritual and formational spheres and they should not be overburdened with work.

For their part, let our seminarians be aware that this interruption of studies does not mean an interruption of the particular requirements of their situation of being in formation.

128. It is requested of the communities to which these students are assigned, both for their requisite vocational as well as apostolic experience, that they surpass themselves in the delicacy of fraternal charity toward them, of magnanimity and understanding in such a way that they encounter an exemplary religious and priestly environment, and a true family atmosphere.

129. Major superiors will determine in each case the time and the manner of completing these interruptions, always observing carefully the norms set forth in this respect by the Holy See.

F) Formation During Ecclesiastical

Theological Studies

130. In accord with what the Council stated (OT 4), major seminaries for priestly formation are considered necessary. In them the entire education of the students should tend toward the formation of true pastors of souls, after the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest, and pastor. Consequently, the students should prepare themselves for the ministry of the Word: to understand more and more the Word revealed by God, to possess it by meditation and express it by Word and conduct. They should prepare themselves for the ministry of worship and

sanctification: to the effect that, praying and celebrating the sacred liturgical functions, they may exercise the work of salvation by means of the eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments. They should prepare themselves for the ministry of a pastor: in order that they may know how to represent Christ before men, who did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life for the redemption of the world (Mk 10,45); and being made the servants of all, they may be able to win over many (cf. I Cor 9,19).

131. The principle of finality should, during the years of theology, have greater precedence than in any other period of training. Because of this, the apostolic ideal belonging to the congregation must be presented with all clarity and theological solidity, both collectively and individually. This ideal should govern and direct the entire life of the theological student, give meaning to his study, to his prayer, to the contacts with others and even to his purely material activities which favor his gradual development.

132. The apostolic ideal should not be presented in the abstract rather incarnated in Christ, as lived by our founder, who reach a perfect understanding with Christ as victim and priests (cf. Autob. 754).

Each student should encounter and discover Christ as a living person who awaits his response and should develop a personal relationship so as to reach a deep friendship with him.

133. Formation, especially during this period, should be eminently personal, and not primarily collective. Keep in mind that formation *en masse* not only wakens the human personalities of our young men but also their interior life. Thus, a sense of responsibility should be developed in each student offering them appropriate ministerial opportunities that favours their gradual growth.

134. In this period the future priest should be as oriented as possible toward the type of ministry which he will fulfill. This concentration of his energies in study and spiritual preparation should not be an impairment to a generous missionary spirit which embraces the entire world within an ecclesial framework (cf. Const. I 122). Provision should be made to form the young religious theologically in the doctrine on religious life, the priesthood, the apostolic mission, etc, and it should be presented in a scientific manner (cf. nn. 30&31 of this Decr.).

135. Special importance should be given to the over-all formation of the future priests, so they might be able to unify their entire spiritual and apostolic life.

"In the world of today, when people are so burdened with duties and their problems, which oftentimes have to be solved with great haste, range through so many fields, there is considerable danger of dissipating their energy. Priests, too, involved and constrained by so many obligations of their office, certainly have reason to wonder how they can coordinate and balance their interior life with feverish outward activity. Neither the mere external performance of the works of the ministry, nor the exclusive engagement in pious devotion, although very helpful, can bring about this necessary coordination. Priests can arrive at this only by following the example of Christ Our Lord in their ministry. His food was to follow the Will of Him who had send Him to accomplish His work (cf. Jn 4,34)." (PO 14).

136. Let our major seminarians be initiated into pastoral practices by means of appropriate activities throughout the school year and especially on vacation days (cf. Const. I,129), according to the prudent judgment of their superiors and along with the guidance of persons who are conversant in pastoral problems, always taking into account the preponderant efficacy of supernatural means (cf. OT 21).

G. Pastoral Year

137. Our congregation established the pastoral year in 1905. The Constitutions "Sedes Sapientiae" and its "General Statutes" made it obligatory for all religious. The Council suggests similar practices (OT 21 & 22). It is necessary that all our missionaries, before dedicating themselves entirely to apostolic undertakings, follow this course, required as it is by the present dispositions of the Church.

The general Prefecture of formation and studies will set forth the general norms for the entire Congregation and the provincial superiors will burden themselves with making the opportune applications in each territory.

138. It should be noted that this pastoral course is a formal course with a determined number of class days and a serious and systematic study of the principal pastoral disciplines and methods.

Along with this intellectual formation, the students must be continuously exercising apostolic activities in

such a way that theory and practice complete one another mutually.

This pastoral course can be had all at once or in different workshops, sufficiently broad in scope, and interspersed in the first years of the ministry. To make up the pastoral year in this way, permission may be requested from the Holy See.

139. Every province that enjoys sufficient means in order to fulfill the aforesaid requisites can arrange the year theoretically and practically according to its convenience. If circumstances suggest it, and with the approval of the Prefecture of formation, this course can be arranged in cooperation with other religious or by taking advantage of existing centers in the different countries.

140. Formation should not be considered terminated at the conclusion of training, but must be continued during the entire life of the missionary. In order to foster this renewal of formation let the superiors strive to offer the means and opportunities to all individuals in order to facilitate this important complementing (cf. PC 18)

141. According to the desire of our holy Father Founder (cf. Const. II, 35) and the tradition of the congregation, efforts should be made to arrange a systematic, periodical, and ordinary renewal of knowledge which, during the year, would be equivalent to what was provided previously by the obligatory conferences. Thus, in an intensive way, let our members dedicate themselves to these studies weekly or monthly within our communities or in cooperation with other religious or priests. The responsibility of making this norm effective is left to major superiors, in accordance with the prospects of the locality.

