

**DECLARATIONS AND DECREES OF THE  
XVII CLARETIAN GENERAL CHAPTER**

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## PRESENTATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Church's posture of renewal should not seem strange. This is a condition of its being as the Mystical Body – in the dynamic of salvation – and of its existence in time. Church history takes note of and describes numerous innovations in the religious life, manifested either

in the need for new structures, or in the form of prohibitions and condemnations, or most of all in the living *magisterium* of the Church.

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

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

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

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

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

"But now we must do something more, because the Church itself is the one who has commanded that all the Rules and Constitutions of the different religious Corporations be changed in everything that the new code of Canon law requires" (*Ibid.*).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In other words, and applied to ourselves, we can say that the General Chapter does not destroy but discovers and restores. And in this vital dimension it will occur to no one to state that the fruit of renewal is any kind of advantage in the external order – an act of piety which is no longer a community act or a point of rule interpreted with greater mildness, etc. Because he who deepens and exploits the spirit encounters and gains fruits of the spirit.

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

This is the thought expressed by our General Chapter when it affirms that "the process of renewal should begin with an interior effort to be faithful to our vocation and it requires of everyone a

profound attitude of willingness very similar to a real conversion" (*Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation*, n. 59).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This morning, at the tomb of our Father Founder, we have concelebrated Mass with the Provincials of Spain. We have gathered

together in sacrificial enclosure with Christ, the Eternal Priest. In the Offertory we have offered Him, through the intercession of Father Claret, our projects and the aspirations of all the sons of the Congregation.

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

Antonio Leghisa, C.M.F.  
Superior General

Vic, March 15, 1968



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## ABBREVIATIONS OF CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS

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

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



# DECLARATION ON THE CHARISM OF ST. ANTHONY MARY CLARET AS THE FOUNDER OF OUR CONGREGATION

## I. The Charism of an Institute

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

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

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

4. This charism or grace, and the mission which comes attached to it, supposes vocation on the part of God. God calls the Founder and all those who throughout history must be graced with a participation in the Founder's charism. By this vocation God sets aside for the members of an Institute a certain position in the Church. Each member of an Institute, participating in its charism, finds himself as it were inserted into the community nature of this charism. The actualization of the charism by the members of an Institute, although

were inserted into the community nature of this charism. The actualization of the charism by the members of an Institute, although it should be a personal work, always departs from this original community nature of the charism, and this is ultimately founded on the grace of the Holy Spirit, from which all unity and community nature in the Church is derived (I Cor 12,13).

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

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

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

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

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

## II. The Apostolic Charism of St. Anthony Mary Claret

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **III. Transmission of the Claretian Charism to the Congregation**

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

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

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

17. This charism, or particular gift, of the Congregation and of all its members, includes first of all those spiritual elements by which we are incorporated into the saving mission of Christ, of Mary and of the

Church. The most important traits of this missionary spirit are the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

19. The charism that the Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, inherited from their Founder is to live especially consecrated and associated to Christ, Son of the Father and of Mary, Who was sent to the world for men's salvation. In this way we are to be energetic helpers of the hierarchy in their magisterial ministry, through the missionary service of the Word (Const. 1,2; cf. CD 12-14), exercised

by all possible means (Const. II, 63), for the spreading of the name of God and extending the Kingdom of Christ unto the ends of the earth (Const. I, 122), thus realizing the Church's mission by offering salvation to all men.

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

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

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

#### IV. The Common and the Particular

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

But as a Claretian charism, it possesses particular characteristics which taken as a whole configure us in the Church and constitute in it our proper character (cf. PC 2, b).

24. The most important characteristics are the following:

a) an imitation of the evangelical life of Christ as an expression of our self-gift, in order to live with Him and associate ourselves to His saving work by proclaiming His salvation to all men.

b) a son's spirit and piety toward the Father, lived in union with Christ, the Son sent for men's salvation.

c) We live our consecration to God and to the Church in an atmosphere of special consecration to the Heart of Mary, Temple of

the most Holy Trinity, Companion of the Redeemer, Figure and Mother of the Church.

d) a special devotion to the Eucharist and to the Word of God as primary and constant sources of our supernatural life and apostolic zeal.

e) a special obedience and loyalty to the Pope.

f) a closeness to the bishops and prompt obedience to their dispositions in everything which refers to the apostolate and to our cooperation on behalf of the local churches.

g) a simple, self-denied, industrious, informal, active style of life.

h) a sensitivity toward what is most pressing, timely and effective at each time and place, without anchoring ourselves to methods or structures in the apostolate.

i) a willingness to employ all suitable means in the transmission of the Christian message.

j) a Catholicity open to all localities, peoples, and forms of life, along with a decided preference for the poor and needy, children and youth, simple people and the consecrated.

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

## V. Fidelity, Multiplicity, and Unity

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

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

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

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

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

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



# DECLARATION ON THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF THE CONGREGATION

## CHAPTER I

### Charism and Spiritual Heritage of Our Congregation

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

2. Although "spirit" and "charism" are not identical, there is a very intimate connection between them. The concept of charism implies, in a proper sense, the essential and objective element of that bestowal of grace which the charism is in itself, coupled with the mission within the Church which it confers upon a determined Institute. The concept of "spirit," on the other hand, accentuates principally the subjective aspect, i.e., the personal manner of possessing and living those objective elements. Founders have received both elements from the Holy Spirit in the same communication of grace. The manner in which they corresponded with this grace was made more or less evident through their spirit. But the transmission of the "charism" in its objective dimension is more easily perceived and

determined. The transmission of the spirit, although perceptible, cannot be submitted to such precise definition. Nevertheless, the "spirit" – the manner of living the charism – also has its exterior objective manifestation, from which it acquires the capacity to be transmitted. From this point of view, Founders can be seen as authentic representatives of the manner in which the charism should be lived, serving as models of spirituality for the Institutes they have founded.

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

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

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

5. Out of love for His Church, God confers extraordinary graces upon Her whenever the circumstances of Her glorious pilgrimage through the world towards the perfection of glory require it. "This was especially necessary in the 19th Century. Because the people of that period, close to our own, distracted by new inventions and by the progress of science and technology, came unconsciously to the point of rejecting God and the Church He founded, and tried to establish other foundations of society, different from those which Christ Our Lord had given," (Pope Pius XI, Apostolic Letter, *Magnus-vocabitur*, Feb. 24th, 1934: AAS 26 (1934), 174). Furthermore, in the religious

sphere, pantheism denied the transcendence of God, and rationalism denied the divinity of Jesus Christ (Spiritual Exercises, 1865). Within the Church Jansenism still persisted and had made its way among the faithful, and a large sector had fallen into indifferentism. On the other hand, sectarianism had impeded the two great means of spiritual regeneration, the testimony of the consecrated evangelical life and the proclamation of the Gospel. "Because of this," Pius XI has said, "among the great men of the 19th Century, God called forth St. Anthony Mary Claret."(l.c.)

6. St. Anthony Mary Claret founded the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in order to foster the salvation of men, especially by means of the missionary preaching of the Gospel. He was prepared for this from his childhood by supernatural lights and inclinations. Especially through meditation on the Sacred Scriptures, he felt himself forcefully called by the Holy Spirit to consecrate himself to Christ and to imitate His life by proclaiming the Gospel. Seeing how Christian life had declined among the people through the lack of preaching, he wanted to associate himself with other priests who would dedicate themselves to the apostolic ministry of the Word, so that they could accomplish together what he could not do alone. Along with five other priests he founded – in the city of Vich on July 16th, 1849 – a Congregation of missionaries "who would be and would be called Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary."

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

8. The Founder and the first missionaries gave themselves to the apostolic following of Christ in a way that was both complete and simple. Through the action of the Holy Spirit who had inspired them to make this gift of themselves, they went on to make it more explicit, first by a consecration "to the special service of God and the Immaculate Heart of Mary" with an oath of permanence and a promise concerning the evangelical Counsels. Later, by the Founder's own will and that of the Congregation, this promise was raised by the Church to a canonical state consecrated to God, and the Church incorporated "the special apostolic service" of the Institute into her own mission. Thus, before his death, the Founder had the happiness

of seeing his Congregation given definite form and of making his own profession in it (*De Sacra Congregationis Hereditate, ANNALES, 1950, p. 283*).

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

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

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

This is the charism which the Institute has inherited from its Founder and which is made effective by everyone, priests and lay-members, because all cooperate toward the same end and serve the same

ministry: the service of the Word, which in our days especially requires many kinds of services and necessary adaptations.

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

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

## CHAPTER II

# Elements of the Claretian Vocation

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

## 1. Christological

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

importuned him in the apostolate and his own self-oblation (Prop. 1850, 19, Not. 40).

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

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

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

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

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

16. For our Founder the evangelical Counsels were not abstract realities but facets of the life of Christ, through which He gave testimony

before men to the Kingdom of God, more by His life than by words, living in anticipation the complete sacrifice of Himself and His complete self-giving to the Kingdom of God.

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

## 2. The Heart of Mary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Council has also pointed out Mary as the type of the Church. The Church lifts its eyes to Mary because she shines as the exemplar



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

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

This is the meaning of our consecration to the Heart of Mary, which from the beginning of the Institute was the bond of unity and continues to be the official character and permanent attitude of our profession to the extent that we dedicate ourselves to the service of the Immaculate Heart.

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

### 3. Evangelical-Religious

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

in order to attain them (cf. II-IIae, 188,6 ad 3).

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

## 4. Apostolic

24. Considered in its most essential fruit the apostolate springs from the sacrifice of Our Lord. Christ was sent mainly to fulfill the Will of His Father, by sacrificing Himself. The sacrifice of Christ culminated in His death and in His glorious resurrection which made possible the mission of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 7,39). This is how He restored the glory of God and redeemed men, and laid the foundation for the Kingdom of Heaven. Christ preached the Kingdom of Heaven to His Apostles and to all people and instituted its fundamental structures, leaving to the Church a mandate to preach (cf. AG 5-9). But all this attained ultimate and definitive value only in His sacrifice (PC I). For this reason there is no genuine apostle who does not will to place himself truly and in a vital manner in the sacrifice of Our Lord, in order to live and establish among men the new life of the Kingdom and the Power of the Holy Spirit (cf. AG 5).

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

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

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

27. In the Institutes consecrated to the work of the Apostolate,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31. As a profoundly supernatural activity, the true apostolate is an exercise of faith, hope, and the charity which the Holy Spirit pours into the heart of all sons of the Church (cf. AA 3). For a faithful discharge of ministry it is indispensable to live intimately in union with Christ, Saviour and Shepherd, especially through the fruitful celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice and a frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance. Pious reading of the Sacred Scriptures, the recitation of the breviary, mental prayer, the rosary, and especially the spirit of continuous prayer during all his activities is an indispensable foundation for the life and efficacy of an apostle. This is the way our Founder lived. He considered prayer as the first means to obtain the salvation of men (Autob. 264) and thus he earnestly inculcates it in those who prepare themselves for the apostolic life (Const. I, 110).

## 5. Priestly

32. The life and the Vocation of our holy Founder center themselves very early in the priesthood (Autob. nn. 30 & 40, Doc.Aut.7; Autob. 64, 69 & 79). Thus priestly spirituality has a first-class importance in his life and works. His apostolate is the intense and absorbing exercise of the priesthood. The missionary vocation is united in him with his priestly vocation (Autob. I,c.1). His is a missionary priesthood, a prophetic priesthood, an extension in everything of the life of the Apostles.

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

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

The most outstanding of these are: a profound faith enlightened by prayer and study, pastoral charity – which is the very charity of Christ the priest – sacrifice for the good of men, a life immersed in

the mystery of the Church, since the priest is the man of the Church, called by God to sanctify himself by serving it in the sacred ministry. Through the spontaneous tendency of charity, Christian perfection is intrinsically apostolic, and the apostolate is a constant inducement for perfecting oneself spiritually and for the exercise of the virtues (PO 13).

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

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

## 6. Lay

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

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

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

The life and apostolate of our lay brothers, united to that of the priests, and within the one apostolic mission of the Congregation, is closely bound to the hierarchical ministry, and occupies the highest grade of association with the priestly life and apostolate which the laity can attain in the Church (cf. AA 24,6; PC 15).

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

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

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

## 7. Ecclesial

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

40. As members of the Congregation we are closely bound to the entire Church through our religious profession and our consecration to the apostolate. It is necessary to develop among ourselves a sense of the Church in conformity with the doctrine and

orientations of Vatican II, so that the Congregation may live and work closely united to the entire People of God (cf. LG 44).

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

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

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

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

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

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



## 8. Exercise of the Apostolate in the Congregation

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

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

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

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

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

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

3) the greatest efficacy among possible apostolic works.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER III

# Renewal and its Exigencies

## 1. General Ideas

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

57. The primary norm of renewal of the religious life should be the same life as Our Lord Jesus Christ led with His Apostles, just as it is reflected for us in the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles and transmitted to us by the Church. This was the living model which

the Apostles wished to perpetuate in their own life and in the first Christian communities. Founders always referred to this form of evangelical and apostolic life when the spirit of Christ led them to establish their communities in the Church.

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

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

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

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

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

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

62. Other traditions may have a greater or lesser durability. Even though in their origin they may have been the expression of the authentic living of the essential spirit of the Institute or in conformity with it, and may have been so for a long time, they do not have a universal and permanent value. Perhaps they arose because of determined historical circumstances upon the endurance of which their vitality depended. As long as the reason for their vitality remains alive, these traditions could also justly be called sound. From the moment when the very reason for their vitality declines, they become obsolete or antiquated practices, according to the terminology of the Council. The "antiquated elements" which are referred to in ES 16,c, never could have constituted traditions, but in every case were pseudo-traditions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As a result, it is necessary to have a thorough knowledge of their point of view and their reactions, to allow them to express their opinions

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

## 2. Chastity

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

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

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

69. Virginity thus specially consecrated is not bound to this world whose fashion passes away (I Cor 7,31), nor to the conditions of the present time. On the contrary, set deeply in the reality of the era to come, it lives in the watchful hope of the final advent of the Bridegroom and of the Kingdom of God (cf. Mt 25,1-6). Thus Christian virginity,

which is a constant manifestation of the virginity of the Church, is a sign and testimony for all Christians, even for those united in matrimony, that they do not belong to this world, but must tirelessly journey to the future city (cf. Heb 11, 10; 13,14).

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

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

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

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

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

Every distortion or falsity which sees sin or dangers where they do not exist should be studiously avoided. Those in charge of the formation of our youth, while not omitting instruction on the real dangers that beset chastity, must insist above all on the lofty motives which the practice of this vow reflect to the world: such as a total and sincere commitment of God, love for the cause of the salvation of men, and joy in following the ideal of Christian virginity (cf. PC 12; OT 10).

73. In order that the chastity of our religious may incessantly grow and become stronger it must be prompt, total, firm, and

confident, it must be a source of joy which sustains missionary zeal, and must be founded on a solid and profound piety. On the other hand, it also demands that the religious practice works of penance and mortification even more than the rest of the faithful (cf. ES 22 & PC 12).

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

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

### 3. Poverty

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

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

76. Instructed by the teachings of the Council, and following the example of so many generous Christians who have endeavoured to respond to the recommendations of the Church and the necessities of the world by adopting a life of poverty, the Sons of St. Anthony Mary Claret must recover that sense of poverty which he possessed



and practiced so faithfully, and which he considered as a basic element in his apostolic vocation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

whatever to luxury or ostentation (cf. PC 13; Paul VI; Disc. 'Magno gaudio,' AAS 56 (1964), 569).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **4. Obedience and Government**

88. Through his baptism, the Christian is already dead to the world and consecrated to God for His Kingdom. Through the profession of his vows, the religious tightens his union with Jesus Christ that he may be fully and totally joined with Him in His death and

participate with special fullness in His life of glory (cf. Rm. 4,11; LG 44). In an act of obedience of Christ, St. Paul finds the beginning and the fulfillment of His redemptive mission (cf. Heb 10,1-10). This obedience was the constant attitude of Our Lord throughout His life (cf. Jn 4,34; 6,38). Culminating His work of redemption He learned in His own flesh what obedience was (cf. Heb 5,7-9), obeying unto death and to the death on a Cross (cf. Phil 2,8).

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

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

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

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

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

91. St. Anthony Mary Claret, though he was always a model of

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

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

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

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

94. The Council wished to perfect the practice of religious obedience. It recommends that obedience be conscious and free, so that it may be a true virtue perfecting the subject supernaturally and even on the personal level. In this way, "far from lessening the dignity of the human person it leads it to maturity by extending the freedom

of the Sons of God" (PC 14). Obedience does not require that things are to be seen contrary to the way they are. It demands that a religious, in a given instance, place himself on the level of faith, and that he know how to make the sacrifice of his own judgment, even if it be ascertained and correct. He will simply recall that obedience is not established for him in the speculative but in the practical order, to which he should always sacrifice his particular opinion by acceding to the general good and to harmony, which are linked to the authority of the superior, a representative of the will and love of God.

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

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

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

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

99. The government must always be supernatural, and must be based on faith, just as obedience is. Faith must be present in the

goals which superiors propose, in the means they make use of, and in the consideration and delicacy which charity requires and the respect which is due to the Sons of God, concerning whom He will demand an account (cf. PC 14).

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

## 5. Community

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

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

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

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

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

109. By reading the documents of the Council attentively one easily discovers the nature and the multiple benefits of the common life: namely a common and effective fraternal life; a common direction

and authority in the perfect exercise of charity according to the evangelical counsels; a complete sharing of material goods; and a community organization of life – all for the purpose of a more perfect and fruitful apostolic ministry, capable of giving testimony. The Council emphasized the idea that life in community, household observances, and the very practice of the evangelical counsels serve to foster and attain this common life of brotherhood which is a value essential to Christian perfection and the apostolic life (cf. PC 6).

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

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

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

113. The organization of the life of the community, should correspond as much as possible to the common and individual obligations of its members, so that community life may be an effective support for everyone's fidelity and an instrument to attain unity of life in a common spirit: a means which fosters fraternal charity, the

solicitude of one for another, which helps us to realize our religious-apostolic vocation, fully aware that in the community we are responsible for one another.

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

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

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

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

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

1. The necessary selection and formation of candidates, requiring of them and developing in them the human qualities and supernatural virtues that are indispensable for the perfect practice of fraternal charity in community life.
2. Careful attention to the social and community aspects of asceticism and the Christian virtues.
3. A supernatural evaluation and progressive practice of dialogue, of living together, of collaboration and of teamwork.

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

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

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

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

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

## 6. The Apostolate

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

120. Our apostolate, as a part of our religious life, must always be inspired by supernatural motives. It must be penetrated with religious virtues and with the evangelical counsels, must be incorporated

into the Church through obedience and lived in community in whatever manner possible.

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

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

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

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

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

## 7. The Priesthood

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 8. The Laity

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

## 9. Piety

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

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

Mental prayer disposes us to participate intimately and profitably in the sacred Eucharistic mystery and in the public prayer of the Church.

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

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

## 10. Study

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

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

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

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

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

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

# DECREE ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

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

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

## CHAPTER I

### General Principles of Government

#### 1. The Church and Religious Institutes

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

The Church, or the People of God, is the Mystical Body and it is organized in this world in a social manner (LG 7,8). As a result, each religious Institute, as a chosen portion of the Church, should constantly

participate in its life and imitate its forms of organization to the degree that this form of organization corresponds to it.

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

## 2. Religious Government in the Revision of Rules

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

## 3. Government in Religious Communities

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

6. "Chapters and deliberative bodies should faithfully discharge the part in ruling entrusted to them and each should in its own way express that concern for the good of the entire community which all its members share" (PC 14). This will be accomplished principally if the religious fulfill a truly effective role in the selection of members of

Chapters and Councils. Equally, let the exercise of authority be more efficient and flexible, according to the exigencies of the present times (cf. MP. ES.8).

## 4. Principles Concerning Government in Religious Communities

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

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

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

c) The correct exercise of government, the same when it counsels or teaches as when it imposes precepts, is an act of charity which helps toward perfection. "Religious obedience, far from stifling human dignity, brings it to maturity by means of the higher liberty of the Sons of God" (PC 14). "Religious families offer their members a liberty strengthened by obedience" (LG 43) "All men should take note that the profession of the evangelical counsels, though entailing the renunciation of certain values which undoubtedly are to be esteemed, does not detract from a genuine development of the human person. Rather, by its very nature, it is most beneficial to that development" (LG 46).

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

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

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

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

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

## 5. Participation of the Community in Government

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

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

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

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

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

## 6. Government According to Our Holy Constitutions: Their Adaptation

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

### CHAPTER II

## Chapters and Councils

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



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

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

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

## A. The General Chapter

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

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

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

21. The composition of the General Chapter is of the highest importance considering that it profoundly affects the representation of the entire Institute and the functioning of the Chapter itself. This representation must be based on two principles: the institutional principle or representation of organisms, through their superiors; and the principle of representation of the personnel of the Congregation through the election of delegates. For this election it is impossible to

attempt solutions that are numerically equivalent but poorly expressive of the diversity of factors which exist in the organisms represented and which should be taken into account with diverse criteria.

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

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

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

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

## **26. Composition of the General Chapter:**

The following shall assist at the General Chapter:

a) The Superior General, the General Consultors and General Officials.

b) The Provincial Superiors.

c) The Superiors of independent Vice-Provinces.

d) Independent Visitors.

e) A delegate for each Province, Vice-Province and Independent Visitorship. Provinces that number 175 perpetually professed members have a right to a second delegate.

f) The General Government may designate two priests and one or two brothers.

g) With regard to the delegates from General Houses and Inter-provincial Houses, it is to be left to the General Government to determine the manner of designating them.

## B. The Provincial Chapter

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34. The following shall make up the Provincial Chapter of Elections and assist with voice and vote:

a) The Superior General or his delegate; the Provincial Superior, consultors, Treasurer and Secretary. The latter two shall attend even if they are not consultors.

b) The Superiors of formed Houses and of independent Residences.

c) A delegate for each formed House and two for those which have at least 15 perpetually professed members. The residences shall group themselves in sections of 6 to 12 individuals in accordance with what is set down in our Code of Additional Law (287,4d).

d) With regard to the Brothers, a Provincial Government may call one or two of them, in the event that they have not been elected as delegates of the Houses.

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER III

### Right of Active and Passive Voice

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

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

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

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

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

## Conclusions

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER IV

## Organs of Government

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

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

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

### A. General Government

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

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

49. In conformity with the M. Pr. "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*", 18, and to guarantee greater exactness in the selection of those who must constitute the General Government it is proposed that there be prior formal inquiries conducted by the members of the Provincial Chapters of Elections. The inquiries should be private, secret and not limited to

the individuals of one's own Province. In addition to these formal inquiries spontaneous reports from all those who wish to submit them, are to be admitted.

## 1. Superior General

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

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

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

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

## 2. The Vicar General

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

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

## 3. General Consultors

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

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

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

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

#### 4. Representativity

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

#### 5. Precedence

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

### B. Provincial Government

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

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

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

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

To practice and foster in the Province a generous open-mindedness toward the universal Congregation, analogous to what collegiality



exacts from the bishops with respect to the universal Church, always placing the welfare of the Congregation above particular interests.

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

## Conclusions

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

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

c) What the decree "Christus Dominus", n. 16, says of bishops is applicable to Superiors, but especially to Major Superiors: "In exercising their office of Father and pastor, let them stand in the midst of their people as those who serve. Let them be good shepherds who know their sheep and whose sheep know them. Let them be true Fathers who excel in the spirit of love and solicitude for all and to

whose divinely conferred authority, all submit themselves. Let them so gather and mould the whole family of their flock that everyone, conscious of his own duties, may live and work in the communion of love." Within the necessary subordination to higher authority, the Provincial will enjoy whatever autonomy is suitable or necessary so that matters of his competency may be executed with efficiency and dispatch (ES II, 18).

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

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

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

### 69. Provincial Consultors

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

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

### 71. The Provincial Treasurer

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

### 72. Provincial Secretary

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

### 73. Prefectures

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **C. Government of Vice-Provinces and Visitorships**

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

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

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

### **D. Inter-provincial Conferences**

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

### **E. Local Government**

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

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

83. Every community should have one or several works

entrusted to it, without thereby impeding individual subordinated activities, personal initiative and teamwork in certain ministries.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER V

## Decentralization

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

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

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

## CHAPTER VI

## Deliberative and Consultative Vote

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

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

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

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

## A. The General Council

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

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

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

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

## B. The Provincial Council

99. The distinction between the full Council (5) and the incomplete Council (3 or 4) is to be maintained. A deliberative vote is linked with the first; a consultive vote, to the second (CIA 223:sq.).

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

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

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

## C. The Local Council

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

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

## CHAPTER VII

### Major Organisms

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

105. The creation of these organisms in the form of Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Visitorships is the purview of the General

Government. It is judged desirable that those which are founded in the future depend from some Province and not attain the condition of major organisms until they can take care of themselves not only in financial matters but in personnel as well.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **A. Expansion of the Institute at the Present Moment**

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

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

114. A certain prudent restriction must, nevertheless, be imposed in order not to accelerate the rhythm of expansion sustained up to the



present; inasmuch as the crisis of vocations now being suffered by almost all Institutes has affected us as well.

