

The
Constitutions
of the
Society of Charity

ANTONIO ROSMINI

THE
CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE
SOCIETY OF CHARITY

ROSMINI HOUSE
DURHAM

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*Rosmini House, Woodbine Road
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*Translated from the Latin manuscript
Constitutiones Societatis a Caritate Nuncupatae.*

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Translator's Preface

This translation of *The Constitutions of the Society of Charity* has been made from the Latin of the manuscript* consigned by Antonio Rosmini, the Founder of the Society, on his death-bed to Fr. Pietro Bertetti. The following attestations were added to the manuscript three weeks after Rosmini's death.

Stresa, on the Lago Maggiore,
in the generalitiate house,
July 22nd, 1855

Our beloved and saintly father in Christ, Antonio Rosmini, left us and the entire Society a great and precious heritage in these Constitutions which he himself drew up at the very beginning of the Society as he meditated in the holy solitude of Mount Calvary at Domodossola.

These Constitutions claim our special reverence. From them he extracted the Rule which Pope Gregory XVI included in the Apostolic Letters and approved in 1839.

As time and strength permitted during the following years, Fr. Rosmini constantly corrected, augmented and perfected the Constitutions presented in this final

* The paragraph numbers correspond to those of the Latin text accompanying the Italian translation of Alfeo Valle (*Costituzioni dell'Istituto della Carità*, Stresa, 1974). This Latin text, and that of the *editio princeps* (London, 1875), contain several variations from the Founder's manuscript, which may be consulted in photocopies held at the *Centro Internazionale di Studi Rosminiani*, Stresa, and at houses in the Italian, English and Irish provinces of the Society of Charity.

Where necessary, the author's references to sacred Scripture have been completed or corrected. Additions and corrections have been placed in square brackets ([]), e.g., 1 Jn 4: [7].

exemplar, copied on blue-coloured paper in 1842 by Angelo Bagnasco of Asti. The manuscript has many corrections, additions and modifications from Fr. Rosmini's own hand (except for one addition at the bottom of page 263 written by Fr. Carlo Gilardi on instructions from our father in Christ).

The third and fourth parts of the Constitutions, however, were re-worked by Rosmini about 1846, and copied out on 77 sheets of white paper by Germinio Martinelli of Sacco, scholastic of our Society. The previous version of these parts was removed from the present volume and the new sheets sewn in between pages 102–137.

This is the only exemplar of the Constitutions of our Society which our beloved and worthy father Antonio Rosmini used during the last years of his life until his death.

We, the undersigned, who by reason of our duties have lived close to our holy father for many years, testify in faith that what has been said here is true.

Carlo Gilardi, presb.,

Procurator General of the Inst. of Charity

Francesco Paoli, presb.,

Secretary of the Inst. of Charity

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Stresa,

July 22nd, 1855

I, the undersigned, declare that our holy and venerated Father Founder called me purposely to his bedside before his death, and consigned to me the present exemplar of the Constitutions of the Institute of Charity. He declared: "This is the only exemplar of the Constitutions that I consider my own. All the other copies are more or less defective, and are not to be used. I would prefer them to be taken out of circulation. Only the provosts provincial should have an exact copy of this present exemplar that I am consigning to you to give in my name to the new superior. You must tell him that in order not to change the nature of

the Institute it is necessary to observe faithfully all that is set out in the Constitutions. It could happen that the reason for some enactment is not seen at first sight. But I assure you that I have studied everything profoundly and that with patient meditation you will find a reason for it all.'

In faith,

*Pietro Bertetti,*

prov. provincial of the Institute of Charity  
in Piedmont

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HE WHO LOVES IS BORN OF GOD  
(1 Jn 4: [7])

THE  
CONSTITUTIONS  
OF THE  
SOCIETY OF CHARITY



**A**  
**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**  
**OF THE**  
**SOCIETY OF CHARITY**

1. The laws which direct any society to the attainment of its end can only be formulated if the purpose and nature of the society are clearly understood. Therefore, as we begin to write the Constitutions of the Society of Charity in honour of God the Father, and of his only-begotten Son, JESUS Christ our Lord, we shall first describe the Society briefly in order to provide a single principle and seed from which the Constitutions as a whole may develop. This description contains two chapters, dealing respectively with the end of the Society, and with the persons belonging to it. The end of the Society is, as it were, its form, while the persons correspond to its matter.

## CHAPTER 1

### The end of the Society

2. This Society, whose members take their name from Charity, is dedicated to our Redeemer JESUS Christ, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael Archangel, to the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints. It consists of faithful Christians who, in their ardent desire of living as disciples of JESUS Christ, our Lord and Master, apply themselves vigorously, with mutual help and encouragement, to their own perfection as persons (R. I).

3. Personal perfection includes the exercise of charity towards one's neighbour also. This may truly be called the great element in personal perfection according to the word of our Lord JESUS Christ: 'He who does these commandments and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5: 19). For this reason the Society has a special love for all works of charity towards its neighbour and willingly undertakes them, knowing as it does that when they spring from the will of God and are undertaken in due order they greatly assist people in rendering their life more pleasing in the sight of God the Father, and of our Lord JESUS who says: 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I loved you' (Jn 15: 12) (R. 2) (EXPLANATION).

EXPLANATION. This is why we name the Society after *Charity*, as characteristic of JESUS' disciples. However, future superiors of the Society shall take care not to be over-concerned about its name and other matters not constituting the substance of the Society and of neutral consequence for achieving its end.

4. Pre-eminent among works of charity is pastoral care, the most perfect work, embracing universal charity. As JESUS says: 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep' (Jn 10: [11]). This is the supreme act of charity: 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (Jn 15: [13]). For this reason a society of this kind cannot attain its full existence and perfect form unless it consists of priests who can and do undertake pastoral care (E.).

(E.) If this Society consisted only of Brothers, or ecclesiastics

without priestly orders, it would be established at its lowest level of perfection but would even then have its own kind of independent existence. But while it consists contemporaneously of priests, clerics and Brothers, the priests must be regarded as its substantial part, clerics and Brothers as an accidental part. The Society needs only priests, not Brothers and clerics, to fulfil its nature.

5. The end of this Society, therefore, is to care lovingly for the sanctification of the members who compose it and, by means of their sanctification, to expend whatever affections and strength it has in all works of charity, and especially for the eternal salvation of every one of its neighbours (R. 3) (E.).

(E.) A person's own sanctification must be at once the *end* and the *means* of the sanctification of others. Works of charity are undertaken only in so far as we know that this is pleasing to God: 'For this is the will of God, your sanctification' (1 Thess 4: 3). The holier we become, the greater the strength we shall have for helping our neighbours.

## CHAPTER 2

### The diversity of persons required in this Society

6. Into this Society taken as a whole two principal categories of persons are admitted, corresponding to the twofold manner of exercising charity towards our neighbour (E.). Another two categories are added as accessories.

(E.) Charity can in fact be exercised in a *general way* when a person not exclusively dedicated to any particular kind of charity applies himself to any charitable work in proportion to his strength. Pre-eminent here is pastoral care. Charity can also be exercised in a *particular way* when a person dedicates himself totally to some specific form of charity, such as the care of the sick in hospitals.

7. The first category is composed of priests who are properly called *presbyters of the Society*. In addition to the three vows they have in common with the coadjutors, who are mentioned later (8), these presbyters humbly subject themselves by a vow of special obedience to the sovereign Vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter. In virtue of this vow, they must be prepared to go immediately, even without provision for the journey, wherever the sovereign Pontiff shall be pleased to send them, to the faithful or to pagan territories, and to serve the Church of God with alacrity, even at the cost of their own lives, as the Pontiff prescribes, in everything he deigns to enjoin on them.

8. The other category comprises the *coadjutors of the Society*, as they are called, who though prepared in spirit to undergo all things for love of our Lord JESUS Christ are destined for more particular duties which superiors judge more conducive to the salvation of their souls and the good of the Church. Coadjutors profess the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience to the superiors of the Society. Generally speaking (E.) these are simple vows; on the coadjutors' part they are also perpetual.

(E.) 'Generally speaking' because solemn vows are not altogether excluded from this Society.

9. There are two primary groups of coadjutors, *intern* and *extern*.

10. *Intern coadjutors* are those who, after completing the three probations in houses of the Society (E.), can be given only temporary assignments outside them for the sake of charity. *Extern coadjutors*, after training in the first and second probation, are those enrolled as coadjutors with a view to their living permanently outside the houses for the sake of exercising charity more freely.

(E.) 'Houses of the Society' are to be understood as those in which members live in community.

11. Both *intern* and *extern* coadjutors are further grouped into *spiritual coadjutors*, that is, priests who serve the Society primarily in spiritual works of charity, and *temporal coadjutors*, that is, Brothers who assist the Society chiefly in temporal affairs of charity.

12. Works of charity towards our neighbour are of many kinds, and very often demand considerable qualities of intellect as well as wide factual and theoretical knowledge. Hence it seems entirely consistent with the aim of our Society, which sets itself no limit or boundary to the exercise of charity, that amongst its temporal coadjutors there should be persons endowed with good intellectual qualities and great humility who undertake academic studies, mastering every kind of knowledge. They should couple this with outstanding piety, as befits the Society we have in mind which professes to know in all things only Christ, and him Crucified. In this way, persons already distinguished in secular life for piety and learning may be admitted as temporal coadjutors, whenever the Lord is pleased to call them to perfection of life.

13. Before being admitted to one of these grades, all applicants for the Society are allocated to appropriate probations where they undergo examinations and tests, some of which are common to all members, while others are characteristic of the duty and grade to which it is expedient in the Lord that members should be assigned (E.).

(E.) *Candidates* for the Society are classified according to the above-mentioned categories of persons just as in the same

genus what is imperfect is classified according to its perfect type. During their first probation, *candidates* are considered the Society's *guests*; after their initial tests they become *novices of the Society*. Those who have professed scholastic vows after the biennium are called *formed scholastics* — *probationers* if they are being tested in the practice of various ministries, *proficients* if they are engaged in the third probation.

14. Finally, in addition to these two categories of persons who abandon all claim to human benefits and dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to the glory of God and their personal perfection, the Society, named as it is after Charity, desires to have as many people as possible sharing in the spiritual gifts and merits which through God's mercy are amassed by the good works of all its members. Two other categories of persons, which we may call accessory and auxiliary, can therefore be admitted into this Society.

15. In the first place, it embraces and adopts as dearly beloved *sons* all clerics and laymen of good character, whether they have already professed vows in other sodalities or been detained in secular life not through human cupidity but for necessary and just reasons. In their innermost spirit these persons flee the confusion of secular life and have their true home in heaven; they use this world as if they used it not, and seem obviously deserving of the haven of religion. Assisted by such faithful and prudent persons, the Society will be able to extend in many respects the help it renders neighbours in their need, besides offering a means of sharing in religious perfection to a greater number of persons.

16. For this reason also the Society contains, besides these adopted sons, other persons of good character (the second category of auxiliaries) who, without professing the more perfect life, undergo the first probation only. They desire to be *ascribed* members of the Society, and show themselves willing to cleave to the Society in the Lord by ties of mutual love, and through reciprocal duties and merits (E.).

(E.) In the Society furnished with the above categories of persons, it is the presbyters, therefore, who constitute the Society taken in its strictest sense. The coadjutors stand next in their relation to the Society, still taken in the strict sense, for they too



make a total profession and thus, free from all external ties, give themselves over completely to obedience in order to exercise with indifference any and every act of charity to which their superiors direct them, after judging them in the Lord capable of such work. Thirdly, there are the *adopted sons* who enter the Society taken in a broad sense, and the *ascribed members* who enter the Society taken in a broader sense again.



I do not pray for these only, but for all  
those who will believe in me through  
their word

(Jn 17: [20])

## THE CONSTITUTIONS

### PREAMBLE

17. Any good discovered in our lowly Society is to be attributed to the light of the Holy Spirit shining down to us through the holy founders of religious life. Accordingly, we shall sometimes use their very words, as well as their holy innovations. It is clear that later masters of religious life have themselves been pleased to repeat in the written Rules bequeathed to their followers the teaching and even the words of their predecessors; and it is indeed beautiful to behold the foundation of religious life, which takes its origin from our Lord's own words, faithfully preserved and handed down to us through so many centuries. With great joy we may rightly exclaim: 'Thy testimonies are my heritage forever!' (Ps 118 [119: 111]).



**Part One**

**THE RECEPTION AND  
FIRST PROBATION  
OF THOSE ASKING TO BE CO-OPTED  
INTO THE BODY OF THE SOCIETY**

## CHAPTER 1

### Those who have the faculty of receiving postulants into the Society

18. The faculty of receiving applicants for the Society into the first probation rests primarily with the head of the Society, then with the *diocesan provosts* (E.1), who can also delegate this faculty to other worthy persons. Those to whom this duty is delegated (E.2) will have the faculty only to the extent determined by the provosts as they judge best in the service of God.

(E.1) A diocesan provost is a superior with authority over the Society within the boundaries of a diocese, or region, where he has subject to him parochial provosts, in due subordination however to major superiors. The *General Provost* holds the highest place amongst the diocesan provosts. It is his responsibility to arrange all the faculties of the other provosts for the universal good.

(E.2) This faculty can normally be delegated to all local provosts and to rectors especially of those houses in which there is a novitiate.

19. When a person apparently suited for the way of life in the Institute approaches a member who has no faculty to receive him, the latter may send him to someone with either a personal or a delegated faculty, or he may write, describing the postulant and the gifts with which God has endowed him, to a member with a personal faculty for settling the matter even *in absentia* (E.1). He must then carry out the directions given him in the Lord (E.2).

(E.1) The faculty to decide about this matter *in absentia* is normally held by the diocesan provosts (18) and by those to whom such a faculty has been given in the delegation.

(E.2) If a candidate suitable for the way of life in the Society cannot conveniently be sent to a person with the power to admit him, any member may receive the postulant as a guest (provided this seems necessary or opportune) until he receives a reply from the person to whom the matter was referred. He will then act according to the decision given in the reply.

20. It is of great advantage to the service of God that those admitted be suitably selected, and care be taken to understand their endowments and calling. If a person with the faculty to admit postulants does not do this himself, he should have amongst his permanent assistants someone through whose agency he can get to know the postulants (E). This assistant should stay with and examine the postulants. He should be prudent and know how to deal with different categories and conditions of persons so that the undertaking, carried through sensibly and to the satisfaction of both parties, may be concluded to the glory of God.

(E.) The *examiner* need not be the *vicar of spiritual charity*, nor depend upon him. A person with the faculty to admit postulants will choose for this special post the member he judges most suitable.

21. Both a person with the faculty to receive postulants and his assistant must be familiar with the working of the Society and zealous for its advancement which is, of course, directed solely to the increase of the Church. On no account must he allow himself to deviate from what he judges in the Lord to be most fitting for the service of God. Therefore, he must be extremely restrained (E.) in his desire to admit postulants. To ensure greater freedom, a person possibly under pressure from undue bias (for example, towards relatives and friends) may not conduct the examinations.

(E.) On the one hand, it is right for us to co-operate eagerly with the of the divine call, taking care to increase (as far as humanly possible) the number of the perfect and of those labouring in the vineyard of Christ, our Lord; on the other hand, we must guard carefully against admitting anyone not endowed with the gifts required to the glory of the Lord by our way of life in the Institute.

22. Whoever carries out this work must have a copy of its duties in writing in order to fulfil it better and more accurately for the service of God.

(E.) A complete examination book, containing in the vernacular and in Latin the examination for each permanent state to which the candidates can be assigned, must be available where there is a faculty for admitting postulants.

## CHAPTER 2

### The characteristics of the first probation; its modification according to the diversity of persons

23. The first probation for those asking to be co-opted into this Society consists of *examination, instruction* and *exercise*. The postulant must first be examined to know whether he possesses the qualities and endowments appropriate in persons entering this Society with its differing permanent states. Next, he must be instructed in the nature of the Society itself (E.), and about the responsibilities involved in belonging to it, so that he may be incorporated into the Society with full knowledge and of his own free will. Finally, he must undergo a period of exercise in works of piety so that he may either enter the novitiate (that is, the second probation) with purified conscience, or be approved for acceptance amongst the ascribed members (R. 7).

(E.) Information about the Society and the responsibilities involved for those entering it must be imparted simultaneously with the examination itself. The two are inseparable because it is taken for granted that the postulant, when examined on his spiritual dispositions for entry, is already sufficiently acquainted with the Society. Otherwise, he would be unable to answer.

24. Moreover, the first probation should vary according to the different states to which postulants can be directed. Some, the *presbyters of the Society* and all *coadjutors*, embrace the religious life in the Society; others become sons of the Society, entering the way of perfection only in part, that is, in spirit alone, while continuing to live in the world. The ascribed follow the way common to all Christians, without despising the religious life which they duly honour in others. They apply themselves to that fullness of charity all Christians must strive for in virtue of the great vocation with which Christ has called them: 'You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Mt 5: [48]), and again: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind' (Mt 22: [37]).



## CHAPTER 3

### The first examination, on external matters

25. The first examination, which must be the same for all those mentioned above, will be concerned with external matters common to all, such as name, age, country, parents, standing and so on, which must be known to the Society (E.1). Particular examinations follow for the three groups mentioned above (E.2).

(E.1) Vagrants may not be admitted. Reliable information must be obtained about postulants who come from a distance, and should be sought from those with whom they have lived, especially from their directors and teachers, their relatives and fellow-townfolk. Reasons for their departure from their usual domiciles should also be ascertained.

(E.2) This examination and the others which follow are explained on the assumption that they will have to be given to all concerned (allowing for the diversity of persons), after their reception into the house of first probation. But if the matters in question can be known with certainty from another source, enquiries should not be made of the postulants themselves, although these details should be noted in writing in the appropriate place with other information. But there are certain things about which questions cannot be omitted, namely, matters which can be ascertained only by enquiry from the candidate himself, for example, his interior dispositions about the religious state, about indifference and about obedience. Enquiries are necessary here not only for the sake of information, but also to enable the postulant to reaffirm his dispositions and bind himself by promise to carry them out as far as human strength permits. If the examiner has any doubt about how he should proceed, he should consult the superior on whose behalf he is acting, and should follow his decision.

## CHAPTER 4

### The second examination, proper to postulants of group one: on their complete freedom to follow this way of life

26. The second examination, peculiar to those asking to profess unlimited perfection in the Society, concerns their complete freedom to follow a way of life in which a person makes his whole self over to the Lord his God through obedience rendered to Christ in his vicars, the superiors of the Society (E.), so that he can say to his heavenly Father with the Psalmist: 'I was like a beast toward thee' (Ps 73: [22]). In this way of life it is first necessary that the postulant should be master of his entire liberty, which he offers and freely sacrifices to God.

(E.) When a person subjects his will to the superiors in any religious society approved by the Church, he obeys Christ on two accounts. First, because he longs to do so. His intention in subjecting himself is to obey Christ, and there is no doubt that Christ himself accepts this intention favourably because it springs from love and reverence towards him. Second, because of the approval of the Church which ratifies with her own authority powers already established. A further consequence in this case is that the first superiors of such societies are either bishops, or directly the sovereign Pontiff himself, with the result that the words: 'He who hears you, hears me,' (Lk 10: [16]) apply to religious superiors also.

27. The postulant must be questioned carefully about any obligations by which he may be bound in virtue of justice, equity or charity, either by contract or through natural relations proper to his state, in such a way that some part of his liberty or work is subject to another's claim or must be employed to the advantage of others. He must be questioned especially on the following five cases.

28. First, is he so burdened with debt and insolvency that the wages he is able or accustomed to earn by his daily work are due to his creditors (apart from what he needs to live on)?

29. Second, has he contracted his work to another?

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30. Third, has he children for whose support and education he is still bound to provide, or needy parents who depend upon his work?

31. Fourth, is he bound by the tie of marriage, consummated or not, or of betrothal?

32. Fifth, has he made religious profession in any regular Institute, or bound himself, with present effect, by promise or vow to follow some other rule of devout life?

33. Anyone of these five impediments precludes a person who incurs it from admission to group one of the Society. Lacking full power over his liberty, he cannot dedicate it to his Lord through obedience in the Society without loss or injury to a third party.

34. In order to be received, a person in debt must first repay what he owes, or so settle the affair, either by obtaining from his creditors the voluntary remission of his debts or by legal provision, that he is no longer in debt to anyone, and can with a clear conscience consecrate his work in religion to God alone.

35. Moreover, before he can be received, enquiries must be made about the causes, honourable or dishonourable, of his debts. If it is clear that the debts are not the result of misfortune, but depend upon his bad will or lack of prudence and judgment, he must on no account be admitted until it is certain he has seriously repented of the evil conduct, or clearly shows he is willing to correct his lack of discretion and judgment by greater humility and discretion.

36. Similarly, no one may be received for group one while still bound by the second, third or fourth impediment. This would be detrimental to his neighbour. The conditions required for reception are as follows. In the case of the second impediment, he must work out the agreed period, or obtain the consent of the person to whom his work or service is contracted; in the case of the third impediment, he must provide for his parents or children, or enable the latter to complete their education; with regard to the fourth impediment, he must be freed from the bond either by the death of his spouse, or by obtaining her

consent and fulfilling the other conditions laid down by law in individual cases.

37. In the fifth case, two reasons would render a person unsuited to the novitiate for candidates to group one: either he would remain bound by obedience to someone other than those who direct the Society, or he might have bound himself to something different from that prescribed in the Society if, for example, he had professed a vow of stricter poverty or sworn to uphold any teaching of a particular school.

38. In addition to the cases mentioned above, enquiries must be made about any ties which, although not absolutely hindering his entry into the Society, ought nevertheless to be manifested so that the matter can be assessed: for example, any obligations, however incurred, which must be fulfilled before he enters the novitiate.

39. Finally, there may be other obligations which, because they are identical with those found in the Society, are not therefore obstacles to reception: for example, a major order, or a vow of poverty or obedience in conformity with or conformable to that professed in the Society, and so on.

## CHAPTER 5

### **The third examination: on the general physical, intellectual and moral standing of the postulants**

40. Those not bound by any of the five impediments mentioned above, nor by other impediments, will undergo a third general examination concerning their physical, intellectual and moral standing. They will be asked about:

I. Their physical health and strength (E.).

(E.) There is nothing to prevent the prudent reception of persons in frail health, provided they are of outstanding piety. They will be a source of edification to others, whom they will provide with an opportunity of exercising charity. The same may be said of elderly people, whom the Society must not reject out of hand, but admit with caution lest its eagerness to benefit them hinder its exercise of charity on a wider scale.

41. II. Their studies, scholastic progress, schools attended, their teachers, subjects taken (E.1), and whether they have acquired any academic or technical skill (E.2). Further enquiry must be made about their temperament and intellectual ability (E.3).

(E.1) Arts or science students must present a résumé of what has been learnt by them in each faculty, and write on a set topic.

(E.2) A person without a sufficiently high academic standard, or some technical skill which could be employed usefully and with edification in the Society, should not as a general rule be admitted to the novitiate for group one. An exception can be made, however, if the following two conditions apply: first, if the applicant is a person of outstanding piety who could be a source of edification to those with whom he is to live; second, if provision can be made for his maintenance without his taking the place of another member more useful for charity towards our neighbours.

(E.3) A person found to be suffering from mental disability obscuring or impairing his judgment, or manifestly disposed to such a condition, must not be admitted. Similarly, no one may be admitted who is clearly lacking in sound judgment or notably obstinate in maintaining his own opinion. Each of these

defects, whether physical or moral, is an obstacle to perfect obedience without which there can be no order or edification in the Society.

42. III. Finally, with regard to their moral standing, they must be examined about their past conduct, their occupations, their education, the persons with whom they have lived, their devotions, affections, exercises of piety, practice of prayer, and the promptings of vocation they have experienced. In short, enquiries should be made with care and discretion about anything which seems likely to provide information beneficial to the person being examined.

## CHAPTER 6

### The fourth examination, on the resolve for perfection; and the first instruction, on perfection

43. The fourth examination will concern the desire to follow perfection of life. At the same time instruction will be given, if necessary, about the notion of such a life and its consequences. Very often people say they are seeking the perfect state without understanding what they are saying; or else they have only a rather inadequate idea of it. They enter with this deficient concept, wrongly believing they have achieved all that makes up the reality of the religious state although, in fact, they have grasped only some of its external aspects. A start must be made, therefore, with the very concept of perfection (and this is the subject of the present examination) which is to be described not in profound and difficult language, but clearly in words adapted to the understanding of beginners.

44. With this in mind, the examiner begins by asking the postulant whether he loves Christian perfection and has firmly resolved to pursue it; how long it is since he made this general resolution to undertake the perfect life; whether, and to what extent, after making this decision, he has become less earnest in his resolve (E.). Here it should be made clear how perfection consists in exquisite love of God and of our neighbour. The only perfection is that described in Scripture: 'God is love: he who abides in love abides in God and God in him' (1 Jn 4: [16]). The postulant must be asked therefore whether he has made up his mind to love God with all his strength and with his whole being and to dedicate himself solely to the love of God.

(E.) In the case of notable inconstancy or slackness, a postulant would be considered rather unsuitable for the Society, which seeks determination in its members, and order in all things.

45. If he is determined to do this, he should then be advised to consider carefully the difference between the *life common to all Christians* and *the perfect life*. In the common life to which they have all been called, all Christians must desire a certain fullness of charity. However, their many preoccupations with secular

life have divisive and distracting effects in them. Generally speaking, they can reflect on God and divine things in an indirect and habitual way only. On the other hand, the person who chooses the state of religious life puts aside all preoccupations with secular life. His dedication to the love of God enables him to be intent upon his God directly and explicitly at every moment, as far as is humanly possible in this life; his mind is at rest and his heart free from everything and every affection; his sole motive for engaging in human affairs is charity. The postulant should see, therefore, whether his desire to be intent upon the love of God is effective, or simply a matter of words. His aim would be to keep constantly before his mind what pleases God and to do it always, or try to do it always, without desiring anything else (E.).

(E.) The examiner should note that it is not required of the postulant that he should be already perfect. The very purpose for which a person enters religion is to make progress in spirit and in knowledge of God (he joins a kind of school, or way of perfection). What is required is that he himself should desire to achieve perfection and hence to make use of all necessary or useful means to attain it for himself. He should, however, be refused admission if he reveals passions or affections that seem uncontrollable or sinful habits that give little hope of amendment.

46. Now what pleases God is justice, or innocence of life, according to those words of Christ: 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments' (Jn 14: [21]). It is impossible to please God in word alone; we must also fulfil God's commandments. The postulant, therefore, must first consider whether, in his desire to follow the more perfect state, he seeks justice alone, or aims rather at a quiet life in this world, or perhaps a combination of the two. He should not be approved unless his only desire is to purify himself more and more from every stain and become more pleasing to God, for in this intention alone consists the true desire and resolve for perfection.

47. A person seeking only justice and the purification of his conscience, by which he becomes more pleasing to God, is not satisfied with taking leave of human affections in general only, but willingly applies himself to rooting out and rejecting every



other love from his heart so that all its affections may genuinely tend to his one Creator and Lord. Hence, whoever intends to pursue perfection must also understand how this intention of his implies also the determination to work away at the affections of his heart. Has the postulant, therefore, any human affection for anything created contrary (E.) to perfection? If so, is he resolved to lay it aside, or at least does he sincerely desire to do so, and is he ready to work towards this end by prayer, in practice, and through obedience?

(E.) Human affections are of three kinds. 1st, those in virtue of which attachment to some created thing is final or decisive. For the sake of these affections, a person is prepared to violate and make light of the divine law itself. They are, therefore, gravely sinful, and to be shunned by all. 2nd, those in virtue of which a person is not so attached to a created thing that he would prefer to sin rather than relinquish it; but he abandons it with such great difficulty that he is not equally ready and keen to serve his God whether he possesses the temporal thing he loves, or not. As long as this affection remains, a person chooses freely to love the will of God and something else as well. This joint-possession of his love ill becomes a disciple of Christ even if the will of God has the larger part. Moreover, this defect is opposed to the pursuit of perfection, for although affections of this sort do not altogether divert a person from the service of God, they slow down his progress, making him reluctant and lazy in fulfilling all that God wants, whether ascertained through obedience or in some other way. Such an affection also introduces an element of melancholy into God's service where only joy and spiritual cheerfulness are appropriate. For this reason Christ excludes affections of this kind amongst his disciples, saying: 'If any man comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14: 26). 3rd, those not springing from any decision of our individual wills nor from corrupt nature, but from the sensitive faculty itself which is part of human nature. These may be called *heightened feelings*, rather than *affections*. They are not evil; they do not hinder the service of God, nor diminish the eagerness proper to good will. On the contrary, they stimulate and perfect it. JESUS himself experienced these heightened feelings as he showed many times, especially when he prayed: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me', adding

immediately however: 'not as I will, but as thou wilt' (Mt 26: 39). The disciple of Christ must root out and eradicate the first and second kind of affection; his chief effort will be found here. The third kind must be sanctified. Although this third kind of affection may cause a feeling of pain when God's law is obeyed, the greatness of a person's virtue and the richness of his sacrifice are reflected in the pain itself because of his good will.

48. The postulant must be allowed to consider this for as long as he wishes. If he then promises to do all these things, the instruction should continue as follows. If what he says is true and he really desires to strive after one thing only, to become more pleasing to God every day, he must make himself indifferent to all the means by which God may wish to bring about his salvation. This indifference extends to everything in this world, so that he may not love one thing more than another until he knows God's will concerning it, when it will be clear how God, in his divine plan, intends him to strive for the height of perfection.

He must be firmly convinced and always keep in mind that all things and all human events are means equally effective in God's hands for human sanctification and that we do not know what will be good or bad for us. God has reserved this knowledge for himself alone until in his mercy he makes it clear to his faithful servants who are ready to listen to his voice.

With his free will, therefore, the faithful follower of Christ must make himself indifferent to all things and abandon himself to the providence of his Father without worrying about himself. He must remain in perfect equilibrium with regard to created things, with his dispositions regulated and constantly held in check.

49. Since this entire indifference of will is to be maintained in the category of more perfect life, the postulant must be asked whether he wishes to strive to achieve it and truly desires to use the means for obtaining such a desirable state.

50. The examination must not be confined to general questions. The postulant must be asked specifically whether he wishes to beg of God the grace to maintain indifference of will concerning those things to which people are very strongly

attracted by natural inclination. The examination falls roughly under the five following heads:

51. I. If he knew it to be God's will that he should serve him and perfect his virtue by being despised and discredited, would he be more willing to bear this than to live highly esteemed by others, even if he thought that in this circumstance also he could serve God?

52. II. Would he prefer, or wish to prefer, to serve God and perfect himself amidst discomfort and suffering in this life, if he knew it to be more in accordance with God's will — and this, even if he believed he could achieve perfection amongst riches and pleasures by following his own will?

53. III. Is he prepared, or does he wish to be prepared, to accept with equal readiness health or sickness, whichever he finds more in accord with God's will and containing greater justice?

54. IV. Does he wish to remain indifferent with respect to a long or short life, that is, to a life shortened by labours of charity endured for the name of JESUS? Is he ready to prefer and choose whichever he knows to be the better means of pleasing God and perfecting his own holiness?

55. V. Finally, is he prepared, or does he wish to prepare himself, to lay aside his personal likes and dislikes and discharge any post or duty in this life? Does he wish always to hold most precious what he knows or can suppose to be more in keeping with God's will and therefore more suitable for exercising his charity towards God?

56. This fifth kind of indifference should be especially insisted upon, not because it seems more difficult of itself than the others, but because it depends more on the will. The primary concern is that the will of those following this way of life should be well-disposed (E.).

(E.) The special feature of members of groups one and two in this Society consists in the good, and even excellent disposition of their own personal will. The postulant can be imperfect in other respects, provided he possesses a sincere desire of achieving perfection and abandoning his own will. This

self-abandonment may be taken as a criterion for judging the postulant's genuine desire to obtain perfection by using the means for acquiring it.

57. At this point the postulant should be warned particularly against the error of some who, after perhaps laying aside their affection for other things, remain too much in love with themselves. They do not allow the Holy Spirit to prompt them to undertake whatever duty or post he desires of them, but use their own judgment and human discretion to choose duties from which they can derive satisfaction for themselves (E.). As long as they think that the work in question is good and effective for the exercise of charity they seek nothing else. Hence, under the plea of performing one good work, they exclude and refuse to undertake others which are equally good and perhaps more in conformity with the will of God.

(E.) It should also be noted whether the postulant has any indiscreet practices of piety, which often cause illusions and serious deviations, and if it is difficult for him to put them aside and be able with great docility to allow his conscience to be governed by superiors. If not, he will scarcely be considered suitable for the Society, which is ruled by obedience alone.

58. Efficacious love of God and the justice of the New Testament imply not only abstention from evil-doing, but also the practice of good works: 'By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (Jn 13: 35). Yet even in undertaking charitable works we must employ holy indifference not, indeed, towards works of charity in general (in spirit we must embrace them all), but in deciding the order of preference amongst particular works. Priority must be given to those more clearly indicated as God's will for us, not to those flattering our fancy. Here, too, we should desire to follow the will of God alone, not our own will or natural instinct. Only in this way do we love Christ in our neighbours, rather than ourselves, and shall truly be able to hear him saying to us: 'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' (Mt 25: 40). Persons seeking in charity itself their own pleasure rather than God's cannot expect to hear these words because it is not Christ but themselves whom they embrace and cherish in their neighbour.

[57–58]

59. Let the postulant, therefore, reflect once more whether he is prepared to lay aside completely his own will (E.) in exercising charitable works, to show himself indifferent to everything, to seek not his own pleasure but charity, and in charity the will of God. If so, he will accept with greatest readiness those works towards which he can reasonably believe himself destined by the will of God, whether they be laborious or easy, irksome to nature or his accustomed way of life, or pleasant and agreeable. For this determination also is implied in the desire to follow a more perfect life.

(E.) In speaking of a *decision of the will*, we do not mean that we should be entirely neutral towards heightened feelings and pain which affect us passively. We mean that these heightened feelings should not overwhelm or diminish a decision of the higher will. If possible, they should rally to support its decision, as has been said, rather than oppose it (47 E.).

## CHAPTER 7

### **The fifth examination, proper to postulants of group one: on their dispositions with regard to embracing the more perfect state in this Society; and the second instruction: on the nature of the Society of Charity**

60. The purpose of the fifth examination is to discover whether the postulant is well disposed not only with regard to the state of perfection in general but, specifically, whether he seems to be called by JESUS Christ, our Lord and God, to this state as it is presented in the Society. Simultaneously with this examination, he must be given appropriate information about the Society, as we shall see in explaining the examination.

61. He must be asked whether, in addition to deciding to leave secular life and dedicate himself completely to the worship of God, he has deliberately resolved to do so in this Society and intends in the Lord to live and die with it (E.).

(E.) If he has not yet fully weighed the matter, he must be given time for reflection. He shall be assisted by receiving all the information he desires about the Society, and by being lodged separately as a guest for some days, as the superior shall see fit.

62. He must also be asked about the end which he had in view (E.) in coming to this decision, about the reasons leading him to it and about the person who first influenced him.

(E.) An imperfect end or purpose is an absolute impediment to admission.

63. If he says that he was not influenced by any member of the Society, he may proceed to the next stage. If he says he was so influenced, it will be for his greater spiritual advantage to have prescribed for him some time in which to consider the matter and commend himself entirely to his Creator and Lord as if no member of the Society had influenced him. In this way, he will be able to go forward with increased spiritual strength to the greater homage and glory of the divine Majesty.

If he then feels and judges that entering the Society for the

greater praise and glory of God would be a most suitable means of better applying himself to the salvation and perfection of his soul and asks to be admitted to the Society, the examination may then be taken to the next stage.

64. In the preceding examination the meaning of the resolve for the perfect life was explained; in the present examination the matter needs to be clarified by an explanation of the meaning of the resolve to pursue the perfect life in this Society.

65. In his resolve for the perfect life, the postulant has asserted and decided that he wishes to prepare himself to seek and love nothing in this world except the will of God in all things, and to hold himself totally indifferent to prosperity or adversity in this world until he knows whether God wills to bring about his salvation and perfection by one or the other. Without this abandonment of all things in spirit, no one can be a disciple of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, as he himself has said: 'So, therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14: 33).

66. After private reflection, the postulant may conclude that there can be no safer way of learning the divine will than that of obedience. Moreover, he may wish to use the judgment and discretion of the superiors of this Society to discern the divine will and consequently make himself over entirely to their direction, submitting himself to obedience in all matters. If so, he can be said to have made up his mind to enter this Society.

67. He would not be mistaken in thinking obedience, especially religious obedience (26 E.), the best way of knowing the divine will. Besides, it is only by obedience that a person, after abandoning the other things of this world, finally forsakes himself. For this reason, the resolve to follow obedience is seen to be included in the perfect life and in the following of Christ, who says: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself' (Mt 16: [24]).

68. As we have said (63), it is left completely to his own feeling, and to the spirit by which he is prompted, to determine whether he prefers the direction he finds in this Society to any other. However, he may perhaps doubt the reasonableness of

general obedience as required and practised in this Society: superiors are fallible human creatures and could abuse such ample power. In this case, further assistance is to be given the postulant by providing him with all the information suitable for his knowing the order and nature of the Society. He will learn what precautions have been laid down to ensure the choice of superiors worthy of ruling. He will also see how they are warned and almost impelled to follow the single rule of divine prudence in governing and to command their brothers, for whose souls they will have to account (Heb 12 [13: 17], with perfect circumspection and fear and love.

69. He will learn that those put in charge of others in this Society are presbyters with great experience and skill in the religious way of life, exceptional for their good works and prudent charity. In every matter of importance they make no decision without deliberating with several of the more prudent members on the action to be taken. Finally, they have to account for their mode of government to others, that is to higher provosts, and to the Church of God, as well as to God himself (E.).

(E.) The subordination of powers in this Society is so arranged that a lower minister can take no important measure without the knowledge and judgment of superiors. For example, prefects and rectors render an account of everything to provosts, while provosts have their own order among themselves. A diocesan provost is informed of what a local provost does, and a provincial is likewise informed of a diocesan's actions, and so on up to the General. Thus it may be said that in any house the Society is governed by no one in particular, but is ruled by itself, so well are all things within it mutually connected and interrelated. However, this explanatory information about the nature of the Society and the correlation of all its parts is not to be made available to everyone, but only to those who desire it and are capable of understanding it. It is not suitable for communication to young people, nor to those who have no doubts about obedience.

70. At this point the postulant could fall into error, thinking that if he submits to obedience he becomes subject to human whim. Nothing could be more false. He who gives himself to obedience in the way we have described only leaves his own personal judgment to follow that of someone else: not indeed of



anyone else, but of one chosen with care from many. The judgment of such a person is free from those illusions to which self-judgment is subject. Moreover, we can expect to receive greater illumination from on high; God does not deny light and grace to the humble who deny themselves. Hence, whoever practises obedience in our Society does not abandon himself to human caprice, but to the conscience of a well-informed religious (for whatever he commands, he weighs beforehand in his conscience (E.)). Since this is reasonable and approved by the Church, he abandons himself to God, and in a superior can truly be said to obey Christ who never deludes those hoping in him.

(E.) It must be noted carefully that a provost in this Society is a spiritual father and as such is bound to bear in mind in all things the greater spiritual progress of the members. On all issues he judges according to the dictate of conscience in virtue of the natural law itself whereby all rulers and especially those who rule the souls of others are obliged to rule well.

71. These considerations will be enough to confirm the postulant in his calling if his doubts about the reasonableness of religious obedience spring from his understanding and not from pride of heart. Already he has unhesitatingly chosen the state of perfection and indifference described above and sets no value, or desires to set no value, on human realities. He has truly offered his life along with all created things to God, to be sacrificed at any indication of the divine will, and hence longs to accept as spoken for his own good the divine words: 'He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life' (Jn 12: [25]).

72. This was the doctrine of all the holy fathers, who consistently taught that religious obedience was to be observed even unto death (E.), and history tells us of many wonderful actions by which God has miraculously approved the virtue of religious obedience unto death.

(E.) For greater confirmation of the teaching on religious obedience which we have proposed, certain words of the holy father Basil can be usefully considered. These words have been repeated by many religious founders. St. Basil asks in his Rule (*Interr.* 128): 'To what extent must we go in carrying out a command?' and he answers: 'We should carry out the

command even unto death because the Lord himself was made obedient unto death. This we can accomplish if we have, everyone of us, a great desire and love of God. For when the Lord had banished worldly anxiety, he immediately added a promise to bring us hope: “Your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Lk 12 [Mt 6: 8]), and the Apostle too has said: “Why, we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead” (2 Cor 1: [9]). We die daily, then, as far as our resolve and spiritual preparation is concerned; but the will of God preserves us. That is why the Apostle said with complete confidence: “struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor 6 [4: 9]). This resolve to carry out God’s commands is strengthened by an ardent spirit and an insatiable desire.’ The context in which these words appear show that they refer also to commands of God given through superiors.

73. Since it is helpful to abandon oneself to the direction of a spiritual person (and the Church has always held this), there can be no doubt that it is praiseworthy and in conformity with God’s will to submit to the direction of the priest set over this Society. He is not self-chosen but elected by persons of prudent judgment, after trial of his virtue, to rule not only for the corporal well-being of the brethren, but much more for the salvation of their souls.

74. Under such direction, therefore, *obedience* in the Society is as boundless as the *charity of God* in the resolve for perfection. For obedience is chosen as the *guide of this charity*, and the sure rule whereby subjects may know the will of God which the disciple of Christ ardently wishes to fulfil in prosperity and adversity, in life and in death.

75. Hence, as the charity we spoke of embraces the kinds of indifference described above, so obedience also must be extended to these points. When the person being examined, therefore, is in agreement and fully content with the preceding instructions, he must be questioned once more on the various kinds of indifference, though the five questions given previously (51–55) may now be reduced to three.

76. I. Is he willing for the love of Christ to be prepared to go to any *place* and live there as obedience requires?

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It must be pointed out that members of the Society can be called upon to travel anywhere or live in any country for the sake of the greater perfection of the brethren, the exercise of charity towards their neighbour, and obedience.

77. II. Does he wish to show complete indifference to whatever *grade*, high or low, the discretion of superiors may destine him when they judge in the Lord that it is for the greater good of his own and his neighbours' soul?

78. III. Finally, does he wish to show himself ready to help his neighbour in any *post* whatever in the service of his Lord which superiors consider more suitable for him and put before him through obedience as the will of God? Does he wish to accept this post with a determined act of will that takes no account of his own affections, nor of the inclinations springing from nature or from his accustomed way of life?

79. It is not to be thought that in consenting to all this the postulant already possesses the perfection we have described, as though he could immediately feel himself ready to undergo all sorts of hardships and death itself for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls. It is sufficient that he should wish to have this Christian fortitude, and hope to obtain it from the Lord JESUS, desiring to enter the school of JESUS Crucified which shall be faithfully described to him. He must also promise to yield himself to divine grace and religious discipline in this school so that he may be taught and led to perfection in whatever way superiors judge in the Lord most fitting. This school, in which the discipleship of Christ is taught and learnt, begins with the novitiate. The present examination is intended to ensure that the postulant enters the novitiate with the right dispositions.

80. This school is a test of the candidate by the Society and of the discipline of the Society by the candidate. Consequently, the novice is not bound by any permanent undertaking such as vows or their equivalent (E.), from which he cannot withdraw when he wishes. In all other matters, however, he must do what superiors require, nor other than what they require in matters of any importance until finally, with the Lord's help, in the joy of the Holy Spirit, he can share fully in the Society by taking

vows. From then on he offers himself completely to God and, even in permanent matters, subjects himself to the direction of the Society.

(E.) Those who wish to make their vows before this time, provided they do so with the superior's permission, are not deprived of the freedom, devotion, spiritual advantage and merit which are gained by all who bind themselves to Christ our Lord. But if they make these vows, it is not to be thought that they have thereby attained any grade in the Society, nor will they be admitted to the vows of the Society before the usual time (387 E.)

**81.** Hence, if the candidate entering the novitiate in the Society is not a priest, or has not yet begun to study, or has not completed a course of studies, he must lay aside his own judgment on these matters while in the Society and rely completely on the judgment of superiors of the Society who will decide in the Lord whether he will benefit from receiving the priesthood, or studying, or continuing his studies. Meanwhile, he must strive with all his might to bring his heart to entire indifference about these matters also. He may be sure that nothing is more acceptable to God than such a disposition.

**82.** With regard to the priesthood, it is consistent with humility and fear of God that each one allow his calling to be examined by others. There is good reason to be afraid for the person who presumes to undertake the priesthood of his own accord, not realising that it would be a burden even for angels, and forgetting the words of the Apostle: 'And one does not take the honour upon himself, but he that is called by God, just as Aaron was' (Heb 5: [4]). Such a person is not even afraid of despising Christ 'who did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him: "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"' (ibid. [5: 5]).

It would be desirable for persons to be brought unwillingly to the priesthood, as often happened in history, rather than approach it in such an inconsiderate manner. Hence, the same holy indifference we have spoken of is to be employed most rigorously with regard to undertaking the priesthood.

**83.** Again, a man of God should not be so anxious about his studies that he is not equally ready to undertake or abandon

them as superiors shall judge more helpful to his salvation and more in conformity (E.) with the will of God.

(E.) Should any difficulty arise in this matter on the postulant's part, he must be informed that superiors, as fathers, have only his own good in view. They do not intend to deprive him without just cause of anything which would be to his advantage; they only wish to keep him in a state of uncertainty in this matter to enable him the better to lay aside every inclination and entrust himself completely to the Lord whose place they hold.

84. Although humanly speaking it is more dignified and advantageous to become a priest or to study, it may be more pleasing in the sight of our God and Lord if a person serve him in the lay state or without academic learning. Consequently, a person who seeks to please God and not man and has renounced all things to follow Christ, must be indifferent to the priesthood or the lay state, to study or to abandoning study. In fact, it is better to incline to the more humble state, which to the eyes of faith is safer and happier.

85. This perfect indifference, which each one must strive to gain in the school of the novitiate, would be present if the souls of the servants of God had grown so strong in charity that superiors, when employing them in the vineyard of the Lord, were able to disregard the imperfection and weakness of their will (E.), and consider only the greater good of the Church and our neighbour's greater benefit. In this way, undertakings more beneficial to the Church would also be of greater avail to the souls of our members, who would always be ready to render God the greatest possible service. Only then could they be said to have left all things and, with Christ, to have offered themselves wholly to the heavenly Father; then indeed having become responsive to God in the hands of superiors they would not fear those words of the Lord: "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 18: 3).

(E.) Superiors must take account of members' defects when giving their brethren assignments so that the souls of the members, the first object of their government, may not suffer as a result. Nevertheless, the members of this Society should realise that every defect in relation to holy indifference is directly

opposed to their calling. They will have to render an account to the Lord of the good the Society would afford the Church and souls if all the members lived up to their promises, but which is lost because of their imperfections.

86. The postulant should be advised about all these matters and given suitable time to consider them. He should then be asked whether he feels a desire to obtain this perfection by means of the obedience described and is prepared interiorly to join this school of complete abasement and self-denial.

If he is called to all these things, he must also be instructed in their consequences. The person who totally abandons himself must have no secret he would be ashamed of revealing to his superior. Keeping a secret to oneself (E.) means keeping back something of oneself; the worldly personality has not yet been put off and rejected. So, unfolding everything with childlike sincerity, the candidate must be prepared to lay open his whole conscience before his superior and father as he would before God, just as it is known to himself, together with all that has happened to him in his whole life, and all that he has done amiss. No corner of his heart should be so closed that he could be sure it had not been entered by the person who directs, rebukes and approves him here on earth. By this salutary disclosure of conscience, with all his faults and defects, he will avoid the danger of fabrication and deception in other things and will become a true Israelite in whom there is no guile. Moreover, this complete and sincere self-humiliation, which is indeed the mother of compunction, gains favour with God, who has raised the confession of sins to the dignity of a sacrament.

(E.) It is clear that this regards those secrets which are concealed through shame or self-love, not those which are withheld by reason of duty.

87. The postulant, therefore, should open his heart and all his thoughts to a superior of the Society, his loving father, so that with full knowledge the latter may be able to discern what can help or harm his soul. The postulant should accept from him all the means suggested for turning his heart perfectly from the secular life to God. Let him see if he is prepared and content to do this also.

88. A general disclosure of conscience and confession are to

be made to the father with all humility and sincerity before he enters the novitiate, unless the father himself decides differently. He will give the same father an account of his conscience every six months until, with God's help, he reaches profession of the vows of the Society (E.).

(E.) Disclosure of conscience, as we interpret it, differs from sacramental confession. 1st, in its matter: in sacramental confession the confession of sins can suffice; but not in disclosure of conscience where not only sins, but all inclinations and temptations must be revealed, as well as any other information which would help the superior to gain a more intimate knowledge of the candidate. 2nd, in its end: the principal end of confession is sacramental absolution; the principal end of disclosure of conscience is to provide the superior with information. 3rd, in its effect: in disclosure of conscience there is no forgiveness of sins, no reception of a sacrament. Should anyone conceal sins in disclosure of conscience, he would not violate a sacrament, although he would not walk rightly before God. In his disclosure of conscience the novice does not need to repeat any sin which he has already confessed to the same superior.

89. After this, the postulant must consider how the obedience proposed (which in this Society is considered the principle and fount of the whole religious life) includes also the profession of poverty. No one can submit himself wholly to the judgment of a superior if he has not first in spirit renounced all temporal goods, and accepted the Lord's word: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5: [5]). In this Society the human being and anything he may possess is subject to obedience.

90. If, therefore, a candidate should wish to dispose of his temporal goods, or the revenue they produce, before subjecting himself to obedience, he may freely do so, keeping back enough for his support in the Society (E.).

(E.) The sum paid by candidates to the Society for their maintenance will be determined according to circumstances by the Provost General, and it can easily be dispensed with if the indigence of our way of life renders it unnecessary.

91. The superior will keep the postulant's inventory of undisposed-of goods. With the approval of the superior, he will

consign their administration to a prudent person whom he can trust to care for them as well as possible. In this way, the novice will no longer be distracted from the pursuit of perfection by anxiety about his temporal affairs (E.).

(E.) If he has a non-residential ecclesiastical benefice, he may retain it if the superior sees fit, but he must take care that its obligations are fulfilled faithfully either by himself or others. If he has a residential benefice, he will either renounce it, or obtain a dispensation from residence for the two years of the novitiate or, with the permission of the ordinaries, provide a suitable substitute for that period.

**92.** After provision has been made for his maintenance, he will dispose of what remains of the revenues with the advice of the superior to the greater glory of God. On his part, the superior will take care to act with God's holy prudence so that the arrangement may edify all, without offending anyone (E.).

(E.) If the superior accepts any of the novice's revenue for distribution, he will keep a careful account of it. He will have this account signed and approved by the novice himself every six months.

**93.** The chattels which the candidate has not disposed of before the novitiate will be stored with some trustworthy person, with the consent of the superior. If the novice brings any with him to the novitiate-house, he will surrender them for safe keeping in some separate place, after writing and signing an accurate list of them (E.).

(E.) They will be restored to him if he is sent away before scholastic vows. Superiors and others in the Society will take care not to encourage the candidate to dispose of any of his goods before his profession of vows. They may advise him, however, if he spontaneously wishes to distribute them. If a candidate wishes to offer the Society more than his maintenance requires, they will accept reluctantly and only after prudent consideration.

**94.** A person admitted to scholastic vows after the novitiate retains the dominion of unrenounced stable goods and investments, but leaves their administration to the Society. He will dedicate all profits, uninvested monies and chattels to the Lord JESUS Christ for pious uses and dispose of them according to the judgment of superiors, as will be said later (Part 5, chapter 5).



95. In his profession as a coadjutor, he declares himself ready to dispose of all goods, not previously disposed of (E.1), in works of charity at the indication of obedience (E.2). He disposes of them in fact (E.3) if the superior orders (E.4). Indeed, he promises and vows to distribute any goods coming to him under any title whatsoever after his profession (for he retains radical dominion on the authority of the Provost General (E.5)).

(E.1) Agreements concerning his hereditary rights and other goods belonging to him should not be undertaken until the General Provost has been fully informed about the condition of the person whose inheritance and goods they are. The whole matter will be carried out according to the judgment of the General Provost.

(E.2) Provided certain conditions are observed, it will not be contrary to the nature of the vow of poverty normally taken in this Society, which depends wholly upon obedience, if the Provost General or his delegate for this purpose allows the coadjutor to retain for a time the legal or merely external ownership of a part or all of his substance. The conditions are: 1st, the annual profits are applied to pious uses by the superior; 2nd, all goods are administered by the superior; 3rd, after coadjutor profession the candidate is prepared, whenever the superior wishes, to renounce his external ownership of the goods (this absolute disposition is the matter of such a vow). This applies to any principal or capital, to the revenue which supports him, to all rights and hope of recovering the same, and to other goods or rights which he may obtain.

(E.3) If there are any debts they will be settled first and as quickly as possible. If the candidate has no debts, he should remember the words of Christ who did not counsel those longing to imitate him to give their goods to their relatives, but to the poor. However the poverty of his kindred, which perhaps could be greater than that of other people, and various other just causes, may make it difficult for him to decide whether it is more in keeping with perfection to make the gift or renunciation of his goods to his relatives or others. In such a case, he will be glad to leave the decision to the judgment of one, two or three persons well-known for their religious life and learning, and chosen by him with the approval of the superior. He will thus avoid the danger of erring which is normally present when there is question of one's own kith and kin. He will accept

whatever his advisers consider more perfect, and to the greater glory of Christ our Lord.

(E.4) If he has dominion, without use or income, he must understand that he gives the dominion to Christ our Lord and submits to obedience both what he has now and what he expects in terms of use and income. In accordance with the law of obedience he obliges himself to dispose of the revenue for as long as he receives it. If he possesses any benefices whatsoever, he must be reminded of the absolute disposition by which he vows to abandon them as the superior indicates and in the way the superior prescribes, without prejudice, however, to the rights of third parties.

(E.5) No member can ever lawfully accept an inheritance or goods coming to him in any way whatsoever, even if the matter is valid in civil law, except under obedience to the General.

96. Because the law of obedience affects the whole person, it applies *a fortiori* to a person's possessions. Hence, no one entering the novitiate must hide from superiors any stable fund or rights of possession or promissary rights. He will not himself keep, nor allow others to keep for him, any money, clothes, books or writings, or anything else. Everything he has not disposed of shall be put into the hands of superiors who will deal with these matters at the proper time, as we have said.

97. The postulant may feel or hope that he will be given courage and strength by the Lord for all that has been described and judge that he should be admitted to the body of this Society for the greater glory of God and the salvation of his soul, to fulfil in it under obedience his calling to a more perfect life. If so, he should now be taught in more detail about the way of life in the novitiate and about the exercises of piety and the tests to be undergone there.

## CHAPTER 8

### The third instruction: on the way of life in the novitiate

98. The novitiate is a school where the candidate strives under holy discipline and by God's mercy to obtain the perfection that he desires and we have described. Established in this perfection, he is prepared to endure and carry out all things for love of the Lord JESUS so that the superior may not be prevented in any way by defect on his part from choosing him for any work which he considers of greater service to the Church and more conducive to the salvation of our neighbours.

99. In the first place we shall speak of the novice's relationship with the world he has left; and afterwards of the way of life amongst ourselves. He must be taught how useful it is to break off all personal and written contact with his friends and relatives. When the Lord taught us about the perfect life, he said: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14: 26), and: 'Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life' (Mt 19: 29). Hence, in order to remove both the obstacle constituted by this natural inclination and the disruption of peace that normally accompanies communication with externs, he must realise that the renunciation of the world which he renews and perfects in spirit on entering the novitiate, and the total abandonment of himself into the hands of superiors implies his willingness to leave all things and persons in secular life and be at rest in obedience to superiors, glad that letters and all other communication with externs should be accepted on his behalf by superiors themselves and dealt with as they see fit in the Lord.

100. Let him remember also the words of the Lord: 'And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven' (Mt 23: 9). He must not only constantly hold in spirit this teaching of Christ, but occasionally manifest it in his conversation (E.). In addition he will take care to lay aside every

earthly affection for his relatives, and change it into a spiritual affection; he should love them with that love only which ordered charity requires of one who, dead to the world and self-love, lives for Christ our Lord alone, whom he holds in place of parents, kindred and all things.

(E.) It is a good practice for novices, when talking to the brethren, to say that they had parents and relatives, rather than they have them. But all affectation must be avoided when they speak like this.

**101.** As far as life amongst us is concerned, it must first be noted that, whether layman or cleric (E.), he may not go out, nor do anything except under obedience.

(E.) If he has been raised to the priesthood, he must realise especially that he cannot hear confessions, nor exercise any other ministry, without special permission from a superior. Moreover, he shall not say Mass publicly until he has said it privately in the presence of one or more of the household and, if he makes mistakes, has been taught how to celebrate Mass correctly and carry out the sacred rites to the edification of those who will attend Mass.

**102.** In general, he will keep the constitutions and directives as he is taught in his rules.

**103.** He must realise that his food, clothes and sleeping accommodation are to be those of poor people. He ought to prefer for himself the worst things in the house as more suitable for a humble, contrite person, and more helpful to self-denial.

**104.** The same may be said about occupations and employments. He must choose and desire those considered more insignificant and troublesome. In carrying out humble duties (such as helping in the kitchen, cleaning the house, and other everyday work) it is right that he should undertake more readily those which he most dislikes, if he is told to do them.

**105.** When he starts work in the kitchen, or helps the cook, he must obey him with the greatest humility in everything relating to his duty. If he is not entirely obedient to the cook, he will not be sincerely obedient to any of the superiors. True obedience does not consider the person to whom it is rendered, but the one for whose sake it is rendered. Obedience given for the sake

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of our Creator and Lord alone is obedience to him, the sovereign Lord. Consequently, no distinction is to be made between orders from the cook or the superior, between one person and another. Properly understood, obedience is not given to them nor for their sakes, but to God alone, and simply for the sake of God the Creator and our Lord JESUS (E.).

(E.) Although orders and requests are both good, it is better for the cook to give an order courteously ('Do this!' or 'Do that!') than request his assistant to do what is necessary. If he makes a request, he appears rather to be speaking as one person to another, and it would not seem right nor appropriate for a lay-cook to ask a priest to wash dishes or bring wood. If he gives an order, it will be easier to see that he is speaking as Christ to the other person.

**106.** In time of sickness, each one must obey not only the spiritual superiors with great single-mindedness that they may rule his soul, but also treat the doctors and nurses with equal humility and with a sense of gratitude, that they may rule his body. The former take care of his full spiritual well-being, the latter of his bodily health. Moreover, the sick person, by his humility and patience, must be careful, for the greater glory of God, to give as much spiritual encouragement to those who are in charge and look after him as he did when he was well.

**107.** To drive home more firmly what has been said, and for his own greater spiritual benefit, the person being examined should be asked if he wishes to show obedience in all that has been mentioned and explained by undergoing and fulfilling whatever penances may be imposed upon him for his defects and negligences, or for any other reason.

**108.** However, when a person has been tested in such trivial and lowly household duties and carried them out with external humility, he can still open the door of his heart to great vanity and pride. These duties are not themselves self-denial and humility. What matters especially as the foundation of all perfection is that each one should forget himself and human praise; in a holy way, he should become little in his own eyes and love a life truly hidden with Christ in order to please his heavenly Father alone, who sees in secret. He must be firmly convinced that if he abandons himself entirely to the providence of God

his Father, the Father himself will look after him and lead him to that lowly or noble state and grade in which he can better benefit his own soul and the Church of Christ, even if all persons and circumstances seem opposed to this. The power of human beings, who 'cannot make one hair black or white' (Mt 5: [36]) is nothing in the sight of God, and all things are in the hand of the Lord. Each one, therefore, must remain constantly at peace in his own state as if he were going to die there and keep free from anxiety about anything he lacks. He should not seek for any change of state for any reason, either on his own account or through another, directly or indirectly, especially if there is question of a higher grade or a more dignified post. He should realise that this would be totally opposed to the spirit of the Society. If he has no part in any change, he can be reasonably sure that his present and any future state come from the Lord his God and have not been usurped by himself. This must certainly bring him great tranquillity. The example of Christ, whose disciple he wishes to be, ought to encourage him to act constantly in this way. Even though Christ merited all things, he did not assume any honour or grade or duty for himself, but accepted all things from his Father and was able to say: 'I came not on my own accord, but he sent me' (Jn 8: [42]). And again: 'Yet I do not seek my own glory, there is One who seeks it and he will be the Judge' (*ibid.* [50]). And again: 'If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me' (*ibid.* [54]). All these words must be a tremendous stimulus for a member of Charity who follows Christ. They should help him to avoid acting like a thief or a robber who snatches honours for himself, and to evade correction by God and eternal damnation. If he does seek an honourable grade or post and undertakes it of himself, he should remember with fear that he cannot expect help from God in those duties to which he was not sent, since he cannot say with Christ: 'I declare to the world what I have heard from him' (Jn 8: [26]), nor 'I do nothing of my own authority' (*ibid.* [28]), but only: 'the things I have heard of myself I speak', and: 'I do all things of myself.' With these words he seals his own condemnation. On the other hand, the person who remains tranquil in his present state and tries hard to carry out its obligations, truly has God with him. Therefore, the one constant rule of action for a member of this Society will

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be this word of Christ, upon which he will meditate continually: 'Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mt 20: 26–28).

**109.** Whoever seriously longs to rid himself of all vices, and advance in every way towards perfection, must first desire all his vices and failings to be known by superiors, however this may come about, and want to be corrected in them by superiors and brethren. He should be asked if he is content for the sake of greater progress in spirit, and especially for greater submission and humility, to have his errors and defects and anything else noted and observed in him made known to superiors by anyone who perceives them outside confession.

**110.** Let him also be asked (it applies to him and to everyone else) if he thinks it good for others to tell him of his faults, and for him to assist others in correcting their failings. Are they prepared to disclose what they know of another with due reverence and charity for their greater spiritual progress, especially when the superior who has care of them enjoins this, or questions them for the greater glory of God?

**111.** Finally, before a person is admitted to religious profession, he will have to undergo six tests, besides others, according to circumstances, and must be ready to do this whenever the superior decides. These tests need not follow in the order set down. They may be modified (E.), and even changed, according to persons, time and place, on authority from the diocesan provost who has overall care for the novices.

(E.) If there is a notable modification, the diocesan to whom the novices have been entrusted is to be consulted.

**112.** The first test consists in making the spiritual exercises for one month, more or less, and in endeavouring to awaken in one's heart the fear of the Lord and compunction for sin, to learn to know our Lord JESUS Christ and imitate his virtues, and finally to progress in intimate union with God and Christ.

**113.** The second test consists in serving the sick in one or more hospitals or hospices for another month. If possible, the

candidates will eat and sleep there; otherwise they will attend for some hours daily. They will help and serve the various sick people according to instructions and assist the nurses. The aim is to humble and abase themselves continually, and prove that they have entirely abandoned the secular life with all its pomps and vanities to serve in every way their Creator and Lord, crucified for their salvation.

**114.** The third test consists in making a month's pilgrimage, without money, even asking alms when appropriate from door to door for love of Christ. The aim is to become used to hardship in food and lodging to such an extent that, without relying on money and other created things as usually happens, they may place their hope entirely with true faith and ardent love in their Creator and Lord. The two months may both be employed, however, in serving in the hospital or making the pilgrimage, as the superior shall see fit.

**115.** The fourth test consists in carrying out the various humble and lowly duties with great care and attention, as we have said before, from the time of their entrance into the house. They must give good example in all these tasks (E.).

(E.) Those engaged in technical work must be employed constantly in their own duties. This test, therefore, may be replaced by another month of more austere life with fasting, or in serving the sick in complete humility and charity.

**116.** The fifth test consists in teaching Christian doctrine at the appropriate level to children and uneducated people, either publicly or privately according to circumstances, as seems best in the Lord.

**117.** The sixth test is proper to priests (E.1). After giving proof of genuine edification in the probations, they will be sent to preach, or to hear confessions, or both, as time, place and other circumstances indicate (E.2).

(E.1) Those who are not priests will spend either a month looking after the poor and helping them in every way, as the superior shall decide, or an additional month catechising the uneducated and children.

(E.2) The reasoning behind these tests is as follows.

We have enumerated three kinds of indifference (76–78) for

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which a member of the Institute must be prepared, that is, indifference to every place, grade and post.

Indifference to place is tested in the third trial, the pilgrimage. Indifference to one's grade is tested in the fourth trial, undertaking humiliating duties.

Indifference to one's occupation is tested in the other trials.

First, occupations may be either internal or external; internal occupations are prayer and one's avocation.

Prayer and piety are tested in the first trial.

A test of laboriousness and application to one's avocation is omitted here, because this is provided for during the period of studies and practical courses.

External occupations can be divided according to the triple division of charity into temporal, intellectual and spiritual. The test of indifference for these kinds of charity are the second, fifth and sixth trials. The second, helping the sick, is to test temporal charity; the fifth, teaching catechism, is to test intellectual charity; and the sixth, preaching and hearing confessions, is to test spiritual charity.

**118.** These six tests should be carried out during the first year of novitiate, or at least before scholastic vows, as occasion offers and according to the judgment of the superior. They may take place during six successive months, or at intervals.

**119.** Finally, the person being examined must note carefully (and consider it of great importance in the sight of our Creator and Lord JESUS) that complete and uncompromising detestation for all things loved and cherished by the world is necessary for progress in the perfection he desires. All his efforts must be devoted to accepting and desiring whatever Christ our Lord loved and cherished. Worldly persons, in their pursuit of worldly things, love and seek with great earnestness honours, fame and a good name on earth, as the world teaches them; those who advance in the spirit and follow Christ the Lord seriously, love and eagerly desire the exact opposite. For love and reverence of their Lord they want to clothe themselves with his garb and emblems. They would desire to suffer contumely, calumny and injuries and be thought fools (without themselves giving cause for it) if it could be done without offence to the divine Majesty, or sin in their neighbour. Such desire springs from their longing to emulate and imitate in some way their

Creator and Lord JESUS Christ by putting on his garb and emblems. It was for our greater spiritual benefit that he clothed himself in them and gave us an example so that in every possible manner, by the help of divine grace, we might imitate and follow him, the true way leading human creatures to life. The postulant should be asked if he feels in himself such beneficial desires, so helpful to the perfection of souls.

120. If human weakness and misery prevent anyone from feeling such burning desires within himself, he should be asked whether he sincerely wishes to feel them. If he answers affirmatively that he does want to conceive these desires in his heart, he should then be asked about the means by which to attain them in practice. Has he decided and is he prepared to accept the injuries, disappointments and contempt entailed in wearing the emblems of Christ, and any other afflictions which may come to him from any person whatever whether in the house or in the Society (in which he ought to desire to obey and be humbled, and obtain eternal blessedness), or outside it? Is he prepared to return good for evil, not evil for evil, and with God's grace to bear all this patiently?

121. To arrive at such wonderful perfection, he must truly and earnestly strive to seek in the Lord complete self-denial and, in everything possible, continual mortification. It will be the superiors' responsibility to help him in these matters, according to the grace bestowed upon them by the Lord for his greater praise and glory (E.).

(E.) Moreover, before he is admitted to common life with the novices, he should be taught in a practical way the method of meditation, and how to observe the rules of courtesy.

## CHAPTER 9

### The examination of those who ask to be received as adopted sons

**122.** A person bound by one of the five impediments mentioned above (27–39), or by any other, may wish to belong and subject himself to the Society as far as possible in order to obtain perfection and exercise charity, even though the impediments prevent his giving complete obedience to superiors of the Society. The Society would desire to share with such a person and others like him the spiritual goods bestowed upon it by God, by adopting them as sons, and cherishing them with all charity.

**123.** In order to be received as adopted sons (15, 24) these God-fearing persons must be motivated in their will by such a sincere desire of perfection of life that they can honestly affirm they would enter the Society if there were no impediments. Hence, they practise the saving counsels of the Lord at least in spirit although they cannot yet profess poverty, chastity and obedience by means of the vows of the Society.

**124.** They shall be asked, therefore (and this is the sixth examination), whether they truly desire religious perfection, as far as they are concerned, and feel themselves ready to undertake the religious state in the Society if the impediments holding them in secular life were to cease. If they reply affirmatively, the third, fourth and fifth examinations, already set out for postulants of group one, will be adapted to their possibilities. After the usual information, their general moral and intellectual dispositions are to be checked, especially by reference to the circumstances of their past and present life. Next, questions should be asked about their desire for religious perfection and about the idea they have formed of it, and if necessary, they should be instructed about its true and basic notion. More particularly, enquiries should be made about their disposition for obtaining perfection in the way and with the means provided by the Society (E.).

(E.) All must be shown that part of the Rules which concerns the duties and obligations undertaken by everybody entering the Society.

**125.** If he perseveres in his resolve after the examination, and the Society is assured of his sincerity, circumstances should be weighed to see if they permit his binding himself in any way by vow, and if so, whether this is expedient, all things being considered. If circumstances are favourable, he should be asked if he wishes to take one or other of the vows after the second probation so that he may profess, at least in part, the ideal of religious life which he desires. This will be a good indication of his religious intent and a real start to the perfect life. Finally, he should also be advised about the need to be ready to submit the direction of his spirit to the priest appointed by a superior of the Society (E.).

(E.) If the examination shows that he has no real desire for religious perfection, he can be enrolled amongst the ascribed members if he possesses the necessary qualifications and endowments for this group, but not amongst the adopted sons.

**126.** The spirit and purpose of the Society, which rejoices in taking its name from the CHARITY of our Lord JESUS Christ, is such that it wishes to pour out and share as widely as possible with others whatever good it may obtain by the Lord's grace. Moreover, by spending all its energy in charity and reverence towards all Christ's faithful, it wishes to be considered, and to be, the servant of them all. We have already mentioned in this respect those God-fearing men amongst the faithful who in spirit long for the perfect state but are prevented by some external impediment from professing the three evangelical counsels under vows. But there also exist as part of the Church's fruitful growth many wonderful religious Institutes in which members of the faithful chosen by the Lord are consecrated to God in the way of perfection, and very often obliged to harder things (such as sterner poverty and stricter austerity of life) than the members of this Society. Now these religious cannot co-operate in the end of the Society in the same way as members of group one because they have determined obligations and are subject to their own superiors. Hence, it seemed good to us in the Lord to work out some means by which all of us vowed to God might

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be linked by our mutual duties of love of Christ and by the merits each possesses. With this in mind, we wish the Society to have the possibility of adopting such religious men as sons when they themselves desire and ask for this, provided, of course, that while the Society accepts them lovingly as sons, it honours them as fathers. For this religious Society of ours takes the last place, and admits that it depends entirely upon the saving charter it has accepted from the divine ways of life and noble innovations of holy founders of other Societies. It is clear to everyone how fitting it is that all those fighting for the one Lord and consecrated to the one God, although they have their own external characteristics, should be bound together by one love and one desire and as one man wage the wars of the Lord in holy and unending alliance. And how joyful it is in the Lord to keep before the mind and maintain in reality the exquisite unity presented by the monastic state in the early history of the Church!

127. No further examination or probation is necessary for adoption in the Society from those professing perfection of life in other religious ways of life approved by the Church because they have already undergone their own probations and experiences which perfect the interior being. However, there should be suitable signs which indicate that they have indeed followed in their lives the way of perfection which they have entered, and offer a shining example to Christ's faithful.

128. The supreme law of the Society's confluence with these persons is that the Society will, as far as its capacities permit, help them humbly in the exercise of any duties of charity towards their neighbour; on their part, they shall reciprocate as they think right in the Lord.

## CHAPTER 10

### Another examination, suitable for ascribed members

129. The seventh examination is for ascribed members, that is, persons of group three accepted by the Society to aid their growth in piety. Christians well-known for their good works in their daily lives who ask to be ascribed to this Society become ascribed members (16, 24) that they may co-operate more easily in its end, which is charity (E.).

(E.) Amongst the ascribed, priests especially can greatly help the Society in extending the exercise of works of charity. Religious of other Institutes, who have their own place amongst the adopted sons, cannot be enrolled with simple ascribed members (126–128). However, our own religious and all adopted sons are considered ascribed by right.

130. In the first place, references testifying a good and exemplary life are required for the acceptance of these persons. A good reputation where they normally live is sufficient.

131. Examination of the ascribed members comprises the usual information, which can be received from any source, and the following points. First, the postulant is instructed in the nature of this ascription through which he is accepted into a more intimate communion of spirit with the members of the Society, shares with them the merits of all good works, indulgences, prayers, and every other spiritual good, and is enrolled amongst the persons of the Society whose needs the Society cares for in charity with special affection. Then he should be asked whether he wishes to strive vigorously for Christian virtue, and especially:

132. Does he desire to co-operate, in as many ways as are compatible with his mode of life and respectable occupations, with the end of this Society, which is charity towards one's neighbour exercised according to good order in the widest manner for the honour of God and the good of the Church? Moreover, does he want to confide in the superiors of the Society, and will he be happy if the Society approaches him with the

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freedom proper to friends and intimates when it needs help for some good work?

**133.** The ascribed members are not tied by any common bond of obligation. Other than the duties common to all the faithful, they will be free to do whatever good they please. However, those desiring to co-operate in particular works of charity may form a pious or religious society with specific rules drawn up by themselves and approved by the Provost General. This will be called a *Sodality of Ascribed Members*, and its associates will be subject to its examinations, tests and probations as their own rules prescribe.

## CHAPTER 11

### Considerations to be made before superiors may admit postulants

**134.** Our ignorance about those whom the heavenly Father may send to be perfected in the Society must make us very cautious about rejecting persons who seek to enter it. In this matter we should imitate JESUS, the divine Master and Lord, who says: ‘All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out’ (Jn 6: [37]).

**135.** But we shall not hesitate to send away those whom we know, through positive indications, do not come to us from the heavenly Father. From what has been said, these are: 1st, persons who cannot offer their full freedom to the Lord and are consequently impeded from reception amongst candidates of group one; 2nd, those suffering from inconstancy of mind, lack of judgment, obstinacy, or disordered and seriously intractable passion, or who lack a true will for perfection or determination to follow the Christian life. These are all absolute impediments to admission into the Society.

**136.** Besides these causes based on defective disposition in postulants, there can be other causes for at least deferring the admission of some. These will depend upon possible offence to externs, or the state of the Society and various circumstances (E.).

(E.) Care should be taken to avoid injuring in any way the rights of civil rulers, or slighting the laws of the nation. The very desires of bishops are to be respected and observed so that in all things we may follow the right course with due respect and satisfaction to all.

**137.** Superiors will easily be able to recognise these causes for themselves with the light of divine grace if they keep in mind the end of the Society, and pay no attention to the importunities of brethren or externs, however powerful. The end of the Society is indeed the salvation of the members and then of all other neighbours.

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The superior must decide on the basis of a reasonable cause whether a postulant is to be accepted amongst extern rather than intern coadjutors. A reasonable cause would be the postulant's extremely useful work in an external ministry or, speaking more generally, if it seemed that he would be of greater benefit to himself and others as an extern coadjutor, or if offence to one's neighbour could be avoided (E.).

(E.) The superior may judge that a postulant asking for admission as an extern coadjutor would give greater glory to God as an intern. If the postulant were not satisfied with this, the lack of necessary indifference would render him inadmissible.

138. They will not admit a postulant whenever they judge in the light of holy discretion that it will not help the greater edification of the members. This will become plain to them especially if they consider that the common edification and sanctification of the members arises from the ordered and, in a certain sense, perfect way in which things are done in the Society. The greatest care should be taken, therefore, not to introduce anything into the Society which may upset this order, or make it too difficult to maintain. This will occur if there are not sufficient superiors and rectors to govern an excessive diversity of persons and duties, or if the admission of a person requires some service which cannot be fulfilled properly or without damage to some greater good.

139. Before accepting candidates, therefore, superiors should consider these three things. Is there a place suitable for their instruction where they may live fittingly under religious discipline? Are there sufficient teachers for the individual groups and permanent states? Does the Society have, or will it soon have, duties and occupations which seem sufficient to absorb fruitfully the talents and capacities of those admitted? The last is necessary to prevent the introduction into the Society of inertia and unrest, evils concomitant with the idleness and excessive contemplation which would in this case undermine the morale of the applicants.

140. The place for the first probation should be a dwelling separate from contact with the brethren. Here postulants of group one are admitted as guests during the time considered

necessary for their examinations, instructions and exercises. If they are approved, they go on to the common house for the novices.