142. The prefectures of formation and apostolate, with the assistance of the pastoral council, should organize each year compulsory workshops to update everyone in the ecclesiastical sciences. Or they may provide for the assistance of our members at Study Weeks which could conclude or complement what has been accomplished during the year. It is incumbent upon the provincial superior in his periodical visits seriously to promote these studies in the communities, taking care that the libraries of our houses be renewed and improved.

143. The Chapter establishes a renewal course for priests and brothers, more or less 5 years after ordination or perpetual profession respectively. This renewal course can be fulfilled in combination with other provinces. It should be adapted in regard to its duration and organization to the needs of today, according to the directives of the general and provincial prefectures of formation and apostolate. This renewal course supposes at least the partial suspension of other activities and is repeatable according to the superiors' judgment (cf. PO 19).

144. The object of the renewal course must be to update knowledge and especially intensify spiritual formation, adapted to the real life that the missionary leads.

It is suggested that advantage be taken during this period to make a month of spiritual exercises.

H. Vacations

145. As a general norm vacation time should be considered a period complementing formation and not simply as a rest.

146. a) This complementing should allow that the person in formation be perfected in certain aspects which might be given less attention during the school year.

b) Attention should be given to the required rest, as well as physical and psychological recuperation, through sports, outings, or camping. These latter should be carefully prepared, using proper methods, and should be directed by responsible persons. The requisites of our religious poverty should be kept in mind.

Vacation time should also be used to attend workshops or conventions at which some knowledge can be gained that is necessary for the missionary.

This time can be made use of to undertake pastoral experiments and have contact with the realities of life (cf. OT 3) during a longer period than the school year.

Provided necessary caution is exercised and there is a suitable plan directed by those in charge of formation, engagement for a time in some type of work is recommended. This work may be salaried or not, and it may be undertaken at home or away from it, as long as the norms are followed which the provincial government establishes in each region. These norms should foresee the possible liabilities of these experiments. The experiments should not be too long, and, if possible, they should be exercised in teams and along with adequate in

charge of formation (cf. n. 1 of this Decree).

147. *Family visits:* With regard to visits to their families, these criteria should be kept in mind:

- For minor seminarians, the statement of "Optatam Totius" 3, should be taken as the norm. It recommends the reasonable cooperation of parents in the formation of adolescents, especially necessary in gaining a reasonable experience of the realities of life and a sufficient psychological balance. It is appropriate, therefore, that during vacations they have suitable contact with their homes.

- For the professed in formation, those reasons which are valid for all professed members of the Congregation according to the declarations of this chapter in the Decree on the Religious Life can be considered justifiable reasons for these visits. In this respect, it must not be forgotten that our young members need to be formed in a generous apostolic detachment, characteristic of our vocation (cf. Const. II, c.15).

Another justifiable reason is the need of complementing formation especially with regard to emotional balance and psychological maturity and with a view to adequately solving possible vocational problems.

148. With regard to the frequency, duration and manner of making these visits, a general norm cannot be given here, considering the diversity of circumstances in different countries. In any case, provincial superiors are the ones responsible for regulating this matter, after listening to those in charge of formation and those concerned.

CHAPTER V

Arrangement of Studies

Centers of Study

149. Solid priestly formation, considered by the Church as the highest law of the organization of seminaries (St. Gen., 22,2; OT 7), is in its intellectual aspect bound up with the specific character of our Congregation and is of great importance to its unity of spirit and action.

In accordance with the underlying premises of the doctrine of the Church in the M. Pr. "Ecclesiae Sanctae" and our own tradition, provision should be made for the Congregation to establish its own centers, as long as they safeguard the conditions and the level demanded for them by the Church and by the conditions of our apostolic activity, according to what is expressed later on.

150. When these requirements cannot be sufficiently satisfied in our members' doctrinal or professional formation, they can be provided for by means of fraternal cooperation with other Institutes. This cooperation can admit different degrees and forms: common conferences or courses, exchange of professors, and even a common center, where these professors would be grouped together, the other means would be provided, and many Institutes would participate (cf. ES II,37). In this matter, not only our own needs and advantages should be considered, but the needs and advantages of the Church in a particular region as well.

151. Our centers of formation should at least attain the level of other centers of this type in the Church or of similar state centers in the country in which they are established, in order that our missionaries may be able to fulfill their mission competently, and that our studies may be able to be recognized by ecclesiastical or civil authorities, as the case requires, with regard to the attainment of corresponding degrees (cf. St. Gen., 21,2).

152. For university and specialist formation, it is indispensable to attend other centers, even though we might consider the advantage, in certain circumstances for the Congregation also to establish some centers for this purpose (cf. Const. I,128).

153. According to the capabilities of each province, let the provincial superior provide for the establishment of formation centers. These centers should fulfill the necessary requisites and once they are established, let the provincial superior maintain and improve them with assiduous and attentive solicitude.

Nevertheless, when this is not feasible in each major organism, it is advisable to establish interprovincial or international centers for ecclesiastical studies, if there exists an affinity of language or culture or other purpose. This may be done as long as the number of students is not too large or their distribution in groups can be suitably provided for, while the unity of regime and studies is safeguarded (cf. OT 7). These centers will be governed by approved statutes, according to what was said above (cf. n.87).

154. With regard to high schools, a study should be made in each case if it would be advantageous to associate them in some way to other high schools, taking into account what was said in Nos. 106-115 of this decree.