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

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

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

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

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

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

117. With respect to new foundations:

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

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

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

## B. Distribution of Personnel

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

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

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

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

122. There is a provincial membership, one of origin, by virtue of profession. By itself this membership is definitive with permanent effects, but is not immutable.

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

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

125. By a prior agreement between Major Superiors, a religious can be sent to another province or major organism for service within

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

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

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

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

## C. Mutual Help

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

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

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

130. Let sincere and perfect cooperation, which apostolic action demands today more than ever and which Vatican Council II requests with such appreciation, be promoted in all the members of the Congregation, even during the time of formation (CD 6; PC 23; AG 33; ES 1,2; II,42-45).

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

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

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

- a) to have an attentive solicitude toward the poorest organisms.
- b) to foster vocations in areas where there may be the greatest possibility of obtaining them, and to take care that they do not lack the means necessary for their formation, both in the realm of personnel and in finances.
- c) to make the Congregation respond to the most urgent needs of the universal Church in the measure of its capabilities.

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

## CHAPTER VIII

## Visits

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

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

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

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

### 136. Official Visits

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

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

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

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

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

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

**138. Specialist Visits**

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

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

# DECREE ON COADJUTOR BROTHERS

## Preface

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

## I. Vocation and Spirit

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

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

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

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

3. Thus, then, identified with the crucified and risen Christ, they renounce the world and leave temporal concerns (Const. 1,74,5; 108), in order to live only for God (cf. PC 5) following and imitating Jesus Christ more closely in praying, working, suffering, and seeking always and only God's greater glory and men's salvation (Autob. 494).

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Let them found their spiritual and apostolic life on the knowledge and acceptance of the nature and exigencies of their own

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### III. Formation of Coadjutor Brothers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

26. Without neglecting to initiate them into their work and even into some kind of specialization, our coadjutor brothers' education

during this period should be concentrated on establishing a solid and balanced foundation for the development of the person. This should be done in such a way that they may be capable of understanding their vocation clearly and responding to it faithfully.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

32. The departments of postulant and junior brothers might be established in the same House of formation and utilize the same

equipment, under the direction of competent spiritual directors and professors, who are well chosen and prepared (PC 18). Both groups might be integrated respectively into our existing minor seminaries and those of philosophy.

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

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

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

## IV. Special Recommendations

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

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

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

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

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

37. The Chapter recommends to Provincial Governments:

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

## V. Modifications in Legislation

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

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

# DECREE ON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

## Preface

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

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

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

The Constitutions proposed by our Founder to the companions who attached themselves to him are intimately penetrated with that particular and special charism of the perfect, evangelical and apostolic life proper to our Father. Thus they present themselves as a norm for the spiritual life of the Congregation. The "divine gift" of vocation (LG 43) impels us to understand and embrace it more and more each day.



## CHAPTER I

## Spiritual Life and Observance

### Doctrinal Considerations

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

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

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

The Council itself proclaims the primacy of the spiritual life. It insists that whoever professes the evangelical counsels should above

all seek and love God Who first loved us (cf. 1 Jn 4,10) and strive to foster earnestly and in all circumstances the life hidden with Christ in God (Col 3,3). This love of God both excites and energizes the love of one's neighbour for the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church (PC 6).

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

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

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

We must take into account that in the New Alliance law is not opposed to grace nor to charity but is rather the stable and authorized expression of its common and social exigencies. Therefore, it can be affirmed that law and liberty are not opposed when both are truly Christian. Being for the most part an expression of a spirit and the

practical norm for its exercise, the Constitutions possess more perfectly than other ecclesiastical laws this aspect of spiritual and holy law.

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

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

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

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

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

## Particular Applications

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

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

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

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

secure for his brothers the means of evangelical perfection consistent with our Constitutions and Directories.

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

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

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

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

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

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

should have some periods to themselves and be able to enjoy suitable recreation" (ES 26).

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

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

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

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

## Changes in the Constitutions :

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER II

# Charity and Common Life

## Doctrinal Considerations

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

24. In the early Church, where "all continued steadfast in prayer with Mary the mother of Jesus" (Act 1,14), charity was an outstanding mark because all those called were "of one heart and one soul" (Act 4,32). Thus, among us who recognize ourselves as united by the common bond of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, a flawless charity of affections and deeds must reign. This is so because our title lays

claim to greater demands of delicacy, meekness, and mutual service. By our charity everyone will know that we are disciples of Christ (Jn 13,35) and true Sons of the Heart of Mary. Also by our charity will we respond fully to our vocation, because he who loves his neighbour fulfills the entire law (Rom 13,8 & 10).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

## Particular Applications

28. In order to live the Gospel fully, consecrated as we are to its diffusion and as Sons of the Heart of Mary, we must always give the primacy to charity "which is the fullness of the law" (Rom 13,10), "the bond of perfection" (Col 3,14), the goal toward which the vows

aspire, the most luminous testimony of the presence of Christ (Jn 13,35) and the force of the effectiveness of our apostolate.

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

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

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

31. Unless the service of the Church indicates otherwise, the communities should consist of at least three members. For his time and for the type of apostolate that was exercised, our Father Founder proposed as an ideal a community of twelve members. If for reasons of the apostolate or formation they must be larger, suitable means should be employed so that a family spirit pervades, along with "true brotherly love" (PC 12).

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

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

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

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

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

The warmth of a family should also be experienced by all the

members of our Institute who are guests in the community, but particularly those who return for rest from the missions.

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

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

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

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

## Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

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

b) In No 25 of Part II:

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

## CHAPTER III

## The Religious Vows in General

## Doctrinal Considerations

37. The religious profession of the evangelical counsels is the consummation of our baptismal consecration. Our baptismal consecration has transformed us "by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man we may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called us out of darkness into this marvelous light (cf. 1 Peter 2,4-10). Therefore, all the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (Rom 12,1). Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life which is in them" (1 Peter 3,15; cf. LG 10).

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

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

39. The essence of a life consecrated by profession is to be Sign lived in the church and for the entire Church and even for all of humanity of the life beyond (cf. LG 44). It is, therefore, a presence of the power of Christ "the Lord" and of the infinite potency of His

Spirit, which takes up the religious and impels him to a self-giving as ample as the love of Christ and the fire of the Spirit. Whatever renunciation is to be found in the religious profession is only the effect of an immense enlargement of human love when it is elevated to the level of the love of Christ and united with an indestructible bond to His Church. It is a sign offered to the world that heavenly goods are not something only for the future but that they are already present in part in this world (cf. LG 44).

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

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

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

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

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

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

43. The vows in our charism. In our Congregation, its first missionaries committed themselves to the apostolic following of Christ in a manner that was both entire and simple. In response to the action of the Spirit who had inspired it, this self-gift continued to make itself more explicit, first through a consecration "to the special service of God in the Immaculate Heart of Mary" with an oath of perseverance and a promise to live the evangelical counsels. Later, this promise was raised by the Church to a canonical state of consecration to God (cf. LG 45), and the Church itself incorporated in its mission the "special service" of the apostolate of the Institute.

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

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

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

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

## Particular Applications

### A. The Constitutions

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

### B. Profession

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

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

### C. Our Houses

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

### D. Indoctrination

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

## CHAPTER IV

# The Vow of Chastity

## Doctrinal Considerations

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

## Particular Applications

### Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

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

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

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

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

g) In Par II, No. 18 of the Constitutions not only the means to overcome temptations against chastity ought to be pointed out, but



also the means to cultivate it. On the other hand, in this chapter, those means which are rather generic and applicable to every type of temptation and which might be better included elsewhere, could be eliminated.

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

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

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

## For the Directory

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

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

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

concerning his vocation to the apostolate, in relationship to his victory over strong temptations, materialized in the life of our Founder.

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

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

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

## CHAPTER V

## The Vow of Poverty

### Doctrinal Consideration

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

### Particular Applications

#### Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

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

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

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

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

## For the Directory

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

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

58. Each one should acknowledge his obligation to work, because the poor make a living by working (cf. PC 13). Each one should rejoice whenever fidelity to the common life makes him experience some effect of poverty (Const. II, 14-15).

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

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

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

With a poverty that is lived perfectly, the Congregation must give an efficacious testimony of the doctrine of Jesus Christ and of the

imperishable goods to which we aspire. But the Congregation should give this testimony through its undertakings and enterprises and in each one of its Sons. If it is authentic poverty, it will always be authentic testimony.

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

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

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

62. Our communities and even our entire Institute must be effectively poor, possessing only whatever is necessary to live and

fulfill our mission in the Church. It is of particular importance in the present times that his life of poverty be adapted to the conditions of each environment and easily understood by men, so that they might be able to appreciate the value of the testimony of detachment and the primacy of the supernatural which the world needs today. For this reason, all our properties and manifestations of our life must be simple, functional, strictly adapted to the necessities of our life and apostolate, and excluding any concession to luxury and ostentation (cf. PC 13; Paul VI, Disc. "Magno gaudio" AAS 56 (1964), 569; cf. "Declaration of the XVII Gen. Chapter on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation," n.81). It would be worthwhile to strive for a greater exchange of goods even with other persons or Institutes, occasionally offering our buildings or halls, or having, if suitable, buildings in common with other religious, etc.

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

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

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

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

## CHAPTER VI

## The Vow of Obedience

### Doctrinal Considerations

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

### Particular Applications

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

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

### Changes in the Constitutions

66. a) Our obedience is consecrated. This essential aspect should appear in the Constitutions.

b) The motive for obedience should be amplified in such a way as to include testimony and service to the Church and its apostolate, in addition to the theological and Christological elements already expressed.

c) There should be in our Constitutions an indication concerning the use of authority in the spirit of service. This could be in the chapter "*De superioribus localibus*."

d) It should be indicated that an active and responsible obedience, and not only a total submission of our judgment and will, is to be expected from members of the Congregation.

e) The formula "et si contra eorum iussa..." (II,20) should be amplified by more positive elements which indicate cooperation with the superiors in their undertakings, in virtue of the very spirit of obedience.

## For the Directory

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

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

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

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

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

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



## CHAPTER VII

## Mortification

## Doctrinal Considerations

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

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

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

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

74. The personality and life of St. Anthony Mary Claret was organized around his primally apostolic vocation. Precisely, the place and emphasis which he confers on this matter of the custody of the senses, moderation, etc. is explained in his life and in his doctrine from this point of view. In Part II, Chapter XXIII, of his Autobiography he speaks of: "the virtues which I knew I had to have in order to bear fruit." On the other hand, "the missionary is a spectacle before God, before angels and before men, and for this reason should be very circumspect and cautious in all his words, deeds, and gestures."

(n.384). This implies a profound internal transformation: "I know I could not be moderate without the virtue of mortification" (n.390). And this same mortification is appreciated by the Saint in its missionary sense (cf. n.392).

75. This part of the Constitutions should be studied from the point of view of the theology of testimony. Because, for our religious apostolic Institute, our holy Founder takes very much into account the value of testimony in the life of the missionary in respect to the building up of the people of God.

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

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

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

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

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

78. However, let it also be noted that the character of our religious life as sign is in the Church a sign of salvation for the world. It is an intelligible sign for the world. Even when the world does not wish to

understand it, it will still be a sign for it and against it, and the world will be judged for not having wanted to accept the directions of God.

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

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

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

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

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

## Particular Applications

### A. Mortification of the Senses and Moderation

#### Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

joining the rest in a single chapter and placing in order the material remaining from both.

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

83. This chapter will be titled "De sensuum mortificatione."

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

## For the Directory

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

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

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

87. *Periodicals*: Our religious consecration does not make us strangers to men (LG 46). Therefore, the Congregation will promote among its members a suitable knowledge of men's conditions and

the times and of the necessities of the Church (cf. PC 2). We will do this not only "to make them share in the most intimate possible manner the dispositions of Christ" (LG 46), but also that our apostolic action may be more opportune and efficacious.

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

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

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

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

## B. Interior Mortification

### Changes in the Constitutions

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

- a) A phrase to indicate our participation in the Paschal mystery.
- b) Another phrase which, as in the Constitutions of 1857, makes us see the apostolic value of mortification. It said: "Fortunate are those who arrive at this degree! Those who wish to be true apostolic missionaries must attain to it, so that each and every one of them might be able to use that expression of the Prophet: 'Like sharp arrows in the hands of a warrior.' For this purpose they must arm themselves

with the most complete self-abnegation and a continuous mortification, without which they would never arrive at the degree of perfection which is absolutely necessary for them to fulfill their ministry."

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

## For the Directory

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

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

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

## CHAPTER VIII

## Household Regulations

## A. Background Historical Elements

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

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

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

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

96. St. Anthony Mary Claret prescribed for us in the primitive and the actual Constitutions two different "Orders", relative to the

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

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

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

"There was a species of regulation which concretized and animated the precepts of the household regulations of the Constitutions. It must have been April 15th, 1865 on which Father Clotet copied it, being Superior of Vich. To such an extent was this so, that it embraced all the moments of the day and all the activities of the individuals who paradoxically became subject to a continuous and strict common life, except in those things which later on by appropriation were called acts of community, viz., the religious acts like morning and night prayers, meditation, the rosary, which were made particularly by



priests in their respective rooms" (Fr. Cristobal Fernandez), *La Congregacion de Misioneros...* "vol. I, pp. 447-450)

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

## B. Regulations in General

### Conclusions concerning our regulations

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

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

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

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

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

## Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

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

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

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

## For the Directory

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

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

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

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

And if in the Liturgy there are moments which are called powerful because of the intensity of their content and for the special manner in which we should live them, similarly there exists powerful moments of silence, surrounding work, study, meditation and contemplation,

or even the very rest our brothers take. In this way, the theology of the Word responds to a fecund theology of silence, because silence, so lived, makes possible the acceptance of the Word, the whole capturing of the Word and of the Spirit, a personal response to the same Word, and our respectful love for our brothers as they give themselves to prayer, to work, or to rest.

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

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

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

#### 110. *Fasting.*

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

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

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

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

#### 112. *Vacations:*

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

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

## C. Concerning the Acts of Piety

### Doctrinal Considerations

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

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

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

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

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

a) The intrinsic nature of the acts of piety differs according to

whether they are liturgical or devotional exercises, whether they are immediately directed to our personal sanctification or to the glory of God; whether by their nature they are community, collective or private acts.

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

c) The requirements of appropriate renewal. In the first place, a return to the Gospel according to the original inspiration of our Founder is necessary. In the arrangement of piety, our Father Founder took into account our mission in the Church. On the one hand he inculcates the value of prayer (*"quod ipsis ante omnia est curandum"* Const. I, 110). He points out the forms of piety which coincide with the character of our apostolic religious vocation of worship, of interiorization of the Word, of formation. In order to make the arrangement of our piety and our apostolate easier, he did not impose on us by Constitution either office in choir or collective prayer. Our Chapters and Superiors have continued to adapt this fundamental alignment to each time and place.

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

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

## Particular Applications

### Changes in the Constitutions

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

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

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

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

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

### For the Directory

#### Acts of Community Piety

121. The following are declared to be community acts in all our houses:

- a) the recitation of lauds.
- b) the recitation of vespers or compline.

It is stated "vespers or compline", because in some countries dinner is had very early, at the end of the afternoon. In this case, vespers can be recited as an act of community, while compline is considered an individual act for immediately before retiring.

122. In our centers of formation and our schools for externs, in large communities where the ministry does not prevent it, and for Coadjutor Brothers whenever there is a group of them in a house, the Mass, concelebrated if possible, should be considered the fundamental act of community.

In our novitiates, as well as our centers of philosophy and theology, both the recitation and the singing of lauds, vespers or compline,

should be accommodated to what is said in the "Instruction for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. . ." nn.16,18 and the "Instruction on the Liturgical Formation of Seminarians," n.26 (cf. canon 1367,3) if the number of students permits. (cf. also "2nd Instruction on Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy nn.19 & 21, May 1, 1967).

123. It is desirable that the recitation of the holy rosary be in common whenever it is possible to do so.

## Individual Acts of Piety Required by the Constitutions

124. The following are individual acts of Piety:

a) Mental prayer, which normally should last one hour for priests (including lauds). The Major Superior can declare in what houses, because of constant ministerial activity, they can apply the norm for the time of missions, which prescribes at least a half hour (excluding lauds). Since it is a matter of extending to the entire year a norm which originally referred only to a part of it, and considering the importance of mental prayer in our apostolic spirituality, this norm is not to be applied in an habitual manner except for serious reasons of the ministry. In this case, our brothers should try to find some time for prayer during the day and the superior should assist them to realize this objective (cf. ES II,21).

As a general rule, mental prayer would be made at the same time, after the community recitation of lauds, in the public place that is most convenient and suitable for each one.

b) The mid-day examination predominantly has the character of mental prayer. But according to the mind of our Holy Founder, brief vocal prayer can also be made, and various optional formulas can be recommended. It shall last fifteen minutes, and at home a signal will be given to begin it. It will be made in the place most suitable for each one.

c) Spiritual reading, which should be done at the time and in the place which is most opportune for each one.

125. Preserving the healthy tradition of the Institute, each one should endeavour to recite the rosary and make a visit to the blessed sacrament whenever it is not done in community (cf. Const. II,33; PO 18).

126. In our centers of formation and always whenever Mass is celebrated in community, the prayer of the faithful for the Church

and for the Congregation should be included as a substitute for noon prayers.

127. According to the desire of the Church frequent use should be made of the sacrament of penance. In order to encourage the liberty recommended by the Council, each one should make use of it on the occasion most opportune for him (cf. PC 14).

128. On Sunday, "the Lord's Day", our members should live the Paschal mystery more intensely in the liturgy and in personal prayer, in fraternal happiness and in an apostolic service of the faithful (cf. SC 106).

129. The day of monthly recollection should preserve its eschatological character. It can be practised in different ways, according to the different situations of our houses. On this day, meditation should be made a subject of religious or apostolic life and there should be an examination of half-an-hour." This can be made in the form of a community "re-examination of life. A spiritual conference should follow the examen. Where the sacred ministry does not prevent it, a Eucharistic act should also be made. According to the practice of our holy Founder and of our first communities, the common recitation of an additional part of the Divine Office in addition to those prescribed is recommended. The detailed arrangements for the day of recollection are left to the local superior.

130. The spiritual exercises can be made either at one time a year in six complete days, or in two periods of four complete days each time. Silence and retreat will be observed during them and normally they will work. The concrete arrangement of all this is left to the director of the exercises with the approval of the local superior.

131. The following are recommended as a traditional expression of our piety: the common celebration of the month of May, the novena to the Heart of Mary, the triduum to our holy Founder and the triduum to St. Joseph on the days preceding this feast on May 1st. Let them be made in a simple form, inspired by the liturgy, according to the different formularies suggested by the particular directories. But if they are not celebrated along with the community Mass, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament should be given, according to liturgical norms. The regional directories will indicate which possible devotions our communities will be bound to practice in the different regions.



## CHAPTER IX

## Bodily Needs, and Impediments to the Sacred Mystery

### Changes in the Constitutions

132. By taking out the various circumstantial, local or unnecessary elements, Part 2, Chapter XIII, No. 54, could be rendered as follows:

*"Alimenta sint salubria et iuxta loci productiones: seper tamen frugalita, non exausita sed communia, et eadem pro omnibus, nisi causa infirmitatis aliud suadeat. Nemini liceat habere in cubiculo vel cella . . ."*

133. It would be worthwhile to give another rendition to No. 61. The phrases which inculcate separation from one's family for motives of the ministry in the present Constitutions seem to be less nuanced than those of 1857. In the latter, there was an exhortation to transform carnal love into a spiritual one "by loving them with a love of piety, with a well-ordered charity" and for the same reason giving preference to the love of Jesus Christ.

134. The Chapter suppresses surveillance of individual correspondence, outside of the most serious cases foreseen by moral theology. As a result, Part I, No. 32 of the Constitutions is suppressed.

135. In eating and drinking, we must follow the norm and example of the doctrine of our Father Founder, which was inspired by the Gospel and the Saints. The first standard is temperance and moderation in their quality and quantity, eating what is necessary in order to work, (Const. 1857-1862, No.76). "Before eating I will say: 'Oh Lord, I eat these things in order to have energy to serve you better'" (Propositions 1863, 13). We must adapt ourselves to different countries and not be demanding or troublesome. In addition to temperance, our Founder proposed positive mortification in order to increase the life of prayer, in order to render fruit in the apostolate and to give testimony (Autob. no.404, 405, 406). He was encouraged by the example of Jesus Christ, our Blessed Lady, and the Apostles, and received a special heavenly inspiration which he proposed to his missionaries in the Constitutions of 1862, no. 73: "We also remember

that the most celebrated missionaries were men of few means and who ate as the poor. This is the way to preach with words and examples and to render fruit, both with a good example that is given and also through the grace which our Lord communicates to such preachers" (l.c.; cf. *Autob.* 408-410).

136. The following of Christ for the works of the apostolate is in itself demanding and it implies the kind of detachment which permits and assures an absolute dedication. The duty of piety with regard to one's own parents and family does not oppose this detachment and as a consequence does not constitute as such an impediment for the sacred ministry, nor is it contrary to the consecrated life. Therefore, our missionaries will fulfill their duties with respect to their parents with a spiritual consciousness proper of persons consecrated to God. In agreement with these norms, superiors will be able to grant our members permission to visit their families when there are reasonable causes.

## DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CONGREGATION

1. In order to establish the Kingdom of God, our Lord Jesus Christ "founded His Church as the sacrament of salvation and sent His Apostles into all the world just as He Himself had been sent by His Father" (AG 5). The Church continues and develops this mission of Christ by impulses of the Holy Spirit.

The apostolate is every contribution to the Kingdom of God, principally through prayer, the works of penance and the testimony of one's life (cf. CD 33). More precisely, it is an apostolate when it is done in the name of Christ and by mission of the Church, in order to make this Kingdom known to men and established among them (AA 2 & PC 8).

2. The Congregation receives from the Church the mission to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God and realizes this according to its proper Claretian charism:

a) As an apostolic religious Institute which imitates very closely the life of the Son of God on earth and prolongs it, it should appear as a sign that moves men to the fulfillment of their Christian vocation, that manifests the presence and transcendence of heavenly goods, that gives testimony of the new and eternal life, that announces in advance the glory of the future resurrection and that makes evident to all the infinite power of Christ and His spirit (cf. LG 44 & 46).

b) As an apostolic missionary Institute, the charity of Christ impels it to seek the salvation of all men (cf. Consti. I,2), commits it to those sectors of greatest evangelical urgency and sensitizes it toward all possible means (cf. Const. II,63) in order always to use those that are most efficacious.

c) As an apostolic Institute dedicated to the Heart of Mary, it is fashioned in the furnace of the love of Mary (cf. Autob. BAC 270) and assimilates "that maternal affection with which all those must be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of men" (LG 65).

3. Obedient to all the appeals of the Supreme Pontiff and docile with "self-sacrificing submission to the bishops as true successors to the Apostles" (CD 35,1; cf. ES I, 22-40), we will work "zealously and diligently in building up and increasing the whole Mystical Body of Christ and for the good of the particular churches" (CD 33).

In the exercise of our apostolate in the Church and for the Church, we will act in accord with all the other apostles, priests, (cf. LG 28 & PO.8), religious (cf. PC 23) and laity (cf. AA 25) so that the unity of all of us who proclaim the Gospel will bring the world to belief in Christ as the one sent by the Father (cf. Jn 17:21).

4. Our apostolic mission, which implies a union with the mandate of Christ and obedience to His representatives, also implies continuous fidelity to the personal urgings of the Spirit.

5. Our substantive title of Missionaries obliges us to be at the forefront in the apostolate, as servants of the Word for conversion to faith.

6. Conscious that without Christ we can do nothing (cf. Jn 15:5), we will live our apostolate with a committed and intrepid faith, in a constant attitude of prayer, in communion with the Paschal Mystery which we daily renew in the Eucharist, and with an imperturbable hope that can accomplish everything in Him who strengthens it. (cf. Phil 4:13). And we will use in a spirit of poverty all the means which our apostolate requires, "but fully knowing that it is God Who makes His Kingdom come upon earth" (AG 42).

7. Heralds of the Incarnate Word and men among men of our time, we should incarnate ourselves in the human communities to which we are sent, so that there may be nothing truly human which does not find an echo in our hearts (cf. GS I). This will oblige us to live apostolically attentive to the signs of the times, to translate the Gospel into a language that is intelligible for each human situation and to offer a Christian solution to all the problems of our brothers in mankind (cf. AG 10).

8. Our missionaries must know how to unite their Claretian impatience, born of zeal, with the hope of those who know that the Kingdom of Heaven grows slowly like a seed. Our sense of responsibility will prevent us from any offhandedness or fickleness. Our consciousness of mission will sustain our initiative and assure our humility. And our total self-gift to the Kingdom of God will make easy for us a renunciation of comfort, human expectation, affections of the heart, and of our own native culture, characteristic of the missionary.