**141.** No special building is necessary for lodging those examined as prospective sons and ascribed members since they can be sent home at night. Nevertheless, the place must be such that they can undergo their probation separately. The provost diocesan will decide, according to faculties received, where the probations are to be held.

**142.** Admittance to the novitiate must be refused to boys too young for entrance to the Society, although their parents desire and request their entry. We should place our hand upon them and bless them with that love with which Christ drew little ones to himself when he said: 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God' (Lk 18: [16]). Moreover, they can be received for the sake of a devout education, so that they may grow in age and grace. The time during which they are maintained in the houses of the Society is counted as the first probation. The Provost General will decide in the Lord when and how this is to be done, what place is to be chosen for such youngsters, and who are to be selected to look after these boys.

**143.** Suitable men are necessary to examine and test postulants of each group and to act as instructors and teachers. In addition, a great deal of time must be spent in this work (especially as it should be carried out properly or not at all). The first need, therefore, is to see whether such persons are available and to weigh the value of their spending this time in instructing such postulants. This will depend, of course, on the quality and number of the postulants.

## CHAPTER 12

### Exercises in the first probation

**144.** The third part of the first probation, the exercise, follows the examination and its accompanying instruction (23).

This exercise is intended principally to purify the candidate from all faults and sins in general so that he may cast off the old man and put on the new. The exercises of the first part will bring this about (E.).

(E.) If the candidate seems ready for it, the entire course of exercises may be given to him before he is admitted to common life. Such a decision is left to the discretion of the superior.

**145.** The exercise given to the candidate will consist of at least the following parts. First, he will be told (and the consideration may be divided into many sections, each of which can be repeated several times) about the power and fear and majesty of the Lord who is the true beginning of wisdom (Ps 110 [111: 10]). An instruction will follow on the adoration to be rendered to the divine Majesty.

When this foundation has been laid and our need for peace with such a great and adorable Lord has been considered (in his hands our whole destiny lies), the means for attaining this peace are to be pondered. The two more general means are proposed first, namely:

a rule of prayer (mental and vocal) by which we may go to God through the way of intelligence given us by his generosity, using the light we have received from him, and

a rule for examination of conscience by which we may scrutinise all the paths our life has followed, and investigate whatever is hidden in our heart, so that by comparing ourselves with the standard of the divine law we may sincerely acknowledge to ourselves our injustice.

Enriched by these two instruments, we must approach the work of our reconciliation to the God of heaven and earth with great reverence, and make use of those paths which his blood has opened for us whom he wishes to save. These ways are two:

confession and compunction for our sins, and the banquet of his flesh and blood.

**146.** At this point, after sacramental confession, or in confession itself, those who ask to be received as religious or as sons will make a disclosure of conscience with all humility and sincerity to a superior of the Society (E.1). Those who are to be ascribed members will make a general confession to any priest, or a confession of their life at least since their last good confession (E.2), before they receive letters of ascription. Finally, they will approach the sacrament of the bread of life so that, even though dead, they may live forever.

(E.1) If anyone has previously made a general confession to a superior, it will be sufficient if he confesses from that time, provided he has nothing to accuse himself of with regard to that confession. The general confession can be deferred to some other time if the superior judges this better in the Lord.

(E.2) Disclosure of conscience will be of great help to ascribed members also.

## CHAPTER 13

### Admission to the probations

147. Those who seem clearly suited for the worship of God and our Lord JESUS Christ in this Society should be admitted to the house, or building, of the first probation (140–141). Those clearly not suited can be sent away immediately after being helped with advice and anything else charity may suggest, so that they may endeavour to serve God and our Lord elsewhere (E.).

(E.) It may be that the matter is still not as clear as it should be to the Society even after the postulant has shown his desire to be admitted, has been questioned courteously about the first impediments, and has understood the substance of our way of life. In this case, despite his apparently sound desire to enter the Society and live in it until death, the answer and the final decision are to be postponed while the matter is considered better and commended to God. In the meantime, the necessary care is to be taken to know the postulant better and to examine his conscience. However, if there are particular causes for a shorter period (if, for example, he seems particularly gifted and is in danger of hesitating in his resolution, or is greatly tempted through delay), the postulant must be admitted sooner to the house of first probation or, after the examination, sent quickly to other places of the Society. Nevertheless, all necessary care must still be used.

148. After it has been decided to admit a postulant to the probation for group one, he can enter in his normal clothes, or dressed as his devotion prompts (unless the superior thinks otherwise). He will live as a guest in the house or place destined for the probation, and the day following his entrance will be told what he must do there. Explicit mention will be made of his having no contact by word or in writing (unless the superior decides otherwise for some serious reason) with externs or with any of the household except those designated by the superior. In this way he will be more at liberty to weigh with himself and God his calling and his resolve to serve the divine Majesty in this Society (E.).

(E.) If will be helpful if, besides the examiner, some of those designated by the superior keep the postulant company, especially if this is of some support to the postulant.

149. A more accurate examination can begin two or three days after the postulant's entry into the house of probation, as has been said (25–110). A written description of the examination should be given him so that he may consider it more attentively on his own.

150. The exercise follows (144–145). Towards the end, the candidate will sign an inventory of the things he has brought with him to the house (E.1). Likewise, he will declare in writing, in the appropriate book, that all matters prescribed concerning the administration, renunciation and disposition of goods have been explained to him, and he will note briefly the chief headings of what he has been told, stating that he has understood what has been explained, and expressing his willingness to observe these and all the other things proposed. Thus there will be no room for any plea of ignorance (E.2). Finally, after reconciliation and the reception of the Eucharist, he will enter the house of common life to live with the novices amongst whom he can be enrolled immediately or shortly afterwards.

(E.1) If he cannot write, someone else will write his name in his presence and in the presence of witnesses.

(E.2) These declarations may be postponed if the candidate does not seem of an age sufficiently mature to appreciate them, or if some other just cause intervenes. But they cannot be deferred until scholastic vows. They must be made before the postulant is admitted to preparatory vows.

**Part Two**

**THE SECOND PROBATION  
FOR THOSE FOUND SUITABLE  
DURING THE FIRST**

## CHAPTER 1

### The persons to be transferred to the second probation and those who govern it

**151.** The faculty of transferring to the second probation, or novitiate, those who have passed adequately through the first (E.1) is granted by the General to the diocesan provost responsible for the overall care of the novices in a given region. He will delegate this faculty to other suitable men when necessity arises (E.2).

(E.1) No one will be admitted to the novitiate before completing his fourteenth year. Indeed, it will be a help if those who seem destined for studies begin the novitiate after their course in philosophy. It will be easier to instruct them if they are more mature, and of the same age.

(E.2) Generally speaking this faculty will be delegated to the parochial provosts and rectors in whose parishes or houses the novitiate-school is located.

**152.** The diocesan provost responsible for the novices will be the provost of the diocese in which the novitiate is placed, or his provincial. It will always be the provincial's duty to watch over the novitiate houses in his province, and keep the Provost General informed about them.

**153.** If there is only one novitiate house in a province, the provincial will be responsible for it. The diocesan provost, in whose diocese the novitiate is located, will look after it to the extent indicated by the General.

**154.** Where the novitiate is attached to a parochial house, the provost will be the immediate superior of the novices.

**155.** Although this superior is the father of all those who live in the house under regular discipline, and their master in the place of the Lord, he must cherish the novices with a special affection in the Lord. His other occupations and business, however, will not permit him continually to look after and help the novices. It will be necessary, therefore, to have in the house a trustworthy man, the most suitable of the brethren, to whom



the superior may confide his children. This man will take his place, living constantly with the novices, instructing them continually in their interior and exterior behaviour, exhorting them to behave as they should, reminding them of what they have been told, and correcting them with great love. All those making the probation should love him and go to him in their temptations, confiding in him completely and hoping in the Lord to receive consolation and help from him in all things.

**156.** This man should be peaceful by nature, gifted with holy simplicity and lovable in his love of Christ. He must also be discreet, and learned in the knowledge of holy things. He will take first place after the provost in the parochial house and be his vicar especially in matters which concern spiritual charity. He will have a priest as his companion and a brother as guardian of the novices.

**157.** In unattached novitiates, the master of novices will have the rules, faculties and name of rector. Normally, he will not be subject to the parochial provost who, nevertheless, can be his consultor (151 E.2) and admonitor.

**158.** Where the novitiate is attached to a rectorial house dedicated to another work of charity, the General will decide whether the novice-master is to be subject to the rector, or independent of him (E.). Nowhere will he be subject to the minister.

(E.) The novice-master will, however, consult the rector and listen to what he has to say on matters of importance about which there is some doubt. The rector will be one of the novice-master's consultors. The novice-master will be in frequent communication by letter with his superiors, and will take great care to write and send reports as directed.

**159.** There should also be a syndic in the house who will be responsible for noting all things concerned with exterior decency and seemliness. He will inspect the church and the house, and inform the superior if he notices anything amiss, or may correct an erring brother if this faculty has been given him, so that he may perform his duty better in the Lord (E.).

(E.) The superior, the vicars and the minister watch all things. Nevertheless, a syndic of this kind with special responsibility for the observance of external decency in all that is found, or is

done, in the house, will be of great help to them. Hence this office will be established in the novitiate and in other places where the number of members requires it. The General will decide, in the light of circumstances, to whom and in what manner the syndic will refer what he has noted.

## CHAPTER 2

### **The discipline to be employed to preserve and encourage the novices in the things of the spirit, when the second probation is carried out in our houses**

160. Postulants who pass from the first probation to the second must be safeguarded in those things which help their advance in virtue, and encouraged with the assistance of our Lord JESUS Christ to tend towards the perfection described (40–125). Established in this perfection, and indifferent to all things of this world, they should be eager for one thing alone, namely, to serve God in charity, according to obedience, for the whole of their life and even in death. To reach this end, they need much supervision and holy discipline by which they may be led with the Lord's own sweetness to purify themselves more and more every day from vices, to cultivate virtue and to unite themselves more intimately with God.

161. We describe first the two-year novitiate done in our houses to obtain purification of spirit and a firm, holy will. This aim will be far more easily achieved by absence from the world they have set aside, and by holy solitude, in which the voice of the Lord is discerned more readily, as Scripture says: 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her' (Hosea 2: [14]). It will help, therefore, if houses of second probation are established in isolated localities, or at least that novices willingly break off with externs all communication by word or letter which the superior (E.1) does not judge absolutely necessary, especially in the case of externs whose worldly love could be a cause of lukewarmness in their resolve for the perfect life (E.2). In this way they will walk in the spirit and be in contact only with those persons and things which will help them in the service of God to obtain the purpose they set before themselves when entering the Society.

(E.1) If it seems necessary for permission to be given to the novice to talk to relatives whom he had in secular life, or friends, he must, as a person who has chosen the Society as his

beloved mother, desire the brief conversation to take place in the presence of someone designated by the superior, unless for particular reasons the superior decides otherwise. Likewise, if anyone in the house wishes to send a letter, he will do so only after willingly showing its contents to the superior. If letters are sent to the novice, they shall be given to the superior first, who may read them and do with them what he thinks in the Lord is for the greater good of the novice.

(E.2) If anyone is unjustly troubled and disturbed by unspiritual persons while residing in a certain locality, the superior should see whether he ought to be sent to another locality where he can attend to the service of God more easily. Without permission from the provincial, however, he cannot be sent out of the diocese by the diocesan provost, unless the case is urgent. The superior to whom he is sent will be informed of the reason for the transfer and of the novice's circumstances by the provincial, if he is sent from one house to another in the province, or by the diocesan provost if he is transferred in the same diocese. The transfer will be recorded in the *status personarum* of both houses. Below, we shall explain when a novice dedicated to non-academic work can be taken from the novitiate (168 E.).

**162.** For the same reason (and like the rest of the brethren), they will not go out except when and with the companion (E.) the superior decides.

(E.) As far as possible, novices and scholastics are not to be assigned as companions to the brethren visiting the houses of seculars.

**163.** At home they will not speak at will, but observe silence with the rest. They can talk, however, at proper times and places, with companions appointed by the superior. These companions should be a source of innocent edification and profit to them in the Lord by their example and spiritual conversation (E.).

(E.) Generally speaking, the novices should not talk amongst themselves, but observe silence, except in matters of necessity. They should communicate rather with mature and prudent persons, assigned to each novice by the superior. Likewise, if two have beds in the same cell, one should be the type of person as to leave no doubt that the other will profit by his company. For the same cause, where individual cells are allotted to each of the juniors, some seniors should be between them.

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No one may enter the cell of another without leave from the superior. While he is inside with permission, the door should remain open as long as he is there with the other so that the superior and others whose duty it is may enter at any time.

No one may leave his own cell without necessity, or when not permitted by the rules.

**164.** However, external solitude alone, and separation from all those things that can distract the mind from its holy recollection and resolve (E.) is useless unless joined with internal solitude of spirit and of desire to flee this secular life. Hence all should take special care to guard the gates of their senses (especially the eyes, ears and tongue) from every bad inclination and keep themselves in peace and true, interior humility which must be manifest both at times of silence and when they speak. Their conversation must be prudent and encouraging, their countenance pleasant, and all their movements and general deportment characterised by a certain maturity, without any sign of impatience or pride. In all things they should seek and desire the better part for others, in spirit esteeming all superior to themselves, and offering with simplicity and religious sobriety the external honour and respect required by each one's state. This mutual consideration will help them to grow in devotion, and praise God and our Lord, whom each one should strive to recognise in the image presented by his neighbour.

(E.) Arrangements in the house should also be a source of edification. There should be no games equipment in the house, nor anything that savours of the world.

**165.** At meals, internal and external temperance, modesty and seemliness are to be observed in all things. While the body is being nourished, the mind should be refreshed also by reading from some pious (E.) book, helpful and intelligible to all. The superior may order someone to speak publicly at this time, or something similar may be arranged to the glory of God.

(E.) For example, histories of the Church, lives of the saints, and edifying literature or periodicals. There will be reading at table not only where there are novices, but also in other houses.

**166.** There will be constant occupation for all in spiritual or

external things, as long as they are physically fit. The necessary help must be provided for those who have a definite duty or ministry to perform. On the other hand, there is to be no inactivity even when they are free. In this way idleness, the origin of every evil, will not gain entrance into our houses.

167. Although there is no place for academic and technical studies in the novitiate (E.1), where affections are schooled in training for virtue, it must be possible for a person to learn something at all times. On the other hand, affections will be sterile, with virtue almost in a state of inertia, if they are not activated. Therefore, unremitting application is necessary for the acquisition of habits and learning, which sharpen rather than blunt the striving of the spirit in the exercise of piety and the study of every virtue, and which help it in many ways. Moreover, a person intending to devote and consecrate himself wholly to the universal charity of Christ must be well-provided with physical and mental capacities and aptitudes, eagerness and practical knowledge of how to get things done. Hence our novices, who should all desire this, can be required to study some of the following subjects, provided there is time left from spiritual conferences and exercises and household duties, and the subjects are treated as accessory (they should lighten, not burden the programme). The subjects are 1st, correct reading and conversation, comportment, enunciation; 2nd, arithmetic, writing and drawing; 3rd, Gregorian chant (E.2); 4th, ceremonies for the sacred rites, and the calender for clerics (E.3); 5th, rules of deportment and good manners; 6th, certain manual works for which all should be prepared such as cobbling shoes, sewing, making disciplines, catinelaes and rosaries, binding books, using a lathe, digging, and other jobs which require corporal exertion.

(E.1) Those engaged in preaching and hearing confessions can use their study-time for learning what is necessary. It is left to the prudence of the provost responsible for the care of the novices to decide whether anyone should be dispensed in regard to study.

(E.2) The use of musical instruments is forbidden, although the provost provincial, if he thinks fit, may give permission for moderate piano or organ practice in a separate building for the purpose of divine worship in church.

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(E.3) Special textbooks are to be written on these subjects by the novice-master.

**168.** Those to be engaged in non-academic work should appreciate the dignity of the manual labour which divine providence has assigned to them as their very own, and show their perfection and the efficiency of their charity and kindness by their laboriousness, diligence and industry. They must sanctify all their external activity with internal virtue. They should have great purity of intention together with a desire to overcome and deny themselves, to suffer and be patient; they should long to do great things for the glory of God, for the virtue of obedience, for the Society and for the good of all their neighbours. The words of St. Augustine should be impressed in their minds: 'To sing psalms and to pray while working is acceptable to God' (*De Op. Monach.*). All their fundamental formation should be directed towards this (E).

(E.) Those destined for non-academic work may not be taken from the novitiate on any pretext until they have been there satisfactorily for an entire year and have made their preparatory vows (unless the General dispenses someone for a grave reason). Whenever they are sent after the first year they should have a spiritual director, and should be recalled to the novitiate for a month before being admitted to vows, or at least spend the same period in recollection where they happen to be. On no account are they to be employed in the sacristy or as porter or in other offices connected with externs before the end of their two-year period.

**169.** If it is necessary to promote some to orders at the proper time (284), they may learn even in the novitiate what is required to receive these orders well and devoutly.

**170.** It is good for all those chosen by the superior to practise public speaking in the house. Some time can usefully be spent in this after dinner, but they should also be encouraged to train their voices and manner of speaking, along with allied functions, so that they may give some idea of the talent the Lord has granted them in this matter. They should often speak about self-abnegation, progress in virtue, and every kind of perfection, encouraging one another in these things, and especially to union and fraternal charity (E.).

(E.) Those who speak publicly in the house must abstain from

any reprimand unless they have consulted the superior about it beforehand.

171. The example of progress in virtue given by the older members is a great stimulus to imitation by the rest. It will be useful, therefore, if novitiate houses are suitable for receiving older men of exemplary life. Worn out by their continued labours in the Lord's vineyard, they will be able in their retirement to teach and strengthen beginners in the way of perfection by their holy living and firm advice. But they should be careful not to take the part of any junior with superiors.

172. It will also be of great edification and example if the person in charge, and other priests whom he considers suitable, undertake now and again during the year some of the domestic work carried out by others. Christ's courtesy will be honoured in this way, and ministries of this kind will be more pleasing to others assigned to such work permanently for the greater glory and service of God.

173. The novices must be carefully instructed that they should on no account conceal any temptation which they do not disclose to their master, or superior, or to the person specially designated for the purpose by the superior (E.). Let them rather consider it a great happiness that they should know thoroughly their whole soul. Let them not only disclose their defects, but also their penances or mortifications, their devotions and all their virtues, desiring with a sincere will to be directed by them lest they fall into error, not wishing to be guided by their own views unless these views agree with the judgment of those whom they hold in the place of Christ our Lord. A full, clear and simple disclosure of conscience is considered as an essential part of the perfection we seek in the Society and the principal means of purifying the soul from all evil. Consequently, the novice must consider that in his master, as also in his superior, he has a friend given to him by God in his mercy. As Scripture says: 'A faithful friend is an elixir of life; and those who fear the Lord will find him' (Sir 6: [16]).

(E.) The superior will assign a priest to hear a novice's confession or counsel him, each time this is requested. He should also do this spontaneously if need be. A novice, however, who has

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made his confession to someone else, will repeat the confession to the master of novices or the superior at some other suitable time, or at least disclose his conscience to the latter, according to the six-month rule incumbent on each one (88). Some time may be given for further consideration, instruction and especially earnest prayer to a novice who finds great difficulty in this kind of disclosure of conscience so that he may conquer himself in this matter also, and put aside such shame, which militates against the love of justice, desiring on his part to undergo abjection and obloquy for the sins he has committed. However, no one is to be considered suitable for the Society, or be co-opted into it, until he has conquered in this matter also.

**174.** The novices will make their confession to their master every week, and more often according to their devotion and the judgment of the master. Holy Communion should be received at least once a week with the greatest internal and external devotion, unless the master thinks otherwise (E.).

(E.) A greater frequency in receiving Holy Communion is desirable in adults of perfect life, and formed temporal coadjutors. Adults, who are more stable in their outlook, are also capable of more constant reverence.

**175.** They shall make the customary examinations of conscience daily.

**176.** Several days each week Christian doctrine should be explained for those who need instruction. There should also be instruction on how to profit by confession, communion and presence at Mass. The way to serve Mass and assist at all other functions of the Church should be explained to the novices; they will also be taught first of all to pray, to examine their conscience, to meditate (special attention is to be given to these matters) and to read, according to each one's capacity. Care must be taken to see that they understand what is helpful and learn it by heart. They must also practise what they have learned. All should give their time to spiritual things and be constant in their quest for devotion, according to the measure of the grace of God that has been communicated to them. They will be helped (E.) in this by the occasional practice of some extraordinary spiritual exercises judged suitable in the Lord for each one.

(E.) There may be some, amongst the temporal coadjutors for

example, who will not be helped by these exercises. They should be offered matter suitable to their level of understanding as a genuine assistance in the service of God and our Lord.

Generally speaking, these exercises are of special help in profoundly impressing the eternal truths upon the mind. They should be employed, therefore, when it seems that a truth has not been appreciated sufficiently to enable it to be used in practice. In this case, the exercises will be such as to remedy the defect in the person who undertakes them.

177. They should be taught how to guard against the deceits of the devil in their spiritual exercises and to protect themselves against all temptations. At the same time, they are to learn how to overcome them. Their aim should be to acquire true and solid virtues, whether they have many or few spiritual visitations; and let them take care always to advance along the road of divine service (E.).

(E.) An explanation of the second chapter of Sirach will be of assistance to novices afflicted by temptations of the adversary.

178. The manner of imposing corrections and penances is left to the prudent charity of the superior who will take account of personal dispositions, and consider individual and universal edification, for the glory of God. Special care is to be employed in acting without the least sign of vexation so that the erring may be taught and corrected with perfect meekness and calm. Their souls will not be disquieted, and their love and confidence in the superior will not be lessened, if they have no doubt that what is said and done springs from a pure heart, full of true love (E.). Let everyone be careful to accept with a sincere desire of amendment and spiritual progress whatever penance and corrections are given him, even when imposed for some defect free from moral guilt. These penances in fact open the way to humility.

(E.) Superiors, especially the more excitable, should be careful to offer an example of meekness, great calm and reasonableness in all things in imitation of their Lord and Master. Nevertheless, they must not neglect the faults of the subjects. They should watch attentively and not overlook the very least defect until it has been removed, even if their solicitude and effort has to be continued until the day of death. Meekness, and the eradication of all their own impatience, is to be their aim, not

negligence and disdain. Christ, although he used all authority to correct the vices of men, showed himself moved passionately by holy zeal only against the deceit of the Pharisees and those who profaned his Father's house. The occasional vehemence he manifested (using the movement of human nature according to a decree of his divine will) was directed against hardness of heart. A person who needs this kind of correction, which prelates of the Church may sometimes aptly employ, can scarcely be considered a suitable candidate for the Society.

Nevertheless, while meekness and dignity are always to be preserved, words can and must be used in correcting and in imposing penances which will arouse shame and decent fear by their content and reasonableness, although there are to be no gratuitous assertions, and false accusations must be completely excluded.

Normally, one needs to remember that those who sin are first to be warned with charity and kindness; if a second correction is needed, charity, of course, is still to be used, but in such a way that a fitting sense of confusion and shame are inculcated; on a third occasion, love is to be united to correction inculcated to induce fear. For public defects, public penance is necessary, but only those matters are to be mentioned which help the edification of all.

179. Finally, at the six-monthly disclosure of conscience during the first two-year period, all are to re-read the *Apostolic Letters*, the *Memorials* and the *Rules*. They should be asked whether they are content with them and if they feel sufficient strength of soul to live and die in the Society.

### CHAPTER 3

#### The special effort required of the novices in their daily lives to co-operate with the discipline by which they are governed

180. Even if those in charge do all they can to help and direct the novices with genuine care and holy discipline, the spiritual progress of the candidates will still leave much to be desired unless the novices themselves co-operate in these efforts with an honest and good heart. They should be attentively reminded and taught how to render themselves good soil which holds fast the seed and brings forth fruit with patience (Lk 8: [15]).

181. First, they should be brought to consider that since the novitiate is simply a school of perfection, they should come to this school willingly, that is, with the deliberate intention of acquiring perfection. A true will implies whole-hearted effort and energy in struggling towards the goal and complete disregard for the work and suffering involved. The Wise Man tells us this when speaking of heavenly wisdom: 'Search out and seek, and she will become known to you; and when you get hold of her, do not let her go' (Sir 6: [27]).

182. An ever clearer idea of the perfection which was their aim in entering the novitiate, and in which they are to be instructed and exercised, will greatly help the novices in recalling the reason for which they have come. Although they have been counselled about this in the first probation, it will be helpful if this idea is frequently reviewed by them and illustrated through the words of scripture. A fairly useful example from the fifteenth chapter of St. John may be given here.

183. The perfection we seek is the closest possible union of man with God. We obtain this by loving Christ JESUS supremely, according to his word: 'As the Father has loved me, so I loved you; abide in my love' (Jn 15: [9]).

But the love of Christ must be operative. It cannot consist in words alone, nor in a sterile disposition of the heart. Hence the Master adds: 'If you keep my commandments, you will abide in

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my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love' (Jn 15: [10]).

Christ's commandment is none other than the love of our neighbour, as he explains immediately: 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you' (Jn 15: [12]). A Christian person, therefore, in order to arrive at perfection, must be perfected in the love of his neighbour. Consequently, this Society is named after Charity; and the school of universal perfection, which is unfolded in the novitiate, aims above all at teaching how this charity towards our neighbour may be exercised perfectly. By this Christian charity Christ is loved in our neighbours and the Father in Christ, while we are made one in them, but it is not exercised perfectly unless a person is ready to renounce all things for its sake and, in imitation of Christ, lay down his very life. Our divine Master teaches this without delay, adding immediately after the words we have quoted: 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (Jn 15: [13]). With these words he invites his disciples to that perfection of charity of which he was the first to give so wonderful an example.

This is the focus of all our labour; this is why we work, why we toil; that through the exercise of poverty, chastity, and obedience, together with complete mortification and abnegation, we may withdraw ourselves from all things and affections of this world, abhorring with a holy hatred relatives, riches, honours, pleasures and life itself, and may embrace all in the one love of Christ. This is the true lesson and intention of the novitiate. If the novice has rightly understood this and accepted it with a sincere will, he will hold as sweet all the bitter things sustained in the course leading to perfection and recognise their necessity, considering them few and light in his great longing to reach quickly the blessed state of the perfect man.

However, charity is to be joined with wisdom if we are to do good to our neighbour with the perfect love of Christ. This wisdom consists in observing the order of charity. The supreme order of charity, which is supreme wisdom, is known to God alone, because it consists in the greatest good of the whole complex of things. Our chief care, therefore, must be to investigate and know the will of God. When we know it, in all its sovereign wisdom and goodness, we must carry it out with burning

charity. With the divine will as guide, charity should be exercised in every way, without seeking anything further, as Christ teaches, re-affirming: 'You are my friends if you do what I command you' (Jn 15: [14]).

Because the will of God is known by prelates through holy discernment given by the Holy Spirit whom Christ promised in this same passage, subjects have no safer and happier way of coming to know this will than by showing obedience to prelates, in whom they must honour Christ. It is indeed reasonable for a person to submit himself to the direction of another, especially in religious societies where the good that can be done by individuals is multiplied immensely by the united forces and energies of the individuals. It is also reasonable to submit oneself to an authority considered greater than one's own, that is, to a superior chosen from many and tested for a long period, who is bound to judge the cause of others in conscience, and with the counsel of discreet men. The man who trusts in such a superior as in a vicar of Christ may be certain he is protected by Christ himself, who says to those who love him: 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' (Jn 16: [33]).

**184.** After the novices have been fully instructed about the perfection they seek, they must be taught very carefully how to attain it. Certain kinds of actions are tools, as it were, enabling them with the Lord's help to fulfil their desire.

These tools of the spiritual trade, by the constant use of which the novices will work out their own perfection, are twelve, namely:

- 1st. Harmony of wills.
- 2nd. LOVE AMONG THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.
- 3rd. Self-abasement.
- 4th. Mortification.
- 5th. Poverty.
- 6th. Chastity.
- 7th. Piety.
- 8th. Self-denial and OBEDIENCE.
- 9th. Simplicity.
- 10th. Courtesy.
- 11th. Encouragement in the spiritual life.
- 12th. Good intention and the LOVE OF GOD.

185. I. Let us consider each heading. In the first place the greatest care is to be taken with regard to union and mutual agreement (E.). Nothing must be permitted to interfere with this aim, because the bond of fraternal charity enables the members to devote themselves better and more effectively to the worship of God and the assistance of their neighbours. Hence, the first task of the novice who desires to reach perfection (and all his efforts ought to be centred on this) is to enter into himself and so dispose and rule his will that he may always be inclined to agree with what others want and, as far as possible, to accord with them in all things. He will achieve this if intellectually he is always ready, with holy discretion, to interpret more favourably what others say and do. Other things being equal, a sense of humility should predispose him before judging to accept the opinions held by others rather than his own; not even the slightest inordinate self-love should prevent or distract him from examining with every care what favours others' opinions; he should abandon his own opinion and accept that of others as soon as he finds his own false and theirs true. Finally, he should be glad whenever he is able to accept wholly or in part the opinion of others, for in this way he has the opportunity of performing an act of humility; he can practise that charity to others which makes us rejoice in whatever benefits them; and he acquires truth which, when upheld in charity, completes the joy of a generous heart. He should not contradict a brother's statement without necessity, nor do so discourteously or ungraciously, nor aggravate a contradiction by pointless repetition. When the truth prevents his accepting wholly or in part the opinion of others and he cannot reasonably doubt his own conclusion, he should not take it badly if others feel differently. He ought to be happy when each one has his own point of view, and be glad that the brethren, while they may differ, know how to live in the closest bond of charity with holy freedom. As far as the will is concerned, the novices and all the religious should be eager to be first to give way to the wishes of others in all things, hiding their own will that the will of others may be done. Each must take care to do this without asking himself whether others do the same. If he really desires to agree with others, he cannot question whether others wish to agree with him or not. There is a delightful warmth of affection among brethren who possess

this kind of mutual harmony, and what is said in the Acts of Apostles about the early Christians can be applied here also: 'Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul!' (Acts 4: [32]). We have Christ's word that the prayers of such brethren go up to the Almighty: 'If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it shall be done for them by my Father in heaven' (Mt 18: [19]).

(E.) Disorder and mutual anger are not to be tolerated in the household. If anything of this kind occurs, care should be taken to restore mutual harmony immediately with due satisfaction.

**186. II.** This affectionate union and agreement of will, which the novices have to seek in all things, must spring from their charity towards one another. It also guards charity and increases it daily. This is the charity which Christ especially desired to see amongst his disciples when he said to them: 'This I command you, to love one another' (Jn 15: [17]). This charity is more beautiful and intimate when practised amongst those who follow Christ more closely, and those choosing the perfect life certainly do this in the best possible way. The disciples of Christ must, therefore, be united by an extraordinary bond of charity unknown to others. The novices will examine their consciences more carefully on this special charity, by which they devote themselves to one another, than on any other matter. It is indeed a kind of light enabling them to cherish everything else that is good, and to avoid evil: 'He who loves his brother abides in the light, and in it there is no cause for stumbling' (1 John 2: [10]).

**187. III.** With charity as their first aim the novices will then be careful to humble themselves in all things. Indeed, charity itself is a strong, fundamental argument for self-abasement, which is greatly helped in practice when they undertake as devotedly as possible those duties which call more insistently for the exercise of humility and charity. In conversation they will avoid anything tending to self-praise and refrain from judgment about themselves, concealing the good qualities God has given them and growing silently in virtue, provided God's honour and service do not require otherwise. In fact, they are to love any occasion of humiliation coming justly or unjustly from others. If superiors test their humility and self-abasement by providing



them with special opportunities for extraordinary lowliness, they will accept them joyfully and consider them a blessing for which they have to be sincerely grateful to superiors. The same is to be said about humiliations coming from the brethren, whether caused by mistake or by malice. Whatever humbles a man will be very acceptable to the novice, conscious as he is of his place in a school of humility and aware that human nature inordinately desires to advance and extol itself in all things because of its forgetfulness of God, the source of all true greatness. A person reborn must indeed check his arrogant nature whenever it seeks to assert itself, and humiliate it for the honour of God who has said: 'He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted' (Mt 23: [11, 12]).

188. IV. It is not enough, however, for the novice to seek and love occasions for self-abasement. Since the desires of the flesh rebel against the spirit, he must also accustom himself to consider as his special good whatever mortifies the flesh. He will remember the word: 'But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness' (Rom 8: [10]) and: 'So then, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh, for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live' (*ibid.* [12, 13]). When the disciple has learned to count as gain for Christ whatever the world sees as loss, he will obtain perfect tranquillity and unshakeable charity; what people consider harmful does not in the least disturb him interiorly because he holds it as good. But without mortification, neither charity nor tranquillity are lasting.

189. V. Poverty and chastity involve detachment from the world, and offer many opportunities for mortification. Hence all the novices should be taught to love poverty as a mother, and should experience some of its effects in discreet measure when occasion demands. Although external renunciation of their property and rights can be postponed for a time, as we have said (91–97), they must use nothing as their own because in heart and mind they have truly left all things for Christ our Lord. They must realise that they cannot in any way give or receive

amongst themselves, nor dispose of anything in the house without appropriate leave from the superior. Although the novices ought to desire and choose the poorest and shabbiest articles, as far as this depends upon themselves, and be glad for love of Christ's poverty when they receive them, interior poverty is required rather than exterior, since our Lord refers to the former in the beatitude: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5: [3]). When we come to despise from our heart the riches of this world, we shall be able to make our own the words of the Apostle: 'I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound (in any and all circumstances); I have learnt the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me' (Phil 4: [12, 13]). Such a disposition will be of great assistance in the various ministries undertaken from charity.

190. VI. Innocence of character and chastity, that truly lovable virtue, are to be cultivated in all their beauty in every act, in bodily demeanour, in word, in thought, and in all things. God looks upon them with such favour that Christ in his sermon promises the vision of God as their reward: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God' (Mt 5: [8]).

191. VII. And so the novices, mortified and humble in all things, will be able to come closer to God in chastity. However, if they are to gain quickly the perfection they strive for, their piety has to be afire and as it were ablaze. The characteristic sign which must indicate such piety is hunger for the bread of angels (Ps 77 [78: 25]) and thirst for the wine that makes virgins joyful (Zech 9: [17]). By this supersubstantial nourishment we achieve the closest possible union with God in this life, a union in which we attain perfection. JESUS himself says: 'As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me' (Jn 6: [58]). This unsurpassable union with Christ in the heavenly bread is also the symbol and cause of our union with one another through charity, as the Apostle says: 'Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread' (1 Cor 10: [17]). From this one source, therefore, they must draw an unceasing love of God and zeal for continual prayer, along with love for one another. In this way, their manner of life will be a reflection of that led by

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the first disciples, of whom scripture says: 'And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favour with all the people' (Acts 2: [46–47]).

192. VIII. But in their devotions, mortifications and all other good works they should be careful to avoid taking account of their own wishes and carrying out their own will. If they are truly to bear the cross of our Lord JESUS Christ after him, they must first deny themselves, as he says: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me' (Mt 16: [24]). When they abide humbly in obedience to others, they can be sure of completely renouncing themselves and their own will. If they do this for love of JESUS, it will be most pleasing to him, as the Church has always taught. It is fitting therefore, and it is very necessary, that all should first dedicate themselves to the practice of perfect obedience for the sake of making progress in the way of the spirit and attaining perfection. Because they see the superior (whoever he may be) as representing Christ the Lord, they should treat him with deep reverence and love. What he requires should be carried out by them completely, readily, and strenuously, with due humility and without excuses and grumbling, even though his commands may be difficult and repugnant to their natural feelings. They must also aim at interior resignation and true denial of their own will and judgment by harmonising them entirely in all things (unless there is obvious sin) with those of the superior. They make the will and judgment of the superior the rule of their own, in order to conform more closely with eternal power and wisdom, the first rule of every good will and judgment.

In order to practise more completely the virtue of obedience, they will readily obey not only the superior of the house or their master, but also, and in the same way, those holding subordinate positions in so far as they have authority over them. They should train themselves to keep their gaze fixed not on the human person they obey, but on Christ the Lord for whose sake they obey, and whom they obey in all things. Obedience to one another, or to their junior brethren, cannot be burdensome to those who are always intent on harmonising their own will

with that of others, as we have said, and are really glad whenever a brother's will is done. In any case, mortification removes all obstacles to obedience. By it JESUS obeyed his Father and as a result the Apostle could say: 'He learned obedience through what he suffered'. He added: 'and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek' (Heb 5: [8–10]). The religious who obeys a provost or other superior as though he obeyed God, trusts in God; and God, who promises to give a faithful friend to those who fear him, does not put him to shame: A faithful friend is an elixir of life, and those who fear the Lord will find him' (Sir 6: [16]).

**193. IX.** The novice who seriously desires perfection will also strive very earnestly to avoid all duplicity of heart and hypocrisy, which can be ruinous for the spiritual man. His obedience, his relationships with superiors and other brethren, his inner reflections, must all be free from insincerity. Even slight dissembling can cause a piteous downfall of the whole person if it is not detected swiftly and rooted out by a very thorough examination of conscience and careful scrutiny of heart. In this matter, each one should act in his own regard with fear and trembling, especially in his daily examination of conscience. Self-deceit is an ugly and subtle enemy, a detestable vice hateful to God and man. If a person succeeds in completely destroying duplicity in himself, his heart will be right before God and he will make great progress in all virtues. The novice, therefore, if he desires God's blessing, must be able to repeat the words of holy king David as he offers to the divine Majesty all that he has renounced in spirit: 'I know, my God, that you try the heart, and have pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things' (I Chron 29: [17]). Vowing to divine worship one's will through obedience, riches through poverty, pleasures through continency, would be of little use unless this offering were made in simplicity of heart and with the spiritual joy that springs from simplicity.

**194. X.** The joy which will spring from their simplicity of heart should be accompanied by courtesy. Let them remember the words of the Apostle: 'Joy to you at all times; again I wish you joy. Give proof to all of your courtesy. The Lord is near'

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(Phil 4: [4–5, Knox]). Wherever they are and whoever their associates, all their actions, their laughter, words, movements, their facial expressions, general comportment, the way they dress, should be signs of holy maturity and self-respect, of watchful prudence and deference, and a certain attractiveness in the Lord, not a cause of disgust or useless sadness. The novices must be clean and neat without affectation, ready listeners, thoughtful in their conversation, and glad to act with moderation and spiritual common sense as good order and reason require.

195. XI. Courtesy, when witnessed by others, gives rise to mutual encouragement which the novices must be most careful to accord one another. In health and sickness, they can at all times and in every circumstance offer the brethren this encouragement and the delight which accompanies the practice of all virtues. In this way, they can benefit others as well as themselves when they are sick. In times of illness, they will not be impatient or morose, but have and manifest great patience, and be obedient to the doctor and the nurse. Their conversation will be uplifting, and show that they accept their illness as a gift from the hand of their Creator and Lord, since it is no less a gift than health. In health and sickness, they should strive to live together as holy men, in the way proposed to the Colossians by the Apostle: ‘Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And, above all else, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God’ (Col 3: [12–14]).

196. XII. But they should not only take care to perfect themselves daily in all these things; each one must also strive to perfect himself in relation to the end for which he does them, so that every action may be directed to the most perfect end. They should therefore aim at an upright intention in all they do, as

well as in their state of life. In every action, they should try sincerely to serve and please divine Goodness for its own sake and for the love and marvellous benefits with which it anticipates our needs, rather than through fear of punishment or hope of reward (though these motives must also help them). Let them be encouraged frequently to seek in all things the closest union with God. As far as possible, they are to free themselves from all love of creatures and concentrate all their affection upon the Creator, loving him in all his creatures and all his creatures in him, according to his most wise and holy will. If they love God in this way, they are drawn by the Father, and will be filled with justice by Christ who says: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied' (Mt 5: [6]); and they will know through their own experience 'that his commandments are not burdensome' (1 Jn 5: [3]).

197. These are the tools of the spiritual trade. The first workshop in which they are used is the novitiate. Someone is to be appointed to remind all each month of these matters and of those mentioned in the preceding chapter (as well as of the common rules, and the rules for various duties), or the individuals are to read them for themselves, lest they be forgotten because of our weakness and their observance cease. Sometimes during the year let all ask penance of the superior for their defects in keeping the rules; and their diligence on this point will be a sign of the care each has for his spiritual progress in the way of God.

## CHAPTER 4

### The tests proper to the novitiate

**198.** As we have said, the novices must also be tested at suitable times by certain experiences, which must be designed to illustrate the aims of each of the two states of life, contemplative and active, proper to this Society. Candidates for this Society must be taught by experience 1st, how to persevere at length in prayer and in singing the divine praises, and how to occupy themselves in their cells, remaining in the sight of God through the practice of fervent, humble prayer, and devotion to their studies or non-academic work; 2nd, how to undertake with fortitude the external ministries of charity which occur. There are six special tests, about which we have said a few words previously (112–117).

**199.** On the one hand, superiors must always be ready of their own accord to prescribe for matters which concern contemplation and the interior life; on the other hand, the nature of this Society, which depends wholly upon Providence, requires that the exercise of external charity be indicated to the novices during the two-year period when occasion offers (118). In this way the novices will be tested by works of charity carried out rationally under the guidance of the providence of God itself (E.).

(E.) If a scholastic has been co-opted by dispensation from the Provost General without having had the opportunity of undergoing the tests during the novitiate, he will make them up at the first opportunity.

**200.** With regard to the tests, it must be diligently observed that when a person is undergoing the first of them, namely, the spiritual exercises, the retreat master should give the superior his opinion about the novice's suitability for the end the Society has in view.

**201.** In the second test, helping in hospitals, the probationer will obtain references about the good impression he has made from the person in charge of hospital staff.

**202.** In the third test, the pilgrimage, he will bring back

references obtained from several persons or from one very trustworthy person at the end of the journey or near its end to show that he has reached his destination and satisfied his devotion without complaint from anyone.

**203.** In the fourth test, working at humble household tasks, his references will be the edification he gives to all in the household (E.).

(E.) Those tested in this way will be dispensed from the novices' additional exercises (167). If this test is not undergone in the novitiate-house, there should be a timetable in the house where it takes place, and someone should have special care of the novices.

**204.** In the fifth and sixth tests, catechism, and preaching and hearing confessions, or both if combined, his references (if he lives in one of our houses) will be the members of the household and the edification received by those who have listened to him. If he has preached and heard confessions elsewhere, he must obtain references from the places where he has remained longest. These reference must be given by persons in posts of public authority, especially local ordinaries of churches who will make it plain that he has sown the word of God through sound doctrine and exemplary life, without undue offence to anyone, and that he has carried out the duties of confessor.

**205.** If it seems expedient, the Society will be able to satisfy itself further to the glory of God by obtaining information elsewhere.

**206.** There must be a thorough investigation if references are not offered for these tests, and care must be taken to learn the whole truth of the matter so that the necessary steps may be taken to put the matter right in such a way that through God's grace divine Goodness may be better served.

**207.** Another test is to be undergone by presbyters and coadjutors before they make their profession and vows. At the time appointed, each one will beg from door to door for the love of Christ our Lord for three days in places chosen by the superior. The aim is to enable them to submit as far as they can for the service and praise of God to things contrary to normal human

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opinion and so advance in spirit to the glory of the divine Majesty. Thus they will be more prepared to act in similar situations of necessity as they travel through various parts of the world according to the command or decision made in their regard by the supreme Vicar of Christ, or a superior of the Society in his place. The nature of our profession demands that we be prompt and ready for all things which may at any moment be enjoined upon us, not seeking nor expecting any reward in this present, failing life, hoping at all times from the immense mercy of God the reward which endures for ever.

**208.** It is also required that the candidates sometimes keep vigil before profession, and spend at least one entire night in prayer in memory of Christ who continued all night in prayer to God before choosing the apostles.

**209.** In order to overcome human respect entirely the candidates, when commanded by their superior, will pray publicly with their arms crossed on their breast or extended in the form of a cross, in church or any other place where it can be done without causing annoyance. They will undertake other similar kinds of prayer, humiliation and penance for the sake of public edification at the discretion of the superior.

## CHAPTER 5

### Ascetical teaching to be given in the second probation

210. The will receives considerable help to right action when the intellect is illumined in such a way that while it can distinguish between good and evil, and between the various virtues and vices, it recognises the beauty of the former and the deformity of the latter. In the same way the intellect should also be clear about the importance of the reasons and the means by which vice is destroyed and virtue built up within the person himself. For this reason, it seems to us useful to choose novices whose capacity and age (142 E. [cf. 142]) appears to fit them for a daily lesson in ascetics enabling them to grasp intelligently the various stages in virtue and perfection (E.).

(E.) The novitiate for temporal coadjutors should differ slightly from that destined for those who have already received orders, or seem suitable for them. It should be different again for those undertaking a trade and for those destined for white-collar work. The things said in general about the novices' probation are, therefore, to be applied in different ways in the different novitiate-houses (although they have a common end, that is, perfection of spirit in the charity and obedience of Christ). In each house, therefore, where there is a choice of older and more intelligent novices considered capable of following an ordered course of ascetics, lessons will be given in this subject.

211. This ascetical doctrine will be taught to the selected candidates according to a threefold syllabus.

212. The teaching will be divided as follows:

the first part concerns man's purification which is never to come to an end in this life, although very special care must be taken about it in the first year;

the second part deals with the virtues with which the Christian, cleansed according to the favour of God, must be adorned;

the third part, suited for the more perfect, touches upon the union by which the just man, replete with virtue, is intimately bound to God.

213. It must not be thought that any one of these parts can be

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completely divided from the others. All are inseparably bound to one another and are, as it were, three points of view from which the same indivisible form of human perfection can be seen and contemplated.

**214.** Each part can be deduced from a single principle.

The first part springs from fear of the Lord and man's end, according to scripture: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' (Ps 110 [111: 10]). By the saving fear of the Lord, man is effectively stimulated to root out his vices, lest he fall away from the end for which he was created and redeemed by divine Goodness.

**215.** The second part begins with acknowledgement and love of truth, for scripture says: 'The sum of thy word is truth' (Ps 118 [119: 160]). All human duties, and all virtues, proceed from the simple acknowledgement and love of truth.

**216.** Finally, the third part lays the foundation of the whole edifice on the precept of charity, for Christ says: 'This is the great and first commandment' (Mt 22: [38]). The union of every faithful soul with God, who is charity, is enkindled and perfected by charity.

**217.** These three parts contain all the education imparted to the human race by the divine Creator. Freedom from vice was especially required in the time preceding Christ when the innocence of holy people was praised in the following terms: 'Blessed is the rich man who is found blameless, and who does not go after gold' (Sir 31: [8]). The attainment of all virtues belongs to the time after Christ. Christian virtue is above all operative; it is the love of the brethren founded upon truth: 'I am writing to you a new commandment... He who loves his brother abides in the light and in it there is no cause for stumbling' (1 Jn 2: [8–10]). Finally, there is a third age which comes after this life, and never ceases. Here belong the love of God and union, and unchangeable joy: 'So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you' (Jn 16: [22]). Nevertheless, these three divisions cannot be totally separated, as we have said, since eternal life, in which man is joined to God, begins with baptism and is completed in glory.

**218.** These lessons in ascetics are designed to stimulate the affections of the will through the illumination of the intellect. At the same time, the opposite way, which may be the only one in this case, is to be taken with youngsters and the less intelligent. That is, they should from the beginning be brought to the practical knowledge and love of God and our Lord through the frequent imposition of external acts of humility and other virtues.

## CHAPTER 6

### Preservation of the body

219. While excessive care of the needs of the body is blameworthy, moderate attention to it, to preserve health and bodily strength for the service of God, is praiseworthy and must be given by all. When, therefore, they find something harmful or necessary to them in food, clothing, dwelling, work, exercise, etc., which has escaped the foresight of the superiors, all must inform the superior or the minister or the person appointed by the father to act in such cases. In doing so, they should observe two conditions. First, before mentioning the matter to him, they must give themselves to prayer; if, after prayer, they believe the case is to be put forward, they should do so (E.1). Second, after explaining the case orally to the superior, or by a short note (to help his memory), they will leave it entirely in his care, and consider his decision as best. They will not continue (E.2) to insist or press the matter, either personally or through someone else (whether the request is granted or not). Indeed, they must persuade themselves that what seems best in the Lord to the superior, when he understands the case, is more conducive both to the service of God and the greater good of their souls.

(E.1) It is an excellent practice, when they go spontaneously to the minister or father or rector about some bodily need, if they kneel before him and kiss the ground as a sign of humiliation. This is a fitting recognition of the weakness of human nature, oppressed continually by so many needs, and a sign of sacrifice and subjection to whatever the superior decides about the matter. The request for what is necessary is to be made privately, not publicly.

(E.2) A request for what is thought necessary must not be repeated nor insisted upon, but if the minister, or whoever in his place has been asked about it, does not understand the matter sufficiently and requires further information, it shall be given him. If he has indicated that he wishes to provide but forgets to do so, it will not be out of place courteously to remind him or ask him again. Again, if the matter is urgent, and for some reason the minister or rector does nothing, it will be in

order humbly to inform the father, whose judgment must be accepted with great tranquillity.

**220.** As far as possible, a time shall be set for meals, going to bed, and rising. This should be generally observed.

(E.) Although all should ordinarily observe the timetable for meals and sleep, the superior may dispense if he considers there are special reasons for so doing in an individual case.

**221.** In matters of food, clothing and lodging, and other bodily necessities, care should be taken, with help from God, to avoid deficiencies in what is required to sustain and preserve nature for the service and glory of God. At the same time, poverty should be manifest, and virtue and self-denial tested (E.).

(E.) Clothing must be considered relative to its end, protection from the cold and the preservation of modesty. Other than this, it is fitting that those who are in probation be aided by what they wear in mortification and self-denial and in overcoming the world and its vanity. This must be tempered, however, by reference to their work and the circumstances of other people. In any case such expressions of humility are to be carried out naturally when the occasion arises without their being sought deliberately. Novices and subjects will have their opportunity when, for example, they have to go without something through negligence on the part of those in charge; superiors will have their opportunity if there is want in the house — and this want is to be borne cheerfully. Then, worn-out clothes are to be used, and the worst are to be given to those in probation. In this way divine providence, rather than the will of the superior, will test everyone, and all will be rendered indifferent to whatever is ordained by God's wonderful providence, using human things as though they used them not, because the time is short.

**222.** It is not right for a person to have to work so hard manually that his spirit is crushed and his body adversely affected. On the other hand, some corporal exercise, helpful to body and spirit, is fitting for all, even for those engaged in intellectual occupations. Intellectual work, indeed, should be interrupted now and again by external activities and not be unduly prolonged. Nor should it be undertaken indiscreetly (E.).

(E.) As far as possible there is to be no strenuous bodily or mental work for an hour or two after dinner, especially during the summer. If it does prove necessary, it is to be measured and

moderated with all charity. This period of time can be employed in lighter occupations which help to indicate their intellectual ability, and give them an opportunity of learning how to converse usefully in a friendly and proper fashion.

**223.** Bodily penance must not be excessive, and discretion is needed in vigils (E.1), fasts and other external penances and labours (E.2) which do harm when they are undertaken imprudently and often impede greater good. Each one must reveal what he does in this matter to his confessor, who will send him to the superior if he judges that he has gone too far or seriously doubts about it. All these things are laid down so that progress may be unimpeded and greater glory offered to God our Lord in our bodies and souls.

(E.1) Generally speaking, between seven and eight hours shall be allowed for sleep.

(E.2) Each one should be ready to undertake whatever duty is imposed upon him. Nevertheless the foresight of superiors must take care to proportion the burdens correctly and see that the duties which require stronger people (such as cook, sacristan, porter and infirmarian) be given to those adapted for them.

They should remember that no corporal penances are generally commanded in this Society so that the energy which has been conserved in this respect may be used in charity towards God and our neighbour and, with this in view, for the more exact observance of the Constitutions.

**224.** There should be someone in the house in charge of the good health of the brethren (E.). His aim should be to preserve it in those who are well, especially the old or those weak in other ways, and restore it to the sick. They must describe the symptoms to him if they feel more unwell than usual so that he may prescribe a suitable remedy, as charity requires.

(E.) The superior has the final responsibility for the care of the sick, as he has for everything else. Care for the health and other external matters of the brethren then devolves on the temporal vicar, or minister, and after him upon the prefect of health, followed by the infirmarian. At least the last two will be present when the doctor arrives. The porter will ring the bell at his arrival.

Great care will be taken of the sick. When the infirmarian learns about the illness, he should inform the superior immediately if he thinks the matter serious. The doctor's prescriptions

about diet and about medicine shall be followed as far as possible. The sick brother should not enquire anxiously about the matter. His one aim should be to exercise patience and obedience. When he has described his symptoms courteously and calmly and answered openly the questions he has been asked, he should remain at peace, leaving all care of himself to the superior and his ministers, through whom he is ruled by divine providence.

There will be a special place in the refectory for the convalescent where they will receive only what is prescribed by the infirmarian. And although our vocation may call us to live in any part of the world where there is hope of God's greater service and help to souls, the superior who has the faculty to do so may transfer a brother from one place to another if experience shows that certain climates are unsuitable, and he can serve God elsewhere with better physical health. The sick man cannot insist upon this change, but it is lawful for him to speak of the matter to the superior as he would about other bodily necessities (219). At the same time, he should strive to keep his spirit free of concern, and desire simply what the care of the superior will decide about him.

**225.** Charity and reason impose upon everyone vigilance in looking after material things, but it is also fitting that someone should be required (E.1) to take care of them in a special way as goods belonging to our Lord JESUS Christ. In addition, a sufficient number of people should be appointed to the other necessary offices, especially when it is more fitting for these to be done inside rather than outside the house (E.2). Some of the temporal coadjutors be well instructed in these duties. And everything must be directed to the greater glory of God the Creator, and our Lord JESUS (E.3).

(E.1) The General will distribute the duties of procurators, administrators, treasurers and disbursars as need arises. These officials are subject to the superiors of the houses in which they live with regard to the internal discipline and the observance of the Rules. When they need a dispensation from the Rules they must ask the superior, mentioning the reason, as others do. In their duties, they have generally speaking a fourfold relationship with rectors, provosts and independent novice-masters. 1st, the superiors are to be the counsellors of the procurators and administrators in all matters of administration; 2nd, the procurators and administrators must inform the superiors of



everything done and to be done, while the superiors must see and know that the former do their duty exactly and report concerning it; 3rd, the same person will not have the duties of procurator or administrator, and disbursar, the last being reserved for the superiors within the limits prescribed for them by the Provost General; 4th, the duties of procurator, administrator and treasurer will be united in the same person, or not, as the General sees fit.

(E.2) However officials for matters carried out more fittingly inside rather than outside the house, are the wardrobe keeper, the barber, and so on, whom it would be useful to have in the house if possible. Other duties, professional as well as manual (medical duties, for instance) may be carried out at home if there are a number of temporal coadjutors.

(E.3) What has been said about the organisation of the novitiate-house is suitable for the most part for other houses. Temporal coadjutors, who help the Society in domestic duties, must not be more than one third or, in a large house, more than a quarter of the personnel.

## CHAPTER 7

### The second probation for extern coadjutors

**226.** After those who seem called to the grade of extern coadjutors have successfully completed the examination and exercise of the first probation, they will transfer in the same way as the others to the second probation, which they will make in the house with the rest of the novices.

**227.** If they are prevented from remaining in the novitiate for two continuous years, they will complete at least one entire year, after which they will take the scholastic vows. The second year will be made up when circumstances permit, before they take coadjutor vows (E.).

(E.) The Provost General can dispense from the second year of novitiate within the house provided there is grave reason and the candidate has a well-founded vocation. But what remains of the two-year period must be completed under religious discipline in the company of a truly fervent and learned member who can take the place of the master and be continually present to instruct the candidate and answer his questions.

**228.** The disposition of their goods is to be carried out according to the rules which apply to intern members (89–97, 150). Hence these goods must be administered by others during the time of the novitiate in such a way that they cease to be a source of distraction or anxiety (if possible). The annual income from the goods must be dispensed in works of charity, according to the judgment of the superior. In the same way all should observe all the other matters concerning poverty which are prescribed for interns.

**229.** As occasion offers, they will carry out the six tests which we have described (111–117, 198–209). These and other similar tests are all the more necessary, and will certainly be very useful to them, as they will have to live amongst seculars and continue openly to make progress in the religious life, in self-denial and self-contempt, and in strong, prudent observance of obedience.

**230.** These novices will make their confession to their master;

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they will give a full account of their conscience with all sincerity to a superior every six months, as the others do (173).

**231.** In the second year a certain amount of free time will be allotted them so that they may prepare for the duties of charity which they will have to undertake immediately after their novitiate. They should not be exempted, however, from the common exercises.

**232.** Those who are older and especially gifted by God intellectually should attend the ascetics lessons, which will help them greatly.

**233.** It is not necessary for extern coadjutors to take part in a third probation (10) unless they are to be admitted as intern members. Admittance to the Society must depend not so much on the length of time spent in the probations as on progress in spirit. No one is to be co-opted, in fact, unless he has given true signs of abnegation, lowliness, charity and especially obedience.

**234.** For this reason it will be helpful if, after they make the scholastic vows and before their co-option as coadjutors of the Society, there is a period of two, three or five years after studies and the probations, or between them, during which they can be exercised in the ministries assigned to them.

## CHAPTER 8

### The second probation for adopted sons

**235.** It is the General's responsibility to consider carefully in the Lord the special circumstances of a person who seems suitable for affiliation (122–128), and apply to him what we have said about the second probation for candidates of group one.

**236.** A priest well instructed in the nature of the Society and with experience in care of souls (E.) will be appointed to see that what the General has decided in the Lord for the second probation of these persons is carried out properly, and to help and direct anyone seeking adoption in the Society in all matters concerning his spiritual progress. He will make his novitiate under him as his master. This priest will be the candidate's confessor, in whom he will confide in all things, receiving from him consolation and counsel in the Lord.

(E.) He will depend upon the master of the intern novices for the organisation of the novitiate. In other matters he will be subject to the director of the sons, unless he himself is the director.

**237.** No one is to be admitted to affiliation unless he has undergone the probations successfully (although less is required for adoption as a son than for co-option amongst the religious). The length of the second probation after the first year depends upon their progress in spirit. It will be helpful if all (religious excepted) are kept amongst the ascribed members for some years before being admitted to affiliation (E.).

(E.) This does not prevent their taking vows similar to scholastic vows, or other vows.

**Part Three**

**HOW THOSE WHO HAVE DULY COM-  
PLETED THE NOVITIATE ARE TO BE  
TRAINED IN LEARNING AND IN  
OTHER MINISTRIES OF CHARITY, AND  
EXERCISED IN THEM**

## PREAMBLE

**238.** The avocation common to all who have enrolled in this Society is spiritual (184–187), and its tools have already been described. A sterile will, however, is not sufficient for charity, in which that avocation chiefly consists. As the apostle James says: ‘If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them: “Go in peace, be warmed and filled”, without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?’ (Jas 2: [14–17]). Therefore, after we have endeavoured in the probation to perfect in some way the will of the candidates so that for the sake of charity it may not reject self-denial and suffering, it is necessary to instruct them in the different studies and professional activities needed by mankind. In this way they will be able to help the human race as extensively as possible in its necessities and wants.

**239.** It is right, therefore, and extremely necessary that each one should have his own avocation in which he may labour with genuine application. The Lord’s word also requires this: ‘In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread’ (Gen 3: [19]). This saying can be called the constitutive law of fallen mankind. Moreover, by our work we shall give good example to externs (E.).

(E.) Those engaged in the praise of God are by no means idle. In fact, they undertake the most useful avocation of all by propitiating the Godhead for themselves and others. Nevertheless, because it is impossible for persons to remain like angels in unceasing contemplation of God, the members of this Society must all be exercised in some ministry of active life, as we have said (166–167).

**240.** First, we must point out how the candidates are chosen for different ministries; then, how they must be trained in each of them.

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## CHAPTER 1

### The selection of candidates for different types of study

241. Superiors to whom novices have been entrusted will mark their individual capacities and endowments (E.) during the second probation, and note the activities for which each of the novices seems suited. Likewise, those who come to the novitiate with sufficient learning or training are to be tested prudently and evaluated.

(E.) It can be very helpful if the ministries to which the candidates can be assigned are foreseen in good time. They can then be formed for them from an early age, and be tested in them.

242. Besides the reports to be sent by all immediate superiors in the second year of the novitiate when each novice is tested, the master and superior responsible for him will send information about him to the diocesan provost to whom the novitiate is subject. He will immediately send the report, with his own remarks, to the General, and another copy to the provincial, if he himself is not the provincial. The provincial will also give the General his written opinion of the candidates (E.).

(E.) The provincial and the diocesan will ensure that such reports are sent to them promptly so that they can be forwarded to the General with their observations not later than two months before the end of the two-year period.

243. The following information must be sent, in addition to whatever may be of assistance in knowing the general dispositions and characteristics of the candidates.

244. Is the candidate to be dismissed? If so, why, etc.?

245. Is he to be kept in the novitiate?

246. Has he taken preparatory vows? If so, when?

247. Is he to be admitted to scholastic vows, or applied to study or professional activities without vows?

248. To what studies or professional activities is he to be assigned? With vows, or without them? What are his prospects?

**249.** Has he studied, or qualified in some professional activity, before entering the second probation? Is he to be sent for a third probation? If so, to which one? Or is he to be assigned work? How can he help the Society in its ministries of charity (E.)?

(E.) A superior, in informing the General of the progress and qualifications of candidates and the duties for which they seem suitable to God's better service, may ask the General for one of them. If so, he must be careful not to exaggerate in describing the occasions for practising charity, and the needs of the neighbour, in his territory lest the General be misled. All superiors of this Society, whether local or diocesan, must be intent on charity in all its extension, without bias.

**250.** Whatever is decided and commanded in the Lord for these candidates by the Provost General, or the diocesan or the provincial to whom the novitiate is subject, or anyone who has this faculty, shall be done.



## CHAPTER 2

### The dismissal of those found unsuitable for the Society during the two-year probation

251. The faculty of dismissing those who have not yet bound themselves with vows belongs in the first place to the Provost General and then to the provosts who have the candidates under their vigilance and care.

252. Their prudent charity will have to weigh the reasons sufficient for dismissal. The following are the more important.

253. First, if during the course of the probation someone is found to have concealed at the examination one of the five impediments enumerated above which are obstacles to a vow of complete obedience (E.).

(E.) If he kept silence without malice, for example if he was not asked, and does not lack the other endowments, he can be received as an adopted son. But if he concealed one of the impediments (38) or lied about it, the superior who has the faculty to dismiss should see whether this happened through ignorance or through malice, and decide whether he is to be expelled from the Society or whether some means may be employed for removing the impediment.

254. Second, if it is judged (E.) that the novice will cause damage by the bad example of his life, or be a stumbling block to others by his words or actions. Tolerating this is a vice, the opposite of charity, in a person responsible for preserving the good and peaceful state of the Society entrusted to him.

(E.) A person is said to be a stumbling block for others if his example is an occasion of sin for them. The evil is compounded if he uses persuasion to attract them to evil, especially to discord, or if he acts against the superiors or the common good of the Society. It would be unreasonable for people who do this to remain in the Society.

If it is necessary to send someone away for the sake of removing a stumbling block to others, rather than because of the enormity of some sin, and the candidate appears to be suitable in other respects, the superior should prudently consider whether

he is to give him, or obtain for him (161 E.2), permission to go to some other place in the Society. If so, accurate information about him is to be sent beforehand, and he is to be furnished with letters to the superior of the place, which mention his permission to move there.

**255.** Third, if his malice seems incorrigible although, because it is not obvious, it has not been a stumbling block to others; or if his incapacity or unwillingness to set aside his own feeling and judgment leaves no hope that he will live under obedience and according to the way of acting in the Society, or if the candidate is in the grip of some bad habit and does not offer sufficient co-operation in overcoming it. This co-operation is, of course, to be encouraged with all charity.

**256.** Fourth, if some disease or weakness is discovered in anyone during the period of probation and the Society cannot give sufficient help to remedy it, or the candidate would be better looked after at home, or indeed if the sick person could be assisted by us outside the house in an equivalent or better way with less inconvenience to the Society and less loss of time from other works of charity (E.).

(E.) The order of charity which the Society proposes to follow takes account of the greater degree of neighbourliness between persons and the Society. Hence, our charity is due to the candidates, after the co-opted members, before it is exercised towards others. In all charity, therefore, care must be taken to see that candidates suffering from spiritual sickness be cured before their dismissal. The same applies to those physically sick, especially if the illness appears to be caused in some way by reason of the Society. They must be looked after with loving care and assisted with every skill and generosity known to charity.

**257.** Fifth, if tepidity in prayer and below average intelligence are united with perhaps slight moral defects in such a way that the candidate is judged of no foreseeable use in increasing the moral good in our way of life (E.).

(E.) The probation should be lengthened for a year at most after the two-year period if there is any doubt about the novice's uselessness. This extension will help us to avoid even the suspicion of rejecting any portion of God's good gift, or of admitting anyone who does not come to us from God.

**258.** The manner of sending persons away is to be such that in the sight of the Lord the person who dismisses, the one dismissed, and other members of the household if the candidate is not sent away covertly, and even externs, are quite satisfied by it.

**259.** Three conditions should be observed by the one who dismisses.

**260.** First, he himself should pray to the Lord and ensure that the rest of the household prays (without anyone knowing however whom the prayer is for), so that our Lord may deign to show his most holy will in the matter.

**261.** Second, he should speak about the matter to his vicars and counsellors, and also to those in the household who seem suitable, and hear what they think (E.).

(E.) The whole matter should be settled with the Provost General or with the provincial if the causes are so secret that they may not be revealed even to the consultors. Nevertheless, the consultors can courteously ask the superior who sends the candidate away what reasons may be given to brethren or externs enquiring about the matter.

**262.** Third, his decision to dismiss or retain the candidate must depend upon careful considerations relevant to the case. In forming a conclusion he must set aside every affection, and keep in mind the greater glory of God, the common and (as far as possible) particular good (E.).

(E.) Let him consider 1st, whether the accusations against the person are true or false; 2nd, whether they are serious enough to demand consideration of dismissal; 3rd, whether superiors have used due charity in warning him, and in applying the appropriate remedies for an internal cure, that is, penances and the spiritual exercises (these are especially important); and how long the cure has been persevered with — sometimes patience and longanimity are needed, particularly if the person is otherwise of good character.

**263.** Three conditions are also to be observed regarding the person dismissed.

**264.** First, exteriorly, he should as far as possible leave the house without disgrace or loss of his good name, taking with him all the belongings he brought from secular life (E.).

(E.) It is obvious that there is no obligation to restore what has been used for his keep, or applied at his request to charitable works or entrusted to him by the Society. The superior responsible for the dismissal should consider whether any sum is to be given to the needy as alms, and if so how much; and whether he may take his writings with him or not. He is not bound in any way to support dismissed priests who have no title or patrimony.

**265.** Second, interiorly, the superior should be careful to dismiss him with every possible consolation in the Lord.

**266.** Third, the superior should try to direct him with regard to some state of life so that he may choose a way of serving the Lord which seems more in harmony with the divine will. He should take care to help him with advice and prayer, and in any other way charity suggests.

**267.** Three conditions are also to be observed in order to satisfy the other members of the household and externs.

**268.** First, care should be taken, as far as possible, to prevent disquiet remaining in anyone's spirit because of the dismissal. With this end in view, a sufficient reason for the dismissal should be given to those for whom it is necessary, although no defect should be mentioned which is not public knowledge.

**269.** Second, they should have no ill-feeling towards the person dismissed nor, as far as possible, should they have any bad impression of him. On the contrary, they should be sorry for what has happened, and love him in Christ, commending him in their prayers to the divine Majesty that God may deign to guide him and have mercy on him.

**270.** Third, his example should be used to help persons in the house who are not living as they should. Offenders should be afraid lest the same thing happen to them if they are unwilling to improve. Externs, too, who know about the dismissal should be edified that what zeal for God's glory forbids us to tolerate is not in fact tolerated in the house.

**271.** Those sent away should be told that they are absolved from preparatory, scholastic and coadjutor vows (if they have taken them), and need no other dispensation.

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272. If a person has been rightly dismissed but returns, prepared to make any satisfaction, to the same house from which he has been sent away, it is obvious that he must not be re-accepted as long as the just reasons for his dismissal remain. If the causes for the dismissal have ceased, and the person who has sent him away (E.) considers it God's good pleasure that he should be re-admitted to the same house, he must inform the superior by whose authority he was dismissed, and carry out what he decides.

(E.) Any superior of a house can accept him as a guest if he thinks it necessary, until he has consulted the superior by whose authority he was dismissed. Or he may write if necessary (respecting however the order of his superiors) to a higher provost who must always hear the superior responsible for the dismissal.

273. Those who leave without being sent away and go to some other place of the Society, can only be kept as guests until the superior with the faculty to dismiss has been informed. His decision will be carried out.

274. If a person returns to the former house, or another, and is lawfully accepted, he must be examined. This applies whether he has left of his own accord, or has been dismissed. He should make a general confession at least from the time when he thought of leaving and will be given other tests. His two-year novitiate will begin again, or be lengthened, or at least completed, according to the judgment of the superior responsible for admissions, who will weigh the affair in the light of general and particular edification to the glory of God.

275. Finally, there is to be no relaxation of effort with those who ask to be sent away because of their temptations. Rather the tempted, who may return to a better way of thinking if their departure is prudently forbidden or delayed, are to be aided with all charity and patience. Such a way of acting edifies others and prevents their forming the idea, which could be dangerous to many, that the way out is open without difficulty. Nevertheless, persons like this are rarely suitable for the Society when they arrive at a certain stage of temptation with flagging will. Moreover, it is to avoid the opposite extreme where it is

thought that at all costs they should always be kept. This would not accord with the nature of our way of life or the reason behind our ministries, nor be helpful to the persons themselves.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Those retained in the second probation after the two-year period

276. The perfect life to which we dedicate ourselves on entering this Society must be genuine and sincere, not just an empty formula. Hence it is of great importance that no one be co-opted into the scholastic or coadjutor body who has not made that progress during the novitiate, and reached that perfection, for which he entered it. This is a necessary preliminary to the above grades if the Society is truly to obtain in its members the purpose it has in view.

277. Therefore, even if a person has finished his two-year period of second probation without making great progress, he may be kept on in the obedience of the Society for another year, or at least until the schools open. Prudent charity, however, requires the following conditions: there must be some hope that he will improve if helped with charity and longanimity; if there is no certain reason for sending him away, a decision should be made about his aptitude for studies; finally, he should be admitted to preparatory (not perpetual) vows. All this is to be done in the hope that he will repay the Society's care with better results (E.), through the assistance of God's grace.

(E.) Age and temperament should be weighed favourably when there is evidence of a good heart and pure intention which value self-denial and sincerely desire to pursue it. With persons of this kind, time is of great assistance in fostering experience and developing maturity. However, even greater care is needed here lest someone be admitted into the Society who has not already offered some sign of perfect and sufficiently solid virtue.

278. In the meantime, studies may be interposed for those from whom more is hoped as they mature in age, or another year of second probation may be granted, in accordance with the request expressed by the vinedresser in the Lord's vineyard (Lk 13: [6-9]), after which the candidate should be dismissed if he has given no fruit.

## CHAPTER 4

### Those admitted to the third probation immediately after the second

279. Those who have been instructed before entering the Society and need no training in learning or professional activity should be admitted to the third probation, about which we shall speak later, immediately after due completion of the second probation and their profession of scholastic vows (E.).

(E.) The Provost General, or his deputy, will decide what exercises are best in the Lord for experienced men who enter the Society, or for those who have held ecclesiastical dignities with great edification.

It is of great importance to instruct them perfectly about the characteristics of the Society. Otherwise, their authority may give support to innovations. In order to avoid this danger, we establish that no one retaining (even under obedience to the General) a parish, or any ecclesiastical dignities whatsoever, held before co-option into the Society can ever be a rector or provost of the Society. If a case seeming to call for exemption to this rule does occur, the Provost General cannot give the dispensation without the unanimous agreement in the Lord of the four men.

There will be no dispensation for the profession of perpetual and simple coadjutor vows by anyone before the completion of at least two years' novitiate during which the candidate must give proof of a spirit of poverty, self-denial and especially obedience. Only the General can admit sooner to solemn vows for an urgent and important reason, provided that a person admitted in this way makes up his novitiate afterwards.



## CHAPTER 5

### Those co-opted as scholastics of the Society

280. Those who take simple vows after the two-year probation, and promise to enter the Society as coadjutors to live and die in it for the service of God are called *approved scholastics* when, at the decree of the General or his delegate, they are assigned to learning or professional activities in which they still have to be instructed. Both those who have undergone the probations inside our houses, and those who have completed them outside, are admitted as scholastics.

281. It is not necessary for the two-year probation to be continuous. Sometimes, but rarely, the candidates can be assigned to training for learning or professional activities after the completion of the first year of probation. Because candidates without vows and without promise to enter the Society at coadjutor grade cannot be numbered amongst the approved scholastics, the Society will have, therefore, besides approved scholastics, others whom she must cherish with the same maternal care that she gives to the approved scholastics.

282. Even after the successful completion of his two-year probation, it could occur that a candidate might desire a longer period to consider in the sight of the Lord the vows to be taken and the promise of entering the Society. For this reason, he may wish to be sent on to his designated training without having taken scholastic vows. This can be granted if the General thinks it wise (E.).

(E.) The provost responsible for the care of the scholastics will decide prudently, in the light of personal and external circumstances, whether these persons are to live with the approved scholastics.

283. Our candidates who complete the two-year novitiate sometime before the beginning of the academic year are to be prepared in the interim, and sit examinations designed to test their individual suitability for the various kinds of training to which each may be assigned. If, after the examination, their

suitability is still in doubt, they will be given time to prepare for a second sitting. On the basis of this second test, a decision will be made about their aptitude for one or other kind of training, or their incapacity for any kind, and they will be assigned according to this decision. Those who are judged suitable for training in humanities will devote themselves earnestly to preparation for the class chosen for them, if there is still time before the opening of the schools. Special attention will be given to learning Latin during this period.

**284.** Those destined for the clerical state will not take orders, nor the tonsure, nor even the clerical habit (unless the General sees fit to decide otherwise about the clerical habit in an individual case) until they are first bound to the Society by vows which, on the part of the professed, are perpetual. These may be the above-mentioned scholastic vows and promise, or other private vows described in 80 E. and 387 E. Bound in this way the candidates will receive the clerical habit and orders at the proper time according to the decision of the diocesan to whom they are subject and who has received the necessary faculty.

## CHAPTER 6

### Those assigned to training in learning and in professional activities

285. In sending on candidates for ecclesiastical training, there should be reasonable hope that they will prove suitable for ecclesial ministries, and for cultivating the vineyard of Christ our Lord by example and teaching. Their aptitude for the priestly life will be in proportion to their intelligence, virtue, physical capacity for the labour of training, and especially the signs they give of a certain contemplative disposition.

286. Candidates who have been tested, and seriously seek perfection, but are less adapted to contemplation, can be applied according to their propensities (E.) to some branch of study in science or arts provided they seem intelligent enough to pursue the subject successfully. In this way, the gifts and inclinations placed in them by God (241 E.) will be used satisfactorily in his service, and the Society will exercise charity more fruitfully.

(E.) Superiors must indeed weigh carefully the natural inclinations of each member and as far as possible distribute duties to the individuals accordingly. Nevertheless, candidates are to preserve the fullest indifference to any duties or ministries whatsoever, as we have said. This indifference, which consists in an act of free will, is not upset by any involuntary natural inclination.

287. On the one hand, it is not impossible for those who have been assigned to some special branch of science or arts to be changed, either for promotion to the priesthood, or for training in some other field (in this case, they are to act with holy indifference and the obedience they have promised by undertaking the new training and leaving the old readily and swiftly); on the other hand, when they are commanded to persevere with the training they have begun, they must remain at peace, content with their office, unaffected by frivolity or boredom, doing nothing of themselves or through others to obtain a change.

**288.** Candidates not promoted to orders nor sent on for learning or arts must be trained in technical work, according to the discipline of the ancient fathers. The monks of old, laymen for the most part, were students and labourers at the same time. In the same way, all members of this Society should work, and leave no excuse for anyone disliking us to quote (even with only a semblance of truth) the saying of the Apostle: 'If anyone will not work, let him not eat' (2 Thess 3: [10]).