155. In general, when according to the principles enunciated in No. 150 cooperation or federation with other Institutes for ecclesiastical studies is promoted, let the provincial governments present the case to the general Government for its approval. The reports of the respective prefectures of formation should be heard. At the same time, assuming the principles enunciated in Nos. 149-152, our members' formation can be provided for by sending them to diocesan seminaries or to other Catholic colleges. In this matter, the approval of the respective superiors is necessary, and the other common norms of the Church and our own Institute must be fulfilled, whether in their present form, or according the way they will be reformed in the near future (cf. OT 7; St. Gen., 23,3; c. 587,3; Const. I,128).

156. In case it is not advisable to have our own internal high school, and the norm expressed in No. 154 cannot be applied, let the major superiors consider the suitability of sending our young men to outside schools. Previously, there should be reports from the respective prefectures.

157. In every case the particular formation of our Institute should be assured diligently, through appropriate norms, in accordance with the Decree "Optatam Totius," 3, and the M.Pr. "Ecclesiae Sanctae", EI 37, and through a suitable completion, according to the prudent judgment of the corresponding prefectures, of what is lacking in order to observe our internal legislation concerning studies.

158. The disadvantages which could result in our members' formation in the congregation's own centers, even though they are suitably equipped, should be balanced by the advantages which derive from an appropriate exposure to the outside, particularly:

- by placing our youth cautiously in contact with life, for motives of human and pastoral formation, in accordance with what was said in Nos.27-129,136, and 146 of this Decree.

- by seeking contact and healthy exchange with other academic institutions, whether on the level of professors or of students.

- by requesting professors from outside or by generously offering our own professors' cooperation (cf. ES II,37).

- by discreetly accommodating our centers to the circumstances of the country and following the directives of the episcopal conferences, while safeguarding the universal character of our formation.

159. Young men who have not followed our courses in the humanities or their equivalent, and which are considered obligatory on the high school, college or university level, will complete their formation, in the humanities and sciences, or prepare themselves to enter into our Institute in the high school, novitiate or college, according to convenience. If necessary, let special centers be established for this purpose, or let them take advantage of existing centers.

160. Among the requisites for our centers of formation, it is worth calling attention to these points:

- a) Provision should be made that our seminaries are located in centers of ecclesiastical or social culture which offer possibilities of cultural expansion and suitable contacts with other similar centers.

- b) The number of students in any case should not be excessively small, considering the requisites of today's formation centers, nor too large, in order to avoid the disadvantages of mass formation.

- c) In every seminary there should be an established roster of professors, who should have established subjects to teach. Provision should be made that the required conditions for living and working are guaranteed, so that this stability may really exist. This problem should be considered a serious one. In the major seminaries, the doctorate or an equivalent should be demanded, at least for primary subjects.

- d) Safeguarding the preceding number, an exchange of professors among the different centers of the Congregation should be sought, and when considered opportune some professors from outside should be called.

- e) It is urgently necessary that all our internal centers of formation have at their disposal sufficient financial resources for the integral formation of our students. In addition to a budget for their libraries, which should be an object of particular solicitude and be staffed by suitable personnel for cataloguing, care and service, funds must be made available for other cultural purposes and for relaxation, which are also necessary for the proper

attainment of the goals of the institutions.

161. Our members should be encouraged to specialize and should be sent, only to those centers that have a high standard of scholarship, and which offer the greatest possibility for success. For this purpose, it would be advisable to set up a study facility in houses or residences already established in places where these centers are located. Where such houses do not exist, the superiors, according to their prudence, may establish special residences or make other housing arrangements for those who are sent there.

162. The Chapter recommends the formation of a commission dependent on the prefecture of formation and studies to investigate the problems presented by the Congregations existing centers of advanced formation or research, or those which it might establish in the future in Rome or in other important cities.

Regimen and Personnel

I. Prefecture of Formation and Studies

A) Structure

163. In order to assure that the Prefecture of Formation and Studies is efficient, it should be organized in accordance with the way it is described in our legislation.

Therefore, the Prefecture of Studies should have a Secretary and avail itself of a commission of priests competent in different fields and chosen from different parts of the Congregation. This commission will render its assistance when requested. Especially, it will meet from time to time to examine and discuss the situation and the prospects of our studies.

Let the composition and constitution of the Prefecture of formation and Studies in each of the provinces and quasi-provinces be similar to the structure of the General Prefecture. Let the Visitorships have at least one person in charge of studies.

164. In order to guarantee the efficiency and vitality of these structures:

a) Those in charge should be competent persons. Their influence in the arrangement of studies, including financial considerations, should be truly effective, though they shall always work in subordination to their superiors, and in close cooperation with them.

b) Canonical visitors of centers of formation will always take into account the reports of the prefectures of studies. These reports shall be based upon the academic Visits which will be made periodically by the corresponding person in charge of formation. In this way, unity of direction and meaningful decisions will be assured.

c) Periodic meetings between the General Prefecture and the Prefects of Studies of major organisms should be held and between the latter and those in charge of the individual centers.

B) Competency

165. The competency of the general Prefecture of Studies happens to be sufficiently described in our legislation (cf. OSG art. 34, 83-85, 175) in what pertains to the aspects of government as well as science and culture.

Since the rightful autonomy of the Provinces must be respected, the General Prefecture will limit itself to give directions that are general in character, leaving to corresponding provincial prefectures their application to the circumstances of each territory. General centers will be directly under the direction of the general Prefecture.

Let the prefectures of studies promote the initiatives which can contribute to elevating the level of our studies and in particular the continual renewal of the scientific activities of the professors.

II. The Professors and Formation

166. Professors are truly involved in formation since "doctrinal training ought to tend not to a mere communication of ideas but to a true and intimate formation of the students" (OT 17; cf. *ibid.* 14.16).