## CHAPTER I

## Reorganizing and Planning our Apostolate

### Article I: General Reorganization

9. Within the Post-Conciliar Church and being the Church renewed, the Congregation must realize its mission of salvation in the world of today. Therefore it should:

- a) renew its apostolic mentality through a constant return to the Gospel and to its original Claretian inspiration and through an adaptation to the conditions of our times (cf. PC 2).
- b) adopt a new style in its missionary activity.
- c) provide for itself highly responsive and flexible legislation in order to assure itself constant adaptation.
- d) establish a new organization of its apostolate on the basis of specialists
- e) execute its apostolic task in efficient work groups.
- f) participate in pastoral masterplans, and cooperate in specialized pastoral programs.

10. The entire mechanism of our Institute should be ordained toward our apostolic finality and we propose a new organization of our apostolate which establishes as a basis the creation of a Pastoral Council in each province and terminates at the top with a revitalized functioning of the General Prefecture of the Apostolate.

11. It is indispensable that those in charge of our formation programs have an enlightened apostolic sensibility and that they have acquired a "convenient pastoral experience" (OT 5).

12. Within our general charism, the specialization and assignment of each individual must be determined by his proper and personal vocation, by the needs of our Institute and by the exigencies of the Church. All our basic formation is always to be preserved, this specialization should already be begun during the years of formation, both for clerics (cf. "Sed. Sap.", Stat.Gen.III art.46) as well as for coadjutor brothers.

13. That our missionaries may be provided with constant pastoral renewal, the present arrangement of our community conferences

shall be substituted by an efficient program on the provincial level and through the responsibility of the Pastoral Council of each major organism.

14. It is urgent to adopt a scientific statistical system to be implanted in the entire Institute in an appropriate manner, for the purpose of a realistic evaluation of our apostolate.

15. The name "Prefect of Ministries" is to be substituted by "Prefect of Apostolate", General or Provincial, whenever it appears in our legislation.

16. For its task, the General Prefecture of Apostolate shall have at its disposal sufficient specialist and support personnel residing in Rome or in the Provinces.

17. The responsibilities of the General Prefecture of Apostolate will be:

a) To ascertain the progress of the universal apostolate of the Church to determine what is most urgent and most effective.

b) To be at the service of the entire apostolate of the Congregation principally through contact with the Pastoral Councils in the provinces.

c) To promote apostolic coordination among the Interprovincial Conferences, though always leaving the liberty of action of each organism intact.

d) To establish the specialized study of reports, experiments, proposals and statistics from the entire Congregation, in order by this means to inform and stimulate the pastoral action of all organizations.

18. In order to facilitate the apostolic role of the government in each province, there shall be constituted in each one a Pastoral Council, consisting of the Provincial Prefect of Apostolate, the Provincial Prefect of Formation and one member representing each one of the principal apostolates prevailing in the province. These representatives will be elected by direct vote of all the perpetually professed members, priests, students, and brothers of each respective major organism.

19. While safeguarding the rights of the Provincial Superior, the responsibility of the pastoral commission will be:

a) to be attuned to the pastoral master plan of the respective dioceses

b) to detect the most urgent apostolic needs in the confines of each province, so that our entire apostolate may emerge from a realistic basis.

c) to coordinate policies, activities and methods.

d) to preoccupy itself with updating the missionaries of the province with regard to knowledge and methods, and to foster contact and interaction between our professors of ecclesiastical sciences and the other missionaries of the Province.

e) along with the Pastoral Councils of other provinces of the Conference, to involve itself in the more encompassing responsibilities of the national and international levels of pastoral action.

20. Teamwork, along with other reasons such as our living together and our giving testimony, demands that each community be pastorally specified. Communities of two or three ministerial purposes should be avoided as much as possible. And the timetable at home shall be adapted to this pastoral specification.

21. It would be desirable to establish a "re-examination of apostolic life" in all our communities. In this sense, advantage might be taken of the one envisioned for the day of recollection, by orienting it also to a community apostolic re-examination.

22. The superior of each house should serve the community apostolically. He should be attentive to the directives of the pastoral plan of the diocese and the indications of the Pastoral Council of the province.

23. The fundamental norm of coupling all apostolic activity to a pastoral master plan obliges us to incorporate ourselves, in spirit and in fact, to the pastoral plan of the diocese, and to link our ministries preaching, communications media, education, etc. with similar ministries undertaken by other religious Families, particularly those which have our "Letter of Brotherhood."

24. Our fundamentally supraparochial character as missionaries fits in perfectly with the exercise of the various specialized pastoral programs among workers, professionals, university students, migrants, tourists . . .

25. All Claretians, superiors and fellow members, should have an open spirit for the creation and adoption of new movements, organizations or other forms of the apostolate. They should also have a suitable aptitude and preparation to undertake those to which they feel called, as well as fidelity to respective methods and goals of each movement or organization.

26. Our "forms of apostolate must be suitably adapted to the present necessities, taking into account not only the spiritual and moral conditions of men, but also social, demographic and economic" (CD 17). We should "sufficiently employ in pastoral care not only theological principles but the findings of the secular sciences especially of psychology and sociology. Thus, it will bring the faithful a more adequate and mature life of faith" (GS 62).

## Article 2: Postcapitular Pastoral Planning

27. *The Non-Christian World.* We must effectively strengthen our apostolate in it, in conformity with what is said in the capitular Decree on the Missions.

28. *The De-Christianized World.* (Either because it has broken with the Church because it takes no account of its faith in its life). In this field of the apostolate, which is spreading in older Christian countries, and in the farflung world of atheism, all the Congregation's sons must reawaken their consciousness of their essentially missionary vocation, and should renew their own mentality and their own activities according to the directives of the council.

29. *Our Separated Brethren.* All our members in their ministries, publications and relationships, must assume a posture that is sincerely ecumenical in keeping with the sensitivity of the Church and according to the norms of the hierarchy. Furthermore, we should have some specialists in ecumenism, either because they might have an aptitude for it or because necessity requires it.

30. *Practicing Christians.* In conformity with Vatican II, we should foster their vocation to sanctity (LG c.V), their liturgical life (SC 19), their apostolic restlessness (AA) and Christian responsibility in their temporal commitments (GS).

31. *Catholic Lay-Leaders* (Leaders in thought or action). We must value highly their ecclesial identity and their key efficacy, according to the doctrine of the Council (LG, AA, GS, passim); further them effectively, sincerely overcoming any possible clerical paternalism. In our apostolate among them we must also prefer pastoral master planning, and work in those movements and organizations which have the greatest effectiveness and the widest ecclesiastical scope.

32. *The Consecrated* (Religious, priests, seminarians). The Institute shall revitalize its traditional apostolate in this field, furthering the renewal of the consecrated within the Council's guidelines and in their full ecclesial dimension (PC, PO, OT, ES). This is to be done on the parochial, diocesan, national and federated scale.

33. *The Displaced.* The Congregation shall see itself committed, more each day to work in a missionary manner among the diverse human groups of "the displaced" in the internal and external migration movements, among workers' cells, in the slums, among vagrants, perhaps by a discreet work of pre-evangelization, in order to fulfill among them also the call of the Council: "The Church must be present in these groups through her children who dwell among them or who are sent to them" (AG 11).



We see the necessity of establishing our communities in these environments. Their manner of living, particularly "the practice of poverty" (ES II,23), should give a greater efficacy to their apostolate.

For this apostolate, it will be necessary on some occasions even, to "displace" some of our communities, by disengaging them from apostolates that are sufficiently provided for.

### 34. *Immigrants.*

a) Within our specific objective, we must establish certain communities consecrated to the apostolate among immigrants.

b) Resolutely adapting themselves, the missionaries dedicated to this apostolate should fully enter into the world of the immigrants which they serve and into the social and ecclesiastical environment which they have acquired. This supposes a careful schooling in the mentality, languages, and cultures of these people.

c) With regard to immigrants who are not transitory, who have an intention of permanently residing in a country, one of the principal commitments of the missionary will be to facilitate their defective and full incorporation into the new human and ecclesial community they have recently joined.

35. *In the Social Field.* We must involve ourselves apostolically in the current fields of social action. This includes the direction of thought and formation of consciences, as well as a decided reform of our own testimony. This will affect both the policies according to which we accept foundations and ministries and the manner of fulfilling them, in order to "perfect the work of justice under the inspiration of charity" (GS 72 & Enc. "Populorum Progressio", passim).

36. *The University.* In the ministry to higher education, we should work for the simple direction of residences to develop toward an authentic apostolic penetration into the university. This will be done through authentic evangelical testimony in community life, through the creation of cells of ferment, through the service of spiritual direction in a renewed form, and through any type of pastoral care at the university in its most missionary forms.

37. *Latin-America.* Because of the pressing appeals of the Church and the requirements of our Claretian vocation, we must respond to the most urgent necessities of Latin-American by sending a greater number of personnel, and in effective and significant concentrations.

## CHAPTER II

## Direct Service of the Word

38. "The Word of God is living and energetic" (Heb 4:12). "Apostolate and preaching in a certain sense are equivalent." "Preaching is the first Apostolate" (Enc. "Ecclesiam suam", MS LVI (1964) 648).

The Congregation proclaims with the Council, "the force and power in the Word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church" (DV 21), and exhorts its priestly missionaries as ministers of the Word of God that they endeavour to seek "how they can bring more adequately to others what they themselves have contemplated" (PO 13).

Furthermore, the Congregation accepts the viewpoint of the Church which "is rehabilitating the function of the living word in the economy of its pastoral office" (Paul VI, "L'OSSERV. ROM." Feb. 13, '64) and encourages its members to "study new forms, to multiply and concentrate on particular talks, to have greater contact with the public, to step down from platforms that are too lofty, to go out from the church if necessary to present oneself with respect and esteem before any audience whatever" (ibid.).

39. All legitimate forms of rendering the Word fit into the dimensions of our charism, the expression of which can develop in the life of the Institute the way it developed in the life of our Founder. And through them all, the Congregation maintains and fulfills "with fidelity its proper objectives" (PC 20) .

40. In order to revitalize in practice the specific vocation of our priestly missionaries to the direct service of the Word, it is fitting to follow the policy of freeing ourselves from the administration of schools or of other similar administrations, from parochial bureaucracy and from other functions which can suitably be undertaken by coadjutor brothers or competent lay persons.

41. The salience of the Word of God in the Liturgy requires of all Claretian priests a specific knowledge of liturgical preaching, a careful and realistic preparation of each homily and a painstaking pastoral administration of all the sacraments (cf. SC 52 & 59).

42. We should value catechesis as the foremost means belonging to the Church in its educative role (GE 4), and as the first ministry

indicated in our Claretian legislation (Const. II, XVI, 63). We should give special attention to adult catechesis. A considerable number of our members should be catechetical specialists. Our catechetical work should be renewed and operate within the channels of the Episcopal Conferences and diocesan catechetical secretariats.

43. All our members dedicated to teaching, spoken and written, or to researching the Christian message fulfill a lofty direct service of the Word. Let our Missionaries who are professors of ecclesiastical sciences exercise their function with a true apostolic sense (cf. OT 16817) and endeavour to amplify the radius of action of their teaching with publications, participation in meetings, etc.

#### 44. *Popular Missions:*

a) We esteem according to their rightful value the efforts of pastoralists and missionaries in the Church today to bring up to date, where it still retains its efficacy, a ministry which is so traditional in our Institute. And we support any joint effort that may be made among us in this respect.

b) Our missionaries should follow with interest the actual dynamic of popular missions. This includes their recent programming on the diocesan, national and international scales, and their scriptural, theological, and sociological enrichment.

c) The Provinces where this ministry flourishes should establish a community which would be a center for missions, and it should be suitably staffed.

d) The Chapter supports the development of the traditional mission into "missionary campaigns" to the People of God, be they in the form of missionary teams on campaign, or in the form of communities in missionary areas. Both experiments could be construed in the following manner:

##### 1. *Missionary teams on campaign:*

would suppose a devitalized area or region.

would rely on the existence of ordinary pastoral activity.

would not include the care of souls.

would require missionaries who are specialists in the pastoral needs of the area for children, families, workers, religious, etc.

the missionaries would live together or not, according to the requirements of missionary strategy.

its duration would be approximately for one year.

*its objectives:* the same as the traditional mission, i.e., intensification of the service of the Word, conversion of hearts and Christian revitalization of structures.

2. *Communities in a Missionary area:*

would suppose an area or country that is de-Christianized and especially uncared for.

would depend on some insufficient structures for ordinary pastoral activity.

would not exclude the care of souls.

the missionaries would live in community, with a special testimony of poverty.

they would admit the possibility of acquiring jobs.

its duration would be indefinite.

*its objectives:* re-Christianize the area in order to hand it over to ordinary effective pastoral activity.

3. Both forms could rely on the participation of our coadjutor brothers and of teams of lay apostles.

45. *Spiritual Exercises*

a) the conducting of Spiritual Exercises continues fully in the direction of our Claretian charism.

b) the internal dynamic of the Ignatian method is still valid and should not be adulterated with extraneous elements from other methods of the apostolate. The Exercises should be conducted, nevertheless, according to the new biblical, theological, liturgical and pastoral mentality expressed in Vatican II.

c) the Chapter accepts the validity of the other types of exercises, which, though not Ignatian, we can make or direct, for motives of efficacy, especially in a series or in other diverse circumstances.

d) the goal of new retreat houses for ourselves is to be subordinated to a more integrated pastoral care, within each diocese or nation.

e) in time, individuals having aptitude and inclination for this ministry should take special studies in it, in addition to as many as possible of those already dedicated to it.

46. Recommended for their special efficacy in the preaching of the Gospel to adults are Institutes, Courses or special Weeks directed to special segments - professionals, married couples, youth..., or oriented to special subjects - Bible, Liturgy, Sociology, Ecumenism, etc.

47. Where novenas, septenaries, etc., are still conducted, we should preach them with the missionary spirit they had in the hands of our Father Founder and with a new doctrinal depth which the Council acclaims: "It is necessary that all preaching be nourished on Sacred Scripture and enriched by it" (DV 21).

## CHAPTER III

# The Communications Media

48. These media are of the highest importance because of their capacity to permeate and express modern society, and even to create it. Responsive to the Church, therefore, which exhorts us to "strive to make use of the various media at hand nowadays for proclaiming Christian Doctrine" (CD 13), and following the inventive example of our Father Founder as well as our Institute's traditional involvement in communication, we should adopt a posture that is apostolically responsible and professionally competent toward the communications media.

49. Every Claretian should:

- a) cultivate his human and pastoral sensitivity toward the communication media.
- b) suitably use them personally in order to live in tune with the prevailing climate of culture, information, and social ferment.
- c) utilize them as instruments of the apostolate, either occasionally or habitually, according to his own capabilities and special preparation. (IM 13 & 15; OT 2).

50. The Congregation should take a decisive collective attitude toward the communications media:

- a) on the general level, through the formation of all seminarians and brothers.
- b) on the specialized level, by selecting some missionaries with the qualities and vocation to dedicate themselves to the organization and direction of this apostolate or to its immediate and habitual exercise (IM 15).
- c) in the attitude that should prevail in our communities and centers of formation (IM 16), that these media will be used responsibly, as a means of formation, and for information.

d) and in the effective organization on the general and provincial level or on the level of Interprovincial Conferences, of a ministry of communications media, so that we may finally rise above mere improvisations, ingenuous well-intentioned attempts, and individual efforts.

51. With special pains we should further the apostolate of the laity in the communications media. For "the laity especially must strive to instill a human and Christian spirit into these media" (IM.3). To this purpose we will:

commit them to this apostolate, so that they bring to it their personal skill or their financial support, according to the Council (Cf. IM 17)

support and direct in a Christian manner those who are professionals in these media (cf. IM 11 & 15).

52. Immersed in a society that is shaped by these communications media, our missionary vocation especially obliges us to form day by day, as readers hearers or spectators, all those who may be within reach of our ministry. Therefore the programs which are suitable to this purpose should be encouraged, increased in numbers and organized according to Christian moral principles (IM.16).

53. Considering the technological and economical complexity of these communications media and their gradual socialization, it will be apostolically more effective to introduce ourselves into the formidable organizations owned by others than to create our own. Our missionaries, with suitable preparation, should collaborate in these organizations, whether they depend from the hierarchy or not, in order to participate there, too, in a pastoral master plan, or to influence the masses in a Christian manner (cf. IM 14).

Where it may seem pastorally necessary, e.g., in our mission territories and in less developed countries, our members should establish these media, but always using apostolic judgments and professional standards.

54. As servants of the Word, all our priests should achieve a mastery of the art of writing as well as speaking. The majority of them must be able to write effectively even though they may not dedicate themselves, properly speaking, to the ministry of the press. Many of them, however, must end up coupling their diverse apostolic activities with a relative succession of writings, on different levels of specialization and publication.

Those most highly gifted in the art of writing should specialize in it, with sufficient studies for a degree and career in journalism.

55. In the publication of books, magazines, leaflets and other pamphlets an account should be taken objectively of the editorial situation and the needs of each country. And for reasons of efficacy, care should be taken to attune them with the signs of the times in their content and presentation.

56. In general our periodicals cannot be numerically increased inconsiderately. They must be conducted on the provincial level or the level of Interprovincial Conferences, in order to adapt them better to the scope of a nation or country.

These publications demand an unselfish cooperation from our members.

57. The exchange and cooperative publication of periodicals, translations and editorial collections should be studied and controlled, using realistic judgments that will result in an effective apostolate.

58. Each of our periodicals must have its editorial staff and the trained directors required in each locality.

59. A very simple but effective "news service" office should be established on the General level, edited by the Prefecture of Apostolate, for the purpose of feeding information on our publications, to the Holy See's communications media and to the media of the countries where Claretians are working.

## CHAPTER IV

### Parishes

60. The parish, although it is not the only form of Christian community, is the primary local community of the faith, of worship and charity.

Beyond its juridical aspects, which are being re-evaluated today, its Eucharistic (cf. SC 42) and missionary (CD 30,1) polarities are being accentuated.

Religious sociology establishes the fact that there is a crisis in the traditional parish, especially in the great urban centers.

Hence, a living parish calls for a pastoral activity awakened to its Eucharistic-missionary exigencies and to the sociology which conditions it.

61. The congregation, which originated in the Church with supra-parochial mission, but which in the course of its history has been accepting parishes by the force of its very apostolic adaptability, shall in the future offer its services to the Church in order to respond to the explicit calls of Vatican II (cf. CD 33, 34, 35) and in response to the requirements and potential of the ministry of the Word in the parish of today (cf. CD 30,2).

In order to retain our fidelity to our own charism within this ministry, the Institute requests of its missionaries an open attitude to new perspectives and structures in the mission-parish of today, in order to make each one of our parishes an authentic "missionary community."

62. In accepting the parochial ministry, we should balance equally the needs of the Church and the exigencies of our charism. For this reason we will give preference to parishes that are strictly missionary in character. And in response to the call of the bishops, we will generously accept the care of parishes even on a temporary basis (cf. CD 35,1).

63. In the exercise of the parish ministry, we will be authentic missionaries, by the quality of our preaching, by our special concern for catechetics, (CD 30,2) by our commitment to winning over those who have been alienated or on the margin, by our furthering of the laity, by fostering priestly and religious vocations, by our cooperation in social works, which will be frequently a work of pre-evangelization.

64. All our parishes, though part of particular Churches, must live in openness to the Universal Church by collaborating through prayer and action to this total endeavour, missionary, ecumenical and pastoral, because, "the grace of renewal cannot grow in communities unless each of these extends the range of its charity to the ends of the earth, and devotes the same care to those afar off as it does to those who are its own members" (AG 37).

It would be very useful if our parishes maintained communications "with some parish or diocese in the missions, in order to make visible the communion between communities so that mutual edification may abound." (AG 37)

65. In order better to develop the parish as mission, the spirit of collaboration and testimony of unity should be fostered (CD 30,1 & 3) by a life of priestly teamwork, by the effective functioning of a lay-council in parish organization and administration, and with a sincere involvement in the pastoral master plan, both local and diocesan.

66. Let our priests and coadjutor brothers who form the Claretian parish communities live with fraternal love the gift of their priesthood and their religious and missionary life. Let them give a transparent



testimony of piety, above all in the liturgy, and of their generous practice of the evangelical counsels. Let them maintain a perennial "unity of life" in the midst of their many duties (cf. PO 14), and receive all the faithful with an affable spirit of service.

67. Let our pastors see to it "that the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice be the center and culmination of the entire life of the Christian community. They should labour without stint that the faithful are nourished with spiritual food through the devout and frequent reception of the Sacraments and by intelligent and active participation in the liturgy." (CD 30,2). Let them show themselves especially prompt to hear the confessions of the faithful, remembering how much the sacrament of Penance favours the increase of the Christian life (cf. CD 30,2). Let them not disregard exercises of piety, according to the recommendation of the Council (SC 13).

68. Let them give singular attention to the apostolate of personal contact. This includes visits to families and schools, consideration toward the sick, solicitude for the needy, dialogue with youth, with the estranged, and with transients, etc. (CD 30,2).

69. Interior and exterior migration and other similar phenomena of displacement or the urgent needs of certain de-Christianized areas can impose upon us other types of parish service:

a) accepting mission areas with the purpose of creating Christian communities from which would result new parishes, to be transferred in due time to ordinary pastoral care.

b) making ourselves present, as missionary teams or especially adapted communities, in precariously situated parishes.

70. Let care be taken that our missionary pastors "enjoy the stability in their office which the good of souls requires" (CD 31).

71. Guided by a realistic and universal vision, and with a view to the actual expansion of our Institute, we invoke for our parish communities the principle of greatest possible flexibility. Let the Claretian parish apostolate be studied and concretely determined after considering the sociological circumstances of the place in which it is developed.

## CHAPTER V

## Apostolate of the Laity

72. "The laity derive the duty and the right to the apostolate from their union with Christ the Head. Incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by our Lord Himself" (AA.3).

73. From the beginning of his priestly ministry until his death, St. Anthony Mary Claret was a tireless promoter of the apostolate of the laity. He entrusted to the laity the organization and direction of his people's libraries, and wrote these prophetic words: "In these last times it seems that God wishes the laity to have a part in the salvation of souls" ("*Las Bibliotecas Populares Y Parroquiales*", Madrid, 1864, pg.18). The Supreme Pontiffs Pius XI and Pius XII have presented our Founder as a precursor of the lay apostolate of today.

74. In order to live the apostolic intuition of its Founder, the Congregation today accepts the doctrine of Vatican II with regard to the origin, meaning and scope of the apostolate of the laity, which ranges from the testimony of their life to their characteristic obligation of restoring the temporal order in a Christian manner (cf. AA 6 & 7).

75. Our missionaries' promotion of the lay apostolate must be oriented to foster the development of the laity's proper ecclesial vocation and to increase the work of evangelization of our Holy Church (cf. LG 33).

76. In our common Christian vocation and in this common ecclesial work, the laity collaborates with us, and we collaborate fraternally with them. We bring to their common priesthood and baptismal consecration the gift of our priestly ministry and of the religious and apostolic consecration of our priests, brothers, and seminarians.

77. At the same time, the Congregation can do no less than accept with joy and gratitude the assistance of those lay-persons, either as individuals or in groups, who wish voluntarily to serve the Church within our own charism, participating in the works proper to our Institute.

78. The promotion of the lay apostolate on the part of the Congregation is realized as a consequence in three ways:

a) through the spiritual formation of the faithful, whether they belong to an association or not, helping them to attain to their apostolic charity.

b) through our priests' involvement as assistants and counsellors in the general movements of the lay apostolate, and in our brothers' and students' active participation in them.

c) with the foundation or furthering of some lay work proper of our Institute, wherever it can be sustained within the pastoral master plan (CD 17).

79. Our Congregation, which has as its proper trait collaboration with the Bishops whom the Holy Spirit has set in place to rule the Church, (Heb 20,28), exhorts its members, particularly those who are consecrated to the care of souls, educators, and those who have special qualities to be counsellors or assistants, to participate actively and unselfishly in the national and international movements of the lay apostolate recommended by the hierarchy: specialized movements such as Catholic Action, Young Christian Workers, Cursillos of Christianity, Legion of Mary, Christian Family Movement, Scouting, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

In all these works let our members strive to foster "the particular characteristics of the spiritual life that are proper to them" (AA 4).

80. In their apostolate among youth, our missionaries can accomplish an extraordinary service for the Kingdom of God. For this purpose let them dedicate themselves to cultivate preferentially smaller groups of youth having a spirit of leadership. Let them give them a clear personal testimony of commitment to our Lord and to His Church. Let them foster intensely in them a Christian conscience and their ecclesial vocation and, without prematurely determining them, project them to a committed and supernatural apostolate, and one carried out as a team. Let them place them in contact with persons and institutions which embody in an exemplary way the mission of the Church. Let them organize among them retreats, hikes, vigils, etc., in which they experience the warmth of Christian apostolic community life.

In these youth groups, very good religious and priestly vocations can arise and especially Clareian vocations. Those who do not feel themselves called to a special vocation will be magnificent lay-apostles, in any case.

81. In the conservation and development of its proper works, the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Youth of the Heart

of Mary, Claretian Guilds, we should follow with generous obedience the will of the Church manifested in Vatican II, to seek "the good of the Universal Church and of the diocese." We should adapt these works "to the requirements of time and place, employing appropriate and even new programs and abandoning those works which today are less relevant to the spirit and authentic nature of the community" (PC 20),

82. Conscious of the general crisis of pious associations, the Chapter urges our missionaries who are responsible for our associations to develop their spiritual heritage and that they involve them in a true lay apostolic activity, according to the spirit of the Council and in relation to the missionary requirements of the local churches.