**289.** There should be no one in this Society, therefore, who is not properly trained for some occupation (41 E.2). It is to be hoped that those assigned to professional training will excel others in their work, and it is likewise fitting that our brethren give an example of diligence, industry and skill in technical work.

**290.** It is left to the prudence of the Provost General or diocesan to decide the different occupations of the individuals on the basis of their knowledge and information concerning them.

**291.** Occupations necessary in the house are to be promoted and sanctified before all others; next in order are those required by the ministries of charity we have assumed or are to assume shortly; in the third place are the useful occupations for which the candidates themselves show greater promise and inclination, and for which they can be trained more easily and piously inside or outside the house; finally, the fourth place belongs to those amongst the useful occupations which are more useful by reason of circumstances, and necessary for man's daily life.

**292.** In addition, the Provost General and the diocesan, or the provincial, must observe especially the following rule in distributing the candidates for ecclesiastical, academic or technical training: persons will be prepared and instructed for each of the duties so that when necessary a substitute is available for anyone holding a duty. These provosts will confer attentively with their consultants on this matter. The aim is to maintain a sufficient number of suitable workers in the Society.

**293.** These workers are to live content with their positions, since they devote themselves to the service of God like all the others of the Society. Indeed, they do all things for love and

reverence of God. They should be ready to undertake correctly, joyfully, laboriously and earnestly the technical work entrusted to them, imitating JESUS CHRIST, and MARY and JOSEPH, his parents, with all humility and charity in a private life. When they do this, they will not only obtain their own complete reward, but will also share in all the good which God deigns to procure through the whole Society for his honour and praise. All the members form one body, and the members share together in the working of the whole body in which they co-operate proportionately (E.).

(E.) Learning cultivated with devotion and humility helps towards a better understanding of the law of God, which is most useful for a rightly intentioned person. It does not seem just, therefore, for persons who would have studied if they had remained in secular life to be applied simply to technical work, unless greater charity towards our neighbour requires this. Technical work is more fitting rather for those who would have earned their living by it in secular life. Nevertheless, clerics and students should learn husbandry and some handicraft during recreation (167), if it can be done. This is in harmony with the enactments of councils (*Counc. Carth. iv, can. 51*), and is a safeguard against the danger of idleness, especially for those who cannot concentrate easily upon lessons and written work.

This will also aid extern coadjutors towards a more exemplary life, especially those caring for souls in country districts who may lack other useful occupations.

## CHAPTER 7

### The persons responsible for the care of scholastics

294. The diocesan provost in whose diocese scholastics live (E.), or his provincial, is the superior entrusted with complete care of them. It is his responsibility to watch over scholastics and their training in his province. He will inform the General of the same.

(E.) He will be assisted by an inspector of studies, who will be his vicar of intellectual charity.

295. The training-house will be organised in almost the same way as the novitiate. Instead of the master, a person noted for his piety and doctrine (E.) will preside over the scholastics and their training. He will direct the tutors, prefects and assistants with true wisdom, and instil all with greatness of mind and heart in our Lord JESUS for his glory.

(E.) He must belong to the college of doctors of the Society. The master of the scholastics will have a companion.

296. This person will be independent of the rector of the house, or will have the faculties and name of rector if the training-house is not attached to a provostal house. He will communicate directly with the inspector of studies and the diocesan provost. If the training-house is attached to a provostal house, the master of the scholastics will be subject to the provost of that house, but not to the minister or the vicars. At the General's directive, he can be one of the vicars (E.).

(E.) The minister or the vicar, however, can correct the scholastics for faults committed outside the place set aside for them.

297. Both the ecclesiastical students and the students of humanities shall have tutors and assistants who will take the candidates to and from the individual schools if they are outside our own houses, and frequently be present at lessons in the schools so that they may go through them again at home for the benefit of the students (E.).

(E.) Experience will show if it is necessary to have some persons as assistants and others as tutors.

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298. It is the tutors' responsibility to see to everything that can help the scholastics' progress, according to the superiors' instructions. The masters of the Society can be chosen from the tutors.

299. There will be special assistants or prefects for each of the occupations if there are many temporal coadjutors employed in learning some technical skill. Continual watchfulness and frequent instruction on the part of the assistants and tutors is necessary so that each one may progress in his work and job with fear and love of the Lord (E.).

(E.) Bodily mortifications and penances are especially fitting for scholastics engaged in technical work, but kindness united with unshakeable firmness is needed in persuading them of this.

300. The assistants shall be trustworthy men, tested in their love of the Society and gifted with shrewd judgment. They will have fulfilled their own work devotedly with all charity and understanding.

301. Particular prudence in the Lord is required from those who have to accompany scholastics studying humanities to universities. They will take suitable precautions from the very beginning if there is any danger to the good conduct and sound doctrine of our brethren from their lecturers or fellow-students, and they will inform the superiors about the matter immediately.

302. Adopted sons, who are not able to take the vow of obedience required in the Society, cannot be numbered amongst the approved or unapproved scholastics of the Society. Nevertheless, a special kind of charity will be used in their regard, and they will be helped in their studies by their director, or someone else chosen for the work. After the adopted sons, the ascribed members will also receive in the Lord the help they desire and seek from the Society so that their studies and professional activities may be available for God's greater service and glory (E.).

(E.) Externs cannot mix indiscriminately with scholastics who are educated in the houses of the Society. However, if it is thought useful for mutual edification, they will be able to

discuss studies and spiritual matters with those appointed when suitable arrangements have been made.

**303.** The usual reports will be sent (E.) by all immediate superiors. In addition, towards the end of each course of study, e.g. towards the end of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, etc., the master and superior of the scholastics will present any information which may help the superiors to decide the most favourable assignment for the candidate, as in the case of the novices (248, 249).

(E.) Examination results are to be sent with the annual report, together with assessments and other conclusions. Explanatory notes are to be added.



## CHAPTER 8

### Care of the scholastics' health

304. Besides the rules which apply to all, and the directions for the novices (219–225), the following will be observed so that the health of the scholastics may be guarded for the service of the Lord.

305. The master and rector or provost will take care that the scholastics do not study at times harmful to physical health; that they are given sufficient time for sleep; and that moderation is observed in mental work. For this reason, scholastics will not spend more than two hours reading or writing without an interval from study.

306. The training-house will be established by the General in some healthy spot. At the same time, however, large colleges are to be preferred to small for the sake of greater convenience and utility in teaching the brethren.

307. A weekly break in the country will be of great benefit to health. The students can be sent out on a day free from all study (except feast days or during Lent). If the weather is bad, or there are other reasons which prevent their going to the estate or for a walk, the bell will not be rung for recreation in the morning, and studies will continue. After dinner, however, there will be normal recreation, then an interval, after which a signal will be given for three hours quiet recreation. When they have their supper on the estate, the scholastics will spend one or two hours during the afternoon partly in study and partly in perfecting their morning prayer. During this period there will be no talking.

308. Once a year, during the long vacation, they can spend a fortnight on the estate or at the villa. While their bodily health recuperates, their spiritual fervour must not be extinguished. Therefore: 1st, the period in the villa is not to be allowed at all unless the building is a really suitable dwelling place with doors that can be locked, and unless a superior is present to look after religious discipline; 2nd, the normal spiritual exercises shall not

be omitted; 3rd, no one may visit the villas of externs, even relatives, unless the diocesan provost gives permission for grave reasons; 4th, the type of exercise will be delineated by the diocesan or provincial who will draw up directions suitable for the circumstances.

## CHAPTER 9

### The studies of our scholastics

309. Because the establishment and government of all kinds of schools for youth is a wonderful way of exercising charity, it harmonises in the highest degree with the character of this Society, when our neighbour asks us to undertake this work of education. Nevertheless, we consider it an excellent thing in the Lord that candidates of the Society be educated along with all the other servants and faithful of Christ for the sake of greater uniformity in the Church of God. The Society, therefore, will not normally have special, internal studies reserved for our own young members.

310. Candidates assigned to ecclesiastical studies, therefore, will do their course with other clerics and faithful in our public schools, or other academies, or in episcopal seminaries with permission from the bishops. They will take the common examinations and public diplomas, unless the Provost General thinks otherwise.

311. Our students, therefore, will be located in places adapted to their studies, where one of our houses is sufficiently large and comfortable enough to appear suitable for the purpose. This will apply whether the brethren teach in the same house or college, or nearby, or even if the scholastics attend some other public institute.

312. Where this is impossible, or the General considers it inopportune in the Lord, they should be lodged in the most suitable places, and educated privately at home. If the Provost General thinks it beneficial, they can take public examinations.

313. If the education of our candidates is public, and carried out to the satisfaction of the ordinaries and faithful, people will be able to judge in all truth their preparedness and suitability. In this case, public opinion will neither overestimate them (which we think extremely harmful and contrary to the truth), nor underestimate them. Any opinion whatsoever based on public witness will be more solidly grounded because more in

harmony with truth and more open to inspection. The closer the public watchfulness, the sharper the stimulus to the inertia of our human nature which both turns away from the labour to which it was born unless it is continually goaded and, at the same time, constantly yearns for the flattery of vain praise.

314. In the same way, those studying science or arts for the sake of their neighbour must complete their course of studies regularly, and as far as possible in public, taking certificates and diplomas as the General sees fit. They will do more good if they possess public qualifications, provided keen intelligences are selected who can be an example of diligence and progress to the rest.

315. It is left to the Provost General to decide, in the light of circumstances, whether any branch of knowledge or course of studies is to be added at home to the public course.

316. Both in the case of complete courses of study for the brethren, and where public studies have to be complemented with private work, the Provost General shall strive to obtain a perfect education for all in the ministries and duties to which they have been assigned. Some studies must be done in common. Besides religion, the Rules of our way of life and good manners, these would seem to be at least reading, correct and well-formed handwriting, and arithmetic. Those who seem destined for administration will attend what we call elementary schools and will know how to write up and keep accounts, and in addition will have some idea of architecture, surveying, husbandry and civil law.

317. Scholastics destined for the priesthood, or for humanities for reasons of charity, shall have a solid grounding in Latin before passing to higher studies. They will speak Latin (E.) to become familiar with it. There will be no exemption from this rule except on the days of weekly holiday, and even then it may be retained in those regions where the provincial considers this can easily be done. The brethren who have not completed their Latin studies should use this language in writing to others in the Society.

(E.) Nevertheless, the Provost General can dispense after careful consideration of possible grave reasons.

[314–317]

318. Greek is of considerable help in learning and teaching many of the subjects we undertake. It also throws great light on the explanation of the holy bible and is a powerful weapon against heretics. Some students should be chosen for it, therefore, mastering it either when they learn Latin or at some other more suitable time.

319. Attention must also be paid to the more widespread living languages in Europe, in other regions where the brethren dwell, and elsewhere throughout the world. Languages necessary for preaching the gospel to the faithful and for the salvation of souls in mission territories are to be given special attention. The Provost General will take great care to promote studies of this kind.

320. It is necessary for the candidates learning languages to have their minds exercised in other subjects at the same time. Chief amongst these, besides moral doctrine which the other subjects should serve, are style, or the art of writing with purity and clarity of expression, which can be practised at every age, for example in familiar news and correspondence; history, with some outline of dates and geography; drawing; natural sciences, and similar subjects. In all these studies the moral education and edification of the students is to be sought so that they may learn to despise vice, to love virtue, and to seek the goodness and wisdom of God whom they adore with gratitude.

321. The study of humanities is to be held in great esteem, and the diocesans and provincials should take particular care of the students working at them. They should speak to the General about the need for establishing and maintaining training colleges so that suitable professors may be available in these subjects. Our students assigned to humanities will complete two years' rhetoric before they begin philosophy. During this period, they will pay particular attention to purity of expression, and practise a style in which their concepts are elaborated decently without subterfuge, affections are stimulated, and arguments for rebutting an opponent, based always upon truth, are strengthened by logically ordered exposition.

322. It is left to the Provost General to decide whether logic (with mathematics added) is to be taught before the three-year

period of academic studies. But all the academics will have a year's course in these sciences before or after their humanities.

**323.** There will be a thorough two-year course of philosophy for the more distinguished of the students to be raised to the priesthood, and also for others in different branches of study.

**324.** There will be two courses of theology, the shorter lasting three years, the longer five. The curriculum for students of the shorter course will be a compendium of dogma, with moral theology and cases of conscience (E.).

(E.) A private weekly conference on cases of conscience will be held for theologians of both courses. The chairman, who will be appointed by the senior provost, must be capable of undertaking this duty prudently and securely. The priests of the house, including the immediate superior, will rarely be absent from these conferences, and then only for grave reasons.

**325.** At the same time the liturgical books, that is, the Roman missal, ritual, pontifical, breviary and others (E.), will be read and explained to them. The students of both courses should work hard at acquiring a style of composition which will help them in their office of preaching.

(E.) Those raised to the priesthood will not be sent to hear confessions until the end of the three-year period in the theology schools, and after having successfully taken the examination for confessions before a board of three experts in moral theology (one of whom should be an ascribed member, if possible). They must satisfy at least two of the examiners that they possess all the doctrine necessary for hearing confessions fruitfully. The examiners, who must give their opinion in writing, are under a serious obligation of conscience in this matter. Priests admitted to the Society must undergo the same examination before being sent to hear confessions unless their exceptional learning is beyond question.

**326.** The curriculum of the longer course includes: ecclesiastical history as a subsidiary to dogma; canon and pontifical law; Hebrew; biblical archaeology; introduction to sacred scripture, and exegesis; finally, pastoral theology. If during this period of study there is not time for more than a cursory reading of the councils, decrees, holy doctors, and moral subjects, each student should be able to make up privately, with the approval of

superiors, what is wanting after the end of the course, especially if a solid basis of scholastic doctrine has been laid.

**327.** A special three-year course in sacred eloquence will be taken by those who have a particular talent for preaching, and are well-grounded in humility and the other virtues. This course may be taken with, or after, the other theological subjects. Provincials and diocesans will take great care to see that excellent preachers of God's word are trained.

**328.** In choosing opinions in philosophy, the following rule should be observed: opinions and their consequences should not contain anything whatsoever against the deposit of faith. All lecturers in this subject, but especially the Provost General and all superiors in a special way (E.), are responsible for seeing that this is observed. In addition, lecturers should teach what they know to be in conformity with truth. In searching for this truth, they must have great respect for the authority of the saints; as a criterion they should believe that what conforms better with the principles of sacred, catholic theology is nearer the truth; finally, they should tend, through frequent written communication and discussions, under the direction of superiors, to the greatest possible agreement amongst themselves. In proposing and expounding questions, they should always remember that natural philosophy must be nothing more than a propaedeutic to theology (which alone contains the theory of wisdom), and that the aim of studies in the Society is simply to help our neighbour towards the knowledge and love of God.

(E.) Those superiors who have no theological studium within their jurisdiction can in cases of doubt apply to other superiors responsible for such studies. Let them be content with the opinion and prudence of these other superiors.

**329.** In theology, the brethren will hold and teach what the Apostolic See holds and teaches, in the way they know the Apostolic See holds it. Another criterion which the brethren shall always bear in mind is this: they should seek and maintain opinions towards which the whole catholic Church seems to incline and tend. With regard to opposing the contrary opinions of others which have not been condemned by the Church, the brethren should maintain the freedom which the Holy See

reserves for the different schools and make their own the saying: in necessary matters, unity; in doubtful matters, freedom; in all things, charity.

**330.** No one is to be taught philosophy before the age of eighteen, unless the Provost General dispenses in particular cases for a grave reason.

**331.** All our scholastics, whatever their subjects, are to be examined seriously at the end of each year, in the presence of the immediate superior and the diocesan or provincial if possible. At least half-marks are needed for promotion from one academic year to the next. The examining board will be composed of the prefect of studies and the appropriate teacher, to whom the rector or the provost will add an ascribed member if possible. If not, the third member will be one of the other masters, or someone else considered capable of doing the work. In addition to these three, at least two others who can alternate will be chosen by the rector or provost. If this is not possible, exceptionally suited persons, even from the ascribed members, can be chosen to decide the marks and reports with the three examiners. Each one will have a certain quota of marks (the Provost General will decide the number), of which the greater number will be given to the student who shows indications of greater knowledge. No one will be promoted who has not received at least half-marks. All those giving marks will maintain complete secrecy about the whole scrutiny.

**332.** The examination will last at least half an hour in the philosophy and theology schools. Candidates who sit for promotion to second-year philosophy or fourth-year theology will each be examined for an hour. They will not be promoted without two-thirds of the marks (E.).

(E.) A moderate student showing special talents for government or preaching may be granted time for a new examination if this seems necessary, or the General can dispense from this.

**333.** The same examination is to be taken by persons who have done some studies before entering the Society, so that they may be put in the appropriate class with the brethren. Only knowledge shown in the examinations is to be considered, not their previous course of studies (E.).

[330–333]



(E.) Sufficient time will be given them for revision and preparation before the , and they will be provided with suitable help.

**334.** The subject-matter of the examination is all the work done with the teachers during the current year, except for that done near examination time. The prefect of studies will decide what this includes.

**335.** The brethren frequenting public schools not in our charge will sit for the same examinations as the other students. The Provost General will see that courses lacking in these institutes (...) are provided in our own houses, and that deficiencies in rules laid down for examinations and marking are also complemented. The promotion of the brethren will be strictly in accord with the norms laid down.

**336.** Moreover, some who have obtained excellent results in public institutes should accept academic diplomas and take part in normal procedure, as the General or provincial judges fit (but without too much expense or extraordinary ceremony). Their religious virtue must be particularly considered, for the glory of God and help to our neighbour.

Generally speaking, those who mark examinations must weigh learning, while the above-mentioned superiors have to judge the habit of evangelical virtue necessary for a student's admission to these diplomas and procedures, or even for promotion to higher studies. Those educated in private schools will not accept public diplomas unless the General decides otherwise in the Lord. Nevertheless, they can be doctors of the Society if they have the necessary qualifications.

**337.** The General will prescribe, according to circumstances, the other studies for the temporal coadjutors (E.).

(E.) All the scholastics must learn the art of study, and methods by which they can educate themselves more easily and readily. Examples of these means are how to read books and make extracts from them; how to write one's thoughts in an orderly manner; subsidiary subjects such as bibliography, literary history, and so on.

## CHAPTER 10

### The aid to be given scholastics for greater progress in their studies

338. Students who have studied the language for some time must always speak in Latin; all the others, even the more advanced, at least in alternate periods. Scholastics will learn by heart what has been specified by their lecturers and take great pains with style, especially in their own language. Someone will mark their written work. Extensive and carefully written work, corrected and edited by an excellent master, is the best way of obtaining a clear and elegant style.

339. If our students of rhetoric or humanities, or some of them, do not attend public schools, and the head of department is unable to undertake the burden of instructing our own students and externs, the superior will bring in some other suitable teacher to educate the brethren carefully in private at home.

340. Students of humanities will be given periods in which to discuss their subjects in the presence of a person who can direct them. After dinner on set days they will review straightforwardly and religiously the finer points of literature or will practise composing *ex tempore* speeches or poems on a given theme to test their quickness of intelligence, or read in public previously composed works for the rest to criticise (E.). All this will be done without strain, rather light-heartedly, with a sense for what is right.

(E.) The rector or provincial should decide, according to faculties received, whether the circumstances are such that some of these arrangements should be changed.

341. The superior will also see that our students of rhetoric occasionally speak, or recite poetry, on some theme in Latin or Greek both in the classroom and at table for the edification of the household and externs. This will be a stimulus in the Lord to better things. Twice or three times a year, on some solemnity, such as the inauguration of the new academic year,

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philosophers, theologians and students of other faculties will also compose some verse, and pin it up.

**342.** At home, there will be an hour's repetition and discussion daily of philosophy and theology lectures for our students at some determined time, except Sundays, holidays and feast days. One or other of the students will be warned beforehand to repeat the work by memory (E.), but not for more than a quarter of an hour. Afterwards, some will debate the matter and the same number will reply. If time allows, questions should be proposed. To have time for these, the master will have to ensure that the method of argument is strictly adhered to and that the rules for debate are observed exactly. If nothing emerges, he must end the discussion.

(E.) It is desirable that what has been learned by heart should be expounded briefly and smoothly.

**343.** It will also help if on a certain day every fortnight someone chosen by the superior from each philosophy and theology class undertakes to defend a single proposition. On the evening of the previous day, the subject-matter will be posted on the inner doors of the scholastic buildings (so that those who wish may be present to listen or take part). The proponent will set forth his arguments briefly after which anyone of the household who so desires may comment (E.1). A chairman will be present to direct the arguments. For the sake of the listeners he shall first draw out from what has been said the doctrine to be held, and explain it. Then he shall show what logically follows, either true or false, from the admissions made by the defender. He will indicate to those speaking when they are to stop, and will distribute the time without interrupting the logical sequence so that a good number have an opportunity for making their points (E.2).

(E.1) The extern coadjutors must be present and take part in these debates. Adopted sons [and] ascribed members of the Society can also have permission to be present if the superior judges in the Lord that it will help either group.

(E.2) The principal ends to be desired from these debates are 1st, that young members learn the reasons which confirm the truth: hence weak arguments are to be altogether avoided; 2nd, the mind be clarified, and grow accustomed to defending the

truth logically: hence all vain cavilling, even by an objector, is to be eliminated; 3rd, direct, clear and fluent speech be acquired: hence slang is to be carefully avoided, although the necessary brevity and directness of reasoning are to be tempered with free, learned and friendly language; 4th, above all, that the exercise be used to accustom the students to speak courteously, with clarity and modesty, each in order, without interrupting one another, listening attentively, summing up exactly, conceding what cannot be denied, not drawing unwarranted inferences; and carrying out all these things with the greatest love of truth and the brotherhood.

344. Moreover a very learned, articulate man should if possible live in the same house as the theologians and philosophers. At set times, he will often talk to them *more socratico* about the principal points in the lectures they have heard, imitating the Platonic dialogues. This should also be done in the country (...). The benefits accruing to keen minds from this kind of exercise are incredible. At the same time the students' powers of correct speech are exerted, while the difficulties they experience in their subjects can be exquisitely clarified to the glory of God.

345. Some students shall be permitted, at the superior's discretion, to study other than the set authors. Every other week on a specified day, one of the more advanced students will make a speech after dinner in Greek or Latin or the local language. The subject-matter must be of edification to the household and externs, and stimulate them to more perfect things in the Lord.

346. Scholastics should have their own library chosen with great care from the best authors. The key shall be given to the master of scholastics who will be the prefect of the library, and follow the rules for the prefect of the common library. Keys will also be given to the prefect of studies and to others whom the superior thinks should have them (E.). It will be the responsibility of the prefect of studies to see that scholastics have not only the necessary books, but useful books also, although he must take care to avoid useless material. The librarian will follow the same prefect's directions in giving out the books.

(E.) Those who combine great qualities of intelligence and piety may have free access to the books in this library which they consider helpful. This is done so that they may become

familiar with books, may read more carefully the books they have chosen for themselves, and may give a clearer idea of their natural bent.

**347.** Moreover the students, especially the philosophers and theologians, will have their own quiet, private study.

**348.** Studies will be governed by the following rules, and by those to be set out by the Provost General in manuals on different subjects.

## CHAPTER 11

### The rule of life for scholastics living in our houses

**349.** Scholastics of the Society live outside our houses if they are to become extern coadjutors; otherwise in our houses. We shall speak first of the care of those trained at home; then of the externs.

**350.** The external rule of life for academic and professional students is practically the same as for those in the probationations (E.).

(E.) They must be educated in a separate place. No one may go there without permission from the superior.

And even after this two-year scholastic period, there will be certain rules for their contact with others. The following is established for all. 1st, there will be special times, chosen by the superior, for necessary interviews with teachers (masters shall be appointed not only to help them in their studies, but also to stimulate them to virtue by good example); 2nd, it is strictly forbidden for scholastics to be over-familiar with senior fathers, or to have them as patrons with superiors; 3rd, if superiors notice human prudence and reasoning in any of the scholastics, they should cut short their plans. In this way our young men will develop habits of simplicity and straightforwardness right from the beginning.

**351.** Care should be taken that love of religious life and solid virtue does not grow cold amongst the academics in the heat of study. At the same time, there should not be too much insistence on mortifications, prayers and lengthy meditations (E.1). Study requires the whole man, and when it is undertaken with the sincere intention of serving God it is not less, but rather more pleasing to God and our Lord than spending study-time in these other works (E.2).

(E.1) Discretion will always have its place even if a superior judges that greater liberty in these matters is to be permitted in particular cases. The spiritual profit of the scholastics will be greatly aided if they take up to some extent during the holidays previous habits of mortification. Proposals for mortification can be listed on the notice-board.

(E.2) For the same purpose of avoiding distractions, the

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students should not be given responsibilities and occupations entailed by domestic duties (although there is no reason why they should not be sent for a few hours to help those engaged in such duties), nor sent out for talks or confessions or other works towards their neighbour in so far as they can in the Lord avoid these occupations. In places where there are scholastics, some priests already co-opted should be available for the ecclesiastical functions required by our neighbour.

**352.** Each one must decide to apply himself seriously and constantly to his studies. Even though he may never use what he has learned, he should be firmly persuaded that the necessary obedience and charity with which he undertakes it will be a work of great merit in the sight of the divine Majesty.

**353.** In order to profit to the full in the work they have undertaken, they should strive in the first place to preserve purity of soul, and to have a right intention, seeking nothing in their studies except the divine glory and the good of souls. When they pray, they should ask earnestly for the grace to reach this goal, according to the will of God, in the training to which they are assigned.

**354.** Besides the sacraments of confession (E.1) and communion which they will approach at least once a week, daily Mass and twofold examen, they will spend an hour in prayer each morning, and half an hour in the evenings on non-study days (E.2).

(E.1) They should make their confession to their master who will send them now and again to another confessor designated by the provincial to whom they are subject. If necessary, a spiritual director may be appointed to whom they can make their confession, or speak about spiritual matters.

(E.2) Vocal prayer is especially recommended to the scholastics. If a person does not make spiritual progress with one form of prayer, he may try another with permission from the superior or master who will have to see what will help individuals in particular circumstances. Consideration must be given to what constitutes true devotion for them, and persons, times and places should be evaluated in this respect. Suitable headings for meditation can be proposed for those who still seem inexperienced in spiritual things.

Priority is to be given to ensuring that when a person prays,

he effectively understands what he says. His mind should be alert and raised up to God, so that he may pray not only with his mouth, but truly, in his heart. Hence those who are not learning Latin should say their private prayers in a language they understand and be taught carefully to make their petitions with actual understanding and affection for what they are expressing.

With regard to the *corona* or rosary, they should be taught how to think or meditate on the mysteries contained in it so as to say it with the greatest attention and profit.

**355.** It will be suitable for them to renew twice yearly, about the feasts of the Purification and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin MARY (E.), the simple vows which they have taken according to the prescribed formula (444). This is done to increase their devotion, to remind them of the obligation by which they are bound to God, and to encourage them in complete self-reformation (There will be a triduum beforehand in which they will be free from all other occupations, except their normal lessons if it is not holiday time, so as to exercise themselves in spiritual things alone. Some time before the renewal day, they should make a general confession, at least from the time of their last general confession, to extraordinary confessors delegated by the diocesan. They may go to these persons at any time during the triduum for the sake of confession). Those who have not made simple vows at the end of probation should do so at a suitable time.

(E.) That is, within the octave of the feasts, or during the preceding novena. The diocesan provost can change these feasts for a good reason.

**356.** All the candidates will go to school and return together (E.1), or in whatever way is thought best, with great inward and outward modesty to the equal edification of themselves and others. When speaking to other scholastics, or to externs, whoever they may be, they must normally discuss their studies or progress in the spirit in so far as they feel it is more useful for all to the greater glory of God (E.2).

(E.1) Each one shall be allowed a companion from whose work he will benefit; companions should be changed frequently.

(E.2) Superiors should see the scholastics do not grow too



accustomed to talking to externs, or become familiar with them, eating with them, mutually sending and receiving letters and gifts, unless necessity and right reason sometimes indicate differently. Therefore, they should not be called to the door except with the express permission of the superior alone, who should grant it rarely and take care that conversations are not prolonged. In university towns a little more latitude may seem indicated, and some students outstanding in virtue may be permitted by the superior to be in contact with the secular students for the sake of helping them spiritually.

**357.** Scholastics should be assiduous in their work, preparing their lessons beforehand, and reviewing them afterwards. They should ask questions when they do not understand and, where necessary, make notes to help their memory.

**358.** The immediate superior, and after him the others whose responsibility it is, should see whether the master, lecturers, tutors, assistants and students carry out their duty in the Lord or not.

**359.** It is necessary to refrain the over-eager (E.) and to stimulate and animate the lazier students in their studies. To do this better the superior in charge of scholastics must find out, either personally or through someone who has the office of syndic or visitor of scholastics, how the scholastics carry out their duty.

(E.) As studies require the whole man, the desire for learning should not be suppressed. Nevertheless, if anyone were to seem lax in spirit it would be altogether necessary for him to be brought back to mortifications and spiritual exercises which would re-ignite his spiritual fervour, as has been said (262 E.). The studies of those who show the Society only mediocre signs of religious indifference and acts of virtue are to be treated with great circumspection, and may be interrupted now and again by other occupations, or even deferred. All this is done lest after studies they attribute more to themselves than the Society thinks fit to attribute to them. When studies are deferred, scholastics are to be warned openly about their imperfections.

**360.** Anyone seen to be spending his time uselessly, either because he is unwilling or is certainly unable to make progress in learning, should be transferred from studies and applied to

something else in which he may serve the Lord better. The Provost General, and the person who has been given this faculty, will make the decision.

**361.** In encouraging the young to study, superiors should use sound reasons which are also consistent with the gospel of Christ. These motives must be based upon the end of human beings and of studies, the glory of God, and charity towards our neighbour in which the divine glory is contained. The spirit of competition, which is often the seed of pride and worldly vain-glory, is to be avoided as an incentive to study.

**362.** Care should be taken that scholastics in training for academic and professional activities learn contemporaneously how to use their training for their neighbour's good. This is the aim of the Society and therefore the principal reason why our candidates are taught so much.

**363.** This end of all their labours must be kept continually before their eyes by both academic and technical students. With this continually in mind, the academics will flee vain curiosity and knowledge which serves only to puff up; the technical students will rejoice deep in their hearts because they realise perfectly how even the work of one's hands becomes noble for the sake of the charity of our Lord JESUS.

**364.** For this reason superiors will not disregard the opportunities offered by providence for exercising scholastics in certain works of charity towards their neighbours. However, these works should not distract them from love of their studies and progress in them.

**365.** Two principal matters will be taken into consideration in sending scholastics to ministries of charity. 1st, the works of charity assigned to each must have some relationship to his studies; 2nd, they should be undertaken with a view to his future assignment, as far as this can be foreseen (E.).

(E.) Now and again they can be sent to beg from door to door or help in a hospital, or accompany the bursar, or preach in the streets, or teach catechism to youngsters. This will depend upon what seems best in the Lord for the edification and spiritual benefit of the brethren and externs.

**366.** It is especially fitting for those working at technical activities to help their neighbour (E.) in their own trades; for scholastics studying humanities to assist in this way; and for priests and clerics to help rather through the arms of the spiritual ministry.

(E.) For example, a person trained in some trade could make things to give to the poor, or teach the trade itself to poor boys.

**367.** They should practise preaching and giving sacred talks in a way suitable for the edification of the people, and for this reason they need to learn the national language well (E.1). It is also necessary to foresee and to have available whatever else will be more useful for this task. Every means by which they can be helped should be employed so that they can undertake this duty better and with greater profit for souls (E.2).

(E.1) It will be helpful for them to have made special study of the gospels used throughout the year, and of the moral sections of the scriptures, and the psalms. It is also useful to review the vices, and the motives which lead to their detestation, along with the remedies to be applied to them. From the opposite point of view, the commandments, virtues and good works should be examined, together with the motives for loving them and the means for acquiring them. All these matters should be available in a compendium even if it is good for each person to draw them more abundantly from the great sources of scripture and the fathers.

(E.2) For example, reading the rules on oratory which are laid down by the best writers; listening to and reading good speakers; practising writing and delivering discourses at home. But the best means of all is to have an excellent admonitor who can advise wisely on content, vocabulary, delivery, pronunciation and gesture.

**368.** Those who are already priests should not forsake the ministry of the sacraments of confession (E.) and communion. They will be careful to keep in mind their own duties and those of penitents and communicants in this respect, and see that they are carried out so that these sacraments may be received worthily and fruitfully for the glory of God.

(E.) Hearing confessions demands study of Christian ethics and of cases of conscience, especially in matters of restitution. In addition, it is helpful to have available a compendium of

cases and reserved censures so that the confessor may be aware how far his jurisdiction extends. The confessor should also know a brief method of questioning about sins, and be aware of the remedies for them. A confessor with limited experience should reconsider the confessions he hears and note any defects so that he may correct them in future. Scholastics studying theology and living with a parochial provost are to be specially directed by him in all these matters, and if he sees fit are to be present at the pastoral conferences he holds.

**369.** After they have had experience in themselves of the spiritual exercises, they should become used to giving them to others. All must work hard to be able to explain the exercises, and endeavour to obtain a certain dexterity in using these spiritual weapons (which are known to contribute greatly to the service of God through his grace).

(E.) They should be accustomed to giving the exercises to others, unfolding them to people for whom errors are less risky, as indicated in the manual of the retreat master (book 1, chapter 1). It will be helpful to discuss one's method with a more experienced person, noting whatever is found appropriate or inappropriate.

**370.** A suitable method of catechising, adapted to the capacities of young and uneducated persons, should also be studied (E.).

(E.) It will also be useful to have a compendium containing an explanation of the matters necessary for faith and Christian life.

**371.** Our priests should know what is mentioned above in order to help our neighbour live well. In the same way, they should know what will aid him to die well, that is, how to react towards the sick at this moment of such importance for gaining or losing the final end of eternal happiness (E.).

(E.) Another little booklet about the manner of assisting the dying will be very useful for refreshing the memory whenever it is necessary to exercise this holy duty. The example of the holy fathers should often be put before the young men in order to avoid the defects arising from the exclusive use of compendia. Their writings should be used to show how the notion of the teaching of Christian religion ought to be conceived in spirit and then expressed in word. In this way they will apprehend the dignity, grandeur and quasi-infinity with which it is

everywhere manifested and developed, and become capable of unfolding it to the minds and hearts of the faithful.

**372.** Generally speaking the scholastics need to be taught how to comport themselves as workers of this Society whose members have to live in so many different parts of the world and with so many different types of persons. Possible difficulties should be anticipated, and advantage taken of matters which assist charity towards one's neighbour for the greater service of God. Although it is true that the incomparable anointing of the Holy Spirit and the manifold prudence which God is accustomed to communicate to those who trust in his divine Majesty can teach them these things, the way can be opened, at least to some extent, by certain oral and written instructions which help beginners and dispose them for the working of divine grace.

## CHAPTER 12

### The rule of life for scholastics living outside our houses

373. Candidates who are to become extern coadjutors and have made scholastic vows and profession after the two-year probation are called approved scholastics of the Society in the same way as interns. If they give their obedience to the Society, but have not yet made their vows and profession, they are simply scholastics of the Society, or unapproved scholastics of the Society.

374. All care and charity is to be used towards candidates for adoption to the Society who, after they have joined the Society, may wish to be instructed academically or professionally.

375. In the third place, the ascribed members, or candidates for ascription, equally require our solicitude if they are studying academically or professionally.

376. The Society must consider carefully how to help all these members and direct them in the Lord during their academic or professional training.

377. Again, those destined for extern coadjutorship are to be kept in our houses as long as possible for training in holy life and doctrine. If they have to be sent out for training immediately after the two-year probation, they should not be admitted, without the Provost General's leave, to daily life with the intern scholastics after living for one year outside our houses. But they may live separately in the colleges.

378. If possible an intern member should be appointed master of the extern scholastics who are to become coadjutors. If this is impossible a learned extern, dedicated to our way of life and religious observance, shall be given the post. Another person should be in charge of the candidates for adoption, and a third placed over the prospective ascribed members (E.).

(E.) These masters can be given companions if necessary. The Provost General will decide according to circumstances who should be their immediate superior. This person will send

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reports to his own superiors in the same way as the master of interns (242), and will frequently communicate with them orally and in writing.

**379.** Moreover, prefects should be appointed for different schools and professional activities as need arises. The choice may be made from already co-opted extern coadjutors, sons and ascribed members, or from those living in our houses. Finally, the more mature and well-established scholastics, who can be relied upon, may be put in charge of schools or classes.

**380.** Academic students can be assigned suitable tutors from amongst intern or extern members (E.).

(E.) The diocesan provost will decide according to circumstances whether the best of the scholastics who it is hoped will become extern coadjutors, or certain of the sons and ascribed members, or certain candidates for affiliation and ascription, may be admitted to tutorials for the intern members.

**381.** Extern scholastics must present six-monthly references from rectors of churches to which they are attached, or from other trustworthy persons (E.).

(E.) All members, even laypeople, must be ascribed to a church, either one of ours if this is possible, or another which they frequent, where they should be prepared to exercise works of charity, such as teaching Christian doctrine to children, as occasion offers.

**382.** Every one should be given his own timetable, and care should be taken to see that it is carefully observed.

**383.** Besides their weekly sacramental confession, scholastics under the obedience of the Society will inform those who watch over them of their daily routine and manner of life. They should confess their negligence and faults, and willingly fulfil the penances they ought to request for them (E.).

(E.) A six-monthly disclosure of conscience is to be made to a superior by candidates for extern coadjutorship, just as it is by interns.

**384.** With regard to the spiritual exercises, future coadjutors amongst the scholastics are to be understood as governed by the rules for interns given in the preceding chapter. The superior will also prescribe how often and when they are to come to our

churches and houses for ecclesiastical functions, and exercises or works of charity, which they shall carry out carefully. All that has been said about the care and rule of life for scholastics will be applied to them and, as far as possible, they must conform to the interns in all things, and be directed by the same inspector or prefect of studies.

**385.** Those seeking affiliation will also have to show that they receive the sacraments of confession and communion weekly. Postulants for ascription will also have to prove that they frequent the sacraments. They will also attend our churches, and offer some signs of devotion and constant edification by which they merit to be co-opted, when the time comes, in their respective grades into the Society where, in charity towards their neighbour, they may offer service and duty to God and our Lord with all their strength, and receive an eternal crown.

**386.** The Provost General and those to whom responsibility for scholastics has been committed should be mindful of the care which they are required to take so that extern scholastics remain under the continued vigilance of superiors and never lack suitable government for each of their divisions. This is more necessary in so far as those living outside our establishments need greater help (E.).

(E.) The same reports are to be sent about extern as about intern scholastics, but separately (303, 378 E.).



## CHAPTER 13

### Candidates for promotion to orders

**387.** Formed scholastics destined for the clerical state will receive minor orders after their philosophy course (E.).

(E.) The cassock and clerical tonsure can be given to them before they take scholastic vows, but not before preparatory vows.

**388.** Those who have reached canonical age can be promoted to the order of subdiaconate after the first year of theology; to the diaconate after the second year; to the priesthood after the third year.

**389.** For admission to any order (E.1) it is necessary for candidates, who must be morally suitable, to have passed the end-of-year examination for promotion to the next class in the following year. There will be an additional examination, with two specially designated examiners, to certify that the candidates are sufficiently instructed in the orders to be received, in the obligations attached to them, and the manner of exercising them (E.2).

(E.1) If possible, orders will be conferred on our students during the long vacation.

(E.2) There should be instruction in the way of saying Mass so that it may be celebrated not only with understanding and interior devotion, but also with exterior decorum for the edification of those who attend. As far as possible, the whole Society will employ the same ceremonies in which it will follow the Roman rite.

**390.** Superiors will take care that ordinands have sufficient time to prepare themselves for the ordinations. Before each ordination, candidates will make the spiritual exercises for at least ten days. The exercises will be ordered in such a way that candidates may with purified conscience reflect on the dignity of the ecclesiastical state, and so be stimulated in the future to greater and more perfect efforts for Christ the Lord.

**391.** The diocesan to whom scholastics are subject shall

consider, with the advice of his counsellors, whether our candidates have the necessary endowments for orders. Constancy and firmness in their vocation are especially needed, and no one is to be ordained in hope of his amendment. If all the requirements are found, he should promote the candidates, entering their names in the book kept for the purpose which the consultors must sign. He will inform the General as soon as the orders have been conferred.

**Part Four**

**THE THIRD PROBATION AND  
EXERCISE**

## CHAPTER 1

### The persons to be admitted to the third probation

**392.** The final year of probation done in our houses after studies and practical experience by those who have been trained academically or professionally is called by us the third probation (R. 14).

**393.** Those tested outside our houses for the sake of exercising charity will be enrolled only amongst those called extern coadjutors (R. 14). Hence an extern coadjutor, before being co-opted amongst the interns, must spend a complete year in the third probation.

**394.** Although the third probation is necessary only for interns, it is highly desirable that extern coadjutors have their own special religious building where they can undergo a third probation either before or after they have been co-opted, and where they can live occasionally.

**395.** Those who come to the Society already trained in learning (E.) or some professional activity pass immediately to a third year of probation after their two-year period of probation and practical exercise if they are found sufficiently worthy. This year holds the place of the third probation (R. 15).

(E.) The Provost General may consider that certain persons entering the Society at a more advanced age, and already priests, should be dispensed from the third probation. But he will not dispense at least from certain exercises which may hold the place of the third probation. He shall also take care that those dispensed apply themselves seriously in the second year of the two-year period to a study of our way of life, both as an aid to exercising charity according to the manner and order of our way of life, and as a precaution against the danger that such eminent persons might in some way act in the Society contrary to its characteristics and nature and thus little by little destroy it (279 E.).

**396.** The third probation will be given precedence over practical experience for those taught methodology in the third probation.

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## CHAPTER 2

### Exercises of the third probation

397. In the third probation the candidate must acquire final perfection, as far as possible, especially in charity, humility, meekness, patience and intimate familiarity with God. The exercises and practical experience of this probation shall be suitable, therefore, for persons already more perfect.

398. The diocesan whose responsibility it is will inform those to be sent to the third probation of matters previously observed in them. He will also inform their master or instructor (E.). Scholastics and probationers coming to the third probation will also bring with them letters from those who were their superiors during studies and practical experience so that the superior and instructor of the third probation may be notified of what was done during this period of studies and practical experience.

(E.) The faculty of admitting to the third probation resides with the General, and those to whom he delegates this faculty. Normally the delegation will be made to the diocesans for the candidates subject to them.

399. At their entry they will be asked whether they remain firm in their resolve for religious life. By this means the Society will know whether they have retained the constancy which is a necessary condition for their admission to further vows. They shall give an account of their life at least from the time they were sent for training, and undergo the novices' six-monthly examination.

400. Those who are priests, or are to receive the priesthood, must be devoutly instructed 1st, about the sacraments, the holy order, the sacrifice of the Mass and church ceremonies; 2nd, about the nature of our way of life from the Constitutions, which they must read in their entirety and weigh carefully, and which the instructor must explain; 3rd, in the method of giving the exercises according to the manual, which they themselves must undergo in their entirety; 4th, in special ways of helping souls (E.1). Reading and meditation of holy scripture, not for

curiosity but simply for the sake of humbly feeding the spirit on the word of God, is entirely in keeping with the third probation (E.2).

(E.1) This is a part of the pastoral practice and knowledge to be cultivated under experienced pastors by all the brethren who after ordination are assigned to the care of souls. But all candidates for the priesthood, and all the priests, are to be given some idea of this subject.

(E.2) Those permitted the reading of the holy Fathers, or some other study, during the third probation, will seek in it only the love of God and the benefit of their own spirit.

**401.** Common houses of second probation are helpful because the same root of virtue, the same universality of charity, and the same indifference proper to our way of life have to be learned by all. On the other hand, different houses of third probation seem indicated for the specific duties of charity to which the brethren may be assigned, for example as teachers in elementary schools, while there may also be different houses for intern and extern coadjutors (E.). Persons already well grounded and firm in universal charity will be able to draw from it the virtues suitable and proper for their special task.

(E.) Houses of this kind can also be profitably set up for adopted sons, and for the scholastics amongst the ascribed members.

**402.** Diocesans responsible for third probation will vary the way of life from that of the second probation according to circumstances by adding or subtracting only those things which they see will help the candidates (E.1) to direct their life towards attaining, as far as possible, with the aid of divine grace, the Spirit of truth and charity inherent in this, our way of life. Besides the time for prayer which the novices normally have, each one will have the time helpful to his own individual devotion, with the approval of the master. They will practise mortification. They will seek silence, quiet, an effective distribution of all their time, and edification in word and deeds (E.). Like the novices, they will allow themselves to be led by their director. They will repeat some of the six tests, or practise others which are similar. They will also take care of their health.

(E.1) They should avoid the distraction springing from idle

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correspondence, from conversations with brethren coming from other parts, or with externs without permission from their master. They will not mix indiscriminately amongst themselves, but according to the decision of the superior. If they have permission from the superior to use the garden other than during recreation time, each will walk by himself, and they will keep silence, nor will they wander about the house at inopportune moments. When they have to speak, they will edify those who hear them.

(E.2) Although the aim of the third probation is more intimate union with God, it does not seem expedient for houses of third probation to be located in isolated places where there will be fewer opportunities for exercising charity towards our neighbour, the aim of the purpose of this Society. But if houses of third probation cannot be completely separate, at least the people in the third probation should be separated from the rest.

**403.** Candidates in the third probation should have experience of more and greater works of charity. Individuals shall be enabled to gain experience in the duties to which they will probably be assigned (E.).

(E.) Only a short time will be spent outside the house for the sake of charity. Nevertheless, missions of one or two months with helpful companions are not forbidden. They must be instructed about hearing confessions before these missions.

**404.** The third part of ascetics, which treats of intimate union between human beings and God, is suitable for the period of third probation. It will be taught to the more promising and able students.

**405.** The instructor of those in the third probation should be a person of a certain authority who ought, if possible, to have had experience of governing others. The post would be suitable for an ex-provincial, or someone similar, for whom they would have great esteem, and by whom they would be directed wisely. On his part, mindful of his very serious task, he must strive both to perform his own duty well and conscientiously, and stimulate those undergoing the probation to accept it with great intensity and readily, not perfunctorily. The same person will be their ordinary confessor. He will be able to allow them devotional penances, but the imposition of penance for some violation of discipline pertains to the superior, unless he is also

superior. He will however have the faculty of seeing whether their letters should be dispatched and given to them. In separate houses of third probation, the instructor and rector will be the same person.

**406.** The diocesan will frequently visit, advise, console and instruct them. He will watch to see if any fail to make progress in this probation, and take them away in time to test them elsewhere before sending them once more to the third probation. He will note in a book how each one has behaved.

**407.** Besides the reports to be sent by all immediate superiors, information should be sent by the master and superior in good time towards the end of the year, as has been said about novices (244, 245, 378 E., 386 E.).



## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology to be taught to certain members in the third probation

408. During the third probation, the brethren applied to a determined work of charity and forming a special college of the Society, for example, elementary or secondary schoolmasters, doctors, and so on, must be taught the method to be used in their practice of charity to the greater praise of God. The third probation may be extended to two years (E.).

(E.) The third probation will begin when schools open after the long vacation, and all those assigned to it will enter together. Superiors shall advise them in good time.

409. Practical experience for these persons will follow, not precede, the third probation.

410. A house of third probation of this kind will also be called a central house, and will have a rector who will govern as appendages to his house certain nearby (E.) cells where the brethren may dwell for a year to practise this particular office of charity.

(E.) That is, not more than a day's journey away.

411. Methodology is to be taught for the specific branches of charity in such a way that the candidates make progress in religious virtue at the same time. Indeed, the training of the mind and the attainment of some professional skill is to be considered neither the sole nor the principal end of such teaching. The Society's primary purpose is that throughout this period its candidates learn about the virtues, purity of conscience, a holy and undivided end, prudent means and notions required for the exercise in the Lord of those capacities and abilities they are endeavouring to acquire in order to fulfil the charity of Christ.

412. It will therefore be the General's responsibility to draw up a statute for each of these houses so that there may be sufficient time for methodology without disruption of normal periods for common and special exercises of piety. The statute shall

avoid the danger of overloading the minds of the candidates, but ensure parallel progress in professional activity and in spirit; it will help them to preserve and increase humility, to reverence unceasingly the presence of the Godhead, and to persevere in prayer and intimate union with God.

## CHAPTER 4

### The practical exercise of the virtues in ministries of charity

**413.** Towards the end of training, or after its completion, those chosen must be ordained deacons, or if they are already deacons receive the priesthood (E.). During the period of training they should be prepared for taking the order; or they may use some time after training in preparation for it.

(E.) Those who enter the Society as deacons, or as subdeacons who then receive the diaconate after making scholastic vows, and who have passed through their studies sufficiently well, can be elevated to the priesthood after attaining their twenty-fifth year. Care should be taken, however, that no one be ordained in hope of improvement if he has made only poor progress in spirit. This is especially indicated in view of the far greater difficulty both of ruling a person and dismissing him from the Society after the priesthood.

**414.** They should not be made coadjutors of the Society immediately after their academic or professional training, but should be exercised in some ministry of charity for one, two, three or five years, either before or after the third probation, as has been said (...). Real virtue proved in action is needed for our way of life; a veneer of virtue is not sufficient. The love of God, which they have obtained for themselves during the novitiate, must be translated into love of their neighbour so that the fervour of charity which glowed in the quiet of contemplation may burn in works of active life. If the fire of charity were extinguished, when it ought to enkindle and warm all external things, its concept would seem never to have been truly present in the soul. The same must be said about training: training is of great value in ministries of charity, but proof is needed that he who knows, knows how to use what he knows; and if he does not know, he must learn how he can use his knowledge beneficially. The person who has employed, or has learnt to employ in the stated period, zeal and knowledge prudently and firmly in whatever duties of charity have been committed to him can truly be considered consumed by fire and seasoned with salt, and worthy

therefore to be enrolled amongst the coadjutors of the society.

**415.** Each one will carry out with full indifference the works of charity given by the providence of God to be fulfilled by the Society, and amongst them those which have greater affinity with the works to which he is likely to be assigned, according to the judgment of the Provost General, or of the person to whom the General has given the faculty of assigning candidates to practical experience (E.).

(E.) This will normally be the diocesan provost for candidates subject to him.

**416.** Probationers will have their own father, or master, to direct them in the spirit and truth of good works.

**417.** The part of ascetics which treats of the acquisition of virtues will be the most suitable both for scholastics and probationers. The virtues themselves draw their energy and life from purity and union with God (which were the constant occupation of the novitiate).

**418.** Besides the reports to be sent by all immediate superiors, the master and superior in charge of the probationers will send an account of each person involved towards the end of the exercise, as has been said about the third probation.

**Part Five**

**CO-OPTION TO THE BODY OF THE  
SOCIETY FOR THOSE SO TRAINED,  
AND DISMISSAL**

## CHAPTER 1

### The essential qualities of those co-opted into the Society

419. It is of great importance that nothing be done in this Society simply as an external matter of form. Mere outward appearance has no inner strength and, more important by far than any other consideration, such a notion contradicts eternal and all-powerful truth. The greatest care is to be taken, therefore, to prevent the co-option into the Society of anyone who is not judged truly worthy of his grade in the sight of God, and in some way perfect in it. Our aim is the service and honour of God, without any partiality for persons or any deceptive hope of greater progress. It would indeed be fallacious to think that, for the sake of increasing the number of members, persons should be admitted who were not yet truly formed for the grade to which they are destined. It is certainly better, and must be believed more in keeping with everlasting truth and justice, that this Society, which wishes to depend on the goodness of divine providence alone, should either be very small in number or cease to exist altogether rather than be filled with those who are members in name only and do not correspond in the slightest in deed or spirit with the vocation and perfection that the Society wishes to profess. Let us first see, therefore, what are the qualities required of each person before admittance to the various grades of which the body of this Society is composed.

420. The ascribed member must be a true child of the Church, mindful of his baptismal promises. He must not be ashamed of the gospel, and should use the things of this world as though he used them not; he must either be free from evil-doing and notoriety (E.) or noteworthy as one who edifies his brethren in secular life by his exemplary penance and by good works. He should frequent the church and do works of charity. These are the reasons for accepting a person amongst the ascribed. No reason must blind us to the vices of rich and powerful persons, if they are not to deceive themselves and others with the appearance of piety. As the apostle Jude says, we should not 'flatter people to gain advantage' (v. 16), knowing that we were

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redeemed not with 'perishable things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot' (1 Pet 1: [18–19]). Those deviating from this law of justice on the pretext of expediency, that is, for the sake of gaining favour for religious life from persons who seem powerful in the world, should recognise that they are deceived by human foresight and have little faith in the word of Christ. They do not comprehend the inner meaning of the words: 'All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower fails' (1 Pet 1: [24]).

(E.) Victims of calumny and unjust persecution are not to be excluded, but considered more favourably and received with more active charity.

**421.** In addition, the adopted son of this Society who has not embraced the evangelical counsels outside the Society by means of the three vows must possess an effective desire of following perfection in the Society according to the three counsels at the cessation of impediments recognised by the superior. In the meantime he must manifest an evident will to obey the superior of the Society in those matters which he knows benefit him in the sight of God, and show that he is indifferent, as far as he himself is concerned, to the duties of charity commanded him. This indifference is, as it were, the characteristic feature of all who communicate perfectly with this Society, as far as the spirit is concerned.

**422.** Certain evidence of these dispositions of spirit must be present before anyone is co-opted as a son. Therefore, a two-year probation is to be employed for the sons, besides the examinations and further information about ascribed members. After the probation, a watch should be kept during their training and practical activities until a sufficiently firm judgment can be made about them (E.).

(E.) In the case of the ascribed, their correct following of the common life of Christians is to be proved. This can be done by observation of their manner of acting in secular life with the rest of Christ's faithful. But because the desire for the counsels, and indifference, must be tested in the case of sons, another probation is required in which tests to discover these dispositions are to be set out.

**423.** As indifference of spirit towards undertaking any duties of charity is the feature common to sons and coadjutors of this Society, so obedience strictly so-called is the special feature of coadjutors alone. From obedience, as from their source, all other obligations of this our way of life are derived, that is to say, from obedience which directs charity. Superiors indeed are resolved to command only for the sake of charity so that members of this Society may make their own the words of the apostle Peter: ‘purifying your souls in the obedience of charity’ (1 Pet 1: [22]). The soul is chastened and virtue is made sincere through obedience which proceeds from and directs charity. This sincerity of virtue must shine always and to the highest degree in every member of this Society. The probations, therefore, which are employed in the case of those who are to become coadjutors, must furnish sufficient evidence for the superior to make a just judgment in the Lord that those to be enrolled amongst the coadjutors follow the devout life common to all Christians, have a real desire for the evangelical counsels, are free from any impediment to professing them, and have finally attained, with the grace of Christ our Lord, great indifference, self-abnegation and obedience. Proved under all these headings, they can be admitted to the roll of coadjutors by the superiors.

**424.** A three-year period of probation, training and practical activity is required for admittance amongst the extern coadjutors so that the Society may have no reason for regretting admission of anyone. Nevertheless, a promise to enter the Society, and preparatory vows, may be granted more easily. Scholastic vows should be made available, after the two-year probation, to those showing evidence of solid virtue.

**425.** Temporal coadjutors (E.), especially interns, must not be admitted before they have completed their tenth year in religion, and thirty years of age.

(E.) This grade of persons must always be held in honour and never spoken about lightly.

**426.** Only those of good intelligence, and those to whom equity gives some right in the matter, are to be chosen for academic studies (E.).

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(E.) A candidate without an ecclesiastical patrimony should not be promoted to the subdiaconate if he is not firmly grounded in his vocation. Where there is no patrimony, dismissal is more difficult after the subdiaconate.

427. Non-theological subjects are to be reserved for those having a special talent and inclination for them, or for members needed by the Society for works of charity already undertaken (E.).

(E.) Intern temporal coadjutors assigned to some trade are divided into two groups. Some are needed to help the rest of the brethren in matters which the latter could not undertake without detriment to some greater good, or to exercise some special ministries of charity. These must be tranquil, forbearing, happy with the lot of Martha, possessing a love for our way of life, and capable of edifying the household and externs. They should be of good appearance, with the health, age and strength required for the manual work which presents itself in the Society, and gifted with the talents needed for their ministries. Others are received so that the rest may exercise charity towards them. It is helpful to admit them, even the sick, circumspectly however, provided they are persons of outstanding integrity.

428. Finally, presbyters of the Society are to be chosen from priests among the intern spiritual coadjutors. They should be men who combine keen intelligence, extraordinary learning and a certain sublimity of character with special piety and affection for the Society.

429. The burden of government of the Society and of other works of more universal charity must devolve principally upon these men. Consequently, it is necessary that they should excel the others in greater purity of life and more ardent love of God and their neighbour. In addition, they should be endowed with perceptiveness and liveliness of mind and greatness of soul. They should also be imbued with sound doctrine and adorned with sufficient erudition to enable them in such an office to serve God suitably in their neighbours, to whose necessities they undertake to devote and sacrifice themselves completely. They also promise to embrace wholeheartedly at a sign from the sovereign Pontiff of the Church and Vicar of Christ any labour whatsoever that may be necessary and useful for the Church,

even at the cost of their own life. Hence, perfected and consummated in all virtues, and rooted and founded in the love of God, they should not fear to undergo or suffer anything difficult or hard for the name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. The more they are also enriched with natural gifts, especially with vast and profound intelligence and a heart lifted and raised up to all great things, and the humbler they are at the same time, and greater lovers and followers of the cross of our Lord, the more they will be judged suitable for such a work.

430. Those who are to be presbyters will study at home after the probations and a properly completed course of theological sciences. Each one will perfect himself at the command of the General in that branch of study which in the circumstances is considered more necessary to the Society. Their course of theological sciences will last at least four years, and if they study at public schools where the course is shorter, they will complete the four years at home (E.1). The presbyters of the Society will also have attended the full course of ascetics. If they have not been able to attend the lectures, they should study the subject privately. They should be examined in it, and not be considered suitable for co-option amongst the presbyters except on this basis. Moreover (E.2) presbyters should be chosen from men who have been coadjutors for at least a year, have given a good example of virtue, and have spent five years in the Society since their entrance into the novitiate. They should also have acquired the good opinion of all the brethren and their special respect. Finally, care is to be taken that they possess a genuine knowledge of the entire Constitutions of the Society, which they should approve and love with their whole heart.

(E.1) Four persons should be delegated as examiners to test the adequacy of their learning (unless this is quite evident from their published works or from other indubitable arguments). The subjects for examination will be 1st, philosophy; 2nd, theology; and 3rd, the notion of our way of life. The standard will be that required for teaching philosophy and theology satisfactorily in universities, and for governing our way of life according to its nature. Only the examiners will be present with the presiding superior. They should understand clearly that their work is a serious, not perfunctory duty. Before the examination, they will take the following oath on their knees before the

superior: 'I, N.N., call God as witness that I shall mark faithfully in this examination. I shall not make comparisons with others, nor take account only of the intelligence shown, but consider also the current learning which each actually possesses and in virtue of which he may be able, with the normal preparation, to teach philosophy and theology satisfactory in universities, and govern the Society. Moreover, I shall reveal the mark I give only to those whose office demands their knowledge of it. So I promise on oath.' In giving the mark he must state 1st, whether the candidate possesses the prescribed doctrine; 2nd, whether he can acquire it soon, if he does not already possess it. The examinee will have passed if he obtains three passes, or two in addition to that of the chairman, when the results have been collated. Each examiner will then place him in one of three groups. They will do the same if he has not passed, and add reasons for their opinion. If he is found not to have sufficient learning, but appears intelligent enough, it will be more profitable for him to wait until he attains it. It will be all the more necessary to delay with those who have not yet given sufficient sign of the self-abnegation and virtue worthy of a religious.

(E.2) Although the decision about co-opting someone amongst the presbyters of the Society should have been made long beforehand, it is not normally expedient to manifest it until shortly before the person is co-opted.

**431.** The great diversity of persons forming the Society will not hinder its right government if those whose responsibility it is take special care not to confuse the different states and grades, nor admit anyone to a grade before he is properly formed for it, namely, before they judge in the sight of the Lord that he will probably fulfil the obligations and duties of the grade to which he is admitted. In order to do this more easily, they must consider each grade as distinct from every other, as though it stood alone and were *per se* a separate society.

## CHAPTER 2

### The persons having authority to co-opt

432. Immediate superiors of candidates must send a six-monthly report about them (E.1) to the General, through mediate superiors (242, 303) during the whole period they remain in the probations, training and in the practical exercise of any ministry. At the same time, they should express their advice about the candidates' assignments. Mediate superiors must do the same (E.2).

(E.1) All diocesan provosts will also inform themselves, especially at the triennial visitation, through the older and more noteworthy fathers, about those to be promoted to a grade. They will send their information, after conferring with their counsellors, to the provincials who will forward them, with their own observations, to the General. The following are the heads of information required about those who appear suitable for promotion to the grade of spiritual coadjutor.

1st, name, country, age, health and way of life before entry.

2nd, place and time of admission; was he tested in the novitiate with all the trials prescribed in the examinations? If not, why not?

3rd, has he made progress in virtue since his entrance, especially in contempt of self, obedience, fraternal charity, simplicity, affection for poverty, and love of our way of life? Has he ever wavered in his vocation, or fallen away from it? — Would he constantly and continually act according to the demands of virtue, and is there hope that he would do the same in more difficult matters should they occur?

4th, has he completed the entire four-year course in theology or part of it after humanities and philosophy? Has he spent time afterwards, and how long, in repeating the same course and reading the fathers? What progress has he made in these subjects? Has he any skill in canon law?

5th, after his studies (unless they were completed before his entrance) has he undergone the third year of probation satisfactorily according to the Constitutions?

6th, has he taught humanities, philosophy or theology? If so, for how long? Has he expounded cases of conscience?

What is his reputation for knowledge and learning in teaching each of these subjects?

7th, has he had experience of preaching and of other ministries of salvation for his neighbour? With what grace, capacity and benefit to souls has he carried them out? Was his manner one of edification to externs, especially during missions if he undertook them?

8th, has he had, and if so for how long, any post of administration in the Society? With what prudence, humility, courtesy, integrity, charity and satisfaction in the household and amongst externs did he rule his subjects and expedite business?

9th, does he follow extraordinary opinions, or any mode of procedure or outlook which is odd, or alien to our way of life, especially in doctrine, in the notion of prayer and in other spiritual exercises? Is he a lover of his own judgment, and little mortified in his inclinations?

10th, is he devout and prayerful, zealous for the salvation of souls, active in carrying out business and overcoming difficulties, and motivated by trust in God? Does he desire to endure hardship and other discomforts especially amongst pagans and heretics, for the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbours?

11th, has he desired any post of government, or any dignity? Or aspired to profession, or the priesthood, or higher studies? Or sought any of these things directly or through another? Or has he always appeared, and is still judged, indifferent towards any grade whatsoever in the Society, and towards any of its ministries?

In the reports which are sent about those to be formed as temporal coadjutors, the first three headings will be sufficient, with the addition of what is proper to their state.

(E.2) When the General receives the reports on the candidates he must at the same time be informed (but on another sheet) of the needs of 1st, each house; 2nd, diocese; 3rd, province.

**433.** The faculty of co-opting candidates into the body of the Society at the grade suitable for each of them belongs to the head of the Society. He will delegate to others in the Society that part of this faculty which appears to benefit the whole body (E.).

(E.) Only in the case of grave and evident necessity will he communicate the faculty of deciding a person's admittance to

the presbyterate in our way of life. He must be able to trust the delegate as he trusts himself.

Only the General can delegate a prelate outside the Society to receive the profession of presbyterate; he will do this occasionally.

**434.** The Provost General must keep three principal things in mind when he allots candidates to both a grade and to ministries. 1st, the greater future well-being of each candidate and all the brethren in the Society, since he must exercise fatherly charity towards them first; 2nd, the greater universal good, that is, the greater charity that can be exercised through them; 3rd, the reports, advice and requests of superiors to whom they are subject. Nevertheless, he must give preference to the place where there is more need of members for the interior progress of the brethren and the observance of the rules, and for fulfilling obligations and exercising adequately ministries of charity already undertaken.

## CHAPTER 3

### Ascription

**435.** Candidates for this grade are declared ascribed members immediately after their first probation, if they have been found well-disposed.

**436.** No determined form is assigned for ascription. A verbal declaration of mutual will between the Society and the aspirant is sufficient.

**437.** The ascribed member should spend some time with the brethren, and give proof of mutual charity and of a sound and right mind inclined towards God. Then, after going to confession and receiving the sacrament of holy eucharist, he may, if he is of age, be presented with letters of ascription, and be admitted to the meetings of the ascribed members. However, he cannot be elected to any internal office of ascription until he has attended six of these meetings, unless the Provost General dispenses.

**438.** Sodalties are groups of members united to profess, that is, to exercise, certain particular duties of piety and charity. Members are chosen for these sodalties according to the method outlined in the laws approved for each sodality by the Provost General.

**439.** Superiors will have a list of ascribed members in the congregation subject to them. It will contain the date when each was received into the communion of the Society; the date of presentation of the letters; and the date on which the right to internal offices was acquired. Separate catalogues for each of the sodalties will be drawn up in the same way.

CHAPTER 4  
The admission of sons

440. Likewise no formula of admission of sons will be necessary other than a declaration from the General or his representative that a postulant has been received as an adopted son of the Society.

441. However, before this declaration is put in writing, the postulant, if he has never taken religious vows, must first be an ascribed member according to the normal rules. Then he must be tested for at least a year (237), and be exercised in good works for another year. At the end of this year, if he is suitable, he must make a general confession, or particular confession if he has already made a general confession, to a member of the Society whom he has chosen as his confessor or spiritual director. He will receive the eucharist from the Provost General, or his representative, and afterwards will take an oath privately before two or three witnesses, in these words: 'I call upon God, and promise upon oath that I will consecrate myself entirely to the Society of Charity so that I may become a coadjutor by the established grades as soon as the impediment, or impediments...(here the impediments previously recognised by the superior of the Institute must be expressly declared) shall have ceased, if the Society itself receives me in the grade of coadjutor.' A record of this adoption, and the words of the oath, will be set down in the book kept for the purpose. It will be signed by the son in his own hand, and he will add that he understands perfectly the force of the oath. The witnesses will also sign.

442. But if the postulant has already taken religious vows in another congregation or order, and is still a member of it, the probation and practical experience will be omitted, and with the superior's leave he will be affiliated to the Society without the oath after a two-year test of his charity.



## CHAPTER 5

### Simple vows before and after the completion of the two-year period

443. Those who have obtained good reports during the second probation, as has been said (...), and have been appointed by the Provost General or his representative (E.) will, after reaching the age of sixteen, take the three simple vows, called scholastic vows, with the promise of accepting any grades whatsoever of the Society, before being numbered amongst the approved scholastics, either probationers or proficient, of the Society.

(E.) They cannot take the scholastic vows before the completion of the two-year period. For a grave reason the Provost General will dispense after a year has elapsed from entrance into the first probation, but not sooner except with the majority vote of his council and for a serious cause. Provost diocesans, however, have the faculty of admitting their own novices who merit it to scholastic vows after two years from entrance into the first probation, provided they remain in the novitiate to finish their two-year period.

For the greater spiritual consolation and fuller merit of those approved for the purpose, the diocesan provost to whom the novitiate is subject (152) can permit them (80 E.) to make the following promise: 'I vow to take the vows of the Institute of Charity as soon as the Provost General of the same Institute allows me to do so; in the meantime I shall give obedience to the same provost.' This promise will not be made in the hands of anyone, but in the secret of their heart without any solemnity in the house. A record of the obligation promised to God will be written in the little notebook each one will keep (this book will contain the other obligations our members have contracted, as well as corrections and other personal matters). Another copy will be given to the immediate superior to be kept in the archives. They will renew the promise privately every six months. The novice must not be put under any pressure to make the promise. Those bound by this obligation are dismissed with greater difficulty from the Society.

444. The formula of these vows will be as follows:

‘Almighty, everlasting God, I, N., although in every way most unworthy in your sight, yet relying on your infinite goodness and mercy, and moved by the desire of serving you, here in the presence of the most holy Virgin MARY, blessed MICHAEL Archangel, the blessed apostles PETER and PAUL, and all the court of heaven, vow to your divine Majesty perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience. Moreover I vow to accept the grade that shall be assigned to me in the Society of Charity, and I promise to live all my life in that grade according to the will of the Provost General of the same Society. All these things being understood according to the Rule and Constitutions of the Society of Charity. I therefore humbly pray that you, through the Precious Blood of JESUS Christ, of your immense goodness and clemency, would deign to receive this holocaust in an odour of sweetness, and as you have enabled me to desire and offer it, so you would grant me abundant grace to fulfil it.’

Rome (or elsewhere), place, day, month, year.

445. Before they are admitted to scholastic vows, the formula is to be explained to them, and they are to be advised especially: first, that without permission from the General they cannot leave the Society after taking vows (E.1); second, the promise of accepting any grades whatsoever in the Society is a vow by which they are obliged to accept the grade of spiritual or temporal coadjutor, or even of presbyter, as the Provost General shall decide; third, by the vow of poverty, the scholastics offer their crucified Lord their temporal goods in such a way that as long as the Society retains them as members, they use nothing as their own, disposing their incomes, chattels and money, which have not been pledged, in pious works according to the judgment of superiors, and prepared at the discretion of the provost to abdicate completely the dominion of their goods, and to take coadjutor vows (E.2) (if, therefore, they retain some dominion of certain goods for a time, they no longer have any use, disposition or free administration of them); all is put into the hands of superiors who are bound to apply or dispense everything (E.3) at the proper time to Christ’s poor and other good works, for

the service and greater glory of Christ the Lord whose goods they are; fourth, their future six-monthly renewals of vows which are to be made according to the custom of the Society have the force of first profession if for any defect the first vows were invalid.

(E.1) All those who have made what are called scholastic vows, or coadjutor vows, fall under the penalties proper to apostates if they leave the Society without permission from the General. The same persons cannot transfer to other forms of religious life without leave from the General.

(E.2) A novice who dispenses his goods before taking scholastic vows is bound to use his goods in works of charity, as has been said, if he desires to obtain perfection. Nevertheless, he is left free according to his devotion to dispense his goods to one work rather than another in so far as he understands in the Lord that this is more in keeping with the divine good-pleasure. However, there is no doubt at all that he will do a work of greater perfection, renunciation and abnegation of all his self-love if he submits his judgment about the divine good-pleasure and greater good in this dispensation to the superior, with perfect indifference to one work or another, to one place or another, because this indifference is contained in the kind of life to which he aspires. Hence after scholastic or coadjutor vows, he cannot dispose of even the smallest thing according to his own will, although from obedience he may retain dominion over certain goods. This abdication before God of every independent faculty of disposing of anything pertains to the matter of the vow.

(E.3) The scholastic vow of poverty has the same extension as the simple coadjutor vow with the following exceptions. 1st, the scholastic is never obliged in virtue of obedience to dispose of what he possesses, but only of the annual income and chattels, as has been said, in the way prescribed by obedience, with total abdication of any administration (this is permitted so that the Society may have greater freedom in dismissing its members if this is necessary); 2nd, the goods of scholastics are not applied stably to good works as other goods are; 3rd, when those dismissed from the Society are absolved from their vows, their complete rights over their goods are reconstituted for them, and what is left is restored to them.

The administration of goods not yet renounced will not be given to their owners, but entrusted to the person who, in the

opinion of the General or his delegate, is best fitted to deal with them. No one is to have permission to convert the use of these goods to his own utility.

**446.** Those admitted as scholastics should be further questioned whether they wish to permit themselves to be directed with regard to the content, manner and time of the studies they must undertake; whether they will be content to live in a college or house in the same way as the rest, and precede even the least person living there in lack of privileges and prerogatives; whether, indeed, they will be glad in the Lord to have the last place for the sake of self-abnegation, leaving the entire care of themselves to the superior.

**447.** Moreover, all the Rules and obligations undertaken are to be pondered. They will also make a disclosure of conscience. A general confession of the previous six months shall be made beforehand. For the sake of preparing themselves better for this, and to confirm their first resolution, they should recollect themselves in the spiritual exercises for the space of a week. If the superior thinks fit, they may beg from door to door for three days for love of CHRIST our Lord so that they may be able to submit themselves better for the service and praise of God to an action so opposed to common human opinion, and may be more easily disposed to do the same thing when necessity impels them.

**448.** These vows will be taken during Mass before some of the members of the household, but not while others are renewing their vows. The person making the vow will receive the most holy Body of CHRIST. Even if he is a priest, he will communicate with the rest.

**449.** After the profession of vows, a record of them will be kept in a book retained for the purpose. The professed will sign that he has made the vows on such-and-such a date, and that he has clearly understood the force of the promise to be such that he is obliged to the indifference to grade or state which has been mentioned (445).

## CHAPTER 6

### Admission to coadjutor profession

450. Before being admitted to the coadjutor grade (E.), a person will distribute his goods, or dispose of them in a will in the most charitable way, according to the judgment of the Provost General. He will make a disclosure of conscience to the superior of the house about thirty days before his profession. He will also beg from door to door for three days. Finally, he will undergo the spiritual exercises for a week during which he will consider the formula of the vows he must make, and be instructed in their meaning with special attention to the vow of persevering and dying in the Society contained in the words 'perpetual poverty etc.'

(E.) Unless there is some grave reason, all who are suitable for the grade are to be co-opted amongst the intern coadjutors. Where the superior whose responsibility it is decides for a grave reason that someone be numbered amongst the extern coadjutors, and hence permits him to do the extern probations, the person to be co-opted must, before anything else, promise on oath that he will allow himself to be inscribed amongst the intern coadjutors as soon as the judgment of the superior of the Society considers that the impediments have ceased. At the same time, he must also promise to undergo the probations and tests necessary for intern coadjutorship (441).

451. The procedure for reception to the office of coadjutor is as follows. The Provost General, or the person who has received from him the faculty of admitting to coadjutorship, offers the sacrifice of the Mass in the presence of the household, and of a few only of the extern coadjutors, sons and ascribed members, if the diocesan thinks fit. Holding the sacrament of the most holy eucharist, he turns to the one about to make his profession who, after the *Confiteor*, and the other rites which normally precede communion, reads aloud his written vow (which he must have weighed for several days previously) according to the formula:

'I, N., in the presence of the Virgin Mother of JESUS,

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blessed Michael Archangel, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, the whole court of heaven, and all those here present, promise to almighty God, and JESUS Christ crucified, and to you, Reverend Father Provost General of the Society of Charity, representative of God, and to your successors, perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the manner of living contained in the Rule and Constitutions of the same Society' (E.).

(E.) The only essential point in these matters is to pronounce the formula of vows before the Provost General, or a person lawfully representing the whole Society. If the vows are pronounced after the death of a General, in the presence of the Vicar General, the above formula is modified as follows:

'I, N., in the presence of the Virgin Mother of JESUS, of blessed Michael Archangel, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and the whole court of heaven, promise to almighty God and JESUS Christ crucified, and to you, Reverend Father Vicar General of the Society of Charity, representative of God, and your successors, perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the manner of living contained in the Rule and Constitutions of the same Society.' If anyone else receives the vow, the formula should be: 'and to you, Reverend Father Provost Diocesan, or whoever it may be, as representative of the Reverend Father Provost General of the Society, representative of God', or 'as representative of the Vicar General, etc.'

The same formula is to be used in the vernacular for temporal coadjutors who do not know Latin.

**452.** Immediately after profession of the three substantial vows, all those who are to be spiritual coadjutors, and the temporal coadjutors engaged in academic work, will profess three other simple vows according to the following formula (which is likewise given them for consideration several days before profession):

'Moreover, I promise never to do anything, or aspire, even indirectly, to be elected or promoted to any superiorship in the Society.

'Again, I promise never to cherish or aspire to any superiorship or dignity outside the Society even if spontaneously offered, and never to accept or refuse such a

position except under obedience to one who can command me under pain of sin.

‘Moreover, if I know that anyone cherishes or aspires to either of these things, I promise to expose him, and the whole matter, to the Society or its Provost. All these things being understood according to the Rule and Constitutions of the Society of Charity.’

Place, day and year.

**453.** Those enrolled amongst the extern coadjutors will then swear, in another place,

‘I call as witness God and my Lord JESUS, whom alone I desire to serve, and in his presence I promise to enter amongst the intern coadjutors of the Society of Charity as soon as the Provost General of the same Society, to whom I have vowed full obedience, deigns to nominate me to that grade.’