The goal which should direct and animate the entire intellectual formation of the students is the development of their religious apostolic vocation. (cf. Const. I,2,122; OSG 140,2; OT 4,9,18,19).

The different aspects of formation cannot be separated in any way, since they all converge into the same educative process with regard to the person. "All the forms of training, spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, are to be

ordered with concerted effort toward this pastoral end and to attain it all the administrators and teachers are to work zealously and harmoniously together” (OT 4)

167. The basic element of the formation of our young members is the climate which they experience in the life of the seminary. The professors contribute in large measure to forming this climate by their personality, their balance and objectivity, their mental outlook, their cultural maturity and the human relations which they manage to establish with their students as the channel of a true and noble teaching role. The fundamental elements of this educational climate are: unity of spirit and action, and family unity expressed through joyfully living together their common Vocation under the authority of the director. In this way, the life of our centers of formation will fulfill Our Lord’s prayer, “That all may be one” (Jn 17,11).

168. In order to fulfill this commission, the professors will realize their teaching function in the most stable manner possible. They will be chosen from among the best, combining the fundamental bases of holiness of life and a good intellectual education, along with the particular gifts of balanced judgment and teaching ability. They will also have to have suitable pastoral experience and special educational formation (OT 5).

III. Study Plans

A) General Norms

169. In the general arrangement of studies, let only general norms be established to obtain a fundamental unity of criteria in the intellectual formation of our students, and thus to promote everyone’s willingness to exercise their apostolic activity in any region whatever.

In each region, a particular arrangement of studies should be promulgated by the provincial superior, with the prior approval of the general Prefecture. This arrangement will apply the general norms of our legislation to concrete needs and circumstances. These arrangements will be submitted to periodic review, in order to accommodate them to the requirements of different times.

B) Program of Studies of Claretian Ecclesiastical Training

170. Our priestly training comprehends ecclesiastical studies, properly so called, and studies in human and scientific education as well (cf. OT 13).

1. High School and College

High school studies, according to Vatican II:

a) are not to be inferior to those undertaken by young men of the same country in high school and college (OT 3,13; “Menti nostrae,” AAS 42 (1950); “Sedes Sapientiae,” 30; St. Gen., art.43; OSG art. 97)

b) are to be recognized by the state (St. Gen., Qrt. 43,1-2; OSG Qrt. 97, I; cf. OT 3,13).

171. The primary goal of our high school studies is the integral formation in its intellectual aspect, of the young men who manifest the seeds of a priestly and religious vocation. For this purpose:

a) Intellectual education should comprehend humanistic and scientific formation and should be of such a nature that they proximately prepare him for ecclesiastical studies properly so called (OT 13; “Sedes Sapientiae” 30).

b) The study of Latin should be directed in such a way that the student obtains the necessary ability to know and use the ancient sources and documents (OT 13,16; St. Gen., 43,3, 2 & 3).

c) This preparation for the knowledge and use of the sources and documents already requires of itself an impressive knowledge of Latin and Greek. For a better humanistic formation, moreover it should be perfected by a more profound study, in those particular nations which by their culture, language and tradition have a more intimate connection with the classic languages (OT 13-16; St. Gen. 43,3,2; Const. I,77,139). The study of modern languages, initiated in the high school period, should be opportunely continued throughout training in such a way that the student thereby acquires fluency in one of them.

d) Because of their situation as future missionaries and servants of the Word, it is necessary to take great pains to cultivate their artistic formation, particularly in writing and in the art of speaking. They should be taught the rightful value and appropriate use of the communications media. All this will facilitate their missionary identification with men and with the world of their time.

2. Philosophical and Theological Studies

172. In revising ecclesiastical studies properly so called, the different disciplines should be so articulated that they harmoniously work toward opening more and more the minds of the students to the Mystery of Christ. For it is this Mystery which affects the whole history of the human race, constantly influences the Church, and is especially at work in the priestly and missionary ministry (cf. OT 14).

Consequently, ecclesiastical studies must be introduced by a course in which the mystery of salvation is presented in a manner that may perceive the meaning of ecclesiastical studies and their pastoral purpose (OT 14; cf. n. 122 of this Decree).

173. The doctrine should be founded on the perennially valid patrimony of philosophy and theology (OT 15), under the guidance of St. Thomas (OT 16) giving heed to the contributions of modern science (cf. GE 10) and with special attention to the problems of each nation (cf. OT 15). Let the professors remember they do not teach in their own name but in the name of the Church, from which they have received their mission to teach.

The multiplication of new disciplines should be avoided, while provision should be made to include new problems within the fundamental disciplines. On the other hand, the gestations that have lost their relevance should be eliminated.

174. The philosophical disciplines should be taught in such a way that the students obtain, through them all, a solid and coherent knowledge of man, of the world and of God, and that they may be able to perceive perfectly the links existing between philosophical arguments and the mysteries of salvation which are studied in theology under a higher light (cf. OT 15).

175. Let a special emphasis be placed on the study of Sacred Scripture, which should be as it were the soul of all theology. After an appropriate introduction, the students should be carefully initiated into the method of exegesis in such a way that they may be capable of capturing the great themes of Divine revelation and obtain stimulus and nourishment from reading and meditating on the Holy Bible (OT 16).

176. Dogmatic theology should be explained by following the method of "Optatam totius": 1) biblical themes; 2) contributions of the Fathers; 3) the history of the dogma in relation to the general history of the Church; 4) speculative research on the connection of the mysteries of salvation to one another under the guidance of St. Thomas (cf. OT 16).