83. A very effective manner of joining the lay apostolate with the apostolate of our Institute will be through the utilization of lay groups in our different missionary campaigns in Christian countries, and the incorporation of lay apostles, foreign or native, in our missions among non-Christians.

84. In order to respond to the desires of many of the laity, our alumni, Claretian ex-seminarians, members of our families and certain members of our associations, the Chapter affirms in principle the opportune of a Claretian lay body in the missionary dimension of our charism, bearing the stamp of our consecration to the Heart of Mary and even taking the shape of a true secular Institute.

# DECREE ON MISSIONS TO NON-CHRISTIANS

## Preface

"Divinely sent to the nations in order to be 'a universal sacrament of salvation', " (AG 1), the Church "is wholly missionary, and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God" (AG 35). For this reason, Vatican Council II has invited "all to a profound interior renewal, so that having a lively consciousness of their own responsibility in the spread of the Gospel, they may accept their commitment to missionary work among the nations" (Ibid.), to which the Church feels itself called with a greater urgency in the present state of affairs. (AG 1)

The Council asked that religious Institutes preserve under all circumstances their missionary spirit and that "they be adapted, as the nature of each community permits, to modern conditions so the preaching of the Gospel may be carried out more effectively in every nation" (PC 20).

Our Congregation, like the pilgrim Church, is "missionary by its very nature" (AG 2). It is also missionary by the will of its Founder and by the weight of its authentic tradition. At this moment of renewal the Congregation asks itself if, according to the mind of Vatican II, it can sincerely before God ... extend its activity for the expansion of the Kingdom of God among the nations; if it can leave off some other ministries, so that it may dedicate its energies (employed in them) to the Missions (cf. AG 40).

Let all the sons of the Congregation recall, then, this missionary summons of the Chapter, which is the same anguished call uttered by the Church.

With Vatican Council II, the Congregation gives thanks to God for so many services rendered (cf. AG 40) by those heroic sons of hers who in their work to expand the Kingdom of God have died, or are

currently giving their lives, or will sacrifice themselves tomorrow in increasing numbers in mission lands. Because they fulfill, in its most genuine missionary expression, the Institute's reason for being in the Church of Jesus Christ.

## I. Missionary Character of the Congregation

1. Although the Congregation does not have missions to non-Christians as its exclusive goal, the Institute is essentially missionary and properly so, by virtue of its orientation to the ministry of the Word and the catholicity of its spirit.

2. In adapting the Holy Constitutions according to the mind of our Founder (cf. AG 40,3), a specific place will be given to the conciliar expression, *Evanqelium Dei apud gentes diffundere*.

3. All the members of the Congregation, by virtue of their missionary vocation, must be ready to exercise the apostolate among non-Christians (Const. I, 74,6). Furthermore, let those who feel themselves especially called to this ministry offer themselves to their superiors in imitation of our holy Father Founder. Their superiors ought to favour and support this vocation once they have recognized and tested it. This applies even to the most gifted members, inasmuch as the missionary vocation is a grace and blessing of God for their respective organisms.

4. Let those missions to non-Christians assigned to the Congregation be regarded as one of the basic works of the Institute. In order to foster missionary spirit and cooperation, let a competent and effective secretariat or procuratorship be established on the general and provincial levels.

## II. Missionary Action of the Congregation

5. The Congregation wishes in this Chapter to be aware of its missionary duty "among non-Christians" (LG 64; CC I) and bestir itself to respond in the measure of its capabilities and in the proportion of its ministries to the urgent insistence of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God among non-Christians (cf. AG 40).

6. The Congregation recognizes that its first missionary obligation at the present time is to review and reinforce its activity in those missions already in its charge.

7. While safeguarding the right and duty of the General Government (Const. 1,8,6) the missions will be undertaken and fulfilled not on the general but on the provincial level.

8. All the provinces should have their own mission, providing it with personnel and financial means.

### III. Formation of the Missionary

9. a) "Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and the origin of the whole apostolate of the Church," let those in charge of formation instill in the minds of our young seminarians that "the success of their future apostolate depends on their living union with Christ in keeping with the Lord's Words: "He who abides in Me and I in him bears fruit for without Me you can do nothing"" (AA 4; Jn 15:5).

b) Let those in charge of formation foster the missionary vocation. Let them cherish it rightfully and sustain it in its crises, securing it by true zeal, by sacrifice, by renunciation, and by love for all men and for all peoples (AG 23-25).

10. In the new Order of Studies the following should be kept in mind:

a) "Doctrinal training should be so planned that it takes in both the universality of the Church and the diversity of the world's nations." (AG 26) It should also take in the learning of languages, above all the international languages, from the first years.

b) "Mission theology should be so incorporated in the teaching and development of theological doctrine that the missionary nature of the Church may be fully brought to light. In addition, the Lord's plans of preparing for the Gospel and the possibility of salvation for those to whom the Gospel has not been preached are to be examined, and the necessity of evangelization and incorporation in the Church is to be made clear" (ES III,1).

11. Among the virtues which the future missionaries must acquire and practice are those derived from apostolic zeal and highly recommended by the Council. These virtues include: ability of initiative, constancy in undertakings, an open mind and a generous heart, ready adaptability to foreign customs and to the various circumstances of peoples (AG 25).

12. Those members assigned to the missions should suitably be assured of a special preparation, both doctrinal and practical (AG 26), in their own country; and they should, wherever possible, finish

the last years of their formation in the country where they must evangelize.

Likewise, coadjutor brothers, who provide such valiant services to the missions, must take courses in catechetics (AG 26) and receive sufficient training as professionals and technicians to become capable of directing schools and workshops (PC 8).

13. Let a period of pastoral preparation and missionary adaptation be established for those recently arrived in the missions. Let the superiors arrange a suitable program. Let them watch over its fulfillment and not be easy in granting exemptions. During this time let the new missionaries study the customs, social structures and history of the peoples they must evangelize; let them try to understand their religious soul; let them be eager and persevering from the start to learn their language, till they can speak it fluently and elegantly (AG 26).

14. Some Missionaries, after a certain time of pastoral experience in the territory of the mission, may appropriately be assigned to special studies in universities and graduate schools (AG 26).

15. Let Superiors foster research studies in the region which they are evangelizing, creating, if possible, a center of higher culture with a specialized library and museum, so that the missions may be present in the cultural development of the country imbuing that development with a sense of Christianity (AG 26).

#### IV. Government and the Missions

16. Let Provincial Superiors, upon whom each mission depends, try to visit their mission as soon as possible so that they may be acquainted with the mission's needs and the missionaries' problems. Let Superiors endeavour by their repeated visits to provide for their missions reasonable needs, and let them support and encourage the missionaries in their difficult undertaking through effective cooperation on the part of the Province.

17. In mission territories dependent on a Province, let there be a superior delegate to whom wide faculties are granted so that his government may be more effective (ES II, 18).

18. Let our missionaries maintain cordial and respectful relations with ecclesiastical authorities, always regarding themselves as their constant helpers (Const. I, 2; CD 35, 1). Likewise, let them generously cooperate with the diocesan priests and religious communities whom they may find working in the same mission territory.



19. Giving to God what is God's, let our missionaries not neglect to give to Caesar what is Caesar's. Let them support, then, the civil authorities' initiative for improvements and progress, and on scheduled holidays, let them not consider it belittling to show their respect and loyalty (Rm 13:1-7). Let our missionaries avoid involving themselves in political questions which could impede and even annul their ministry (Const. II,64). Let the supernatural motive of their presence in the country always be evident, and let them show their love for the people confided to them (cf. *Autob.* nn.522-523).

20. Let our missionaries be provided an opportunity to enjoy a reasonable vacation period each year and let them be allowed to return to their province of origin more easily than other members of the Congregation, according to the judgment of the Major Superior.

## V. Mission Spirituality

21. Identified with Christ and feeling themselves bound to His mission as the One sent by the Father, "let them bear His death within them" (1Cor 4:10) for the life of men. Let our missionaries, then, be living witnesses, who strive to make themselves "all things for all men" (1Cor 9:22) through an entirely apostolic life. With an open mind in a spirit of service, let them build up the Church, composing in the community of pastors and faithful "one heart and one soul" (Acts 2:42; AG 24-25).

22. Let the attitude of sonship and apostolic spirit proper to our special consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and our confidence in Her intercession as Mother of the Church (LG 53 & 65) live continuously within our missionaries; and let them grow in the perfect imitation of our Holy Father Founder, in his "life hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:3), in his self-immolation and apostolic dynamism.

23. Let our missionaries live evangelical perfection in its fullness, as the greatest form of apostolate to the nations of the world and the guarantee of its fruitfulness (PC I).

24. In a spirit of adaptation and renewal (PC 3 & 8):

a) A special set of regulations for each mission territory should be arranged (ES 2,26).

b) The timetable, approved as required, should be adapted to the demands of mission life (ES II,26).

c) In particular cases, the competent superior will be able to grant dispensations from acts of piety or a commutation for other acts which are undertaken for motives of apostolate.

25. Superiors, according to their means, should give missionaries the opportunity, assistance and time to refine their spiritual, doctrinal and professional development (PC 18). They should also assure the missionaries' participation in the benefits of common life by avoiding situations in which anyone must live alone (AG 27; PC 12).

26. Once a year, let the Spiritual Exercises be made together and in suitable houses, taking advantage of the presence of the missionaries by having, either before or after the Exercises, encounters to help bring about common pastoral renewal (AG 24).

## VI. Missionary Activity

27. Evangelization of peoples must constitute the basic activity of the missions. Care must be taken, however, not to present the Gospel as sweeping away old beliefs and customs, but as a refinement of whatever may be good in them and as a germ of brotherhood, unity and peace among people (AG 8-9).

28. In order better to adapt missionary preaching to the mentality of the peoples who are to be evangelized, it would be desirable to have in each missionary region a center of information. This center would provide missionaries with necessary information on the history, sociology and religion of the people (cf. AG 26).

29. Actively included in our missionary works, our coadjutor brothers will provide most valuable assistance in the manual offices and arts, as well as in catechesis.

30. To give greater impulse to the propagation of the faith and the Church, let our missionaries make use of native catechists, who are full of apostolic spirit. These people should be provided with a means for a decent life and social security by paying them a just wage. To provide them with as complete a religious and pastoral formation as possible, courses should be arranged, and schools of religion (or catechetical schools) established. In this way the most qualified will be able to be proposed as candidates for the order of diaconate (cf. AG 26).

31. The Church is not formed, nor does it live fully, nor represent Christ perfectly if no true laity exists to work with the hierarchy. Hence, the formation of the laity must be sought with all interest so that the Gospel may penetrate deeply the life, and the individual consciences of the people (cf. AG 21).

32. Let our missionaries greatly appreciate the active apostolate of the laity, whether they are from the same country as the mission,

or from other countries. And the principal function of the provincial Secretariat of missions should be to form, instruct and initiate lay-missionaries before they are sent to the field of operations (cf. AG 21).

33. All possible interest should be taken so that the pastoral care during the catechumenate may be an initiation into the Christian life that embraces not only the mere explanation of dogmas and precepts, but also the exercise of Gospel morality and participation in the sacred rites permitted to the catechumens (AG 14).

34. Since the principal means of communication is direct contact with people, our missionaries, with greater reason than their lay collaborators, should "acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of men among whom they live, let them share in cultural and social life by the various undertakings and enterprises of human living" (AG 11). But let them avoid everything that might wound national interest, so that they can exercise their sacred mission with greater influence.

35. With ecumenical openness and within the norms established by the Directory and Decree on Ecumenism, the missionary should support the activity of all persons and institutions, religious or civil, whether they are Catholic or not, as long as they are dedicated to doing good under any form whatever.

36. Social welfare works, especially those which concern teaching, pertain fully to missionary activity and are an extraordinary instrument of apostolate. Provision must be made, however, to lead to Christ those who receive through them the opportunity to dignify and elevate their human condition (AG 12).

37. Care should also be taken that at least some of our missionaries know how to use practical tools and the communications media, whose great importance everyone must appreciate (AG 26).

38. The apostolic zeal of our missionaries should spur them on to establish in each mission country a major organism of the Congregation made up of native Claretians, who, in turn, should also launch themselves upon missionary expansion. This should be considered the greatest service which the Congregation can offer to missionary work.

39. Since a principal goal of missionary activity is to implant a local Church with its own clergy and hierarchy, let our missionaries make the greatest effort to foster native priestly vocations. With equal interest let them foster vocations to the religious life, considered by the decree "Ad Gentes" as indispensable for the development of the Christian community (AG 15 & 18).

# DECREE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## I. Christian Education, an Apostolic Ministry of the Congregation

1. Our Congregation of Missionaries should cooperate effectively with the bishops in the ministry of the Word (Const. I,2), and should diffuse the Word in all its forms by every means (Const. II,63), thus helping to announce the message of salvation to all men.

2. Christian education makes an important contribution to the service of the Word. It offers special opportunities to prepare nonbelievers for acceptance of the Gospel, while at the same time it consolidates and develops the faith in those who already believe. Moreover, it makes possible in a great part contacts with segments of society habitually alienated from the influence of the Church (GE.8).

Because of this, the Congregation has cultivated teaching and Christian education in all its forms as a proper ministry, realizing that it is especially appropriate for developing the Congregation's missionary activity in the world (cf. "Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage," 51).

Our Founder wanted it thus, and ten General Chapters have declared it so, as well as the Holy See itself in its decree of August 22nd, 1947.

3. The Congregation, through its Extraordinary General Chapter, is ready to follow the exhortations of Vatican Council II, and review in depth its ministry of Christian education. It hopes, thus, to respond adequately to the most urgent needs of the world today and the anguished calls of the Church.

## II. Community of Apostolate

4. Those who with outstanding zeal and self-sacrifice are dedicated to this ministry of Christian education in any of its forms, or who in the future may be assigned to it by their superiors should feel themselves inwardly driven by their spirit and their missionary vocation, to confront all the difficulties which this ministry presents and convert these difficulties into a true exercise of the Congregation's missionary vocation. Teaching, in any of its forms, should in our hands be transformed into a means of announcing the Gospel, propagating and developing the faith, inspiring in the faithful a missionary spirit, and radiating this spirit to areas deprived of the saving influence of the Church.

5. The Claretian educator, to be an authentic educator, should by his life of prayer and sacrifice steep himself in the mystery of Christ; he should impregnate his teaching activities with a true apostolic zeal.

With his life, then, full of the spirit of Christ, he will place at the service of this teaching function all of his endowments of soul and heart, and employ every possible diligence in generously preparing and renewing himself (GE 5).

6. Both the mission which we have in the Church as well as the diverse ministries which carry it out are community realities which unite all of us in the same spirit and in one common task. This obliges us always to consider the activity of each missionary within the totality of the duties of the entire Congregation. It obliges us, too, to consider the activity of the Institute within the mission of the entire Church, in keeping with the words of the Council: "Even though priests are assigned to different duties, nevertheless they carry on one priestly ministry for men. ... Whether they engage in parochial... ministry... or whether they devote their efforts to scientific research or teaching ... all are, indeed, united in the building up of the Body of Christ" (PO 8).

7. The Congregation generally pursues its educative-teaching ministry today within the complex of the Catholic school:

- a) creating there an environment of charity and of evangelical freedom (GE 8).
- b) illuminating human culture with the Faith (GE 8).
- c) exercising frequently the immediate ministry of preaching and the life of the sacraments.

According to this global structure of the Catholic school, the apostolic effectiveness of teaching should be prized. The action, then, of all the personnel of the center must tend harmoniously to this community function. And the personnel must accomplish this by the testimony of their life, by their teamwork, and by the same rule of life.

### III. The Scope of our Teaching Apostolate

8. In keeping with our vocation as missionaries in the direct service of the Word, and aware of the scarcity of priests in the Church, the superiors should within the ministry of education:

a) dedicate our priests, preferably, to spiritual direction and to teaching those subjects which more directly form the mind.

b) prepare spiritually and professionally those brothers who manifest a vocation for education

c) integrate with us as many laity as possible who are competent not only on a professional level, but principally on the spiritual level because of their outstanding Christian lives and their apostolic posture.

9. All types of centers of education proposed by the Council can be accepted by us within the requirements of our charism and according to the needs of the Church in each time and place.

When because of external difficulties, or pastoral exigencies, or lack of personnel, it may not be possible to establish centers of Catholic education, let other forms of education, which have a positive influence on the Christian formation of students, be fostered – such as chaplaincies, professorships of religion, etc. – taking care to form apostolic groups among the students from public as well as private schools.

10. So that our apostolate of Christian education may, according to the mind of the Church, foster the maturity of the human personality, bring about a greater consciousness of the gift of faith, help the development of the new man toward the age of the fullness of Christ, make the students contribute to the growth of His Mystical Body, students who, in turn, will give testimony and aid to the Christian re-shaping of the world (GE 1 & 2), we should prolong our activity as missionary educators by cultivating apostolically our former students. Moreover, we should habitually extend this same influence over the families of the students we educate (GE 8); we can do this through Parent Associations, Claretian Guilds, and other similar organizations.

11. In residences and similar educational centers, formation should not be restricted to being preventive in nature and providing a good environment for students and young men. It is necessary to foster among students apostolic and charitable works. It is also necessary to awaken possible priestly and religious vocations among them, and, in every instance, their ecclesial responsibility as Christian leaders. For this purpose individuals should be placed before them who are humanly and spiritually well-trained, and who, if possible, have degrees.

#### IV. Social Aspects

12. While it is true that the Congregation directs numerous free schools, the Chapter desires that this aspect of its educational apostolate become widespread in schools that charge tuition, in the measure of our real capabilities.

We would contribute in this way to a greater freedom for families to choose schools for their sons (GE 6). For this purpose it would be desirable to promote efforts before the civil authorities, by means of Parent Associations or other similar groups whose aim would be to obtain in practice the equal rights that all men have to culture and to education (GE 1).

13. It is a grave responsibility of those directing our schools and similar centers to fulfill faithfully the social obligations of each country; it is also a grave responsibility to fulfill the requirements of Christian charity toward lay-personnel engaged to help us in our work; and disbursements or expenses of the center should be prudently managed with a sense of social responsibility.

14. Following the wishes of our Holy Founder (Letter to Fr. Xifre, July 16th, 1869) and of Father Xifre (Esp. de la Congreg. Trat. II, Cap. 2, art. 5) let the major superiors preferably assign to teaching those who possess a decided vocation for it.

It will be possible in this way to assure more easily that the professors will enjoy stability, something that is indispensable in this ministry, and that they also may be specialists in the various branches of teaching. With regard to the latter, it would be desirable that those who are active in these branches of teaching have the respective academic titles (GE 8).

## V. Principal Characteristics of our Centers of Education

15. Let our centers of Christian education be above all centers of apostolic insight and activity, in which the educators "intimately linked in charity to one another and with their students and endowed with an apostolic spirit, ... by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ, the unique Teacher" (GE 8).

Let these centers of education, therefore, endeavour to form students who are noted for their Christian spirit, for their mature and well-defined personalities, for their achievement of an intellectual and social formation oriented towards a life of Christian service to others in their future professions. Let these students become, as it were, a saving ferment in the human community (GE 8).

16. Sufficient order must be established in our schools to guarantee overall progress and harmony, and as a necessary element for the personal formation of the students. It should be provided that they exercise responsibility and participate in the organization of the various spiritual, cultural and recreational activities.

17. The Spiritual Director, supported by the team of educators, must create a climate of piety which brings the students to a conscious and active participation in the liturgical Mystery (GE.4), to a frequent reception of the sacraments, to a filial love for our Mother and imitation of her virtues (LG 67). He will foster the kinds of piety recommended by the Church and by the Congregation, though in a renewed and adapted form.

18. Our apostolic-missionary work of Christian education, in any of its forms, must reach its culmination in the formation of select groups aiming to fit themselves into the modern movements of the apostolate. Priestly and religious vocations will result spontaneously from these groups. All our educators should make a great effort to support and cultivate these vocations, above all by the example of their religious and apostolic lives. This is the best recommendation for our own Institute and an invitation to embrace the religious life (PC 24).



## VI. Recommendations

19. Finally, the Chapter recommends the formulation of a manual of education developed by experts from the different parts of the Congregation. The manual should sum up the fundamental lines of our ministry of Christian education, with due attention to the permanent values of our teaching tradition and resolutely incorporating the doctrine which Vatican II has bequeathed to us in this matter.

So also the Chapter desires that in some section of the Holy Constitutions, the ministry of Christian education be cited in an explicit form.

# DECREE ON FORMATION

## Preface

1. With the Council, an era of personal and collective renewal has been opened up in the Church, one of sincere conforming with the Gospel in order to show God's plan of salvation to men in an intelligible and attractive way.

We can say that the salvation of humanity is bound up with renewal of the Church, in its sons and through them in the Church's structures. But this renewal depends on the formation of priests, of religious, and of laity (OT, Preface). Formation has been entrusted to the sense of responsibility of educators and students (cf. OT, Concl.; PC 18; GE Intr.; AA 28-32).

In response to these teachings of the Council, this Extraordinary General Chapter, assembled with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and enjoying the protection and presence of the Heart of Mary, the Mother of the Church, wishes to pay very special attention to one of the most serious problems which the Congregation has at present: the selection and formation of educators and students.

## CHAPTER I

### General Criteria

#### A. The Over-All Purpose of Formation

2. All formation should be oriented toward a set goal. This overall purpose should be set forth clearly and concretely, so that it may have effective influence upon all parts of the educative process.

Consequently, it is necessary to establish as precisely as possible the full meaning of Missionary Son of the Heart of Mary, as it expresses the charism of the Congregation within the Church. The superiors and other educators have the serious responsibility of organizing the entire educative process in the light of this principle (cf. GE I; PC 2,3; ES II,17).

The apostolic formation should in a certain way guide all aspects of formation, bearing in mind that the Claretian apostolic spirit postulates a form of religious life (cf. OT 4,19,21).

## B. Principles of Integration

**3. Definition:** An integral formation embraces the harmonious development of all the facets of the personality of the Claretian missionary:

- a) human formation
- b) Christian-ecclesial formation
- c) religious-evangelical formation
- d) Claretian-apostolic formation
- e) priestly formation, for those called to the priesthood

### a) Human Formation

4. We should aim, in formation, to create genuine human personalities, cultivating all the higher values of humanity, but particularly those that most directly constitute personality: the capacity for facing events decisively and judging them calmly; the force of character to undertake one's own mission; the virtues of social living, which will allow the one to be educated to integrate himself into the community and harmoniously make his contribution to the fulfillment of the Institute's mission. There should be a cultivation of the virtues which have the most influence on society today and which best prepare the path for the message of the religious priest: "love for truth, sincerity of mind, a constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's promises, refinement of manners, modesty in speech coupled with charity" (cf. OT 11). The aesthetic sense should also be cultivated, and sensitivity toward all human values.

5. In the basic formation of our members, let the necessary attention be given to their progress and attainment of full liberty in Christ, through an increasing and more responsible exercise of Christian liberty. This is highly important in formation, even on the

level of the human community. Let discipline be presented to them as a necessary part of all formation, in order that they may acquire self-mastery (cf. OT 11).

Let it be pointed out to the one being formed that this liberty is not rightly understood except when it is united with a keen respect for the rights of others: with a deeper and deeper sense of responsibility to God, to men, and even to himself. In order to achieve this education in the right use of human liberty – so that the intervention of the educators may be less and less necessary – it is indispensable that those in charge confidently grant to those they are forming such responsibilities as are suited to them in the life of the community, in accordance with each member's age and disposition, and that a prudent, yet favourable hearing be given to their initiatives (cf. OT 11).

6. It is necessary that a prudent development of a psychological balance be given attention so that mature and healthy development of the affective life may be attained, and likewise a readiness for establishing interpersonal relationships.

It is also necessary to provide for moderate, systematic physical education in our centers of formation, granting its importance for the complete and balanced development of the apostle. Systematic medical examinations should be given before the admittance of a candidate and during his formation. Let the necessary means be provided for the practice of physical exercise, and let habits of hygiene and cleanliness be insisted on.

## **b) Christian-Ecclesial Formation**

7. The entire formation of our members should be based on an intense Christian education, answering to the exigencies baptism has impressed upon our being:

- A life of profound faith.
- Integration into the pilgrim Church, with a lively sense of responsibility and solidarity with the entire people of God, which constitutes the basis of the apostolate of every Christian.
- Being bound up with the Paschal mystery of Christ, both under the aspect of death to sin in Christ, which gives meaning to Christian mortification, and under the aspect of our association with His Resurrection, which is the foundation for Christian hope and disposes us for understanding of the life of the evangelical counsels.

- The cultic character of baptism, which permits us to feel ourselves part of the liturgy, and led to the Eucharist, in which the Paschal mystery of Christ gathers and unifies the entire Church.

8. This Christian formation should be completed through the apostolic features implied in the sacrament of Confirmation. This will ease their passage to the new realization of apostolic life offered by the religious or priestly vocation. Although this Christian formation should ideally be given during the years of the junior seminary, or in equivalent periods outside the seminary, it should nevertheless be continued throughout the entire period of formation. We ought to make sure that it is accompanied by a profound doctrinal formation, a steady growth in Christian virtues, and a suitable formation in the apostolate, so that it enables those to be formed to be conveyors of the mystery of Christ to men.