**454.** When a priest amongst the intern coadjutors is enrolled in the presbyter grade, the same procedure is followed (E.). However, the formula of the fourth vow is:

‘I, N., priest coadjutor of the Society of Charity, in the presence of almighty God, of the crucified Lord, and of his Virgin Mother, of blessed Michael Archangel, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, the entire court of heaven, and all here present, vow special obedience to the sovereign Pontiff with regard to missions, according to what is contained in the Rule and Constitutions of the same Society.’

Place, day, month and year.

(E.) Other ceremonies are not to be added to those already mentioned (451). When making coadjutor profession it will be praiseworthy to retain the rite followed at the profession of the first coadjutors, which is described at the end of the Constitutions.

**455.** As soon as this vow has been taken, all presbyters of the Society take another simple vow not to relax poverty, using the following formula:

‘I, N., presbyter of the Society of Charity, promise to almighty God, in the presence of his Virgin Mother, and

of the entire court of heaven, and in the presence of Reverend Father N., Provost General, or his representative (or in the presence of Reverend Father N., Vicar General, or in the presence of Reverend Father N., representing Father Vicar General) that I will never do anything, for any reason whatsoever, to relax the ordinances laid down about poverty in the Constitutions of the Society, nor will I consent to their relaxation' (503 E.) (E.).

(E.) In Part 7 we shall deal with the effects and obligations of the vows of the Society. These matters, especially when they concern the vow of poverty (502–517) are to be considered carefully by those making profession before they pronounce vows.

**456.** When anyone has been co-opted into any grade, he should be reminded of his obligation not to concern himself in any way about progress to another grade, but to perfect himself in his own, spending himself in it for the service and glory of God, and leaving all care of himself to the superior who acts as God's representative.



## CHAPTER 7

### The dismissal of those bound by perpetual vows

**457.** The preservation of the entire Society is considerably assisted by the dismissal of those who do not walk rightly in their vocation (may God avert this), and thus can harm the whole body unless they are cut off from it. If a person is simply dismissed by the Provost General (to whom belongs the faculty of dismissal), all vows made in the Society cease by the fact of dismissal, unless the dismissed is a presbyter of the Society. In this case, he remains bound by all the vows until he obtains a dispensation from the Apostolic See of his fourth vow of missions for the sovereign Pontiff (E.).

(E.) A person who has professed a solemn vow can be dismissed, but not absolved from the vow. However, one who has taken solemn vows, or who is bound by the fourth vow of missions for the sovereign Pontiff, can lawfully transfer to any order, even to one less strict. The faculty of dismissing presbyters is not to be communicated to others; it must remain in the General's power alone. Hence it follows that although our religious is always bound to the Society, the Society is at liberty to keep him, or dismiss him as free from vows if he is a coadjutor in simple vows (although the temporal goods which he brought to the Society and still possesses at the time of his dismissal, and which are restored to him by the Society, remain forever consecrated to Christ the Lord in such a way that he cannot use them at his own good-pleasure, but must in virtue of his vow give to the poor, or to other good works, what is superfluous to his living expenses); if, however, he has taken solemn vows, or the vow of missions, the Society is free to dismiss him without a dispensation from vows.

**458.** A dismissal extorted by importunity alone on the part of religious can be granted them only with the obligation of their entering another form of religious life where regular observance flourishes. This obligation will be inserted into the letters patent. A person who has obtained dismissal by importunity alone is very rarely to be sent back to the world free from every obligation entailed by the vows (E.).

(E.) There may be no just cause for asking for dismissal from the Institute. In this case, such a position will seem opposed to the perfection each has determined to seek, and to the perpetuity of the vows to which he has obliged himself. Nevertheless, if a professed member, who otherwise is considered suitable for the Society, requests dismissal because of weakness or some scruple, and continues to appeal despite the superior's admonitions, let him list all the causes in favour of his dismissal, signing the document and declaring that there is no other cause for his seeking dismissal. The diocesan provost will consider these causes with his consultors and forward the document with his own and the consultors' opinion to the General. If these seem insufficient to the Father, he can impose perpetual silence upon him in virtue of obedience. If he does not obey, he should be corrected according to the gravity of the fault, and even publicly, if the fault has been known to others.

**459.** While a dismissal is under consideration, the person concerned will not be employed in the meantime in any public ministries, but will be left at home. If, for the sake of edification, he is first sent to another diocese or province where he is less well-known, the superiors of the place will receive careful instruction informing them of what they are to do with him.

**460.** Those who have abandoned the Society, and return, and are considered suitable for the service of God in the Society, but whose true penitence is not clear, can be put in a guest-house while their constancy is tested, or applied to some work of charity outside the house until they show clear signs of good will and penitence.

**461.** What has been said about the dismissal of novices after the two-year period (Part 3, chapter 2) and about their re-admittance, must be observed even more strictly in the case of formed scholastics, coadjutors and presbyters.

**Part Six**

**THE FOUNDATION OF THE  
ENTIRE SOCIETY**

## CHAPTER 1

### The Providence of the heavenly Father

**462.** This Society rests on one foundation alone, the providence of God, the almighty Father. Anyone wishing to lay some other foundation seeks to destroy the Society.

**463.** Members of this Society, especially those on whom its rule devolves, shall keep in mind the need to beware both of presumption and of fear in its regard.

**464.** Presumption is found in members of the Society who place confidence in it, in its striking organisation, in the prudence of its rulers, in the number and greatness of its members and of the aids with which God might enrich it; in those, too, who might think the Society necessary to the Church of Christ; who might look with secret contempt upon the faithful not belonging to it; and might judge to their own condemnation. Let them recall, in humility and charity, the words of scripture: 'He that judges his brother, judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one law-giver and judge, he who is able to save and destroy' (Jas 4: [11, 12]) (E.).

(E.) With the rest of the faithful we have the gospel of Christ as our great common codex. We must use it day and night. Our Constitutions, taken from the gospel, must lead us back to it. Hence the members of this Society should not set themselves apart from other people, but rather unite with all in the one body of Christ.

**465.** Each member must fear the damage he may cause to the Society through his evil works, but there is no need for him to be anxious about the Society's well-being and increase when he does all things according to the law of God and his holy zeal. As long as it is useful to the Church, the heavenly Father will keep and protect it for love of Christ, his Son, 'with whom he is well pleased' (Mt 17: [5]). If it begins to be useless or harmful, he will rightly cut down and burn the sterile tree. The entire Society depends upon the providence of the heavenly Father, not upon

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human planning, and the Father is praiseworthy in building up the Society as he would be in destroying it. This Society is not to be loved for itself, but in it the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

**466.** The burning and inextinguishable zeal for the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST, which must be in us all, has also to act in an enlightened way. Otherwise, what the Apostle says about the Hebrews may be said about ourselves: 'For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness' (Rom 10: [3]). If the Hebrews were rebuked for overconfidence in the works of the law, which was obviously from God, how much more shall we be condemned if we think the greatness of his kingdom depends upon our Society? We know that it is written: 'Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations' (Ps 144 [145: 13]). And again, 'I will make him the first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth. My steadfast love will keep him forever, and my covenant will stand firm with him. I will establish his line forever and his throne as the days of the heavens' (Ps 88 [89: 28–30]). But we do not know what means God will use for all ages to fulfil his true word, nor for how long he has chosen this Society to be amongst these means. We read: 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts' (Is 54 [55: 8–9]).

**467.** Our little faith and the power of sensible nature make us unprepared to wait a little; our circumscribed feeling, which we stupidly employ as the measure of all things, makes us consider moments as interminable which are brief compared with the unfolding of the ages. Consequently we are fearful for the greatness of the Church of Christ whose many wonders were proclaimed by the prophets. But if we consider that: 'A thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night' (Ps 89 [90: 4]), 'and that the kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed' (Lk 17: [20]), we shall never doubt, whatever happens, that the Father's witness to his only-begotten Son is faithful.

**468.** Let us always think therefore of the Church of Christ, not of this Society, recalling in the joy of our heart the promises concerning the kingdom of Christ and the unchangeableness of the divine plan handed down to us as our inheritance. And let us imitate the faith and tenacity of the patriarchs, as the Apostle encourages us when he says of Abraham: ‘And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise’ (Heb 6: [15]). As long as we trust in Christ JESUS no event, even though it may seem opposed to the kingdom of God, will diminish our joy. ‘For he is the head of the body, the Church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Col 1: [18–20]). And David says about him: ‘He makes wars to cease, to the end of the earth, he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, he burns the chariots with fire!’ (Ps 45 [46: 10]).

## CHAPTER 2

### The grace of our Saviour, JESUS Christ

469. What human beings can do in the order of nature through the capacities given them by God along with nature itself is ordered by the eternal providence of God to the greatness of the glory of his Son JESUS, who is 'appointed the heir of all things' (Heb 1: [2]) and to the fulfilment of the elect, according to the words: 'For it is all for your sake' (2 Cor 4: [15]). Unwittingly, and even unwillingly, the children of this world co-operate with God's plan. The words of the first Christians about the Jews who crucified Christ are applicable to all the adversaries of Christ: '...and in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant JESUS, whom you did anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever you...had predestined to take place' (Acts 4: [27–28]).

470. In the supernatural order, however, mankind can do nothing without the grace of God and our Saviour JESUS to whom 'power over all flesh' has been given (Jn 17: [2]). The creature's work, study, planning, his efforts, the burdens he takes upon himself, are useless; there is nothing he can do of his own power, even though he possesses every natural gift and the whole world besides, which would leave him with the slightest capacity for acting on the supernatural level. If he desires to be and to do something in matters which touch his own and others' sanctification, he must first humble himself by careful consideration of God's free choice, and pray. All other graces will come through this grace of prayer.

471. The members of this Society intend not to act as children of this world in the natural order, where God turns to the glory of his Son regardless of human ignorance or even unwillingness, but as children of the light whose desire is to fulfil, by the grace of their Saviour, those works which are a willing expression of greater honour and service of God. They should realise that their one necessity is the strength that comes from God's proffered mercy and grace. Through this grace, and the virtues

which flower from it, they become God's instrument, to be used by his hand as the human hand uses a stick or rod or any inanimate thing.

**472.** If the members of this Society firmly believe this, they will never take pride in what they do, nor hope in any created thing. Their confidence will be in the power of God which uses persons and things alike, making them suitable in his hand for every work. As he said: 'Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes that it may bear more fruit... Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you' (Jn 15: [2, 4-5, 16]).



## CHAPTER 3

### Justice

473. As a person without eyes cannot see, so human beings can do nothing towards eternal life unless the grace of our Lord and Saviour JESUS Christ works in them. This free gift (if it were not free it would not be grace) is to be received with infinite love and gratitude, and with fear and trembling lest after receiving it we lose it.

474. In order that the grace of God, which goes before us, may work without ceasing for an increase of holiness in ourselves and our neighbour, we must take constant care to correct our spirit through continual purification. The goodness of God comes to dwell infinitely in the person in whom there is no impediment of sin. However, it is not sufficient to be watchful about one matter, and continue to defile oneself in another: 'For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of it all' (Jas 2: [10]). Nor does it help to shut up evil in the depth's of one's heart, as though it were hidden: 'And before him no creature is hidden, but all are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do' (Heb 4: [13]). Nor are exercises of piety and religion an excuse for sinning, or for not repenting of sin. They do not render God's judgment less searching. He said: 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord", shall enter the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 7: [21]).

475. Each one, therefore, should walk perfectly in the sight of God and sincerely endeavour to purify himself from every stain. Scripture says: 'The time is at hand [Rev 1: 3] — he that is holy, let him be sanctified still' (Rev 22: [11]). Revelation of conscience is an efficacious tool in the obligatory and unending struggle for purification. Each one should undertake this exercise with complete candour and truth before his provost and father. He can be quite certain that if he performs it perfectly, he will be cleansed in a very short time by the grace of God and our Lord. Christ came into this world to disclose all things, and to subject all things to the judgment which no one can avoid. But God has mercy on him who opens himself for love of justice.

Hence John says: ‘If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us’ (1 Jn 1: [8–10]).

**476.** Revelation of conscience must be united with a firm desire to amend if its end is to be achieved. Self-amendment requires patience and tenacity which never allows the soul to rest in its defects and imperfections. Excessive rigour and scrupulosity are indeed to be avoided, but laxity of conscience is to be rejected at all costs.

**477.** Excessive rigour and scrupulosity are to be found very often in those who, lacking knowledge of their own infirmity and weakness, straightaway begin with the presumption that great purity and even impeccability will be theirs. But God humbles the pride of all human beings and, for those who faithfully trust in him, begins the work of purification at this root of sins.

**478.** Laxity of conscience is proper to those who allow certain vices to remain undisturbed in their souls. Miserably, they permit themselves to be deceived because of certain good works, and through the false idea they manifest of the mercy of God. These persons so harm the Church that the Lord once declared to a beloved soul: ‘The foundation of this (Church) is faith, namely belief that I am a just and merciful judge. But now this foundation has been undermined. They all believe and preach that I am merciful, but practically no one preaches or believes that I judge justly. They almost consider me a wicked judge, for the judge who would free evil persons without punishment so that they could oppress the just would indeed be wicked. But I am a just and merciful judge; the least sin does not remain unpunished, nor the smallest good unrewarded.’

## CHAPTER 4

### The love of God

**479.** As the activity of this entire Society is ruled by the providence of the heavenly Father, so the activity of the individual members of the same Society is moved, as was said, by the grace of our Lord and Saviour JESUS Christ. On the part of the members themselves, the first co-operation with the grace they have received must consist in purposing to purify themselves every day unceasingly and increasingly from every stain of sin and fault through their use of completely just and righteous means. But the obligatory end and final purpose of their co-operation is that it be borne insatiably to and into the love of the one God.

**480.** ‘The Lord has done all things for his own sake’ (Prov 16: [4, Douai]). Hence all things are to be referred to him as to their end in order that God alone, and his greater honour and service, may be sought and loved in all things and persons.

**481.** God is the beginning of all things, as well as their end and perfection. All goodness of things and persons comes from God alone. All things are what they are from God, and without God they are nothing. For this reason the scriptures call God: ‘the only Sovereign’ (1 Tim 6: [15]), who alone ‘is just’ (2 Macc 1: [25]), ‘is wisdom’ (Rom 16: [27]), ‘is good’ (Lk 18: [19]), ‘is holy’ (Rev 15: [4]). Hence we are not obliged to serve the glory and greatness of any person, but give help and service from our hearts to all, not for the sake of flesh and blood, but for love of the one God who alone is lovable and worthy of honour.

**482.** The charity towards our neighbours professed by this Society is itself, therefore, the very charity of God. If, in our thought, God were taken away from the world, human beings would deserve no honour and love from us since they would not even exist. We would all alike be nothing.

**483.** Therefore, in all our works of charity let us have before our eyes God the Father, and his Son JESUS, his beloved. Towards him alone let all our purpose be borne, without its halting or resting in any other thing or person (E.). The

heavenly Father loves human beings for the sake of JESUS alone, as JESUS says: 'For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I come from the Father' (Jn 16: [27]). The children of the heavenly Jerusalem look unhesitatingly upon the Father and his beloved Son while they do works of charity towards their neighbours. In this way, they will fulfil more perfectly the prophecy written beforehand about this period of the new law: 'And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the pride of men shall be brought low; and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day' (Is 2: [17]).

Their argument for true love will be found in the words: 'By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments' (1 Jn 5: [2]). Let the love of God, therefore, be the single source of all the cares and labours to which the members of this Society are dedicated.

(E.) This does not prohibit natural good instincts, such as instincts of compassion. It is the rational will that must be borne always to and into God as its end, leading and regulating the natural instincts. These instincts, which do not contradict reason and the purpose of the rational will to refer all things to and into God, are a great help to human beings in stimulating charity and holy fervour, and supply strength for accomplishing many good works (47 E.).

**Part Seven**

**THE ELECTIVE STATE OF  
THIS SOCIETY**

## PREAMBLE

**484.** Our life will be perfect when we do all things according to the light of reason. Our actions must depend upon the indication and necessity offered by reason itself, not upon caprice. We must remain at rest, therefore, until moved by reason (E.).

(E.) A certain peace and tranquillity in God must be sought above all things by every member of this Society. But while humbly bowed down before God in this state, he must at the same time be easily moved by the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and avid to practise perfectly the will of God made known through obedience.

**485.** At all times and in all places reason shows each of us the necessity of peace and society with the Lord, the author and perfecter of all things. This peace and union of human beings with God is made possible by God's infinite goodness through our Saviour. Beyond this necessary bond with our final end, there is no other absolute necessity binding one human being to another, because human beings do not depend upon one another absolutely speaking. So, by natural relationship itself, each one is obliged to seek and cultivate of his own accord the worship and friendship of God; but he will act towards human beings as circumstances and accidental relationships indicate to reason what is to be done.

**486.** Hence from the characteristics of the perfect life which they have made their own, there are two states in which the members of this Society can be found successively. The first, dedicated to contemplation and divine worship, will be elective, according to the words: 'One thing is needful; Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her' (Lk 10: [42]). The second, devoted to action because of their neighbour's need, will be accepted by them, according to the words: 'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' (Mt 25: [40]).

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487. We must speak first about the elective state of this Society, and then of its other state accepted for love of our neighbour. And although we may not assume this second state of our own choice, but impelled by events and circumstances, according to the light of reason and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we shall keep it in mind continually when describing our prior state of choice, because of the various needs of our neighbour which will bring us to undergo our second state as time goes by.

## CHAPTER 1

### Prayer and one's avocation: the two occupations of the elective state

**488.** The state of contemplative life chosen by us requires first of all loving care for holy solitude in which we can attend to God earnestly and unceasingly, as far as human weakness permits. This aim will be greatly assisted if no one leaves the house without a solid, charitable reason (E.) and if care is taken to avoid, as far as possible, the presence of externs in the houses of the members.

(E.) In all things God is to be present to us in such a way that we do everything simply out of love for him. When there is a reasonable cause for going out, therefore, it proceeds necessarily from the love of God, provided one goes out with the purpose of honouring and worshipping God and our Lord.

**489.** To achieve this, there should be a door-keeper in each of our houses, a mature person available to attend to those who ask a work of charity of us, or desire to see any of the brethren. He shall communicate the matter immediately to the provost, or the rector of the house, or his representative. Only a superior shall be in contact with externs.

**490.** There shall be at least one small room, not far from the entrance, which the superior can reach without being seen by the members, and can use for attending to externs. He shall help them with prudent charity either by word of mouth, or by doing himself what is required, or by sending one of the members to perform the required charitable work.

**491.** He must not grant too easily the member who is requested. On the other hand, when there is a genuine reason of charity he must satisfy neighbours with holy discretion (unless some greater good is impeded, or some evil incurred by his action), considering the breadth of charity towards our neighbour which continually manifests itself in the Lord as good and kind to all persons (E.).

(E.) When someone wishes to speak to one of the members for

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the brother's sake, not his own, the superior, who is the sole father of the household, shall see to the business if he can on behalf of the member, who has renounced all things. Moreover, it must be noted that the superior shall not speak about it to the member without necessity. This would not be helpful for one who has left himself and all that he calls his own.

If superiors act constantly in this way they will help the members considerably in their progress towards dispensing with the world, and towards humility and subjection. It is desirable that the superior act consistently and equally with all, not consulting anyone about his own affairs without necessity, as for example if information is required, or something similar.

**492.** If a provost is obliged to see externs often (for example, if he has some pastoral care), there should be, if possible, an external house next to the religious house in which he can receive externs as his duty requires without disturbing on this account the brethren in their contemplation. As far as possible none of the members should know what is being done in the near-by house (E.).

(E.) Hospitality, which should be shown especially towards religious and clerics, must be exercised in the extern house, not in the religious house.

**493.** In the same way, the brethren shall not travel (especially if returning to their own country) except when charity impels them. They will carry commendatory letters. Those who work in colleges or schools will spend at least ten days during the vacation in retreat. If they keep in mind Christ's words to his apostles, exhausted by their teaching, 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while' (Mark 6: 31), the retreat will help them to spend a part of their holidays devoutly, and obviate any desire of journeying for recreational purposes. The rest of the brethren will make the exercises between Septuagesima Sunday and the Lenten fast, if possible. Superiors will set the example. If this period is unavailable, they will make them at some other time.

A diocesan provost cannot send anyone outside his diocese, or a provincial outside his province, unless there is some immediate necessity which, recognised by the consultors, must be recorded in the diary. The provincial and the General must be informed immediately (E.).

(E.) Normally those travelling will be given companions for the sake of their own and others' edification.

**494.** While they remain in the elective state, all their time is to be employed in some useful and holy occupation since an account will have to be rendered to God for every single moment of time, as well as for all the other talents he has committed to us. A 24-hour timetable is to be established from the beginning, but it does not bind a member if some charitable work intervenes. Domestic order is to be preserved, in accordance with the Constitutions (225 E.3), Rules, and good approved customs.

**495.** There will be two occupations in this life: prayer and one's avocation, either academic, or technical.

**496.** There will not be many prayers prescribed in common (except for the unbroken hour of meditation) (E.), on account of the works of charity which may occur. Superiors will be able to establish prayers for individuals or for all as they judge best and in so far as time is available, or leave them to the devotion of each.

(E.) A book of meditations will be published for use in the Society. It will have meditations covering three years during which the whole gospel will be considered, and the entire body of ascetical teaching shall be explained according to the needs of the various kinds of persons who make up the Society.

**497.** Generally speaking, care must be taken that the prayers of the Church be said with understanding and actual attention of spirit, as far as possible. If this is done, the prayers which the Church enjoins upon priests will be sufficient for all who know Latin (E.1). These prayers require great concentration, and the labour entailed in acquiring extensive knowledge. The canonical hours will be said in common (E.2) as far as occupations of charity permit. Those not familiar with Latin will say similar or shorter prayers in a language they understand. It will be a special point of devotion to see that the blessing of the eucharistic bread be extended to everything the Christian uses in this world, according to the spirit and custom of the Church. In this way, all things will be considered consecrated to divine worship, and God, who is honoured in all things, will cherish and bless those who adore him in spirit and in truth.

(E.1) Hence special care will be taken to study the sacred rites and to profit by them.

(E.2) There will be no sung Mass or hours, or offices in choir, in places devoted exclusively to the education of youth, or missions, or other works of charity requiring all a person's efforts and almost all his time. However, if a superior of such a house considers it helpful, vespers can be sung in Gregorian chant or some other devout, simple and pleasing manner, but not polyphonically, in the evening to occupy the people before the sermon or reading. This applies also to Sundays and feastsdays.

In parish churches, the accepted custom of those churches will be followed. The General Superior, and his representative, will assess and approve in each house the practice regarding church services most suited to the nature of the house. He will be careful to keep in mind the principal duty of charity proper to the house so that every obstacle to its perfect fulfilment may be set aside.

498. Likewise no corporal austerities are generally prescribed in order that our energies may be conserved for the exercise of charity. Each one will practise mortification as his spirit prompts, according to the judgment of his superior and father. We are convinced that it will be sufficient for each one (unless his spirit teaches him otherwise, and superiors approve) to take up humbly and cheerfully that cross which the fatherly providence of God gives him, and to bear willingly all the hardships belonging to his state, dedicated to universal charity. He should undertake all the self-denial and all the mortifications which daily occur if he wishes to give to all and pardon all: he should be patient and obedient, and subject to God in such a way as to fulfil, even unto death, whatever the superior commands.

499. Those dedicated to academic study must apply themselves to it, after prayer. Studies should be directed by the superior, or an inspector appointed to the office, according to the *Handbook of Studies* which is to be brought out for God's greater glory and the better service of the Church. However, since studies can be considered both an internal occupation and an external activity of charity, we shall speak about them again.

500. Manual workers will spend all the time which remains after attention to prayer and the necessities of life in working at

their avocation silently, orderly, peacefully and joyfully. Let them bless and thank God the Father and our Lord JESUS CHRIST in all things, and obey those holding the place of this same Lord.

**501.** As far as possible superiors will adapt this mode of contemplative and industrious life to the circumstances and persons of coadjutors living outside our houses (E.1). These men will devote themselves to exterior and interior solitude, to silence, prayer and some study or trade, living quietly and contentedly in the Lord, labouring earnestly in his honour, remaining at home, not wandering about without a motive of charity, and acting faithfully according to the rules superiors will give to each one (E.2). These rules must be read often. The same things can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to adopted sons and ascribed members (E.3).

(E.1). The following live outside our houses: those enrolled as extern coadjutors; and intern members placed outside the houses by superiors for some reason of charity.

(E.2) Superiors will give to each of the extern coadjutors the common rules, and special individual rules treating in particular of communication with superiors, disclosure of conscience, duties to be accepted and carried out, etc. Communication must be as frequent as possible so that the body, composed of such diverse and separate members, may not lack unity.

(E.3) Care must be taken that each local congregation of ascribed members has its own oratory and a house in which members may meet several times a year. Informal instructions on the way of assisting at the function of the day in the parish church may be given at the oratories, and other devout exercises may take place there.

## CHAPTER 2

### Poverty and its consequences

502. Perfect evangelical poverty consists in the renunciation that a person makes of all that he possesses in order to follow Christ, after the example set by the apostles who said: 'Behold, we have left all things and have followed you' (Mt 19: [27]). It is this unrestricted poverty that the members of this Society wholeheartedly purpose to make their aim. This they wish to embrace and do in fact embrace so that each member may be wholly intent on contemplation and released from every worldly occupation, as far as possible in this life, and be able to say with JESUS, his God and Saviour: 'The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; yes, I have a goodly heritage' (Ps 15: [16: 5]).

503. This abandonment of all things for the sake of following Christ can only be fulfilled in spirit, in the first place, as our Lord himself has told us: 'True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth' (Jn 4: [23]). Moreover, the person who follows Christ with his whole heart, and by an act of will abandons all his possessions, may still retain for a time his worldly substance as far as his external and civil dominion is concerned, and profess evangelical poverty no less than someone externally naked, provided he does this for very love of Christ, that is, to please him in this matter also. For these reasons the members of this Society are convinced that in view of the Society's nature and aim it would be better if the faculty of deciding which members should retain the legal dominion of some goods, and for how long, were put into the hand of the Provost General. At the same time, however, members completely reject the use and disposition of these goods as if they were their own, so that these goods belonging to JESUS Christ — for they have given everything to him — may be distributed under the obedience of the Provost General himself for charitable purposes as the evangelical counsel directs. Our members have seen that to go begging daily for bread would very often be incompatible with responsibilities undertaken by the Society;

they have thought about the example set by the college of apostles which itself held resources, and about the lesson taught by the Doctor of the Gentiles who worked with his hands to acquire a living for himself and his companions. To the Thessalonians he wrote: 'For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, we did not eat anyone's bread without paying, but with toil and labour we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you (E.). For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: 'If anyone will not work, let him not eat' (2 Th 3: [7, 8, 10]).

(E.) The Apostle continues: 'It was not because we have not that right, but to give you in our conduct an example to imitate.' [2 Th 3. 9] These words agree with what is said elsewhere: 'Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel' (1 Cor 9: [13, 14]). He adds, however: 'But I have made no use of these rights.' There is a difference, therefore, between that which Christ taught his apostles to do in general (and they professed evangelical poverty) and what the Apostle did in addition; between the general directives which the Church has given in accordance with our Lord's teaching for all the workers in the vineyard of Christ, and that which convenience or expedience requires in some particular case to promote the freedom and greater increase of the word of the gospel. The Provost General of this Society, and his representative, whose duty it is to determine for each member the degree of actual poverty he will observe, must bear this distinction in mind. He will consider that the nature of this Society requires that its members who are priests should not differ in general from other priests of the Church except in the greater assistance they have at their disposal for sanctifying themselves and fulfilling with greater diligence and perfection the works proper to the priesthood. Similarly, the sole distinction between lay-members and the rest of the faithful should be that the former are provided with greater aids for acquiring perfection. Pre-eminent among these aids are the evangelical counsels. In general, then, it is not contrary to the profession of evangelical life and apostolic poverty for priests who minister at the altar to receive and live by what the charity of the faithful

or of the Church attaches to the ministry of the altar and the word. This is not opposed to the poverty professed by the members of this Society, since the revenues or income arising both from the offerings and occasional alms of the faithful and from benefices (as we shall state below) are without reservation subject entirely to the obedience of superiors and disposed of in accordance with obedience for charity alone. If a beneficed priest or a priest in any capacity performing service at the altar employs under obedience any part of these revenues for his own support or for charitable works, he will render an exact account of everything to the Provost General or the person substituted by him for this purpose. He must not regard it as a nuisance to have to use great care and diligence in dealing with these temporal things, because this diligence will contribute greatly to the general good of the whole Society and of the Church. The order preserved in temporal matters is necessary for the preservation of order in spiritual matters, because of the bond connecting temporal and spiritual things. The person who, with this and no other intention, is careful and exact in temporal things must be convinced that he is really contributing to the service of God and the love of his neighbour, and will receive his reward from the Lord.

For the rest, the Provost General and indeed all the superiors must always remember that the Society of Charity has a deep and heartfelt desire that its members should follow the pattern of the apostle Paul and serve the Church and their neighbours without any remuneration whatsoever. The Provost General is most earnestly recommended to strive that our members carry out for their neighbours' benefit as many works of charity as possible without any remuneration whatsoever.

504. Some persons intent upon the providence of their heavenly Father reflect on the words of the Lord: 'Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on' (Mt 6: [25]), and profess external and even solemn abandonment of all goods. This is both holy in itself, and has been professed by holy people with the Church's approval; and it could one day be advantageous for some members of our Society to embrace this kind of poverty. Indeed, since there could be no true poverty of spirit in those not prepared also for civil abandonment of their goods when this is required to increase the service and homage rendered to God and promote the exercise of charity, the notion of

poverty followed by members of this Society should be such that they are prepared for an actual and perpetual abandonment of all goods and rights, both present and to come, and ready to renounce by profession of a simple vow even their legal dominion, to beg their food from door to door, and to profess a solemn vow of poverty when superiors judge that this would redound to the greater homage of God and assistance to their neighbour.

**505.** Profession of this kind of poverty will, however, remain untested and uncertain if its lessons are never learnt in the school of experience. The Society should have, therefore, some means of revivifying and renewing in its members fervour of spirit and resolution in following this singular counsel given by our Lord, wherever these have flagged through our own weakness and the adversary of mankind. We hold, therefore, that it would be highly beneficial to the Society and at the same time help to preserve its spirit if, when circumstances of time and place prove suitable, one of our houses were made subject by the Provost General to the condition that all who live there should, as long as they are there, live solely on alms begged of the faithful for love of JESUS Christ. Members who apparently fall below the necessary standard in the cultivation of holy poverty will be assigned to this house. In this school of practical training they will learn more and more to become Christ's poor men. Novices can also be assigned to this house, especially in the first year of novitiate. Members who have professed a solemn vow of poverty with the General's permission must be permanently ascribed to this house. It is also recommended to the Provost General that this plan should be realised when, with God's favour, an occasion for so doing presents itself.

**506.** The nature of the vow of poverty professed by religious of this Society is in the first place that it depends entirely on obedience to Superiors who must consider in the Lord what degree of actual poverty is to be assigned to each member for the greater homage of God and greater love of our neighbour. In considering this they must take into account the particular circumstances of time and place, and the duties incumbent upon individual members. From the moment of their profession



members declare themselves ready to accept all degrees of poverty, embracing them all in spirit and in will (E.).

(E.) This absolute disposition is the matter of the vow. Nevertheless, the following members are to lack all civil dominion.

1st, those received into the Society under the title of voluntary poverty or the common table. These, if they are to be priests, are ordained under the same title, unless the Provost General judges otherwise.

2nd, any member who sins gravely against the vow and virtue of poverty by abusing the external and civil dominion of his goods, or who defects from and abandons the Society by reason of such an abuse but afterwards repents and humbly returns. Such a person is not to be received unless (besides showing genuine conversion and making satisfaction to the Society, according to the judgment of the Provost General) he professes in addition a solemn vow of poverty.

3rd, those who desire to profess a solemn vow of poverty and obtain permission from the Provost General to do so. After this profession they are normally to be placed on a permanent basis in those houses where members live on alms they themselves beg or on the revenues of the houses themselves.

507. Since it is a matter of great importance, we must clarify the nature of this vow by distinguishing between the poverty which, as we have said, our members profess in will and in *spirit*, and the poverty they profess externally. In spirit all members embrace all degrees of evangelical poverty, even to the extent of making a solemn vow to live solely on alms without any individual or common revenue whatsoever; further, they are prepared to lay aside every hope of acquiring rights or goods, and to go begging from door to door. But externally they profess that degree of poverty which the Provost General assigns to each individual (E.).

(E.) No one is ordered under obedience to renounce goods except those who have reached their majority in the eyes of civil law, are judged stable in their vocation, have completed the novitiate and schools, and are about to be made coadjutors.

In the case of a person already subject to the Society, the formula of abdication or renunciation of part or all of the goods will be that approved by the General.

508. There are, however, certain things concerning poverty which must always be observed. No one may contravene them,

and not even the Provost General can dispense from them without violating his vow. These observances fall under the five following heads.

**509.** First, the Society itself cannot possess anything from which it derives income; it can only accept donations and legacies on condition that, while it holds them, it receives no income from them, and transfers them immediately to the dominion of some individual belonging to the body of the Society (E.1), or to a church or to other works of charity. Churches and other works of charity, such as schools, hospitals, etc., separate from the body of the Society, although governed by our members (E.2), are capable of ownership. The Society must take care to register stable goods in public records in the name of these institutions and never in its own name. It will administer and hold in usufruct the above-mentioned goods.

(E.1) When the Provost General judges that goods should remain in or be transferred to the dominion of members, the goods must normally be so distributed among the presbyters of the Society that they themselves, either individually or in twos, or better still in threes, possess all the goods sufficient for an entire house of the Society or for supporting and maintaining some other work of charity. If coadjutors have some revenues, they may retain only that necessary for their own support (90 E.). Then, if they are dismissed, they will not be without means of subsistence. At their death it can be employed for charitable purposes. They are, however, to be completely divested of their chattels.

(E.2) Works or houses termed 'separate from the Society' are those of which the civil dominion rests not with the Society but with the Church, the State or others. Hence, these houses continue to exist when the Society withdraws. This does not prevent members in our way of life from living in these houses, administering their goods, and drawing income for their own support and love of their neighbours.

**510.** Second, members who can own for a time (E.1) under obedience to the head of the Society will not accept any goods, no matter by what title they accrue to them, after the profession of perpetual vows (E.2) unless the Superior enjoins it on them. All goods so possessed by them in virtue of their civil dominion will be administered in common, and disposed by the Society.

[509–510]

(E.1) Members may bequeath under obedience, and for pious uses only, the goods which by their entry into the Society and by their vows and profession they have consecrated and given along with themselves to God and our Lord, JESUS Crucified. They may also appoint legatees, whom the Provost General shall designate, to put these goods to pious uses. The Provost General cannot designate himself among the legatees. The will is made before the profession of vows and renewed when the General judges necessary. — For a legatee designated by the Provost General to accept the legacy, the permission of the provost diocesan is sufficient, but the Provost General must be informed immediately about the testator's decease and the legatee's succession,

(E.2) An exception must be made of things consumed in the very act of receiving them, such as food and drink. The Rules forbid members to accept even these without permission from the superior of the house, who may however mandate his subjects to accept small gifts and alms as their prudence sees fit, provided they take them to the superior as soon as they receive them or else give him an exact account of them.

**511.** Third, no goods yielding income will be possessed for more than one year (E.1) by any member (E.2) without the income being used for the support of some member or for some other work of charity (E.3). The revenues necessary for the support of each individual will be determined by the Provost General who will take into account time, place and other circumstances. When the goods or their income have once been applied to a work of charity (E.4) by a decree of the Provost General, they must remain firmly applied to this same work for the whole of the duration of the work, unless for an urgent and evident reason the Provost General and three of his four closer consultors are persuaded otherwise; and in this single instance the consultors' vote must agree with that of the Provost if his authority is to be decisive in the matter (E.5).

(E.1) The year is to be calculated from the day on which the Provost General is informed of the ownership.

(E.2) Immediately a member comes into possession of any material good derived from the almsgiving of the faithful, from benefices, from goods which he retains under obedience on a temporary basis, from manual labour or from any other source, he must take it to his immediate superior or inform him of it

(this applies to every good, whether stable, chattel, revenue, possession, money, or whatever may be sold for a price, as well as rights whether actual or promissary). This superior must then refer the matter to the Provost General through the intermediate superiors. The Provost must within one year assign the goods to the work of charity which seems most urgent and, as far as possible, to some work near the location of the goods (unless the goods are sold and their value transferred; as a general rule this should be done if the time is opportune); otherwise he must dispense them to the poor or put them to some other pious use. In assigning such goods, priority should be given to the completion of works already begun; above all, our houses should be made suitable for their purposes, and stable revenues established for persons. After that, new projects may be undertaken: in the first place goods should be used to enable the Society to conduct its missions, schools and other works without remuneration of any kind (503 E.), unless serious reasons lead to other conclusions. Money should either be relocated to produce regular income and applied to these and similar works, or distributed to the poor. Chattels should be retained if they are useful in the houses, involve no luxury and help the members to give greater service to God; they should be distributed to the houses in proportion to their needs; otherwise they should be sold and the proceeds distributed immediately to the poor and used for some other charitable purpose, or converted into some stable, substantial thing and then applied in the same way to some work of charity.

(E.3) A *capital fund* (or source of interest) may, however, be established by authority of the Provost General, and the revenues accruing from it be steadily applied to the foundation or endowment of charitable works. This capital fund (or source of interest), rightly applied, is considered tied to a work of charity, like other goods similarly applied, and cannot be transferred to any other use. But the possibility of selling, should such an opportunity arise, is not excluded; in cases where an opportunity for selling respectably does not present itself within one year, an application to charitable works must be made within one year calculated from the day on which the Superior is informed. If it is to be sold a suitable time should be chosen, and as soon as possible.

(E.4) The application is made by a decree of the Provost General, signed by himself and one of his four closer consultors; it is then communicated to the Provost concerned with its

execution. The consultors have no decisive authority in the application of temporal goods but they must present the Provost General with a signed testimonial certifying that he has transacted the business within the period of one year. They must stand surety to the whole Society that nothing substantial has been transferred without just cause from its original application to another charitable work while the original work remains in the Society's charge.

(E.5) As a general rule goods already applied to works of charity must be administered by procurators or administrators who will render an account of their administration as often as the Provost General enjoins it on them, to the persons, at the time, and in the manner prescribed by him. The faculty for expenditure, which will be given by the General to superiors, will not be made available to these procurators and administrators (225 E.1).

**512.** Fourth, apart from sacred vessels and things directly employed for the preservation of the most holy sacrament of the EUCHARIST and the relics of the saints (E.1), no precious object of solid gold or silver belonging to us (E.2) is to be kept (E.3) in the houses and places occupied by the Society. An exception is made of objects for the use of guests, or which help members in their studies, and things considered necessary (E.4) for any other reason, as the Provost General decides.

(E.1) The inner house where, generally speaking, no extern is admitted, and especially the cells of the individual members, should reflect the greatest poverty and simplicity. Our churches must be poor and simple as far as solid materials are concerned, but in design they should contain all the ornaments conducive to divine worship; in particular they should be adorned with every kind of work of art. In the library, and in everything useful for study, a lesser degree of poverty should be observed even, where necessary, with respect to solid material, provided all luxury and superfluity are avoided. Studies, if they are to flourish, require a certain amount of grandeur and magnificence. These are permitted provided the sole intention is to promote the exercise of charity and render more homage to God.

(E.2) Should one of our members by reason of some dignity (for example, if he is a prelate) make use of an object of solid gold or silver, the following principle must be established so that the use of the object may be as far as possible avoided: the

object must no longer belong to the Society or a member of it; it belongs directly to the church whose prelate he has been appointed. This church has the right to appropriate the object on the prelate's decease; if it cannot be given to the church, it must be made over to the poor immediately after the prelate's decease. If our members fail to do this when it is in their power to do so, they should know that they have committed a sin against the vow of poverty.

(E.3) That is, for the use of our members. These things are in no way contrary to our Constitutions if the members do not use them, or use them only incidentally, that is with no intention of putting them to constant use, and keep them with the intention of selling them or disposing of them at a suitable time.

(E.4) Necessity is present if there is question of promoting the practice of charity and the other virtues.

**513.** Fifth, as far as the use of things is concerned, everything is to be regarded as common; no one may use anything (E) unless he has received it from a superior.

(E.) Even if the thing is the result of his own work, for example manuscripts, or acquired through his own work, or comes to him through any title whatsoever, ecclesiastical or secular.

**514.** In this matter superiors must guard against allotting things in a general way; as far as possible they should give permission to use even the smallest things to each individual and on each occasion. This greatly helps to remind members that there is no distinction amongst the poor of Christ (E).

(E.) Clothing should be kept in a common room, and someone should be appointed to distribute it after the pattern set by the apostles: 'So as to distribute to all as each has need' (Acts 2: [45]). He should not be at pains to give the same clothing to the same individuals; it will be profitable to change them round so that no one may maintain that the clothes he has are his own. He must pay attention to health, however — the clothes of the sick should not be given to those who are well. And in each case, individual needs are to be taken into consideration.

The dress worn by the priests in the Society will be the same for all, as far as possible, and follow that used by the Roman secular clergy. They must never dispense with the cassock except at the order of superiors for a reasonable cause. The Society should aim at extending the dress customary at Rome to catholic clergy everywhere, for even external uniformity

throughout the whole Church seems very suitable. For lay-members engaged in an academic profession, the Superior General will prescribe a respectable, appropriate and poor habit; it should not differ greatly from the dress worn by good, serious men of the world dedicated to the same profession. The General will determine another form of dress for lay-members engaged in technical work. Whether each trade should be marked by some external distinction is for the Provost General to consider according to the circumstances of time and place.

**515.** Thus, all superiors should give their attention to poverty in the things which concern them. They should see that nothing superfluous, nothing unbecoming the poor of Christ appears in our houses; when people enter, everything in the houses should greet them with the cry: 'Enough here for one so soon to die' (E.). All members must love POVERTY as the firm bulwark of religious life; it must be observed in its integrity as far as this is possible with the grace of God.

(E.) Luxury is abhorrent, and all superfluity is to be avoided. On the other hand, provision must be made to ensure that the Society lacks none of the appropriate means needed to preserve the energy of persons subjected to so many labours, and helpful in increasing their strength for serving God in their neighbour. For this reason alone, and for no other purpose, premises may be acquired in some quiet and healthy locality. Suitably equipped, they will be used by the sick and convalescent; by persons who withdraw from the distractions of society so as to be free to attend to the spiritual life; by those exhausted after study and other work, who need both physical and mental recreation, as the superior shall judge; and for the use of the colleges as a country house during the vacation. The income from these premises must be used for their upkeep, or applied to a work of charity. It must not be spent on luxuries or affectations of any sort. Nothing is excluded which the spiritual prudence of superiors judges conducive to the greater service of God and of our neighbour, provided it is drawn upon according to this intention and purpose which the Lord will see and judge.

**516.** The enemy of mankind tries to weaken this refuge and stronghold which the Lord our God has urged us to use against the devil and the other enemies of perfection. He usually does this by concentrating his efforts on altering the well-ordered principles laid down by the original founders; the means he

employs are interpretations and innovations utterly inconsistent with the first spirit of the founders. To make provision for the Society on this point as far as in us lies, every presbyter of the Society will profess a vow, as stated above (455), against laxity (E.).

(E.) Laxity in the vow of poverty is to be understood with special reference to the five points enumerated in nos. 509–513, above all with respect to unapplied, income-bearing matters of substance. To avoid more completely the danger of any matter of substance remaining unapplied to some particular work the Provost General, after his election and before entering on his office, must take an oath over and above the promise made by members after their profession. He must swear not to allow any capital sum to remain unapplied for more than one year from the time he learns of its existence, that he will not apply to any work more of anything of substance than the work seems to require, and that he will not transfer to another work anything of substance already applied, unless there is serious and evident necessity and he has the approval of three of his closer consultors.

This is a matter of great importance, and the persons concerned should proceed with all caution. To ensure this, nothing of substance will be applied to any work of charity unless a probable estimate is first made of the expenses required by the work. In this way the Superior will ensure that nothing of substance is applied in excess of need. If after a few years the revenue is excessive, the substance applied must be decreased, and the excess used for another work. If the excess in any year is balanced by deficit in another, the former may be reserved in the account of that work to compensate the deficit. At the same time a small sum may be set aside for extraordinary needs; any good estimate will provide for these as well. Every year a statement of account will be rendered, and any excess reduced to the limit established.

**517.** Extern coadjutors will make the same vow and profess the same poverty as intern coadjutors, as has just been described (E.). We have dealt with scholastics elsewhere (94, 445 E.3).

(E.) Individual extern coadjutors not possessing benefices or other sources of income will be supplied from their patrimony (which, like the other goods of the members, is administered by the Society) for single periods at a time with the revenues necessary for their support, and will render an account of them. If



they have benefices or salaries, they must give an account of these also, as all the other religious do.

**CHAPTER 3**  
**The vow of chastity**

**518.** After the explanation of the vow of poverty, which disposes a person for a life of contemplation devoted to God through the removal of the affection for external things, a word is needed about chastity which perfects a person through the removal of those things appertaining to the pleasures of the body.

**519.** With regard to its matter, we wish the vow of chastity made by members of this Society to be understood in the sense of the Church's law prohibiting marriage to those ordained.

**520.** We believe that a vow of this kind is a great help to preserving the virtue of chastity in the perfect observance it obviously requires, namely in the endeavour to imitate angelic purity in the cleanliness of our body and mind (E.).

(E.) When a member has to meet women for any reason, especially to hear their confessions, his companion will remain where he can see him while he talks to the women, although he should not be able to hear what has to be said in secret. If the arrangement of the building does not permit this, the priest or brother should take special care that the door be left open, and the place be well lit.

## CHAPTER 4

### The humility of the elective state

521. We must now speak of those things which internally perfect the contemplative man in spirit and will. *Humility* must be mentioned first, because it is the foundation of the whole life chosen by us. Obedience, which springs from humility, comes next because of the resolve to exercise universal charity towards our own souls and towards our neighbours under its direction and command.

522. The members of this Society have chosen a private state in the Church, as we have said (nor should any of the faithful undertake any public office of himself), and they should always keep in mind that as long as they remain in that state they belong to the Church learning, not to the Church teaching. Hence they should never desire to take the role of teachers in the Church, but humbly submit themselves in all things to the teachers and judges whom our God and Saviour JESUS has constituted pastors of the Church.

523. The immediate aim of their coming together is to be in a safe place, separated as far as possible from the tumult and dangers of this world, where they may look to themselves and endeavour through mutual help to remedy their own weaknesses and, through the help of God who ‘alone will be declared righteous’ (Sir 18: [1]) to be purified from their own vices. In the sight of God there is always room for fear, and a constant need for unceasing purification of self. Hence they should have the eyes of their understanding always ready to judge and condemn themselves. If they remember this great work they will not think more of correcting and perfecting their neighbours than themselves.

524. On the contrary, they should always presume in favour of others until the opposite is known. Let them believe that they themselves are more in need of help from the thoughts and good example of others, than others from them. They should act with great modesty, and sincere and free humility,

meditating always the saying of St. James: ‘Let not many of you become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with great strictness’ (3: [1]). While they must be eager for the glory of the heavenly Father in every word they utter, and should speak in order to edify, their tone must be that of brothers and friends, not teachers. Their speech should be sensible and sincere, avoiding rashness, pomposity, ignorance and any show of vanity.

**525.** The state that we love and choose is lowly and humble, a life hidden with Christ in God; the member in our way of life is a person directed to his own interior life, weeping over himself, grounded in the bitterness of penitence (E.1). Nothing is more contrary to this state than ambition for posts of honour in the Church or, much worst, in the world. Ambition, therefore, is altogether forbidden to all members of this Society under pain of sin. Rather, they must have a sense of their own nothingness which will truly prevent their imagining themselves capable of achieving anything in the house of God for the salvation of souls unless they are sent by God (E.2). For this reason they must be most careful to ascertain that in undertaking any ministry or work of charity, they are undertaking it for the will of God, and as sent by him. In this way they can ‘stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God’ (Col 4: [12]).

(E.1) There should be a holy parity amongst the members. Temporal coadjutors are not to be despised nor hurt, but affectionately and quietly encouraged, as far as the duties of charity permit.

(E.2) Opportunities of exercising humility are to be given to all, seniors and superiors included. Likewise, public penances are to be imposed upon all alike for public defects.

**526.** Subjects know the will and mission of God with certainty through obedience to superiors when their purpose in accepting obedience is to receive this will from God and our Lord JESUS whom they shall always honour in superiors. Obedience has always been described by the Fathers as the safest and the royal road.

**527.** Superiors, however, need discretion and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to know the will of God which subjects also

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share by fulfilling their commands. Signs of the divine will, which superiors have to discern and interpret wisely, will be explained in their own place.

**528.** When one of the members does a work of charity, or receives some ministry, he should meditate unceasingly the word of holy scripture: 'I am the Lord, who made all things' (Is 44: [24]). Whatever he does, God does in him. In the natural order God acts as Creator, creating and moving for him at every moment the energy with which he works, according to the word: 'upholding the universe by his word of power' (Heb 1: [3]). In the supernatural order he acts as our Redeemer, enlivening us with his grace. 'For apart from me you can do nothing' (Jn 15: [5]).

**529.** Let him also consider with gratitude to God the Father and his Son, the free choice God has made of him for that task which he could have accomplished through any person. God's choice of him for the work is a great grace: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you' (Jn 15: [16]). He should rejoice in the Lord for whatever act of charity he has to do, and thank God for the gift he has received.

**530.** Let him think also about his own unworthiness, and the unworthiness of all men corrupted from the beginning, as is said: 'They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt' (Ps 17 [14: 3]). He should then be more thankful to the Saviour that despite his unworthiness he has chosen him for his service so that he may do that act of charity for him. His gratitude will also be greater at the thought that God has chosen someone for that good work from the corrupt and damned mass of mankind. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have no need of human beings, whom they have loved freely.

**531.** If the work he has begun succeeds, and the ministry he has received prospers, he must humble himself more profoundly, pouring out the feelings of his grateful soul constantly before God and the Lord. He will keep in mind the Lord's words to his apostles when he commanded them to suffer and do every great and hard thing for his name, and warned: 'Does he (the master) thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that is

commanded you, say “We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty” (Lk 17: [9, 10]). What, then, shall they say to themselves who do not obey the Lord, their God?

## CHAPTER 5

### Matters pertaining to obedience

**532.** It is God's will that charity towards our own souls and towards our neighbour should be exercised in an orderly manner; wisdom is to be united to charity so that we may discern the true *order* of charity, the *order* more pleasing to God. Wisdom and understanding in the Lord are necessary especially in a brotherhood of many members so that the energies of all may be harnessed for a common end and, thus well disposed, may be employed to obtain the greatest possible good from their union and harmony. Unity of counsel and of wills is required for this, and because not all have the same gift of counsel and understanding from the Lord, it is reasonable that those believed to possess greater knowledge and wisdom should be placed at the head. The others, directed and ordered wisely by them, will in this way share in their gift. Superiors are constituted therefore, and the obedience given to them is rightly said to be given to God both on account of the affection of will in those who give it, and because of the reasonableness of obedience itself. Through it we subject ourselves to the greatest authority we can have, and as long as we obey the greatest authority we certainly obey God (68–74). Hence the Church of God approves religious subjection and the vow of obedience, while superiors of all forms of religious life share great authority and power in the Church through this approbation. Hence the very words of our Lord JESUS Christ can be applied to religious superiors: 'He who hears you, hears me' (Lk 10: [16]).

**533.** All should study to observe as much as possible this holy obedience full of the will of God, because it is the mother of all the perfection they wish to attain and exercise by entering the Society. They must endeavour to excel in this virtue not only in matters of obligation, but also in others in which they may see, without any express command, only a sign of the certain will of the superior.

**534.** Let them keep before their eyes God, our Creator and Lord, for whose sake they give obedience to a human being, and

without any disquiet or fear let them take care to proceed in a spirit of love so that all of us may strive with a constant soul to lose nothing of that perfection which we can attain by divine grace through the complete observance of all the Constitutions and through the fulfilment of the ideal proper to our way of life. At the same time we must struggle with all the energies at our disposal to manifest the deference of our obedience to the sovereign Pontiff first, and then to the superiors of the Society. In all matters to which obedience with charity can extend, even to leaving unfinished a letter we have begun, we must be most ready to obey the voice of a superior as if Christ himself were speaking (and indeed we give the superior our obedience in the place of Christ, and through love and reverence for him).

**535.** With this aim in view, let us turn all our energies and purpose towards the Lord so that holy obedience may be altogether perfect in our outward action, in the will and in the understanding. Let us submit swiftly, with spiritual joy, fortitude, prudence and perseverance to whatever is laid upon us, persuading ourselves that all is just, and denying our every contrary opinion and judgment by a certain blind submission. This applies to everything arranged by a superior in which it cannot certainly be seen (as we have said) that there is any kind of sin. Each one must be persuaded that those living under obedience ought to allow themselves to be borne and ruled by divine providence through their superiors as if they were a corpse permitting itself to be carried anywhere, and treated in any way; or as an old man's staff which serves its holder wherever he wishes to put it or however he wishes to use it. Obeying in this manner, each one must carry out joyfully whatever the superior commands him as a help to the brethren and the Church. He will hold for certain that in this way he will correspond to the divine will far more than by anything else he can do in following his own will and divergent judgment. The same can be said when a work once begun has to be given up, or a dignity or benefice resigned. All these things are contained equally in the vow of obedience of our way of life (E.).

(E.) Obedience is given in regard to the outward action when what is commanded is carried out well; in regard to the will when he who obeys wills the very same as he who commands;



in regard to the understanding when the subject holds the very same as the superior, and considers what is ordered to be well ordered. Obedience is imperfect where, except for the outward action, this harmony of will and judgment between the one who commands and the one who obeys is absent. Perfect harmony of understanding with a superior can be obtained in three ways.

1st, what we are told to do accords so obviously with our own judgment, because of the necessity and evidence of the matter or because of uniformity of reasoning, that we ourselves agree with the one who commands and would command the same.

2nd, what is commanded does not seem evident to us, and is perhaps contrary to our way of thinking. Nevertheless we are able to abstain from judging both from a sincere desire of humility and subjection, and because of the lawful use of logical caution which makes us slow in reaching conclusions. In this way we agree with the one who commands on account of the authority behind his judgment, not because we see the reason for what we have been told. It is almost always possible to agree intellectually with a superior in this manner. What person can be so sure of his judgment that he can altogether exclude doubt from any particular judgment? But where some doubt remains, there is immediately room for another's authority to which we can subject our opinion.

3rd, there may be a case in which the evidence of the matter, or our weakness, impels us in actual fact to hold a judgment contrary to that contained in a superior's command (although we can scarcely believe that this will happen without some imperfection on our part since even a slight doubt is sufficient to allow us to suspend our judgment). If so, we can agree with the superior at least by beholding and adoring a disposition of divine providence whose ways exceed all human thought, and which uses human imprudence and ignorance to attain its end. In this case, let us consider the superior as the minister of providence, and revere him as such. What has been ordered (provided it is not certainly sinful) should be considered in harmony not with human reason, but with divine reason which constantly considers all things together, not separately, so that what seems foolish to us becomes wise in the extreme from this point of view.

**536.** The perfect and constant exercise of obedience must not blunt, but sharpen the mind's feeling for things, while the effort

and eagerness of spontaneous action should be increased and stimulated by obedience, not lessened. Ability of mind and force of action must be expressed in carrying out perfectly what obedience indicates. The wisdom of superiors will not always prescribe in particular what subjects are to do, but will leave many things to be determined freely and resolutely. In this case, they do not lose the merit of obedience by using their liberty, since they act with the intention of carrying out the will of superiors and of God, and exercise their own prudence which must often be combined with greatness of soul. However wide the scope of their obedience, let the subjects carry it out carefully and conscientiously, mastering all their own inclinations, and making vigorous use of all the energies given them by providence.

**537.** It should be highly recommended that all show great reverence (especially interior reverence) to their superiors. They should behold and revere JESUS Christ in them, love them sincerely as fathers in Christ, and thus walk in all things in a spirit of charity, concealing nothing from them interiorly or exteriorly. They must desire, indeed, that superiors understand all things which will help the members to be guided better on the road of salvation and perfection (E.).

(E.) When a newly appointed superior comes to his house for the first time he should be received by all the subjects at the door or entrance to the house. The senior in authority will offer him the aspersorium, and the superior will sprinkle himself and them with holy water, while the others kneel to receive his blessing. Then all go into the oratory or elsewhere after the superior, where they will kneel at a little distance from the superior who will be placed alone in their midst. Two cantors will intone the litany of the saints, and the normal prayers will be said. The superior will rise, and begin the *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, to which the others will reply standing. A prayer for the subjects should be added to the superior's prayer to the Holy Spirit, after which the superior intones the *Te Deum* which the others take up. If the new superior is already in the house, the same ceremony shall be followed, except for the holy water which will be used only at the entrance to the oratory.

**538.** For this reason all presbyters and coadjutors, intern and extern, will have to be ready to disclose their consciences to the

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superior, and candidates, both scholastics and novices, will have to make general confessions to him. The first general confession will cover their whole life, and successive confessions the period since the last general confession. They must also be prepared to make their normal confession to their master, or to the confessor designated by the superior.

**539.** All their necessities must be sought from their superiors. No individual must ask anything directly or indirectly, or get others to ask anything, for his own private use or for another, from the sovereign Pontiff or from anyone else outside the Society without leave and approval from the superior. Let each one be convinced that what he desires is not suitable for him in the Lord's service if he cannot obtain it through his superiors or without his consent. If it is suitable, he will obtain it with the consent of the superior who holds for him the place of Christ our Lord.

**540.** When superiors begin their term of office they advise subjects (as they must) to make known any privileges or permissions received from previous or other, even higher, superiors. Exemptions lapse for those subjects who fail to comply within the stated time. Otherwise permissions and privileges, as well as commands, are in force until they are expressly abrogated. Those granted by a higher superior cannot be abrogated by a lower superior without previous reference to the other superior.

## CHAPTER 6

### The help given to those who die in the Society, and the suffrages after death

541. Each member of the Society must strive and endeavour throughout his life, and much more at his death, to glorify God and our Lord, JESUS Christ, to fulfil his good pleasure, and to edify his neighbour at least by giving an example of patience and fortitude, with living faith, hope and love for those eternal goods which Christ our Lord has merited and acquired for us by the incomparable works of his earthly life, and by his death. Sickness, however, is often of such a nature that it greatly impairs the use of the mental faculties. Moreover, the help of fraternal charity will be required to overcome grave temptations of the devil (it is of supreme importance to conquer them) which are sometimes associated with the passage from this mortal life. The superior, therefore, should take great care that a brother who, in the opinion of the doctor, is in danger of death should receive all the sacraments before he loses the use of his judgment. The sacraments are weapons given to us by the divine generosity of Christ our Lord so that we may be armed for the passage from temporal to eternal life.

542. He must be aided by the very special prayers of all the household until he has given up his soul to his Creator. Besides the large or small number (E.) who may visit him according to the decision of the superior, some should be chosen to watch the sick person (without disturbing or paining him) when death approaches, assisting and encouraging him with suggestions and assistance suitable for such a time. When they can help him no longer in other things, let them commend his soul to the Lord, who has redeemed it at the price of his precious Blood and his life, until he deigns to take it to himself as it departs from the body.

(E.) Some may fall into delirium and lose the use of reason (in this state they cannot be blamed or praised for what they say); some may give less edification in their illness than they should. Both groups should be assisted by a few of the more

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dependable brethren. Those who have permission to visit the sick should remember to speak in a low tone of voice and with moderation lest they become tiresome. They should talk of matters which may comfort the sick person in the Lord, and edify those around him.

**543.** After the death of one of the interns, his body should be kept decently for forty-eight hours before burial (E.). After office, the household should be present at the funeral which will be carried out in the way normally used for secular priests and faithful. On the morning after his death, all the priests of the household will offer Mass for his soul. The others will beg the divine mercy for the deceased with their own special prayers, prolonged according to the decision of the superior, their own devotion, and the obligations which exist in the Lord.

(E.) If in the doctor's opinion there is some evidence of corruption the corpse may be buried sooner.

**544.** The diocesan superior will also be informed, and will circulate the news to all the religious priests in the diocese, whether they live inside or outside our own houses. Each one will celebrate one Mass and the entire office of the dead (vespers excepted) for the dead brother as soon as possible. The lay religious will also be informed, and will say the prayers prescribed, or follow the normal custom. The soul of the deceased will also be commended to the prayers of sons of the Society and ascribed members so that the same charity may be shown to one another in the Lord in death no less than in life by all belonging to this Society.

**545.** This charity which we show towards our sick and dead brethren must be a strong bond uniting extern and intern religious, and sons and ascribed with the whole Society.

Extern coadjutors are to be treated with the same charity prescribed for intern members. In sickness they are to receive the same spiritual and bodily help and consolations; in death, the same suffrages.

**546.** Sons and ascribed members will be assisted in the same way when they are sick. They should be visited very frequently with all charity, and, as far as we can, we should give them all the spiritual and bodily help and support they desire. In death they

will receive the same suffrages as the religious, but only in the house to which they belong (E.).

(E.) Adopted sons and ascribed are not bound by strict obedience, and cannot be transferred at will from one place to another. Hence they are considered as ascribed to one house.

The diocesan, provincial and General Provost (who should be notified immediately of the death of each member) can reward in a special way those religious or ascribed who have merited more from the Church, by extending their suffrages outside the house, outside the diocese, outside the province, and even to the whole Society.

**547.** Care should be taken that they oblige themselves to certain suffrages for one another, uniting themselves more closely in the Lord in this new way.

**548.** Finally, Mass will be offered annually in all our churches for all the deceased of the Society on the first free day after the feast of All Saints.

## Part Eight

THE PRINCIPLE BY WHICH THIS  
SOCIETY UNDERTAKES THE VARIOUS  
WORKS OF CHARITY IT HAS TO CARRY  
OUT; THE STATE UNDERTAKEN FOR  
THE SAKE OF CHARITY

## CHAPTER 1

### The universality of charity

549. Love is the act by which the will is borne into good; it is pure and perfect when it is borne into good alone, for only then does a person love good alone, and moreover love it because it is good. Hence, such a will loves good wherever it is, loves the greater good more, and in all things seeks the greatest good. Therefore, one who does not love God, who is the greatest good, does not love at all; for if he truly loved, he would indeed love God. Holy scripture does in fact speak simply about love as true charity, where it says: 'He who does not love remains in death' (1 Jn 3: [14]); and: 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much' (Lk 7: [47]). It does not say: 'He who does not love his brother' but only: 'He who does not love,' nor: 'For she loved me' but: 'For she loved.' The person who truly has love in his soul, wills every good, because he wills only good; and so he wills both the good which is in God, who is good without qualification, and the good which, qualified and participated, can be in a human being. This is what it means to love God and human beings.

550. From this it is clear that charity is of its nature universal since it extends itself to every good according to the species and grade of goodness by which each is good.

551. But since charity constitutes *per se* the end and nature of our companionship, every member must will every good as far as he can without restriction, and he must will each good only in so far as it is good. The Society, therefore, suffers no limit to be imposed on itself in the exercise of charity, but in spirit and desire unceasingly embraces all kinds of charity alike, and continually accepts to fulfil them.

552. Human beings, however, although they may have a God-given heart open to desire every good they conceive, are prevented by their limited powers, and especially by the insignificance of the body, from doing all except a few of the many things they will. Consequently, in the practical exercise of

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charity each one must limit himself wisely so that his efforts may not be uselessly dissipated in a plurality of good works. In this Society, therefore, so that the powers of individuals may be evaluated and duties of charity harmonised with them, those persons considered to possess greater knowledge and discernment are given a special position. It is the responsibility of these persons to adapt the burdens to the powers of individuals, and to distribute the duties of charity amongst many persons so that individuals do the greatest good possible, and the single works when unified produce the greatest good attainable from the integral work of many. Greater good can in fact be obtained from the harmonious efforts of many co-workers, directed by a single purpose, than from the same people labouring individually, separately and according to their own discretion. This shows how much our companionship must be loved by all who love in earnest since it is the means without which a greater good cannot be brought to completion.

553. Golden indifference to any work of charity proceeds from this universality of charity with which the heart of each member should be full. The person who wills the greatest good of which he is capable must keep in view not only the good that he himself can do directly, but everything in his work which may redound to the sum of all individual goods. With this in mind, he will recognise, even though he himself seems to be doing little good, how great a good comes from that tiny good which contributes to the immense good accumulated from the action of the whole body of the Society. He himself could certainly not produce a greater good, nor could it be attained by all the individuals without unity of purpose. It is to be expected, when one considers the powers of the whole, perfectly formed body of the Society, that the realisation of the greatest good will depend upon the judgment of superiors who arrange all the duties of individuals in the entire Society with this in mind, namely that the maximum good be realised. The individual who seems to do the least good in the Society should convince himself that in the sight of God he merits as much as the one who appears to him to perform much greater good, provided that he acts with the intention of furthering the solid good that springs from the Society. All those possessing similar intention

and love, and co-operating faithfully in the duty they have accepted towards this universal love, share in it as in a common treasure. All are necessary for producing this cumulation of good. One can go even further: he who does less, but denies himself while furthering the universal good in humility and patience, remaining content with his place and his ministry even if it seems contemptible and lowly in human eyes and is contrary to his own inclinations, and even less than he is capable of, can be sure that he has some special merit over and above what he earns with all the others who co-operate for the good of the whole body. God and our Lord JESUS, looking graciously upon the sacrifice of his will, and accepting it favourably, has reserved a distinctive reward for him.

## CHAPTER 2

### The principle by which the needs of our neighbour become known to us

554. Although the Lord has given us the commandment of mutual love, he has not obliged us (as long as we remain in a private state (E.1)) to search for the needs of our neighbour. When they are disclosed to us of themselves, however, we must do whatever we can to help. The Lord himself, who healed everyone's infirmities, poured out his divine, unfathomable charity wherever the sick came forward and neighbours sought something from him, but we do not read that he looked for the infirm (E.2). It is better for our members to preserve the same order. They should not seek occasions of exercising charity, but accept those which first offer themselves spontaneously, and satisfy those neighbours who ask for help with unbounded generosity according to the gift of God they possess.

(E.1) A person accepting a pastoral duty must fulfil it with every care. The good shepherd knows his sheep and their need, and 'goes in search of the one that went astray,' even leaving the ninety-nine (Mt 18: [12]).

(E.2) Indeed, 'the Son of man came to seek and save the lost' (Lk 19: 10), but he did this according to the opportunities offered him by the providence of his Father. This is shown in the conversion of Zaccheus, when JESUS uttered the words quoted.

On the other hand, when there is question of preaching Christ to pagans, each one can announce the truth from the abundance of his tested spirit as occasion offers, provided that legitimate obedience does not require otherwise. This he can do without limitation, and without waiting to be asked. 'What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice' (Phil 1: [18]).

Likewise, no one should resist the gentle movements of the Holy Spirit. He should obey them rather, and with simplicity speak to all of what is good for the sake of edification. If he is a subject, he ought with humility to disclose to superiors the heightened feelings of the divine Spirit, together with the other matters which occur in his spirit. The superior must observe

the apostolic advice: ‘Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God’ (1 Jn 4: [1]). This is applicable in judging both one’s own inspirations and those of others. The superior should bear in mind that whatever comes from God is a perfect gift, full of peace and charity, perfectly ordered and wholly clear, and subject to rational will, according to the words: ‘The spirits of the prophets are subject to prophets’ (1 Cor 14: [32]).

These things are true because the exposition of truth and the reasonable outpouring of the good affections of the heart is a natural and good instinct, made holy by the gift of God, whom every Christian can and must obey.

**555.** Divine providence is the first reason for this order. It protects all persons and keeps vigil on their behalf. In particular, it disposes all things for the greater glory of God the Father and JESUS, our Saviour, of whom it is written: ‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men’ (Ps 67 [cf. Ps 68: 18; Eph 4: 8]). Each one, therefore, must rest in this providence of God, as has been said previously (Part 6, chap. 1) with regard to matters concerning himself and others. When he acts of his own initiative, a person cannot know if what he does contributes to the universal good, even though it seems good in itself. Only God, the Father almighty, and his Son, may estimate and dispose the universal good. But when an occasion of exercising charity offers itself, we must take it as put before us by providence, not sought by ourselves.

**556.** A sincere sense of humility, which leads us to reflect upon ourselves rather than on others, as we said (Part 7, chap. 4), must persuade us of the same truth. We must think ourselves fit for nothing in the kingdom of our Lord JESUS Christ unless we are moved by him. But when we live in simplicity and humility, and an occasion of doing good presents itself spontaneously, it is JESUS who puts it before us. He directs all things, and to him ‘all authority in heaven and earth has been given’ (Mt 28: [18]). Let us at this moment be grateful to him for having deigned to call us and make us co-operators in his goodness and, obeying his will, let us carry out the good work promptly.

**557.** The third reason for this order of charity is that if we never move spontaneously to render service in others’

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necessities, but are asked by our neighbours themselves, or the necessity becomes known to us of itself and merits our attention, we are more likely to avoid the danger of interfering in other people's business with our charity as a reason or excuse (so defective are we humans!). In this way we shall exercise charity to the greater satisfaction of all and to the edification of our neighbour. The very fact of his request cuts off access to ingratitude on his part since the petition itself acknowledges our good deed, justifying us completely and freeing us from every appearance of evil so that 'an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us' (Tit 2: [8]) (E.).

(E.) In this way we shall also fulfil the commandment of the Lord: 'Beware of men' (Mt 10: 17). This is impossible without great prudence and consideration. And generally speaking, where what is about to be done could be of offence to others, a superior should first hear his council and deliberate with them whether that offence is to be undergone for the love of Christ. If it cannot be avoided altogether, they should consider especially ways and means by which it can at least be mitigated in the Lord.

**558.** Having set aside for our part all search into the needs of our neighbour (E.), let us see the ways by which these necessities can become known to us.

The first way is if our neighbour, either in person or through another, comes to our house and seeks help from us in any matter, spiritual or temporal. As we have said above, his request must be received only by the superior of the house or his representative in this work. If possible, he should carefully supply through some member the help requested.

(E.) Each one must correspond to the relationships springing from his state and the circumstances in which divine providence has placed him. The superior, therefore, must consider the duties individual members may have to sustain on account of their relationships, which may be either natural, as in the case of mother or father, etc., or man-made, as in the case of friends, benefactors, etc. The superior must faithfully direct the brethren in the fulfilment of these duties. Where a relationship or duty exists, there could be some obligation to enquire about the needs of our neighbour, especially if there is some indication of these needs.

**559.** The second way is if a neighbour asks for help from one of the members outside the house for reasons of charity. He should give this help immediately if he can, according to the directives and faculties he possesses. If he cannot help, he must refer the matter to the superior at home who will do what he can and what is expedient in the Lord to satisfy the neighbour.

**560.** The third way is if anyone makes known a neighbour's necessity to a superior at home, or outside to one of the members.

**561.** The fourth way is if one of the brethren outside the house sees some necessity of a neighbour. In this case, he himself will help if he can, and if not he will report the matter later to the superior.

**562. I.** Other things being equal, the requests of our neighbour are to be satisfied first in imitation of the goodness of our heavenly Father who gives 'good things to those who ask him' (Mt 7: [11]), and of our Lord JESUS who says: 'If you ask me anything in my name I will do it' (Jn 14: [14]).

**563. II.** In the second place, help is to be given (provided the other conditions which we shall develop later are fulfilled) to alleviate those necessities which we see without an explicit request from our neighbour. 'But if anyone has the world's goods,' says John (1 Jn 3: [17]), 'and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?'

(E.) There are also tacit requests, that is, the desire of our neighbour which is known to us with certainty. Zaccheus' request was such. As St. Ambrose says (Lib. 8: *In Luc.*), the Lord had seen his affection, although he had not heard his voice inviting him.

**564. III.** In the third place, help is to be given to our neighbours' needs, but with greater caution, when we learn of this only from what others tell us. However, in this case, we should consider before going to his aid whether our help will be acceptable to our neighbour in his need (E.1), and without offence to others (E.2).

(E.1) Help will almost always be acceptable if the need is temporal or corporal, but there may be some doubt in the case of

spiritual necessity. Where the matter is doubtful, the work is normally to be left to the person whose responsibility it is in justice, provided that in the circumstances the anointing of the Holy Spirit does not suggest otherwise.

Greater liberty can be used in helping the poor, orphans and humble people, than in dealing with the rich and with those gifted with the prudence of this world. The Lord's mission was 'to preach good news to the poor' (Mt 11 [Lk 4: 18]), and ours cannot be different. In addition, the purpose of the Society will tend to render Christian living between poor and rich friendly, freer and embellished with Christian honour and love. In this way it smooths the path to mutual and simple charity.

(E.2) Here one must understand that offence towards others is to be avoided where the work of charity is not obligatory *per se*, or because of circumstances. If the work is obligatory, it must be fulfilled even though others unjustly take offence.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Signs of the divine will, or the conditions required for undertaking an office of charity when only one work is put forward for fulfilment

565. When our neighbour seeks some office of charity (E.) from us, either *expressly* or *tacitly*, as has been said in the preceding chapter, we shall carry out that work immediately (unless defects in any of the conditions we shall elaborate forbid it) as put before us by the divine will. As we must in humility restrain ourselves at all times, so we must in simplicity take the good which first presents itself to us. When a present and certain good is before us, we must not think of or await any future good which may or may not occur. Normally speaking, we prefer to other works of charity the first to become known to us, and we accept it as a sign of the will of God.

(E.) If there is a question of temporal or intellectual work, the brethren could be in danger of assuming something under the appearance of charity which would not in fact appertain at all to the charity of Christ. Hence, we must be certain before all else that the help our neighbour seeks is indeed a duty appertaining to the charity of Christ. A superior, therefore, shall often consult his council in this regard, and always listen to it whenever there are doubts whether the work requested belongs to the charity of Christ or not.

566. The conditions we have mentioned will be the three following. The first condition is that no new work of charity offered to us for fulfilment should harm the perfect execution of the other duties already undertaken by the Society (E.). Every attention must be given to carrying out perfectly, as far as our strength will allow, and bringing to completion whatever we have once begun. The foresight of superiors must remove any impediments, such as excessive occupation, which either lessen the perfect execution of work already begun, or impede it altogether.

(E.) If the new duty of charity is pressing, this is not to be strictly understood as meaning that not even slight or momentary detriment is to be tolerated in works of charity already



undertaken. The charity of the Holy Spirit will teach those accepting to rule the Society of love with love alone, in which cases and to what extent this may be allowed.

567. The second condition is that no new office, combined with works already undertaken, should form a burden exceeding and shattering the strength of the members. This is opposed in the first place to the charity that superiors should show members themselves. Moreover, even if members could satisfy all these duties perfectly because of their greatness of soul and immense charity, much harm would soon be done to charity by the very fact of their strength being weakened and broken through overwork.

568. The third condition is that there should first be suitable superiors amongst members available for assignment to the new work of charity (E.1), and then as many qualified ministers and workers as are required to fulfil the work with complete satisfaction. Nothing must be started which cannot be completed by us with a certain perfection (E.2) or has to be abandoned by us after a while because of imprudence in undertaking the work.

(E.1) The happy outcome of every work of charity depends for the most part on the prudence and holiness of superiors. Hence it is totally unfitting for the General Provost to take a work of charity of the fourth kind (574) unless he has first some suitable person to whom as superior he can confide it. It will help the perpetual observance of this rule if he has a list of those members not at present superiors but suitable for government, or considered as probably suitable in the future. He shall take care that there is a number sufficient to replace actual superiors at the appropriate time. If they exceed this number, the new works offered by providence can be undertaken more securely.

(E.2) A case can be visualised in which the anointing of the Holy Spirit, rather than simple human foresight, suggests to superiors something different from that laid down here. In these circumstances, superiors should test the spirit by which they are moved and, after taking counsel from several persons, do with all deliberation whatever the grace of JESUS, our Lord, has shown them.

569. The first condition deals with works already undertaken; the second with members by whom the new works are to be undertaken; the third the works themselves which are put

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forward. All three conditions are to be observed accurately by superiors of this Society because this Society, which is not limited of its nature to any special kind of charity, must be ordered in its entirety and in all its action by the prudence of those governing it.