177. Moral theology must be presented more under the intense enlightenment of the light of revelation, in such a way that the sublime vocation of the Christian may be accepted as an exigency of conduct, rich in fruits of charity for the life of the world (cf. OT 16).

178. The Mystery of the Church should be the vital nerve of juridical and historical studies. In particular, liturgy should be explained as the first and necessary source of true Christian spirit, united with the other theological disciplines in their connection to the mystery of Christ and the history of our salvation (cf. OT 16).

179. It is necessary that the theological sciences and the other disciplines, especially the historical ones, be also taught under their ecumenical aspects so that they respond more exactly to reality (UR 10). The students should also be introduced to the knowledge of the other most widespread religions of each region, so that they may know better what by divine disposition, of the good and true they have retained. They should be able to refute their errors and be capable of transmitting the fullness of light to those who are without it (OT 16).

180. The establishment of a professional commission to study the concrete manner of implementing conclusions 172 and 173 is urgently recommended. When this program is developed, the repetition of closely related subjects should be avoided.

3. Pastoral Formation

181. Ecclesiastical studies shall last at least as long as the time determined by the Church, as this is applied by the Episcopal Conferences. Adaptations to our particular character in the apostolate, as arranged by our general or regional legislation, should also be kept in mind. A special pastoral course should be added to this (cf. n. 137 of this Decree). In major seminaries the program of studies can be arranged on the basis of semesters.

182. The formation of the Claretian religious must have a pastoral meaning. Therefore, the programming will

be submitted to continuous revision, so that it may correspond constantly to circumstances of time and place, according to the mind of the Council (cf. OT1).

183. For the academic and scientific consequences, studied more in detail in this Part V, what has been said above should be kept in mind, concerning the necessary pastoral practices to be undertaken throughout training, and especially concerning the Pastoral Year, in nos. 136-139 of this Decree (Part IV). In the pastoral course, pastoral theology should be studied more in detail along with catechetics, pastoral psychology, sociology in its pastoral applications, etc. All this should be done in a sufficiently scientific manner, though along with an outlook and emphasis according to the pastoral needs of each region in which our members will work, and always safeguarding the universal character of our function in the Church. This study should lead them to use the aids which the aforesaid sciences can provide, according to correct methodology and the norms of ecclesiastical authority (cf. OT 20).

184. "At the same time" according to the mind of the Council "let them be properly instructed in inspiring and fostering the Apostolic activity of the laity and promoting the various and more effective forms of the apostolate. Let them also be imbued with that truly Catholic spirit which will accustom them to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation or rite, and to help the needs of the whole Church, prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel to everyone" (OT ibid.; cf. LG 33)

185. It is desirable that within ecclesiastical studies themselves, during their training, they should give their attention to specific pastoral problems, which should be appropriately enlightened by the ecclesiastical discipline or the other sciences studied at the same time.

4. Scholarly Activity

186. Without wishing to descend to details which should be regulated by an appropriate post-capitular legislation, the Chapter proposes some outlines for the development of this legislation:

1. The school year should be considered as composed of classes and of personal work outside of them, on the part of the student. It should be regulated by the arrangement of studies with a modern educational approach.

2. In each region, the number of classes will be determined by its own particular arrangement of studies, within the margin established by higher authorities.

3. In order to determine the number and duration of classes, the following criteria will be taken into account:

a) Let the number of classes be sufficient to assure the Congregation's lofty goals concerning intellectual formation.

b) Nevertheless an excessive number of classes, which makes unity and solidity difficult in intellectual formation should be avoided. An excessive number of assignments should be avoided, and all those questions which today scarcely have any importance or should be left for higher academic studies should be omitted (cf. OT17).

c) Sufficient time for personal work outside of class should be allowed, in keeping with the requirements of today's educational methodology, and having in mind the different stages of intellectual formation (cf. St. Gen. art. 11,2).

d) The importance of each assignment with relation to priestly formation should be considered.

Teaching Methods

Principles of teaching

187. The Professors will strive for a close cooperation with one another, in order to achieve internal coordination in the different assignments, avoiding useless repetition of closely related assignments and in order to maintain unity in the student's formation (cf. OT 14).

188. The professor should provide that his explanation be a true enlightenment to guide the student to discover the fundamental ideas and discern them clearly in the concrete material context in which they are explained.

With reference to philosophical and theological subjects, in particular, the concrete situation of the students should be considered. The problems should be presented to them in such a way that they will affect their own lives, answer the questions which vex their own minds and assist them to possess a reflective and lively faith. They will thus be encouraged to search for a solution of human problems in the light of revelation, and to

communicate them in an appropriate manner their time (cf. OT 15,16).

189. The method of teaching should tend to promote in the student, within and outside of class, the internal process of personal activity toward the discovery of truth on the part of the student himself. Therefore, let the professor strive to produce a harmonious education of the spiritual faculties of the student, and arouse his spirit of initiative and discovery, while he stirs in him the love of truth, rigorously sought out, respected and demonstrated (cf. OT15)

Approaches in Teaching

190. In order to promote the student's personal activity, the following should be employed: recitals, group meetings, team assignments, etc., according to the prescriptions and approaches of modern education. Also, within established discipline, personal contact should be fostered between professors and students.

The use of audiovisual means should be favored as modern instruments of cultural formation, and the students should be taught to use them as means for the modern apostolate (cf. IM 16).

Examinations

191. According to what has been said concerning teaching methods, examinations should not be considered as the principal gauge of the student's progress, much less the only one, though they are certainly important.

Examinations should, nevertheless, be retained as something necessary in strictly ecclesiastical courses, inasmuch as they oblige the student to a complete and careful vision of the entire matter. However, a study should be made how to simplify them, by eliminating from them whatever can provoke a psychological tension damaging to the examination itself.