9. All this formation should really be made personal and alive through a deeper and deeper friendship with Christ the Redeemer. The youth should feel called to follow Him with a generous spirit and a pure heart, so that he may acquire the temper of spirit which abnegation and Christian virtue demand. These latter should be presented and understood in a way that is in keeping with the psychology of the adolescent and the norms of sound pedagogy (cf. OT 3,8).

10. This formative process should lead the student to the conviction that God has a design for him. All his life should be a generous answer to this divine call which gives him a special place in the Church and in the world. This response cannot be a forced submission; it must be a psychologically free and loving response to a providential plan of grace and salvation, in the recollection "that man would not exist were he not created by God's love and constantly preserved by it; nor can he live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and devotes himself to his Creator" (GS 19). This total abandonment to divine providence and faithful and self-sacrificing dedication to the plans of God should be translated into an unconditional commitment to the service of the Church and the saving work which Christ entrusted to it.

It must be acknowledged that many of those who begin their studies in the seminary or prepare to enter it will not in fact, for lack of a religious or priestly vocation, actually become members of our Congregation. But even where these students are concerned, the care taken to give them a Christian and apostolic formation will provide them with an intense awareness and dedication to their Christian vocation as holy and excellent apostles in another position in the Church.

### c) Religious-Evangelical Formation

11. Although from the very first years of their formation, our members' future religious and priestly life should be considered, the approach should generally be made indirectly, the objective being that they themselves may feel the necessity of searching for and being faithful to the vocation which each of them has in the Church according to the gift of the Spirit.

Directors of formation should do their best to see that this search – personal and psychologically mature – takes place in complete liberty, before candidates enter the novitiate.

Once the religious meaning of life has been made clear, and has been sufficiently matured and after there has been a response to the first promptings of a vocation to belong to our Congregation, the Novices should be given a clear vision of religious life in the Church, so that they may understand and be prepared to live the fullness of the so-called evangelical counsels. Toward this end it is imperative that they be enlightened with the proper idea of the religious vocation, which is to leave everything for Christ (cf. Mk 10:29), to follow Him (cf. Mt 19:21) as the one thing necessary (cf. Lk 10:42), to hear His Words (cf. Lk 10:39) and to feel a solicitude for His interests (cf. PC 5). The entire religious life is ordained to this following of Christ. Our holy Father Founder lived this union with Christ intensely, imitating the life of the Apostles, and following Christ as they did, in complete abnegation, for the Kingdom of Heaven.

12. Our students should understand that "by professing the evangelical counsels they responded to a divine call, so that by being not only dead to sin (cf. Rm 6:11) but also renouncing the world, they may live for God alone. They have dedicated their entire lives to His service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that of baptism and expresses it more fully" (PC 5).

13. An adequate formation includes not only a more and more thorough elucidation of the meaning of the religious life, but also the practice and living of its requirements, particularly the religious vows. This faithful practice should be related to the fundamental idea of consecration and should be completed by the idea of service to the Church. The religious should not only respond to "his vocation" but he should also give testimony before the world to the holiness of the Church (cf. LG 39).

Those who profess the evangelical counsels show the faithful and all men that the heavenly goods are already present and at work in the Church. They give testimony to the new life won by the Death and

Resurrection of Christ, and they prefigure the holy life and the universal brotherhood of the Kingdom of Heaven to which all men are called. Thus they are the first fruits of the redemption of the world and the arrow which points to the true meaning of its hopes, within the saving plans of God (cf. LG 44).

14. The aim of directors of formation should constantly be that those being formed reach these convictions and begin to put them in practice not out of a passive, artificial response to the environment and to the influence of their guides, but through the conscious free, and generous response of the whole self. This guidance should be carried out in such a way that later on, even though the director should be absent, and the environment unfavourable, these convictions not only would not disappear, but would continue developing to the point of authentic religious holiness. On the part of the one entrusted with the guidance of formation, there is nothing that will do more to clear the path for the generous response of the one being formed to the action of the Holy Spirit than the testimony of a life that is holy and full of enthusiasm for one's own vocation. This is what will vividly set before the youth the face of Christ, the first Religious dedicated to God the Father.

15. This living testimony should be given to the youth not only by the individual particularly assigned to the task of formation – the member to whom the youth has been directly confided – but should likewise be given collectively, through the testimony of the entire Community and even of the entire Province, since the candidate first sees the Congregation reflected in them. Major Superiors, sensitive to the purity of our religious and apostolic spirit and to the problems of each time and country, will strive both in their pastoral care and in their governing functions, to fashion this testimony into concrete works which will vitally translate the very being of the Congregation, presenting a magnetic ideal to confirm in their vocation those who are called to our Institute.

16. Let chastity in particular, professed out of love for the Kingdom of Heaven, be presented as an outstanding gift of Grace which uniquely frees the heart of man, consecrates it entirely to the Kingdom of God, and evokes the mysterious nuptials by which the Church is espoused to Christ as her only spouse. The faithful profession of this chastity should be based on a profound faith in the Word of our Lord, on confidence in His help, on supernatural charity, which is nourished by the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and by sincere and constant piety, principally toward the Virgin most Faithful. Educators should take pains to form the consciences of our youths properly, so that by themselves they acquire a solid virtue. This virtue, on the one

hand, will avoid needless fear and disturbance in the face of what in this matter is a consequence of our present human condition, or in the face of dangers that are unavoidable for the missionary; on the other hand, it will avoid a presumption prone to disregard the advice of the Church, which recommends the practice of mortification, the custody of the senses, and the avoidance of unnecessary dangers (cf. PC 12).

17. Directors of formation should also take into account the special difficulties which can be encountered by the religious of today through the assimilation of false doctrines which present perfect chastity is impossible or harmful to human personality development.

Finally, in the process of formation, there is no need to avoid recourse to the natural means that are useful for bodily and especially for psychological health. If necessary, and in accordance with the norms of the Church, recourse should be had to the help of psychotherapy that is reliable and Catholic in orientation. This consideration should especially be borne in mind when making the necessary prior evaluation before deciding to allow those candidates whose psychological equilibrium may be in serious doubt to make the profession of chastity. In this prior evaluation concerning psychological as well as moral and religious fitness, let the norms and criteria set forth by the Holy See be followed. For the good of the Church and of the candidate himself, both the superiors and the young aspirant, after he has been advised by the counsel of a prudent spiritual director, will not decide to make the profession of chastity or allow it to be made except after a sufficient trial, and assurance of due psychological and emotional maturity (cf. PC 12), so that they may act in this decision with a moral certainty that excludes every prudent and serious doubt.

18. Lastly, let directors of formation see to it that they advise the young missionaries about the dangers besetting chastity, so that they may really know the difficulties of this new life. But let them also inspire the new members to respond to a call that is supported by the greatness of the virtue of Christ, and by the infinite power of the Spirit, who so nourishes the Church that the life of the counsels may germinate. With such an outlook they will be able to accept celibacy consecrated to God even as a good for the integrity of the person (cf. PC 12).

19. The formation of the new religious in evangelical poverty requires that from the beginning he be given a correct perspective and that he be nourished by a real practice of it along with being given the individual and collective testimony of the directors of his



formation. Let it be pointed out repeatedly to the young religious that the poverty he chooses is voluntary and accepted for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, i.e., not because of narrowness of spirit; nor out of avarice, but in order to participate through it in the poverty of Christ, Who being rich, made Himself poor out of love for us, in order that we might be rich by His poverty (cf. 2Cor 8:9; Mt 8:20; PC 13).

It is necessary that directors of formation explain poverty to the one undergoing formation, and assist him in the practice of the evangelical counsel in such a way that he may clearly see that what he has chosen is not simply detachment of his affections from temporal goods – something proper to every Christian – but the effective and real imitation of Christ, the poor man, within the modality of his integral religious-apostolic vocation. This formation will preserve him from any later confusion between appropriate evangelical poverty and mere dependence from others in the use of goods.

20. It should likewise be the preoccupation of directors of formation that the young religious feel himself obliged, by conviction, to the general law of labour, according to the goal of his community; and that, furthermore he learn from his youth to lay up his treasure in heaven, and to leave every undue anxiety in the hands of the Providence of his heavenly Father (cf. Mt 6,25- PC 13). But those in charge should never grow tired of their watchfulness for the formation of the new religious, until they see that he understands and practices poverty in its social and collective aspects, so that this new member of the community not only will not hinder but rather will contribute generously, with his youthful spirit, so that the Congregation may give, in the Church, a testimony of the evangelical poverty which is required of it.

Let directors of formation meditate with the young members on the orientations which the Council and this very Chapter, applying the conciliar doctrine to the Congregation, have said on this point. Let these instructions of the Church concerning evangelical poverty both in its individual and in its collective aspects, be clearly realized in the practical life of the young religious and in the environment of the houses of formation so that the life and environment which make up the novitiate may from the first moment be a reflection of the thought of the Church and of the Congregation and an encouragement to love this voluntary poverty sincerely as a sign, greatly esteemed by everyone today, of the presence of Christ in the world.

21. Accordingly, let the young religious be given the opportunity of living really poor – let him have a prudent and gradual

experience of work, paid or otherwise, within the house or outside of it, or perhaps other experiences or forms of work which directors of formation will arrange prepare and carefully ascertain through their personal contact. The buildings in which our youth live, although functional and even beautiful, should be – along with their food, their clothing, their belongings, their trips, their vacations – “the kind that the poor have,” as our Holy Constitutions say (II, 6, 15). This breadth of view and this generosity of practice will gradually shape in the religious the true sense of poverty, which is derived from and leads to the love of God and of one’s neighbour, in imitation of Jesus Christ Who made Himself poor out of love for us.

22. The understanding and living of religious obedience can offer special difficulty to the young religious. Since this counsel and religious vow have so much importance in a Congregation such as ours, in that its Founder wishes that his Sons be perfect in obedience (cf. Const. I, 108), directors of formation and those undergoing formation must endeavour to attain by the action of the Holy Spirit, the best and wisest development of this aspect of vocation.

23. It is necessary above all, that the new religious acquire an exact concept of what the choice of religious obedience calls for in his life. Toward this end, directors of his formation should progressively illustrate the value of learning from and listening to others, as well as the capacity of doing so, which is the basis of every dialogue. This docility is necessary for him even in the natural order, to enable him to learn certain theoretical and practical concepts; and in this respect he is no different from other youths of his age who do not have a religious vocation. At the same time it is fitting that the religious who is receiving his education should not forget that obedience is necessary, by God’s design, in every human society, to enable it to attain its community goals. Along with the knowledge and practical acceptance of these values as they apply to all men, he should learn the supernatural value of obedience in the Church, as a consequence of his membership in it, through baptism, in which his vocation coincides with that of every Christian. This being granted, it behooves directors of formation by word and still more by their example, to nourish the flame enkindled by the Holy Spirit in the soul of this youth, so that he may learn and generously embrace, from his first years, true religious obedience, by which “he offers to God as a sacrifice of himself the full dedication of his will, and thereby unites himself more constantly and fully to the salvific Will of God” (PC 14).

This commitment must be made each day in union with the obedience of Christ Who “came to fulfill the will of His Father” (cf. Jn

4:34; 5:30; Heb 10:7; Psalm 39:9) and "taking on the form of a servant (Phil 2:7)," "to learn obedience through his sufferings" (cf. Heb 5:8; PC *ibid.*).

24. As a concrete Way of realizing this commitment, the Spirit of Christ will lead him to obey his superiors with confidence, out of a motive of faith, as representatives of God, and in accordance with the rules and Constitutions of his own Institute; in this way he will be conducted to the effective service of his brothers and of the entire Church as Christ Himself served His brothers as a consequence of His submission to the Father, and dedicated His life for the redemption of many (cf. Mt 20:28; Jn 10:14-18).

The young Claretian religious will thus be prepared to build the unity of his life on solid foundations; for his apostolic action intimately united to the mission it receives from the Church, finds its support and the most authentic source of vitality in religious obedience.

25. It is of the greatest importance that superiors of the young religious discharge their duties toward him in accordance with the norms of the Vatican Council itself: with charity and respect for his person (cf. PC *ibid.*). They should assist him by their attitude of faith to obey humbly, and avail themselves of the energies of his intelligence and will and of his gifts of nature and grace, especially in his execution of duties they entrust to him. They will avoid, thus, forming a wayward and proud spirit, or fostering timidity, or destroying the youth's spirit of initiative and his healthy confidence in his superiors. In this way, above all through establishing a clearly supernatural motivation, the exercise of religious obedience "far from lessening the dignity of the human person, by extending the freedom of the Sons of God leads to maturity" (PC 14c).

26. In the mind of our holy Father Founder, the perfect following of Jesus Christ by the evangelic law of poverty, chastity and obedience brings with it an exalted spirit of Christian mortification, which he wishes his missionaries to practice from their youth. And so it is recommended to all directors of formation that they assist and orient the young religious to resemble Christ in the generous self-denial of their life of the senses and faculties, in the control of their passions, and in the practice of all the virtues which flow from their condition as Sons of God but which are still more appropriate to those who live consecrated to God. The young religious themselves should combine a great spirit of faith and confidence in God with sincere humility. In this humility He wishes that they ground themselves with the greatest concern (cf. Const. I, 107, 122).

27. Let directors of formation take care to orient and to animate

our members in this self-denial, but not by proposing it as a human effort for the sake of the individual alone, or as a negative and meaningless asceticism, or as a collection of merely external practices. This self-denial must spring from their love of Christ and the desire to live, in themselves, the mystery of the sacrifice of Christ.

Let them not forget that the perfected condition of the Sons of God has not as yet been manifested, and that no one can attain resurrection with Christ if he does not die with Him, uniting himself to His Cross in which alone he should glory (cf. Gal 6, 14; Const. II, II).

28. Their self-denial should be united each day with the offering of Jesus Christ, the High Priest, on the altar and be penetrated by the charity of Him Who gives Himself to them as Eucharistic Bread, so that they may later be witnesses and apostles for the salvation of many.

This doctrine and practice should be presented full of optimism and Christian hope, and lived in keeping with the age and psychology of youth in its different stages.

If the one undergoing formation does not succeed in correctly assimilating this doctrine, and generously sacrificing himself out of love for Christ in the ordinary conditions of his life, he does not offer guarantees of persevering and developing his first decision of following Christ in His evangelical life.

29. The entire religious life of the youth should tend to the development of perfect charity toward God and toward his neighbour. For this reason he must understand that among the different fruits and advantages of the evangelical profession is brotherly union in the service of Christ (cf. LG 43). After the example of the Apostolic College, and of the primitive Church gathered in the name of Jesus, which had one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 4, 32), religious, too, should possess this spiritual union, which is the true support of community life. For this purpose our youth should be educated in the first place in a great respect for the person and the vocation of others, especially in acquiring the social virtues: mutual respect, sincerity, benevolence, understanding, and the attitude of service. This community attitude should be displayed in the interest they have in one another. Everyone's responsibility for the vocation of his brothers should move especially by good example, brotherly correction, and the many services which daily living together makes possible.

30. Finally, our students must be led to the conviction that they will not develop suitably in their own vocation if they do not have this family sense of the religious life. Community life reinforces the apostolate, not only because there are enterprises which require the union of

forces but also because community life is the expression of the charity which the Holy Spirit has poured forth in our hearts (cf. Rm 5,5) and the climate in which the religious encounters peace, brotherly understanding and support for his spiritual and apostolic life.

31. Let our youth be educated in such a way that they do not form self-enclosed community circles, insuring that the Congregation may be a family closely united to the other sectors of the People of God and open to the needs of men.

#### **d) Claretian and Apostolic Formation**

32. Together with their religious formation, our members should be educated carefully in the apostolic and Claretian aspects of their vocation. This dimension must be comprehended not as something isolated from the Church, nor as a collaboration which arises from the outside, as it were, but as the expression of an aspect of the Church itself which is realized in us as a group of particular modalities for the good of the entire people of God.

Our religious life is oriented to apostolic action (cf. PC 8), more specifically to missionary action. God called us to the service of the Church as ministers of His Word, in order to continue in the entire world the life and the work of salvation of Christ (cf. "Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage of the Congregation," no.47).

33. Our youth should place all of their abilities at the service of this apostolic missionary life: In the service of the Church, their religious vocation is to be energetic cooperators of the bishops in the ministry of the Word, employing all means, with a special sensitivity toward what is most pressing and effective at each particular time. Their apostolic vocation should increase, in openness to all peoples and countries. The vocation of the Claretian is centered on a generous communion with the charity of Christ, which impels us to sacrifice our life, sharing His work of redemption in the apostolic ministry. This sharing the mystery of Christ is realized in us by a special participation in the charity of Mary, Mother of the Church. Our Congregation is apostolic, and in it we sanctify ourselves to the extent that, impelled by the charity of Christ, we work for the salvation and sanctification of others. This is the source of the great responsibility of directors of formation and those entrusted to them, because, in fact, the fulfillment of this mission of the Congregation principally depends upon its members' sufficient spiritual and scientific or professional formation (cf. Declaration on the Charism, nn.18-19).

34. The assimilation of this apostolic spirit, in the Way that our

holy Father Founder lived it, will be possible in so far as our students know our charism and our particular identity among the numerous religious families. The Chapter has striven to present the entire Congregation with a synthesis of that spiritual heritage in order that our youth, especially, may make an effort to know it through study and above all through meditation. This synthesis should be completed by living in almost continuous contact with the life and writings of our Founder, with the history of the Congregation, and with the biographies of those missionaries of ours who have lived their vocation best, so that all may be formed in the love of the Institute, our Father Founder's favourite work. This formation should be sufficiently achieved in the novitiate, but it should be carried forward with greater depth of doctrine and lively practice during all the remaining years of preparation.

35. As a most important aspect of this Claretian formation let our formation directors see to it that our youth acquire a profound knowledge and experience of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, understood within the dimensions and the outlook proposed by this general Chapter. Let care be taken to unite doctrinal depth and certainty with the characteristic traits our Founder's Marian piety, taking into account also the spiritual and psychological situation of the students.

Our young missionaries must learn to live in spiritual communion with Mary and to place their constant effort to know Christ within themselves and conform themselves to Him through the action of her spiritual maternity.

Devotion to the Heart of Mary, figure and mother of the Church, should help them discover the spiritual exigencies of their consecration to the Father in the Holy Spirit, in full association with Christ in the work of men's salvation. Assiduous contemplation of the consecration of Mary to Christ and His work of redemption will assist them to live their own consecration in a climate of true willingness, humility, self-denial, interiority and fidelity. In this way, through the Mother of God's intercession they will prepare themselves to spread the Kingdom of God throughout the world and through their life, to give a testimony of Christ's coming and of the power of His Resurrection (cf. LG 46-65; PC 25; Const. I, 25, 122-123).

Likewise, our members should live their apostolic vocation in an express relationship to Mary's maternal action on the Church and on the whole of mankind. They should feel themselves, in accord with the mind of our holy Founder, as an instrument of Mary's maternal action, which continues to nurture and to provide for the Sons of God. Mary's charity and abnegation is the maternal example of the affection which must animate all those who cooperate in the apostolic

mission of the Church for men's regeneration (cf. LG 64). In her they will find encouragement, example, and efficacious assistance to promote among men obedience to the Gospel and perfect docility to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

36. Our Lord, in order that the faithful might form one sole body, in which "not all the members have the same function" (Rom 12,4); instituted from among the faithful themselves some as ministers, who "in the society of the faithful are able by the sacred power of Orders to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins, and perform their priestly office publicly for men in the name of Christ" (PO 2). In many of our members, the Claretian religious life will have its consummation in this priestly ministry.

Those called to the priesthood must be given a progressive doctrinal, spiritual and pastoral formation, since their future ministry, by being united to the episcopal order, participates in the authority with which Christ Himself builds, sanctifies and governs his body (cf. PO 2).

The priestly, religious, and missionary elements should be integrated in our Claretian seminarians into a full unity, so that their entire religious life may eventually be laid open to the priestly apostolate and their entire priesthood may be penetrated by the religious-evangelical life. Let them fill themselves with a genuinely catholic spirit which will habituate them to transcend the limits of their own country and to launch themselves toward helping to meet the needs of the entire Church with a spirit willing to preach the Gospel everywhere (cf. OT 20).

Granted the unity of the Church's priesthood, let the common norms given by the Church in the decree, "Optatam Totius", be followed though adapting its directives to the particular condition of our vocation as the decree itself indicates (cf. Preface).

37. Let directors of formation take pains that their students progress toward the highest realization of this priestly mission, as they learn it through study and meditation based on Tradition and the Sacred Scriptures, and presented by the living Magisterium of the Church (cf. DV 9-10). In this way, little by little, they will continue to steep themselves in a thankful esteem and admiration for the great gift of the priesthood, and thus unite themselves most intimately in charity with all their brothers in the priesthood, living with Christ, the Eternal Priest, a life of immolation, which prolongs what they accomplish with Him in the sacrifice of the altar (cf. PO 8).

38. This consciousness of their exalted mission should not lead them to a mistaken self-conceit. They should consider, rather, that their priestly ministry, which is most necessary for the people of God,

does not make them any the less disciples of Our Lord together with all faithful Christians. With all those regenerated in the font of Baptism priests are brothers among brothers. Therefore they should prepare themselves to preside in such a way that, seeking not their own interests but those of Jesus Christ, they may work together with other religious and with the rest of the faithful, conducting themselves like Our Master, Who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life for the redemption of many (cf. PO 9).

39. "The whole pattern of seminary life, permeated with a desire for piety and silence and a careful concern for mutual help, must be so arranged that it provides, in a certain sense, an initiation into the future life which the priest will lead" (OT 11).

### C. Spiritual Formation

40. Christian formation, as well as religious, apostolic, Claretian and for those called to the priesthood priestly formation, all require an intense cultivation of the spiritual life as an irreplaceable source of supernatural vitality. The Chapter takes for its own the call of the Church which, directing itself to those who profess the evangelical counsels, exhorts them to "seek and love above all else God who has first loved us (cf. Jn 4, 10), and to strive to foster in all circumstances the life hidden with Christ in God (cf. Col 3, 3). This love of God both excites and energizes that love of one's neighbour which contributes to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church" (PC 6).

41. Spiritual formation must be given in such a way "that the students may learn to live in an intimate and unceasing union with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit" (OT 8). Their spiritual formation should be centered on that point of convergence of the Divine life of the Trinity. Let directors of formation strive to make this Trinity-centered piety of our religious life a living reality in their own lives, according to the mind of the Council. In this way, they will succeed in bringing their students to live by this piety, in a striving for renewal, and thus make it approach the center and fountainhead of all Christian life (cf. LG cc. I-II, V).

42. The mystery of the divine life, communicated to men, has been realized in Christ, through the mystery of His life, death, and Resurrection and by His entry into Glory. From there, constituted in power, He sent the Holy Spirit "on the day of Pentecost, in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus all those who believe would have access through Christ, in one Spirit, to the Father" (LG 4, 5).



"All ought to be moulded in His likeness until Christ be formed in them (Gal 4, 19). For this reason we who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him, and risen with Him are taken up into the mysteries of His Life, until we will reign together with Him" (LG 7).

From this is deduced that our directors of formation should strive to enlighten our students concerning the place which this patterning upon Christ should occupy in their spiritual formation, in such a way that they become habituated to uniting themselves to Him as friends, in an intimate companionship throughout their life (cf. OT 8). This is likewise the fundamental orientation of the spiritual life of our Holy Founder, who thought of nothing but how he would follow and imitate Jesus Christ in working, suffering, and always seeking exclusively God's greater glory and men's salvation (BAC Autob. 494) He united himself to God intimately through His life of faith and of charity, until he was able to say with St. Paul that it was no longer he who lived, but Christ Who lived in him (cf. BAC, Escritos, p. 657).

43. Those undergoing formation should keep in mind that the sending of the Holy Spirit is the foundation of the entire interior life. In formation of this sending of the Spirit should be inculcated as the indispensable foundation of a true interiority. He is in effect "the spirit of life, a fountain of waters springing up to life eternal. To men, dead in sin, the Father gives life through Him, until, in Christ, He brings to life their mortal bodies. The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple. In them he prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons" (LG 4).

44. Together with this fundamental christological orientation of the spiritual life, let directors of formation strive by word and example to instill in their young religious a deep veneration and a son's love toward the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who was handed over as Mother, to the disciple, at the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. This Marian piety, necessary for every Christian, should be enriched with the perspective belonging to our Founder's charism.

In this spirit they must live their entire life of piety, striving to read and probe the Scriptures in union of spirit with Mary, who meditated upon them in her heart. They must participate in the Eucharistic communion with the faith and charity of her who was associated with the Redeemer. They must always contemplate in her the supreme example of perfect dedication to God's plans for salvation and place under her protection the supernatural efficacy of their apostolate. A suitable renewal of our traditional practices will assist in promoting this living of our Sonship in the Heart of Mary, correctly understood.