## CHAPTER 4

### The person responsible for undertaking new offices of charity, and matters to be observed in carrying out this responsibility

570. Offices of charity in relationship to those having authority for undertaking them are fourfold.

571. The first kind comprises works completed in a single act, such as giving alms to a poor person, or advice to someone needing it, etc.

572. The second kind comprises works not of their nature stable, which cease at will although they may be made up of many actions and require more than one person; or at most import an obligation for a year, such as missions, spiritual exercises, the teaching of Christian doctrine, etc.

573. The third kind of offices of charity comprises works which are stable of their nature, but do not occupy more than one person, and are not undertaken for more than his lifetime; or, if more than one person is required, cease at will, or import an obligation of not more than two years, such as the duty of teaching in school, or the establishment of some work of charity not belonging to us, etc.

574. Finally, the fourth kind of charitable offices is made up of works which are stable of their nature and perpetual, or require several persons together devoted to a single work for more than two years, such as various institutes of charity, e.g. the entire care of a hospital, or orphanage, or hostel for girls at risk, and so on (E.).

(E.) There may be doubt, not resolved by the Constitutions, as to which of the four categories an office of charity properly belongs. In this case, authority to resolve the doubt will lie with the following. 1st, the diocesan provost will have authority to decide if doubt falls between works of the first, second or third kind; 2nd, if doubt falls between works of the third and fourth kind the Provost General will have authority to decide.

575. Normally, each parochial provost has authority to accept

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works of the first two kinds for any branch of charity. Each rector of a house has the same authority for the branch of charity proper to his house (E.).

(E.) The charity of a *parochial house* is universal; a particular house belonging to it, however, established for a special duty of charity, e.g. for the education of youth, is called a *rectorial house*.

The reason for attributing this authority to superiors of individual houses is that the persons subject to them are considered stably assigned through the authority of the General Provost to serve the superior of the house in the needs which occur in the house committed to him.

**576.** Nevertheless, the diocesan provost is to be consulted before works are accepted in difficult matters, where there may be danger of commissions accepted for the sake of charity leading to division rather than that union of human hearts which we seek. This consideration is altogether necessary if there is a question of disputes on behalf of widows or poor people unjustly oppressed, or of the execution of wills or confidential charges, or finally of any business in which temporal rights are adjudged for one party rather than another. The same applies in very arduous matters if, for example, there is question of danger to life. The diocesan will decide in these matters after considering very carefully with his council if the work is to be accepted, to what extent it is to be accepted, and in what way.

**577.** Acceptance of those offices which pertain to the third kind is the responsibility of the diocesan provost, or the major rector in his own kind of charity if the faculty has been given to him (E.).

(E.) Before a diocesan provost, or a major rector allocates persons of this kind (who have been given to him by name by the Provost General to whom alone pertains the stable allocation of persons throughout the entire Society), he will speak about the matter to the provincial, or the rector-in-chief, or even the Provost General if the allocation is such that it cannot be rescinded without inconvenience. He will inform the Provost General immediately when a person has been allocated.

**578.** The authority for accepting offices of the fourth kind, by which a new house or institute is established, requiring either

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continually or successively several persons, belongs to the Provost General alone. When necessary, he may communicate this authority to others to the extent he sees fit in the Lord (E.).

(E.) Perpetual burdens and conditions are to be avoided. Light and temporary burdens and conditions can be accepted lawfully and validly only by authority of the Provost General. Perpetual obligations for Masses to be celebrated by our brethren at a given time or place are totally excluded.

579. Duties of charity should be distributed carefully and with great discretion to individual members who, as far as they themselves are concerned, must be indifferent to all things. For this reason, we judge in the Lord that each member should be allocated certain offices of the first and second kind in a stable form with the approbation of the diocesan superior. For example, a member in a parochial house may be assigned the visitation of the sick who have been accepted for visits in the parish by the Society living in that house. He may also be designated to hear confessions, and to work for the poor. This is not to be understood in the sense that he can decide for himself to carry out these offices when the need occurs (a special obedience is necessary for this), but that the superior of the house has the authority to detail him to such duties whenever they occur without having to give an account to the diocesan superior of the individual acts of command. It is useful to have several persons commissioned for determined duties of the first and second kind which can occur in a parish. These members can carry out the duties as they occur at the desire of the provost or rector of the house. Provided a work is of the first or second kind, the same superior can order it to be carried out by a person not approved for it, as has been said (575 E.), but he must be careful to note in the *diary*, or in the book which he keeps for notes of this and similar matters, whatever command he gives outside the determined assignments we have spoken of. This will show the wisdom and charity he has employed in making appointments. The diary should be read attentively by the visitor who should enquire whether all matters mentioned there were carried out rightly, and should correct what he finds unsatisfactory.

580. Before undertaking an office of the second kind, or an

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important office of the first kind, he will pray, and consult two vicars or senior members (E.) assigned for the purpose. Their opinions (which he is bound to listen to, not to follow) should be written by them personally in the diary so that the diocesan superior, to whom the diary is sent, may perceive the feeling and gifts of all, and see that all in the Society are commanded with every consideration and understanding.

(E.) The two senior members take the place of vicars in this and other duties in houses headed by a rector, not a provost. When these consultors are absent or lacking, others will substitute for them according to the order of authority.

**581.** Extern coadjutors have the faculty of exercising the first kind of offices of charity when they encounter them, but this must be done with prudence and judgment lest new works prove an obstacle to those already accepted from obedience. The coadjutors will refer offices of the second kind, whenever they become known in the ways mentioned above, to the superior, and receive their obedience from him. Similarly, they will inform the superior about requests made to them by their neighbour concerning the third and fourth kind of charity so that he may confer with the provost superiors about the matter. Obediences given to coadjutors will also be noted in the diary. Each coadjutor will also be assigned determined duties in the way described for intern religious (E.).

(E.) It is not at all necessary for individuals to know which of the first and second kinds of offices of charity have been assigned to them. Offices are not distributed for their direction, nor do they acquire any right in consequence. The assignment is a precaution against indiscreet appointments.

**582.** The diocesan superior also will make a note in the diary to be consigned to the visitor whenever he undertakes a new work of the third kind of charity. If the matter is of some importance, the opinions (which he is bound to hear) of the vicars and consultors will also be set down (E.).

(E.) They must also write the reasons for their opinions when they consider that these will throw greater light upon the matter for the provost superior.

**583.** Before undertaking a new office of the fourth kind, the Provost General will pray at length before God, seeking

counsel from him in the first place. He will then consider the matter carefully himself with all its circumstances and even in its remote consequences. Finally, he will in the third place hear his council. In this way, all will be done in the Lord with circumspection.

## CHAPTER 5

### **The preference to be observed (E.) about offices of charity with reference to the persons requesting them from us: in particular, about missions from the sovereign Pontiff**

584. The offices imposed upon us by the condescension of the sovereign Pontiff of the Church and Vicar of Christ are to be preferred without any excuse to all others. This is the purpose of the vow by which the presbyters of this Society have bound themselves to obey the supreme Vicar of Christ. They do not understand by this vow any particular place, but go wherever he considers they should be sent for the greater glory of God and assistance to our neighbour amongst the faithful or infidels; they desire to choose what is indeed best, and they hope to achieve this by obeying the wishes of the sovereign Pontiff.

(E.) We have already spoken (chap. 3) about the way in which offices of charity are to be undertaken when a single work is put forward for acceptance. Here we begin to speak about the clash arising from the simultaneous offer of several incompatible offices. In this chapter we shall treat of the preference dependent upon the persons who ask; in the following chapter, of the preference dependent upon the nature of the offices themselves.

585. In this matter, the presbyters of the Society have subjected their entire feeling and will to Christ our Lord, and to his Vicar. Neither the Superior on his own behalf (E.1) nor any of the subjects on his own behalf or for another, may take steps or attempt, indirectly or directly, to arrange with the sovereign Pontiff or his ministers to reside in or be sent to one place rather than another. Subjects will leave the entire matter to the supreme Vicar of Christ and to their Superior; the Superior will leave what attains to his own person to the sovereign Pontiff and to the members of the Society whom he has with him (E.2).

(E.1) When one of the subjects is assigned to a place or work to which it is thought he would not be sent if the circumstances were weighed carefully by the supreme Vicar of Christ, the Provost General can give fuller information to His Holiness, leaving the entire matter, however, to his decision.

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(E.2) Those who are with the General can inform the sovereign Pontiff of the state of affairs if it seems that the Holy Father, led by a different assessment emanating from others, is thinking of sending the Provost General to a place unsuitable for the common good of our neighbour, which is the purpose of the Society for the honour of God. The sovereign Pontiff will be informed by these members according to their propinquity to the General.

586. Moreover, when a person is designated to go to a place by the sovereign Pontiff, he should offer (E.1) himself generously without requesting any assistance for the journey himself or through another. He should rather let himself be sent by the sovereign Pontiff as His Holiness judges fitting for the greater honour of God and the Apostolic See, without considering anything else (E.2).

(E.1) He can and must ask, through the prelate or other person by whom the sovereign Pontiff has given the order to set out, that His Holiness condescend to inform him whether he desires him to journey, and to live where he is sent, on alms begged for the love of Christ, or in some other way. What appears best to the sovereign Pontiff will be done with greater devotion and security in the Lord.

(E.2) All Christians are subject to the ordinances of the Vicar of Christ. In arduous matters, however, lack of virtue sometimes makes them incapable of obeying. The sovereign Pontiff, as a good shepherd, does not normally impose burdens or obligations on them which are heavier than or exceed what is necessary for their salvation or which at least are not very useful for their salvation. Hence the whole purpose of this kind of vow of special obedience to the sovereign Pontiff, by which presbyters of the Society bind themselves, is to lead them to promise that they will perfect and prepare themselves by holy exercises to be able, by God's mercy, to bear onerous commands, not only for their own salvation, as other Christians do, but also for the salvation of others. In this way the pastor of the Church is freer to command in matters which can be useful for the Church, even though they are extremely difficult, since he has their express promise not to oppose his commands, although heavy, and to obey them willingly with the sacrifice of themselves for the honour of Christ.

587. The sovereign Pontiff may, without assigning any

particular person, order one or several persons to set out for a certain place, or to carry out a certain duty of charity, leaving the Provost General to decide who is more suitable for such a mission or duty. In this case, the Provost will assign to the work the persons whom he considers more fitted and suitable, according to the command he has received. He will keep in mind the greater universal good so that the least possible harm is suffered by other works accepted to the honour of God.

**588.** It is best for the person designated and sent to be fully informed about the work and the mission, the purpose of the Holy Father, and the desired result. This should be done in writing (E.) if possible so that he may be able to fulfil his orders more exactly. The superior will take care to help him with advice and instructions as far as it is in his power, so that in all things he may devote his ministry more usefully to the honour of God and the Apostolic See.

(E.) If this cannot be obtained, care must certainly be taken to understand orally the mind of the sovereign Pontiff, whether he explains it himself immediately to the person he sends, or through the Provost, or a prelate, or someone else.

**589.** If a person is sent by the sovereign Pontiff to determined places for an unlimited time to work generally in the vineyard of the Lord (and the superior of the Society has not given him definite instructions), it is understood that he is to remain there for about three months. This period will be extended or shortened according to the greater or smaller spiritual profit manifested there, or hoped for elsewhere, or judged more helpful for some universal good. As far as distance allows, he will consult the superior established for him about all these matters. He will act in all things according to the instructions given him when setting out. As far as possible, these instructions will also determine how far he must use his private judgment in the Lord on the accepted mission.

**590.** If, however, the sovereign Pontiff assigns one or more persons to a duty of charity either in the place where they live or elsewhere, they will devote themselves to their commission with complete readiness and constancy until they have completed it, or are designated for something else.

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591. The Society, which would desire to satisfy all, and endeavours to do this to the extent of its strength, may receive requests for charitable work from others. When its energies are insufficient for accepting all the works of charity requested of it, preference is to be given amongst simultaneous offers, other things being equal, to requests from pastors of the Church, bishops first (E.1), and then parish priests. The Society does not indeed subject itself to bishops by a special vow, as it does to the sovereign Pontiff, but intends by reason of the order of charity alone to observe the following rule: when the superior of the Society who is responsible for undertaking offices considers that there is no obstacle to undertaking the works proposed, he will accept the requests of pastors of the Church before those of others so that due honour may be paid them and so that, by respecting their will, we may see ourselves acting more in accord with the will of God and our Saviour whose place these pastors hold. Nevertheless, the superior of the Society, who must render an account of his entire government to God the Father and his only-begotten Son, should not be led in any way by human respect and inclinations in undertaking offices. Putting only the honour of God always before his mind, he will not accept any office where the requisite conditions for its fulfilment in the Lord are lacking, or which are not according to the Constitutions. He should accept before all else what he knows is more pleasing to God and, all things being considered, more in harmony with the good of the Church and help for our neighbours (E.2).

(E.1) Although the priests of this Society obey the bishops in all matters pertaining to pastoral charges already accepted in their dioceses, it is altogether necessary that the acceptance of duties of charity depend upon the sovereign Pontiff and superiors of the Society alone, as has been said (chap. 4). These persons are able to weigh better the strength of individuals and to consider the existence of the Society as a whole.

(E.2) It is impossible to enumerate all the circumstances which can influence the judgment of the superior when he accepts offices. However, it can be said in general that he must weigh every consideration which can reasonably be judged of some importance. He must be persuaded that he will do the will of God by choosing the work which, all things being considered, he finds the most reasonable.

Therefore he should also reflect that the more universal the good, the more divine it is. Hence, other things being equal, those persons (and places too) are to be given preference who, while asking for help on their own behalf, will benefit many others following their authority, or ruled through them. In this way, the spiritual help given to leading men in civil or ecclesiastical public affairs (if these persons request it of us), and to men outstanding for their learning and authority, is to be considered of greater importance on account of the same more universal good. For the same reason, help afforded great nations, or well-attended universities, is to be given priority. Those amongst them who receive aid can themselves labour to bring help to others.

**592.** Gratitude must also move us reasonably and in the sight of God to give preference amongst applicants, other things being equal, to those to whom we owe more according to the order of perfect charity (E.).

(E.) Blood relationship enables us to know the needs of our relatives more easily. These needs are not to be overlooked by superiors who will first take care to help those related by blood or marriage to members who serve God in our Society, provided other conditions do not prevent this. The brethren who had relatives or in-laws in the world will leave the whole matter to the judgment of the superior. Superiors themselves cannot lawfully give alms to their own relations unless a higher superior has ordered them to do this. Even in cases of intellectual and spiritual charity towards their kindred they should hear their consultors and follow their advice completely.

## CHAPTER 6

### The preference to be observed with regard to the offices themselves when several are offered simultaneously for our acceptance

593. Offices of charity are of a threefold kind when considered relatively to the good of our neighbour which is their direct purpose.

The first kind are those offices which purpose to help our neighbour directly in matters pertaining to this temporal life. This can be called *temporal charity*.

594. The second kind are those offices which purpose to help our neighbour directly to cultivate his mind and develop his intellectual faculties. This can be called *intellectual charity*.

595. The third kind are those offices of charity which purpose to help our neighbour in matters pertaining to the salvation of souls. This can be called *moral* and *spiritual* (E.1) *charity* (E.2).

(E.1) We call *moral* charity that which disposes a person to fulfil his moral offices; the same charity we call *spiritual* when it is raised to the supernatural order and as such enables human beings to adhere to God. This is the aim of those religious means with which a person, having obtained divine grace, is able to fulfil his moral duties.

(E.2) In each of these kinds of charity the work can comprise one or more acts, and require one person stably, or several persons continuously or successively. In this case, the contents of chapter 4 of this Part are to be applied.

596. *Spiritual charity* purposes to pass on to our neighbours that which is *per se* good, and the sole good, that is, eternal life. *Temporal* and *intellectual* charity on the other hand bestow upon people simply relative and partial goods which can only be called goods in so far as they are purposefully ordered to the absolute good of spiritual charity, and in some way dispose people for it. Strictly speaking, therefore, the three kinds of charity we have described pertain to one single charity, as has been said above (part 6, chapter 4). Hence temporal and intellectual

charity must be exercised by us only for the sake of saving souls and honouring in human beings God and our Lord JESUS, who wished to take on himself the needs of us all.

**597.** The third kind of charity, which aims at the greater and truer good, is the foremost and highest. The second kind is next because intellectual learning is superior to any other temporal matter, and is of more immediate service to the supreme kind of charity; the first is the lowest kind of charity. Nevertheless, in undertaking offices we should not consider this order alone in such a way that we undertake more easily and promptly what appears more important. Other considerations, which we shall speak of immediately, are to be viewed first.

**598.** Having chosen a state of humility amongst disciples, we must not place ourselves amongst the masters of Israel, nor desert this state so dear to us unless there is a valid reason for doing so. Where possible, we are to give preference to the charity common to all the faithful. We shall undertake the state of teachers and pastors only when the divine call becomes quite clear.

**599.** Let us see, therefore, what is the order of charity we have in common with all the faithful before we undertake the pastoral office. Afterwards, we can examine the order of charity proper to pastors.

**600.** In his simplicity, Christ's faithful follower must first further the good impulses and instincts of nature, that is, of compassion which is stimulated principally by the sight of the temporal evils in our neighbour's life. He must sanctify these impulses with the love of Christ (E.1). Because they are impulses of nature, and as such good, they proceed from God, the author of nature, and express the divine will. They are free from the danger of pride and arrogance because we are passive in their regard, and because they have their source in a good quality of the body rather than in the intellect. Hence the Lord offered us many examples of works of corporal mercy, which he poured out on those who showed him their needs. For instance, on seeing the crowds following him up the mountain, he said: 'I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now for three days, and have nothing to eat' (Mk 8: [2]). As he

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viewed Jerusalem from the mountain, he wept over it. When called, he went to raise Lazarus from the dead and, as soon as he was at the tomb, was greatly distressed, and wept; without being asked, he raised the son of the widow from the dead when he met him by chance on the road; in Cana of Galilee he transmuted the water (E.2) at his mother's request. He gave way to compassion and wept, but without seeking his neighbour in distress; yet wherever he happened to notice distress, he was moved by it, and when asked he helped. Such a way of acting is fitting for his follower who, realising that he himself and the whole world are placed under the providence of God the Father, actively allows himself to be moved by it whithersoever it wishes (he does not think that he knows best how to move himself), obeying the good impulses of nature as decrees of providence itself. When we are led by this purpose of obeying the divine will and pleasing Christ JESUS, we do not resist natural compassion, but further it, and even wisely arouse it in ourselves. In this way, we build up true charity which starts from movements of compassion, just as intellectual knowledge begins from heightened feelings. Hence, Christ JESUS himself seems to have indicated his command of mutual love in its source when he taught that in the final judgment the just would be rewarded and the unjust damned on the sole basis of corporal charity, which begins with compassion. Less is required therefore for us to undertake corporal charity (E.3) than to take up the other kinds of charity which of their nature are greater.

(E.1) This capacity for compassion with our neighbour's calamities and anguish must not however degenerate into weakness and lack of courage, which disturb the mind. The intellect should remain the sole judge and ruler, while the natural impulses flow forth as intellective will permits.

(E.2) We can learn from this example that the charity of Christ extends much further than the supreme necessities of the life and well-being of our neighbour.

(E.3) Preference is to be given to the temporal works of charity enumerated by Christ. 1st, 'I was hungry, and you gave me food'; 2nd, 'I was thirsty, and you gave me drink'; 3rd, 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'; 4th, 'I was naked and you clothed me'; 5th, 'I was sick and you visited me'; 6th, 'I was in prison and you came to see me' (Mt 25: [35–36]).

**601.** In desire and act we must strive to attain the maximum *quantity* in our exercise of temporal charity. Nevertheless when a superior has received the faculty of distributing anything of temporal substance, his alms to externs should not be such as to leave the house, or houses or members, in necessity. In order to avoid the appearance of giving away what belongs to others rather than to himself, he should keep to the instructions he has received, and frequently take advice of his council on action to be followed in this matter. If he desires to deprive himself of sustenance for the sake of helping his destitute neighbour, he should act only in accordance with the opinion of his admonitor, or confessor, or council. If others ask him if they may do the same — and this is to be desired — he can grant the request, but only for a time and with holy discretion, so that bodily well-being may not suffer excessively. Over-eagerness in helping our neighbour when we are asked by externs for alms to succour some need should be controlled by asking advice from the consultors, and acting discreetly with regard to what is given and the manner in which it is given.

**602.** The pastoral ministry itself is not to be refused when the will of God is evident (E.) in the matter. However, a contrary order of charity is to be observed in the pastoral ministry. The pastor, or the person who works in a pastoral occupation, must first help his neighbour with *spiritual charity* because he is sent especially for this purpose; secondly, with *intellectual charity* in so far as cultivation of the intellect disposes a person to acquire the knowledge of salvation; thirdly, with *temporal charity*. But since the last two kinds of charity must only be ordered towards the first, which is the immediate concern of all a pastor's zeal, either may be put before the other if circumstances make it appear that one or the other will be of greater help in attaining the aim of his ministry.

(E.) When, for example, a bishop makes a request, and there are sufficient means of satisfying it, and no apparent reason for doubting the happy outcome of the task in question. Such an arrangement of circumstances, promising a successful conclusion to the matter, must be taken as a sign from divine providence.

**603.** Corporal charity is common to all Christians who can

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with reason hear the voice of divine providence in the impulse of compassion created at the sight of our neighbour's anguish. Similarly charity towards souls is proper to pastors, and a more obvious occasion is required for its exercise by ordinary Christians. Christ, in fact, has taught us by his example to have great trust in divine providence for the salvation of the human race. Even when asked, he sometimes delayed in helping. For instance, he did not at first reply when the Chanaanite woman cried: 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David'. Then he said: 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Mt 15: [22, 24]). Finally at the woman's insistence, he helped her. This should teach us to distinguish in insistence itself the final circumstance for recognising the time for help, and the will of God. This careful and almost fastidious forethought in undertaking works of charity will be in harmony with Christ's example when it springs not from self-love, but from living faith in the providence of the most High who has at his disposition infinite means with which to come to the aid of the necessities of all if he wishes without us, and from a sincere knowledge both of our own misery, which makes us incapable of anything unless we are moved by God, and of our ignorance, which prevents our knowing whether the work we do will contribute to the universal good, or to evil.

604. Finally, many other things must be weighed when choosing between works of charity. In each individual case only prudence from the Holy Spirit will manifest the better choice to the person seeking simply with pure affection the honour and glory of God. However, it will be helpful to assemble here some rules to be observed when requests for works of charity clash. We believe these rules have their source in that very same Spirit.

Therefore, when a choice has to be made between several works of charity offered simultaneously, we act as follows.

- 1st, duties imposed upon us by natural or positive law are to be preferred to arbitrary or supererogatory works.
- 2nd, the first duties offered to us are to be preferred to later requests.
- 3rd, preference is to be given where necessity is more urgent.

- 4th, preference is to be given to duties for which other workers are lacking. Where others might be present, especially if they were bound to the work by ties of justice, we should move cautiously and slowly.
- 5th, when the Society is already engaged on some work, preference is to be given to this rather than to new offices and in general to those duties by which the strength of the Society is fortified and increased, rather than to duties which diminish and weaken it. The strength of the Society is augmented by works in which members and houses and individual associations are perfected, especially in the spirit.
- 6th, preference is to be given to duties which can be carried out more perfectly, considering the nature of the work, the personnel available, and peoples' attitudes. Other things being equal, we should work where it appears that the door is open more widely, and the people who could be helped are better disposed and easier to relate to. In this case, the benefit will be greater than elsewhere, and the labour less.
- 7th, help is to be provided more readily for the place and persons to whom we owe more.
- 8th, preference is to be given where our help is sought with greater insistence. corporal works of mercy should be more easily accepted, that is, without need for greater insistence.
- 9th, the greater kind of good is to be given preference.
- 10th, the greater grade or weight of good is to be given preference. This depends upon the depth of evil which can be eliminated, as for example, in helping great sinners who wish to be converted, and upon the depth of good occasioned by the direction of very holy people. This direction will be useful for building up the members.
- 11th, a greater good dependent upon a greater number of persons is to be preferred.
- 12th, a more lasting good is to be given preference.
- 13th, a more fruitful good is to be given preference. This fruitfulness, which must be held in great regard, will multiply lasting benefits.

## CHAPTER 7

### The principle prompting the undertaking of pastoral care, and matters to be observed in its regard

605. Although duties of charity concerning our neighbour's spirit are to be undertaken by us more cautiously than those concerning his body, spiritual charity is, as we have said, more excellent than temporal charity. Hence, where a sufficient indication of the divine will has been made known to us, we will give priority to spiritual offices over all others. Amongst spiritual offices the primary place is held by the pastoral care of souls because it exhibits the full and perfect notion of spiritual charity. This care of souls is indeed the greatest of all offices of charity; it encompasses and actualises universal charity. For this reason, it must be considered as the complete perfection and fullness of this Society which, having taken its name and end from well-ordered, actual charity towards our neighbour, is to be adjudged as attaining the height of its perfection only after entering through the gate, that is, through our God and Lord JESUS, the first and only shepherd of souls, to exercise in its turn pastoral charity and zeal. Therefore it is necessary for the Society to understand most carefully that it is not to enter of itself, nor close to itself, the door opened for it by Christ. We must now speak in particular about this supreme concern of the entire Society.

606. The will of our Lord is shown to us in his law which is charity. In order to exercise charity in the right way and in the right order according to his example, as we have said, it is necessary in undertaking external offices of charity 1st, that we should be moved generally speaking *ab extra*, that is, by a tacit or express request of our neighbours; 2nd, that we be moved reasonably. We allow ourselves to be moved reasonably to action when we purpose a greater good by our action without simultaneously impeding that to which we are bound by another tie, or incurring some evil that we should avoid.

607. In undertaking a pastoral duty these two conditions can

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be considered as present when 1st, we are urged by prelates, or with their consent by the people, to undertake pastoral care (E.) not in general, but in some determined charge; and 2nd, the superior whose responsibility it is considers, after the request has been brought to him, that the duties already undertaken, the talents of the member who is to be sent, the internal unity of the Society and external circumstances are such as to lead him to believe in the Lord that an undertaking of this kind would be according to the will of God because it does not appear to be an impediment to greater good, nor a cause of evil or of any offence. Nevertheless, as this matter is of great importance, the superior should first pray, and have others pray, and should hear his council before deciding.

(E.) It is altogether in harmony with our Society for a member to sit for the examinations and tests normally employed by a bishop for secular priests when it has been decided that he should undertake the care of a parish. When this can be done without any infringement of its rights, the Society sincerely wishes its priests to be indistinguishable in this matter from secular priests. An exception is made, however, of matters not *de iure* where the benefice either is or will be subject to the law governing regulars.

**608.** Some works comprised in the care of souls, such as *parishes* and the *episcopate*, can be called quasi-perfect, and first in their order; others, such as curacies, that is, ministries of presbyters assigned to assist parish priests, are imperfect and subsidiary. Curacies are not to be accepted on any account by our intern religious (E.1) unless the parish priest himself belongs to our Society. Where possible, and it appears fitting, our Society will exercise these ministries of charity, but only very rarely through extern coadjutors, and more frequently through sons or ascribed members (E.2).

(E.1) The reason is that this would cause too much harm to the union and freedom of the Society, which is to be safeguarded most vigilantly.

(E.2) The imperfect charge of souls, that is, curacies, are numbered amongst the stable duties of charity which require one person only. For this reason, they can be undertaken on the authority of the diocesan provost, as has been said. Parishes are numbered amongst the stable offices of charity which require

several persons at the same time, and consequently are the responsibility of the Provost General who can, however, delegate suitable persons to accept them. The delegation may be qualified by the addition of greater or lesser restrictions dependent upon distance and other circumstances.

If anyone is called to the episcopate, he will accept the post only from obedience to the Provost General, or his specially appointed representative.

**609.** Only an examination of the possibly innumerable circumstances should direct superiors in this matter. Enlightened through divine illumination, they should set aside human reasoning and affections. Certain general norms must be established, however, which are to be carefully observed by those whose responsibility it is to undertake the care of souls.

**610.** In the first place, therefore, if a person who can and must have reasonable concern in the matter requests one of the brethren for a parochial charge, the superior responsible will, besides other things, observe the following.

If a parochial house, that is a house designated for the exercise of universal charity as distinct from some particular form of charity, has already been established in the parish offered us, the future parish priest is also to be considered appointed as provost of that house. The person sent to take charge of that parish must, therefore, be considered eminently suitable for both the parochial duty, and the government of that house.

**611.** If, therefore, only a general request has been made for one of the brethren without the nomination of any specific person, so that the choice of person for this office depends upon the decision of the superior, he must select for that parish either the present provost of the house, or another person who can take the place of the previous provost (E.) in the house. Likewise, when a particular person is requested for the parish, he is not to be granted unless, while serving as parish priest, he can take the place of the previous provost in that house with evident benefit.

(E.) No one must take it to heart if he is removed from any duty in the Society, even without an obvious cause. This would be contrary to the perfect obedience and complete indifference professed by members of the Society. Superiors should act with

complete freedom in any change they desire to make, provided of course it is in accord with the Constitutions. When they act in this way, they contribute substantially to the preservation of humility and the indifference spoken of.

**612.** All our brethren, even those in enjoyment of a benefice, must be considered movable on account of the vow of obedience by which they have obliged themselves to resign the benefice at an indication from superiors, and have renounced the right which canonical sanctions confer upon benefices for the holders. This obligation must be explained to them anew when they take possession of a benefice, and must be confirmed by them in writing.

**613.** If a parochial charge is undertaken in those parishes where a parochial house of ours is already established, it is of primary importance that our parish priest, who is also the provost, should not be separated from those whom he rules. Hence the parish priest should remain in our house or, if the parochial buildings of that church are more suitable, obtain permission from the prelate before accepting the parish to have the brethren live the common life with him in those buildings (E.).

(E.) It can occur that some great benefit may induce the superior to designate a person to a pastoral charge, in a parish where we have a house, who is not at the same time provost of that house. For example, he may hope to smooth the path to the appointment of a parish priest who will also be provost. However, extern coadjutors are often more suitable for undertaking this kind of parish. Since they live outside our houses, they do not lessen the union of our companionship by becoming parish priests. Parishes administered by extern coadjutors are not numbered amongst the others administered by the Society, but are considered secondary offices as we shall explain later.

**614.** Whether it belongs to the church, or is our own, a house suitable for such a community of members needs to be sufficiently large, and constructed in such a way that the building can be divided into two parts, independent (E.1) except for means of communication, as has been said (492). The first part shall be called the *extern* and *parish house*. Here the parish priest will conduct business with externs, and exercise hospitality in a religious manner (E.2). The second part, for the brethren,

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should be called the *religious house*. The provost should certainly remain here at night, and as much as possible during the day, while the religious devote themselves generously and undistractedly to the contemplation which is their occupation, and exercise charity under obedience to their provost (who is also the parish priest of the faithful).

(E.1) In such a way that they have distinct entrances allowing people to come and go from the first house without disturbing or annoying the brethren in the second.

(E.2) By hospitality is meant that shown especially to extern coadjutors, ascribed members, religious, and secular ecclesiastics who while travelling would have no other place to go except a public hotel. If it is opportune, some help should be given to the spirit of these ecclesiastics along with bodily hospitality, and there should be reading at table. The superior will not receive any women as staying guests in this house.

**615.** If a member is requested as parish priest in a place where we have no so-called parochial house, but only a rectorial house, the superior will have to determine how the parish priest can be established with or without provost's authority at the same rectorial house either without the rector's remaining in the house, or with the rector and his subjects in a separate building. The work of charity to which this house is specifically designated must suffer no damage from these arrangements.

**616.** If there is no house of ours in the parish, the superior should consider whether the parochial buildings at least (E.) are such that a community of ours can be established there, or whether the buildings can be adapted to such a purpose. If the buildings are already suitable, or can easily be adapted, as large a community of our members as possible should be set up there with the permission of the ordinary. The superior whose responsibility it is should be careful to use only mature members in such foundations. The smaller the number he is able to send, the more perfect and capable the members should be.

(E.) The same thing applies if another house is found near the church which is more suitable as a residence for the twofold duty of parish priest and provost of the Society.

**617.** We should not hesitate on account of fear that a community of our members may have to be transferred elsewhere, and

the house deserted, after the parish priest in question ceases to hold his position. This could easily happen, but it is no reason for abandoning a present good. On the contrary, it should lead us to confide wholeheartedly in divine providence. The companions will never lack a roof over their heads, nor work to occupy them, especially if they are what they should be. Let them be content in every place and with every office, and rely faithfully in all things and through all things on divine providence, their loving mother.

**618.** Where great expense is necessary in adapting the house it should be decided whether at least three of our intern priests can live there. If suitable men are available, and other circumstances are favourable, these three priests should be placed there with the good will of the prelate. The first is to be parish priest and the other two his curates in the care of souls. These three members should be really mature religious, offering a solid prospect as future foundations of the new religious house. On such a basis, with the blessing of JESUS our Lord, a perfect house will be able to rise little by little as time passes (E.1). On no condition should the parish be accepted if two of our priests cannot be sent with the parish priest, unless an extern coadjutor can be placed there (E.2) or the work can be entrusted to sons or ascribed members.

(E.1) Our Society can have three kinds of parish houses. The first and perfect kind is that in which a member is both parish priest and a provost of the Society, having with him a suitable grouping of brethren who live a regular life in the *religious* house which communicates immediately (although it is at the same time independent) with the extern, parochial house, used by the superior during the day for parochial and external business.

The second kind is made up of houses in which a member lives both as parish priest and superior of the house, having with him only a few members (at least two priests) whom he employs in his pastoral work, but without communal life amongst brethren living in a religious house separate from the parish house. These houses are considered as a beginning and preparation until an intern house can be added to them and a regular community of religious established. However, these houses appertain to the fourth kind of charity delineated in chapter 4, this Part.



The third kind of parish house is that which holds no hope of developing into a parochial house of the first kind because of the small numbers in the locality, or to which because of circumstances only one or two of our priests can currently be allocated. As long as this situation lasts, these houses are to be administered through extern coadjutors, and are numbered amongst stable offices of charity requiring only individual persons.

(E.2) As far as possible, care should be taken that extern coadjutors preserve amongst themselves a union solidly founded upon affection and devotion towards the house they serve. Hence, on the one hand, the territory where they live is to be examined, and as suitable a place as possible is to be chosen for their dwelling; on the other hand, when they are sent or assigned to a duty they should never be used singly, but in groups of two or three, or even more if possible. It will not be out of place for one of our mature intern priests, perfectly instructed in the nature of our Society and firm in his love for it, to be sent with them so that from him they may learn better the spirit and manner of the life of the entire Society.

619. A parish where a community of our members is placed, or the three above-mentioned are sent, should not be so small and contain so few parishioners that it can never accept suitable priests (E.) nor be converted in time into a perfect and completely regular house of religious observance. Small places, therefore, are to be assisted through sons or ascribed members, or finally through extern coadjutors if the competent superior so decides.

(E.) In small places it is necessary to consider whether a communal life of at least eight or nine priests with four lay-brothers can be established in course of time. Where the number of souls is so small that the house could never, under any conditions nor at any time, accept at least eight priests, no consideration is to be given to the establishment of a parochial house of the Society. The needs of the people are to be met through extern coadjutors or, if opportunity allows, some other house dedicated to a particular work of charity is to be established which may also serve the care of souls. Where several parishes are near one another, they can be of mutual help in the cultivation of religious perfection, and in observing a holy manner of life. It will be better if only one of these small neighbouring parishes is declared a parochial house of the Society. If our members are

parish priests in the other parishes, the Society should not consider them as such, but as coadjutors of the principal parish priest. Parish priests enjoy greater authority if their parishes are larger, and bring forth greater fruit amongst the clergy and the people.

For the rest, any care of souls is to be considered as primary because the Provost General, in establishing it, has declared it such, according to the Constitutions.

**620.** Where there is a sufficient (E.1) number of souls to accept suitable communal life for our priests, and three intern priests are sent to the parish, greater care will be taken to develop the locality for perfect use by the Society. Money will be used for this purpose every year out of surplus income from the parish with the consent of the prelate of the place, until the building is completed (E.2). The length of time needed and the magnitude of the work must not alarm us, but stimulate us to undertake the matter, at the superiors' decision, with all possible constancy and courage. We should consider it an achievement to have done even a little, whatever it may be.

(E.1) The number of priests who can be allocated to a parochial house must be decided according to the number of souls who are their particular concern, not according to the abundance of temporal things, since the brethren, as poor men, must be content with necessities. In the same way, in accepting or rejecting the care of souls no account is to be taken of the benefice attached to it. The greater exercise of charity is to be the only consideration (when the Society has sufficient means to support the members there), and it is from this point of view, with the exercise of complete faith in divine providence, that all other matters are to be regarded.

(E.2) Without detracting, however, from the alms which should be given to the poor of that parish.

**621.** As we have said (617), a work is not to be declined because the house is not our own, but belongs to the church in the place. It should be a sign, as it were, of our Society that it looks to the Church's well-being, not its own. The good it has done for the Church of God it should consider as done for itself. Let it leave all care of itself to divine providence, glad to remain not so much in its own houses as in those of strangers, for an uncertain length of time. In this way, it will never place its

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hope in the fragile riches of this world, and the members will realise that they are strangers and pilgrims on earth. Moreover, our vow of poverty seems, in normal practice, less severe than the vows of many other religious societies. Let us make our own, therefore, at least a stricter observance in our manner of pouring out what is at our disposal, and as it were despoiling ourselves to acquire what materially benefits the Church even if we should perhaps never enjoy it in the future.

**622.** When a new construction is to be erected (E.1) the following system will be used. In the first place, the plan of the new building should be sufficiently commodious and large. Otherwise, our religious life could not be fulfilled perfectly. The plan should be seen and approved by the Provost General so that, as far as possible, houses should conform to a similar pattern, with the assurance that the construction deliberately takes into account solidity, function and religious decency (E.2). If the work is large it should be divided into as many parts as can be completed on their own and finished in separate periods of time. Building should start when there is sufficient money, or certain hope of sufficient money, to complete at least one unit of the construction which, while the others remain undeveloped, will help, not hinder, the house.

(E.1) This is to be understood of any building erected by the Society. Maintenance of the fabric is normally to be left to the local superior, or procurator or administrator. If any house is to be renovated, without enlargement, the diocesan or provincial appointed for this kind of work by the Provost General is to be consulted. Appropriate permission and direction are first to be requested from the Provost General or his chosen substitute if an addition or a new building is in question.

(E.2) This could be more easily achieved if some of the temporal coadjutors study architecture so that the Society may use the help they can give. However, the best architects should be employed wherever they are. Indeed, the best is to be sought in all things without any blind attachment towards our Society, which is not separate from the rest of human beings, but only a part of a greater and more noble Society, that is the human race and the Church.

**623.** The Provost General, who has the responsibility for assigning goods for different works of charity, will on no

account allow many construction projects to be accepted at the same time in such a way that lack of money enforces slow development of them all. He will give permission only for those which can be finished in a short time, and will apply to their rapid completion the goods collected from all sources, if they are free. This will be of great assistance to the universal good of the Church, the obligatory (E.) and sole purpose of each of the brethren. Nevertheless, attention may also be given in all fairness to the particular good when this can be harmonised with the more universal good of the Church. For this purpose, the Provost General can note the source and destination of the money allocated by him for a certain work, and arrange that whenever possible the house or place which has benefited should refund as much as it can to those places which have contributed the money, and retain a grateful memory of what has been done.

(E.) In giving priority for building purposes to one place rather than to another, the Provost General must set aside all his individual desires, and give his attention solely to the greater exercise of charity. To do this more easily, he will hear his council, although he is not bound to accept their opinion in this matter if his own judgment in the Lord is quite different.

Likewise, all the members should remember that they are not citizens of one place but of the whole world and subject to Christ the Lord. They should not take it to heart if the Provost General disposes of their goods, or those which result from their offices, in places other than their own countries or where they live. They must conform themselves to his will in all things if they do not want to fall away from their vows of obedience and poverty. They have promised God and the Society in each of these vows to leave the distribution of their goods to the care of the Superior for the sake of the greater universal good. Acting otherwise would be contrary to the love they should have for the Church of Christ, whose increase and greater prosperity must be the sole purpose of the entire Society, and its Provost.

**624.** If one of our brethren is called to the episcopate (no one, however, can accept the episcopate except from obedience to the Provost General, unless the sovereign Pontiff insists), he is to be considered provost diocesan at the same time and as such will reside either in the episcopal residence or in our *major house* (E.) in the episcopal city.

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(E.) It is called the *major house* by reason of its dignity, not its size. The Provost General will decide in the light of all the circumstances, and especially in view of its nearness to the cathedral church and the episcopal residence, which is to be the major house in each episcopal city.

**625.** Everything we have said about parochial houses is to be applied also to those houses in which one of the brethren is bishop. He must rule simultaneously his diocese and the Society, and will have two contiguous, or at least communicating houses, an extern episcopal house and an intern, religious house.

**626.** The responsibility of the diocesan provost in regard to the Society does not concern the individual members in the same way as the responsibility of the parochial provost. Hence it does not appear as necessary for the diocesan superior to live in the same house with an entire community of members as it does for the parochial superior, although it is desirable and must be done wherever possible. The Provost General, therefore, with circumspection, and if he judges it very beneficial, can permit one of the brethren called to the episcopate, who would also be superior of the Society in his diocese or province, to dwell outside a community of the brethren. However, he must give the bishop several mature men with whom he can live in the episcopal residence, according to the Constitutions and our manner of life, and at the same time rule the Society in his entire diocese or province according to the Constitutions and the rulings of superiors. The bishop should be aware of his responsibility towards the Society, giving it his attention as far as possible, and especially arranging whatever is necessary and within his possibilities so that the bishop's house and the house of the Society are united, as has been said (E.).

(E.) It may not be suitable for one of the brethren to be diocesan superior even though he could fittingly accept the bishopric offered him. In this case, the Superior General can dispense him from government in the Society and give him an obedience to accept the bishopric offered (unless the sovereign Pontiff obliges him to accept the episcopate).

**627.** The principle which distinguishes the chief grades of superiorship in our Society is sufficiently clear from what has

been explained: the Church's distribution of powers should be imitated in all things. As the Society founded by JESUS Christ, the Church possesses a structure regulated in accordance with the greatest wisdom. Care should be taken, therefore, that the powers of the Church, when undertaken by our brethren for a motive of charity in the order and manner outlined, should run parallel and harmonise in the same person with co-relative powers (E.) in the Society. In this way, this least of Societies will be able to render better and more consonant service for the honour and glory of our Lord JESUS, and his beloved Spouse, the Church, whom he won for himself with his blood.

(E.) This is to be inviolably held with regard to the more absolute offices in the Church, that is, of bishops and parish priests, as constituting the very essence of our Society. With regard to other offices, ecclesiastical discipline is to be followed as far as possible in the distribution of superiorships in the Society, and is to be taken as a model by the Provost General. Nevertheless, a grave reason could sometimes move the head of this Society to deviate according to circumstances from imitating the structure of the Church in lesser offices. Consequently, the General does not always have to consider it necessary for provost provincials, who correspond in the Society to metropolitan bishops, to be established in the same place as metropolitans. It would be better, in fact, if their residence corresponded to a seat of civil government. Moreover, not more than twelve diocesans should be subject to the same provincial.

## CHAPTER 8

### The preservation of diversity between powers of the Church and of the Society when they are combined in one person

**628.** When one of our members accepts a parochial or episcopal charge as a result of obedience, and simultaneously undertakes the care of souls as a pastor of the Church and government of the Society as a parochial or diocesan provost, he combines in himself the two powers of the Church and the Society. In this case, care must be taken not to confuse the attributes of the two powers. The ecclesiastical dignity is not to hinder the religious power, nor is the religious power to be extended in the least into the sphere of the ecclesiastical dignity. To avoid this danger more easily, some rules are set down here which will serve to define precisely the limits of each jurisdiction.

**629.** When one of our members is made parish priest or bishop he possesses all the rights held by other parish priests and bishops just as he shares with them all the offices which constitute responsibility for the flock confided to them. All matters come under his authority, therefore, which he considers in conscience before God and our Lord JESUS, the supreme Shepherd, as beneficial to the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, and which he judges in the same Lord form part of the concern felt by a good shepherd so that, if he neglects them, he has to render an account to him who sends him. He does not depend upon the Society in any way with regard to these matters, but upon his own conscience, upon God, and upon God's supreme Vicar on earth.

**630.** Nevertheless, the good pastor makes use of good advice in ruling his flock in the way of salvation, and the religious, in subjecting himself to the obedience of the Society, has acknowledged the Society itself as a prudent mother. For this reason it does not seem fitting for the religious even after being made parish priest or bishop, or accepting some other prelature in the Church, to refuse to listen to the advice of superiors of the Society in matters pertaining to his pastoral duty.

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**631.** Hence, all coadjutors of the Society, after their profession, also promise God that at all times they will listen to advice of superiors whom they, as religious, revere in the Society if, in obedience to superiors and in the order prescribed in the Society, they accept any parochial charge, or any prelature in the Church. They also promise to follow the same advice willingly, as has been said (452), if they feel that its outcome would be better. They do this not because they are obliged by obedience, but because they wish of their own accord, in the sight of God to be obliged to do what they know is better for the honour of God, and because they are glad there is someone who has proposed it to them with charity and Christian freedom for the glory of God and our Lord JESUS.

**632.** The persons present in the parochial house, or major house, or distributed outside these houses within the limits of the parish or the diocese, have been given to him by the Society to be governed. It is fitting and necessary, therefore, that he should govern them according to the Constitutions of the Society and the regulations which the major provosts of the same Society will give him. In all things which concern the Society, he will be subject to the Society as are the others who occupy the same place in the Society. He promises this again tacitly when he accepts the government in question.

**633.** It follows he cannot change persons who have been assigned to certain kinds of charity by major provosts, or any matters established by the major provosts, without authority from them.

**634.** If he is a parish priest he can only accept, as parochial provost, the first two of the four kinds of charity enumerated in this Part, chapter 4. This rule is common to all parochial provosts.

**635.** If he is a bishop, he cannot as diocesan provost undertake the fourth kind of charity, but the first three only. He must leave to the authority of the Provost General new houses and any institutes whatsoever belonging to the Society in which several persons, or even one, perpetually however, are employed.

**636.** Finally, the Provost General can dispose of certain goods

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in the diocese for a more universal good with the same liberty as if the bishop were not one of the brethren. These goods are for the Society's use in the diocese, whether they come from members' external dominion, or from works of charity done by them, or from any other title whatsoever. In the same way, he can choose someone to rule the Society in the same diocese as substitute for the provost, either on account of the provost's old age, or for some other reason. In a parish also, where the parish priest is parochial provost, he can nominate a vice-provost to govern the Society. He can also create other provosts, if necessary, after removing the former provosts from their office altogether.

**637.** A provost who is also a pastor of the Church will record his instructions and other matters in his diary, and will observe whatever has been prescribed for individual superiors.

**638.** On the one hand, care must be taken that neither of the two powers mentioned suffers damage from their union; on the other hand, provision is to be made for the realisation of the mutual assistance we had in mind when establishing such a connection, which we hope will be of great utility to the Church.

**639.** As long as our Society remains in the private and hidden state it has chosen for itself, it does not presume to exercise offices of charity without being urged towards them by the tacit or express requests of our neighbour. It acts in a contrary sense when it enters a public and pastoral state.

**640.** The pastor, who has accepted responsibility from God for the flock of the Lord, is bound by his office to exercise universal charity towards it. Hence he must not wait for others to request the spiritual good of his sheep. He must himself enquire about all things with active charity, and look after everything to the limits of his knowledge and capacity. The Society, therefore, begins to be active through pastoral responsibility, and when it receives its mission from God operates spontaneously in helping our neighbour. The parish priest, therefore, can use the persons from the Society entrusted to him for the exercise of universal charity towards his flock provided that he does so within the limits laid down for him by the Constitutions and the instructions of superiors, and plays the part of a good governor and father of the Society.

**641.** A bishop is under greater obligation with regard to what he can and must do in this matter because his influence and power extend further. As bishop, he can ask help for his neighbour from the Society; as diocesan provost, he can satisfy the same requests according to the authority given and defined for him by the Constitutions and his superiors.

**642.** A prelate of this kind must remember, however, that as pastor he possesses greater and, I may say, final authority. The authority of a provost of the Society, and the entire Society itself, is ancillary and subsidiary with regard to the Church. On the one hand, therefore, he must not harm the maidservant by rendering her incapable of serving; on the other hand, he is bound to take care never to injure the justice he owes to the Church, his bride and lady, from inordinate affection for the servant, that is, the Society.

**643.** Hence, this religious of our Society, especially if a bishop, should consider all his priests, secular and religious, as equal co-operators in cultivating the same field of the Lord, and include them all without distinction in his fatherly love in the Lord. He should take extreme care in ministries and duties of charity never to prefer unjustly priests from the Society to seculars, especially if benefices are attached to the work. In this matter of distributive justice he should be careful to arrange for outsiders, that is, people outside the Society, to determine the matter if he is in doubt about any question of greater merit or suitability which may arise in the case of a member and a secular priest. Indeed, if he has two priests, one belonging to the Society, the other a secular, who seem equally suitable for a post, let him know that he acts contrary to the spirit and laws of this Society if he prefers the priest of our Society to the secular (E.). If he understands correctly the nature of the Society, he will consider the brethren as auxiliaries only, and will use them only when others are lacking, and only in those duties for which others do not normally offer their services easily. For the entire Society tends to be of service to the Church of God wherever the Church suffers from a deficiency of workers, not where it has other equally suitable labourers. Our Society would be lying if it wished to labour in this latter case, because it declares that it chooses for itself, and loves more, the hidden and

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contemplative state. Moreover, the preservation of secular priests is of great importance to the Church, and their development is a matter of obligation. Harm would certainly be done to their growth if we were unjust towards those to whom we are bound to be generous.

(E.) Other reasons for this Constitution are as follows.

1st, it is consistent with a love of equity. The Society in judging one of its members judges in its own cause. Hence, a delicate and modest sincerity requires that, other things being equal, it should prefer an extern priest to one of its own members.

2nd, it is a maxim of humility to be inclined to consider that others can fulfil duties and ministries more perfectly than ourselves, unless there is some obvious reason to the contrary.

3rd, this Constitution harmonises with the special genius of our way of life which intends to cultivate both secular and regular clergy, embracing extern priests with love as though they were her own members, and honouring them as masters and fathers.

4th, it helps to obtain better results. A member in our way of life must be prepared for everything because of the indifference he has promised. Consequently, he can be deployed for other good purposes. This is not always the case with a person outside the Society who cannot always be directed to what is preferable.

5th, finally, this too is an exercise of charity and kindness.

**644.** A bishop, and in his lesser sphere a parish priest, and anyone who holds a prelacy simultaneously in the Church and the Society, must in all things maintain the same distributive justice, equity and indeed generosity, and keep all his affections directed towards the Church of God alone. This is the compendium of the entire spirit by which the Society must be actuated.

**645.** Matters pertaining to the assumption of any grade or dignity in the Church, and its connection with a corresponding superiorship, if there is one, in the Society, can easily be deduced from what we have said about the parochial and episcopal ministries. Wherever a new case of this connection occurs, it is the Superior General's responsibility to deduce the special regulations for the case from the Constitutions and their

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spirit. After their approbation by the supreme council of the Society, these rules and norms will be communicated to each of those in whom the connection we have mentioned takes place.

## CHAPTER 9

### Relinquishing offices of charity already undertaken

646. If those obliged to rule this Society have understood its spirit and nature, they will be insistent more upon the sanctification of all, and on increasing the number of skilled workers applied to works already accepted than on desiring to spread it. They will consider as well-done and beneficial to the Church of God which the Society serves, and to the Society itself, work which they are not compelled to abandon after beginning it, but which is brought to completion, as far as it is in our power, for the glory of God and our Lord and to the satisfaction and edification of all. Their resolution to follow only the will of God, not their own views, and to relinquish human affections, should make them weigh more earnestly the importance of this truth. In this way, they will seek and desire neither the increase nor even the preservation of the Society for its own sake, but only after and in so far as they know it to be in harmony with the divine will which, with so many means available (and they are infinite), has chosen to use this one for some good for a period of time unknown to us. The things put before us to be carried out must be judged to accord with the divine will if they are just in every respect and completely according to order, and moreover calm and satisfying, even though somewhat difficult; and if they are put before us not by human rashness, but under the influence of an interior holy light, by the evidence of the divine law, according to all the accompanying circumstances, and by their capacity for moving us reasonably.

647. Superiors should not desire to admire with the eyes of the flesh the external extension of the Society, but to behold its glory from within through the eyes of the spirit. In undertaking ministries of charity therefore, superiors will employ whatever forethought and consideration is necessary to prevent the abandonment of uncompleted works through imprudence which leads them to presume upon their own and the Society's strength, and to calculate their resources wrongly. Such action merits the mockery (E.) of men, expressed in the

words: “This man began to build, and was not able to finish” (Lk 14: [30]).

(E.) When we take up a work through divine, not human prudence, this mockery is to be tolerated, and sought rather than feared. We must certainly be on our guard, while desiring to avoid one vice, not to fall into a contrary vice, and we should be careful not to abstain from good works through cowardice which takes the place of true prudence.

There are also cases in which we must not seek the security occasioned by being well thought of. Great care is to be taken to trust in God, not in our own foresight. We are simply admonished to avoid inconsiderateness and rashness in undertaking works courageously, and we may risk derision provided we have simple confidence in God and do not offer malicious people opportunities of rightly mocking us to the prejudice of religion and charity.

**648.** We hope that in this matter superiors will go forward with the utmost diligence and spiritual wisdom. Nevertheless, besides imprudence in undertaking works there may be other external causes, not the fault of the brethren, for relinquishing offices of charity. We shall now speak, therefore, about the manner in which we must act when it appears that some office of charity undertaken by us is to be relinquished for any cause whatsoever.

**649.** In the first place, burdensome offices and ministries, that is, those importing a strict, legal obligation towards distinguished men or towards civil government, should be noted. These works are to be undertaken with the greatest caution, and relinquished very easily. It is characteristic of the Institute that it exercises good works towards its neighbours freely and of its own accord, according to its capacities. It is to be desired, therefore, that the Society submit minimally to the kind of works mentioned above, and that superiors free it from them quickly if they see that they burden it.

**650.** Superiors should persevere with great constancy in duties willingly accepted and exercised. If these duties are to be relinquished, superiors will observe what follows.

**651.** There is no need to spend time explaining how the first two kinds of charity enumerated in this Part, chapter 4, are to

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be relinquished since they are not permanent. Their relinquishment is left to the prudence of superiors whose responsibility it is to undertake them.

652. In the same way, the prudence of the diocesan superior will decide when necessary, after consultation with the General, if a work of the third kind can fittingly be relinquished, and if the individual persons stably assigned to works of this nature may be transferred to other occupations without offence or scandal to our neighbour.

653. Much greater consideration is demanded for relinquishing services of the fourth kind, that is, those which are perpetual or require several persons working together. After they have been undertaken, works of this nature can only be relinquished for some grave and obvious reason. Hence the Provost General cannot abandon them (if they are voluntary) unless he has the votes of two of the four men who assist him, together with his own.

654. With regard to subjects, all should be ready to leave any ministry whatsoever, and undertake a new one, without excuse or delay, when obedience prescribes (535). Those especially who act as confessors to important persons, or fulfil other duties of charity towards them, should keep themselves so disposed that superiors, in judging their transfer necessary, may find all things ready.

655. When it is only the spirit of our Father which is present 'to direct our hearts to the love of God and the steadfastness of Christ' (2 Th 3: [5]) as we undertake and exercise duties of charity, and also as we relinquish and abandon them, all these matters will have a happy conclusion, for the benefit of our own and our neighbour's spirit.





**Part Nine**

**THE SELECTION AND PREPARATION  
OF THOSE ASSIGNED TO THE VARIOUS  
WORKS OF CHARITY: THE DIRECTION  
OF THESE WORKS**

## CHAPTER 1

### The members to be chosen for different works of charity

656. Some of the Society's duties can be called *primary*, others *secondary*. *Provosts'* offices are said to be primary, whether the provosts are in charge of parochial houses, or are diocesan, provincial or general provosts. Secondary duties are all others which concern internal charity towards the members, or external charity towards our neighbours.

657. Provosts (E.1), their spiritual vicars, masters of novices, of scholastics and probationers, and the instructor in the third probation must be chosen from the presbyters of the Society especially noted for their religious virtue, discretion, charity, knowledge of the Constitutions, and love and zeal for the Church of God (E.2).

(E.1) Superiors of houses dedicated to special, not general, charity, are called *rectors*; those who preside over houses dedicated to general charity are called *provosts*.

(E.2) Spiritual vicars can in due time be promoted to provostships.

658. Special attention is needed in choosing presbyters for the care of souls when this position is united with that of government in the Society. Their humility and obedience must be such that there is no fear of even the least harm to religious subjection and the good order of the entire Society from their accession to external authority and power; they should be wholeheartedly devoted to our way of life; and they should be acquainted with everything prescribed about obedience in the Constitutions for those undertaking the care of souls, and promise orally and in writing to observe it (E.).

(E.) They will declare that they have clearly understood their vow of obedience to entail the obligation of renouncing any benefice they may possess at a sign from the superior. They will write their declarations and promises in a book to be kept by the provost diocesan or General to whom they are immediately subject.

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659. Other offices and duties of charity which we call *secondary* in relationship to the provostships mentioned, although they can be of great importance and, because of their extent (E.) a source of more universal good than the provostships, can be exercised by the Society through wise choice and training of *coadjutors* for the individual works.

(E.) These *particular* offices of charity will normally be subject to the parochial provost where the work is established, if they are exercised within the limits of the parish. If such an establishment extends to the whole of a diocese, it will be the responsibility of the diocesan provost and the rectors. If it embraces several dioceses, it will depend only upon the provincial and the rectors subject to him. If it exists as one body, with suitable strong internal ties, capable of helping our neighbour through many provinces, it will be independent of other provosts and have only the General as its superior, together with the rectors, in due order, chosen by him. The same order will be observed with regard to prefects of the ascribed, and directors of sodalities. Prefects, however, can be subjected to rectors, and directors to prefects.

660. If a coadjutor is requested for a parochial or episcopal charge in the manner prescribed in the Constitutions, and the Provost General considers it the will of God that he should undertake such a burden, let him become parish priest or bishop. In this case, another person who is a presbyter of the Society should remain as provost (E.).

(E.) In some cases it would be of great benefit if such a member attained a provostship in the Society when receiving the ecclesiastical dignity. In order that the power for such an eventuality may be available, we determine that the General may dispense provided that the five men all agree. Without their favourable opinion, the provost is forbidden to list among the presbyters of the Society the person requested for the care of souls. With the consent of these five men, therefore, the Provost General will first declare the coadjutor a *presbyter of the Society*, and as such he will take the fourth vow. He will then be both a pastor of the Church, and a provost of the Society.

The supreme council of the Society will, however, proceed carefully in giving the dispensation which permits a coadjutor to become a *presbyter* in such an eventuality and accept a pastoral charge together with a provostship in the Society. The

dispensation should be made only in very rare cases, especially if an extern coadjutor is in question. A special example would be that of a noteworthy person who has become an *extern*, rather than an *intern* coadjutor through exterior circumstances, not on account of the meagreness of his virtue. He should be familiar with the Constitutions of the Society and their genuine character.

**661.** Generally speaking, a provost must be at least thirty-four years of age. The General can sometimes dispense from this age-limit in the case of men who have received special gifts from the Lord. 'For old age is not honoured for length of time nor measured by number of years' (Wis 4: [8]). Great leaders have flourished in the Church of God, achieving outstanding results in their youth for the honour of God and the increase of the Church.

**662.** The Provost General cannot grant the request if one of the brethren is sought for a perfect pastoral charge before his thirty-fourth year. A dispensation from age may seem appropriate on account of special gifts given by God to the person requested, and other circumstances. However, this dispensation will not be in the power of the Provost General alone, but will depend upon the council of five men of whom at least three must be of the opinion (E.) that he could also accept a provostship in the Society.

(E.) However, the Superior General could appoint a vice-provost to govern the Society independently until the person chosen for pastoral office attains the prescribed age and becomes a provost.

If it appears expedient for a member to take up a pastoral charge before the lawful age without his being given a post of government in the Society, it will not be necessary to give him the position when he attains the right age unless the Provost General really considers this beneficial and safe.

A person having a pastoral charge without a provostship is numbered by the Society amongst those who take up from obedience *secondary*, not *primary* offices.

**663.** Presbyters of the Society can be applied to any secondary duties as well as to primary duties, although the former will be more suitable in so far as they are more general. Examples of these more general posts are: those concerned with spiritual

affairs, or even intellectual or temporal matters provided they pertain to general government such as the offices of temporal vicars, procurators or administrators (E.1); or those which imply direction on a large scale, such as that undertaken by rectors of a single kind of charity, either in one house or in a wider sphere. Some of these offices will also serve as preparatory posts in which to gain practical experience and greater insight into the character of the Society. These presbyters can be transferred later to a completely general charity directed by provosts (E.2).

(E.1) Superiors who have carried out their duties well, or persons who are later to become rectors, can be chosen as procurators and administrators.

(E.2) If a rectorate, or the direction of a particular kind of charity, is such as to require the whole man, rectors should not easily be removed from that office, but left in it to acquire perfection.

664. Likewise study, all branches of knowledge, and writing useful books are suitable pursuits for presbyters of the Society. Since they are destined for more general government in the Society, their knowledge must be more extensive, according to the saying of the Wise Man: 'The man of understanding may acquire skill' (Prov 1: [5]). This must be especially true in governing a Society which rejects no kind of good that it is capable of offering human beings. More general studies, such as philosophy, theology and *summae*, or the foundations of all learning, are the most suitable for presbyters of the Society; particular sciences, especially the natural sciences, which each engage the whole person if it is to be known in any depth, are generally speaking to be left to the spiritual and temporal coadjutors.

665. Those who have completed a regular course of studies, and are again applied to studies for further progress after their profession as presbyters of the Society, together form the college or academy of doctors of the Society (E.) during the period of those further studies. This academy can be consulted about branches of knowledge or practical matters whenever Superiors think necessary. The college, or the doctors consulted, will endeavour to give careful and fully considered replies (E.).

(E.) In this way, the presbyters of the Society are divided into three classes. 1st, those who are provosts of the Society

whether they are pastors or not; 2nd, those assigned to other offices and secondary duties, either permanently or as a step towards provostships in the Society; 3rd, those who give their whole attention to study, either helping the Church perseveringly by furthering knowledge and writing books, or as a preparation for other ministries to which the Superior General will assign them at a suitable time as he sees fit in the Lord.

This academy will have its centre at some large college of the Society, or in the individual provinces at another house suitable for scientific studies.

**666.** Intern and extern coadjutors, sons and ascribed members who have attained great eminence in some branch of knowledge (they will be few, therefore) can be enrolled *honoris causa*, and for the sake of mutual love, in this college of doctors of the Society by the Provost General. As a second section of the college, they will be called the *additional college* (E.).

(E.) It is more suitable for the reader in theology, a necessary appointment at the major house, to be one of the *presbyters*. Nevertheless, he may be chosen without incongruity from the *additional college* of doctors. But he can never be taken from the other coadjutors.

**667.** Every provost must have a *vicar of temporal charity* as his assistant. This man, who must be at least a formed intern coadjutor and a deacon, will render all honour and reverence to the provost. Moreover, he should be intelligent, trustworthy, diligent, capable in practical affairs, and able to keep perfectly intelligible accounts.

**668.** Offices which require only one person living outside our houses are normally to be assigned to *extern coadjutors*, and as far as possible to be exercised also through *sons* and ascribed members. However, it is not in the least contrary to the character of the Society if it is considered that one of the interns should be allocated a temporary (E.) position outside the houses for just reasons of charity.

(E.) If a person has not lived during the previous three years at least one morally continuous year in any house of ours to which at least seven priests in addition to the superior are assigned, he cannot be made rector or provost without having first spent one year in such a religious family.

669. The external offices to which members may be assigned are almost innumerable, and each requires different qualities according to various circumstances. This renders it impossible for us to lay down sufficient rules (E.) to determine the gifts and capacities required by the members for these offices. However, we would admonish superiors responsible for undertaking offices of charity and assigning persons to them to consider these matters with complete purity of intention so as to seek only God's honour in the work, and to commend themselves to God. According to the importance of the work, they should have prayers said and Masses offered, and finally they should use intense meditation about the matter. In this way, the supreme providence of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit will lead them to better things and, if we may use the words of the Apostle, 'they will be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.' In their turn, the members, directed by them will walk 'fully pleasing to God, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God' (Col 1: [9–10]).

(E.) Generally speaking we can state the following.

First, in more serious matters where it is important not to err (in so far as this lies, with the help of divine grace, within the possibilities of the person concerned), more carefully chosen and trustworthy persons must be sent.

Healthier and stronger persons should be employed for works where greater bodily exertion is required.

If spiritual dangers are present, safer and more tested persons are needed.

In dealing with prudent persons who hold offices of spiritual or temporal government, those appear more suitable who have a gift for discretion and ease in conversation, combined with an outwardly authoritative appearance (provided interior dispositions are not lacking). Their advice could be of great importance.

Those with a special gift of intelligence and a bent for literature harmonise better with literary persons of quick and subtle mind. They can help more adequately by lectures and in conversation.

Persons with a gift for preaching and hearing confessions are usually more suitable for helping the people.

Finally, effective remedies should be employed in removing

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defects. For example, it is not sufficient to send a person who behaves badly in one house to another before he is reformed. The axe is to be laid to the root before such a person is re-assigned to a duty in which he has been remiss.



## CHAPTER 2

### The means by which members can be known more intimately

670. Generally speaking, the careful provision that superiors of the Society should make for the members depends upon their perfect knowledge of the brethren. This is especially true when members have to be chosen and selected prudently for different works of charity. Superiors, therefore, will use great care and effort in acquiring more intimate knowledge of their subjects. They should remember that all their knowledge of subjects' interior dispositions is for the most part purely conjectural. Consequently, they should always be wary of falling into temerarious judgments which sin against truth, since they do not distinguish between what is *certain* and what is *probable*, and bring about their own judgment, according to the words: 'Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back' (Lk 6: [37–38]). They will certainly be on their guard if they are led by *pure charity* in their enquiry into the spirit and dispositions of the members, rejecting themselves and that hatred, whose original seed is in us, which JESUS has come to destroy and about which he speaks in the passage quoted. The knowledge they have in simplicity of others will be beneficial if they suspend their assent and make prudent conjecture their rule, in accordance with the words: 'Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves' (Mt 10: [16]).

671. They have many aids for knowing their members during the first probation, the novitiate, the period of studies, the third probation, the exercise of the ministry (E.) and through constant contact in daily life.

(E.) Masters of novices, teachers, instructors and all superiors will possess a catalogue of their subjects in which they will note in order all their qualities, and their special dispositions, and allot each member notes and a grade according to merit. They will keep this book altogether secret from all subjects and externs.

**672.** To a large extent the greater honour of God and assistance to our neighbour depends upon the superiors' perfect knowledge of the members' dispositions. For this reason those who are truly members of charity, and realise that they must desire the best provision for the Society, ought to wish that the superior know everything about themselves and the brethren. Hence if they truly will what is good, they are bound by their vocation to co-operate in the common good, as far as they can, by giving their superior, with candour and charity, all the information about themselves (E.1) and the brethren that the superior could desire, and which they believe will be useful for them. Each one must do this not only for himself with complete simplicity of truth, but he must also want others to do the same in his regard. All must purpose unanimously the same end of charity and divine honour, and not be distressed if anyone speaks to the superior about them. On the contrary, they should be grateful to him and manifest their gratitude (E.2). If they are tempted to doubt the good intention of the brother who speaks about them, they should strongly repulse this thought, considering simply that good has been done, and resting content with the same in the Lord.

(E.1) A member makes disclosure of conscience to a superior so that the latter may use such knowledge, with the member's consent, to rule him with greater profit and consolation of spirit, and to adapt proportioned and fitting burdens to each individual. The superior, however, must never manifest any part of his knowledge of another's conscience in any way, and should keep everything heard in the disclosure under the greatest secrecy.

(E.2) Each one must refer to his immediate superior whatever has to be disclosed. Nevertheless, he can also refer it to any higher superior for a reasonable cause. If the higher superior perceives no just cause for doing this, he will send the informant back to the immediate superior unless prudence dictates otherwise.

**673.** Superiors can also learn to know the hearts and minds of the brethren in their assemblies and free conversations, especially during recreation after dinner and supper when it will help to discuss matters relating to works of charity if prudence permits this. The provost can question them during this period,

calling individuals to himself (if he is not present at the common recreation (E.)) and listening to what they have to say about the state of works assigned them; he can also ask their opinion and advice about these works (they will give it with modesty and simplicity); finally, he can comfort all of them so that they may go forward readily together to the honour of God. This should all be done in a friendly way, and mixed with conversation about other topics to prevent what should be pleasant and beneficial recreation from becoming tedious.

(E.) The rector must be present at common recreation if possible; the provost is free to attend, or send his vicar as substitute.

674. By these and similar means superiors will be able to keep in view the characters and endowment of members with whom they are in daily contact. Those with whom they are not directly in touch shall be mentioned frequently in letters from persons who do have contact with them. Major superiors, therefore, will be informed of all matters connected with the members and the outcome of their work by the prompt correspondence of minor superiors.

675. Besides this free and frequent correspondence (...), all the parochial provosts will send to the diocesan provost, in the manner and at the time prescribed, an annual report on all the works and persons of the Society for whom they are responsible. In order to do this at the appropriate time, they will receive the necessary information promptly from rectors about their own subjects, from prefects about extern coadjutors, sons and ascribed members, from directors about sodalities, from commissioned members (E.), and from others by whom they expect to be informed best about the truth of matters. With their consultors, they will examine and sift the information received, forwarding it, with proofs if necessary. Local rectors not subject to parochial provosts will send the same reports to their own superiors.

(E.) An individual member applied to a transitory work of charity, or a member totally responsible for this kind of work, but having co-operators subordinate to him in the work, is normally called a *commissioned member*.

676. Diocesan provosts will send these reports, received from

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their superiors, to the provincials with their own additions, and the provincials to the General. In the same way, superiors not dependent upon provosts will send annual reports to the General through their intermediate superiors. These reports will contain 1st, noteworthy information about each person; 2nd, their assignments (577 E.); 3rd, any defects they may have found, untoward occurrences whether the fault of the brethren or not, difficulties, dangers, improvements in works of charity, whether these improvements have been or are to be used or are simply proposed as requiring advice and help from superiors; 4th, the state of temporal affairs; 5th, what has been done, what remains to be done, or what is to be accepted.

(E.) Separate reports are to be sent about novices, probationers and proficient scholastics in the manner and at the time indicated (158, 242–249, 294, 303, 378, 386, 391, 432).

**677.** Diocesan provosts (and other superiors, whatever their title, in charge of several houses or residences within the boundaries of a single diocese or district) will annually visit in person the houses of the Society subject to them, and receive the disclosures of conscience of the brethren. If they are prevented by grave reasons from visiting all the places in their diocese, they will confer with their consultors on the matter, and substitute some other person (E.) for the houses they cannot visit. The person chosen will be selected from many perfectly acquainted with the Society, and will report about all matters to the superiors. However, they should take special care to visit personally and thoroughly the houses of probation and the seminaries for scholastics. After the visitation (during which they will correct by word and decree the defects they find; instruct and form superiors; insist on and require urgently the execution of what has been established; unite all hearts with the bond of Christ; learn about all things, and provide for every eventuality), they will send their report to the Provost General through the intermediate provincial, who must take care that these visitations are not omitted. For this reason the diocesan provost will visit the foundations in his diocese whenever he thinks fit, and send a visitor in his place to an individual house, or to all the houses.

(E.) In the report he will set out the reasons which prevented

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him from fulfilling in person the duty of visitation, and the votes of the consultors.

678. The provincial superior, whether he has the title of provost, rector or some other name, will moreover visit every three years all the diocesan provosts subject to him, their houses, and other houses under his authority, if it is necessary for him to inspect matters for himself, and report to the Superior General. During the visitation he will use the services of several mature men, distinguished for their knowledge of the purest end of the Society (E.).

(E.) In the visitations the diocesan provosts will acquire information from the more noteworthy and older fathers about persons to be promoted to another grade, as has been said (433 E.1), and about those suitable for government. Every third year they will send a catalogue of this information to the Provost General.

This catalogue, composed of those considered suitable for governing, must be divided into three classes: the first class is composed of those currently governing; the second of those who have governed, with a note about the cause if they have been found unsuitable; and the third of those who have not yet governed.

The provincials will add annotations to this catalogue.

The headings for information about those suitable for governing will be as follows.

1st, *Age*. The name of the parents, and the age of the person about whom information is being sent; his length of time in the Society, his studies and his progress in them;

2nd, *Previous government*. Has he ever governed? If so, where and for how long? In what offices? To the satisfaction of the brethren and others?

3rd, *Affection for spiritual things*. What affection has he for spiritual things, for prayer and for other communication with the Lord?

4th, *Mortification of passions*.

Concerns the mortification of passions, meekness, humility, love of poverty or selfishness about his own comforts.

Concerns watchfulness, prudence and fortitude in carrying out business.

Concerns charity and kindness towards subjects, and discretion.

Concerns religious obedience and observance, uprightness and constancy.

5th, *Understanding of the Constitutions*. Does he understand our Constitutions and Rules, and endeavour to direct subjects towards perfection by their spirit without human respect and manoeuvring? Has he his own peculiar ideas out of harmony with the feeling of the Society?

6th, *Attitude towards foreign nations*. What is his attitude towards foreign nations and regions? Does he harbour particular affection towards particular persons in such a way as to indicate possible offence towards others if he were to govern?

7th, *Zeal for souls*. Concerns zeal for souls, desire to help our neighbour, and endeavour to promote this amongst the brethren; concerns obedience and subordination to his own superiors, and his own judgment in works of charity.

8th, *Ambition*. Has he ever been known to desire or procure a position of government?

9th, *Secular business*. Has he been known to mix in secular affairs, either that of relatives or others, with a secular spirit? If anyone is found guilty in this matter, or that of the preceding heading (which God forbid), he is to be punished and removed from government.

10th, *Finally*, is there anything else which seems to point to his greater or lesser suitability for government?

679. In the same way the Superior General will visit any part of the Society, either personally or through others, whenever he thinks it expedient.

680. If it appears necessary, the diocesan provincial or general superior can call to themselves one or more of their subjects in the Society for the sake of trustworthy information. They cannot, however, bring a congregation together without authority from the Provost General.

### CHAPTER 3

#### The significance to be attached to natural inclination in assigning works of charity; the sphere of activity

681. The members of the Institute of Charity must possess constant and firm souls, equally ready for the good things and bad things of this world where we are away from God; for honour and contempt; for want or abundance; for good health or infirmity; for death or life; and consequently be indifferent also to any kinds of charity, whether they harmonise with natural inclinations, habits and opinions, or contradict them; in one matter only lacking indifference, that is, in pleasing God in penance and love through humility, self-abnegation and obedience. With this attitude of soul they will maintain for their whole life, by divine grace, what they promised at their entrance to the Society, and learnt and exercised during the probations. Such a manner of life indicates their unwillingness to receive any rewards from the world, but they will receive one, pressed down and flowing over, from him who in admonishing us said not only 'he who begins' but 'he who endures to the end will be saved' (Mt 24: [13]).

682. With regard to that indifference which all members have promised, and which they have professed as their way of life, superiors, in distributing the ministries of charity, ought to be able to abstract from inclinations and divide the ministries amongst the individuals simply in so far as the greater honour of God seems to require for the widest assistance of our neighbours. Any distribution of offices made in this way ought to be completely in harmony with the will of the members who have founded all their own will upon single obedience to their superiors. Moreover, if superiors command what is opposed to the natural propensities of individuals, they give these members an opportunity for greater self-abnegation.

683. Nevertheless, superiors will investigate the inclinations of each of the members, and make use of them in the service of God and our neighbour. Natural propensities are normally signs of the talents with which we have to trade, and man's

greatest efforts can only be made where nature impels and leads him. Hence, when different works of charity promise equal fruits, what divine providence offers must not be neglected on the one hand, while on the other members who are moved by their special propensity towards certain works should be adapted to them (E.). Natural inclinations, like other circumstances independent of us, must be accepted as indications and signs of divine providence. However, where works of charity offered for our exercise cannot be distributed in harmony with natural inclinations, we must recognise a further sign of the will of divine providence which now requires from us the mortification of our own inclinations. In this case, superiors should not hesitate to contradict firmly their own inclinations and those of the members. This is an obvious case in which inclinations must be opposed, and the cross taken up not because we seek it for ourselves, or impose it arbitrarily on others, but because God gives it to us, and it is in truth our very own, according to the word of Christ: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up *his* cross and follow me' (Mt 16: [24]).