Text books

192. Our educational legislation on textbooks should be revised with an approach more adapted to our times. Likewise, prescriptions that are too detailed should be avoided.

Special Studies

193. Our missionary vocation implies an intellectual superiority that demands a specialized preparation in the different fields of the apostolate. Therefore, superiors should strive that generally all of their personnel acquire some specialization, according to the needs of the Congregation and taking into account the individuals' capabilities and inclinations.

194. Appropriate specialization should be provided for everyone. They should be granted special studies with reference to the apostolate which each one will have to exercise. More advanced specialization should be reserved to some who are singularly endowed, in order to develop true experts in different matters. It should be recognized that full dedication to scientific research, whether in ecclesiastical or profane sciences, when it is vivified by our spirit, is an authentic Claretian apostolate.

Let our superiors recall the norms given by the Church concerning the aptitudes of character, virtue and intelligence required of those who are going to be sent to special institutes, schools or universities. In such cases, their spiritual and pastoral formation should in no way be disregarded, especially if they are not yet priests (cf. OT 18),

195. At the present moment in the Church and the Congregation, the chapter feels it is necessary for our specialization preferably to concern:

- a) the formation of our prefects, professors and spiritual directors;
- b) the special ministries of the Congregation, according to the criteria assigned by this Chapter itself in the Decree on the apostolate, and the applications to be made by the general and Provincial Prefectures of apostolate in their respective spheres;
- c) the studies traditionally cultivated in the congregation, to the degree that they coincide with the indications set forth in the preceding sentence.

196. Our members' specialization should not be limited to any one sphere. The entire gamut of discipline is

necessary to attain for the apostolic and teaching goals of the Congregation and must be suitably covered.

197. During theological studies, the Prefect of Students, in close cooperation with the entire team of educators and with the students themselves, should endeavor to discover the particular inclinations and qualities each one of them has, and inform the Provincial Prefect of Studies of this.

198. This particular matter will be determined:

a) as soon as possible; perhaps before priestly ordination;

b) by the respective provincial superiors, after listening to the suggestions of the Provincial Prefect of Studies, and the rightful demands of the General Prefecture.

c) taking into account, as a general norm, each student's intellectual vocation and inclination as he manifests this himself, even within the time of studies during priestly training.

199. The practical realization of specialization will be made as a general rule once training is concluded. But during ecclesiastical studies, it can already be begun with a view to future specialization, as long as the common basic studies do not suffer in the meanwhile.

DECREE ON ADMINISTRATION

Preface

The congregation, as an integral part of the Church, participates of its divine-human condition (cf. LG.8). As a primarily divine society, its human condition should be ordained and even subordinated to its divine and transcendent life (cf. SC 2).

The Church, and within it the Congregation, is a pilgrim in this world, and tends towards a fixed goal, the future city. This should be the source of all its strivings (cf. LG 44; Const. II,10).

The Congregation, as an Institute of perfection (LG.45) in the bosom of the Church, should emphasize with special vigor the eschatological traits of the People of God. In a particular way it must manifest the superiority of the Kingdom of God over terrestrial things and proclaim its lofty requirements (LG 44).

This basic striving for the Kingdom of God will produce a more authentic and profound love toward our brothers and urge us to practice justice through the inspiration of charity (cf. GS 72). Whence finances should never be an end in itself. On the contrary, our financial holdings must be directed, through the guidance of Superiors, toward the attainment of the goals of the Congregation. And the goods necessary for our apostolate should always be utilized with a profound respect for the evangelical dimension of our poverty.

The Church, as a divine-human society, is subjected to a dynamic law of incarnation (cf. GS 40). For this reason, it should be directed like every society on earth by a group of laws, even in financial matters. We should know these laws and observe them, because the goods of the Congregation are also ecclesiastical goods, subject in their administration to the sacred canons and the other norms of the Church.

They are not merely private goods. Vatican Council II has prescribed that future priests in recently Christianized areas should be given the necessary formation to carry on ecclesiastical administration in a precise fashion. This is to be understood in a financial sense as well (AG 16).

The Sons of the Congregation in imitation of our holy Father Founder, will associate the most absolute detachment toward money with an exquisite faithfulness in controlling and administering the goods which are entrusted to them. A living example of this faithfulness was left to us in the painstaking notations contained in the book of expenses of Archbishop Claret's house when he resided in Madrid, as can be seen in the General Archives. On the other hand, our Father Founder showed his apostolic genius, enterprising and dynamic, through the great social innovations on the island of Cuba, the glorious cultural enterprises he created in Madrid and his restorations at the *Escorial*. For works for the glory of God, for the formation of libraries, for the apostolate of the press, for relief of the poor, he never spared expense.

The Congregation, because of its ecclesial situation, its status as an Institute of perfection (LG 45) and its special sonship in the heart of Mary, is above all a communion of love.

The profound and intimate communion which flourishes in the family of God has its origin and pattern in the life of the Trinity (cf. I Jn 1,3) and should be projected also in the financial sphere (cf. II Cor 9,13). Our unity of heart and soul should be translated, as it was in the primitive Christian society (cf. Act 4,32) into a fundamental community of

goods between organisms which possess more and those which possess less (PC 13) “that there may be equality” (cf. II Cor 8,14). Even more, the Congregation opens its heart (cf. II Cor 6,11) and remedies, as much as it can, the general needs of the Church and of the poor (PC 13).

CHAPTER I

Aptitude and Formation of Treasurers

1. It is fitting that the office of treasurer be given all the importance which it deserves, by appointing trained persons who know how to put the stamp of efficacy on their administrative work.