45. Our students will attain this intimacy with the Father through Christ in the Spirit, by living intensely the Paschal Mystery of Christ which primarily comes to them offered in the Church itself, as a sacrament, sign and instrument of intimate union with God (cf. LG I; OT 8). This mystery is made present for everyone in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist (cf. OT 8). Therefore let the primacy in acts of cult be given to liturgical action in such a way that our youth participate in it, as the summit to which the activity of the Church tends and likewise as the source from which all the Church's energy derives (cf. SC 10,14).

46. As the Eucharist constitutes the center of liturgy and worship, all efforts of formation in spirituality and piety should converge toward it. Following the outstanding example of our Founder let our students live the Eucharist in all its fullness: first, as the Sacrifice of Christ and of His Church, with which they should associate themselves personally joining with Christ in His obedience in order to dedicate themselves afterwards to others, impelled by the same charity that impelled Christ; second, as the Sacrament of the community and unity of the Church, striving to project that unity on the collective life of the community signified and realized by the Eucharist; and third, as the permanent Sacrament of the presence of Christ, Who in the tabernacle invites them to approach His presence and render Him worship, to activate their faith and their response before Him in order to dispose themselves better to participate in the sacred agape and in order to make themselves more worthy ministers of His Word for the purpose of spreading His kingdom throughout the world (cf. Const. I, 122).

47. Directors of formation will see to it that the ones being formed understand and live the meaning of the entire Liturgy and the sacraments in the light of the Eucharist. Let this be done principally with reference to baptism, penance, and holy orders, which those called to the priesthood will one day receive. Following the recommendations of the Church itself let those in charge encourage students to participate frequently and fruitfully in the sacrament of Penance both in its individual and in its community aspects.

48. Although the liturgy is the center of worship and of the Christian life itself, nevertheless, liturgical action does not exhaust spiritual life (cf. SC 12). For this reason, each one of our members, although called by vocation to pray in common, should nevertheless, according to the recommendations of the Gospel, pray to the Father in secret. And furthermore, they should pray without ceasing (cf. SC 9-12). It was certainly a notable preoccupation of our Founder, from

the beginning of the formation of our missionaries, that they develop an intense life of prayer (cf. Const. I, 120, 121). That spirit of prayer, and even prayer itself, which the Church requires all religious to practice assiduously (cf. PC 6), should be presented as a personal search for God, leading toward a greater interior supernatural knowledge of Christ, which they will later on provide for the people of God in their life and their words.

Practices of piety are earnestly recommended to our members in formation, especially those which for us have been the most solid and traditional, like the rosary. Nevertheless, they should be oriented and arranged and even renewed by taking into account the liturgical seasons, in such a way that they remain in accordance with the Sacred Liturgy, and in a certain way derive from it and lead to it (cf. SC 13).

49. Personal response to the entire liturgical life and above all to the Eucharist springs exclusively from lively faith, nourished principally by constant meditation on the Word of God (cf. PC 6). Our youth should be progressively educated and encouraged in the exercise, with special care, according to our Founder's desire (cf. Const. I, 95). Let the young religious note that this interior life of prayer, which makes room for the action of the Holy Spirit, requires sufficient recollection. This recollection creates the personal atmosphere in which the Word of God is heard, and in which is obtained "that faith clarified by the gifts of understanding and wisdom" (DV 5; cf. LG 11; SC 9, 12, 33, 59). Nevertheless it is necessary to orient the future apostolic missionary to find, even amid the manifold occupations of modern life, that unity of life which cannot be obtained either by external organization of ministerial work, nor by exercises of piety alone though these things help a great deal but through the imitation of Christ Our Lord, Whose nourishment was to fulfill the Will of Him Who sent Him to accomplish His work (cf. PO 14).

50. In any case the students of our Congregation should convince themselves that without an intense life of prayer, without a continuous meditation on the Word of God, without frequent moments throughout the day in which personal prayer is sought and found, a true response cannot be given nor can one go out to encounter Christ, Who comes to us in the Sacrament and Who brings us to Him by faith.

51. As an effective complement of this interior life, as a means of helping the one being formed to be consistent with his vocation not allowing himself to be led by false motives and in order to obtain a

greater purity of conscience and intention, it should be recommended to him that he strive to acquire with God's help a clear knowledge of himself. For this purpose the constant practice of the examen of conscience, recommended by our holy Father Founder (cf. Const. II,31,32), will be a very useful means which will bring him to a true personal encounter with himself and with God.

52. Along with the more and more intense, continuous and progressive study of the Word of God, in which are followed the fundamental lines of that history of salvation whose center and culmination is Christ our students should make use of the Sacred Scriptures, following the example of our Father Founder, the preferred book of their spiritual reading in the measure in which they progress in its study. They should dedicate some space of time to it every day. They should assure that this is a period of the greatest recollection. Thus the Bible can become the basis of their daily meditations, and it will enable them to live what they believe, and one day teach what they live.

53. One of the principal means of obtaining a true and intense interior life is spiritual direction, especially recommended by the Church for those who are preparing to be priests (cf. OT 8), as a means of humbly learning the Will of our heavenly Father. This is true above all in the important decisions which are required by the exalted mission to which they are destined. The use of this great means of formation should be favoured and facilitated for our young religious to the greatest possible extent, thus fulfilling the wise dispositions of the Church, which simultaneously protects both the liberty of the individual and the rights of the Church itself (cf. nn. 81-82 of this Decree).

Summing up the teaching of the Council, the Chapter earnestly exhorts our youth to use this truly important means of formation to the end that they may have light and sufficient spirit to reach the fullness of their vocation in the midst of the difficulties and doubts which they may encounter.

**CHAPTER II****Criteria of Adaptation****A. General Principles**

54. The principle of adaptation, required by the accelerated evolution of our times and so urged by the Council, should be one of the basic points of our system of formation, in such a way that our formation may correspond to the type, mentality, and psychology of those in formation, to cultural differences, and to the needs of our times (cf. PC 2-3; GS 5; GE 5).

This adaptation should be flexible in itself, i.e., susceptible to continuous renewal in the dynamic evolutionary sense of reality today, and keeping in mind that the one in formation today is the apostle of tomorrow (GS 5).

55. In order for our formation to achieve this adaptation it is necessary to have an adaptation of the legislation (structures and norms) of our system of formation, an adaptation of our seminaries and an adaptation of the very directors of formation.

**B. Adaptation of the Structures and Norms of Our System of Formation**

56. It is necessary that our legislation and directory of formation be general, and that our structures be decentralized in character, merely providing a fundamental nucleus of documents and organisms, professionally and pluralistically constituted, and leaving to different countries and provinces sufficient liberty to concretize them and apply them as suits their own needs and circumstances, keeping in mind the greater service of the Church and of the Congregation (cf. OT I).

**C. Adaptation of Our Centers of Formation**

57. The Congregation will take to heart what the Church advises concerning adaptation of centers of formation, accepting such recommendations faithfully, either for the entire structure or for parts of it, adopting them either as permanent modifications or as tentative

experiments. Let there also be a frank dialogue with other Institutes, for the purpose of interchanging ideas and experiments.

58. In centers of formation organized in the fashion of a boarding school, let a painstaking educational presence be provided, so that there may be full utilization of the advantages thus offered: a sense of discipline, exercise of social virtues, harmonious atmosphere and cocentration of formative efforts. At the same time the utmost care should be taken to avoid the drawbacks of such a system: above all that depersonalization toward which massive scholasticates have a tendency. For this purpose, internal centers can be divided into groups, always in accordance with educational and religious objectives.

59. Academic and financial reasons can suggest the expedient of interprovincial or even international seminaries. But such seminaries should be especially organized so that the formation may be the most direct and personal possible, and so that the weight of numbers may not be an obstacle to the attention the individual requires (cf. OT 7). Their organization should likewise take into account what was said in No.58.

60. Let our members cooperate with a generous and disinterested lending of our personnel, in the formation of other seminarians and religious. (cf. Const. II,63; ES II,37).

61. When the convenience of the entire Church or our own needs advise it, and having secured the required authorization, let there be cooperation in the establishment of common centers of studies with other religious or with the diocesan clergy. In every such case, however, let due provision be made for the formation of our members in the aspects proper to our vocation and for the fulfillment of its exigencies. (ES II,37).

62. Let the land, building and location of our seminaries their situation, organization and construction be suitable for a complete and modern formation.

63. The discipline will be adequate for each particular region, era, and human situation. It will neither impose an excessive authoritarianism nor permit an individualistic freedom. It will endeavour in an orderly and systematic fashion to inculcate in the one being educated the religious values necessary for a select formation. Account should be taken of the student's age and development, of differences in character, the demands of each culture, and the requirements of the spirit of true supernatural obedience.

64. Disciplinary regulations will be revised in accordance with the positive contributions of psychology, pedagogy, and sociology.

Responsible initiative concerning the individual's own vocation, personal authenticity and conviction, and the ability to interiorize discipline in the seminary as an integrating element in all formation, all should be fostered (cf. OT 11; PC 3; GF I).

65. Let discipline be presented not as an external imposition, but as a defence of the common life and of fraternal charity, and as an element indispensable to all formation, in order that one may acquire solid maturity of the person and of the soul's dispositions. Both these will assist toward orderly and fruitful labour in the Congregation for the service of the Church (cf. OT 11).

66. All this means that the moving force of discipline should be internal conviction, that of conscience, in virtue of which the authority of superiors is accepted. Only in this way will it attain its purposes and succeed in impregnating the life of the seminary with an atmosphere of piety, with a taste for silence, and with an interest in work (cf. OT 11).

67. Attention should be given that the application of discipline be so graduated according to age that the students can learn little by little to govern themselves, to use liberty prudently, to work according to their own initiative and responsibility, and to cooperate fruitfully with their brothers and with the laity (cf. OT 11).

68. The Constitutions, regulations, timetables, activities, etc., will be presented within a hierarchy of values, so that in practice, the recommendations, counsels and sanctions may observe that hierarchy. Only thus harmonizing the practical recommendations with objective and written requirements is it possible to create in those of our members to be educated an interiorized and effective scale of values.

69. A balanced integration of the students in the total life of the seminary supposes the elimination of artificial distinctions and separations which are not pedagogically necessary, and the fostering of a suitable participation in the disciplinary planning of the seminary, with an intensification of interpersonal contact, of dialogue accompanied by a true supernatural spirit of active and responsible obedience.

70. At the same time social contact will be extended progressively to spheres outside the seminary: one's own family, student and worker circles, and society in general, according as the needs of the maturation of the personality and the initiation of those being educated in the ministry dictate it, and as the character of Our religious and missionary apostolic vocation suggests (cf. OT 11,19; PC 2,d; Const. II, XV).

## D. Adaptation of Directors of Formation

71. For our members' formation and emotional equilibrium it is believed necessary that superiors and directors of formation take the initiative in possible changes and go forward in dialogue with their fellow members when circumstances and signs of the times demand it. Furthermore, all directors of formation should strive to continue acquiring the capacity for adaptation through an open mentality, one that is disposed always to seek God in all things, modern and ancient (GE 5).

72. Each center must be so established that all those who participate in any way in formation directly experience their mutual solidarity and are committed to formation, each one in his own position. All must strive for the closest union of spirit and action, under the leadership of the superior, and they should likewise form such an intimate closeness with the students that it will verify Our Lord's prayer: "That all may be one" (Jn 17,11) and that it will spark in the students a joy in being called to be a member of the Congregation (cf. OT 5). This must be extended, in due proportion, to all directions of formation and ultimately to all the personnel of the province and the Congregation.

73. Particularly with regard to the professors, efforts should be made that at least the principal roster of professors be stable, strongly rooted in the college, in such a way that they feel attached to it, that they have their interests in it. Moderate activity outside of the seminary is not opposed to this goal, especially if it is directed toward gradual formation in various aspects of the ministry.

## E. Adaptation of Methods of Formation

74. Since education today is an art which has attained a high professional perfection, our system of education should aspire to the highest possible competency in each and every aspect of formation. Thus provision should be made for the application of the techniques of modern education and psychology to the extent that the nature of the priestly and religious education permit. Worthy of special consideration is the personal dossier which must be developed on each student, from his first years, with the involvement of all those responsible for his formation. Copies of this dossier must be passed on to the higher centers for further completion at the opportune time (cf. OT 6, Pius XII, "Menti nostrae", AAS 42(1950)p 684; SC Sacr., Circ. Ltr. "Magna equidem", Dec. 27,'35,10; St. Gen. art. 33; Paul VI, "Summi Dei Verbum" AAS 55 (1963), pp. 987ss; Const. 1,92-97).



## CHAPTER III

## Directors, and Others Responsible for Formation

75. All members of the Congregation, and in particular of each Province, each one in his own position, are responsible in a certain way for the formation of our young members. But in a more direct way each superior is responsible within his own compass. In the seminary itself, the entire community to which our seminarians have been entrusted is responsible. But within the seminary, superiors, who are directors of formation, have a particular duty in this respect, and under the rector's leadership should form a closely knit and family like educational team in which everyone is interested in seeking integral formation (cf. OT 5).

### *76. Suitability and Selection of Directors of Formation*

Since formation certainly depends on wise provisions, but above all on capable educators the superiors, prefects, and professors of our seminaries must be selected from among the best (cf. OT 5). There should be no hesitation in "taking them away from other charges which appear to be more important but which in reality cannot be compared to this essential ministry, which nothing else surpasses" (Pius XI, "Ad catholici sacerdotii", Dec. 20, '35, AAS 28 (1936) p. 37; cf. Pius XII, "Apostolic Letter to the Ordinaries of Brazil", Apr. 4, '47, in "Discorsi e Radiomessaggi", IX, pp. 579-580; Const. I, 90, 131, 146; St. Gen. 25, 4, + notes).

### *77. Qualities and Preparation of Directors of Formation*

Our directors of formation must have a profound ecclesial sense, a heightened missionary sensitivity, a refined love for the Congregation, a proven fidelity to superiors, an intense life of prayer and an unblemished exemplarity. Let them keep in mind "how much the success of the students' formation depends on their manner of thinking and acting" (OT 5; cf. Const. I, 132, 1).

They must possess an emotional maturity which will make them capable, with the impulse of the Holy Spirit, of bringing to fulfillment their mission for the building up of the Body of Christ: in its most selective aspects (cf. Const. I, 90). In relation to those in formation, let them be true leaders who communicate their religious and apostolic enthusiasm.

78. Also required of them is an interior balance, which shows itself in the authenticity and sincerity of their lives and in their self-control; in the objectivity of their judgments concerning reality; in their ability to understand the subjective world of those being educated and their capacity of creating, through mutual cooperation, an intimate educational atmosphere all of which will make them appear as a testimony of the ideal Claretian (cf. Const. I, 132, 133).

79. It is the duty of superiors to see to it that our directors of formation and our professors be carefully formed (cf. PC 18), especially in the theology of the Religious Life, with solid doctrine, suitable pastoral experience, and special spiritual and educational formation (cf. OT 5).

80. To achieve this, an Institute or Center for the preparation of individuals naturally endowed for this ministry will be established in the Congregation. They will be able to attend other centers outside the Congregation, but they will have to complete this general formation with other materials more directly related to our spirituality and our goals. They will have to have a licentiate in theology or Sacred Scripture or degrees that are equivalent. The Chapter also desires that a special commission prepare an organic program for this center for directors of formation. Furthermore, it would be of advantage to organize suitable courses and meetings of our seminary educators at established intervals (cf. OT 5). These meetings should be on the general or on the provincial level, embracing directors of formation on all levels, in order to obtain better coordination between these directors. Nor should taking part in conventions and meetings with other educators of priests and religious be neglected.

To the General Government is recommended a wise and generous distribution of formative personnel for the service of all the provinces.

#### 81. *Prefect of Students and Spiritual Direction*

The Chapter desires that the traditional figure of our Prefect as the one in charge of the formation of our seminarians be maintained, but that it be adapted to criteria which differ according to the circumstances and degrees of formation.

The Prefect, in his proper sphere, will conduct the formative direction of the seminary according to the Church's and the Congregation's highest standards, but always in accordance with the policies of the competent superiors. He will consult with the rector on the application of these educational standards, and he will support the superior's role so that effective coordination in their common task might be achieved by all the directors of formation (cf. n. 72).

82. With regard to the function of spiritual director, spiritual master and the other functions of our Prefects, let them take into account the norms of the Church, to which the Congregation subscribes, and which we synthesize as follows:

1. Let spiritual direction be promoted according to the norm of the Church (c. 530,2; c. 588 & parallels cc.1358, 1360,1; St. Gen. art. 28,3,1; Instr. SC Rel. 1961, passim, n.17sg.; OT 3,8).

2. a) Among us the Prefect fulfills the function of spiritual director by his own right (cf. Const. 1,131,132; 133; cf. 90; St. Gen. 28,2,3).

b) He should be chosen with special care (cf. Instr. de candidatis Feb 2, '61, n.37; "Litteras a vobis" Leonis XIII ad Episc. Brasiliae, July 2, '94), and should be endowed with such natural and supernatural characteristics and with such dogmatic and ascetical doctrine that he can exhort and lead students to perfection by his example and teaching (cf. Epist. "Fin da principio" Leonis XIII ad Episc. Italiae, Dec.8, '02 in EC n. 704; Litt. "The Sacred Congregation" ad univ. SFAS Ordinarios May 26, '28 in EC 1245,1246).

3. In order that the necessary liberty may be given to the students in this matter (PC 14) though without harm to the singleness of direction (cf. cc. 1358, 1-3 & 588,1; Instr. SC Sem. 1943 / reserved/ St. Gen. 28,3,2) the prefect can be assisted and complemented by a spiritual director in the strict sense (St. Gen. 28,2,9). And although the documents of the Church take for granted that spiritual direction is something different from confession (cf. cc. 1358, 588 cf. 566; 530, 2 with 518; Instr. SC Sem. 1943), and that the prefect cannot be the ordinary confessor (St. Gen. 28,2,10), there is nothing to prevent one of the confessors from being a spiritual director in the strict sense (cf. Inst. SC Sem. 1943; St. Gen. 28,3,2).

4. If any student requests a special confessor or spiritual director and it is seen that he needs one, let the superior readily grant his request (St. Gen. 28,3,2). The documents of the Church are not opposed to the normal plurality of spiritual directors, as occurs in the French-Sulpician or Anglo-Saxon School (cf. Ord. Sem. p.15,27sg.), but they weigh and insist upon their qualifications in such a way that not all the priests living in the seminary will possess them by the mere fact of their being there; rather, "superiors are vehemently exhorted to select confessors and spiritual directors with the greatest care." (Inst. de candidatis, Feb. 2, '61, n.19).

5. Periodic interviews for spiritual direction can be established (*ibid.* 3,1). The Sacred Congregation of Seminaries considers a monthly interview, by turns, necessary and sufficient (*Instr.* 1943).

6. Our prefect, inasmuch as he has also been entrusted with the external forum, can be interrogated, should give reports, and will even be able to cast a vote on the occasion of professions and ordinations (*St. Gen.* 28,2,10; cf. *Instr.* SC Rel. 1961, n.39 & the *Instr.* "Quantum Religiones" 1931, n. 14). But he cannot reveal anything of what he knows exclusively from the internal forum.

7. a) The Spiritual Director's function is limited exclusively to the internal forum. He can bring nothing to the external forum except with the express permission of the student, given in writing (*Instr.* "Religiosorum Institutio" nn. 17818 and Enc. "Ad Catholici Sacerdotii" AAS. 1936, p. 41).

b) The Spiritual Director should know the students to such a degree that he can render a sure judgment in the internal forum concerning their vocation, i.e., if they can or cannot make their perpetual profession and receive sacred Orders (Pius XI, "Ad Catholici Scerd." in EC 1388; *Instr.* de candidatis n. 17; SC Sem. "Per direttori spirituali dei seminari", n. 1).

8. In what concerns the discipline and external regimen the prefect may be assisted by one or several associates, who will report directly to him on these matters (*St. Gen.* 28,2,11).

9. Superiors should strive to know the mind of the Church concerning spiritual direction and should discreetly ascertain that each one is guided by it (*Instr.* SC Sem. 1943).

10. Superiors should foster a vigilant and uniform manner of working among all those who are dedicated to the formation of our young members, so as not to permit that the unfit are advanced to Orders (cf. *Instr.* Religiosorum institutio, nn. 19,18 & 52 *Instr.* SC Sem. 1943). "It is indispensable that confessors (external and internal) have contact and an exchange of opinions with the Spiritual Director, for the purpose of assuring the identity of criteria and methods, especially in vocational matters. The rector, therefore, should foster such exchanges, and should find a way to make them meet at least at the beginning and the middle of each scholastic year in order to discuss those questions which should be resolved through common principles and in a uniform manner" (*ibid.*).

83. When special circumstances require it, let the following conciliar norm be applied: "In seminaries where there are many students, while retaining a unity of direction and of scientific training,

the students should be conveniently divided into smaller groups so that a better provision is had for the personal formation of each" (OT 7). Let the assistants be responsible for the external discipline of our seminaries, though under the authority of the Prefect (cf. Const. 1,99; CIA, 333, 1&2). Let the same thing be said with regard to the professors and to what pertains to order and discipline in their classes.

#### 84. *Superiors responsible for formation*

##### *Principles of subordination and subsidiarity.*

a) *In Planning*: Since all religious should have a "Program of Training" (St. Gen. 19, 1), the General Prefecture of Formation should develop a General Plan which sums up the general principles of the Church and of the Congregation in this matter. In each province and region the prefecture or provincial prefectures will adopt the General Plan, and complement it in accordance with local needs. In doing so, they will take episcopal and civil laws into account (cf. OT 1), but without losing sight of the fact that the missionary must have a broad formation coupled with a universalist spirit.

85. The following, in addition to developing the General Plan, falls within the competence of the General Government: 1) to interpret and apply the general principles given by the Chapter for the entire Congregation 2) to ratify the appointments to the principal offices of formation made by competent superiors (cf. St. Gen. 25,3,2); 3) to approve provincial and regional plans of formation 4) to minister to and visit all the centers of the Congregation.

It falls within the competence of the Provincial Government: 1) to develop the Provincial plan of formation, applying the regional and general principles in accordance with what has been said above; 2) to name those in charge of formation, without prejudice to what has been said above; 3) to approve local rules which apply and implement the regional or provincial plan; 4) to minister to and visit the educational centers of the province and enter with them into a frequent and cordial dialogue which manifests the provincial government's interest in the problems of those in charge of formation and those being formed.

The local team will be formed by the rector, the prefects of students and of studies, the assistants and the professors, and, for the sacramental forum, the confessors. They will meet periodically in order to examine and coordinate the seminary's progress and its formative aspects.

#### 86. b) *In the admission of candidates*

1) Admission to the Postulate is a matter to be decided by the local superior, in consultation with the prefect or his equivalent, the vocation recruiters, directors of vocation weeks...

2) Admission to the novitiate is to be decided by the Provincial Superior with the vote of his council according to the common and particular law. For this purpose, the prefect of postulants or the vocation recruiter should inform him in advance, according to the case. In addition the examiners should act effectively in the exercise of their function (cf. Const. 1,75).

3) First profession: approval is to be given by the major superior through a deliberative vote of his council. The master of novices, the superior, the community, and, especially, the novice's companions should report seriously. The provincial examiners will act with the same effectiveness referred to above.

4) Temporal renewals and Holy Orders: approval belongs to the major superior with the consultive vote of his council. Beforehand, the director, the prefect, the team of educators, the companions and the entire community should report seriously. A trimester evaluation of the students should be introduced. It should be developed by the team of those in charge of formation, and it should be given to the student. This refers to the external forum only; i.e., to discipline and to studies.

5) Admission to perpetual profession and to major Orders is determined by the major superior with the vote of his council, according to Canon law and our own particular law. The persons listed above should send in reports beforehand.

87. Norms for international or Interprovincial Seminaries: The General Government or the interested major superiors, on whom these seminaries depend, will approve the corresponding statutes for their proper functioning, with the following or similar criteria: 1) If they are under the authority of provincial superiors, the highest authority can be confided either to a council of interested provincials (with one provincial elected from their number as president or to a provincial delegated by the council; 2) full, immediate authority, in keeping with the higher corresponding authority, can be granted to the local government; 3) the statutes should provide concrete solutions for the problems which these seminaries present, particularly concerning approval for professions and Holy Orders for the students, the many expenses of the seminary and the manner of covering them, etc.; 4) government and formation demand a unity of local regime and that the students depend directly on this regime. Consequently, let all the dispositions which may be necessary be communicated to the students through the local regime, with the exception of the privileged correspondence with their major superiors, concerning which the students have a right.

## CHAPTER IV

## Stages of Formation

88. The general criteria expounded in the first part of this document must be applied with varying education implications. There must be a clear awareness that one of the first principles of the formative process is the necessity of adaptation to the different developmental phases of the one being formed. Not everything explained in the preceding section can be applied totally and indiscriminately, nor in the same manner in all stages of formation.

89. Taking for granted the accepted principles and conclusions of education in general, both spiritual and human, the Chapter now wishes to explain its viewpoint concerning topics of special interest in this varying task of formation: particularly in matters concerning the different stages of the integral education of our missionaries.