(E.) Natural inclination differs from the will, and the superior should pay attention to the former, not to the desires of the latter. If members will anything, they must take care to put this desire aside, and be mortified with regard to it. If, however, without willing anything, they are inclined to something by nature alone, there is no evil to be mortified in them. On the contrary, the involuntary instinct is to be seconded as far as possible, with divine providence as guide.

**684.** Such opposition to natural inclinations is very useful for subduing and checking our own will which easily harms our religious indifference by its decrees if propensities are constantly permitted to gain the upper hand without sometimes being driven back. This work, however, belongs strictly speaking, to divine providence and mercy. God alone scrutinises all hearts, and knows their true needs, and the cross which is beneficial to each (E.). In such an arduous task, and in assigning multiple and difficult works, a superior should, as has been said, follow God with wisdom and understanding, and be 'like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions' (Deut 32: [11]). If there is any weakness of will in them, however, he

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should not cease trying to eradicate and destroy it with prudence, charity and persevering effort, as opposed to perfection.

(E.) This moderation in resisting the members' upright natural propensities 1st, must spring from faith in divine providence which takes merciful care of the souls of us all through external events; 2nd, is in harmony with the precept about not judging our neighbour. A superior who opposes an upright propensity without necessity tacitly judges that the member is going to abuse it. To such a superior we desire to say: 'Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother?' (Rom 14: [10]); 3rd, it is in conformity with charity and kindness which restrain us from mortifying our brother without cause, and which must be exercised within our houses by superiors in a special manner.

**685.** When natural propensities are contradicted in the distribution of duties, offices to which a member is assigned permanently should be distinguished from those which are temporary, not perpetual. In contradicting inclinations and opposing a resurgent will, it is better to avoid using duties in which a member is permanently settled, and to employ temporary posts for his probation. As far as possible, therefore, perpetual duties of charity, about we shall speak later, are to be assigned to members who have conquered themselves continually and become perfect, and whose natural characters seem to harmonise perfectly with these duties.

**686.** Moreover, careful foresight on the part of superiors demands that an office assigned by them in harmony with nature, should not exceed, nor, as far as possible, fall short of the natural powers. For the sake of brevity we shall call the accumulation of these powers the *sphere of activity* (E.).

(E.) The principal reasons for this rule, which is to be held in great esteem, are as follows.

It is not sufficient for the brethren to be sanctified through the good intention they should have in all their works, even the smallest. Although a good intention sanctifies even indifferent and distasteful actions, it is of more avail if, in addition to the intention, the brother uses all the powers he possesses, especially the superior powers, such as his spiritual forces, for the greater glory of God and the greater benefit of our neighbour. In this way he co-operates more efficaciously for the coming of

the kingdom of our God, and exercises the charity of God more perfectly towards his neighbour and himself.

A person cannot sufficiently satisfy the requirements of the office he has received if the sphere of the office of charity assigned to him is greater than the sphere of his activity.

If the sphere of the office assigned to him is more restricted than the sphere of his activity, other difficulties ensue. They are:

1st, a certain part of a person's activity remains idle and useless. Consequently, the benefit which could be obtained from it is lost. This reason coincides with the first reason mentioned previously.

2nd, the idle part of man's activity becomes dangerous as well as useless. Man is borne by nature to action proportioned to his powers, and that part of his activity not occupied by the office he has received wanders, as it were, searching here and there for occupation. As a result, it prepares a person for distraction and dissipation. On the other hand, if a good man restrains his wandering activity, keeping it idle, a form of stupidity manifests itself in him because his spirit blunts and diminishes its own faculties, talents given by God to trade with, for which superiors of the Society, not the brother, now have to render an account to the Lord. This is indeed a serious matter, and it is obvious that any attempt to blunt the faculties is repugnant to nature, unless there is question of the case mentioned by Christ: 'And if your hand or foot scandalises you, cut it off and throw it from you' (Mt 18: [8]). This last eventuality could often occur, and it is to be kept in mind, but the principal responsibility for the amputation rests with the person whose hand and foot they are. Outside such a case, a superior should not require this. Although great virtue may be found in the person who suffers it involuntarily and indirectly for the sake of obedience, the constant difficulty of the struggle is a grave temptation to human nature, leading the person perhaps to regret the religious life and to desire, if possible, to leave. Temptation against obedience also arises, along with the tendency to despise one's superiors. This can even make them appear enemies in the house, rather than kindred. It diminishes joyfulness of heart and the holy freedom of charity that enables a person to take giant strides along the path of the perfect life; insensibly it cuts back or reduces brotherly love and the happiness and joy of mutual, daily relationships. Yet temptations must be diminished in every way amongst our dearest brethren in

the Lord, not increased. Superiors should use every attention and care in removing the obstacles which could block the space in which charity is to expand. Indeed, not only is the brother's spirit restricted and endangered; as time passes his good works also are infected by the same limitations. In a short time he becomes inordinately attached to them and makes more of them than they merit. The first result is darkness of spirit that obscures knowledge of truth. Moreover, in bringing to bear upon them all the activity of his spirit, which exceeds the limit of those offices, he devises fixed ways and means either of carrying out or extending the work given to him. This undue anxiety detracts from truth and restricts goodness. Beneficial works are no longer appreciated as such, but only in so far as they are elaborated and embellished by the imagination. In art, this pernicious effect is called *mannerism*; in morals, it can be called restraint or restriction of virtue, or even superstition, which in some way it is.

687. The sphere of activity differs according to persons 1st, specifically; 2nd, quantitatively.

It differs *specifically* by its relationship to more or less general acts of charity (E.). It differs *quantitatively* by its relationship to more or less numerous and burdensome acts.

(E.) More general acts are those which require spiritual energies, especially moral and devout powers, as for example, 1st, prayer which depends upon moral energy; and 2nd, study which depends upon intellectual energy; 3rd, government, which requires moral energy if directed towards souls, and intellectual energy if directed towards a human end. The universality of government is determined by its extent, which is delimited not so much by the number of persons governed (although this also enters into the matter) as by the generality and dignity of the end to which many means are subordinated.

Less general acts are those especially which exercise physical energies in individual actions related directly to our neighbour's body, for example, nursing the sick, etc.

688. Each *species* of charity is constituted by its generality, and includes a greater or smaller *number* of charitable actions that are to be carried out with more or less *effort*.

689. Superiors must take care to know, in the first place, which *species* of charity corresponds with a member's sphere of

activity; in the second place, the *energy* he possesses relative to the number and effort of works in the same species.

690. Next, they must adapt the office of charity to the known sphere of activity. This is to be done in such a way that 1st, the office should be as *general* as possible without exceeding the sphere of activity of the member, or members, who otherwise would not perform it perfectly; 2nd, it should fulfil every *quantity* of activity in the same *general* species without overreaching it, and thus destroying the member by overwork.

691. Superiors must make use of prayer and intellectual enlightenment from the Holy Spirit in order to fulfil the divine will in ascertaining the sphere of activity proper to each member. The sphere of activity is itself a talent received from God, and we know that God wishes us to increase these talents through our trade with them. Knowledge of the sphere of activity when related to external circumstances can, therefore, rightly be called knowledge of the divine will. The sphere of spiritual activity is also manifested by an exquisite inspiration and movement towards an office of charity. This stimulus has as its object eternal rest, not rest in this life, for we can be caressed by spiritual sweetness while flesh and blood feel nothing but repugnance. A prudent superior of the Society must not neglect this manner of knowing the divine will. He must investigate the activity which the brother has most probably been given by the Lord, and direct him towards it (E.).

(E.) The delicate inspiration of the Holy Spirit is marked by its power to draw a person to perfect peace and complete quiet, devoid of even the least remorse or anguish of conscience.

## CHAPTER 4

### The nature of government in the Society, and its delicate rule

**692.** That first and most complete offering and oblation, by which a member of ours on his entrance into the Society promises until death indifference to every duty of charity, is acceptable and pleasing to God, who scrutinises heart and mind, because it springs from a pure will and from the depth of one's heart. If this is indeed its source, the member, with that first act of self-oblation, renders acceptable to his will all the demands his superiors will afterwards make of him. By virtue of that first act he has willed for himself all that he is later to fulfil. What is voluntary, however, is not a burden. Hence the true and faithful member of this Society must find every command of superiors light, and as welcome to him as his own will. Each time he receives an obedience from a superior, such a member will take care to renew this act of will and apply it to the particular thing commanded of him, so that while he feels the sweetness of obedience, with full joy in the perfection of religious life which he has entered, his merit may be complete in the sight of God.

**693.** It is indeed true that the superior's command loses all severity and harshness when it is made one's own will. Hence, although the authority of superiors is so extensive in this Society, it is not simply an authority to command. Rather, in view of the disposition which the members determine upon and will, it is a ministry enunciating what members themselves must will, and what they do in fact will.

**694.** As we have said, superiors' commands are not left to their caprice. They are declarations made by the more accomplished of the brethren about what is best for each individual (E.). At the same time, these commands are obligatory for those who, striving for perfection, consider their search for the best in all things as the will of the perfectly good God. In addition to this, however, when superiors give orders they will consider the voluntariness of the obedience of their subjects and will genuinely perceive in that voluntariness the ruling principle and

nature of the government they have accepted. They will reflect that the voluntary, trusting submission of the subjects was given to them as faithful representatives of God in that first act, which must continue forever.

(E.) Hence superiors should understand how much consideration, modesty, fear and trembling they should use in employing their power to command. In all things, members want what is more perfect; and nothing is more perfect than the love of a wise man. Superiors are chosen, therefore, to declare how the members can act most wisely in exercising charity. Yet judging the very wisest use of charity altogether surpasses human powers. This is the reason why superiors must walk in divine light and follow the will of God as the supreme and safe rule. In all matters they should act with the greatest circumspection so that, even if they do not discover the wisest arrangement in each event, the divine Judge may attribute this to human limitation, not to their fault.

695. They will note how the end of the entire Society, that is the sanctification of the members (they come together to become more perfect, and to please God better) and, through the sanctification of the members as an instrument in the divine hands, the good and sanctification of others, depends upon this voluntariness of obedience. Consequently, since the end of the Society is the supreme rule of all government, they will realise that all their effort and zeal must consist in preserving and augmenting this voluntariness of obedience. Without it the end of the Society and the Society itself would be a mere chimera.

696. With this in mind they will likewise understand that their authority is spiritual only and, as such, must extend to the will of the members. Otherwise it would be to no purpose, nor would it function for the end for which it was constituted.

697. Their authority, therefore, is totally directed towards the salvation of the souls of the members, and the perfection of their will. They must recognise its description in the words with which the Lord described the rule of his Church: 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave;

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even as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mt 20: [25–28]).

**698.** It is true that the members are obliged, because of their promise and vow of perfect obedience, to obey any command in which there is no sin. In addition superiors derive from this promise and vow a certain right to command, and to punish the disobedient. Nevertheless, if superiors were to use their right more than equity permits, they would impugn their own power and the entire fellowship. Members who have taken that promise cannot at the same time lay aside entirely human imperfection and weakness, which accompanies human beings until death.

**699.** Superiors, therefore, must keep in mind the words: 'All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful' (1 Cor 6: [12]), and refrain from commanding all that their right entitles them to command. They will dispose and arrange offices with true charity, taking into account available spiritual energies. It is not sufficient for the office assigned to be in harmony with physical and intellectual energies (this was the principal object of the previous chapter); it must also accord with the spiritual energy at hand, that is, there should not be more hardship and difficulty in unnecessary matters than the brother can withstand with the strength and grace of the Holy Spirit. God himself, as we said previously, does not suffer us to be tempted above our capacities (E.). The superior, therefore, must try the member as God tried Abraham. In this way, the command received will be voluntary, and the member will merit in the sight of God, obtaining the end of his perfection.

(E.) For example, those who have made more progress in spirit and religious discipline should be sent to attend to the vineyards and fields. They should never stay alone in these places, or at least not at night, and they should remain there for as short a time as possible. If they have to be absent longer, or go further, they should be changed now and again, or return to the houses occasionally so that the inner and outer man may be refreshed. The brethren should not be engaged in work of this nature if externs can be employed.

**700.** A superior's every act of government must aim at two things. 1st, to preserve and augment the subjects' disposition

towards obedience and the sacrifice of self, by which they are sanctified and rendered suitable instruments in the hand of God for the works which the good pleasure of his will brings about through the members; 2nd, to ensure that the members expend all these sanctified and augmented energies, but no more than they possess or can possess. Although they may command them hard things, if the commanded things are proportioned to their moral energies they will experience in the service of Christ the Lord the truth of the words: 'My yoke is easy, and my burden light' (Mt 11: [30]), something they should always experience. A superior should be very zealous in increasing the moral energies of his subjects, especially by word of mouth, dialoguing unceasingly with individuals, even the temporal coadjutors, teaching them with the living word in all patience and doctrine, and pasturing the sheep entrusted to him (E.). If the commands he gives are exactly proportioned to their increased energies, he will harvest much benefit from his power, and assist members and externs by his wisdom through charity in imitation of divine providence which 'reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and orders all things well' (Wis 8: [1]).

(E.) Diocesans and provincials will not spend the night outside their diocese or province without permission from their superior. Other superiors will not spend the night outside the diocese without permission from the diocesan. Generally speaking, the one who presides will not leave his post without first considering two things: is the love of God and his neighbour the motive for his journey? will his journey harm his rule?

**701.** The spirit of the members is the instrument of charity which the superiors of this Society are primarily constituted to perfect, and which they then use to the great benefit of mankind. Christ himself came in order that the spirits of all human beings might obtain this perfection, and for this purpose he has sent pastors as he himself was sent. He made it a rule that all those to be perfected should disclose the weaknesses of their spirit to priests to whom he gave the power of judging, binding and loosing. We, his priests, carry out with Christ this judgment which he exercised in his first coming. If people do not assist themselves towards their own salvation by this judgment of grace, he may, in union with all his elect, judge them in his

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second coming with a judgment of punishment. Superiors, therefore, should as fathers hear the confessions of their subjects (E.) and their disclosures of conscience, so that they may be able to assist them in every way towards salvation and perfection with the means Christ has brought. This is the immediate end towards which all their zeal and direction tends.

(E.) In the first place, all provosts are the spiritual fathers of all their subjects.

Every other authority springs up in them from this fount. With regard to hearing confessions, since they cannot hear all the confessions, they will observe the following.

- 1st. They shall hear the confessions of their subjects, especially the juniors, living in their house, and their disclosures of conscience (they should gently draw out subjects with all benevolence and charity so that they may open themselves completely without fear, and realise that they are manifesting themselves to a father, not a judge); if holy discretion prompts them to send the subjects to another confessor, this should be for a time only. Nevertheless, they will hear the disclosure of conscience at least every six months as they judge best in the Lord.
- 2nd. Generally speaking, novices, scholastics, probationers and proficients will have their respective masters as confessors (173 E., 174) although every six months the provost will also hear their confessions and disclosure of conscience.
- 3rd. They will assign confessors for the extern coadjutors, and hear their confessions or disclosures of conscience at least once a year; or the the vicar of spiritual charity may replace the provost.
- 4th. They will assign confessors for the adopted sons of the Society (for those, that is, who are not religious, or do not depend upon some other Institute); and sometimes when it can be done they will hear their disclosure of conscience. The spiritual vicar may take the place of the provost who will also approve confessors for the ascribed members.
- 5th. It is not necessary for the rector or prefect or commissioned priest to hear the confessions of the members in secondary houses where there is a rector, not a provost, or in congregations which have a prefect, or in any body of members where there is a president under some other title. Normally speaking, in fact, this is not expedient. The provost having authority at that moment will assign

confessors as his vicars to the individuals, as has been said, but all can make a disclosure of conscience to the provost during the period of retreat or at some more opportune moment.

6th. The provost superior will assign confessors to the provosts and their vicars who can, however, confess to one another. A higher provost may reserve the choice of confessors to himself, and substitute the vice-provost or the spiritual vicar to hear the ordinary confessions in his house.

702. Every lover of Christ will choose, in all his actions, including his exercise of works of charity, that which will enable him to please God more abundantly. Hence a superior, as it were transforming himself through charity into each of his subjects individually, will have the same zeal for each one as a true disciple would have for himself without a superior, and will distribute activities of charity to each one in such a way that they can bring the member to that perfection of virtue by which he can please God and preserve and augment his moral energies.

703. Under such a rule, which springs from the wisdom of charity, it is normally helpful for a superior, in allocating a person to some activity, to order rather than request him (although in a natural, serious and kind voice (E.)). In this way, the subjects will constantly be mindful of obedience and, through love of obedience carry out everything meritoriously.

(E.) This manner of acting does not exclude encouragement and requests etc., when this is reasonable.

704. When correcting, they should consider the words: 'Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart' (Mt 11: [29]). They too should be meek and humble: not, of course, to the extent of tolerating abuse, but showing themselves just and firm in eradicating every evil without diverting in the least, for any motive, from the path of justice. They should consider St. Paul's words: 'If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself lest you too be tempted' (Gal 6: [1]). This spirit of mildness, intent constantly and solely upon progress and edification, will be strong and immovable within them. It should prevent them from ever permitting matters which may gravitate towards

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greater evils and towards destruction, rather than contribute to edification. Evil is to be resisted calmly but constantly, with full authority, for the sake of love and in its light, without any disturbance springing from anger, with one's gaze always on Christ. As Christ corrected, so our superiors should correct (E.); as he bore imperfections, so our superiors should bear them. They should be silent not from ignorance or weakness, but wisely, discerning the time to be silent and the time to speak.

(E.) Superiors agitated by human anger when correcting (although they should sometimes manifest the fire of holy zeal which resembles anger) do not trust sufficiently in divine providence. They show that they have not yet understood that human emendation springs solely from divine grace, not from the power of their own words. Recognising this perfectly, they should teach those in error the truth with firm kindness and pure zeal, commending their improvement perseveringly to divine goodness, from which they await it. They should not imagine that human agitation can be an instrument of divine grace which depends rather upon meekness shown with a profound sense of affliction, and peaceful, well-considered words (178 E.).

705. Those who do not observe the life they have professed, and appear incorrigible, can be dismissed from the Society (E.). However, the nature of our profession is such that in it members show themselves ready for all duties, whether they can be fulfilled inside or outside our houses. Normally speaking, therefore, greater charity should be shown towards the member (provided he is not guilty of any public crime, and appears to sin more from weakness than malice — otherwise he could not be tolerated in the Society) by assigning him permanently to some external duty for which he is suitable. The manner and rules of his employment will be those which in the circumstances seem most helpful for the eternal salvation of the member himself. This is the supreme aim superiors must always keep in mind.

(E.) The allocation of a person outside a house of the Society pertains to the authority of the diocesan provost, as has been said, since it is an assignment of an office of the third of the four kinds of charity enumerated in Part 8, chapter 4. However, if there is a question of allocating a member outside a house because he cannot sustain common life, the General should be consulted first.

## CHAPTER 5

### The obligatory force of the Constitutions

706. Christ's faithful who come together in this Society and submit themselves to its Constitutions in order to be aided towards a better and more perfect fulfilment of the great commandment of the law of Christ: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,' and 'You shall love your as yourself' (Mt 22: [37, 39]), do not want to impose upon themselves any bond of sin as a result of the help which they seek. For this reason, we have decided in the Lord to declare that nothing in the Constitutions, Explanations, Rules or manner of life which is expressed simply as a positive disposition (E.), and is not already contained in natural or divine law, can induce any obligation under sin, mortal or venial, unless a superior (E.2) commands it in the name of our Lord JESUS Christ, or in virtue of obedience. The only exceptions are the vow by which the Society is bound to the reigning sovereign Pontiff, and the three other essential vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and all other simple vows and promises which have been made. The Society does indeed desire, and each member should desire with it, that its entire Constitutions, Explanations (E.3), Rules (E.4) and manner of living (E.5) and any decrees should all be observed without any relaxation according to our way of life. Nevertheless, it also desires that love and desire for every perfection should take the place of fear of offending as a motive for this complete observance. In this way, each one will simultaneously unite the grace he receives from the Lord his God with great liberty of conscience, and 'from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith' (1 Tim 1: [5]) work great charity, the end of the whole law, for the greater glory and praise of Christ, our Creator and Lord.

(E.1) Superiors are bound by a natural obligation, springing namely from the nature and importance of the matter, to govern the Society well.

(E.2) Vicars and ministers cannot command *in virtue of holy*

*obedience*. However, in the absence of superiors whose place they take, these officials and others, and all those who have the title of vice-superior, can do this.

(E.3) That is, Explanations of this kind, not others. Promulgated with the Constitutions, these have the same authority as the Constitutions of which they form a part.

(E.4) Any superior can dispense individuals in lighter matters concerning the Rules, decrees and good customs, provided the ideal of perfection requires this. In more serious matters, a higher superior should be consulted and the General, whose reply may have to be awaited, should be informed.

(E.5) As time goes on, customs detracting from the spirit or letter of the Constitutions may creep in. These are hereby declared to be of no weight. This should be explained straight-away to the candidates in the first probation so that they may not rely upon any relaxation dependent upon those unlawful customs, but think out and test their vocation in conformity with the Constitutions and Rules of the Institute.

## CHAPTER 6

### The individual action of this Society

707. This Society has been founded in a private state, and as far as possible must keep itself in this state, and in the humility it has chosen for itself. For this reason, we have decided in the Lord to lay down that the entire Society itself may have no external action or representation, which pertains only to its individual members, either singly or grouped in lesser sodalities (E.). One needs to consider that the Society has been founded to form, to perfect in the Lord, and to direct individuals who for this end normally take private (although not secret) vows. Hence, almost all its action terminates in its members who, having been well formed by the Society, act of themselves and in their own name as it were in their relationships with externs, although with the spiritual direction of the Society.

(E.) Ignorance of the Society's proposed breadth of charity towards all may create a certain diffidence on people's part which prevents their recurring to it in their necessities. If so, it is not opposed to this Constitution that the Society be seen in certain good works so that people may learn about the end and mind of such an institution.

708. With this in view individuals in this Society, although they are yoked to the obedience of our Lord JESUS, should hold themselves ready and watchful to the highest degree. They do not lay aside their own action and vigour. On the contrary, they must exert great efforts of themselves, as though they had been left alone in the battle.

709. Nevertheless, because they receive direction and obedience from the Society itself in undertaking and carrying out works of charity, care is to be taken that this direction and command from the superiors be harmonised with individual action, that is, with the energy proper to the individual. This comes about when a member, having received an obedience, considers the office laid upon him as his own, and as imposed by his very own will. The more perfect understanding of obedience (as we have explained above) is that by which, in virtue of the first act

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of religious submission and profession elicited on entrance into the Society, all later undertakings are considered voluntary, and by which each command is accepted with a new act of will in such a way that it becomes voluntary in fact. Hence the member always wishes, and in some way commands himself whatever a superior wishes and commands him. He is prepared to carry the command out in the manner normal to a person who undertakes a work of his own accord.

710. Generally speaking, therefore, a member does what has been commanded him as though it were his own interest. He does not explain in any way, unless he has received instructions to the contrary, that he is working in virtue of obedience (although he will not deliberately hide it), nor will he defend himself with obedience in contradictions and difficulties. He should put himself at risk for the love of Christ the Lord, and fight singlehanded. If necessary, let him face every danger, and leap into the fight. Devoted simply to God and his Lord, he should rejoice at becoming a holocaust for him, delivering himself up if need arises for the protection and safety of the Society.

711. The Society should never use its collective strength to safeguard the mistaken, evil or imprudent undertakings of the members (E.), lest they act incautiously or rashly through over-confidence in the authority of the body to which they belong. Nothing can be more harmful or disastrous to the members themselves, to the rest of the faithful, and to the Society than this over-confidence. The members, therefore, should fulfil for a holy purpose the ministries they have received, without any human presumption in the powers of the Society. The Society itself, just and simple, should persevere in its humility because it is altogether private. Let it act before God alone, without any publicity, external force, or covetous notice from men.

(E.) It is not wrong for the members, with permission from the superior, to defend and protect an unjustly oppressed friend and brother. This section is not to be understood as withdrawing from the members the rights common to all human beings.

Nor is it contrary to this Constitution for superiors to give references to members on a journey, as has been said (...). They should also furnish the same brethren and their friends with commendatory letters.

**712.** There is nothing to prevent the members from showing publicly that they are friends (friendship is not proper to the fellowship, but part of human existence). However, they must not be addressed publicly by the brethren, nor be written to, without special reason, as fathers or brothers of the Society, nor should any other name be employed which expresses their union or grouping in one body (E.1). They should use only common names and titles such as priest, Mr., and so on, and will not employ the seal of the Society on their private letters or reports. In all these matters they should accept from the Society the minimum that divides them from other persons (E.2). What we desire above all else is this: that the one, simple Body of Christ, beautifully diversified in its members while never split into sections, should become more apparent as its charity daily increases; that each of the brethren should be seen as one of the faithful, and each of the faithful as one of us; that no child of the Church should suffer discrimination; that in this way good works may be established by us so that access to them is open to all, and all Christians may be cherished without envy or deceit as one household.

(E.1). Confessors can be called 'father' by their penitents. The name 'fathers' is especially fitting for provosts as a whole, because they are the spiritual fathers of the members. The simple name 'father' is proper to the Provost General.

(E.2) In fact, the Society adds nothing substantial to the common life of Christians except the study and profession of perfection.

**713.** Generally speaking, a superior, as we have said before (703), must not ask but command when he speaks to his subjects. On the other hand, when the faithful come to a superior to request someone for an act of charity, the superior acts as representative of each individual specifically asked for. If no special individual is requested, and the choice is left to the superior, he should, when he wishes to send for a person, speak in a way which makes it clear that the subject goes of his own will rather than as a result of being sent. For example, he may say: 'I shall speak to such-and-such a priest, or master, or brother' (using his name as Christians normally do) 'so that he may see to it.'

**714.** On the one hand, members must unite their will to what

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superiors command if their action is to become voluntary and meritorious; on the other hand, if some affair has been left to their decision by superiors, they do not lose the merit of obedience by acting of their own will, because this too has been enjoined upon them. Consequently, although all things are said to be done in this fellowship from obedience, superiors should leave more or less freedom of action to the members entrusted by them with works of charity. The extent of this liberty will depend upon the way in which superiors know in the Lord the exigencies of divine service and of assistance to our neighbour. Whenever offices are distributed in a more or less general manner (E.), superiors will fortify the member with instructions which clearly indicate to him the measure of freedom of action left to him. As far as possible these instructions are to be given in writing. If such contiguity of *perfect obedience and perfect will* is faithfully observed (this contiguity makes the service that we render to our neighbour in the Lord more prompt, integral and cautious), it can be hoped that this Society will prove of greater use for the honour of God and our Lord JESUS, the increase of the Church, and charity towards our neighbour.

(E.) For example, if no determined area is assigned to a person sent to evangelise in great and distant regions, he can dwell and live in one place or another for a longer or shorter period, or move around. His decision will depend upon what he thinks more necessary for the work of the gospel after he has weighed all things (preserving indifference of will as far as his inclination is concerned) and prayed.

Wherever he remains, if he has not been ordered to employ some defined means such as travelling and preaching, he will do whatever he judges most in harmony with the spirit of the Society.

## CHAPTER 7

### The preparation of those destined for the different works of charity

**715.** The principal norm of this Society must be to act as perfectly as possible. For this reason the members, besides undergoing probations and general studies, should be prepared for and directed to the individual works of charity for which they are destined (E.).

(E.) The Constitution requires persons to be classified according to offices, and according to the studies in which they are trained for these duties.

Hence during the year of third probation (397), and at other times, there will be courses of every kind in which the brethren may perfect themselves, after completing the regular course of studies, in the particular branch to which they have been especially assigned. For example, there will be a course for preachers, for confessors, for pastors, for dogmatic theologians, and so on for every branch of knowledge, for each professional activity and for each method of exercising charity.

**716.** Training and exercise must begin as soon as the member is recognised as suitable for a certain kind of charity. In addition, a more immediate preparation is to be given to those on the point of being sent to works of charity. Even after this, their education will not cease, whether it continues in the branch where they can best be perfected, or in several branches if no special aptitude is apparent (E.).

(E.) Tests and practical work undergone by each member will provide data for tabulating the offices they have been tested in and the grade of suitability and talent shown in each.

Because it is more fitting to use every member in the occupation in which he is more skilled, this table or list (which is to be continually corrected and brought up-to-date according to the results of new tests) will be of great help towards knowing the offices in which each is to be employed.

**717.** Attention should be paid to a member's mode of action when he is sent on any work. Any certain defect noted,

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however small, should be pointed out to him so that he may learn to carry out perfectly and graciously even the smallest ministries in word and in work, as far as human nature permits.

**718.** Generally speaking, the younger members should first be employed and tested in the first and second kind of duties that we have enumerated in Part 8, chapter 4, before they are allocated a permanent position which may require one or more persons.

**719.** Superiors should see that they are prepared for greater and more permanent services by having them live for some time with men skilled in their work. They should be seconded to these men in their ministries, and learn from their word and example how to carry out these duties perfectly (E.).

(E.) The very nature of the ministries requires the wise association of members so that they may complement one another in a single work. For example, when an already skilled person is sent to preach, he should be given a companion who knows how to bring in the harvest through confessions and spiritual exercises.

When a person with little experience is sent out, and is unfamiliar with work for our neighbour, he should be accompanied by someone more conversant with these matters whom he can imitate, with whom he can discuss matters, and whom he can consult in doubtful cases which may arise.

A circumspect and cautious person is best placed with one who is fervent and courageous. The same may be said about other, similar combinations. Diversity, united in the bond of charity, should be of assistance to both partners without generating contradiction or discord amongst them or other neighbours.

The same points may be made about any work of charity in which members are exercised before their permanent assignments.

**720.** Juniors, and less stable and mature members, should not be exposed to duties in which they may undergo danger. Recently ordained priests may not be employed as ordinary workers in the vineyard for at least two years unless the necessity is really urgent and they are firmly established in virtue. During this time (after a thorough examination at home in the entire morals course, and in cases of conscience, and with the

ordinaries' approbation according to the rulings of the Council of Trent) they should hear men's confessions before undertaking the confessions of women.

**721.** Cases of conscience shall be held once a week in houses where at least three of our priests live. The major provost will appoint a chairman capable of carrying out the task prudently and safely (E.).

(E.) No one is exempt from these conferences except those currently teaching theology and philosophy, and others excused by the major provost. The immediate superiors may be absent only rarely and for grave causes. Certain ascribed members can be enrolled by the major provost in this conference of priests which meets for cases of conscience. These members may attend the ordinary discussions. When difficulties are encountered, the major provost should be informed. He will be able to consult similar conferences until a certain or very probable solution has been found. In this way, harmony will gradually be attained in moral matters. The Provost General will determine the method to be followed in these conferences.

**722.** Those destined for the pastoral office will remain for at least two years after their studies and probations in a place where a theological course is available. They will deepen their knowledge of theology and at the same time apply themselves to the study of pastoral requirements. After this, they are to be appointed curates to one of our parish priests who will instruct them in pastoral practice. Or they may study and have practical experience at the same time with the parish priest as their teacher.

**723.** Parish priests with new curates will give them tutorials in pastoral science on alternate days (Sundays and feastdays excepted) so that they may be better instructed theoretically and practically. The curates will continue with these lessons until they have attained the required age and learning.

**724.** A provost will also have to direct his young subjects with regard to their studies, which must on no account be neglected, so that they may learn whatever may assist them in carrying out rightly the ministries assigned to them (E.).

(E.) Studies more necessary for presbyters of the Society,

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besides 1st, rational and moral philosophy, are 2nd, canon and pontifical law and all matters appertaining to the constitution and history of the Church, upon which the constitution of the Society itself is founded; 3rd, the Constitutions of the Society; 4th, civil law.

725. Each house will have a common library to which the General will annex an annual income for expansion. The librarian will keep an exact catalogue of the books, and have a book in which are written carefully all the works issued to members at the discretion of the superior. Individuals who keep books privately must neither write nor put any note in them without permission. The superior should first approve the books which the librarian considers should be bought. The librarian will give an account of the income and expenditure. He will take care to keep vain and bad books, if there are any, under a special key. He will also preserve in a common binding each year's examination results and other scholastic matters. He must zealously fulfil the other rules prescribed for him.

726. Where there is a sufficient supply of personnel, ample time is to be given for instruction and adaptation in the various ministries we undertake, but this is even more highly recommended to diocesan provosts (provincial provosts especially) in the case of government, the most important duty of all. Great earnestness and diligence are to be employed in discovering individuals' talents in this matter, and those who seem to have received some aptitude from the Lord should be taught practically, and by opportune instruction and advice. They should also be employed for certain consultations, and read through the Rules with their provost. It will be of the greatest assistance if superiors, provosts especially, take care by example and manner of life to form those who appear suitable for future government. Action and oral tradition are almost the only way of implanting in the souls of others greatness of heart and practical prudence in dealing with other persons. Provosts, therefore, should associate these selected brethren with them in their work, speaking to them about what is to be done, and teaching them as friends when the opportunity arises, so that their manner of life together resembles a kind of continual school of wisdom. Before anyone undertakes the office of superior, he

should spend several days making the spiritual exercises. If he has not governed previously, he should spend at least two months prior to entering upon government in reading attentively everything that pertains to our way of life, and in conferring with his own superior, or the superior's vicar, who will inform him about matters touching his future government. In the same way procurators and administrators, who have to be skilled in management, should be instructed by someone and tested for a period before undertaking their duties.

727. A member assigned to an office in which he is already trained will receive written advice and directions from the superior in which he should find particular assistance adapted to the circumstances of his duty and person (E.). The booklet of instructions will clearly define the extension of the office received, the limits within which he can act according to his own discretion, and the method of communicating with superiors. All should be put down with order and clarity for the greater benefit of souls, and to the glory of God and our Lord J<sup>ESUS</sup>.

(E.) For example, if a member is sent to a mission, he ought to be advised, amongst other things, whether he should go as a poor man without transport or money, or proceed with greater ease. Again, he should be informed about any obligatory use of commendatory letters, etc.

## CHAPTER 8

### The help to be given to members established in some work (E.1)

728. Members sent by the Society on a work of charity will be assisted first of all and above all if the foresight of superiors removes as far as possible from their path obstacles impeding the free and perfect execution of their duty. Both the entire Society, and members who undertake any work of charity, are to be freed from these obstacles (E.2).

(E.1) In offering assistance to members established in some work, the Society is not to extend its action beyond the members, as has been said in chapter 6 of this Part.

(E.2) Hence the brethren do not use choir whenever this could be an impediment to the more perfect fulfilment of their duties of charity (497 E.2).

729. It is not fitting for members to be obliged to perpetual Masses in their own churches, or to any charge incompatible with the freedom (E.) necessary for our manner of acting in the Lord.

(E.) Freedom in carrying out works of charity is so necessary to this Institute that generally speaking it is preferable for the care of souls, parochial work for example, to be exercised through individual members than through the Society itself. In the latter case, the assumption of a parish would be perpetual, and a perpetual obligation always restricts the liberty of the Society in exercising charity. The same may be said about any perpetual obligations, which are to be assumed only with the greatest forethought. We do not know whether we shall always have members suitable for these works. Hence obligations of this kind are opposed both to the *individual action* of the Society and to the *perfection of the works* undertaken.

730. Superiors will take account of the number and energies of the brethren who dwell in the religious houses and be careful not to overburden these houses with offices of charity, while not allowing the members to be idle in any way. They will also take care not to assign a number of varied offices of

charity to the same house. Benefits will be incomparably greater if the individual houses are as far as possible given offices of the same kind, or offices having some mutual connection and relationship, in preference to dispersing the energies of the members upon many different tasks. Moreover, a superior, in assigning duties to individual houses, will consider what we have already said about the sphere of activity of individual members and apply this to the moral persons formed by the houses.

**731.** Young members are to be tested and exercised in different duties, as has been said. Nevertheless, they must be established at an opportune time in one kind of work or a small number of works so that they may devote themselves wholly to them and become skilled through long experience. When their sphere of activity comes to light, therefore, and occasion offers, they shall be assigned to either one simple office, or to a complex office embracing many others in a single whole (E.1) (they will also have devoted themselves to this duty on the completion of their studies). They will be left in this office at length without distraction. Hence, unless necessity demands otherwise, they should be employed only in matters which are not an obstacle to their *principal* duty (E.2).

(E.1) The sphere of activity can be divided specifically into *moral*, *intellectual* and *technical* spheres. The wider the intellectual sphere, supported by the energies of a sanctified will, the more complex the work which can be assigned.

(E.2) If a person's capacity is so limited that it appears impossible to apply him to some *principal* work, he is to be employed in services of lesser importance without being assigned to one rather than another.

**732.** When a person is applied to a matter of considerable importance and difficulty, for example writing some great work, he is to be dispensed from the customs common to the members, unless his spiritual father decides otherwise, so that he may give himself completely to the matter. Certain affairs require all a man's energies if perfection is to be obtained, and even some small work and extraneous anxiety is sufficient to detract from the perfection of the work. Hence such members are to be left in great freedom. It is only necessary to observe

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whether they put their whole heart into the work they have in hand without damage to their humility and devotion.

**733.** It is often obligatory also to provide the members with all necessary assistance and, as far as possible, with what contributes to the perfection of the work. While it is true that the foresight of superiors should be more diligent and more all-embracing when very important works are in question, nevertheless they are also responsible for observing and providing for the necessities of each person, whether he is applied to great or small works. He should be equipped with all that is required for the work committed to him (especially if he cannot obtain these things for himself) so that he may serve the Lord humbly and silently in the simple execution of the obedience he has received (E.). However it is sometimes helpful if the member is left to himself to find and provide, at least in part, the elements necessary for the work (if this is done, the member will be told about it expressly, and will be helped with advice according to circumstances). In this way, activity directed towards search and provision will be stimulated in him. Both his powers of intellect and his powers of activity (this will be especially profitable) will be developed further.

(E.) Only the provosts, or the visitators who take their place, or old people of more than seventy years of age, are to be given a permanent temporal coadjutor to look after their bodily necessities, if they need someone. These coadjutors possess no special privileges and should give others a greater example of humility. If they do not do this, they should be relieved of duties of this kind.

**734.** In their written instructions (727) also they will be told how (E.) they may inform superiors of matters which are necessary and helpful for the work they have received. As a good and prudent mother the Society will succour each of the members with complete charity and care so that all our brethren may be able to bring forth much fruit in our Lord JESUS Christ for his greater honour and glory.

(E.) Everyone assigned to a certain duty of charity as a *principal* work will receive a booklet with instructions and advice.

Care should be taken to avoid expressing these instructions

and warnings in general terms which could then be taken as mere formalities.

The instructions are to be composed of the teachings of the Fathers and the saints, of the lights given to superiors by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and of the experience of the members themselves. As far as possible, they are to descend to particular matters.

In this way, there will be formulated as time goes on and opportunity permits

- 1st, instructions for the individual ministries of the Church (these pertain to general charity);
- 2nd, instructions for individual stable offices of particular charity;
- 3rd, instructions for individual offices of charity which are not stable.

These instructions will become continually more perfect for individual offices of charity and for different persons as superiors progress in wisdom through the experience gained by members in exercising duties of charity. With the Lord's help, superiors will be able to form a kind of treasury of these instructions with which the Society can better serve the Church of Christ to the greater well-being of our neighbour for the honour of God.

**735.** The Provost General may consider that elementary masters, catechists, sacristans and others dedicated to a suitable duty of charity who have performed their duties industriously and devotedly for several years should be promoted to the clerical tonsure and minor orders so that they may have the assistance of more fruitful graces. In this case, they will first renew their vow of obedience in the hands of their superiors, declaring that they have wished, and certainly now wish through that vow to bind themselves expressly not to desire any other promotion in the Church. They will live in that order in perfect indifference, and subject to the will of superiors.

## CHAPTER 9

### General rules to be observed in the direction of works

**736.** Direction of the accepted works of charity will be much easier if the Society is faithfully constituted by superiors according to the model provided in the Constitutions, especially if the rules prescribed for co-opting persons have been observed. Provided the choice of persons admitted to this Society is what it should be, the Society will be able to exercise not a few good works, God willing, towards our neighbour through its members. To ensure this, the greatest care should be taken to see that each co-opted member is suitable for his grade and state, and tested in such a way that he is able and willing to correspond efficaciously with the obligations and burdens of that grade. Superiors are not to transfer a member from one grade to another as soon as he shows some perfection, in such a way that the perfect are all found in the final grade while the first grades are occupied by those who are weaker (E.). On the contrary, care should be taken to have excellent persons in every grade. They will safeguard respect and love for that grade, and offer good example by demonstrating in their own persons what kind of men the members of the Society must be in each grade. Of the grades we have enumerated none should be preserved in which there are not at least some persons noted for virtue and good standing. Either it will be of no benefit, or it will be an obstacle to the exercise of charity. On the other hand, when each of the grades described is noteworthy for men of observance and charity, and all the rest edify our neighbour, the different grades into which the Society divides its members present a wonderful order, and a form of hierarchy worthy of admiration most suited with God's help to the fulfilment of every kind of charitable duty as occasion arises.

(E.) If there is doubt about a member's promotion, he should be kept in his grade.

**737.** Not only within the houses should there be persons excelling in the perfection of life proper to their grade; the same should be true about the spiritual coadjutors, adopted sons and

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ascribed members who live outside the houses. Moreover, care must be taken that these members be solidly united and bound together. With this in view, all will first be ascribed to some rec-torial or provostal house.

**738.** As far as possible, extern coadjutors will observe uniformity with interns in domestic order, in reading the Rules attentively and observing them, in the exercises of piety, in the profession of poverty, and in complete dependence and obedience towards superiors and prefects. In beginning and perfecting their actions they will faithfully look to obedience and carry it out devotedly. Finally, they should be one with the entire Society in cultivating love of the brotherhood.

**739.** This Institute has set itself two principal things in its exercise of the commandment of our Lord JESUS CHRIST: first, that it should be capable of being moved towards and accommodated to all works of charity; second, that in unity of spirit, and with meekness, humility and patience, it should provide those benefits which ordinaries can reasonably expect from it for the good of their churches. We trust that both these aims will be achieved above all through extern spiritual coadjutors. We desire these men, already in holy orders, to remain permanently at their posts so that they can only be transferred from one diocese to another with the consent of the bishop. Again, the bishop should be consulted, and the matter settled perfectly with him, before any extern coadjutor is made an intern. Again, offices offered by a bishop to extern coadjutors already priests should not be easily rejected. If for some reason they cannot be accepted, the superior can and must inform the bishop about persons and circumstances (this will certainly be acceptable to the bishop himself), and offer reasons dependent upon a greater good. The bishop may nevertheless judge that the coadjutors mentioned should be applied to the offices proposed by himself. If so, his judgment should be accepted.

**740.** Extern coadjutors are governed by intern superiors. Moreover, they will have the prefects, vice-prefects, directors, confessors, priors and other officials considered necessary by the Provost General, and required by the circumstances.

**741.** Sons will endeavour to follow these rules as closely as

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possible, and will be helped in this by superiors. They do not form separate congregations, but belong as a form of sodality to the congregations of the ascribed.

742. There is one common fellowship for all the ascribed, and then special sodalities, as we have said (133). All the ascribed members are divided into deaneries with a dean at the head of each, and a senior dean for every ten deans. Senior deans communicate with a prefect or pro-prefect or sub-prefect, and these with the superior of the place, the head of the rectorial or parochial congregation. Where several rectorial houses are under one parochial provost, all the rectorial congregations are considered morally united under the title of parochial congregation. The same is to be said about diocesan, provincial and general congregations. If however a president of the ascribed members is appointed in any locality (E.1) he himself will communicate with the General, and also with the highest superior of the Society in his district, and with other superiors and officials in the district, as necessity requires. The only ordinary meetings will be those of the local congregation in oratories (501 E.3) or at houses either belonging to the congregation itself or destined for its use. The superior of our house will often send some of the senior or noteworthy intern members, and some sons to these meetings. Although all our religious and adopted sons are considered ascribed by right, they can only be present at meetings of the ascribed with permission from a superior who can grant this. They enjoy no pre-eminence over the others at the meetings. Larger congregations meet rarely, and then only with leave from the Provost General who, in giving permission, will decide the method of procedure, the agenda and how many local congregations and persons from them are to be invited to take part. The Provost General will also make laws and appoint presidents for the individual sodalities. The president will be either the prefect who is head of the whole congregation, or individual directors who will communicate with the prefect and other superiors according to the extent required by the work of the sodality (E.2). The prefect, or senior prefect if there are several subordinate prefects, communicates with the superior or superiors designated by the General, according to circumstances.

(E.1) His Lordship Charles Emmanuel Sardegna of Hohenstein, bishop first of Cremona and then archbishop of Caesarea, having expressed his holy desire to be ascribed amongst the sons of the Society, has been received amongst them with the name and honour of father. After him, other bishops of the Church have given the same example of humility and charity. Consequently, the Society has decreed that in future such bishops should be asked graciously to accept as presidents, with the counsel and ministry of superiors of the Society, the government of all ascription within the extent of their jurisdiction.

(E.2) The Sisters of Providence enjoy adoption in our Institute. Each of the central houses of their sodality will have a director subject to the diocesan provost in whose diocese the central house is located, unless the General establishes otherwise.

**743.** These various bodies of persons must be grafted into the trunk, composed of the intern religious, only when it has matured and grown strong. The sodalities themselves must be formed in number, quality, union and homogeneity so that their appreciable size and strength can be used by the Society for a greater charitable good. Where this is impossible, they should be considered imperfect entities, and even superfluities if there is no hope of their increase. In this case, they should not be permitted to multiply, or to occupy much care and time.

**744.** Prudent acceptance of works of charity is also of great help in ensuring better and easier direction of the works accepted. Of the matters mentioned in Part 8, the following are the most useful in obtaining easy and happy direction of these works: the energies of the Society should be commensurate with the perfect fulfilment of what has been accepted; the Society should remain free to lay down the duty when it lacks suitable workers, energy and time.

(E.) Liberty to allocate members must be highly valued, and most carefully guarded. Hence inheritances with burdens demanding the perpetual action of one or more members should not be accepted if they cannot be transferred to externs. Perpetual agreements, by which the work of a member or members is of constant obligation in the future, are also strictly prohibited (478 E.). In addition, our churches and dwelling places are to be kept free from all perpetual obligations.

**745.** A person with authority to accept works must foresee

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whether the Society's energies will be increased or diminished as a result of fulfilling the duty accepted. There is no doubt that duties which at completion leave the Society stronger for other works are to be preferred, in the right order of charity, to those by which the Society is weakened.

**746.** Hence it is not expedient to multiply kinds and species of charity without necessity (E.1). On the contrary, the Society, faithfully following providence, should extend itself in the kinds and species of charity already undertaken, while members should be trained to strengthen what has been initiated, and to develop it as necessary. However, a new kind of charity can be accepted more easily if it seems possible to bring it to perfection, and extend it adequately within a short time, or if it is of assistance to what has already been accepted, or if what has been accepted offers little hope of progress for some considerable time. Finally, every species of charity in the Society, e.g. the care of the sick, should be built up to sufficient size and stability when the opportunity offers even by refraining from accepting other works which of themselves would be of greater charity. Multiple kinds of work when each is small, produce little fruit and require great labour. Moreover, neither the members nor the Society can acquire the skill which comes only with long, extensive practice (E.2).

(E.1) According to the Constitutions, *necessity* is present if only one work of charity, which can be fulfilled, is requested, or if it is requested with other works which can all be satisfied. The aim which the Society proposes for itself is to reject no good shown to it by divine providence through external circumstances when it is capable of fulfilling this good work through the strength it possesses.

On the other hand, when several offices are sought from the Society, and it cannot fulfil them all, superiors' deliberations should be greatly influenced by consideration of the works already undertaken in the Society. We are to persevere in them without seeking other works so that through this perseverance the Society may become really skilled in some matters (587).

(E.2) We should not only persevere in works we ourselves have begun, but also with works started by others. We ought to meditate upon the achievements of holy men in various places, for example, at Milan by St. Ambrose and St. Charles, in Sicily by

St. Gregory, in Tuscany by St. Benedict and St. Romuald, etc., and endeavour to follow the paths traced by them. The work of praiseworthy men in initiating the development of a people is always to be perfected. For this reason, the ecclesiastical history of a locality is to be cultivated to offer the people examples of virtue, and to bring to completion work already started.

747. Sometimes necessity and trust in divine providence demand that we undertake many kinds of charity. In this case, separation of these kinds of charity from one another will greatly assist their prudent direction. What has been said, therefore, about not applying persons indiscriminately to many duties (*see* previous chapter) is to be understood about resources also. What pertains to one work is not to be bound up with matters belonging to another work, for example, obligations connected with the care of souls or other offices which distract greatly from studies are not to be annexed to a college. The goods applied to works (E.), and the houses and persons who minister to these works, will all be directed by superiors, who will treat them as a unit in so far as they are distinct from those devoted to other matters. Superiors will govern the individual kinds of charity separately as though these works were quite cut off from one another. They will only consider them together in so far as it is necessary to subordinate particular goods to the universal good.

(E.) In applying or transferring goods, care should be taken to avoid any offence connected with the laws of political powers. Nevertheless, the whole Society is considered as one household, one body, and hence those frigid words *mine* and *yours* should not be heard amongst us, whether applied to individual persons or individual houses or regions.

748. It is greatly to be hoped that works of charity will be carried out by us without any temporal reward. Indeed, it is desirable that they should very often be done without any compensation for living and travel expenses, and so on, in order that the saying 'You have received without pay, give without pay' (Mt 10: [8]) may be fulfilled more abundantly. Words cannot express how much spiritual good the servants of God can do towards their neighbour when they give, rather than receive from them, since this good is very often impeded or weakened on the part of the faithful by fear of their cost. Moreover, on our

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part, more integral and simple charity would be preserved, and the danger of wicked avarice, which can sometimes shelter under the appearance of good amongst the workers of the Lord themselves, would be totally avoided (503 E.).

749. It is helpful if all are informed about our way of acting. This will be done in the first place through the good works themselves. Next, external indications will be more efficacious than words alone. We must imitate God who taught the people of Israel through magnificent ceremonies; we must imitate the Church which addresses and moves Christ's faithful through rites and solemnities. Hence there should be a certain public structure of sacred functions, examinations, prizes and similar matters which can be carried out with the greatest possible grace, order and splendour. However, all falsehood and show of vanity should be avoided, and the duties of courtesy observed towards all who take part.

750. When a superior enters office, he will divide the period of his rule more or less in the following way. Without omitting his necessary and ordinary occupations, he will spend the first two or three months 1st, in reading attentively the Constitutions and Rules (unless he has done this just before taking up government), and all the regulations governing his administration; 2nd, in familiarising himself with the end proposed for his house and administration when it was established, and in determining for himself the means by which he can fully obtain this end and gather much benefit from it; 3rd, in acquiring for himself, with great earnestness, detailed information about things and persons, about abuses they have contracted, about their defects and virtues, about unobserved commands and unfulfilled decrees; 4th, in acquiring the goodwill and trust of subjects through the genuine prudence, watchfulness and charity of Christ, and in investigating the remedies appropriate to the ills of each; 5th, in learning about the locality, and the circumstances relating to neighbouring persons and things; 6th, finally, in preparing the annual visitation, if this duty is incumbent upon him.

751. Care should be taken that all who have to make and receive visitations (677–679) should carry out their visitations before they are visited, so that they may give an account to their

own, who will also be able to question their companions about the visitation, and act promptly against recent defects and abuses. They shall make the visitation, therefore, within three months after the first three months, and give a written account of it. The final six months of each year will be set aside for the triennial visitation which will be completed in the first two years. Reports will be sent towards the end of the second year (E.). The third year, free from the labour of the triennial visitation, will be spent in carrying out business found to be required during the visitation, and mentioned by the Provost General in his reply to the report on the visitation. The generalitital visitation could also be carried out during this year.

(E.) The *state* of the Society when visited should be described with the greatest accuracy in a clearly written report. There should be drawn up 1st, a catalogue of localities, with their conditions, and the changes since the last visitation; 2nd, a catalogue of persons and ministries allotted to them during the period, with the changes that have taken place; 3rd, a precise exposition of the losses suffered by the Society, and its gains, together with the means required to remedy the former, and conserve and increase the latter; 4th, the decrees of the visitation; 5th, a synopsis of the house diary.

Every superior responsible for visitations will send these acts separately to his immediate superior who will forward them without delay with his own notes and comments to his immediate superior; and so on until they reach the Provost General.

**752.** All damage suffered by any well-established Society springs from defective action. Superiors therefore should be united in their effort to remove all obstacles to effective action. These normally arise from forgetfulness with regard to laws and regulations, or from easy-going superiors, or finally from difficulties advanced by subjects.

**753.** A superior seeking advice and carrying out decisions will be greatly assisted by the consultations which he will hold at least every fortnight with his consultors and vicars, and if necessary with the minister and other senior fathers. If he is in another house of his jurisdiction, he can make use of the superior of the place and his consultors for the same purpose.

**754.** Two things are considered in each consultation: first, the

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*execution* of matters prescribed in the Rules and regulations (especially those noted by the visiting superior in the acts of the visitation) which must be read during the consultation if they have not yet been put into practice, with greater insistence being given to matters that appear obviously neglected; second, *discussion* of affairs proposed by the superior.

755. The superior will show the letters and documents pertaining to the matter under discussion to the consultors without manifesting his own opinion on the business. Although the decision rests with the superior when he has heard his consultors, they themselves are bound to tell the superior what they think should be done publicly or privately, and to lay great insistence upon carrying out matters prescribed but now so lost sight of through neglect or laziness that they are done either poorly or not at all.

756. A list of all things still to be done, and the causes underlying their lack of execution, should be written in the diary. Each consultor will sign the list and add, in his own hand, any observation he may have. At each consultation the same system will be followed: the same list of things will be set down, with the omission of business attended to and the addition of new business. The same diary will contain a note signed by the consultors of the matters discussed and the conclusions reached. If anyone dissents from the opinion of the others, he will write down very briefly in the diary the reasons supporting his view.

757. Finally, superiors have to strive to observe the laws of holy prudence, and act with great deliberation, ignoring human affections and irrational fear or hope of human beings. When they have done this, they should commend the matter with all their heart to the Lord and God in whose honour they wish to carry out all things. If the matter is sufficiently serious, they should get others to commend it to God. They will depend upon prayer for true light, realising always that in matters touching closely the law of holiness, the highest and only true prudence consists in following the commandments of the Lord our God with simplicity, and being able to say with truth: 'I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts' (Ps 118 [119: 10]).

## CHAPTER 10

### **The occupations requiring special direction in the elective state: first, the direction of piety**

758. The mystic union of that Society, by which JESUS has brought together for the sake of their salvation all those who believe in him, is such that a secret and truly divine plan enables each to share in the merits of all who are united to the head. Hence there is no work of piety towards God which cannot be rightly numbered amongst works of charity towards our neighbour. In dealing with the direction of occupations in the elective state therefore, it is clear that we can speak simultaneously about our offices to God and to our neighbour.

759. Prayer is the first of the occupations of our elective state. In it our neighbour is assisted by the desires and prayers we pour out in the sight of God for the entire Church (E.1), especially for those who have been predestined from the foundation of the world as instruments of its increase and glory (E.2); for our living and dead friends and benefactors in Christ; and for those amongst believers and non-believers who are the special care of our members in various localities. We pray that God may condescend to bless the labours sustained in his name by this least of Societies when obeying his will.

(E.1) Our intention is to keep the Church before our eyes constantly, and revere it with infinite love. The Church is the one universal city for which we must die, to which we must wholly dedicate ourselves, and in which we must place and truly consecrate all things. Indeed, we should consider all that we have as already consecrated to the Church by the profession of our life.

(E.2) We are ignorant of the persons through whom God wishes to cultivate and develop his kingdom, but we pray the more for those, whoever they may be, whom God knows and we do not. More ardent prayer is also to be offered for ecclesiastical and civil rulers, and for others who could do great good or harm to souls, so that natural beginnings, and the seeds of good actions which providence has planted in them, may develop to God's glory.

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760. Purification of conscience is the end towards which all the piety and devotion of the members of this Society must continually tend. In his mercy God looks upon the prayers of those who greatly desire to keep his law faithfully. We should be able to say of the Society: 'In righteousness you shall be established' (Is 54: [14]) (E.).

(E.) Special care must be taken to prevent sacramental confession of sins from becoming an empty ceremony. The signs which indicate whether the brethren use this most helpful sacrament as they should are twofold: 1st, emendation and 2nd, humility. With regard to daily defects which normally require continued efforts of amendment, there can and must be at least an increase of humility.

761. Hence the endeavour to purify our conscience should be our habitual devotion. In our actual devotion we should prefer to fulfil our exercises of piety with great perfection rather than do many of them. With this in mind, the one who prays should attend in spirit to the sense of the words, as far as human weakness permits, as if the words used during the time (E.) of his prayer to God and the Lord were his own, not someone else's. 'For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful. What am I to do? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also' (1 Cor 14: [14, 15]). When prayer is accompanied by the mind and by purity of conscience, we have that adoration of which JESUS speaks: 'The true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth' (Jn 4: [23]).

(E.) Laymen and clerics, everyone in fact, must cultivate the chief exercises and services of worship used by the Church, rather than particular and subsidiary devotions. They should take care that the faithful have in all things the opportunity of uniting themselves ever more closely with understanding and love to the feelings, voices and rites of the Church.

762. The *offering of our blood* in union with the Blood of JESUS our Redeemer is an act of piety for which we shall have a special love. We desire this offering to be made frequently, above all by presbyters and provosts of the Society, especially when they are pastors of the Church (E.). Each one should make the offering with humility, fearful and trembling on his own account, but

greatly comforted through his hope of union with the blood of JESUS, our God and Lord. He may suffer considerable apprehension (for the offering must not consist in external words only) from the thought that the Father may accept the offering of a sacrifice that he himself cannot consummate. If so, he should commend and abandon himself wholly into the hands of this most loving Father leaving his mercy both to accept in his honour that part of the complete holocaust which he knows we are capable of in practice through his grace, and to grant us the grace to make the holocaust more fully. Each one can make this offering privately or publicly on determined days for the edification of all.

(E.) ‘The good shepherd, the shepherd desired by Christ, can be compared to many martyrs. The martyr dies once for Christ; the pastor dies innumerable times’ (St. John Chrys., *In Epist. ad Rom.*, c. 13).

**763.** All the priests will renew the oblation privately when offering and consummating the most holy sacrifice of the Mass; the laymen when communicating. The eucharistic sacrifice, and communion for the laymen, should be a frequent occurrence amongst us (if only it could be daily!). All should approach the altar with purity and great hunger.

**764.** All other blessings and intimacies of friendship are derived from the blessing of the eucharistic bread. The brethren, therefore, should desire to have all things blessed, and sacred to God, and should stimulate this affection in all the faithful so that everything in this world may help them to make progress in piety (E.) and to praise our Lord and God. They should teach them also how all things in this world, animate and inanimate, are sanctified by the Body and Blood consecrated by the priest, and directed to the worship of God in such a way that they assist the salvation of body and soul according to the purpose of divine goodness. In all things let praise and glory be given to Christ dwelling under the eucharistic species; let all the faithful remain incorporated in that food of life; and let all things be united in it.

(E.) Our members could also take their name from *blessing*, because they desire all persons and things to be blessed, and consecrated to the worship of their Lord and God.

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The proper effect of a blessing is to further the increase and multiplication of those souls which divine providence has sown in the world.

The purpose and action of this Society, which could also take its name from *providence*, does not aim at planting new seeds in the world, but at cultivating according to the will of God those already placed there. In this way, the Society furthers the dispensation of divine providence, which must be recognised as governing the order in which things are placed in this world.

Hence, although persons entering the Society must be prepared to be indifferent, the spirit of our fellowship does not always require the good occupations they further outside to be changed. What is required is that these occupations can be cultivated in complete obedience.

**765.** As long as we remain in the elective state, all our desires for the Church and devotion towards it are contained in the Lord's words: 'Pray...the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest' (Mt 9: [38]) (E.). This petition can also be referred to the members whom God is to send to this Society. If all present members, especially superiors, ask for as many persons to be enriched with this grace and virtue as the vocation of the Society requires, divine goodness will bring them together.

(E.) No vice is more opposed to the spirit of this Society than *ambition for posts of honour*, which would overthrow the Society from its foundation. All our members, therefore, should be careful not to utter a word, or do the least thing, in order to leave the elective state. Let them truly love to live and die in humility. Then they will have been faithful to their promise, and the heavenly Father will bless them.

**766.** Having or obtaining private or public oratories or churches is not opposed to the elective state. As we need houses to live in, so we require places in which the priests can offer sacrifice and all can pray without difficulty.

**767.** We can and must provide what our public churches require, without waiting for a request from our neighbour. In a word, the worship of God should be carried out in these churches with complete edification and splendour. If people come, it is commendable to provide catechism, to preach, to hear confessions, and to offer similar services which assist the piety of the faithful. However, this should be done spontaneously only

in our own churches where matters of this kind, although concerned with the people, fall within our responsibility and are carried out on our premises. Here, people are free to come or not, as they wish.

**768.** Domestic discipline is of considerable assistance to piety and interior fervour. Care should be taken, therefore, that all observe it. Any matter not pertaining to the perfection which is our concern should be completely set aside, even though it seems good. Responsibility for this falls first upon the superior of the house, and then upon the minister who is to be appointed even in provostal houses and be humbly obeyed in matters of domestic order by the vicars themselves.



## CHAPTER 11

### The direction of academic studies

769. Piety, which we cultivate for our own perfection, is also of assistance to our neighbour. Academic studies, another occupation of the state of life which we choose, must also perfect us and help our neighbour.

770. Knowledge of truth must draw us to carry out truth and adhere to it with all our strength. Hence in esteeming and cultivating truth, we must observe the order which is unfolded in truth itself. We should be careful, therefore, to evaluate studies according to the dignity of their subject matter, not according to their difficulty or the way in which they further temporal good. Theology is to be given priority, and the chief theological science will be ascetics which is especially helpful for uniting us more closely to God in spirit. Holiness is absolute perfection and the most general good. From it, as from a root, all other goods, spiritual and temporal, take their source; it includes and, as it were, sublimates all other goods.

771. The Society does not allow itself to be restricted in holiness and charity. In the same way, it suffers no limit in acquiring knowledge of truth, and keeps before its eyes the words: 'Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things' (Phil 4: [8]).

772. Hence, *unity* of knowledge is to be upheld (all studies must develop from and minister to the knowledge of holiness, so that we may say with the Apostle: 'For I decided to know nothing among you except JESUS Christ and him crucified' (1 Cor 2: [2])); in the same way *universality* of knowledge is to be preserved, as the Apostle says, in such a way that every other branch of knowledge is to assist the better understanding of the work of divine providence, revealed in Christ the Lord, and to aid the deepening perception of his commandments according to the saying: 'Then I shall not be put to shame, having fixed my

eyes on all thy commandments' (Ps 118 [119: 6]). When knowledge is swept away, great charity, increased with the help of knowledge, will be ours forever.

**773.** With this always before his mind the superior, when assigning the studies of the members, will first consider each one's sphere of activity so that he may allot him an occupation which is neither too burdensome nor too light (E.).

(E.) It is better to assign the extent of studies in a more general rather than particular way, although watch should be kept at the same time to ensure that the virtue of obedience, the way of life, and merit are not diminished, and that each one is always prepared willingly and joyfully to lay aside the study he has begun.

**774.** With regards to kinds of study, the superior will first consider those branches which teach perfection and assist the understanding of religious matters (E.1), and then studies which are necessary or useful for internal charity, either towards the individual members or towards the Society as a whole. He will distribute these studies suitably, and encourage them (E.2).

(E.1) When we have a public church, priority is to be given to studies which help to maintain the church decently and holily, and ensure attendance at divine service. Amongst these studies, the teaching of divine liturgy and the sacred rites of the Church have a place, together with practice of church music. This kind of knowledge is important not only with regard to outward performance, but above all related to the mysteries, and their dogmatic and moral significance, so that the command 'Sing wisely' (Ps 46 [47: 6, Douai]) may be observed in our church. We must also study how to *preach* and give *instructions* in Christian doctrine in the public church so that the word of Christ may be heard there with simplicity and evangelical truth, and without deception. For this purpose some teachers of sacred eloquence will be appointed whose duty will be to examine the brethren's sermons, especially the juniors', correcting them if necessary in accordance with the strength and consolation of the gospel. Each of the brethren must be prepared to accept these corrections and, for the sake of humility, to recite another's composition by heart, if the superior so decides. In the third place, some members should be particularly exercised in moral doctrine so as to become holy, learned and prudent confessors.

(E.2) The following can be numbered, with others, amongst the studies which enable the members to exercise offices of charity towards the Society itself.

*Architecture*, which the Society needs for constructing and adapting its houses;

*Surveying*, necessary for measuring and laying out localities, plans of which must be preserved in the archives;

*Technical drawing and painting*;

*Calligraphy* which, with *arithmetic* and *mathematics*, is useful for compiling records and archives;

*Printing*, for producing useful books for the Society and our neighbour;

Etiquette and, generally speaking, the practice of social relationships which enable us to behave pleasurably and politely with different kinds of people without departing from truth, simplicity and edification;

Finally, all studies which have some relationship to the Church of God and the morality of Christian people, such as political economy, especially where it touches on migration, population, and similar matters etc.

775. If members have time and energy for greater things, the superior should see whether anyone is capable of writing books useful to the Church and to mankind, especially against current errors. However, no publication in this category is to be allowed unless it is conclusive. Weak arguments irritate rather than win over an adversary, and harm the cause of truth. Nor should books be published on other subjects, unless they are of a definite benefit to the truth and our neighbour (E.).

(E.) Much effort is required in attaining style and careful idiom. Our neighbour is assisted more by well-written books than by learned, jargon-filled dissertations. We must also strive for good taste, propriety and efficacy in our language, without affectation or worldly charm.

776. As far as possible, all shall make constant progress in the profession or avocation in which they have been initially trained.

777. When some office of charity has been undertaken at our neighbour's request, or it has been possible to foresee petitions of this nature, the superior must immediately give attentive thought and care to the matter, directing the energy of the

Society towards it, as it were. He shall designate members who can become skilled in these duties so that he may help them in every possible way; he will also arrange in good time suitable substitutes to take their place.

778. Finally, care must be taken to hold a study-reading in sacred scripture twice, or at least once a week in the individual diocesan houses, or in some large scholastic house. All the junior coadjutors will attend (E.) at the stated time (unless they have been exempted by the major provost for a grave reason). The work will be a continuation of their studies.

(E.) This is done so that even those who are devoted to secular studies for the sake of charity may not be ignorant of sacred scripture which we hope will be of help to them and the neighbours whom they serve. Besides the extern coadjutors, who are obliged to attend the study-reading, sons and ascribed may also be admitted.

779. This study-reading of the divine writings will be arranged so as to provide a unified and complete review of the economy of the Christian religion by which mankind is saved. In this way, the divine plan, which in the schools is treated under different headings according to the various branches of theological science, appears resplendent with marvellous unity. This strikes the greatest fear and wonder in those contemplating God's astounding works, impelling them, through this single means alone, to cry out with praise to God, the unique principle of the entire system of creation whom all things obey and serve, and to adore God, the Father with his crucified Son, who said: 'I will draw all men to myself' (Jn 12: [32]), and with the Spirit of Father and Son, Spirit of all holiness and unity. Such an absolute branch of knowledge, containing the power and goodness of all other branches, can be called knowledge univocally; and the principal aim in outlining it is to develop especially the traditional teaching of all ages concerning the divine work of human salvation. This study will not be initiated, however, unless there is available a person equal to the dignity of the work. Each study-reading should be presented with a unity of its own so that listeners may benefit without having to relate present to previous matter.

(E.) In setting out this doctrine, the historical order, praised by

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St. Augustine, seems to be recommended. This method serves to unfold the plan by which, as the ages passed, God upheld and taught mankind with continual revelations until Christ. It also offers an opportunity for explaining all the books of holy scripture, and sounding the depths of dogmatic theology, in which St. Thomas is to be held in great esteem.

## CHAPTER 12

### The direction of technical offices

780. Technical employments are to be allotted with the same foresight, according to ability and talents.

781. Until the requests of our neighbour require otherwise, the employments recognised as necessary for the body of the Society are to be developed.

782. After requests from our neighbour, employments which assist the Society to serve our neighbour more readily and perfectly are to be given preference, other things being equal (E.1).

(E.1) Our artisans can contribute a great deal to the education of the poor by teaching them some trade which will enable them to live by the work of their hands and, at the same time, grow in the fear of the Lord.

Their good example, devotion to work, uprightness of life, and honesty in their work will enable them to take the lead of other artisans belonging to the same trade in their devout guilds. They should help their fellow-workmen in many ways: with advice, encouragement, by direction given to inexperienced and uneducated young men coming from the provinces and the country to the great cities where they are a prey to many dangers, etc.

783. As far as possible, artisans shall not be taken from their trades to be employed in duties (E.) unconnected with their normal work. Many trades should not be practised in the same house therefore; rather, artisans practising the same trade should be united.

(E.) Our priests and temporal coadjutors assigned to academic and liberal arts will all be mindful of the saying of Ecclesiasticus: 'Do not hate toilsome labour, or farm work which were created by the Most High' (Sir 7: [15]). However, those giving only a few hours to some technical work are not to be a distraction to the artisans, and should have separate places for employment, as the superior sees fit.

784. All things must be done in the Society with a certain perfection. Hence sufficient skill in the trades is not enough; we

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must seek a very high standard. If the artisans of the Society are more skilful than others, they will be of great assistance to their neighbour in matters connected with present and future life.

**785.** Artisans' work should be offered for sale by the superior (E.), and the income used for pious purposes, the first of which is the maintenance of the members.

(E.) When selling these goods, care should be taken to give others an example of honesty and Christian moderation. A just, moderate and unchangeable price should be fixed so that there is no room for quarrelling.

The extern coadjutors will bring home, or to the established place, the results of their labours to be sold by other persons chosen for this duty. However, it may sometimes be better for a member to be left free to live on the fruits of the work of his own hands, and to offer what is superfluous to the superior to be dispensed at his discretion in pious works to the greater honour of God.

**786.** Great care shall also be taken of extern coadjutors so that they may carry out faithfully and exactly the instructions they have received. Good example, assiduity, charity, meekness, humility and peace should mark their labours. They should live contentedly in their state, imitating the private life of our Lord JESUS to his honour and glory.

## CHAPTER 13

### The special direction of the occupations of the active life: first, the direction of spiritual charity

787. In undertaking external offices, superiors have to consider not simply the more important occupations, but those which, all things being considered, are found in the Lord to be more in harmony with the rules elaborated above. On the other hand, when directing offices already undertaken, they should devote more care and attention to the greater and more worthy duties. Hence we shall speak first about spiritual charity, then about intellectual charity, and finally about temporal charity.

788. All works of charity are directed by superiors (101 E.), but it is also necessary that they themselves take a very active part in matters pertaining to spiritual assistance. In order to do this as they should, provosts especially ought to be constantly engaged in their office and in prayer without being distracted by other particular kinds of work (E.).

(E.) The more pressing duties of a provost are:

1st, hearing the confessions, especially the general confessions, of the members living in the house, accepting their disclosures of conscience, and caring directly for souls, as has been said (701 E.).

2nd, providing through ministers for the temporal necessities of the house and of those entrusted to him, so that nothing is missing in the house through his lack of foresight in any of those matters for which he must bear responsibility.

3rd, with regard to the active state of the Society, being available to all persons who seek a work of charity from the Society by receiving them readily and lovingly, listening to all their necessities, comforting the afflicted, working out and advising about ways and means, praying, helping them all as far as possible, either personally or through the members, and sending away with good advice and words of genuine love those whom he cannot satisfy.

4th, studying the Constitutions, spending any other available time in calling perseveringly upon the Holy Spirit, and meditating earnestly the divine teachings and the affairs of the Society;

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5th, finally each parochial provost, even though without charge of souls, will hold regular meetings on moral science and cases of conscience in the external house, where extern priests can also meet.

789. In choosing exercises of piety, they should follow the Church. For themselves, they will prefer the weightier and more noteworthy exercises, but they must further the particular devotion of the people and of the age if it is good, as the Church normally does. 'For the Spirit breathes where he will' (Jn 3: [8]).

790. All works of charity concerned with piety towards God and the salvation of souls must be directed by provosts of the Society through their own immediate attention to the work. This applies with greatest force to provosts who have accepted a pastoral charge. Let them imitate Christ with the utmost watchfulness. He cared for the people in one way, and for his apostles and disciples in another, shepherding them both. This was the source of that wonderful union between pastoral and religious life which so many fathers, and so many councils of the Church, especially after the time of saints Eusebius, Augustine and Gregory the Great, tried so often and with so much energy to establish or to restore in accord with the example of our Lord and the primitive Church. In harmony with its own desires, the whole Society endeavours to renew this state.

791. It is greatly to be desired that one of those assigned to missions to unbelievers be consecrated bishop. Our missionaries must take great care that new Christian communities do not lack bishops, and that an indigenous clergy be gradually drawn from the new churches.

792. As soon as a member of the Society has entered upon a parochial charge, he will visit each of his parishioners according to an organised method, and try to get to know them by sight. Everyone of the sheep is indeed a great measure entrusted to a pastor's faith by JESUS, the prince of shepherds.

In this first visit he can scatter those seeds which he will be able to cultivate more diligently in his sheep later, according to their individual needs, through that immense pastoral freedom and overflowing charity of Christ which makes him all things to all men.

**793.** He is to be considered the true friend of all, and must be each one's sincere helper. He will visit his sheep individually and repeatedly. These visits will be made without distinction of persons for the sake of the spiritual and temporal necessities of his flock. They will not be carried out purposelessly, nor for the sake of ceremony or worldly respect. No sheep, old though it may be, will ever become a stranger to him, nor will he be a stranger to his sheep, or undistinguished for his love and kind deeds.

**794.** He will further everything that helps to edify and, as far as his power and the state of the Society permits, direct everything the Society can do to the unity of the end, to the salvation of the people entrusted to him.

**795.** Those sent to preach the word of God should sometimes receive their mission in apostolic form, provided they are comforted by divine grace. That is, they should set out in the way prescribed for the apostles and disciples by the Lord, without money, with one coat, without shoes or staff, observing carefully all the other things prescribed by the evangelists (Mt 10: Mk 6; Lk 6: 9–10 [cf. Mt 10: 10; Mk 6: 8–9; Lk 10: 4]).

**796.** It is true that the mouth of the threshing ox should not be tied. Nevertheless, superiors will watch carefully to ensure that preachers do not delude themselves, with their work as a pretext, and relax too much the austerity and holy customs of religious life by seeking favourite foods and distractions. Those incapable of sustaining the lenten fast should not easily be sent to preach outside our houses. They should pay careful attention to poverty, the treasure of our way of life, in their dress, in their manner of travelling, and in all things. Mindful of the apostles, and on fire to gain souls, they should unite persevering prayer to their preaching.

**797.** If only one person is sent on ordinary missions to the faithful, he should be a mature man, capable of edifying his neighbour. However, two or more suitable companions should often be sent together (...). The commissioned companion will be named first in the letters of appointment.

Nevertheless, all shall obey the superior of the nearest locality, unless the member directing the mission is a superior at the

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same level. The superior sending the missionaries will give them instructions, often in writing, about their way of acting, and will decide whether he should add to their letters of appointment another letter directed to the local authorities.

After giving a full account of their conscience to the commissioned companion, the rest will leave the free disposition of themselves to him so as to be directed better on the missions. They will not make any requests on behalf of others, especially about conceding one of the brethren to someone, unless they are conscious of the superior's approval of the matter. As far as possible they will make their mental prayer and examinations, and keep the Rules of the Society, taking poverty to heart by travelling on foot and in other matters, stopping in respectable houses (where they should not have to listen to women), and refusing invitations to meals. They will give an account to the commissioned companion of whatever is spontaneously received. On their arrival at places where ordinaries reside, they will present themselves as soon as possible, modestly asking permission to exercise their ministries. They should gain the good will of parish priests and religious by the reverence and love they show towards them. If they know of persons who have a wrong idea of the Society, or feel badly towards it, they will instruct and attract them with true charity so that we may all be one in Christ JESUS. Let all understand that there is nothing more welcome to us than to be employed at every moment in matters harmonising with our vocation.