Our Treasurers do not administer the goods of the congregation as owners wherefore, in the exercise of their office, they are required to be faithful to the established norms.

The Treasurer is responsible for implementing the ordinary budget, without departing from it during the course of the fiscal year.

He controls and supervises the administrations subordinated to him.

2. Incumbent and future treasurers of the Congregation should be given suitable preparation for the faithful fulfillment of their duties. This should include seminars conducted by professional businessmen and those who are specialized in modern methods.

The norm should also be applied to coadjutor brothers as circumstances permit.

3. Because of the implications of finance upon other problems in the Institute’s life and development, it seems desirable that treasurers enjoy voice and vote in councils.

CHAPTER II

Use of Temporal Goods

4. a) As long as health and age permit, let everyone feel obligated by the common law of labor. Compensation received for it will provide for his own support, will help the centers where the Sons of our Religious Family are being formed, and will provide just wages for those who render them service and assistance for the needy, along with a needed and adequate period of vacation each year (cf. PC 13; PO 1,20).

b) The following phrase of the Holy Constitutions should be modified: “Denique paupertatem exercent nihil muneris aut pecuniae in mercedem pro sacro ministerio accipiendo” (II,16). The text should be rendered in the following form: “Denique paupertatem nihil muneris qut pecuniae sibimetipsis accipiendo nec in mercedem pro sacro ministerio exigendo”.

c) No. 450 of the CIA should be faithfully preserved, concerning the obligation of accepting alms on occasion of ministries, or because of them.

d) All striving for profit in the exercise of the ministry should be avoided.

e) In order to preserve the primitive spirit of the Institute gratuitous ministries should be fostered in our communities and on behalf of poor parishes or needy convents.

f) Let each province establish a fund to provide gratuitous ministries as a testimony of gratitude for the benefits which God has conferred on us (cf. CIA 549).

5. a) Our employees must be treated not only according to the norms dictated by the social laws of each country, but also with a true spirit of social justice, as well as generous Christian charity.

b) The Congregation must make an effort to give individual and collective testimony of poverty, living from its own labors, avoiding every appearance of luxury, of excessive profit and the piling up of material goods. Its Houses and structures of apostolate must be founded upon an evangelical sense, which inclines us to seek out eternal values within temporal goods.

In the budgets of the different organisms of the Congregation, a quantity should be set aside and used to relieve the poor, whom all religious should love in the Heart of Christ (cf. PC; Const. II, 15).

CHAPTER III

Conservation and Care of Goods

6. The preservation and care of temporal goods is not only the competency of the Treasurer or Administrator by reason of his office. All should feel themselves as one in preserving and caring for them, as it occurs in every family united in brotherhood. Wherefore:

a) Let financial affairs be treated publicly in the periodic meetings of the entire community, something which would be very much in keeping with our brotherhood and with everyone's cooperation in common interests (cf. PC 14,15).

b) In the most suitable form, let the Congregation be informed each year of the financial state of the general administration. This norm should be applied equally to provincial and local administrations in relation to their organisms.

c) Let the idea of solidarity be inculcated beginning in the years of formation.

7. The Houses and Capitalization

a) The formation of an endowment for our internal centers of formation is evidently desirable, but it should be administered by the Provincial and General Treasurers.

b) Houses cannot capitalize with their surpluses, but they may accept pious foundations with the required approval of the Major Superior. The better to assure that the aforesaid foundations and endowments are safely and gainfully employed, it is advisable that, *salva proprietate*, they be administered by the provincial Administration.

c) Outside of these cases, it is not advisable to grant to the Houses the right to capitalize so as to avoid eagerness for profit (PC 13) and in order to provide a better collective testimony of poverty and not make difficult the help which each house might suitably give to other poor houses according to the spirit of the Council (PC 13) and the recommendation of our Holy Founder (Letter of Nov. 30th, 1858 to Fr. Xifre).

CHAPTER IV

Fundus Credititius

8. a) The Fundus Credititius has been in the past and can continue being in the future of great benefit to the Congregation's interests.

b) It is recommended to all the Congregation's organisms that with the permission of the respective superiors they make deposits in the Fundus Credititius, preferably with funds from burses, pious foundations, etc.

c) A new set of by-laws for the Fundus Credititius should be formulated, by which a board of directors should be established from among the largest depositors. This board should be advised by someone who is a specialist in banking. The aforesaid board of directors will be changed periodically in accordance with the by-laws which are to be established. The first board of directors will be designated by the General Government. Outside of this case, the election will take place by a vote of the depositors themselves.

d) The Fundus Credititius should be separated from the general administration.

e) The Fundus Credititius can establish branches in different nations, in agreement with the respective major superiors, and in accordance with the new by-laws.

CHAPTER V

Inheritances

9. The Motu Proprio, "Ecclesiae Sanctae" (n.24), affirms that "it is the right of Institutes with simple vows to decree in General chapter whether the renunciation of inheritances which have been acquired and will be acquired should be incorporated into the Constitutions and, if this is done, whether such renunciation should be obligatory or optional. They should also decide when this is to be done, i.e., whether before perpetual profession or some years later."

a) It seems better to begin this experiment by leaving it free to the choice of individuals.

b) With the approval of the Major Superior.

c) The time for making this renunciation is to be not before ten years after the perpetual profession.

- d) Other details of this renunciation will be determined by the General Government .
- e) This faculty of renouncing one's inheritances should be set forth in the Holy Constitutions.
- f) Those who do not renounce their inheritance, in order to save the initial capital against constant devaluation of money, could accumulate the interest from their inheritance. This point affects the Constitutional text (I, 81).