### A. Fostering Vocations

90. Religious and priestly vocations are a gift of our celestial Father for the good of the entire Church. Therefore, "the duty of fostering vocations pertains to the whole Christian community" (OT 2). By means of an easily understood analogy, Claretian vocations should be the object of a decided interest in all those sectors of the people of God who particularly benefit from our apostolic action and from the testimony of our religious life. Therefore, we should very carefully foster in the faithful the formation of an attitude and awareness of their common responsibility toward the problem of vocations. If we do not attain this objective, our vocational recruiting will suffer from a lack of cooperation which will make it, to a certain degree, sterile.

91. At the same time the Congregation should be conscious of the fact that the fostering of its vocations should be envisioned within the vocational activity of the entire Church. Special account should be taken of what the council indicates by these words: "The work of fostering vocations should in a spirit of openness transcend the limits of individual dioceses, countries, religious families and rites. Looking to the needs of the universal Church, it should provide aid particularly for those regions in which workers for the Lord's vineyard are being requested more urgently" (OT 2).

92. The Christian community, in general, and the individual units in which this community is realized such as the Christian family, the parish, etc., must strive, above all, to foster these vocations by living a fully Christian life. For from this fertile fullness of life will be born, so to speak, the vocations which these same communities and others need. Therefore, in our members' vocational activity for the Congregation it is to be presumed that they have an expansive ecclesial vision; and they will take great pains to cultivate the fullness of Christian life within the communities placed in their care, especially:

1) Christian families, which, as the Council says, if "they are animated by the spirit of faith and love and by the sense of duty, become a kind of initial seminary" (OT 2).

2) Our parishes, "in whose rich life the young people take part" (OT *ibid.*).

3) Catholic associations and educational centers entrusted to our care or direction. For the Council orders that "teachers and all those who are in anyway in charge of the training of boys and young men, should carefully guide the young people entrusted to them so that these will recognize and freely accept a divine vocation" (OT *ibid.*).

93. As the priestly or religious vocation is a gift of God, deposited in the form of a seed in the soul of those who are chosen, and is a gift to which the chosen should correspond freely and generously with the help of grace, all vocation recruiting activity should be carried out with an educative, orientation purpose, in order to form a favourable climate for the young man and to assist him personally to perceive this call and to respond to it. In their pastoral activity for vocations, therefore, let our members avoid everything which in any way imprudently pressures anyone toward the priestly or religious state, or simply obliges him to realize his vocation precisely in our Institute. The wise directions of the Church in this matter should be respected (cf. OT 2,6; Const. Apost. "Sedes Sap.", II; SC Rel. Instr. de candidates 1961; c. 971).

94. Our Holy Father Founder, with particular insistence, entrusted this task to Superiors (cf. Const. 1,8,1-5; 30,4-7; 72-73; 74); on all levels, they should feel a special responsibility and solicitude for fostering, developing and preserving vocations for our Institute. The General Chapter, with a lively awareness that it is especially burdened with this responsibility (Const. 1,49) exhorts all superiors that they methodically and coherently plan the entire pastoral activity of fostering vocations; and that they further this activity with equal prudence and zeal. In this matter, use should be made of all



the opportune aids which modern psychological and sociological research has to offer (cf. OT 2).

95. For this purpose, a permanent secretariat for vocations should be established on the General and Provincial level. This secretariat will be a service bureau, without executive or governmental character, but effective in its own sphere, which will provide information, give impulse and coordinate vocation activities. But too much centralization is to be avoided. The director on the provincial level will report directly to the major superior, who should assure him the greatest possible stability in his appointment, and who should name effective regional assistants in the work entrusted to him. It is suggested that one of these vocation recruiters be a Co-adjutor brother who, preferably, will dedicate himself to fostering vocations to the brotherhood. At the same time, however, he will integrate his activity with the other members of the recruiting team, working with them in the overall effort. Through these instruments the General and Provincial Governments should, in their spheres, develop a vocation recruiting plan which includes the following: necessary socio-religious and statistical data, choice of means and their effective adaptation, coordination with the pontifical and diocesan work of vocations, when applicable.

96. As the Council recommends, the primacy of common supernatural means must be maintained in the fostering of religious or priestly vocations, especially, "urgent prayer, Christian penance and a constantly more intensive training of the faithful by preaching, by catechetical instructions, or by the many media of social Communication that will show forth the need, the nature and the importance of priestly (and religious) vocations" (cf. OT 2; PC 24).

97. Yet a special importance should be given to the individual and collective testimony of our members, considering that "there is no better way than their own example to commend their Institutes and gain candidates for the religious life" (PC 24). Let this be carefully taken into account above all in the communities and among the individuals who have most contact with youthful environments. Recently, serious studies on this subject demonstrated that other means of fostering Vocations fail where this testimony does not exist; and, on the contrary, although the other means may be lacking, this testimony alone still has a very great efficacy.

98. Let superiors and those responsible for vocation activity devote themselves to forming youth groups in our parishes, educational centers for externs, university residences, high schools, etc. These youth groups, called in some places "apostolic groups," with not too

large a membership, enroll young men who manifest special human qualities along with the potential of a deep spiritual life. Membership in these groups might develop as much as possible the virtualizes of the members' condition as baptized, confirmed Christians, and thus be translated into a more excellent desire and dedication to the apostolate.

The admitted effectiveness of these "apostolic groups" depends almost indispensably on the presence, testimony, and pastoral activity of a priest or brother who is suitably prepared for this most delicate mission. The priest or brother prepares himself for this work through the necessary studies and, above all, through an intense spiritual life, which almost instinctively affects these young men with the desire for a more generous dedication to a full life of holiness and apostolate.

If these groups are given sufficient time and concern, and are not mingled with other activities that sap energy and dedication from the principal goals, they will, through wise pastoral guidance, provide that the young men will live intensely their baptism and confirmation. And, when they arrive at the age of option for a place in the Church they may be especially prepared to feel the call to the religious and priestly vocation, frequently in our Congregation.

An essential element in this prevocational and vocational formation is that these youth see realized in a small scale in their small group, yet at no time isolated within itself, the ecclesial community of the Sons of God. Inconspicuously, the guidance of the Claretian priest or brother will give to this group a connatural modality proper to the Claretian family, through all of which the young people who may feel themselves called will receive a suitable preparation that, in a few cases will be equivalent to the formation which other candidates opportunely receive in our minor seminaries.

99. Among organizations for promoting vocations, certain associations or "clubs" (eg. "Serra Club") can be very useful. Without acquiring all the characteristics of "apostolic groups," they fulfill a systematic work of promoting and forming vocations among families and youth.

100. Those deserve special mention who, regularly although in a more directly personal manner, dedicate themselves to spiritual direction, whether it be full-time in educational centers or associations, or in the confessional, or separately to youth who do not belong to any association. This method will have greater application among the independent university element or among more adult vocations. These persons will attain through a spiritual direction that is seriously undertaken, a good formation prior to the novitiate. A complement to

this spiritual direction, and even a source of this type of personal relationship, is to be found in the conducting of Spiritual Exercises. These Exercises should be organized systematically. And if possible held in Retreat Houses, which might then foster contact with our seminaries.

101. The full value of the work undertaken by our regular recruiters or regional coordinators should be appreciated. They are the necessary link with those who have been chosen by God, but who do not live within reach of our stationary sources of vocational information. These coordinators should enjoy sufficient freedom from other duties (which might interfere with their charge), and they should have at their disposal the necessary means for providing information, for contact and for freedom of movement. In any case, their greater flexibility should not be confused with improvisation, lack of necessary planning and technique. The recruiters' activity can be directed toward candidates being considered for direct enrolment in our minor seminaries or else toward those making their seminary preparation with their own families and with whom they maintain an extensive, recurrent contact, truly formative in character.

102. All the cases outlined above demand a sufficiently prolonged period of trial before admission to our seminaries or novitiate. This period should be used to obtain comprehensive knowledge of the candidate's family and personal background. In this way, a gradual screening is provided for, even from the beginning (cf. OT 2&6). Prudent use should also be made of the services of centers using psychometrics for vocational guidance. These centers may have been established by the Congregation, or by other religious Institutes, or by lay persons having the required religious and professional training. This prior examination of candidates, while avoiding extreme measures, will lessen the need for rigid application of the same process within our seminaries. This will be to the advantage of those who are truly called, especially in terms of their formation, and will also provide great savings of time, personnel, and money.

103. It is advisable to organize on the general and provincial or interprovincial levels in harmony, however, with what is done by other religious and dioceses yearly or periodical campaigns to furnish vocational information and to promote vocations. The campaigns should be organized, and should respect the dispositions of the Council, which calls for necessary prudence in this matter and for subjection to the dispositions of the Holy See and local ordinaries (cf. PC 24).

In their effort to provide vocational information, the characteristics of our vocation should be appropriately set forth, though the required modesty will prevent us in every case from making comparisons and exaggerations. The competent superiors should encourage these campaigns with opportune measures. They should foster everyone's cooperation in the yearly observance of vocation day, or of other observances, in our communities and educational centers. Let them provide whatever is necessary for the expenses required for these efforts.

104. As a necessary element in the vocational process and in cooperation with the action of the providence of God, the Church should intervene by its judgment in the approval and selection of vocations. The entire people of God has an interest in this judgment, as indicated in the rite of ordination. However, it is especially incumbent on the Church's pastors definitively to exercise this judgment, in accordance with the norms and recommendations of the Council itself (cf. OT 2 & 6; PC 24); the Holy See (cf. "Sedes Sap." II); our Holy Constitutions (I, cc 18, 19,20); and the CIA. and Circulars of our Fathers General.

This judgment should be made with every care and with a sense of heavy responsibility. It should be made in light of the wise criteria of the Church, which, in this case, indicate that a healthy rigor is necessary for the good of the candidates themselves and for the good of the entire Church (cf. OT 6; PC 12; Instr. SC Rel. 1961, n. 16).

105. The following must be an object of special study: the right intention on the part of the candidate, his full liberty in choosing this state, and the required qualities not only for the religious priestly life in general, but also for our Congregation (cf. Const. I, 139, 2). He must have not only the spiritual and moral qualities, but the intellectual, psychological and physical qualities as well. The influence of hereditary factors must also be taken into account. This study should be made in all seriousness, although always using supernatural criteria. The candidate himself should cooperate with all interest and sincerity, in the conviction that this cooperation is greatly pleasing to God. This process should not be considered concluded until definitive profession is made in the Institute so far as the religious life is concerned, and with final ordination, so far as the diaconate and priesthood are concerned. These last steps should not be taken as long as serious doubts persist and positive moral certitude concerning the fitness of the candidate is not obtained.

## B. Minor Seminaries and Similar Centers

106. In keeping with the directives of the Council the Congregation recognizes the educational advantages of minor seminaries or postulates, as long as they are adapted to the needs of the times and various localities and to the present or future directives of the Holy See.

Notwithstanding, "with equal concern the seeds of vocation among adolescents and young men are also to be fostered in those special Institutes, which, in accord with the local circumstances, serve the purpose of a minor seminary as well as among those who are trained in other schools or by other educational means. Finally, those institutions and other schools initiated for those with a belated vocation are to be carefully developed" (OT 3).

107. The Claretian minor seminary is not an educational institution destined to form young men who have already decided upon their vocation. Its purpose, rather, is to give a group of young men who for their age show special aptitude and sufficient inclination to embrace the Claretian religious life the necessary means to study and to bring to maturity these first seeds of vocation which have appeared in them and which must culminate in a conscious and free decision either to begin their Claretian formation or to occupy another place in the Church. Consequently, the Claretian minor seminary should treat its students so as to give them a profound human, Christian, ecclesial and apostolic formation, in accordance with our own special character. Such a formation should prepare them for the religious life, without making them religious before the proper time.

108. Our minor seminarians develop in very diverse and complex stages in their life. Yet, the influence of these years is decisive for their future. Therefore it is to be understood that the varying developmental, educational and psychological criteria must qualify the general statements which will follow (cf. OT 3). In each Province an overall plan must be developed to give direction to formation during these years. The age, cultural background and development of the adolescents of the particular country must be taken into account. A personal formation, adapted to individual differences, must be aimed at, avoiding the disadvantages of indiscriminate lumping together and of other implications of boarding school life.

The unitary concept of personality points out that physical, intellectual and emotional formation cannot be separated from Christian

formation, and granting the seed of a vocation from orientation to the Claretian ideal. With an adaptable and well thought out approach, one or the other aspect of formation will be emphasized without ever neglecting the others.

109. The seminarians must be helped to discover their apostolic vocation in the Church and make it personal. In particular, let them be given help so that they can examine and form the motives and signs of their possible Claretian vocation. Let them be so educated that seeing what God wills for them, they may commit themselves freely to follow Christ their Redeemer more closely, with a spirit of generosity and purity of intention (cf. OT 3).

110. Those in charge should not try to establish too many formulas and the same acts of piety for all Claretian seminarians. Let the educator have the leeway to establish these things freely, according to the criteria he judges fit. But he must avoid arbitrariness and constant change, which would undermine the stability necessary for our system of formation.

In the spiritual formation of our students let the principles which were fully expounded in the first part of these conclusions be taken into account, duly adapting them to the psychological situation of the students.

111. The understanding and personal direction which the adolescent needs are very important in order to make spiritual direction effective. Spiritual direction must be individualized, must respect personal freedom, and must guide the man and the Christian as he proceeds toward his total maturity. And all of this must take place in a climate of confidence and sincerity.

112. In order that the young men may experience the joy of feeling themselves called (cf. OT 5), a close climate of family understanding between the team of educators and the students must be striven for. It is necessary that the adolescent find himself in his own kind of environment: happiness, confidence, cooperation and spirit of service must reign in this family climate. In addition, the seriousness called for by the goals of the institution, and a feeling for authority and for the common good must also be fostered. Only in this way will the youth's emotional life develop normally.

113. With regard to the formation of chastity in this period, let account be taken of the principles and orientations that were explained in the first part of this decree especially with regard to spiritual formation. Nevertheless, in their application, the principles referred to should be adapted to the great developmental variability of these years, in accordance with sound psychology. And there should not be

any neglect of the necessity that "they be given also, as they advance in years, a positive and prudent sexual education" (cf. GE I).

In step with the students' advance in age, let them be directed to a sufficient understanding of the ideal of consecrated chastity, in such a way that those who feel themselves called to it may begin their novitiate with a suitable knowledge of what they are choosing. Nevertheless, it must be considered that true maturity in chastity is present when there exists at the same time a sufficient maturity in the use of freedom and a sufficient maturity in love. Therefore let what has been said concerning this point be integrated with the aspects which are treated below.

114. Seminarians, especially in the last years of this period, should be educated in the use of freedom, as long as close attention is paid to the principles explained in Part I, no.5.

Efforts should be made for an adequate social education, so that students may understand, accept and relate themselves apostolically to human persons. Let help be given them to overcome self-centeredness and to understand that true human, Christian maturity consists in placing oneself at the service of others in the charity of Christ.

115. This formation likewise includes a reasonable contact with and experience of human affairs, and contact with one's own family (cf. OT 3).

In effect, the adolescent in his education must not be separated from his family. Even in vocational matters parents are responsible for the education of their children, and in order that there may be a healthy emotional balance, it is necessary that there be relatively frequent contact between adolescents and their parents. Let the families be instructed and educated so that they can offer their cooperation in the work of the seminary.

Finally, in accordance with the orientation of the Council cited above, and with the apostolic formation which our members must have, our young seminarians will have prudent direct contacts with youth groups, with the communications media, with parish life, etc. This should be a gradual and planned contact, not given as a concession to a natural desire for escape, but according to an educational and pastoral judgment.

## C. Novitiate

116. The novitiate constitutes the fundamental phase of the formation and religious-apostolic life of the aspirants to our Institute. The specific goal of the novitiate, then, consists in assisting the candidate to:

- discern and verify the special characteristics of his vocation (cf. St. Gen., 31,2; 33).

- initiate and establish the foundation of his religious-apostolic formation, according to its Claretian character (cf. PC 18; ES 33; Const. I,103,104).

- confirm his choice of state, in a personal and free manner that is in itself definitive, as a response to the call of God and of the Church, which should, by means of the competent superiors examine the objectivity of the signs of vocation (cf. OT 2, 12; St. Gen., 37,1).

117. Entrance into the novitiate supposes a vocational decision which generally does not seem possible today before 18 years of age. In the period of preparation, which can be made in our minor seminaries, or outside of them (in the manner explained above: cf. n. 106), special pains above all should be taken to apply what the Church has prescribed analogously in the Decree, "Optatam Totius," n.6. Special attention must be paid to the human and Christian maturity of the candidate, especially in its emotional aspect (cf. OT 11), and to his capacity for being integrated into our community of apostolic life.

118. Bearing in mind the present and future orientations and dispositions of the Church in this matter (cf. St. Gen., 37,1) the following qualities should be fostered as the basic attitude in our novices: willingness toward the divine call, through faith (cf. Const. I,105); confidence in God (ibid. 106), and humility (ibid. 107); intelligent cooperation with those in charge of formation by means of obedience (ibid. 108); and a constant purification and conversion, in the framework of a life of prayer (cf. ibid. 110), in such a way that their lives may properly be based upon charity toward God and their brothers (cf. ibid. 109, & 11, c.9) and upon a generous spirit of apostolic service, prompt for any privation or sacrifice (cf. ibid. I,111,112).

119. In accordance with the perspective imprinted by our Father Founder on formation, from the novitiate on, the arrangement of this period should strive for the spiritual grounding of the Claretian in the full reach of his vocation. Consequently, its missionary-apostolic aspect should not be disregarded. Its arrangement thus inspired by the apostolic nature of the Institute, the novitiate should maintain a proper balance between the necessary withdrawal which the purpose of this phase of religious formation requires, and the prudent social-apostolic contact which is appropriate for one who is being formed in a spirit of initiative, responsibility and cooperation in order to be a missionary (cf. ES II,33).



120. According to the opinion of not a few, the specific nature of the novitiate and the psychological characteristics of the youth of today seem to demand that the time of the novitiate be better distributed, and over a more extended period.

In accordance with the norms of the *Motu Proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae"* prudent experiments can be fostered, under the direction of Provincial Governments as the need and convenience of each territory may demand, concerning the duration of the novitiate, the form of completing it, and the variations which may be demanded by the considerations explained in the preceding number, so that it may later be possible to formulate the proper and adequate norms (cf. ES II,36 & 38).

The congregation will receive with submission all the orientations and suggestions of the Holy See referring to these experiments.

121. The Master of Novices should possess, besides the qualities wisely outlined by our holy Father Founder (cf. Const. I,90), those qualities, too, which the Council mentions (cf. OT 5). He especially needs an ecclesial sensibility toward our times, a proven capacity for dialogue, special preparation in Claretian spirituality, and "continuing readiness to renew and to adapt" (GE 5). When his appointment is made, his age should be considered, so that it may not be an obstacle between him and the young men whom he has to educate.

## D. Period Prior to perpetual Profession

122. Before beginning ecclesiastical studies, for those called to the priesthood, and for the purpose of opening up the intelligences of the new religious to the mystery of Christ, which affects the entire history of the human race, an introductory course should be given, lasting as long as necessary, in which there is proposed to them "the mystery of salvation in such a way that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be given help to establish and penetrate their own entire lives with faith, and should be strengthened to embrace their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart (cf. OT 14). This course should be introduced after the canonical year of novitiate or also during the novitiate itself if it is prolonged for a longer time, in accordance with what was said in No. 120. These concepts will be complemented by necessary elements from the sacred liturgy which make the novices' progressive participation in it more conscious and fruitful.

123. In the period previous to perpetual profession, which is perhaps the most difficult and decisive period of formation, the

religious formation and education begun in the novitiate must be completed (cf. St. Gen. art. 7, 1), with a view to the candidates' total dedication of themselves to God and to men, by means of their perpetual profession.

Guarantees of a definitive commitment to God and to the Church require that the student has attained a secure discipline of his emotions, lucidity of religious judgment, and a mature use of his freedom.

124. One should be prepared for probable crises of love and freedom, and even of faith, in this period of profound psychological transformation especially when the ideal of holiness, almost tangible in the novitiate, gives way to the impact of a monotonous and harsh reality. When the young man arrives at the height of his capacity of intuition and assimilation, there will easily be awakened in him an insatiable yearning for the values which nature placed at his disposition. At that time, a singular competency is required of the one in charge of formation in order to forestall the student's fall into a practical naturalism, into self-sufficiency, or into rebellion, together with a forgetfulness or depreciation of the supernatural and of authority. The same competence is required to prevent the similar danger of the student's succumbing to timidity over the difficulties involved in overcoming these crises.

At that time, let the one in charge strive to assist the young man by enlightened spiritual direction which orients him in the meaning of the crises and the value of the renunciation which the following of Christ requires. Above all, let him form in the student an awareness of the necessity of personal dialogue with God and instruct him in the art of praying and contemplating. In this supreme task it is of the greatest importance that the one in charge of formation can call upon the testimony of his own experience. Let him encourage the young man to nourish his spirit with reading, especially of the Holy Scriptures. All this should bring the one to be formed to a profound friendship with Christ the Redeemer (cf. nn. 40-52 of this Decree).

125. During this time, the studies that are necessary must be so arranged that sufficient time be left to these young religious to cultivate the spiritual life, and dedicate themselves to apostolic activity under the direction of those in charge of formation.

This moderate exercise of the apostolate will be an attraction and a training for their missionary spirit, which should not disturb the suitable development of their obligation of preparing their studies.

## E. Interruption of Studies

126. The General chapter accepts the present and future norms of the Church (cf. St. Gen. 13 & OT 12), referring to the interruption of studies in order that our young religious may experience their vocation better and acquire the necessary religious and apostolic maturity.

Those who interrupt their studies should be employed in those ministries most suitable for the personal needs of each student, and not sent strictly to solve particular interests or problems of the community.

127. Consequently, this interruption should not exclusively have as its purpose, teaching or instructing. It could be pastoral activity in our communities or churches or other centers; or a prudent trial according to the judgment of the major superior. In any case, each student should be suitably prepared. He should know in advance the work or ministry to which he should dedicate himself during the aforesaid period of interruption. He should take care above all of his spiritual and educational preparation. It is suggested that students undertake these works in groups or teams. They should have particular assistance in the spiritual and formational spheres and they should not be overburdened with work.

For their part, let our seminarians be aware that this interruption of studies does not mean an interruption of the particular requirements of their situation of being in formation.

128. It is requested of the communities to which these students are assigned, both for their requisite vocational as well as apostolic experience, that they surpass themselves in the delicacy of fraternal charity toward them, of magnanimity and understanding in such a way that they encounter an exemplary religious and priestly environment, and a true family atmosphere.

129. Major superiors will determine in each case the time and the manner of completing these interruptions, always observing carefully the norms set forth in this respect by the Holy See.

## F. Formation During Ecclesiastical Theological Studies

130. In accord with what the Council stated (OT 4), major seminaries for priestly formation are considered necessary. In them the entire education of the students should tend toward the formation

of true pastors of souls, after the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest, and pastor. Consequently, the students should prepare themselves for the ministry of the Word: to understand more and more the Word revealed by God, to possess it by meditation and express it by Word and conduct. They should prepare themselves for the ministry of worship and sanctification: to the effect that, praying and celebrating the sacred liturgical functions, they may exercise the work of salvation by means of the eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments. They should prepare themselves for the ministry of a pastor: in order that they may know how to represent Christ before men, who did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life for the redemption of the world (Mk 10,45); and being made the servants of all, they may be able to win over many (cf. I Cor 9,19).

131. The principle of finality should, during the years of theology, have greater precedence than in any other period of training. Because of this, the apostolic ideal belonging to the congregation must be presented with all clarity and theological solidity, both collectively and individually. This ideal should govern and direct the entire life of the theological student, give meaning to his study, to his prayer, to the contacts with others and even to his purely material activities which favour his gradual development.

132. The apostolic ideal should not be presented in the abstract rather incarnated in Christ, as lived by our founder, who reach a perfect understanding with Christ as victim and priests (cf. Autob. 754).

Each student should encounter and discover Christ as a living person who awaits his response and should develop a personal relationship so as to reach a deep friendship with him.

133. Formation, especially during this period, should be eminently personal, and not primarily collective. Keep in mind that formation *en masse* not only wakens the human personalities of our young men but also their interior life. Thus, a sense of responsibility should be developed in each student offering them appropriate ministerial opportunities that favours their gradual growth.

134. In this period the future priest should be as oriented as possible toward the type of ministry which he will fulfill. This concentration of his energies in study and spiritual preparation should not be an impairment to a generous missionary spirit which embraces the entire world within an ecclesial framework (cf. Const. I 122). Provision should be made to form the young religious theologically in

the doctrine on religious life, the priesthood, the apostolic mission, etc, and it should be presented in a scientific manner (cf. nn. 30&31 of this Decr.).

135. Special importance should be given to the overall formation of the future priests, so they might be able to unify their entire spiritual and apostolic life.

In the world of today, when people are so burdened with duties and their problems, which oftentimes have to be solved with great haste, range through so many fields, there is considerable danger of dissipating their energy. Priests, too, involved and constrained by so many obligations of their office, certainly have reason to wonder how they can coordinate and balance their interior life with feverish outward activity. Neither the mere external performance of the works of the ministry, nor the exclusive engagement in pious devotion, although very helpful, can bring about this necessary coordination. Priests can arrive at this only by following the example of Christ Our Lord in their ministry. His food was to follow the Will of Him who had send Him to accomplish His work (cf. Jn 4,34). (PO 14).