798. Our priests and clerics will contribute a great deal to the harvest of souls if, mindful of their vocation, they show bishops in the first place every honour, goodwill, gratitude and docility, and act with great and dutiful courtesy towards the rest of the clergy, desiring for themselves the last places in the Church. Humility and charity, which we seek and pursue in every disposition of our life, requires us to consider and show ourselves, with sincere and simple love, as the servants of the entire secular clergy in all matters, provided we observe obedience and avoid useless affectation. Superiors shall teach the brethren this unceasingly by their word and example, and require them to put it constantly into practice.

## CHAPTER 14

### The direction of intellectual charity

799. Charity is the way to truth, and is the fullness of truth. The Society, which takes its name from Charity, must guard, contemplate and investigate the truth with great distinction, furthering man's knowledge of truth untiringly and well. This is the source of the kind of charity we have called intellectual. Its immediate purpose is to illuminate and enrich the human intellect with knowledge of things.

800. Anyone who has received responsibility for the direction of intellectual charity in the Society for the honour of God the Father, who alone is wise, and of our Lord JESUS, should realise that the order of truths is an infinitely higher good than their number. Hence he shall first be concerned about their order, and only then about to their number.

801. One order of truths is *absolute*. Here all branches of knowledge form one sole object of knowledge to be revered by all who contemplate it. The first reason for this reverence is the unique essence of such knowledge in which every kind of cognition is beheld. This essence is God, the object of human blessedness. The second reason is the unique and most fecund principle, namely, God, from whom all things flow. The third reason is the unique and supremely best end, God again, unto whom all things return. When all things are considered from the point of view of their unification in their basic notion, principle and end, the principle and end of all things is honoured and acknowledged in them all. Hence Christ says: 'This is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and JESUS Christ whom you have sent' (Jn 17: [3]). Therefore, since we devote ourselves to branches of knowledge with the sole intention of knowing and obeying God, and adhering to him with all our strength, the study of all of them becomes the practical knowledge of God, that is, wisdom. In all things we consider his law and his will, and weigh his commands. Christ spoke on another occasion of these things: 'And I know that his commandment is eternal life' (Jn 12: [50]).

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802. The other order of truths is *relative*. While the absolute order is universal, and leads all truths to unity both in principle and according to theoretic and practical reason, the relative order is particular, and orders in a more specific manner those truths which are proper to each person and society. Studies in the Society must be directed at attaining this order also, so that people may not be burdened with useless information while lacking necessary knowledge. Each one should be fully cognisant of what is necessary and useful for perfect familiarity with the duties of his state which he must know how to carry out (E.).

(E.) Matters to be known by all are listed fairly completely under the following headings.

1st. The state of man created by God, fallen from God's law, then redeemed, and associated in the Church, or called to it. All Christians must acknowledge and perceive the bonds of this Church-society so that their mutual love may increase and they may rejoice at being companions together, helping one another to obtain the same end, using the same means, and undergoing the same dangers.

2nd. In addition to matters pertaining to his state as a Christian person, each one must know the relationships and state in which God has set him in this world, in regard to persons and things with which he has some connection. He must also be aware of the duties which he has towards them.

3rd. He must also be taught everything which helps him to carry out these offices better. He will be instructed, therefore, in some academic or technical avocation so that he may be able to make a decent living, if necessary, and pass his life in work, not in idleness.

4th. Those who learn some trade are to be taught reading, writing and arithmetic in order to make better progress in their trade, and to be more easily instructed in religion and good morals.

In order that all may easily be taught necessary, not superfluous things, the Society will expend some effort, as opportunity occurs, in writing wise books adapted to every class, condition, profession, age, life, without adding to the mass of mediocre books with which the world abounds. In this way the education of the Lord's people will be furthered *in an orderly*

*manner.* Academic and technical instruction will not be separated from fear of the Lord and love of virtue, and will thus be available for good, and not evil purposes.

**803.** With regard to the *extent* of knowledge, superiors shall not reject any kind of knowledge or any kind of truths, but investigate and test the usefulness of them all in relationship to true, good, human development. They should also know how these gifts of God are ordered to the assistance and embellishment of religion, and to the increase of the triumph which the power of our Lord JESUS has achieved and achieves daily amongst us until the end of the ages. On the one hand, they have to take great care lest 'knowledge puff up' the brethren (1 Cor 8: [1]); they can do this by encouraging the development of knowledge for the sake of pure truth and charity. On the other hand, they should so spread the light of sincere truth in the world for the sake of human perfection, that all learned persons desire to be their colleagues (E.), thus providing a wider opening for the furtherance of piety.

(E.) Superiors will give every charitable assistance and care to those who have to spend their time with learned men and devote themselves in a special way to secular science, in order to prevent any lessening of their humility. This is of great importance at the beginning, when gifted persons are still young. They will give them every help in preserving humility. Exercising these learned men in certain public demonstrations of humility and piety can be numbered amongst these aids. For example, they could pray in church with their arms extended, or do similar acts requiring little time. Superiors should remove from studies, either permanently or for a time, those whose spirit seems to be diminishing as a result of their work, and assign them in the meanwhile to other humbler ministries.

**804.** A mass of knowledge provides only little or harmful growth as long as knowledge remains uncertain. The Society, therefore, is to waste no time in amassing uncertain knowledge which, because it is uncertain, does not even merit the name of knowledge. Its energy is to be expended in cleansing all knowledge from error, adding it then as real wealth to the treasure of sound knowledge. Reference is often to be made to experience in this kind of work, while the truth of any matter must be brought into the evident light of facts of every kind, internal and

external. Relinquishing all rash judgment will greatly assist the increase of truth, which in turn will be useful in human affairs and help solid progress in virtue. No proposition should be despised until it has been proved despicable, nor should any proposition be admitted lightly until it has been proved that it is admissible. If superiors proceed in all things with such a power of logic befitting 'sons of light' (Jn 12: [36]) they will not reject inconsiderately useful innovations, nor will they accept in any way harmful innovations.

805. They are to use great consideration and the weight of reasons only, without provoking their adversaries, when they oppose errors and the false opinions of people, whom they should reconcile with delicate courtesy and modest language. They should put to shame and overcome evil persons through goodness, with unfeigned charity and a spirit of mildness, enunciating and preaching the truth freely with perfect patience, avoiding useless questions and inanities (E.). All that they do should be directed not towards victory, but to building up the body of our Lord JESUS. Where the opinions of others are not evidently contrary to religious truth, they should tolerate them for the sake of preserving charity. In this way, the truth will come to light more easily from the opinions and considerations of many persons.

(E.) If they are involved in any argument relating to literature or the feeling for beauty, their academic treatment of these questions should be an example to literary persons of discussion without injury to mutual love and respect. This is a duty of charity, and will help all in learning how to state their opinions and feelings peacefully and carefully.

Even less ardour is necessary in matters relating to the rational or so called exact sciences in which truth can be proved more evidently. When the discussion takes place in public, words are not to be repeated uselessly. In any case, all these things are to be done in dependence on obedience from superiors, and only for the sake of edification, not for vain praise.

In dealing with religious matters, more consideration is needed, especially because error in religion is always held as a kind of stain on a person's good name. Nevertheless, greater freedom and efficacy can be used in persuading people when occasion requires.

**806.** Normally speaking, the education of youth is to be considered the chief of the particular ways of exercising intellectual charity. When the conditions required by the Constitutions have been fulfilled, the Society accepts this work with special ardour, and develops it when accepted with perfect diligence (E.). In educating youth, it will take care to observe what we have said about the order, extent and certainty of knowledge.

(E.) The education of clerics is of great importance, and is in complete harmony with the nature of the Society.

In second place is the education of the middle classes, by reason of more universal good.

In third place is the education of the poor.

In fourth place, the education of the aristocracy and the rich.

In fifth place, the education of the lowest class, farm workers, artisans, etc.

**807.** The method of educating youth will depend principally on experience. One must be cautious in accepting and rejecting new suggestions: 'Test everything, hold fast to what is good' (1 Thess 5: [21]). Where possible, a great college should be founded in which the most accurate experience can be gained of methods which appear good in theory, and prudent judgment may be formed after a suitable period of time about their relative worth. All this will assist us to draw benefit from every new discovery, whatever its source, while avoiding the danger of imprudence.

**808.** In teaching, the subject is to be developed rationally according to the progress of the minds of the hearers at their various ages. The teacher must always express himself in a very clear and simple style. His whole delivery should suit ordinary people so that they could easily follow the thread of the lessons were they to attend them. In large colleges, in fact, there should be some lessons suitable for ordinary people in every branch of knowledge, wherever this is possible.

**809.** A number of mature lay coadjutors should be selected for work at infant and junior schools where the mother-tongue is taught. These coadjutors may be promoted to the orders of reader and acolyte for the sake of receiving greater grace when teaching religion to young children. Together with their rectors and inspectors (E.) they will form a congregation having central



houses, which will also be houses of third probation, where there will be an obligatory course of at least one year in *methodology* and *pedagogy*. Smaller units attached to these houses will be stationed in towns, villages and hamlets, and staffed by at least two coadjutors, externs normally, who will teach the infants and boys. One of the two coadjutors will be administrator or prior. During the autumn vacation all will return to the central house where they will give a full account of themselves to their superiors in a confession covering the whole year and disclosure of conscience, and of the schools and the temporal administration. They will also renew their spirit by a retreat of at least fifteen days. At the same time superiors will draw up a new assignment of members for the various places after considering the information received and all the circumstances. This distribution will have as its criterion the spiritual good of the members in the first place, and then of Christian youth.

(E.) As long as the congregation has no central house and a concomitant rector, the head of the congregation will be called its inspector. If there is a rector, he is *ex officio* inspector.

**810.** Similar congregations can be formed from the teachers of the following subjects: Latin grammar and other languages, living and dead; humanities; philosophy, philology and general knowledge; academic sciences. Theology lecturers must be priests; others do not have to proceed beyond the order of reader.

**811.** All future teachers are to study methodology and pedagogy for at least one year (E.). If ordinary courses of this nature are lacking in the central houses of these congregations, the duty of teaching will be undertaken only by those who have been present for at least six months, three times a week, at the lessons held for the purpose by an experienced brother chosen for the purpose.

(E.) The priests will study methodology either before or after the third probation.

**812.** Rectors will treat their teachers with every possible kindness, encouraging them to carry out their duty readily and constantly. They will not burden them with domestic responsibilities, especially in the case of teachers of humanities and

higher education, unless their progress in spirit requires otherwise.

**813.** There will be at least two spiritual directors in the colleges. For every three teachers, a fourth will be available as substitute. The number of teacher-members for each college will be matched by the number of students training in the college itself, or in a larger college. In this way the Society will have at every moment persons being prepared to undertake the work of those due to retire. Account will be taken of this procedure in determining the revenue necessary for the foundation of new colleges.

**814.** Human society will progress increasingly in virtue and mutual love if the studies of human beings are directed towards knowledge of the law and the justice of God, as we have stated. By the blessing of God, society will prosper in matters connected with present and future life, while the saying of Isaiah will be fulfilled to the glory of Christ our King: 'And the effect of righteousness will be peace' (Is 32: [17]).

## CHAPTER 15

### The direction of temporal charity

815. Each Christian, in his own life, must abstain from and make light of temporal things with great generosity. Likewise he must have compassion for the sufferings of others, in imitation of our Lord JESUS. His charity, if it is great, will consider even the smallest discomforts of our with maternal affection, and assist him in every decent, desirable way, as capacity and propriety permit.

816. A superior of the Institute of Charity, therefore, should feel and experience interiorly whatever others suffer, especially his subject-sons in Christ in the first place, and use the same measure for them as he does for himself. Before commanding others, he must recall the words of Christ: 'They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them upon men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger' (Mt 23: [4]). Hence, he must first weigh the matter in some way through his own experience so that he may be able with charity to adapt the burdens to the forces of each one. It is not fitting to command others to go ahead; we must bid them follow, as Christ bade us. Nevertheless, those who see their own weakness and the readiness of subjects should at least humble themselves in the sight of God and, trusting to his mercy, freely command for his honour what is right and good. Their humility before God, who does not despise the humble, will compensate for their weakness.

817. Temporal benefits should be directed to the salvation of the souls of our neighbours. The Master, who never separated these two things, acted in this way. However, because we are ignorant of the moment in which the Godhead is pleased to call people, we will not lay aside the temporal benefits if we have little hope of spiritual progress. Moreover, the gospel reminds us that Christ acted thus with Judas and with the nine lepers, and with others who were ungrateful.

818. Greater care is to be taken before accepting more general

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works of temporal charity where there is a question of administering common good rather than helping our neighbours directly, even though the former appears to offer more scope for charity towards our neighbour. If necessary, some of the members should be assigned to study accountancy since the Society does not refuse, in cases of necessity, to show itself ready to carry out every good work (E.).

(E.) However, temporal charity does not extend to assisting people to obtain what is superfluous. On the contrary, it should urge them to give what is superfluous to others, according to the divine command: 'But yet (of) that which remains, give alms' (Lk 11: [41]). Our charity, therefore, must help people to be freed from the necessities imposed by nature, not from necessities which are only thought to be such, or depend upon one's relative condition. With regard to temporal matters, people's state ought not to exceed that spoken of by the Wise Man in his prayer: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full, and deny you, and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of God' (Prov 30: [8-9]), or by St. Paul: "There is great gain in godliness with content. If we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction' (1 Tim 6: [6, 8, 9]). Our Society should recoil from making people rich; instead, it ought to encourage and direct the well-off in disposing of their riches to the rest of their brethren. Finally, temporal business can only be undertaken for a manifest charitable cause, even if it is carried out on behalf of people of great authority, unless the Holy Father orders us to do so under pain of sin.

**819.** Great caution is to be used in accepting works of charity which give rise to fears of danger to chastity. For the most part these works are to be exercised by mature ascribed members. As soon as possible, a college is to be founded where our members may dedicate themselves chastely and with real learning to the practice of medicine and surgery. The members of this college will be bound by an oath similar to the hippocratic oath.

**820.** The pastoral office is the greatest form of *spiritual* charity; the education of youth, of *intellective* charity. The happy conclusion of discord and strife is to be considered the highest

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form of *temporal* charity (E.). The highest degree of peace and harmony is to be sought between all Christians, who ought not to be such lovers of this world that they are incapable of attaining friendly agreement. To them also must be said: 'Do you not know that the saints will judge this world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more in matters pertaining to this life? If then you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who are least esteemed by the Church?' (1 Cor 6: [2, 4]). These peaceful settlements, however, are to be concluded according to the norm of justice and equity. Hence a knowledge of what is just and right is necessary for some of our members if we are to have, as we should, persons capable of judging such cases with truth and accuracy. It can then be said with evident truth to the faithful: 'Can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood?' (*ibid.*: [6: 5]). However, these matters are not to be undertaken by us unless we are asked and there is an obvious need of charity. In this case, all should be done without bias.

(E.) In times of public calamity especially, it is right to give our neighbour every assistance; during epidemics all the brethren can fittingly offer themselves. The diocesan, however, will assign those who are to serve the sick.



**Part Ten**

**MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE HEAD  
OF THE SOCIETY AND  
THE GOVERNMENT DEVOLVING  
FROM HIM**

## CHAPTER 1

### The need for a Provost General: the necessity of a life-term for this office

821. In all well constituted associations there is need for one or more persons, in addition to those devoted to particular ends, who will take charge of the universal good. This is true of our Society also. Besides those in charge of particular houses and residences, there must be someone to look after the entire Society. This person is the Provost General who can be chosen in one of two ways to preside over the Society — either as designated for a certain period, or for his lifetime. However experience, practice in government, knowledge of individuals, and authority (E.1) in their regard, are of great assistance in performing this duty well. Hence, the General will be chosen for life, not for a determined time. Another advantage of office for life is that the Society, already sufficiently occupied in works of charity for the glory of God, will suffer less from the effort and distraction entailed by these great meetings (E.2).

(E.1) If the Provost cannot be changed, his authority will be greater with regard to the brethren and externs, to whom he will be better known, than it would be were he to be elected for one or more years. His authority would be diminished if it were known that he was to relinquish office and take equal or inferior place to others, or was little acquainted with his duties.

In so far as the Provost General sees these reasons applicable in the Lord to particular circumstances, they are also valid for the permanence of other provosts.

(E.2) There are other reasons for appointing a General for life in this Society.

The first springs from the character of the order of powers established in this Society. This order imitates the disposition of the Church which this Institute longs to serve when called to do so by the Church herself.

The second reason is that the government and action of the Society spring with greater alacrity and vigour from one person than from several.

The third reason is that it is easier to find one person suitable for this duty than several.



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The fourth is that office for life lessens the thought and opportunity of ambition, the plague of these offices. Ambition does arise if there is an election at definite times.

## CHAPTER 2

### The qualities required of the provost general

**822.** The very first of all the various qualities (E.1) which it is hoped will adorn the Provost General is the greatest possible union and familiarity with God and our Lord JESUS in his prayer and in all his actions. This is needed so that he may more fruitfully beseech JESUS himself, the fount of all good, for an abundant share of his gifts and graces for all the souls of the members, and great strength and efficacy in every means they employ to help souls (E.2).

(E.1) All other qualities can be reduced to the six given here because they contain 1st, the Provost's perfection in relation to God; 2nd, that which perfects his affection, understanding and action; 3rd, the corporeal and external goods that can aid him. Their importance is to be judged from the order in which they are placed.

(E.2) The Provost General offers Mass for the Society daily (if he celebrates daily); that is, he offers it 1st, for the salvation of his own soul and the souls of those entrusted to him; 2nd, that the Holy Spirit may impart to him great foresight in governing the Society in all things according to the will of God for the greater glory of the Lord JESUS Christ and the increase of the Church, his kingdom.

Other provosts will say Mass for the Society with the same intention every Sunday (when they are not prevented from saying Mass). If, as pastors, they must offer Mass for the people, they are not bound to say another Mass for the Society unless superiors have told them to offer other Masses. The Mass for the people, in which both the Church and our members can be included, is sufficient.

Rectors will say Mass once a month for the same intentions. All superiors will say other prayers daily for the Society.

**823.** The second quality required of the General is that he be a man whose example in every kind of virtue will help the rest of the Society. In particular, he must be outstanding for the splendour of his charity towards all, especially towards the members entrusted to him, and for the radiance of true humility which will make him lovable to God and to his fellows.

824. In order to retain a serene, interior judgment in his thinking, he should be free from all inordinate affections, which he will have conquered and mortified through the grace of God. Exteriorly his composure, and especially his circumspection in speech, will be such that nothing, not even a word, can be noted that will not serve to edify both those in the Society (for whom he must act as mirror and model) and externs.

825. Nevertheless, he will know how to mix uprightness and necessary severity with kindness and meekness in such a way that he never allows himself to be turned away from what he judges more pleasing to God and our Lord. At the same time he should know, as is fitting, how to bear with his children. In this way even those whom he has to admonish or correct will recognise that he does his duty rightly in the Lord with justice, equity and charity, although their feelings may find his way of acting distasteful.

826. Greatness of soul and fortitude are altogether necessary for him if he is to bear the weakness of many, and undertake great things in the divine service at God's behest, and persevere in them constantly when required to do so. These qualities will save him from dejection when contradictions arise (although they may be caused by great and powerful persons), and enable him to stand firm by the requirements of reason and God's honour when faced with requests or threats from these persons. He will rise above all circumstances, not permitting himself to be elated by prosperity or thrown off balance interiorly by adversity. When necessary, he will be fully prepared to undergo death for the good of the Church and the souls of the members unto the honour of God and our Lord JESUS Christ to whom he shall daily offer himself for sins (E.).

(E.) The Provost General has a greater motive than all the others in the Society for making often and with greatness of soul the *offering of his own blood* to our Lord and God so that God may be appeased with regard to the General himself and the whole Society.

827. The third quality required is an outstanding gift of understanding and judgment. He must possess this talent with regard to both speculative and practical matters which may

occur. Learning is another urgent necessity because of the Provost's position as Superior over many erudite men. However, it is not as necessary as holy prudence and experience of interior and spiritual things which enable him to discern different spirits, to understand the voice of divine providence in the circumstances of life, to give counsel and aid to many labouring under spiritual and temporal necessities. The gift of discretion will also be highly necessary for him in dealing with external matters and he will need to know how to handle many difficult affairs.

**828.** The fourth quality required, and the first with regard to getting things done, is vigilance and management, and effort in directing affairs to a successful conclusion so that they are not left in their initial, imperfect stage as a result of carelessness and inertia.

**829.** The fifth quality refers to bodily gifts. Attention is to be paid to the General's health, outward appearance and age (E.) which should combine to give him the aspect, authority and physical strength demanded by his office if he is to be able to carry it out to the glory of God and our Lord.

(E.) Extreme old age, which is not normally suitable for the wear and tear of this office, is quite out of place; the same applies to extreme youth which is not normally accompanied by the necessary authority and experience.

**830.** The sixth quality is concerned with external matters, amongst which priority is to be given to those which contribute in this office to edification and the honour of God. Normally, these are esteem and a good name and other qualifications which strengthen authority in the sight of externs and members of the Society.

**831.** Finally, the Provost General (E.1) must be numbered amongst persons resplendent with every kind of virtue, who deserve well for their service towards the Church and the good of the souls of the members, and have been acknowledged as such in the Society for a long time. Some of the qualities described above may be lacking, but extraordinary goodness, and justice, and love directed towards all human beings in Christ JESUS, together with sound judgment accompanied by sufficient learning (E.2), are certainly to be present. Other

matters can be supplied by God's help and favour through those appointed to aid him (mention will be made of them later) (E.3).

(E.1) This applies to all other provosts, especially provincials, diocesans and local provosts, according to the sphere of each one's office, and to all superiors of the Society.

(E.2) Knowledge of the spirit and nature of the Society, together with perfect understanding of the Constitutions, is especially necessary.

(E.3) The General's electors will read and ponder this chapter before the election.

### CHAPTER 3

#### The Provost General's authority regarding the whole Society; his office

**832.** It seems extremely necessary for the Provost General to have every authority in the Society's regard if it is to be well governed for edification. This power (by which the Provost's office is recognised) will be as follows.

**833.** Generally speaking, the Provost General has full power 1st, to admit persons to the Society or to dismiss them, and to employ all persons subject to the obedience of the Society for various duties; 2nd, to apply to, and dispose for different works of charity any goods which have been put at the disposition of the Society by reason of vows or in any other way; 3rd, to undertake, direct and relinquish the works of charity themselves.

**834.** The Provost General has the responsibility of choosing five men as his close, senior aides. However, they can only be named from amongst persons who have been enrolled as presbyters for three years. He can substitute others in place of deceased personal assistants in the way to be described (875). He will also, have the power to appoint all provincial, diocesan and local provosts, rectors, and other superiors and officials of the Society (E.1); to order, suspend (E.2) and limit for the universal good, the faculties given to these persons by the Constitutions (E.3); to transfer them, to remove them from office, and to substitute others in their place. He can grant them faculties not possessed by lower provosts if the universal good requires this.

(E.1) It will be helpful if the Provost General, when appointing officials of the Society, has candidates normally proposed to him in the following way. 1st, prospective provincials to be proposed by the diocesans of the same and other provinces; 2nd, prospective diocesans by parochial provosts of the same diocese, and separately by the provincial or by other diocesans; 3rd, local provosts by the diocesan and provincial provosts; 4th, rectors and others by the superiors to whom they are immediately subject, and by their higher provosts.

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Several names shall be proposed, not one, and they will be placed in order according to their suitability for the office; all proposals will be communicated with the necessary documentation and reasons.

Although the General always remains free to appoint the officials described, he will do well not to depart, without a valid reason, from the candidates proposed.

If a proposal is rejected, and the General decides to choose as provincial a member of another province, or as diocesan a member of another diocese, it will be of assistance at least to consult those whose duty it is to make proposals and to weigh their observations before sending the member chosen to undertake his office.

If he gives to a provincial or to any other person the faculty of appointing certain officials, he should lay down the way in which they are to accept from others nominations or proposals for choosing officials.

(E.2) The Provost General can also punish his personal assistants and admonitor with suspension from the exercise of their office. This suspension will not, however, last for more than a year without the consent of the majority of the nine men (the guilty excepted).

(E.3) Faculties received from the Provost General cannot be delegated to others unless the Provost General himself has given officials power to appoint substitutes; faculties received from the Constitutions cannot be delegated. But both are equally subject to direction from the General.

**835.** Let us enumerate more particularly the principal powers of the Provost General. He can personally or through others admit postulants to the first and second probation if they seem suited to our way of life in the Society; in the same way, he can enrol candidates amongst the approved scholastics, and amongst those who perform some ministry for the sake of experience, and place them in the third probation. He can also accept persons amongst the ascribed, sons, intern and extern coadjutors, and presbyters, either with simple and private vows, or with public vows, or even with solemn (E.), and allocate any of them to the houses, or elsewhere, for a period. He can also collocate persons stably outside the houses, and dismiss them from the Society. All simple vows lose their force through lawful dismissal from the Society, except for the vows of the presbyters of

the Society on account of the fourth vow of missions for the sovereign Pontiff. However, when a dispensation from the fourth vow has been obtained from the sovereign Pontiff, other simple vows, including the presbyters', cease altogether on dismissal. The obligation of the solemn vow of poverty remains, subject to common law.

(E.) The faculty of admitting to the presbyterate is to be delegated very rarely, and only to a person whom he can trust as himself.

**836.** It is also within his power to send those whom he judges should be sent to any place he wishes for academic or technical studies. He can recall the same persons before or after the completion of their studies, and transfer them from one place to another as he considers best in the Lord for their particular good or for the universal good of the Church.

**837.** It is also his responsibility to know the natural propensities, talents and sphere of activity of all. He will allot them duties corresponding exactly to the extent of their sphere of activity. He will arrange for their training for these duties, and provide for the assistance they need in them.

He should also know to the extent of his capacity the consciences of those subject to his obedience, especially the consciences of his assistants, provosts, provincials and others to whom he entrusts duties of greater importance.

**838.** It is the special responsibility of the Provost General to accept new offices pertaining to the fourth kind of charity, offices enumerated in chapter 4, Part 8. Institutes, works and houses of this kind, however, embrace duties of the first three kinds of charity. Hence the Provost General can submit a newly founded institute or house to a lower provost or rector, and assign to him members equal in number and ability to the extent of the work therein (unless he considers that he should reserve for himself the immediate government of the new work). This provost, or other superior designated for these works under the General, should rule the members for the purpose intended, and distribute offices amongst them according to strength and circumstances. In this matter, however, he will take care to observe what the above mentioned Constitution has laid down



(Part 8, chapter 4) concerning different kinds of works of charity, namely, the order of authority to be observed, so that works of the third kind be distributed by the diocesan provost, as has been said in the same place, and works of the first and second kind by the local provost, or some other superior such as a rector, or prefect or commissioned member. Obedience will come down to the subjects with greater order and precision if the Provost General, in establishing some institute or new house, and assigning members to serve in it, has as far as possible a description of the works and functions of the first, second and third kinds of charity which may have to be carried out in the same house or institute. He will nominate tested and suitable individuals for these duties, or leave them to be tested and approved by the provincial or diocesan provost who will act as his vicar in the matter. In this way the immediate superior of the house or institute can indeed employ members for all good works of charity which contribute to the end of the institute, and for works of the first and second kind, according to the instruction he has received. However, he is not obliged to note in the diary commands given to members for work in duties for which they have been approved. Only those commands have to be noted which have been imposed in matters for which the member has not been approved.

**839.** It is also the Provost General's responsibility to maintain constant communication with the lower provosts and officials of the Society. Through the information received from so many sources, he can exercise vigilance over the works undertaken and intervene immediately with appropriate directions as soon as any person fails to fulfil his duty or carry out what has been ordered.

**840.** It is also within the Provost General's power to arrange all things necessary regarding temporal goods. In the first place, he must decide who are to retain external dominion of temporal goods in the Society, and when they are to relinquish it. With regard to dominion, he must establish the external grade of poverty most suitable at a given time for each person with respect to particular and universal good. He is also responsible for admitting persons to the solemn vow of poverty according to the Constitutions.

841. In addition, the use of temporal goods for exercising charity is wholly in the power of the Provost General from whom the disposition of these goods descends to others. It is his responsibility to assign to works of charity all stable and mobile goods which have been received by the Society for this purpose (E.1). This applies to goods brought in by the members, or deriving lawfully from ecclesiastical pensions or benefices, or from other duties or titles. After consulting the provincials (if he sees fit), he will assign the goods with the greatest fairness to the works he considers most useful for the honour of God and the assistance of our neighbour, if several are proposed at the the same time. He will normally exercise this duty when establishing a new house or institute. In this case, he will make a careful calculation (E.2) of the goods necessary for the work, and grant only the exact amount required. This is to be disbursed through secondary superiors, provosts, rectors and others, and to be administered through procurators and others (E.3). If anything remains at the end of the year from the income assigned, the Provost General will delegate secondary superiors the faculty of applying it, provided the sum is small; if income is greatly in excess of expenditure the Provost General himself will apply it, and convert some of the productive goods to other pious works.

(E.1) In order that his charity and fairness may be more apparent, the Provost General should take care that at least the provincials are aware of the use of temporal goods coming from their individual provinces.

(E.2) Every care is needed here to ensure that there is neither too much nor too little. However, it is better to have a small surplus than not to have enough. In the latter case, want might prevent the sufficient fulfilment of works of charity.

Calculation of the necessary revenues should be broken down with great care so that the Provost General may see what is proposed for application under individual headings.

(E.3) The procurator, who carries out business with externs, will be supported by those whose business he attends to. Provincials, commissaries, and the General himself will be supported by the houses in which they live, unless special incomes are assigned for this purpose (this would be more advisable). When a journey is undertaken on business for the Society, those benefiting from the journey will pay the expenses.

842. The Provost General will also have every faculty to command any contracts whatsoever with regard to the sale and purchase of any temporal goods, whether applied or not (E.1); to impose or relax any kind of tax on stable goods for the utility and good of the institutions they assist, with the faculty of freeing himself from the burden either by restoring the money given, or in some other way. All provosts, superiors, procurators, administrators, disbursars and others will share this faculty in so far as the General communicates it (E.2).

(E.1) Goods already applied to a work cannot be changed to other works at his whim. He can lawfully change and re-allocate property and money only with the intention of obtaining more fruitful and secure revenues for the works designated.

(E.2) The following system will be used when the General is petitioned for permission to alienate or commute certain goods.

1st, the name, limits, value and income of the thing to be alienated will be set out, together with any other possible circumstances.

2nd, the same will be done with regard to the thing or revenues to be received in the commutation, or bought for the price of the thing sold, and again all the circumstances will be described in the same document.

3rd, reasons for and against will be set out.

4th, the rector, or other superior, and the consultors will sign the document giving the above information dealing with the matter, if they agree about the alienation; if some disagree, this will also be noted in the document, together with the reasons for the disagreement.

5th, the document will be sent to the diocesan provost, and forwarded by him with observations to the provincial who in his turn will forward it with his own remarks to the General.

6th, if the document or information dealing with the things to be alienated has been drawn up in the manner described, the Provost General, if he thinks fit, will grant simultaneously licence and confirmation for the alienation, immediately confirming the time for the alienation, and clearly indicating the usefulness, as described in the information, of alienating the one thing and purchasing or commuting the other, together with the circumstances of both.

7th, if it is necessary to sell, and nothing particular is to be bought with the sum obtained from the sale, it should at least be noted in general that it is more useful to buy a property or certain revenues, etc., which frequently present themselves. In this manner confirmation can be given together with licence to sell. Otherwise, licence will be given but without confirmation because there is no evidence of clear utility. Indeed, such alienations are to be avoided if there is reason to fear that the money received as price of the thing to be sold will remain unemployed for some time.

All superiors carrying through some alienation should take care that the money received as the price of the thing to be sold should not be diverted in any way to other uses, but reserved for the purchase of things or revenues intended when the faculty of selling was given, or at least used to obtain something similar or better if it presents itself in the meanwhile. As long as this is not done, the money received should be kept on deposit by the superiors until the thing is bought. If they do otherwise, they sin against the vow of poverty.

The same thing is to be understood when the price of some redeemable tax is restored to a work of charity. It must be kept in the same way to buy similar or better revenues.

**843.** Superiors and administrators, disbursars and procurators will send to the General at least once a year an accurate account of all goods applied by him to works of charity. The General will prescribe the manner in which this is to be done (E.1). He has the altogether special responsibility of ensuring that all things in the Society are safeguarded as sacred to the service of the Lord in his poor; he will also take care that the patrimony of the poor and things offered to God suffer no damage through his negligence (E.2).

(E.1) Income and expenditure books are to be kept most diligently by individual superiors and administrators for the management allotted to them. These books must be examined carefully at the annual visitation and signed by the visitor.

Income and expenditure books are to be set out according to the order existing between various authorities. Lower books should contain particular expenses, higher books only the general sum of each kind of expenses, and so on in ascending order. It is the Provost General's responsibility to arrange all these matters, and change them for the better.

(E.2) The Provost General's expenditure account will be open to inspection by his four personal assistants.

**844.** In the same way, the Provost General will arrange all new building projects, examine and approve their plans, and see that the plans are preserved in the archives of the Society.

**845.** The General is responsible for the universal observance of the Constitutions and for dispensing in particular cases where necessary. In granting a dispensation he will take account of persons, places, times and other circumstances. It is his duty to interpret the Constitutions (E.) and to make regulations which may even have the force of precept. Everything decreed by the Provost General as of value in the practice of good government can also be changed and abrogated by him, or by any other Provost General, or by a general or full Roman congregation.

(E.) Commentaries on the Constitutions are not to be published by anyone. This is enacted to prevent their purity and clarity from being tarnished and obscured by subtle comments. If there is any doubt about a matter, the Provost General, or the general or full Roman congregation is to be consulted. The matter will be resolved by decrees (1034 E.).

**846.** The first duty of the General will be to watch and pray for the souls of all the members. He will dispose and carry out all things with this great and final end in view. Corrections and penances which seem necessary in the light of persons and circumstances for the emendation of any defects will also be used and imposed by him for this end. The consideration of these matters is entrusted to his prudent charity for the glory of God.

**847.** He will also convoke the Society to particular and general congregations (where there is a question of matters other than the election or cause of the Provost General himself), and order the provincial or diocesan to convene a congregation when he judges it expedient. He will also direct the persons convened, and send them away at the proper time after the business to be dealt with has been resolved.

**848.** No one can accept any dignity outside the Society without the faculty and obedience from him.

**849.** Generally speaking, he can command everyone in virtue of obedience in all matters concerning the end proposed by the Society, namely one's own perfection and the assistance of our neighbour for the glory of God. Although he may communicate this faculty to other superiors and officials, especially provosts and superintendents, visitators and commissaries (E.1), he can nevertheless approve or rescind what they do, without injury to a third party, and carry out what he thinks fit in all matters. All must pay him reverence and obedience (E.2) (as one who acts on Christ's behalf).

(E.1) 'Commissary' is the name we give to a legate of the General to whom the General has personally entrusted some special, extraordinary business.

(E.2) All privileges, faculties, indulgences, favours granted to the Society are understood as granted to the Provost General in such a way that they cannot be used by persons in the Society except in so far as they have been communicated to them by the General. Where delay is dangerous, however, and a reply from the General cannot be awaited, provincials can use necessary privileges.

## CHAPTER 4

### Certain particular cases in which the authority of the General is limited

**850.** It is extremely necessary to establish the authority of the Provost General on a firm basis so that no one may ever have any pretext for weakening it. Hence we give here a list of the only cases in which it must be limited. These cases (besides that which requires the appointment of a permanent Vicar General during the lifetime of a Provost General (...)) are reduced to the following fifteen.

**851. 1st.** The authority of the Provost is limited with regard to the age of novices (151 E.1), admission to scholastic vows (227, 443), and to simple coadjutor vows (227, 279 E., 425), to the shortening of the novitiate (168 E., 227 E.), as stated in the Constitutions.

**852. 2nd.** The Provost General cannot concede anyone for the perfect care of souls united with a provostship in the Society before he has begun his thirty-fourth year, unless this appointment is approved by the votes of two out of four of his immediate aides (662) (E.).

(E.) Because the votes of his immediate aides are indeed required in these few cases for the convalidation of the General's decisions, these persons must declare freely in the Lord what they consider should be done, especially in cases like this, and sign the appropriate decrees of the Provost. Nevertheless, they will show great reverence and obedience towards the General in all other matters, realising that they are only his aides and, like the other members, his subjects. If the General finds that any of them is unsuitable he can dismiss him from office, and put another person, who has been a provost, in his place.

**853. 3rd.** The Provost General cannot appoint as rector or provost of the Society anyone who retains a parish or ecclesiastical dignities (even under obedience to the General) which he had before being co-opted into the Society, without the unanimous approval of the four men (279 E.).

**854.** 4th. Without a grave and obvious reason persuading him and the five men to the contrary, the Provost cannot appoint any coadjutor simultaneously to the perfect care of souls and a provostship in the Society. Hence, when a coadjutor is sought for the care of souls, the General cannot enlist him amongst the presbyters without the conditions mentioned above (660 E.).

**855.** 5th. He cannot promote a provost to a higher provostship without the consent of two of the four men for such a promotion, except in the cases expressed in the Constitutions where complete authority is reserved to the General.

**856.** 6th. He cannot leave temporal goods unassigned in the Society for more than a year from the time when he knew of their existence, without applying them to some work of charity, or distributing them for pious purposes. Provincials are required to watch this matter in their own provinces, and diocesans in their own territory. Both groups must refer the affair to the next full Roman or general congregation, or to the Provost's council (E.).

(E.) After conferring with the provincials regarding their own provinces, and weighing their advice carefully, the vicar of spiritual charity will after two years apply the unapplied goods. The vicars of spiritual and temporal charity, and the procurator general, will sign the decree of application as witnesses that the application has been carried out at the required time by the vicar. All are held to be vigilant in the matter so that the application is made without delay at the end of two years. In the same way, the signature of the four assistants is required in the decrees of the Provost General concerning the assignment or disposition of goods prescribed by the Constitutions (...). The signatures are not necessary for the validity of the decree, but to witness that the Constitutions have been carried out in a matter of such importance.

**857.** 7th. The Provost General cannot reserve for himself the external dominion of anything whatsoever pertaining to use by the Society. After becoming General he can, however, retain the civil dominion of those goods which he lawfully possessed before he was General, or which came to him by way of inheritance, or under some other title, from persons not subject to his obedience (510 E.).

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**858.** 8th. Without the appropriate consent of three of the four men, the General cannot convert to another work goods already applied by him to a work still in existence (this does not apply to any part of the goods superfluous to the work).

**859.** 9th. It is wholly in keeping with the universal charity we profess if temporal goods at the disposition of our Institute are consumed in any kind of works of charity. Nevertheless, when the Provost General wishes, for the sake of exercising charity, to transfer the dominion of such goods under a gratuitous title (and we recommend that this happen frequently) to persons who have not taken coadjutor vows, or to cede it to other charitable institutes whose administration in law and fact is not in the hands of the Institute, he should determine the whole matter according to the majority vote of his council if the sum of money, or the value of the thing, exceeds three thousand French francs within six months. The Provost, however, will have two votes in the ballot.

**860.** 10th. When one of the works of the fourth kind of charity enumerated in Part 8, chapter 4, has been undertaken and actually started, the General cannot relinquish it, unless it ceases of its own accord, without confirmation from two of his four immediate aides that this is necessary.

**861.** 11th. The Provost General cannot choose his successor, but only decide on a vicar for the congregation to be held for the election of a new Provost General.

**862.** 12th. He will be subject to the full Roman or the general congregation in the manner we shall describe when there are questions relating to him because of some sin he has committed (which God forbid).

**863.** 13th. He must receive from the Society assistants who are to care for his personal needs. His authority in their regard has already been described elsewhere (834). In choosing his immediate and other aides his power is determined by what is established in the Constitutions (834). In matters pertaining to his person, his authority is limited in the way laid down in the following chapter.

**864.** 14th. He cannot change the Constitutions, especially the

Constitution regarding the application and disposition of goods, nor relax rules concerning poverty (516), nor make regulations possessing the force of universal law (845).

**865.** 15th. When there is a case of a new union, not indicated in the Constitutions, between a prelature or ministry in the Church and the Society, the approval of at least two votes from the four men is required for the rules drawn up by the Provost General, according to the provisions of the Constitutions (645), for the person in whom this new union takes place.

**866.** Whenever there is question of a case in which the four or five men (who constitute the Provost General's small council) have a deliberative vote, the Provost will not determine the matter as soon as he has heard their favourable opinion. He will first manifest the whole matter to his complete council, and decide in the Lord what has to be done after hearing all their opinions.

## CHAPTER 5

### The care which the Society must have in regard to the Provost General

**867.** The solicitude or care that the Society (E.) has in regard to the Provost (without losing sight of particular and universal good, and greater edification) consists in a sixfold requirement which can be helpful for the glory of God.

(E.) The Society must be understood here as the order of powers found in the Society amongst those established in power according to the manner defined by the Constitutions.

The power of which we are speaking is found 1st, in the general congregation; 2nd, in the full diocesan congregation; 3rd, in the Provost General's council; 4th, in the provost provincials and others who can sometimes lawfully convoke, or endeavour to convoke, either of the two congregations mentioned above.

**868.** The first requirement concerns external things: the lodging, clothing and any personal expenses whatever of the Provost. The Society can increase or diminish these in so far as it judges fitting for the Provost and itself, and more pleasing to God. The Provost must rest in the Society's decision on this matter (E.).

(E.) The humility of the Provost General in asking his personal assistants for what he considers his needs shall be a sign to others that he recognises the imperfection of his own nature. In this way there will be no one amongst us of whom it cannot be said: 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding' (Mt 11: [25]).

**869.** The second requirement concerns the care of the body. Here, work and great severity should not be excessive. The Provost will allow himself to be moderated in this matter also, and rest in the decision of the Society.

**870.** The third requirement regards his soul, the care of which is necessary even in the case of the person and office of perfect men.

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871. The fourth requirement concerns any dignity or office offered by anyone to the General in person. He must follow the decision of the Society in this matter.

872. The fifth requirement is operative if he is extremely negligent or remiss in matters of great importance connected with the office of provost. The point at issue here is not deliberate neglect, but concerns the case of grave physical illness, or old age, without any hope of improvement, that could seriously damage the public good.

873. The sixth requirement would be present in certain cases (which we hope through the goodness of God and by the help of his grace will never occur) where mortal sins involve an external act. Such cases are: sexual intercourse; injuring anyone with any kind of weapon; taking goods sacred to God in the Society for the expenses of relatives, or giving them to anyone for other than a charitable reason; not observing the limits placed on his authority by the preceding chapter; manifesting false doctrine. If any of these things occur the Society can and must (if there is cogent evidence for the matter) deprive him of his office and, if necessary, dismiss him from the Society. In all things it will keep before its eyes what it considers to be for the glory of God and the universal good of the souls of the members.

## CHAPTER 6

### The manner in which the Society is to proceed in matters concerning the Provost General

**874.** There is no need for a congregation in matters regarding expenses and bodily care. Instead four men, gifted with discretion and zeal for the common good of the Church and the Society, will be appointed as his assistants. They should always remain (E.) with the Provost, and are bound in the sight of their Creator and Lord to say and do with regard to the first two requirements mentioned in the preceding chapter whatever they feel is for the greater glory of God.

(E.) The General will not send them away from himself without grave necessity, but if they are sent away they must obey. When the General is away from his residence for a long period, he will take care to have one of the personal assistants or the admonitor as a companion. The assistants themselves should not be occupied in ministries which distract them from their office although they can preach, teach, hear confessions and attend to other pious works if they have some free time.

**875.** If one of them dies, or has to be sent away from the General for a long time (E.) for serious reasons, the nine men closest to the General will designate two men by majority vote. One of these will be appointed by the Provost to take the place of the dead or absent person, and will enjoy all the rights of his assistants.

(E.) The nine men will decide how long the choice is to be delayed.

**876.** In the third place (870), a presbyter should live with the Provost General (and the same must apply to lower provosts) to admonish him freely for the greater glory of God about what he considers lacking in the Provost. He will do this, however, only after drawing near in prayer to God, consulting divine Goodness, and concluding that the admonition is fair. The admonition itself will be made with becoming modesty and humility and without flattery. This presbyter may be the General's confessor, or some other priest designated by a congregation.

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877. In the fourth place, where there is a question of a dignity or personal office offered by anyone, the General must neither refuse nor accept without advice, unless the sovereign Pontiff places him under obedience. The person immediately next to the General will convene a meeting of the twelve presbyters (over whom he will preside as the thirteenth). After discussing the matter, they will make known the opinion or advice of the whole meeting to the Provost General if they were unanimous. If they do not all agree, or if they could not meet at all, each one will give his vote in writing. This vote will be a simple command, without qualification, to accept or refuse the dignity or office. The Provost General will act according to the majority decision.

878. In the fifth place, if the General is impeded by illness, but not without hope of recovery, he can himself appoint a Vicar without reference to a congregation. This Vicar will carry out all the duties of the General's office until the Provost recovers. The vicar of spiritual charity can occupy this post. The faculties granted cease as soon as the General is restored to health.

879. If the General should become altogether inept for the government of the Society (this will be decided by the majority vote of the thirteen men), the thirteen men will decide, after discussion with the General and among themselves, whether it is necessary to choose a Vicar with great power, but without the title of Provost General. If they consider this unnecessary, they must decide whether other ministers must be provided in addition to those already employed by the General. The aim would be to sustain and help the General so that deficiencies in the government of the Society might be remedied. The whole matter will be settled by majority vote.

880. If they consider that a Vicar General (who is an extraordinary aide) is to be chosen with permanent authority during the General's lifetime, the Provost General himself will choose a *presbyter* for the office to be approved by the majority vote of at least the twelve men. This person can be the vicar of spiritual charity. When a Provost has need of someone, but takes no steps to provide a person, the thirteen men, at least, will choose a Vicar General by majority vote.

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**881.** The Vicar chosen in this way by the Provost General with the approval of at least the twelve men, or by a general congregation, or a full Roman congregation (E.) will have more or less absolute power according to the decision of the General or the congregation which has chosen him.

(E.) A congregation which chooses a Provost General can also elect this Vicar General with right of succession. In this case, the Vicar's election will follow everything laid down for the election of a General.

**882.** If he is chosen by a meeting of at least the thirteen men, his power will be equal to that possessed by the Vicar at the death of a General.

**883.** If it happens that the General has sinned seriously enough (which God forbid) to be deprived of office, the four men who are the General's personal assistants should bind themselves by oath to denounce the matter to the ten men (amongst whom they themselves are to be numbered) (E.) as soon as there is enough evidence about the facts, or a declaration from the General himself. The oath will also require them to convoke a suitable congregation if all, or at least seven of them, vote for this. The causes however will be dissimulated in the letters of convocation. Besides the General's council, all provincials will convene, each one bringing with him the two diocesans in his province who are senior in authority. All these persons are bound to be present, at least through vicars who are provosts, and whom they trust as themselves. If the matter is divulged, is certain and could become common property, the provincials will not wait for notice of convocation, but summon one another to the meeting with the Provost's council. The proceedings will be opened on the first day they arrive at the venue for the congregation, where the ten men are present. This meeting will also be attended by all the other provosts who have an active vote in the election of a Provost General and can be present immediately. The best informed will begin by setting out the accusations clearly. When the Provost has been heard, he must go outside. Then the head of the oldest province represented, with a secretary and another assistant elected by the congregation, will carry out an examination of the whole affair. The first heading will be: has the accusation of sin been proved? The

second: is the sin sufficient to deprive the General of his office? The same person will announce the votes, more than two thirds of which are necessary for a result. If both parts of the accusation are proved, the General will be warned immediately in secret to abdicate his office without waiting for the sentence. All who know about the matter will be bound to secrecy. If he refuses, he is to be deposed. The election of another General will be broached on the spot, nor should anyone leave, if possible, before the Society has a Vicar General to act until a new Provost can be elected. If this matter cannot be transacted on the same day, it should be done on the next. All should be done as quickly as possible through a full Roman congregation without waiting six months. Electors who can be present immediately become delegates, as it were, but everything else is to be carried out as described in Part 11 for the election of a new Provost.

(E.) Before undertaking their office, the ten men will oblige themselves by oath to indicate to the provincials the need for such a congregation, which may arise from serious and ineradicable negligence on the part of the General in the government of the Society, or from similar matters indicated in the Constitutions as necessitating the appointment of a Vicar General (880). They will promise in this oath to be persuaded to act in the matter by truth alone. Before doing anything else, the provosts will decide whether there is sufficient truth in these denunciations.

**884.** If the faults discovered seem to merit correction, but not deprivation of office, four persons will be chosen to consider a fitting correction. If they disagree and the vote is divided equally between them, a fifth, or three others, will be added to their number to enable them to discern what is fitting in the Lord.



## CHAPTER 7

### Matters which can help the Provost General and other superiors to perform their duties well

885. Preaching, hearing confessions and similar ministries do not form part of the General's office (although he will see what he can do as a private person when other occupations proper to his office permit him, not otherwise). His duty is to rule (E.1) the entire body of the Society so that it may be safeguarded and, by the help of divine grace, advance in well-being and its way of acting for the glory of God and our Lord (E.2) according to the divine will. He must use his power for this end, which he will have set before himself explicitly. Hence, besides the gifts of great spiritual perfection and virtue of which we have spoken in chapter 2 of this Part, he needs the assistance of capable ministers for particular duties.

(E.1) He will achieve this in the first place by the authority and example of his life, by love of the Society for the glory of God and his Church, and by assiduous prayer, petitions and sacrifices in which he implores the graces of protection and growth for the body of the Institute according to the divine will. His prayer will be especially urgent when some necessity arises. This must be of great importance to him, and a source of great confidence in the Lord.

He will also achieve the same purpose by the zeal he employs for the observance of the Constitutions. He will demand a frequent account from the provincials and diocesans of things done in all the provinces and dioceses, sending them in writing his opinion of what he has been told, and taking care to provide personally and through his ministers what is required for the matter in hand.

(E.2) The Provost General will meditate continually on divine providence, and in all things adore its ways with humility of heart. He will follow it, not anticipate it, and obey all its calls readily and graciously so that he may be filled *with knowledge of the divine will*, which is to be the one object of his search in all things. Then the Superior will go forward governed by the strength and graciousness of God rather than by human command and will.

**886.** Although he may sometimes be involved in particular matters, it is necessary for him to have lower provosts and superiors (well chosen persons, as we have said) to whom he can give great power, and entrust nearly all particular business. Amongst lower superiors he will have more frequent communication with provincials, and they in their turn with diocesans, the diocesans in turn with local provosts and other superiors. All provosts will have frequent communication with rectors immediately dependent upon them, and with prefects, directors, commissioned companions and all presidents subject to them. Subordination will be better preserved in this way. Sometimes, however, the General himself will deal with lower provosts, rectors, prefects, commissioned companions and particular persons (E.) for the sake of being better informed, and in order to be of assistance to all. He will try to help these persons by advice, encouragement and if necessary correction, since it is the duty of the higher superior to make up for the defects of superiors dependent upon him, and to bring to perfection, with the favour and help of God, what is imperfect in them.

(E.) Especially superintendents and commissaries whom he will make use of very rarely.

**887.** The Provost General will have before him a catalogue of persons, houses and works of the Society, and of goods and things applied to them. The catalogue will contain the names, qualities and previous duties of persons, and the conditions and extensions of houses and works, together with the titles of revenues, the fundings, and a brief description of everything else to be known by him. He will also have well-ordered archives (E.1), the entire contents of which will be easily, distinctly and immediately available to him. This will assist him in his work according to the requirements of God's glory (E.2).

(E.1) All major and minor provinces and houses will also have well-ordered archives, and all things done will be most carefully noted in the register.

(E.2) Uniformity with regard to material things such as account books, and income and expenditure books, is never harmful and can often be of great help. The Provost, therefore, will establish the lay-out of the archives, and the way in which acts are to be registered. For example, the size of books, the manner

of registration, and other things of this nature will be the same in all houses. Uniformity is not so useful in matters which, although material, could by their uniformity restrict spiritual things. Indeed, well-ordered variety often contributes in an extraordinary way to complete development in things of the spirit. Time is necessary, however, for progress in all things.

**888.** Generally speaking, none of the members is to be engaged in secular business except when the divine will has made known some obvious motive of charity for doing so. This applies to the General even more than to others. He should take care (E.) not to be so occupied in these and other matters, although pious, which do not pertain to his office, that he is left without the time and strength required by his proper duties (which would seem to require superhuman energy).

(E.) Although other members of the Society can sometimes engage in secular business when there is a clear reason of charity for doing so, the Provost General cannot do this unless he is impelled by the highest necessity. Amongst other reasons is the practical impossibility of preserving the individual action of a superior in relation to actions carried out by the General (Part 9, chapter 6).

**889.** Moreover, he must not devote himself to carrying out other particular ministries pertaining to a superior which can be performed through others. The care of an individual house would be an example of this. He should have officials everywhere, even in his place of residence, to free him from the work entailed by this charge (E.).

(E.) It is the General's responsibility to prescribe the necessary order in his residence and to see that it is observed, but its execution should be left to others.

**890.** Because he realises that a great part of good government in the Society depends upon (E.) major and local superiors, he will appoint men of proven trust as provincials and diocesans in each province and diocese. With men of this kind he can share his work in appropriate matters while taking care to keep himself informed of all the more serious questions. Thus, he will be left with more leisure and time for the universal matters which he alone can deal with. He will also have more light to detect what is to be done in these matters if he has not lost any of the

intellectual acumen with which he has been endowed. This does happen to those who are occupied more than they should be in small, demanding and minute matters that do not occupy their whole sphere of intellectual activity. Such restrictions blunt their intellectual edge, and make them less capable of examining universal matters.

(E.) When any ordinary superior dies, except a superintendent, whose place is not to be taken provisionally, the first in order of authority (897, 902–938, 949) amongst his current subjects acquires vicar's jurisdiction, and is obliged to inform the Provost General and the next highest superior of the matter. However, he will not undertake any government if a higher superior than the deceased is present. In this case, the higher superior will appoint a vicar, or even a vice-superior, until the Provost General makes a decision in the matter. If there are letters indicating the successor of the deceased (these letters must always emanate from the General in the case of superiors resident in distant regions), they will be opened and executed by the vicar, or vice-superior, or superior, in the presence of the council and at least some of the older fathers. Those holding extraordinary positions are not to be given successors except by those sending them.

**891.** The Provost General needs ministers for particular matters (E), as has been said, but he also requires assistants for universal matters proper to his office if he is to be able to carry them out well and graciously. He needs persons to help him by reminding him of the many things required in the solicitous care of the multifarious duties of his office, by advising him how to order these affairs, and by assisting in their completion with their own diligence and labour. It is obvious that one man's memory is insufficient for remembering so many things; even if it were sufficient, one man's intellect would not be enough to weigh and order these matters; and even if this were so, one man's strength could not carry them out.

(E.) Faculties granted by superiors do not cease at the death or removal from office of these superiors, as has been said (540). No visitator or commissary of any sort will communicate faculties to members except through ordinary superiors. In the same way, commands given to particular persons last until they are revoked by the superior's successor or a higher superior.

**892.** In regard to the first point, that is, his solicitous care for

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universal matters, he will need a minister who should normally live with him (E.), and be as it were his own memory and hands in writing and dealing with everything, in a word, in undertaking all matters pertaining to his office. He will be a second self for the Provost and consider the entire burden of his office, with the exception of the power entailed therein, as his own.

(E.) It will be his office to make a synopsis of all the letters and information received, and headings of all matters proposed to the Father, or requiring some answer or action from him. To the extent of the commission received from the General, he will also draw up replies to be signed either by the General or, on the General's commission, by the secretary himself. He will show these letters to the General or, if the General wishes, to the assistants or anyone else, in so far as their contents and his position as secretary require. He will not write anything without the General's knowledge, but only what the General wants and in the way he wants. He will preserve secrecy in all things, revere the assistants, usurp no part of the government for himself, nor take an air of authority. It will also be his duty to order and keep carefully the General's archives, together with the books and other things entrusted to his care; to propose business for the consultations faithfully and clearly so that there need be no discussion on *de facto*, but only about *de iure* matters; to inform the Superior swiftly about all suffrages and other prayers, together with decrees and letters; to keep the registers of documents; to suggest watchfully the duties owed to various persons by the Provost, and the business to be attended to first; to take charge of the secretaries, companions and copyists. In matters concerning his office, he can command these persons, but in all other things they will come under the obedience of the vice-provost and minister of the house.

**893.** This minister to the Provost should be solicitous, endowed with the gift of discretion and, if possible, learning, of decent appearance, and capable of dealing with all types of persons face to face and by letter. His first quality must be that of integrity and faithfulness. He should be a person to whom anything whatsoever can be confided, a lover of the Church and in it of the Society, as order requires, so that the Provost General may be able to use his work and service more profitably for the glory of God.

894. The second point on which the General requires assistance concerns advice in ordering and deciding the serious matters which occur. The need for this assistance can be understood by considering how many these matters are, how the human intellect is unable to concentrate on them all, and how it is certainly incapable of grasping them all and providing for them all. It seems essential, therefore, for the General to have certain men whose duty it is to consider with special solicitude the universal matters of the Society entrusted to him. These men should live with the General, and be distinguished for their learning and all other gifts of God. The General should be able to divide his duties amongst them, in the first place under the headings of the supreme kinds of charity.

895. As we have said, all charity can be included in the three kinds of charity, namely *spiritual*, *intellectual* and *temporal*. Hence the Provost will have three immediate aides to assist him in each of these kinds of charity. The first can be called vicar of spiritual charity, the second, vicar of intellectual charity, and the third, vicar of temporal charity. However, all are obliged to assist the General in all matters in which they realise he wants help, not simply in their own kind of charity.

896. Each of these men must commend the Provost and his own special duty to God in prayer for that purpose. He will also remember these intentions in his sacrifices. He should also consider the work allotted to him and see how it can best assist the Society to obtain the goal it has set itself. When something appears especially helpful, he should discuss the matter with the others, if this is agreeable to the Provost. They will refer back to the General (E.) the topics mentioned amongst themselves, or considered privately by each of them. They should also give their attention to matters proposed by the Provost, or by the secretary of the Society at the Provost's behest, so that they may be referred back to the Superior after further discussions on their part. Generally speaking, they must help and support the Provost in considering and dealing with matters related to doctrine and praxis which require more serious reflection. Besides, and because it is fitting that many things be better provided for through them, they can employ their time in preaching,

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teaching, hearing confessions, and other good and pious works for the glory of God and the assistance of souls.

(E.) More important matters to be committed to writing, and instructions for those to be sent to various places, can also be arranged with them, and their views be made known to the General by the secretary. The same applies to matters of doctrine. These things will not only help the General; they will also give greater authority to matters decided by him.

897. The Provost will be assisted in the first place by the advice of his three vicars, his personal assistants and his admonitor. Nevertheless, he must also have other councillors amongst whom there will be one person from each of the provinces and larger colleges (E.1). These councillors will be able to inform the Provost about their provinces and colleges and urge the procurator general to expedite their business. They can also read the procurator's letters to these provinces and colleges. The Provost General can also appoint as councillors provincials who have performed their duty with great praise for at least three years, or the provincials' vicars, or anyone who has accompanied the provincial in his visitation of the entire province. These appointments will take place every third year when provincials lay down their office, unless the Provost wishes to confirm former provincials in their grade (E.2). Colleges composed of persons have *rectors-in-chief* in place of senior members. If the groups forming colleges lack a rector-in-chief, and it is worthwhile their having a senior official, the Provost will choose for this office the person designated by a majority vote of the superiors of the groups, unless he judges otherwise.

(E.1) Sodalities of the ascribed members are also numbered amongst these colleges.

(E.2) The visitor of the provincials, the *extraordinary superiors*, the superintendents sent to distant regions who are numbered among the ordinary superiors and possess the permanent rights of visitors and vicars of the Provost General, can all be chosen from the *seniors* who have been with the Provost General during a three-year period. At the end of a year, however, their duties cease, unless they are confirmed in office by a new decree from the General.

898. In addition, the Provost General can form separate

councils or committees for individual works of charity if the size of the work and better dispatch of business requires. Each of his councillors, namely the nine men and the seniors, will be attached to several of these special councils. The chairman (E.1) will be one of the same councillors, while the vice-chairman, the secretary and other councillors (E.2) are selected from members assigned to that work only. If the matters discussed and hammered out in these committees are still not sufficiently clear, they may lawfully be brought either to the notice of the general council, or defined and expedited by the Provost himself.

(E.1) That is, when the Provost General himself is not present.

(E.2) Certain councillors can also be chosen who may give their opinion in writing without being present at the discussion.

**899.** In the third place, namely in diligently carrying out and bringing to completion matters regarded as necessary for the Society, such as despatching business pertaining to the houses and temporal administration, in defending members' interests, and generally in attending to whatever needs to be done, a procurator general will be needed who will reside with the General (E.1). He should be endowed with prudence, trustworthiness, ability in dealing with people, and other gifts of this kind. He will do nothing unknown to the Provost, and will be assisted by helpers and ministers in business he cannot carry out by himself. These assistants will be subject to him for the purpose of this office alone.

(E.1) The procurator's dwelling should be different from the Provost's house, if possible, but contiguous to it.

(E.2) Several procurators should be appointed in due subordination to one another if the General considers that the necessities of the various regions require this. Besides these procurators, there will be several administrators and treasurers who will not be able, however, to spend more than is required for the good administration of the goods in their charge, as their rules must make clear. Superiors have the power to spend what their government requires, but will give a careful annual account to the higher superiors and the General.

**900.** Since the Provost has this threefold assistance (E.1), he will spend his time (in so far as his bodily health and strength permit) partly with God, partly working with these and

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ministers, and partly alone, considering and deciding, with the help and favour of God and our Lord, what action is to be taken (E.2).

(E.1) Only the General can open and read letters directed to the members of the Provost's council.

(E.2) The occupations and duties proper to the Provost General are: 1st, uninterrupted prayer; 2nd, the general government of the Society.

The following are the main duties that the Provost General is obliged to carry out in person for the general government of the Society, besides hearing and knowing all things. He must

1st, admit to profession in the presbyterate of the Society;

2nd, choose provincial, diocesan and local provosts, rectors, prefects, directors, administrators and extraordinary officials;

3rd, command the members to retain for a period the dominion of their temporal goods, while the revenue is employed and applied for works of charity, and watch most carefully lest anyone use anything whatsoever as his own;

4th, accept offices of the fourth kind of charity from those listed in chapter 4, Part 8;

5th, assign a number of members to the individual institutes of the fourth kind and name them for the work either by ascribing them permanently to the houses or institutes themselves, or by granting them to lower superiors who rule the new institutes so that the latter may provide for the necessities of the new institutes through these men and others already subject to them;

6th, allot to houses and institutes of the fourth kind the revenues necessary for the works of charity exercised in them, and determine the patrimonies of the members;

7th, give obediences regarding the acceptance of dignities and honours;

8th, be informed by the entire Society of matters done in it, reform and correct all things in need of reform and correction, and supply by his foresight the defects of the lower members;

9th, take care of the archives of the Society and ensure their good order so that all things done in the Society can be known readily and clearly;

10th, assign interns outside the houses, or absolve from vows and dismiss from the Society;

11th, teach and spread true and sane principles in religion, philosophy and morals, and know and choose the best methods of education and government;

12th, finally, teach wisely, judge justly, and order matters in a spirit of sanctity; be alert to even small evils by continual watchfulness and fortitude.

901. Provincial provosts, simple diocesan provosts who will be appointed when the provincial's care cannot embrace all business in hand, parochial provosts, rectors, prefects, directors, priors, procurators, all presidents, and commissioned companions, must be assisted in proportion to their need and the importance of the duties entrusted to them. In particular, they should have certain persons (E.) designated as their council with whom they can discuss more serious matters which occur (although after listening to their council they normally retain the power of decision). Those superiors who know how to benefit through the work of others whom they patiently direct and form will achieve much more good than those who reserve for themselves alone all that is to be done.

(E.) From what has been said about the General, one can understand what is fitting for provincial, diocesan and parochial provosts, and for rectors and others, with regard to the gifts of God that should adorn them, and the power, occupations and assistance to be assigned to them.

A provincial should have at his side 1st, three vicars; 2nd, a procurator or provincial administrator; 3rd, a secretary; 4th, two personal assistants, one of whom will be his admonitor; 5th, one *senior* from each diocese provided there are not more than four. If they exceed this number, four seniors will be chosen from the dioceses in such a way that each diocese provides its senior members within a certain period of time. If possible, the seniors of the provinces will be men who have occupied praiseworthy the office of diocesan in the province for at least three years, or vicars of the diocesans, or those who have acted as companions in the diocesan visitation. In addition, there will be several councillors chosen from the rectorates, prefectures and other works immediately subject to him.

The Provost General will provide similar assistance for the other provosts, rectors, and all presidents, as need be.

All the above-mentioned aides are consultors, and form the superior's council when they are congregated with him. If one of these men is confessor to the brethren, he must not be

questioned in any way about persons; but if possible the offices of confessor and consultor will not be combined.

Any superior can summon and hear in his council any of his subjects. However, when he adds persons with a deliberative vote to his council on individual occasions, he will choose those who precede the rest in order of authority and power, and are present in the house of which he is superior, even though he has called others to the house to assist his council with their vote.

## CHAPTER 8

### The order of all the persons included in this Society

902. Right understanding of the union of the Society in itself and with its head will be greatly assisted by setting out here the order of persons composing the entire Society.

The order in which persons belonging to the Society are distributed is twofold: one order is related to their external *presentation*, and the other to their *authority and power*. When considering external presentation, the Society's humility must be kept in mind. It has no special grade in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and hence the criterion for the order of persons is normally to be taken from titles extraneous to the Society, provided that the unity of the Society is safeguarded (E.). In relationship to the *power* possessed by persons in the Society, the distribution of all persons is to be deduced from the nature of the Society itself.

(E.) Hence when several members are together, due honour is always to be given to the superior even in the presence of externs.

903. With regard to external *presentation* at table and other ordinary groupings where there is no voting, the immediate superior, or the person taking his place, presides over the whole body subject to him. If higher superiors are also present, and the immediate superiors are subject to them, the former will have a separate table assigned to them and their aides. If, on the other hand, higher superiors are present but without jurisdiction in the locality, they will take their place as though they were not superiors at all.

904. The aides of a higher superior will take their place with the other brethren if that superior is absent, even though he has jurisdiction (unless one of the aides has received some special commission). This does not apply to the generalitial aides of the head of the Society who will have a separate place even though the Provost General is absent.

905. The person immediately presiding over the congregation will come first, and after him other persons disposed in

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individual entities according to the following order. First, priests precede (E.1) others not promoted to that grade; clerics precede laymen. The superior's vicars and minister, even if he is not yet a priest, precede the other priests who follow according to their years of priesthood; then the students for the priesthood according to the orders they have received, those in the same order according to the time they received it. The laymen, and the clerics who have received the same order at the same time, will be placed according to their age from re-birth in baptism and their entry into the novitiate (E.2).

(E.1) Presbyters of the Society and persons with solemn vows are not to have precedence over others.

(E.2) However, novices, formed scholastics, probationers and proficients should form separate entities of persons.

906. It may seem necessary to place a person possessing some ecclesiastical dignity before others who, according to the order laid down, should precede him. If so, he should be given a separate place *honoris causa* only, and may wear the insignia of his dignity. What others wear will bear no mark of superiority contradicting the place they occupy. If a person is entitled to some sign of rank, he should take it off during the sitting.

907. In processions and other ecclesiastical functions, the Society will not gather in a distinct place, but will mix with the secular clergy. In the presence of other priests, our priests should each take either the place suited to his age, or the lower place left for him by others. The same applies to our clerics when they are with other clerics. Our lay brothers should go with the faithful; however, they should all walk together, with a commissioned member following.

908. Related to power and dignity, the grade they have in the Society is regulated as follows.

The Provost General, or the Vicar General in the case of the General's death or disability, precedes all others.

First after the Provost is his vicar of spiritual charity.

Second, his vicar of intellectual charity.

Third, his vicar of temporal charity.

Fourth, his procurator-general.

Fifth, the secretary-general.

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909. Then come the four personal assistants and the admonitor, according to their time in office or, if they were chosen at the same time, according to the date of their priesthood and baptism.

910. The seniors of the provinces or language groups are next, in the order proper to the provinces (E.). All these men have the title of councillors to the General, and form his council.

(E.) In setting up provinces, dioceses and houses the Provost General will take care to assign to each a clear place in the Society, either according to priority of foundation, or according to their size and importance.

911. After these come provincial provosts in the order proper to the provinces.

912. Then diocesan provosts in the order of provinces, and of dioceses within each province.

913. Local provosts come next, according to the order of provinces, dioceses and parochial houses.

914. Then vice-provosts appointed in the houses of dioceses to relieve them of the immediate charge of their houses in view of their other extensive business. These vice-provosts will be the diocesans' vicars of spiritual charity.

915. Then the rectors-general, according to the dignity of the three kinds of charity and, in the same kind, according to the order laid down by the General when establishing them.

916. The provincials' vicars of intellectual and temporal charity, in the order of their provinces.

917. Provincial rectors, according to the order of the rectors-general to whom they are subject.

918. The diocesans' vicars of intellectual and temporal charity, according to the order of their provincials.

919. The diocesan rectors (E.) according to the order of the provincial rectors to whom they are subject.

(E.) Diocesan rectors are not to be appointed when the members dedicated to a certain kind of charity in individual houses are few. Provincial rectors will be sufficient.

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920. The parochial provosts' vicars of spiritual, intellectual and temporal charity, according to the order of their parochial provosts.

921. Local rectors, according to the order of their immediate superiors, and their length of rectorate and priesthood.

922. Novice masters, in the same order.

923. Major procurators and administrators, in the order of dependence established for them by the Provost General, or the order of their immediate superiors.

924. Ministers, in the order of their immediate superiors.

925. Procurators and administrators of houses, in the order of the houses.

926. Prefects of extern coadjutors, according to the order of the superiors to whom they are directly obedient, and their own order of subordination.

927. Prefects of the ascribed members, in the same order.

928. Directors of adopted sons, in the same order.

929. Then other directors of sodalities, according to the order of superiors whom they obey as directors, and according to the order of the dignity of the sodalities established by the General.

930. Next, presidents of stable, external works of charity, whatever their title (E.). They are first distributed according to the dignity of their immediate superiors; then according to the dignity of the three kinds of charity, finally in the order of the date of priesthood, baptism and entry into the novitiate.

(E.) Those appointed as vice-superiors will occupy the place and grade of the superior in his absence.

931. Commissioned companions, in the order of provinces, dioceses and houses, and then according to the length of priesthood and date of baptism.

932. Then follow members who compose the college of doctors of the Society (E.), ordered amongst themselves according to provinces, dioceses, houses and priority of election as doctors of the Society.

(E.) Presbyters belonging to the college of doctors are subject to superiors like the rest, even if the superiors are not presbyters of the Society. No special dignity or power derives from solemn vows. On the contrary, they constitute a state of greater humility and lowliness.

**933.** Presbyters ascribed to the generalitial house take their place according to the order of enrolment before the other presbyters of the Society (E.).

(E.) Those who have laid down their ministry or office, or have ceased to be members of the college of doctors, or no longer belong to the generalitial house, do not retain the previous grades assigned to them.

**934.** Other presbyters of the Society, according to the dignity of provinces, dioceses and houses, and according to the length of time in the presbyterate of the Society and the priesthood.

**935.** Simple coadjutors have no power proper to them (E.). Nevertheless, they could restore the Society if presbyters were lacking. Moreover, since all our coadjutors promise they will observe these Constitutions, they will acknowledge themselves constituted in this order when there is a question of dignity and power of decision.

(E.) As long as there are presbyters, coadjutors have no right to vote on matters concerning the universal business of the Society, even though they are rectors, or act in any other offices, unless the head of the Society, or other supreme authority, calls upon them to vote. But they can only be called after the presbyters present in the place. In special affairs of the Society, and in the execution of business, they will have the level of power over presbyters which we have described in this list of powers.

**936.** Spiritual coadjutors are to be placed before temporal coadjutors; clerics before laymen; interns before externs. Spiritual and temporal coadjutors have their own order according to their provinces and houses, or again according to their period of priesthood or the date of their baptism.

**937.** The rest of the Society follows in this order: formed scholastics who have taken preparatory vows; formed adopted sons who have taken their oath and are bound to the Society by a vow of obedience; priests; clerics according to their orders;

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those who have received the tonsure or clerical habit; proficient; probationers; scholastics; novices; religious; guests in the first probation; ascribed without any obligation; secular laymen; interns; externs. All according to the date of their entry, priesthood and baptism.

**938.** Hence, when we mention four, five, nine, ten or thirteen men, or any other number, in these Constitutions, they are to be calculated starting from the first after the Provost General. When any of their offices is vacant, the next one in order is to be admitted without hesitation to the empty place, and give his vote in council. What is said about the General's council must also be applied to the council of provincial, diocesan and parochial provosts, and to that of a rector and others having a council in any province, diocese, simple provostship or rectorial house, whenever they are bound by law or by an order of the provost superior to hold a council about anything with a determined number of councillors, but without nomination of particular persons. In this case, the number is to be made up of those under the power of the superior holding the council. Their propinquity to him will be measured according to the above-mentioned rule.

**939.** When those who are to be councillors are chosen by the decision of a superior, they must take their places and give their vote in the order indicated, but speak about the matter proposed in the inverse order so that the final speaker is always the person who presides at the meeting. The secretary of the meeting, and other officials, will take their places but without acquiring authority to vote or pass judgment.

## CHAPTER 9

### The Vicar General of the Society after the death of the Provost

940. The entire Society will acknowledge and reverence as its Vicar the presbyter nominated for the office by the Provost General before his death (E.).

(E.) The Provost General will nominate this Vicar at a suitable time lest he die before making the nomination. If a Vicar General is appointed during the lifetime of a Provost by the Society, he will also be the Vicar General of the Society immediately after the Provost's death even if the Provost has nominated someone else.

941. If the General has not nominated a Vicar because of sudden death or some other cause, the Vicar General will be the dead Provost's vicar of spiritual charity. This position will then be taken by a substitute chosen by the Vicar General and the other four men. The substitute must be chosen by at least three votes, and will remain in office until the election of a Provost.

942. If the vicar of spiritual charity also has died, the four men closest to the dead Provost General after the vicar of spiritual charity, in the order outlined in the preceding chapter, will nominate a Vicar General (E.).

(E.) These four, together with the secretary, the four assistants, the admonitor and all the other aides of the deceased Provost assist the Vicar, and must take care that there is no delay, unless there is absolute necessity for it, in the election of the new Provost. The assistants and the admonitor, however, lay down their office as soon as the new Provost is elected.

943. The Vicar is chosen for two purposes: namely, to arrange for the election of the Provost General, and to govern the Society before his election.

944. With regard to the election of the Provost, 1st, he will take care that Masses and prayers are said for the soul of the dead Provost (E.); 2nd, as soon as possible he will convene the electors who must be present personally, indicating the time

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and the place of the meeting, and warn the other electors to send their votes in writing; 3rd, he will decide with the council of general ministers, on a majority vote, whether persons other than those bound to be present for the election should be called to the congregation to help with serious business after the election; 4th, when the electors have convened, he will give them an account of matters arranged with regard to the congregation after the death of the Provost, and will take care of the other things to be mentioned in chapter 3, Part 9.

945. He presides in the congregation prior to the election, but has only one vote.

946. After the election of the General his office ceases completely (E.).

(E.) Those who lay down their office retain no external dignity.

947. With regard to the other duty of the Vicar General, that is, the government of the Society until the election of the new General, he has generally speaking the power and faculty for governing the Society possessed by the Provost General. Certain exceptions have to be enumerated, however (E.).

(E.) As soon as he is declared Vicar by the first aide, he will receive the key of the General's desk, but he will not take anything from it without urgent necessity. The secretary and two of the five men will be present on these occasions.

948. He will take the same line of government as the deceased Provost, and conform to his feeling about things, interpreting it where it is uncertain. He will defer all serious matters that can be deferred until the election of the new Provost. Decisions about matters which cannot be deferred will be made by him with the majority vote of his ordinary council of generalial ministers; urgent and serious matters are those judged to be such by a majority of the council of five men with whom he will consult more, even on less important matters, than the General would. He will communicate letters containing business to all the men, or at least to the five men.