CHAPTER VI

Contributions and Quotas

10. a) One of the principal foundations of our economy is that the property and administration of our Houses and Provinces are subordinated to the common necessities of the congregation (cf. CIA 180, 192, OAG 61).

b) Provinces and Houses should share material goods with one another, in such a way that those who have more, help those who suffer need (PC 13). Our holy Father Founder had had the same idea: "whatever is left one in one House, should make up what is lacking in another" (Letter to Fr. Xifre, Nov. 30th, 1858). In keeping with these norms, let the system of quotas of the Provinces to the General Administration and of the Houses to the Provinces be preserved (cf. CIA 203; OAG 49).

c) The respective superior can assign the times in which to satisfy the assigned quotas.

11. a) In principle, all major organisms of the Congregation and all General Houses that are not centers of formation should pay a quota to the General Government. This quota will be a symbol of cooperation on the part of all the Sons of the Congregation in the common expenses of the General Government.

b) Financially strong organisms shall send in addition a special quota to help in the formation of personnel in our centers of formation, our missions and needy organisms and the expansion of the Congregation.

c) Quotas should not constitute a grave burden for the subordinate administrations. Let the quota be dispensed with in those organisms which may have suffered some financial reverse, either because of a noticeable devaluation of money, or for other similar causes. These causes easily transpire today in some countries of Latin America.

d) Let the norms be revised by which the General Administration must offer equitable assistance to needy organisms. Each organism, as an ideal, must seek effectively to suffice for itself financially.

e) It is recommended that the General Administration establish an emergency fund on the basis of voluntary donations of the different organisms, so that the General Government may be able to alleviate the necessities of different organisms in time of grave crisis or disaster.

f) The different organisms can make agreements directly with one another concerning mutual help in personnel or finances, submitting them to the General Government for ratification, and without prejudice to the quota assigned for the General Administration.

In any case, the general Government will take care to avoid that the most needy organisms, lacking in personnel or resources, be left unassisted. Rather let them be sure to favor them with preferential solicitude.

12. a) The Chapter recognizes that a better distribution of the Congregation's personnel in accordance with the Council's norms (cf. GS.88; PO.10) can also contribute to the resolution of financial problems.

b) The organisms of the Congregation should be urged to help one another generously, either in personnel, or in temporal goods, remembering what our Lord said: "It is better to give than to receive" (Acts 20,35).

CHAPTER VII

Insurance for Persons and for Goods

13. In order to take care of our sick brothers with the greatest charity the chapter urges that all members of the congregation have:

- a) health or hospital insurance
- b) old-age insurance

A form of establishing internal insurance in these cases should be studied.

14. Individuals who by reasons of illness or old age leave the Province where they have worked for the greater part of their life, either because they are transferred, or because they request a transfer to their province of origin or to another province, should obtain a subsidy for the province to which they are being transferred. If they are insured, the insurance should be transferred with them.

15. The most suitable way to insure, in large and solvent companies, furniture, buildings, automobiles, against fire and other accidents which can occur, should be studied. Let insurance be centralized in the Province or nation in the same company for the purpose of obtaining a reduction in premiums.

CHAPTER VIII

The Administration

16. a) In accordance with what is prescribed by our Order of General Administration, 87, 88, the formation of a Financial Council should be urged, to advise the General Administration. This Financial Council will advise in the formulation of budgets, and will render its judgment on projects which are submitted for its examination, and on other affairs of general interest.

b) It shall have its periodic meetings at the times assigned and furthermore will meet in extraordinary session whenever it may be necessary.

c) Annually a certified public accounting firm will review the general administration and reconcile the book and bank balances.

17. The norms of the previous number are to be applied equally in provincial administrations and in the others which have acquired importance in the commercial or industrial fields.

18. Interprovincial meetings of Treasurers, similar to the Conferences of Major Superiors, are recommended.

19. Decentralization

a) In accordance with the prescription of the Motu Proprio, "Ecclesiae Sanctae," 18, let a wider freedom in matters of administration be granted to major organisms. Let the provinces be authorized, with prior notification to the general Government, to undertake necessary expenses and works, as long as they do not contract debts by these acts and the obligation of the quota with respect to the General Administration is safeguarded.

b) In the same way, a greater autonomy can be granted to local governments. Thus for extraordinary expenses, without contracting debts, they should only depend upon the permission of the respective provincial Government.

c) Local governments, in soliciting this provincial authorization, should have their ordinary expenses of the normal budget assured: food, services, quota and the rest.

d) In reference to debts and alienation, without recourse to the General Government, Provincial Governments can authorize up to 3/4 of the amount which bishops in their respective countries can authorize.

CHAPTER IX

Modification in the Holy Constitutions

20. Let there be a separation in the Holy Constitutions (I, c.VI) between what concerns the Treasurer and the Procurator General. An entire Chapter should be dedicated to the General Treasurer.

21. It is suggested that there be added in the Holy Constitutions (I, 38) when they speak of the local treasurer some words which indicate the spirit with which he should exercise this office: "Spiritu servitii vere fraterno". The text might be formulated in the following manner: "Praecipuum vero oeconomii localis officium erit rerum temporalium curam habere spiritu servitii vere fraterno."

CHAPTER X

Modifications in the OAG

22. Without eliminating them from the CIA, let whatever is said there of administration be reproduced in the OAG.
23. And the following: cf. "Conclusions of the Commission on Administration" at the end of No. 24 which remain unchanged (this is a long and detailed list which was not formally considered, but remanded to the post-conciliar commission).