949. He cannot change the generalial aides, provosts, rectors and other primary officials appointed by the General unless some die (E.) or their term of office expire, and it is necessary to

replace them until the election of a General. Other very serious causes may occur which seem to require the dismissal or suspension of one of these persons from the duties of office. This must be decided by a majority vote of the council of generalitial ministers to whom the matter must be communicated. He can also give effect to decrees in which the deceased General nominated successors to certain superiors.

(E.) No superiors or officials of the Society lose their post through the death of a General. The same is to be said about the death of any provost. Vicars themselves remain in office until the election of a new Provost. The senior amongst them presides in the place of the deceased until provision is made by legitimate authority.

950. He has the faculty to make contracts, but not of alienating stable goods unless this is required by the laws of the poverty we profess, or the matter is for the evident benefit of charity and does not permit delay. This faculty can only be exercised with the consent of the majority vote of the council, which is also required when there seems grave reason for changing any of the professed from one province to another, or from their missions to more distant parts. He will not make changes for lesser causes. With the majority vote of the generalitial aides he can also admit persons with the requisite qualifications to the Society (but not to the *presbyterate* without an urgent reason), and dismiss them from the Society.

951. As has been said with regard to the General, he cannot reserve for himself any ownership in temporal matters, nor nominate his successor.

Part Eleven

MATTERS WHICH CONTRIBUTE  
TOWARDS MUTUAL UNION BETWEEN  
THE DISPERSED MEMBERS  
AND THEIR HEAD,  
AND AMONGST THEMSELVES

## PREAMBLE

952. This Congregation cannot be preserved or governed, nor consequently can it attain the end towards which it tends, namely greater love of God, unless its members remain united among themselves, and with their head. The need to seek support for this union is made more imperative by the great number of kinds of persons admitted by the Congregation, by the considerable variety of offices it undertakes, and by its constant willingness to live in any place whatsoever. All these considerations make it difficult for the members of the Congregation to be united with their head, and amongst themselves. We shall speak, therefore, about matters [which assist union in spirit, and then about matters] pertaining to union in person at the congregations.

CHAPTER 1  
Aids to union in spirit

953. There will be some aids towards union in spirit on the part of superiors, some on the part of subjects, and some on both parts.

954. On the part of subjects, it will help to exclude large and useless conglomerations of men from every category of persons, especially among the presbyters and spiritual coadjutors. Among temporal coadjutors and sons also, there should be place only for those considered suitable for the indifference and obedience proper to these grades, as has been said in Part 2. It is also of assistance to keep selected and pre-eminent persons in each permanent state (E.). The ordered action of the Society is not aided, but impeded by a multitude of persons prevented by their poorly conquered vices from being able to observe what they have promised. They destroy the order of the Society by the relaxations they import into it, and wipe out, together with the order and harmony of homogeneity, the union of spirit so necessary in Christ our Lord for preserving the well-being and progress of this Society.

(E.) In the same way, only those shown to have the qualities required by the Constitutions can be received among the scholastics and ascribed members.

955. Because such union is to a great extent brought about through the bond of obedience, this virtue is always to be maintained in its vigour, especially as the entire activity of the Society depends upon it.

956. Greater proficiency in obedience is required from those who work outside to help our neighbour, or are sent out of the houses. Persons holding the chief posts in the Society are to be a shining example to others in this virtue, and those dedicated to study are to remain united to their superior, obeying him readily, humbly and devotedly. If a person is sent out, and there is doubt about his obedience, he must at least be accompanied by a companion of a certain authority more noted for his

obedience (E.). A companion who has made great progress in obedience will very often be of benefit by divine favour to one who has made less progress.

(E.) Since experience shows that some who are sent out do not conduct themselves rightly with regard to obedience, they are either to be recalled, or given companions who have progressed in the virtue, although it would have been better not to have sent them out in the first place.

**957.** Generally speaking a companion can be provided for any person whose duty of government takes him outside (E.) (if the superior considers that in this way he will perform more adequately the task allotted to him). The relationship between the companion and the person-in-charge will be such that on the one hand obedience and reverence of subjects for their superior in no way lessens, while on the other the superior finds the companion given him a faithful help and encouragement for himself and for those entrusted to him.

(E.) The companion (who will always have some other authority over the members, as vicar or minister, for example) will not be subject to the obedience of the provost, rector or other person to whom he is given. Nevertheless, he must show him interior and exterior respect, and offer an example in this matter to those subject to obedience. In the same way, he must take the greatest care to help the person responsible for others in all matters pertaining to his office in which he requests assistance.

Even though he has not been asked, he must faithfully mention to him what is necessary when he notices that something should be said about the other's person or office. He should explain what he feels with Christian modesty and liberty. If the superior persists in his contrary opinion after he has explained the reasons and ideas that move him, the companion must submit his own judgment, and conform himself to the other, unless he realises with the greatest clarity that the other has erred. In this case, he is to disclose the matter to a higher superior.

To the best of his ability the companion will also encourage union between the subjects themselves, and with their immediate superior. He should be like an angel of peace in his relationship with them all, and take care that their feeling and love towards their superior befit this person who takes the place of Christ the Lord for them.

He is to inform his general or provincial superior, etc.,



according to instructions, about matters recommended by him or the person with whom he is associated. He should do this on his own account, substituting for the latter if he cannot fulfil his duty in this matter through ill-health, occupations, or any other cause.

On the other hand, the superior to whom he is given must observe certain things in regard to his companion. First, he must realise that he has been given the companion as an auxiliary and helper, not as a subject, and is to show him special love and respect. He will treat the companion as a friend, so that he may be encouraged to say what he feels, to express himself more easily, and see how he can help him. Moreover, he should make sure that he possesses authority and is loved by those below him so that he may use his ministry in their regard more usefully.

If more than normal difficulties seem to occur, he should discuss them with him, asking his opinion and encouraging him to say what he feels (even when he is not asked) and to remind him about matters which concern his person and office. When he has heard what the companion has to say, he himself will be in a better position to decide what is necessary.

In the execution of his office of government of his subjects, he will use his companion as a faithful minister in matters of greater importance, whether these are general, regarding the houses, or particular, regarding any of the brethren.

He will make use of his companion's work in matters pertaining and due to the Provost General. In all things he will consider and trust him as himself (but without his power) in union of spirit in Christ our Lord.

Two other necessary causes should also be noticed which may underlie the need for a companion. First, the person sent on the principal task may require greater help on account of his lack of experience and familiarity with this kind of government, or for other reasons, even though his aims and life are extremely upright for the greater glory of God. Second, one of those who are to live with him may appear to benefit less under obedience to the person-in-charge than as his companion, provided of course he possesses the talent to help him.

And subjects may sometimes make their confession to the companion, if this is thought opportune.

**958.** Well-observed order, both among superiors themselves, of whom some are subject to others, and by inferiors towards superiors, is proper to the virtue of obedience. Hence,

individuals belonging to any body, or sodality or congregation, or living in houses and residences, must have recourse to the commissioned member, to the prefect or director, or to the prior or to the local rector, or to the parochial provost, and allow themselves to be ruled in all things. Commissioned members and priors will have recourse to the prefect, director, and rector, or to any provost or vicar, in accordance with their instructions. Prefects and rectors must often have recourse to their provosts or the vicars, or other immediate superiors. All parochial provosts will be in frequent direct communication with the diocesan provost or with his vicars appointed for the purpose, and diocesan superiors with provincials whose decision they will follow in all things. Provincial superiors will have the same relationship with the General. In this way, subordination is preserved, and union, which depends to a great degree on subordination, will be preserved with the help of the grace of God (E.).

(E.) For particular reasons the Provost General may consider it more in harmony with divine worship if a member is immediately subject to himself. In this event he can exempt him from obedience to other provosts and rectors. In most cases, however, results will be better in so far as they spring from perfect observance of the subordination of obedience we have described.

**959.** Obedience is rendered easier by the virtue of superiors and their skill in commanding acquired by experience and perfect knowledge of their subjects. For this reason it will be of assistance if superiors are not moved from their position without a just cause. They should grow old therein with their companions. In particular, provosts must not be moved from their positions lightly, and although greater facility is allowed with other superiors and subjects, they too should not be moved very easily. The higher the positions held, the more this should be observed, so that rectors are moved with greater difficulty than prefects, prefects with greater difficulty than commissioned members, and the last more rarely than subjects (E.). If there is a just cause, however, they will be changed. All superiors, nevertheless, should be chosen only for three-year periods, and confirmed in their office from one triennium to another, if necessary.

(E.) Generally speaking, it is not a good thing to promote

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parochial provosts to a diocesan provostship, nor diocesan provosts to a provincial provostship. This constitution is in harmony with the rule laid down previously about the sphere of activity. The sphere which accords with parochial government is not commensurate with provincial or universal government. Hence the Provost General should not choose provincial and diocesan provosts from parochial provosts, but rather from the doctors, or the vicars of provincials and diocesans, or from presbyters occupied in less restricted and determined ministries.

It is not opposed to this constitution if a provost is transferred from one house to another in the same order. Nevertheless, this is not to be done easily unless there is some clear advantage from it. To ensure strict observance of this constitution, the Superior General will not be able to promote a provost to a higher provostship without the agreement of at least two of his four closest aides.

Nevertheless, his faculty to change or promote other officials, rectors, etc., is left intact. He will use this with care, however, keeping before his mind especially union in spirit, which is made easier by the knowledge members have of one another.

960. A great contribution is made to union and obedience if superiors form a happy fellowship with their ministers, and all of these a happy fellowship with the subjects assigned to them. When a superior is chosen, therefore, his qualities and those of his ministers and subjects must be considered. The latter should also be changed, if necessary, so that the moral body constituted by a superior and his aides may be knit together harmoniously and united in such a way that the words of holy scripture about the people of God may be applied to it: 'The whole assembly together' (1 Esd 2: [Neh 7: 66]) (E.).

(E.) Each provost is given two vicars for spiritual and temporal charity who should be his right and left hands, as it were. It is especially helpful if these officials harmonise easily. Although the best choice depends considerably upon the full knowledge of all the members possessed by the superior who has to designate these vicars with their provost, he will be assisted if he listens to the provost superiors, and questions about the matter the provost to whom the vicars are to be assigned. This provost, disposed to accept everything decided by the superior, can make known to him with all humility the persons whom he believes most suitable for him.

**961.** If, contrary to our hope, anyone is found (E.1) to be the author of division and dissension between those living united with one another and their head, he is to be most carefully separated (E.2) from that body as a plague which can seriously infect it if an immediate remedy is not found.

(E.1) The desire to have permanent superiors makes this even more necessary. There is ample cause for changing subjects if they do not live happily with their superior, or if their esteem for him and confidence in him is diminished. Indeed, a desire to augment mutual love is a sufficient reason for changing members.

Love and esteem can languish through long familiarity also. If this occurs, brethren should be sent elsewhere for a time so that when they return to their former companions they may be more pleasing and acceptable to them. The same is to be said about superiors.

Members belonging to different regions and languages are to be intermingled, and no house composed of one nation only is permitted. At least the superior appointed should be from another nation in order to prevent the gradual introduction of national discrimination, a great blow to unity, and to remove the impediment to mutual love normally caused by diversity of origin. Foreigners chosen should be exemplary and gifted persons, capable of rousing love and esteem for their own people.

All should learn the language of the region in which they live unless their own is more useful.

(E.2) *Separated* is to be understood here either as dismissal of a member from the Society, or his transference from one house to another if this is sufficient to secure his amendment. He can also be assigned a place outside our houses if the person whose responsibility it is judges that this would be better for the honour of God and the common good. These penalties are to be imposed especially on those who, through appeals of people outside, or in any other way, restrict the superiors' freedom to govern.

**962.** On the part of the Provost General, the qualities with which he must be adorned (E.) (as has been said in Part 10) contribute to this union in spirit, and enable him to perform his duty as head of the Society towards all its members. The impulse required to bring the Society to its chosen end should descend from the head into the Society. In this way, all the

authority of the provincials flows from the Provost General as the head, and through them to the diocesans, and then in order to the parochial provosts, the rectors, the commissioned members, and finally to the individual persons. With regard to the communication of graces within the Society, it is sufficient to say: love, obedience and union will be preserved between lower members and their superiors in so far as the former depend upon the latter.

(E.) In the first place, it will help him to have at heart, and express in his work, great love and care for the subjects. Such love will enable them to realise that their superior has the knowledge, desire and capacity to govern them well in the Lord.

The same purpose, and many others, will be furthered if his closest aides know how best to advise him. He should make use of their work at all times to the glory of God in matters to be determined in various localities for the well-being of the Society.

An additional help is the superior's circumspection and orderly manner in commanding. He should keep subjects to their duty of obedience with the utmost kindness, courtesy, charity and wisdom so that they make their relationship with their superiors a tie of love rather than fear, although fear is also useful at times. He will also leave some decisions to their own judgment and will sometimes overlook a mishap and sympathise, if he thinks this beneficial.

**963.** The Provost General, who will always be the Roman diocesan provost (E.1), will as far as possible make diocesan provosts provincials in places having ready communication with inferiors and with the provost superior (E.2). In the same way, diocesan provosts, if they have many parochial houses, can with permission from the General, make certain parochial provosts their vicars or deans in the most suitable places.

(E.1) Nevertheless, he can visit members established in other places, and live periodically at Rome if he considers this to be for the glory of God, and elsewhere if necessity demands.

(E.2) It is useful to take political divisions into account in selecting places to establish provincials.

**964.** It will be of great assistance if the Provost General, provincials and diocesans have certain men to accompany them

on their visitations of the Society (E.) to see whether all things proceed in due order. In this way, good order will be maintained everywhere, and persons will be available who know the state of the Society perfectly from their own experience.

(E.) The Provost General will visit his diocese every year, at least in the person of his spiritual vicar or someone else, and his province every third year, either in person or through his closest aides, or through delegates chosen from among the presbyters. He will also tour the provinces at suitable times, either personally or through others.

**965.** The principal bond on both sides establishing the two-fold union of members amongst themselves and with their head is the love of God and our Lord JESUS Christ, and his kingdom, the Church. If superiors and inferiors are closely united with supreme and eternal Goodness, their own union with one another will be easily achieved since God himself will be among them. Their union will come about through the same love which, descending from God, reaches out to all neighbours, and in a special way to the body of the Society. This love was also the object of the Son's prayer to his Father: 'That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me' (Jn 17: [21]). Charity, therefore, in which is perfected all righteousness and virtue, will contribute marvellously towards union on both sides by bringing in its wake contempt of all temporal things through which love of self, the most serious enemy of this union and of universal good, normally errs. Concord is also of great assistance both in interior things, such as the doctrine of truth, right judgments and good will, and in exterior matters, such as dress, the ceremonies at Mass, and in other things which have been brought to perfect and fitting unity in so far as diversity and imperfection of persons, places and other eventualities permit.

**966.** Finally, frequent correspondence between inferiors and superiors will be of great assistance, together with constant despatch of information from both sides (E.1) and opportunities of hearing edifying news from various places (E.2). Responsibility for this will lie with superiors, especially with the General and the provincials. They will see that in every place news which

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brings mutual consolation and edification in the Lord can be known by others without those exaggerations which lessen its truth.

(E.1) Each week, or as often as possible, rectors must write to their immediate superior, parochial provosts to their diocesan provost, diocesans to their provincial, and provincials to the Provost General. All superiors below the level of provincial must write to the General at least once a year in addition to the prescribed reports. Commissioned members and other superiors will write in accordance with the instructions given them orally or in writing. Confidential letters should be marked: *Confidential*, and letters requiring the attention of the procurator general should be stamped outside with the letter *P*.

(E.2) Edifying news about the Church, as well as the Society, should be made known to all. To provide for this, the following system should be adopted. Every year in each diocese a letter should be written in Latin containing edifying news only, and sent by the diocesan to the Provost General. The latter will be responsible for communicating the entire letter, or excerpts from it, to the whole Society for its edification and instruction. These letters must be written in an elegant, unadorned style, and contain the exact truth, so that they can be received and preserved as historical records. If necessary, they should be accompanied by proofs.

## CHAPTER 2

### The election of a Provost General to succeed a deceased General

967. We must now speak of union in person, which comes about at congregations of the Society. First, we shall have to deal with the special congregation assembled for the election of a Provost General. It is called a *congregation of the Roman diocese*, wherever it takes place.

968. Among the presbyters of the Society, the following have an active vote in the election of a Provost General. 1st, those who preside in each diocesan house (E.1); 2nd, those who preside in each provostal house of the Roman diocese; and finally 3rd, all *presbyters of the Society* ascribed to the major Roman house at the death of the Provost (E.2).

(E.1) When provostships are vacant, the vicars of spiritual charity succeed to government (unless the Provost General has established otherwise) and have a vote and place in the election of the Provost General as though they were provosts.

(E.2) Every house will have a catalogue of those ascribed to it for the purpose of helping their neighbour. This inscription must be certified from the decrees, and no one can be ascribed in several houses simultaneously.

Those living as guests in the above-mentioned Roman house, and not assigned to it, are not considered to have a right to take part in the election because of their residence in the house.

However, those ascribed to the same house, but absent on business for the Society at the time of the election, are electors. Nevertheless, they are not obliged to assemble if they continue to be impeded by their work. It is sufficient that they send their votes by letter. The same regulations will be observed with regard to these letters as are laid down for the others.

If the Provost General dies in a house other than the major Roman house, or outside the houses of the Society in the absence of his vicars, the superior presiding in the house where the General expires, or whichever of the brethren is nearest if the General dies outside our houses, will have the responsibility of informing the major Roman house of the Provost's decease. The Vicar nominated, or in the absence of a



nomination the person nearest in authority to the General while he lived, will be recognised as Vicar General responsible for the election.

**969.** Although all these persons have an equal vote, only the electors in the Roman diocese (E.) are obliged to assemble in person. The others will send their vote by letter.

(E.) If any of those possessing an active vote are present where the congregation is to be held, they can all take part in the congregation.

On the day appointed by the Vicar for the congregation, there should be present at least two-thirds of those obliged to assemble in person. If not, matters should be delayed until they arrive, at least until they have sent their votes in writing, or through a procurator or procurators. The electors able to be present will decide whether the election is to be deferred if their votes cannot be obtained in writing or in any other way, and time seems extremely short. If they are unanimous, or nearly so, that the Society would be placed in great danger by delay, they will carry out the election as if delegated, and it will be considered ratified by all.

**970.** All those professed in the Society as *presbyters of the Society* and constituting its first category of persons, possess a passive vote.

**971.** Indicting the above-mentioned congregation will be the responsibility of the Vicar General, as has been said in Part 10, chapter 9.

**972.** The place of assembly for electors obliged to congregate for the election of a General will normally be the *major* or *generalitial* (E.) house at Rome where the General usually resides. The electoral body required to assemble for a valid election may, however, decide by a majority vote to convene elsewhere.

(E.) Even though the General may reside elsewhere for a period, one house at Rome should be declared the *major house*. This is the house spoken of here. As long as there is no house of this kind available, another house will be designated in its place.

**973.** The election will take place as soon as possible. A maximum period of six months will be allowed from the time of sending the advisory letters about the election if an elector

cannot send his vote soon because of distance or for some other just cause (E.). The congregation will take place, and be equally valid, if the votes of those not assembled have not arrived within six months owing to the difficulty of travel, or for any other reason.

(E.) Father Vicar General will write these letters as soon as possible. In this and other matters pertaining to the election, he will make use of the advice and assistance of those who aided the deceased General. For their part, they are obliged to place themselves at his service for the purpose of the election of the Provost General with the care and respect they would give to the General himself.

974. Nevertheless, if necessity requires, the six-month period can be prolonged by the Vicar on the majority vote of the electors present with him. If, in the meantime, letters containing votes arrive before the congregation, even after six months, the votes will be valid.

975. The person responsible will inform by letter the *presbyters* of the Roman diocesan house, the *parochial provosts* of the same diocese, and the *diocesan provosts* of the entire Society of the cause, place and time of the required assembly so that the first two groups may be present, and the last may send their votes (E.). He will also remind them that all should pray, and that Masses should be celebrated everywhere for the successful election of a Provost. In addition, superiors will take care that all living under the obedience of the Society commend fervently to the Lord in their daily prayers and in the sacrifice of the Mass those assembling or sending votes for the election of the General, so that whatever is done in the course of the election may redound to the greater honour and praise and glory of the divine Name.

(E.) Care will be taken to see that others, besides those having to vote, will be present at the congregation. Even though they have no right to vote, their assistance will be useful in providing further knowledge of affairs, if necessary, and for carrying out other business after the election of the General, if the newly-elect thinks fit.

976. On the morning after the congregation has convened, the hymn to the Holy Spirit with its prayer will be recited kneeling at a convocation of those fathers only who have an undoubted

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right to vote. After the prayer, the Vicar will give an account of matters pertaining to the congregation and carried out after the death of the General. It will then be decided by a majority vote that those present form a legitimate congregation.

977. Then, if the Vicar and his four nearest aides have doubts about any persons' legitimate right to vote, he will refer the matter to the decision of the congregation. Those judged to possess a right to be admitted will be called and take their places.

978. The congregation should be asked whether all defects should be indemnified if any occur.

979. The congregation will elect a secretary by secret majority vote (E.1) (it will elect all other officials before the election of the General in the same way). His office will extend to the general congregation, to any particular congregation of deputies, and to the election of the Provost General, but terminate at the end of the election. Two of the older presbyters, together with the Vicar (E.2), will scrutinise the votes for the election of the secretary (as in any other ballot, the votes are first to be counted aloud). If there is a tie, these three persons will again vote secretly for one of those who have tied. The secretary will be the person who obtains two of their votes (E.3).

(E.1) The votes of the sick electors outside the place for the congregation need not be sought in this election, nor in any election which depends upon a *majority* vote. These votes are required only if the sick are in the same house when a majority of more than a half is called for.

(E.2) Whenever there is a ballot, the two persons seated on the right and left of the president of the congregation will scrutinise the votes with him.

(E.3) In all business prior to the election, the Vicar will have only one vote, with a right to precedence when a public vote results in a tie.

980. If the congregation takes place at Rome, it should be proposed that a group accompany the Vicar to the sovereign Pontiff. They will ask his blessing for the election of the Provost, and for the other business of the congregation.

981. One of the electors will be chosen by ballot to give the second address or exhortation on the day of the election. Before

delivering it, however, he will show it to the Vicar and his closest aides. They will advise him in good time if anything has to be changed, corrected or added.

982. A non-electer will be chosen by ballot to be responsible for the enclosure of the electors on the day of the election. Four others will also be appointed by the Vicar.

983. Then the congregation will elect by ballot and depute four of those assembled to examine, with the Vicar and the four men, in the presence of the secretary of the congregation, whether the Society has suffered any great damage, or any great damage is feared, which should be redressed or remedied by special care and effort. The four elected should, as far as possible, be of different languages. If there proves to be anything of this nature, they will draw up, with the help of the secretary, a questionnaire for the use of the electors. It will include only those matters in which the deputed fathers are certain that the Society has suffered, or from which they fear harm will soon come to the Society. The deputies' business will require a majority vote and the work of this investigation must be completed within a maximum of four days (E.).

(E.) The Vicar, the secretary, the deputies, and all those who have acquired knowledge in any way about the delator, are commanded under obedience not to reveal this person against his will in any way, directly or indirectly, to the congregation itself or to anyone inside or outside the congregation, or to any of their colleagues.

984. Individual electors and others having a right to vote after the election of the Provost will make known to the deputies within two days of their being chosen all matters pertaining to this investigation. Others among the brethren are not to be rejected if they have anything to propose to the deputies; on the other hand, they should not be asked to do so. In any case, information received from those who have no right to vote will only be accepted if it is signed by them. Those having a right to vote can communicate their information without a signature, but can only refer that of others, even of electors, when it bears the signature of its authors.

985. The secretary, and two of the deputies chosen by the

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Vicar, will arrange the information received so that all matters concerning one topic can be read and discussed together in the congregation of deputies, who will choose the principal subjects, rejecting subsidiary affairs and those which do not appear useful for drawing up the questionnaire. Only matters pertaining to the election are to be admitted; mention of persons, or topics which refer to particular persons, such as complaints, justifications, accusations and the like, are to be referred by the deputies and the whole congregation (if by chance they are brought to its notice) to those deputed after the election of the General, unless there are some matters concerning electoral intrigue which have to be examined by judges.

986. It is not necessary to read publicly in the congregation the questionnaire drawn up by the deputies. It is sufficient to communicate it to the individual electors before, or at least at the beginning of, the four-day period. When asked by the electors for an interpretation or explanation of the questionnaire, deputies must inform them of the state of the Society in these matters, and of the way it has suffered, or it is feared that it will suffer. However, this information must be relevant to the successful outcome of the election of the future General.

987. Only matters pertaining to the election itself will be brought to the notice of the general congregation before the election. The Vicar and the deputies will determine by a majority vote what seems to need bringing forward. Afterwards, it will be lawful for anyone who remains dissatisfied to raise the matter before the congregation. The congregation itself, although it cannot frame decrees before the election, will be able to decide and carry out what pertains to or is helpful to the election.

988. If matters of some importance concerning the election are brought to the congregation's notice, they will be discussed in a single day with arguments for and against, and if greater information about these is required it may be sought from the Vicar or other electors. The next day, decisions will be given. These topics, and all business dealt with before the election, will be decided on a majority vote. If matters are raised which appear less important to the Vicar, without contradiction from

the congregation, they should be dealt with on the same or another day.

**989.** If anyone knows that a person has aspired to the office of Provost General, or even then aspires to it, either for himself or for another, working for this directly or indirectly, or expressing it by some sign, or has attempted in any way to impede or corrupt the integrity and complete freedom of the election, he is obliged under pain of excommunication *latae sententiae* to make this known to the Vicar or one of the older *presbyters* (who will confer with the Vicar) (E.). A person convicted of ambition in this respect shall be deprived of both active and passive vote as disqualified to elect others, or to be elected himself; nor can he be admitted into that congregation, or any other at any time.

(E.) A person must be clearly convicted by evidence, or in any other way capable of demonstrating the truth of the accusation of this kind of ambition, before he can be deprived of his vote as disqualified. If the proofs provide only a very probable suspicion, without complete certainty, those who consider that they are aware of this probability must not vote for the accused. However, he is not to be deprived, as disqualified, of his right to a vote. The suspicion is not to be spread, especially if it is not thought probable. In this case, it must not harm in any way the one who has been unjustly accused.

Judgment in the matter is the responsibility of the Vicar, together with the Provincials who are present, and three or four other persons chosen from the closer aides of the deceased General. There will be no condemnation without at least a majority opinion among the judges who, if they pronounce a judgment different from what they feel in their heart, *ipso facto* incur excommunication.

If the Vicar himself, or one of those who should act as judge, is accused, the other provincials present, and four of those closest to the dead Provost, will adjudicate in the absence of the person accused. Anyone who has information about such an accusation should go to the persons above-mentioned and summon them to examine the matter.

The decisions of these judges are to be accepted entirely without appeal. Anyone who thinks he has been injured by the judges will be permitted to state his case to the congregation after the election. If he does not justify himself sufficiently, he will be punished at the discretion of the congregation.

990. All delations concerning electoral intrigues should be judged before the four-day meeting preceding the election (unless during the four days someone is discovered to have acted, or is acting, ambitiously). Only the members of the congregation are to be called to give advice in the matter. All, including the delators and witnesses, are bound to secrecy about the information laid, except in speaking to electors during the four-day information period. The judges themselves before passing sentence must not inform electors about matters they have learned as judges. If a judge does not preserve secrecy, he is deprived *ipso facto* of his position as judge, and the other judges will pass judgment. After the election he should be punished at the discretion of the congregation, along with others who have broken the secret whether they are persons the judges have asked for advice, the delators, or witnesses. The punishment will be more severe if they are found to have calumniated anyone. These judges, whose duty is to decide about pre-electoral intrigues, will have the responsibility, during the remainder of the congregation after the election, of investigating matters which seem to have been done contrary to the Constitutions during the period from the death of the General to the creation of another (the Vicar keeps his place among them according to the order proper to the congregation). The judges' power will extend to enquiries about guilty persons and to suitable punishment of those found guilty. Not only can they deprive guilty persons of an active or passive vote temporarily or permanently; they can also render them incapable of any duties and offices whatsoever, and impose at discretion any other penalties. The Provost General will always be present to direct their judgment according to his prudence and his universal love as Father, although he will abstain from voting even if he were a judge before his election. The General himself will be the judge if there is question of intrigue in the election of his personal assistants. It will not be lawful to initiate any enquiry, or to accept any delation whatsoever, about the General and his election.

991. Before the four-day period, there should be a discussion about the need to await any absent members before beginning the election of the Provost. If the decision is negative, their place

should nevertheless be kept open for them in case of their arrival.

992. When this has been done, an assistant will be chosen for the election on the morning of the fourth day preceding the election of the Provost. The election of this assistant will follow the rules laid down for the choice of secretary. After the appointment of the assistant, the Vicar General will address all the electors and urge them to carry out the election in a manner befitting the greater honour of God and the good government of the Society. In addition to this day, the electors will have the three following days to commend themselves to God and to consider better in the light of information obtained from those well able to give it which of the presbyters of the entire Society is best suited for this responsibility. However, they will not make any personal decision about who is to be elected until they have entered the place of the election, and have been enclosed (E.).

(E.) As soon as they have received letters concerning the election of a new Provost, the diocesan provosts who cannot be present at the Congregation will commend themselves to God and seek the help of the prayers of others.

Before deliberating about the choice they consider in the Lord best suited to the common good from the persons known to them, they will ponder the matter for some days, without neglecting consultation with men of a certain standing who live with them, and whose advice they should make use of. These consultors must preserve secrecy about the matters discussed with their Provost.

It is of great assistance if the general opinion of the uprightness and standing of the Provost General is as high as possible. For this reason provosts having a vote in the election will question each of the presbyters of the Society individually at the annual visitation, and ascertain which of the principal men known to them in the Society they would wish to be ruled by in the case of an election for a new Provost after the present one. They will give these presbyters sufficient time to make a decision. The latter will manifest their opinion in the matter to their provost in the sight of God and in virtue of holy obedience. The provost will make a note of each one's decision, and will thus come to know the persons favoured for election by the greater part of the *presbyters of the Society*



in his jurisdiction. This opinion will have great weight with him.

Although it is helpful for each diocesan provost to take steps to know the more eminent men in the Society, and to compile a catalogue of them for himself, he must not discuss this matter with others before the appropriate time, nor decide anything for himself before the election.

**993.** During the four-day period, no member of the congregation shall leave the house without leave from the Vicar who will not grant it without conferring with the four men and the assistant for the election. He will also let them know if he himself wishes to go out. In both cases, the assent of three of them is needed. Superiors will not permit others to go out of any house or college in the place where the congregation is being held unless the necessity is urgent. In this way electors will have time to collect information and, with the others, to devote themselves to saying Mass, fasting and bodily mortifications. The Vicar will decide how fasts, penances and prayers are to be organised during this week.

**994.** All the electors, without any exception, will seek information during this four-day period only, and from the electors alone.

**995.** Information must be sought about any of the presbyters with the four vows, whether absent or present, who have been considered by anyone as possibly suited for the office of Provost General.

**996.** Defects which may present obstacles to a good election should be sought out and made known, although matters not to the election should be omitted. This will be done according to the Constitutions and the questionnaire drawn up by the deputies, as has been said. However, no one is to be restrained from asking about other things which he thinks should be questioned.

**997.** The person giving information must be asked whether he has anything else to say about the one concerning whom he is being questioned, or whether he feels that information should be sought about someone else, or whether clearer and more secure information can be obtained about any matter from

anyone at all amongst those from whom information is to be sought (E.).

(E.) One should not enquire whether this or that person seems suitable for the post or not. Information should be requested about matters enabling one to form a judgment regarding a person's suitability. The intention of the questioner should be free from all inordinate affections, and he should not permit himself to be led by vicious or even human considerations. He will keep before his eyes only the glory of God and the better government of the Society (which is directed to the common good of souls).

He should be free from all ambition for himself and others, and must take care to avoid having or showing a willing propensity to exclude or omit anyone, even in the case of the election of the secretary and deputies. While receiving information about one person, he will keep his mind open to others and his heart to God, remembering that he will be under oath to choose the person he considers most suitable.

**998.** If some serious matter demanding secrecy has come to light in the information obtained, the secret must be safeguarded, except from the electors, in virtue of holy obedience. Mindful of charity, each one should be most careful not to reveal defects which he may have heard, nor name or indicate in any way the person who has mentioned them.

**999.** When the information has been obtained, consideration and discussion are needed. Prayer, however, is much more important. Through it, light is sought from God, the fountain of wisdom, to judge well and to elect the person most pleasing to God. This grace of God, rather than human diligence, is to constitute our hope. However, the elector should remember in the meantime that his judgment, as well as his will, is to abstain from a final conclusion until the electors have entered the enclosure where each one, after prayer, is to decide whom he will choose (E.).

(E.) No one is to press unasked-for information upon another. If he does, he should be delated to the judge for electoral intrigue. The person questioned should also beware in his reply of human inclination towards ambition, or indeed of any propensity which does not spring from a desire for the honour of God, the common good and good government of the Society.

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Enlargements and exaggerations, as well as lies, are to be avoided. Information is not to be communicated rashly, but in a balanced and mature way. Each must relate as certain what is certain, as opinion what is opinion, as hearsay what is hearsay, remembering that he is acting before God to whom he will render an account of the information he has made known. If anyone hears of another's defect from an informant, he should mention it to others if asked (together with the name of the person from whom he has heard it), or send the questioner to the original informant.

Finally, anyone receiving anonymous letters, without signature or name, about the exclusion or acceptance of another, should destroy them as soon as possible without showing them to anybody. However, if he judges the matter sufficiently serious, he must mention it to the Vicar or the Provost General, or speak about it under the seal of secrecy to one of the assembled congregation. for the sake of advice.

1000. On the evening before the election-day an altar with a crucifix, together with a kneeler and a table for the Vicar, the secretary and the assistant, and an urn for the votes will be put in the place designated for the election. As many ballot papers as necessary will be prepared with the oath on one side and the formula of election on the other, so that the elector has to write only the name of his choice and his own name on the paper.

1001. The box containing the votes previously sent by the absent electors will be taken to the same place chosen for the congregation. The votes should have been sealed by the electors (E.), and the box locked with two different keys, one of which shall be kept by the Vicar, the other by the senior of the four men. The box will be placed in a locked cupboard in the place where the congregation is to be held, and taken out after all the votes of those present have been collected.

(E.) Ballot papers recording the votes should be the same for present and absent electors, without any additions, and if possible well closed with the seal of the major house whence they have been sent. These ballot papers should be despatched to the Vicar General with letters from absent voters declaring that the prescribed regulations, which must be individually enumerated, have all been observed, especially the oath required of the electors. The vote itself, however, will not be disclosed. The Vicar will open these letters only in the presence of the senior

amongst the four men, who will also be responsible for looking after them.

**1002.** On the day of the election, which follows these three days, the Vicar, or the person chosen by him, shall celebrate a Mass of the Holy Spirit. All shall attend the Mass and receive the most holy BODY of Christ.

(E.) Those absent will also say a private Mass for this intention before sending their letters and votes.

**1003.** Afterwards, led by a cross, those with a right to vote will go to the place where the congregation is to be held, while other members of the Society sing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and the house bell tolls (it will be rung from the communion to the moment of enclosure). At the place for the congregation the electors will say the same hymn, alternating in a low voice. After the enclosure, other members of the Society will say the litanies and continue in prayer for the length of the election.

**1004.** The electors shall be enclosed in the place for the congregation by the previously-chosen deputies in such a way that they cannot leave, nor be given any nourishment except bread and water, until they have chosen a Provost General. All will observe silence in this place, not speaking to one another about the election, unless something appears necessary. In this case, the remark should be addressed to all (E.).

(E.) But no objections will be allowed in the precincts. No one may propose anything that could in any way impede, disturb or defer the election.

**1005.** The first business after the enclosure of the electors will be the address given by the person deputed. Generally speaking, it will be an exhortation to elect the Provost most suitable to God's greater glory. However, no particular person will be indicated in any way. After the exhortation each one will pray within his heart to God for an hour, and in silence will decide for himself in the sight of his Creator and Lord the person whom he will choose. The choice will be made on the basis of what he has already learned, without additional information, forbidden in the enclosure. He shall choose the Provost General from what he has already discovered through previous or

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present graces of enlightenment and reason granted by God. He must choose one of the presbyters, present or absent, who has taken the four vows.

1006. After the prayer, the Father Vicar will stand and give the others absolution with the following formula: 'I, N. N., Vicar General of the Society of Charity, by the authority of almighty God granted to my unworthy self through the Apostolic See, absolve you from any sentence of excommunication, suspension and interdict, and from any other sentences, censures and penalties whatsoever; and, in so far as it is necessary for a lawful election, I dispense you from every irregularity (provided you have not incurred these sentences, censures, penalties and irregularities on account of defects pertaining to this election). In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' The same absolution will be given to the Vicar by the priest longest ordained. No detriment whatsoever to the lawful election of the Provost will be entailed if it is discovered after the absolution that one of the electors had incurred any censure or irregularity during the time of the election because of some defect relating to the election.

1007. After the absolution, each elector will choose for himself three persons, to one of whom he will give preference. If this person cannot be elected, the elector will nominate the second, and finally the third. He will write the three names he has selected on the voting paper, in the order he has chosen, each name under another with its own number, as the model shows (E.1):

|                             |       |                        |
|-----------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| I choose as Provost General |       |                        |
| 1st.                        | N. N. | or transfer my vote to |
| 2nd.                        | N. N. | or to                  |
| 3rd.                        | N. N. |                        |
| Signature:                  |       |                        |

He will also sign his name. An hour at most will be allowed for this (E.2).

(E.1) No one is allowed to write more than one name in each space, or choose a person in more than one space, or leave a space without a name. If this happens, the ballot paper will be burnt as null. Hence, three names, neither more nor less, must be inserted in the separate places.

(E.2) Ballot papers considered as doubtful expressions of the minds of electors by three or four of the closer aides of the deceased General, the Vicar General and the provincials, are invalid, but they will not be an impediment to election by the other papers.

**1008.** In the meantime, the Vicar takes from the cupboard the box containing the votes of the absent electors, and places it on the table. When all have returned to their seats after writing the names, the Vicar himself and the other custodian should say: ‘In the sight of God I declare on oath without any deception that this box’ (he should touch it with his hand) ‘contains all the votes it ought to contain (E), that is, all the votes sent up to now by the absent brethren who have a right to elect the Provost General’.

(E.) If any of the votes sent by an absent member is invalidated through lack of an accompanying witness to the oath, the ballot paper is not to be put in the box by the custodians, but shown closed to the congregation before whom the custodian should burn it.

**1009.** Then the Vicar, the secretary and the assistant again stand at the table, and individually take an oath before God that they will sincerely accept and make known the votes of those present. The formula for the oath is: ‘I call as my witness God, who sees all things, that I shall faithfully accept and make known the votes, and carry out with a sincere intention whatever my office requires. In the sight of the divine Majesty, and the entire Society which we here represent, I affirm that I wish to admit no one who should not be admitted, nor to exclude anyone who should be excluded.’

**1010.** After this declaration, the secretary, standing at the table, says to the Vicar: ‘Father, cast your vote in the name of JESUS.’ Rising, the Vicar goes to kneel at the altar before the crucifix, makes the sign of the cross in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and reads the oath written or

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printed (E.) on the back of the ballot paper. Rising, he puts the ballot paper in the urn, holding it between two fingers so that it may be seen. Bowing once more to the crucifix, he returns to his place and then says to his two companions and the others: 'Let all cast their votes in order in the name of JESUS.' The secretary rises, then the assistant, followed by the others. All take the same oath individually in their order, and cast their votes as the Vicar did.

(E.) The formula of the oath is as follows: 'I, N.N., call upon JESUS Christ, eternal Wisdom, to witness that I choose and nominate as Provost General of the Society of Charity the person I consider most suitable to bear this burden.'

Although all swear that they choose the person whom they feel in the Lord is most suited for bearing this burden, we declare that if anyone considers that two or more are equally suitable, he may freely give his vote to any one of them.

When the absent diocesan provosts have written down their votes and enclosed them in the letters, as has been said, they will assemble all the presbyters and coadjutors of the major house and take the same oath in their presence declaring that they have named, in the letters they hold, only the persons they considered in the Lord most suited for ruling the Society, other considerations excluded. The two oldest *presbyters* of each diocesan house will accept the oath in the name of the Society after one of them has given absolution to the diocesan. The written evidence they give of this to their provost will be sent to the congregation with the other letters. If it is lacking, the vote will be null.

Absent electors who are not provosts must take the same oath before at least two presbyters, and send evidence of the oath.

**1011.** Then, before all, the box on the table containing the votes of the absent electors is opened, and all the collected ballot sheets are put into it by the secretary. Again before all, the secretary himself, with two others assisting him and examining the votes, will call out only the names of those chosen in the order in which they are written. Four others chosen for the purpose will each write down the names without moving from their places.

**1012.** After this, the secretary, with his assistants, will count the votes openly to see who has been elected Provost General.

An *absolute majority*, as they call it, is needed, The following points are to be observed in this respect.

1st, a person found to have more than half the votes cast in the first section of the ballot papers, that is, a number of votes exceeding half the number of ballot papers, will be Provost General.

2nd, if no one named in the first section has this number of votes, then, beginning with the person who obtained most votes amongst those nominated in the first section, the votes he has received in the second section, if there are any, shall be added. If with these he obtains more than half the votes he will be Provost General.

3rd, if the number of votes in favour of this person does not reach the total required, the same will be done with the others named in the first section. The first one found to have obtained, with the votes of the second section, more than half, as has been said, will be Provost.

4th, if none of those in the first section obtains more than half when the votes of those nominating him in the second section have been added to his number, a person who has more than half the votes in the second place only will be Provost.

5th, if no one has obtained this number, all those nominated in the first and second sections shall be placed in order according to the greater number of votes obtained by each from both sections added together. If two or more are equal when both sections have been added together, the person who has received most votes in the first section has precedence. At this point, beginning with the first in the order indicated and working through to the others, the votes obtained by each in the third section are added. The first one found in this order to have more than half the votes will be Provost.

6th, finally, if there is still no Provost, a person found to have obtained more than half the votes in the third section only will be Provost even if he has not been nominated in the first and second section.

7th, if several persons have received an equal number of votes in the first section, or even in the second section, a



doubt may arise about the obligatory order in which votes from the second and third sections are to be added. In this case, preference is to be given to the person receiving the greatest number of votes in the following section. This person will be Provost if, together with these votes, he obtains more than half the votes.

**1013.** When these rules have been observed, there may still be no result either because no one is found to have been given half the votes, or because two or more, having consistently received equal votes in the first, second and third section, exceed by an equal number of votes half the ballot. In these cases, only those electors present in the congregation will hold a new ballot on the same day, and without departing from the enclosure. In the first case, each will name on new papers three of those nominated in the preceding ballot; in the second case, each will name on new papers the single name of the person who has their preference from those only who have obtained an equal majority of votes. Then, following the same rules laid down above, and after the counting has been carried out in the manner and order we have described, the election will rightly produce a Provost General if two-thirds of the electors present name the same person in this new ballot. The electors present can and must cast votes in the same way as often as necessary until a Provost General has been elected.

**1014.** The Vicar General (E.1) will immediately draw up the decree of election in the following terms: 'A count of votes having shown that in full and lawful congregation more than half the total number of votes nominated and chose the Rev. Father N., I, N. N., by authority of the Apostolic See, and of the entire Society, choose the said Rev. Father N. as the Provost General of the Society of Charity in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen' (E.2). Rome, or elsewhere.

(E.1.). If the Vicar General himself is elected, the secretary will announce the votes and draw up the decree, and the decree will be written by the Society, and signed also by the oldest *presbyter* amongst the electors present, and stamped with the seal of the Society.

(E.2) All are bound to consent to the election, as Provost General, of the person chosen by the majority in the manner

described. This mode of election is prescribed by the Constitutions to which those entering the Society have submitted themselves. We declare that this constitution binds seriously the conscience of all the members.

**1015.** After the Vicar has promulgated the matter in the congregation no one has the right to change his vote, or attempt another election after the conclusion of the previous one. This will be observed by everyone not desiring to be considered a schismatic and an author of the Society's downfall, to incur the penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*, and to undergo other grave censures according to the decision of the Society in which every kind of union and homogeneity is fitting for the glory of God.

**1016.** Then, if the person elected Provost General is present, all will immediately come forward (E.1) to render him reverence and obedience by kneeling before him and kissing his hand. The person elected cannot refuse either the election or the reverence shown him (mindful of the One in whose name he must accept it). If he is absent (E.2), the Vicar will receive the promise of obedience in the name of the newly-elect, and all will reverence (E.3) the new General as soon as he arrives after receiving news of his election. All will say together *Te Deum laudamus* etc., after the promise of obedience and the reverence.

(E.1) The Vicar will come first, with the secretary and the assistant, or (if one of them has been elected) the remaining two, and the rest will follow.

(E.2) If the newly-elect is in the city where the election has taken place, no one is to leave the place of the congregation until he has been summoned and received the reverence of them all. Nothing is to be said to him or to others about the election while he is being summoned. Likewise, he is to be summoned immediately if he is not more than eight or ten days' journey away from the city. In the meantime the congregation will abstain from all business. If it is necessary to wait longer, the congregation will continue its business with the Vicar, leaving only the election of the personal assistants and the admonitor until the end, unless the congregation considers that it should wait longer.

(E.3) The consent of the newly-elect is not required since according to the Constitutions, he cannot refuse the dignity in

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the first place, even though he may later resign for just and approved reasons, as we have seen in Part 10.

1017. After reverence has been paid, the General, if he is present, will take immediately before the image of the Crucified the oath about applying or distributing temporal goods to pious works within a year, and not moving them from a former application without a just and evident cause and the consent of three of the four men (858). This oath will be noted in the acts of the congregation. If the General is not present, he will take the oath immediately on his arrival, either before the congregation, if it has not dispersed, or before his council and those electors who are easily available.

1018. The doorkeepers will then be advised of the election by the secretary, and the ballot papers will be burned immediately in the congregation room. Then all will go to the church, while other members of the Society sing *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel* etc. on their way, and *Te Deum laudamus* etc. in the church itself, where a priest will say three prayers, the first to the Trinity, the second in thanksgiving, the third of the day, or of the Blessed Virgin. The Provost will not permit anyone, except the electors, to kiss his hands while he is still in the church.

1019. As soon as the election of the Provost General is known, all the priests throughout the Society will say three Masses on continuous feast-days (E.1); all others will apply three communions and recite three entire rosaries to petition the Holy Spirit for the newly-elect that he may be able to govern well.

(E.1) Those who already say Mass for the Society on these feast-days should simply add the intention of obtaining from the heavenly Father and his Son through the same sacrifices a superabundant out-pouring of the Holy Spirit for the new Provost.

(E.2) All their priest-subjects will say one Mass for all other newly chosen superiors (but not for those newly confirmed in office) on the first feast-day; the others will apply one communion, and recite one entire rosary.

### CHAPTER 3

#### The election of a Provost General during the life of his predecessor

1020. The election of a new Provost will be carried out in the same way in the case of any eventuality which permits the General to be released from office without fault on his part.

1021. Those who have examined the Provost's situation will choose an aide to take responsibility for indicting the congregation and arranging whatever is necessary for the election of a Provost General, as the Vicar General normally does at the death of a Provost. The aide's electors can either prescribe the time of the congregation and other matters pertaining to it (in accordance with what has been said previously), or leave these things to his decision.

1022. If the election of a new Provost is rendered necessary because of grave sin on the part of the Provost, which God forbid, it will be carried out by the electors who are at Rome as if they were delegates, provided that those obliged to examine the General's case can be assembled at Rome. If the latter cannot convene at Rome (E.), the former alone, together with any voters who can be assembled immediately, will carry out the election.

(E.) All the electors present, or nearly all, must declare that the election is so urgent that it cannot be delayed without danger. A decree to this effect will be drawn up before they proceed to elect the new General.

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## CHAPTER 4

### The election of the four personal Assistants and the Admonitor who take care of the General's person

**1023.** The four men who take care of the personal necessities of the Provost will be chosen in the same congregation as the Provost himself. They are to be presbyters of the Society, present or absent, belonging to different nations or to provinces of different nations in the Society. The Provost will take no part in this election, but accept those assigned to him by the congregation (E.). A fifth person, the General's admonitor, will be added to them in the same way.

(E.) The Provost will not preside at the sessions of the congregation devoted to matters pertaining to the General's person. However, the Provost will nominate the chairman for these occasions.

**1024.** These assistants are to be good, trustworthy men, capable of keeping a secret; they should know thoroughly the character and laws of the Society, be lovers of the common good and gifted with discretion, possessing practical experience, talented in social intercourse, and skilful in preserving love and peace among themselves, and with their Superior. Their office does not imply any prelature or dignity. The admonitor must likewise be a deeply religious man, familiar with God in prayer, of a certain age, mature and careful in judgment, emotionally steady, well-versed in our way of life and the business of the Society, for which he possesses great zeal joined with discretion and prudence, not gullible or timid, and of such a nature that he may be considered acceptable to the General while carrying out his duty for the good of the Society without being swayed in any way by human respect (E.).

(E.) The admonitor should take care not to allow his office to diminish the authority in which others hold the General, or the reverence and interior and exterior obedience he must feel in himself as subject to the head of the entire Society. If he judges, after prayer, that a matter is of some importance in the Lord, he

will advise the Provost of it in all courtesy, without however allowing his demeanour to detract from a certain holy freedom. He will also advise the Provost of matters which at least two of the assistants consider should be proposed, and will report back to these assistants after the admonition. If only one of the four assistants, or anyone else in the Society suggests something to him, he should consider the matter before God and do what he thinks is right. In this case, he is not obliged to give an account of what he has done.

**1025.** Four days will be granted for obtaining information. Before this period no one will ask for or give information, which will be sought during the four-day period by all the electors alone about and from persons whom they feel in the Lord should be the subject of their enquiry. However, they may seek information only from those whom they may question for the General's election, as has been said (994). Those questioned cannot information. Both the questioner and the informant should have a pure and sincere intention in what they do, keeping in mind only the greater glory of God, as was said in treating of the election of the Provost General (995–998).

**1026.** The penalty of excommunication *latae sententiae*, from which only the General can absolve, is incurred *ipso facto* by anyone within or without the congregation who in seeking information or in some other way, acts ambitiously either by procuring his own or someone else's election, or another's elimination. A person with knowledge of this ambition is obliged in virtue of holy obedience to reveal it to the General. If it is sufficiently proved, the person in question shall be deprived of his active or passive vote, or both, and be punished by greater or lesser penalties in accordance with the gravity of the offence and the certainty of the proof. His case will be judged by the General and all others responsible for judging electoral intrigue in the case of the Provost. However, no one can be condemned without the concurrence of a majority of the judges. Non-delators, whether they belong to the congregation or not, will be punished at the General's discretion, besides incurring mortal sin.

**1027.** Information which should be kept secret may not be revealed by anyone who has learnt it except to electors who question him specifically or generally when seeking information.

[1025–1027]

What is said here about silence has to be considered as a command in virtue of holy obedience. Nevertheless, his conscience must judge in serious matters, that is, matters which could bring ignominy or harm to the Society or any person in the Society.

**1028.** The congregation will assemble on the last morning of the four-day period and after some time spent in prayer, at the discretion of the president, the election of the assistants and the admonitor shall take place. They will be elected individually and by ballot on a majority of more than half the electors present, according to the system used for the election of the Provost, which will be followed exactly. The election of the admonitor will take place in the same way. The newly-elect cannot refuse office, nor resign it later without the consent of the Society.

**1029.** After the election, the assistants and the admonitor will kneel in the midst of the chapter. All others present will kneel around them and pray over them for a while in silence. The Provost General will then arise and say some prayers aloud over them (E.1). Each of the assistants and the admonitor will then approach the table where the Provost General is seated and take an oath kneeling before the image of the Crucified placed on the table for the purpose. The formula for the oath will be: 'I call as witness God, who sees all things, that if anything befalls which suffices to deprive the Provost of his office, and the matter is proved by sufficient evidence or by his own declaration I will faithfully delate the affair to the Society and convoke a congregation according to the Constitutions' (E.2). They will take up their duties immediately, but not change their places during the period of the congregation.

(E.1) Likewise when the Provost General has chosen a new superior, but not when he only confirms one in his office and place, he will assemble a chapter of those with him, and make known to it the appointment or appointments. All those assembled will first pray in silence for a while for the newly-appointed person or persons, if they can be present without their having to come a long distance. Afterwards, prayers shall be said aloud over them, and terminated with the blessing of the Provost General.

(E.2) The five men chosen by the Provost as his closest aides will take the same oath before they enter office. If they are

selected prior to the end of the congregation they will take the oath before the assembly; otherwise it will be accepted in the name of the entire Society by the four personal assistants and the admonitor.



## CHAPTER 5

### Other business carried out in the Roman Congregation after the election of the Provost General

**1030.** After the election of the Provost, attention should be devoted to expediting as swiftly as possible any serious business still to be dealt with (E.). This work can begin during the four-day period preceding the election of the assistants.

(E.) That is, business which cannot be rightly carried through by the General and his council, or which it is not expedient for them to undertake.

**1031.** The secretary of the congregation is to be elected by majority vote in a ballot. Two other Fathers, chosen in the same way, are to be his assistants in counting votes and drawing up decrees.

**1032.** All the *presbyters of the Society* (even those without an active vote, which is proper only to the Provost General's electors) are to deliver in writing to the secretary the business they consider should be proposed.

**1033.** Four Fathers (E.), as far as possible from different nations, are to be deputed by a majority and secret vote to decide, with the Provost and those chosen by him, which business is to be put aside, which is to receive the attention of the Provost himself, and which is to be referred to the congregation. The secretary, who also has the right to vote, should be present to write what is required.

(E.) These deputies, elected to make a choice of the business presented, cannot be drawn from the group responsible for examining possible damage. They can, however, be chosen from the Provost's aides or assistants.

**1034.** Business which the deputies consider must be proposed to the congregation should be set out according to the order of dignity of the persons proposing it (Part 8, chapter 8), or according to the order preferred by the General. If a non-elect has something to propose, he will not come to the congregation unless perhaps the congregation itself wish to hear

him. In any event, he will never have a vote. Each member of the congregation can postulate a hearing from the congregation if he does not agree with the deputies' decision to reject what he has proposed. The congregation will decide by a majority vote whether he is to be heard and, after hearing him, whether his proposition is to be debated.

(E.) There is to be no discussion either in general or in particular about change in the substantial Constitutions of our way of life. Even in other matters, nothing is to be changed in the Constitutions without undoubted experience, or a very evident reason. If the deputies consider that some proposition about the Constitutions should be expounded in the congregation, it will be done in the following manner. First, the congregation is to decide whether the business should be dealt with; if very grave reasons lead it to answer affirmatively, it must then decide whether the force of the Constitutions regarding the matter is to be suspended by way of experiment until the next full or general congregation. There must be no discussion whatever about relaxing poverty. The possible profession of future presbyters without the vow about not relaxing poverty is to be placed amongst the substantial elements of our way of life.

**1035.** Finally, it should be debated, and decided by majority vote, whether and when a general congregation is to be decreed. The Provost General will abstain from voting, and confirm a decree for a congregation without any opposition. Should the Provost General die before the time decreed for the general congregation, this congregation is to be convened instead of the Roman congregation, if it can be done without inconvenience, for the election of the new Provost. In it, all matters are to be observed which were set out above for a Roman Congregation which elects a Provost.

## CHAPTER 6

### The non-general Congregation which can be summoned by the Provost General

1036. When there is no question of electing a Provost General or of any business concerning him, the Provost General will himself indict and assemble a large congregation for the sake of having their advice when he thinks this more suitable in matters of great importance.

1037. He will have the power to decide whether to consult the diocesan provosts of the entire Society by letter also, or to summon some only, or simply those near the place of the congregation.

1038. He will also decide whether to send for certain members of the Society to hear or consult them, or to discuss with them what he thinks will further the good of the Society. Likewise, an assembly of any persons whatsoever can be summoned by him in matters of great importance requiring many people's advice.

1039. No assembly or congregation brought together by the Provost General to deal with the affairs of the Society will have any decisive authority unless its decrees are confirmed by the General.

1040. No diocesan or provincial congregation can be held legitimately and validly without the express permission and command of the Provost General, or the person who holds the place of the Provost. Where the Constitutions do not determine the matter, he will also decide in his decree the time and order of the congregation, and who is to be admitted to it or heard by it. The business (E.) of the congregation will also be established by him.

(E.) Congregations of this kind cannot establish any new law. They are only indicted to decide matters of fact, e.g., to decide whether a certain custom exists or obliges in a province or diocese, or to urge the execution of some business, or to give advice requested by the Provost General, or enquire about the existence of some crime, etc.

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**1041.** The acts of the congregation will be signed by the president, and by the person acting as secretary in the same congregation. However, the names of the other fathers-consultor may also be added.

**1042.** Finally, these acts are confirmed by the Provost General, or the person holding his place, and will be ratified and valid only after this confirmation.

## CHAPTER 7

### The General Congregation

**1043.** When all those having a right to vote in the congregation held to elect a General are assembled together, they constitute a *general congregation* and represent the whole Society (E.).

(E.) The only difference between a general congregation and a *full Roman congregation* is that the diocesan provosts are not present at the latter unless they happen to be at the place of the congregation for some other reason. They send their votes by letter. In the former, however, they must be present in person unless they are prevented by a serious cause. Each congregation possesses equally supreme authority, but a meeting may be required in particular cases where necessary business, which cannot be carried on easily by correspondence, demands discussion. The congregation will do nothing about the Constitutions, however, except in the way laid down for the full congregation (1034 E.).

**1044.** The Provost General, who normally has the responsibility for convoking it, will summon the congregation only at the time established by the decree of the congregation which elected him (1035), or when an urgent cause persuades him to do so, e.g., a schism which threatens to divide the unity of the whole body and for which, despite many endeavours, there seems no other remedy. Generally speaking, the Provost himself will act on his own authority, aided by the communication he has with the Society as a whole and by the work of those living with him. In this way, he will free the Society as a whole from work and distraction, as far as he can. The full Roman congregation will be sufficient for the election of a Provost, and for other, even very important, business.

**1045.** Provincials have the greatest responsibility for conserving the Society's well-being. Hence, in the case of an urgent, grave cause which seems to presage the downfall of the entire Society, or a great part of it, unless a general congregation or a full Roman congregation is alerted, and when those presiding

with highest authority over the Society seem manifestly remiss in the matter, anyone who clearly sees this danger may advise the provincial provosts of it. They can then assemble at Rome, or elsewhere if they cannot meet at Rome, in order to safeguard the well-being of the entire Society by making efforts to summon a general, or full Roman congregation.

**1046.** Enclosure is not necessary in a general, or full Roman congregation (E.), when the business concerns serious matters pertaining to the state of the Society other than the election of a Provost. However, care should be taken to expedite the business as quickly as possible, and all the other matters mentioned in chapter 5 should be observed.

(E.) After the promulgation of the decree of convocation for a general or full Roman congregation, neither the Provost nor the Vicar General can discharge by a new decree any of those who have a vote in the election of a Provost until the congregation is closed. For the rest, however, the Provost retains the free exercise of his jurisdiction even during the general congregation.

**1047.** Light for discerning what has to be done can only come down from first and highest Wisdom. Hence Masses will be offered in sacrifice and prayer will be made at the place of the congregation and wherever the Society dwells, during the whole period of the assembly and while business is being enacted in the meeting, to beseech God's grace that everything may be done for his greater glory.

**1048.** When all have assembled, the Provost General, followed by the provincials (E.1) and the diocesans, and others summoned to the congregation, will propose what they consider should be dealt with, and the reasons for their opinions, after weighing all things and commending them to God and our Lord. This will be done briefly in the presence of the whole assembly through the secretary and deputies, as has been said (1032–34). Having made their submissions (E.2), they will leave a written synopsis in the middle of the assembly so that all who wish may read it and say what they think of it in the following congregation.

(E.1) The vicars who take the place of deceased provosts will speak in the order proper to the provost whom they represent.

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In discussing business, the sequence and connections of matters will be decided by the deputies, under the supervision of the General. In delivering one's opinion orally, the inverse order to that of dignity of provinces will be followed so that those belonging to the province of highest dignity should speak last. Members of the same province will likewise observe the inverse order of dignity so that the provincial should speak after all those in his province. The General, as the head of the province of highest dignity, and of the entire Society, will speak last of all and will be immediately preceded by the members of the Roman province who will likewise maintain the inverse order of dignity. When all have spoken, those who ask may speak again and again in the same order.

(E.2) By placing their document upon the table in the middle of the assembly. The secretary will take care to provide several copies if demand requires, or each person may take down for himself the arguments that have appealed to him, so that the document can be seen by those who have yet to give their opinion on these matters.

**1049.** It may happen that there is no clear conclusion after business has been discussed from various points of view in one or more congregations (E.1). In this case, and with the consent of all or nearly all, four definitors should be chosen by a majority vote from amongst those present and having a right to vote in the congregation, in the manner outlined above (the others promising that they will adhere to the decision of these delegates). They will assemble with the Provost General as often as necessary to decide all the matters discussed (E.2). If there is no unanimous, or nearly unanimous opinion amongst them, the whole congregation shall accept the majority decision and receive it as coming from the hand of the Lord.

(E.1) If he wishes, the Provost General may offer his opinion after all the others have spoken, but he will refrain from voting.

Nevertheless, if he detects something that seems to him productive of great harm in the Society, he can consult his council of thirteen men and, if the majority of them consider it necessary, he can invalidate the proposed decree with his veto. But he can never do this without the prevailing opinion of his council.

(E.2) If the Provost General is not sufficiently well physically to attend all the business that has to be dealt with, he will appoint someone to take his place.

1050. When all things have been decided according to the majority point of view, what has been decreed will be written down and read aloud in full congregation. Even then it will be lawful for anyone to say what he feels about the matter. But finally, the majority will decide, without any appeal, whether the decree is to be upheld or left to the decision of the General and the definitors.

1051. The secretary will write in the appropriate book (E.) matters decided in the manner outlined. These matters shall be promulgated later.

(E.) The promulgation will take place before the whole house, and afterwards in other houses. This must be understood of matters which are to be known universally, or which it is helpful for all to know.

The regulations decided in a congregation will remain in force even after the death of the Provost General under whom they were made.



**Part Twelve**

**HOW THE WHOLE BODY OF THE  
SOCIETY CAN BE KEPT IN ITS STATE OF  
WELL-BEING**

**1052.** The Society has not been established through human will or means, and cannot depend upon them for its well-being and growth, but only upon the grace of almighty God and our Lord JESUS Christ. The work, therefore, must be entrusted to the will of him who has begun it in his mercy for his praise and glory, and the assistance of his poor ones. According to this trust, the first means will be those prayers and sacrifices which are offered with this intention in a certain order weekly, monthly and annually in all those places where the Society dwells (E.).

(E.) Besides the Masses offered for the Society 1st, daily by the Provost General, 2nd, every Sunday by other provosts, 3rd, monthly by other superiors, the Provost General will prescribe certain others for particular necessities.

**1053.** Various means are available for the well-being and growth of the body of the Society, that is, of what is external to it, and of its spirit. They can also be used to attain the end it proposes for itself, that is, the assistance of our own souls and that of our neighbour by exercising every charity towards them according to the order of the will of God. Amongst these means, those which join the Society as an instrument to God and order it in such a way that it may be used rightly by the hand of God are more efficacious than those which relate it to human beings. Such means are uprightness and justice, every kind of virtue, especially charity and humility, pure intention in the divine service, familiarity with God in spiritual exercises of devotion, and sincere zeal for souls without desire for any other reward than the glory of him who created and redeemed them. Generally speaking, it is evident that all those who have enrolled in the Society should devote themselves to attaining solid and perfect virtues, and to spiritual things. They should realise that these things are more important than learning, or other natural and human gifts. Exterior gifts draw their usefulness for the end we have in view from interior gifts.

**1054.** Let us mention in particular some of the virtues with which the Society must be armed. Above all, we recommend that each one devote himself to reading the Gospel, the spring from which these Constitutions have flowed like a brook; alive and vigorous, the Constitutions must be shown for what they

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are by right use. Let each one gaze directly upon the example of the Master and Lord JESUS Christ, reflecting upon his words and actions, and endeavouring to conform his own words and actions to those of the Lord.

God and the Lord of humankind, JESUS, our Master and only exemplar, held nothing more important than doing his Father's will. In fact, he was not intent upon anything else. According to his likeness, we must meditate upon the will of God to which the providence of all things is directed, and search for it in all things. We must neither presume upon it nor anticipate it, but rest in its known desires, realising that it achieves pre-eminently the glory of God's only-begotten Son through whom the world was made, and subjecting and humiliating our own judgment to divine Wisdom. All this will help us to undertake works with humble consent and obedience to the light of divine truth in which there is neither haste nor darkness, and to avoid rashness and human affection, as well as aid us in ridding ourselves of cowardice, inertia and inconstancy. Superiors must understand that their knowledge of the things which are in harmony with God's eternal design and which, as true good, lead to the greatest glory of JESUS Christ in whom the Father was well-pleased, depends simply upon the indications and signs of divine providence, not upon their own judgment. When this is clear, they will not attempt to further the works of the Society by disordered zeal or inclinations not according to knowledge, nor will they seek new works of themselves or lightly accept them, nor induct into any grade of the Society members who are not rightly formed or cannot satisfy the duties of that grade. In this way, like the chosen people, we shall move camp at the command of the Lord (Num 9: [22]).

**1055.** All the love of our Lord JESUS Christ towards humankind is directed to the Church, the triumph of his power, for the sake of bringing together those who do the will of the Father, and to no other Society or person, whatever title they may possess, even that of motherhood itself. Of his mother he said: 'Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and do it' (Lk 9: [11: 28]), and 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and keep it' (Lk 8: [21]). Nor did the title and dignity of apostle merit it. He said: 'To sit on my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it

has been prepared by my Father' (Mt 20: [23]) (in his mother herself, and in his apostles, he loved always the will of God which he acknowledged and completed). The members of this Society also, who out of their love of God love human beings in Christ JESUS, must direct this love towards the Bride of Christ, not towards any other Society or individual, and simply under the title of the good pleasure of God the Father and of his Christ, in whose hand, as the prophet says, 'the will of the Lord shall prosper' (Is 53: [10]).

**1056.** For his part, each member will imitate his divine exemplar if he remains at rest in humility and, in obeying, does not place any hope or security in creatures, or in the Society, or superiors, but, resolute in himself and in his duty, does all things, both those commanded and those left in his own power, with great fortitude as if he were alone in the world with his God. He does all these things of his own will, ready to sacrifice himself in difficult matters. If God and superiors so dispose, he expects no help from the Society. He is prepared to suffer abandonment in the most difficult circumstances. Christ, his Master and exemplar, had to undergo abandonment by the Apostles, and even by his Father to whom he addressed these words of mystical love as he was dying: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Ps 21 [22: 1]). Let each member of our Society learn to rely upon himself, not upon anyone else, through obedience in faith. He must fight manfully through his own individual action for the glory of JESUS and the coming of his kingdom, waiting with spiritual joy for God his Lord to accept him as a pleasing victim of holocaust.

Spontaneity of obedience is especially commended in the light of Christ's example. 'Perfect and free obedience is present in human nature when it subjects free will spontaneously to God and completes in action, with ready liberty and without coercion of any kind, what good will has undertaken. In this manner, that man (and God, Christ JESUS) redeemed all others when what he freely gave to God he reckoned as the debt which others owed' (St. Anselm, *Med.* 4).

**1057.** Christ's justice and charity towards other human beings must be imitated and practised exactly. With regard to the observance of justice, a member of the Society named after Charity

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must be careful to avoid being unjust even in thought. He must shun rash judgments, full of the ignorance of pride. The humble, wise person does not judge easily. He knows that the depths of the human heart are open to him alone who scrutinises 'mind and heart'; he realises that human beings cannot penetrate the hidden affairs of others or even their own. Let him be careful in his speech also, fleeing every deceit, and recalling Christ's way of conversing, described by Peter in the words of the prophet: 'He committed no sin; no guile was found in his lips' (1 Pet 2: [22]). The person who speaks without any deceit becomes a perfect and faithful minister of God. In addition, let none of the brethren seek in his work the things of this world. Christ has said: 'My kingship is not of this world' (Jn 18: [36]). Let him show that he is a son of God, not born of flesh and blood, by doing good to all, friends and enemies, as he passes by, in a spirit of meekness, not solicitous for his own affairs, certain in his belief that he has a Father who takes care of his own. His Master 'when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when he suffered, did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly' (1 Pet 2: [23]). The strength and fortitude of those who follow the immaculate Lamb is to be found in their meekness and self-abandonment to the providence of God the Father. Their desire is to bless all mankind, and to bring peace to the whole world, and indeed to turn aside the divine anger with their own blood. For Christ 'bore our sins in his body upon the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness' (1 Pet 2: [24]).

**1058.** Once the foundation of virtue and likeness to JESUS Christ the Lord, the head of the predestined, has been laid, those natural means by which mankind can be helped through the grace of our Lord are not to be despised in any way. They must be studied, however, and employed for the glory of God alone, and in order that mankind may attain its end. Our confidence must not rest in them, but always on the grace of God and our Creator who dispenses his gifts, natural and supernatural, to human beings for his glory. It follows that great care is to be taken of human means, natural or cultivated. This applies especially to sound and wide learning, to outstanding ability in imparting learning orally or by writing, to a capacity for dealing with our fellow creatures, and to other things of this kind.

**1059.** Great care must be taken also in the administration of temporal goods. It should be carried out so honourably and openly that all human beings, as well as members of this Society, may come to know as far as possible the use we have made of these goods, according to the Apostle's example (1 Cor 15 [16: 1–4; 2 Cor 8: 20 ss.], Rom 15: [25, 26]), and the way in which they are dispensed or applied to works of charity in accordance with the Constitutions. The Society should be able at any time to undergo judgment by the whole world, as Samuel did by the people of God (1 Sam 12: [1–6]). All superiors must consider the things sanctioned concerning poverty as of the greatest importance and as a bulwark of the whole Society. They must never permit them to be relaxed either through congregations, which would be against the oath they have taken, or little by little through insinuating customs, which can never be in good faith, and which we declare as being without force at any time to undermine or weaken any part of the Constitutions on poverty.

**1060.** The suppression of ambition, the mother of all evils in every community will be of the highest importance if the happy and simple state of the Society is to be continually maintained. This will be achieved if members remember that they can never do anything to obtain dignities. There is nothing more contrary than this to the spirit of our Society, which consists in a life hidden in Christ, and in contemplation. Anyone aware of ambition in others should defer them to superiors as enemies of the whole Society. If certainly convicted of such a crime, they are to be declared perpetually disqualified for any prelacy whatsoever. And this is to be understood about dignities sought outside the Society, and about any superiority within the Society.

**1061.** What has been said about keeping an unsuitable multitude from our way of life will also help the well-being of the whole body. That is, no one is to be admitted to any grade unless he is judged to be truly suitable. The Superior must not be moved by any human reason from this principle of prudence and justice, nor may he entrust an office to one who seems incapable of carrying it out. In this way, although numbers increase, the strength of our way of life, which lies wholly in the

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spirit, will not be lessened since all the members will measure up to their grade and office.

**1062.** Good and evil in the attitude of the head influences the whole body. It is supremely important, therefore, that the election of the Provost General be in accordance with what has been described in Part 10, and that all pray for their common Father that God keep his spirit steady and willing. It is also of great importance that lower provosts and rectors, as well as prefects, directors, priors and commissioned members be chosen from the best men available. The quality of subjects will almost certainly be that of their superiors. Besides careful choice, it will greatly help if considerable power is possessed by individual superiors over their subjects, by the General over other superiors, and by the Society itself, in the manner declared by the Constitutions, so that all may do all in their power for good and, if they act badly, may be fully controlled. It will be of assistance also if all superiors have suitable ministers (as has been said in the same part) for the organisation and execution of matters relating to their office.

**1063.** Superiors must remember that the real benefit of which the Society is capable depends upon their unremitting labour and zeal in teaching and forming their subjects, and in their requiring the exact observance of the Rules. The whole Society has already begun to disintegrate when superiors cease to apply themselves seriously and wholeheartedly to this aim, especially if they neglect their duty of preaching and reflecting evangelical virtues. The effect will be the same if thoughtful and inspiring words give place in their conversation to empty talk, and they give the time which should be devoted to their office to trivial and unsuitable occupations, preferring their own quiet to the advancement of the brethren.

**1064.** Whatever helps towards union between the members of this body amongst themselves and with their head will also greatly help to conserve its well-being. This applies in the first place to the bond of wills which is charity and mutual love, the true mark of the disciples of JESUS Christ. Constant communication and interchange of news. the same doctrine and love of truth, and uniformity (in so far as this is possible without

restricting a wider good) will nourish this love. But above all things, the well-being of the Society will be preserved by the bond of obedience, which unites individuals with their superiors, and superiors amongst themselves and with the General. On their part, superiors in ruling should use the power of command and the staff of direction without harsh domineering, so that work may be carried out devotedly and vigorously, and the exquisite beauty of subordination may be universally maintained.

**1065.** Moderation in corporal and spiritual labour, and a careful mean between the extremes of harshness and laxity, will be an aid to the lasting life of the whole body and to its continual well-being.

**1066.** To the same end, it will generally be helpful if care is taken through our integrity and good works to preserve as far as possible the love and charity of all, externs included, towards the Society. This applies especially to those whose just or unjust disposition towards us is of great importance to opening or closing the way to divine service and the assistance of souls. This should be done by adherence to the truth in all things, and by acting justly even to our own disadvantage so that if we have committed any sin we should be prepared to our fault and give satisfaction, and if there is no sin to practise humility and meekness. But no one should be cultivated by us with flattery. In the Society itself there should be no vain or unjust attitude towards either side of any dispute between princes or rulers. Universal love should reach out in the Lord to all parties even though they may be opposed to one another.

**1067.** We should also be grateful, and show our gratitude, towards those who have benefited our Institute. For this reason we ought, in the first place, to offer ascription in the Society to those who have founded a complete house with its own income (E.1) for our way of life, or have given sufficient to enable this to be done. By ascription, these benefactors share in all the spiritual goods which the whole body of the Society enjoys. Next, the prayers said by the brethren for benefactors are understood as applied in a special manner for the good of body and soul of these benefactors. Moreover, while a founder or great

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benefactor lives, Mass will be celebrated weekly for his good estate in the house he has founded. A wax candle will be offered annually to the founder on the anniversary of the day on which the use or possession of the house was handed to the Society (E.2) and an inscription will be placed in a suitable position as a memorial of the benefaction (E.3). After the death of a founder, the Provost General, as soon as he hears of it, will see that each priest of the Society celebrates Mass for his soul, and that all the others pray for the same intention. A solemn anniversary Mass will be celebrated on the day on which the Society took possession of any house, and a candle decorated with the arms of the founder or with pious symbols will be offered to his nearest relative, or to the person whom the founder has designated. If this relative is far away, the candle can be put upon the altar where the divine Sacrifice is being offered for the founder.

(E.1) Those who have contributed in part only will share in the things mentioned as the Provost General thinks fit.

(E.2) This candle is a symbol of the gratitude we should have towards the founder. It does not give to founders or their successors any right of patronage or activity over the house or its temporal goods. There will be nothing of this kind. Benefactors, and those who undertake to protect our houses, should be considered as our friends, but individual titles in law, indicative of jurisdiction, should be avoided lest at the same time they take upon themselves more than is right.

(E.3) If the founder or great benefactor is one of our own religious, the candle is to be offered to his father or mother while he is alive, not to himself nor anyone else. No inscription is to be set up. After his death, all must be done as though he did not belong to the Society.

**1068.** Finally, let all struggle constantly to put into practice the things laid down, and fight manfully against the natural inertia opposed to such practice. To accomplish this, all must know the Constitutions and the Rules, at least what applies to them. All must read them frequently, especially the presbyters, so that they and all who belong to the Society may achieve true human greatness: 'Rooted and grounded in love, may they have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the LOVE OF CHRIST

which surpasses all knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God.

‘Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we may ask or think, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ JESUS, unto all generations, world without end. Amen’ (Eph 3: [17–21]).

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