136. Let our major seminarians be initiated into pastoral practices by means of appropriate activities throughout the school year and especially on vacation days (cf. Const. I,129), according to the prudent judgment of their superiors and along with the guidance of persons who are conversant in pastoral problems, always taking into account the preponderant efficacy of supernatural means (cf. OT 21).

## G. Pastoral Year

137. Our congregation established the pastoral year in 1905. The Constitutions "Sedes Sapientiae" and its "General Statutes" made it obligatory for all religious. The Council suggests similar practices (OT 21 & 22). It is necessary that all our missionaries, before dedicating themselves entirely to apostolic undertakings, follow this course, required as it is by the present dispositions of the Church.

The general Prefecture of formation and studies will set forth the general norms for the entire Congregation and the provincial superiors will burden themselves with making the opportune applications in each territory.

138. It should be noted that this pastoral course is a formal course with a determined number of class days and a serious and systematic study of the principal pastoral disciplines and methods.

Along with this intellectual formation, the students must be continuously exercising apostolic activities in such a way that theory and practice complete one another mutually.

This pastoral course can be had all at once or in different workshops, sufficiently broad in scope, and interspersed in the first years of the ministry. To make up the pastoral year in this way, permission may be requested from the Holy See.

139. Every province that enjoys sufficient means in order to fulfill the aforesaid requisites can arrange the year theoretically and practically according to its convenience. If circumstances suggest it, and with the approval of the Prefecture of formation, this course can be arranged in cooperation with other religious or by taking advantage of existing centers in the different countries.

140. Formation should not be considered terminated at the conclusion of training, but must be continued during the entire life of the missionary. In order to foster this renewal of formation let the superiors strive to offer the means and opportunities to all individuals in order to facilitate this important complementing (cf. PC 18).

141. According to the desire of our holy Father Founder (cf. Const. II, 35) and the tradition of the congregation, efforts should be made to arrange a systematic, periodical, and ordinary renewal of knowledge which, during the year, would be equivalent to what was provided previously by the obligatory conferences. Thus, in an intensive way, let our members dedicate themselves to these studies weekly or monthly within our communities or in cooperation with other religious or priests. The responsibility of making this norm effective is left to major superiors, in accordance with the prospects of the locality.

142. The prefectures of formation and apostolate, with the assistance of the pastoral council, should organize each year compulsory workshops to update everyone in the ecclesiastical sciences. Or they may provide for the assistance of our members at Study Weeks which could conclude or complement what has been accomplished during the year. It is incumbent upon the provincial superior in his periodical visits seriously to promote these studies in the communities, taking care that the libraries of our houses be renewed and improved.

143. The Chapter establishes a renewal course for priests and brothers, more or less 5 years after ordination or perpetual profession respectively. This renewal course can be fulfilled in combination with other provinces. It should be adapted in regard to its duration and organization to the needs of today, according to the directives of the

general and provincial prefectures of formation and apostolate. This renewal course supposes at least the partial suspension of other activities and is repeatable according to the superiors' judgment (cf. PO 19).

144. The object of the renewal course must be to update knowledge and especially intensify spiritual formation, adapted to the real life that the missionary leads.

It is suggested that advantage be taken during this period to make a month of spiritual exercises.

## H. Vacations

145. As a general norm vacation time should be considered a period complementing formation and not simply as a rest.

146. a) This complementing should allow that the person in formation be perfected in certain aspects which might be given less attention during the school year.

b) Attention should be given to the required rest, as well as physical and psychological recuperation, through sports, outings, or camping. These latter should be carefully prepared, using proper methods, and should be directed by responsible persons. The requisites of our religious poverty should be kept in mind.

Vacation time should also be used to attend workshops or conventions at which some knowledge can be gained that is necessary for the missionary.

This time can be made use of to undertake pastoral experiments and have contact with the realities of life (cf. OT 3) during a longer period than the school year.

Provided necessary caution is exercised and there is a suitable plan directed by those in charge of formation, engagement for a time in some type of work is recommended. This work may be salaried or not, and it may be undertaken at home or away from it, as long as the norms are followed which the provincial government establishes in each region. These norms should foresee the possible liabilities of these experiments. The experiments should not be too long, and, if possible, they should be exercised in teams and along with adequate in charge of formation (cf. n. 1 of this Decree).

147. *Family visits:* With regard to visits to their families, these criteria should be kept in mind:

- For minor seminarians, the statement of "Optatam Totius" 3, should be taken as the norm. It recommends the seasonable

cooperation of parents in the formation of adolescents, especially necessary in gaining a reasonable experience of the realities of life and a sufficient psychological balance. It is appropriate, therefore, that during vacations they have suitable contact with their homes.

- For the professed in formation, those reasons which are valid for all professed members of the Congregation according to the declarations of this chapter in the Decree on the Religious Life can be considered justifiable reasons for these visits. In this respect, it must not be forgotten that our young members need to be formed in a generous apostolic detachment, characteristic of our vocation (cf. Const. II, c. 15).

Another justifiable reason is the need of complementing formation especially with regard to emotional balance and psychological maturity and with a view to adequately solving possible vocational problems.

148. With regard to the frequency, duration and manner of making these visits, a general norm cannot be given here, considering the diversity of circumstances in different countries. In any case, provincial superiors are the ones responsible for regulating this matter, after listening to those in charge of formation and those concerned.

## CHAPTER V

# Arrangement of Studies

## Centers of Study

149. Solid priestly formation, considered by the Church as the highest law of the organization of seminaries (St. Gen., 22,2; OT 7), is in its intellectual aspect bound up with the specific character of our Congregation and is of great importance to its unity of spirit and action.

In accordance with the underlying premises of the doctrine of the Church in the M. Pr. "Ecclesiae Sanctae" and our own tradition, provision should be made for the Congregation to establish its own centers, as long as they safeguard the conditions and the level demanded for them by the Church and by the conditions of our apostolic activity, according to what is expressed later on.



150. When these requirements cannot be sufficiently satisfied in our members' doctrinal or professional formation, they can be provided for by means of fraternal cooperation with other Institutes. This cooperation can admit different degrees and forms: common conferences or courses, exchange of professors, and even a common center, where these professors would be grouped together, the other means would be provided, and many Institutes would participate (cf. ES II,37). In this matter, not only our own needs and advantages should be considered, but the needs and advantages of the Church in a particular region as well.

151. Our centers of formation should at least attain the level of other centers of this type in the Church or of similar state centers in the country in which they are established, in order that our missionaries may be able to fulfill their mission competently, and that our studies may be able to be recognized by ecclesiastical or civil authorities, as the case requires, with regard to the attainment of corresponding degrees (cf. St. Gen., 21,2).

152. For university and specialist formation, it is indispensable to attend other centers, even though we might consider the advantage, in certain circumstances for the Congregation also to establish some centers for this purpose (cf. Const. I,128).

153. According to the capabilities of each province, let the provincial superior provide for the establishment of formation centers. These centers should fulfill the necessary requisites and once they are established, let the provincial superior maintain and improve them with assiduous and attentive solicitude.

Nevertheless, when this is not feasible in each major organism, it is advisable to establish interprovincial or international centers for ecclesiastical studies, if there exists an affinity of language or culture or other purpose. This may be done as long as the number of students is not too large or their distribution in groups can be suitably provided for, while the unity of regime and studies is safeguarded (cf. OT 7). These centers will be governed by approved statutes, according to what was said above (cf. n.87).

154. With regard to high schools, a study should be made in each case if it would be advantageous to associate them in some way to other high schools, taking into account what was said in Nos. 106-115 of this decree.

155. In general, when according to the principles enunciated in No. 150 cooperation or federation with other Institutes for ecclesiastical studies is promoted, let the provincial governments present the case to the general Government for its approval. The reports of the

respective prefectures of formation should be heard. At the same time, assuming the principles enunciated in Nos. 149-152, our members' formation can be provided for by sending them to diocesan seminaries or to other Catholic colleges. In this matter, the approval of the respective superiors is necessary, and the other common norms of the Church and our own Institute must be fulfilled, whether in their present form, or according the way they will be reformed in the near future (cf. OT 7; St. Gen., 23,3; c. 587,3; Const. I,128).

156. In case it is not advisable to have our own internal high school, and the norm expressed in No. 154 cannot be applied, let the major superiors consider the suitability of sending our young men to outside schools. Previously, there should be reports from the respective prefectures.

157. In every case the particular formation of our Institute should be assured diligently, through appropriate norms, in accordance with the Decree "Optatam Totius," 3, and the M.Pr. "Ecclesiae Sanctae", EI 37, and through a suitable completion, according to the prudent judgment of the corresponding prefectures, of what is lacking in order to observe our internal legislation concerning studies.

158. The disadvantages which could result in our members' formation in the congregation's own centers, even though they are suitably equipped, should be balanced by the advantages which derive from an appropriate exposure to the outside, particularly:

- by placing our youth cautiously in contact with life, for motives of human and pastoral formation, in accordance with what was said in Nos.27-129,136, and 146 of this Decree.

- by seeking contact and healthy exchange with other academic institutions, whether on the level of professors or of students.

- by requesting professors from outside or by generously offering our own professors' cooperation (cf. ES II,37).

- by discreetly accommodating our centers to the circumstances of the country and following the directives of the episcopal conferences, while safeguarding the universal character of our formation.

159. Young men who have not followed our courses in the humanities or their equivalent, and which are considered obligatory on the high school, college or university level, will complete their formation, in the humanities and sciences, or prepare themselves to enter into our Institute in the high school, novitiate or college, according to convenience. If necessary, let special centers be established for this purpose, or let them take advantage of existing centers.

160. Among the requisites for our centers of formation, it is worth calling attention to these points:

a) Provision should be made that our seminaries are located in centers of ecclesiastical or social culture which offer possibilities of cultural expansion and suitable contacts with other similar centers.

b) The number of students in any case should not be excessively small, considering the requisites of today's formation centers, nor too large, in order to avoid the disadvantages of mass formation.

c) In every seminary there should be an established roster of professors, who should have established subjects to teach. Provision should be made that the required conditions for living and working are guaranteed, so that this stability may really exist. This problem should be considered a serious one. In the major seminaries, the doctorate or an equivalent should be demanded, at least for primary subjects.

d) Safeguarding the preceding number, an exchange of professors among the different centers of the Congregation should be sought, and when considered opportune some professors from outside should be called.

e) It is urgently necessary that all our internal centers of formation have at their disposal sufficient financial resources for the integral formation of our students. In addition to a budget for their libraries, which should be an object of particular solicitude and be staffed by suitable personnel for cataloguing, care and service, funds must be made available for other cultural purposes and for relaxation, which are also necessary for the proper attainment of the goals of the institutions.

161. Our members should be encouraged to specialize and should be sent, only to those centers that have a high standard of scholarship, and which offer the greatest possibility for success. For this purpose, it would be advisable to set up a study facility in houses or residences already established in places where these centers are located. Where such houses do not exist, the superiors, according to their prudence, may establish special residences or make other housing arrangements for those who are sent there.

162. The Chapter recommends the formation of a commission dependent on the prefecture of formation and studies to investigate the problems presented by the Congregations existing centers of advanced formation or research, or those which it might establish in the future in Rome or in other important cities.

## Regimen and Personnel

### I. Prefecture of Formation and Studies

#### A. Structure

163. In order to assure that the Prefecture of Formation and Studies is efficient, it should be organized in accordance with the way it is described in our legislation.

Therefore, the Prefecture of Studies should have a Secretary and avail itself of a commission of priests competent in different fields and chosen from different parts of the Congregation. This commission will render its assistance when requested. Especially, it will meet from time to time to examine and discuss the situation and the prospects of our studies.

Let the composition and constitution of the Prefecture of formation and Studies in each of the provinces and quasi-provinces be similar to the structure of the General Prefecture. Let the Visitorships have at least one person in charge of studies.

164. In order to guarantee the efficiency and vitality of these structures:

a) Those in charge should be competent persons. Their influence in the arrangement of studies, including financial considerations, should be truly effective, though they shall always work in subordination to their superiors, and in close cooperation with them.

b) Canonical visitors of centers of formation will always take into account the reports of the prefectures of studies. These reports shall be based upon the academic Visits which will be made periodically by the corresponding person in charge of formation. In this way, unity of direction and meaningful decisions will be assured.

c) Periodic meetings between the General Prefecture and the Prefects of Studies of major organisms should be held and between the latter and those in charge of the individual centers.

#### B. Competency

165. The competency of the general Prefecture of Studies happens to be sufficiently described in our legislation (cf. OSG art. 34, 83-85, 175) in what pertains to the aspects of government as well as science and culture.

Since the rightful autonomy of the Provinces must be respected, the General Prefecture will limit itself to give directions that are general in character, leaving to corresponding provincial prefectures their application to the circumstances of each territory. General centers will be directly under the direction of the general Prefecture.

Let the prefectures of studies promote the initiatives which can contribute to elevating the level of our studies and in particular the continual renewal of the scientific activities of the professors.

## II. The Professors and Formation

166. Professors are truly involved in formation since "doctrinal training ought to tend not to a mere communication of ideas but to a true and intimate formation of the students" (OT 17; cf. *ibid.* 14.16).

The goal which should direct and animate the entire intellectual formation of the students is the development of their religious apostolic vocation. (cf. Const. 1,2,122; OSG 140,2; OT 4,9,18,19).

The different aspects of formation cannot be separated in any way, since they all converge into the same educative process with regard to the person. "All the forms of training, spiritual, intellectual, disciplinary, are to be ordered with concerted effort toward this pastoral end and to attain it all the administrators and teachers are to work zealously and harmoniously together" (OT 4).

167. The basic element of the formation of our young members is the climate which they experience in the life of the seminary. The professors contribute in large measure to forming this climate by their personality, their balance and objectivity, their mental outlook, their cultural maturity and the human relations which they manage to establish with their students as the channel of a true and noble teaching role. The fundamental elements of this educational climate are: unity of spirit and action, and family unity expressed through joyfully living together their common Vocation under the authority of the director. In this way, the life of our centers of formation will fulfill Our Lord's prayer, "That all may be one" (Jn 17,11).

168. In order to fulfill this commission, the professors will realize their teaching function in the most stable manner possible. They will be chosen from among the best, combining the fundamental bases of holiness of life and a good intellectual education, along with the particular gifts of balanced judgment and teaching ability. They will also have to have suitable pastoral experience and special educational formation (OT 5).

### III. Study Plans

#### A. General Norms

169. In the general arrangement of studies, let only general norms be established to obtain a fundamental unity of criteria in the intellectual formation of our students, and thus to promote everyone's willingness to exercise their apostolic activity in any region whatever.

In each region, a particular arrangement of studies should be promulgated by the provincial superior, with the prior approval of the general Prefecture. This arrangement will apply the general norms of our legislation to concrete needs and circumstances. These arrangements will be submitted to periodic review, in order to accommodate them to the requirements of different times.

#### B. Program of Studies of Claretian Ecclesiastical Training

170. Our priestly training comprehends ecclesiastical studies, properly so called, and studies in human and scientific education as well (cf. OT 13).

##### 1. High School and College

High school studies, according to Vatican II:

a) are not to be inferior to those undertaken by young men of the same country in high school and college (OT 3,13; "Menti nostrae," AAS 42 (1950); "Sedes Sapientiae," 30; St. Gen., art.43; OSG art. 97).

b) are to be recognized by the state (St. Gen., Qrt. 43,1-2; OSG Qrt. 97, 1; cf. OT 3,13).

171. The primary goal of our high school studies is the integral formation in its intellectual aspect, of the young men who manifest the seeds of a priestly and religious vocation. For this purpose:

a) Intellectual education should comprehend humanistic and scientific formation and should be of such a nature that they proximately prepare him for ecclesiastical studies properly so called (OT 13; "Sedes Sapientiae" 30).

b) The study of Latin should be directed in such a way that the student obtains the necessary ability to know and use the ancient sources and documents (OT 13,16; St. Gen., 43,3, 2 & 3).

c) This preparation for the knowledge and use of the sources and documents already requires of itself an impressive knowledge of Latin and Greek. For a better humanistic formation, moreover it should be perfected by a more profound study, in those particular nations which by their culture, language and tradition have a more intimate connection with the classic languages (OT 13-16; St. Gen. 43,3,2; Const. 1,77,139). The study of modern languages, initiated in the high school period, should be opportunely continued throughout training in such a way that the student thereby acquires fluency in one of them.

d) Because of their situation as future missionaries and servants of the Word, it is necessary to take great pains to cultivate their artistic formation, particularly in writing and in the art of speaking. They should be taught the rightful value and appropriate use of the communications media. All this will facilitate their missionary identification with men and with the world of their time.

## 2. Philosophical and Theological Studies

172. In revising ecclesiastical studies properly so called, the different disciplines should be so articulated that they harmoniously work toward opening more and more the minds of the students to the Mystery of Christ. For it is this Mystery which affects the whole history of the human race, constantly influences the Church, and is especially at work in the priestly and missionary ministry (cf. OT 14).

Consequently, ecclesiastical studies must be introduced by a course in which the mystery of salvation is presented in a manner that may perceive the meaning of ecclesiastical studies and their pastoral purpose (OT 14; cf. n. 122 of this Decree).

173. The doctrine should be founded on the perennially valid patrimony of philosophy and theology (OT 15), under the guidance of St. Thomas (OT 16) giving heed to the contributions of modern science (cf. GE 10) and with special attention to the problems of each nation (cf. OT 15). Let the professors remember they do not teach in their own name but in the name of the Church, from which they have received their mission to teach.

The multiplication of new disciplines should be avoided, while provision should be made to include new problems within the fundamental disciplines. On the other hand, the gestations that have lost their relevance should be eliminated.

174. The philosophical disciplines should be taught in such a way that the students obtain, through them all, a solid and coherent knowledge of man, of the world and of God, and that they may be

able to perceive perfectly the links existing between philosophical arguments and the mysteries of salvation which are studied in theology under a higher light (cf. OT 15).

175. Let a special emphasis be placed on the study of Sacred Scripture, which should be as it were the soul of all theology. After an appropriate introduction, the students should be carefully initiated into the method of exegesis in such a way that they may be capable of capturing the great themes of Divine revelation and obtain stimulus and nourishment from reading and meditating on the Holy Bible (OT 16).

176. Dogmatic theology should be explained by following the method of "Optatum totius": 1) biblical themes; 2) contributions of the Fathers; 3) the history of the dogma in relation to the general history of the Church; 4) speculative research on the connection of the mysteries of salvation to one another under the guidance of St. Thomas (cf. OT 16).

177. Moral theology must be presented more under the intense enlightenment of the light of revelation, in such a way that the sublime vocation of the Christian may be accepted as an exigency of conduct, rich in fruits of charity for the life of the world (cf. OT 16).

178. The Mystery of the Church should be the vital nerve of juridical and historical studies. In particular, liturgy should be explained as the first and necessary source of true Christian spirit, united with the other theological disciplines in their connection to the mystery of Christ and the history of our salvation (cf. OT 16).

179. It is necessary that the theological sciences and the other disciplines, especially the historical ones, be also taught under their ecumenical aspects so that they respond more exactly to reality (UR 10). The students should also be introduced to the knowledge of the other most widespread religions of each region, so that they may know better what by divine disposition, of the good and true they have retained. They should be able to refute their errors and be capable of transmitting the fullness of light to those who are without it (OT 16).

180. The establishment of a professional commission to study the concrete manner of implementing conclusions 172 and 173 is urgently recommended. When this program is developed, the repetition of closely related subjects should be avoided.

### 3. Pastoral Formation

181. Ecclesiastical studies shall last at least as long as the time determined by the Church, as this is applied by the Episcopal



Conferences. Adaptations to our particular character in the apostolate, as arranged by our general or regional legislation, should also be kept in mind. A special pastoral course should be added to this (cf. n. 137 of this Decree). In major seminaries the program of studies can be arranged on the basis of semesters.

182. The formation of the Claretian religious must have a pastoral meaning. Therefore, the programming will be submitted to continuous revision, so that it may correspond constantly to circumstances of time and place, according to the mind of the Council (cf. OT 1).

183. For the academic and scientific consequences, studied more in detail in this Part V, what has been said above should be kept in mind, concerning the necessary pastoral practices to be undertaken throughout training, and especially concerning the Pastoral Year, in nos. 136-139 of this Decree (Part IV). In the pastoral course, pastoral theology should be studied more in detail along with catechetics, pastoral psychology, sociology in its pastoral applications, etc. All this should be done in a sufficiently scientific manner, though along with an outlook and emphasis according to the pastoral needs of each region in which our members will work, and always safeguarding the universal character of our function in the Church. This study should lead them to use the aids which the aforesaid sciences can provide, according to correct methodology and the norms of ecclesiastical authority (cf. OT 20).

184. "At the same time" according to the mind of the Council "let them be properly instructed in inspiring and fostering the Apostolic activity of the laity and promoting the various and more effective forms of the apostolate. Let them also be imbued with that truly Catholic spirit which will accustom them to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation or rite, and to help the needs of the whole Church, prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel to everyone" (OT *ibid.*,; cf. LG 33).

185. It is desirable that within ecclesiastical studies themselves, during their training, they should give their attention to specific pastoral problems, which should be appropriately enlightened by the ecclesiastical discipline or the other sciences studied at the same time.

#### 4. Scholarly Activity

186. Without wishing to descend to details which should be regulated by an appropriate post-capitular legislation, the Chapter proposes some outlines for the development of this legislation:

1. The school year should be considered as composed of classes and of personal work outside of them, on the part of the

student. It should be regulated by the arrangement of studies with a modern educational approach.

2. In each region, the number of classes will be determined by its own particular arrangement of studies, within the margin established by higher authorities.

3. In order to determine the number and duration of classes, the following criteria will be taken into account:

a) Let the number of classes be sufficient to assure the Congregation's lofty goals concerning intellectual formation.

b) Nevertheless an excessive number of classes, which makes unity and solidity difficult in intellectual formation should be avoided. An excessive number of assignments should be avoided, and all those questions which today scarcely have any importance or should be left for higher academic studies should be omitted (cf. OT 17).

c) Sufficient time for personal work outside of class should be allowed, in keeping with the requirements of today's educational methodology, and having in mind the different stages of intellectual formation (cf. St. Gen. art. 11,2).

d) The importance of each assignment with relation to priestly formation should be considered.

## Teaching Methods

### Principles of teaching

187. The Professors will strive for a close cooperation with one another, in order to achieve internal coordination in the different assignments, avoiding useless repetition of closely related assignments and in order to maintain unity in the student's formation (cf. OT 14).

188. The professor should provide that his explanation be a true enlightenment to guide the student to discover the fundamental ideas and discern them clearly in the concrete material context in which they are explained.

With reference to philosophical and theological subjects, in particular, the concrete situation of the students should be considered. The problems should be presented to them in such a way that they will affect their own lives, answer the questions which vex their own minds and assist them to possess a reflective and lively faith. They will thus be encouraged to search for a solution of

human problems in the light of revelation, and to communicate them in an appropriate manner their time (cf. OT 15, 16).

189. The method of teaching should tend to promote in the student, within and outside of class, the internal process of personal activity toward the discovery of truth on the part of the student himself. Therefore, let the professor strive to produce a harmonious education of the spiritual faculties of the student, and arouse his spirit of initiative and discovery, while he stirs in him the love of truth, rigorously sought out, respected and demonstrated (cf. OT 15).

## Approaches in Teaching

190. In order to promote the student's personal activity, the following should be employed: recitals, group meetings, team assignments, etc., according to the prescriptions and approaches of modern education. Also, within established discipline, personal contact should be fostered between professors and students.

The use of audiovisual means should be favoured as modern instruments of cultural formation, and the students should be taught to use them as means for the modern apostolate (cf. IM 16).

## Examinations

191. According to what has been said concerning teaching methods, examinations should not be considered as the principal gauge of the student's progress, much less the only one, though they are certainly important.

Examinations should, nevertheless, be retained as something necessary in strictly ecclesiastical courses, inasmuch as they oblige the student to a complete and careful vision of the entire matter. However, a study should be made how to simplify them, by eliminating from them whatever can provoke a psychological tension damaging to the examination itself.

## Text Books

192. Our educational legislation on textbooks should be revised with an approach more adapted to our times. Likewise, prescriptions that are too detailed should be avoided.

## Special Studies

193. Our missionary vocation implies an intellectual superiority that demands a specialized preparation in the different fields of the

apostolate. Therefore, superiors should strive that generally all of their personnel acquire some specialization, according to the needs of the Congregation and taking into account the individuals' capabilities and inclinations.

194. Appropriate specialization should be provided for everyone. They should be granted special studies with reference to the apostolate which each one will have to exercise. More advanced specialization should be reserved to some who are singularly endowed, in order to develop true experts in different matters. It should be recognized that full dedication to scientific research, whether in ecclesiastical or profane sciences, when it is vivified by our spirit, is an authentic Claretian apostolate.

Let our superiors recall the norms given by the Church concerning the aptitudes of character, virtue and intelligence required of those who are going to be sent to special institutes, schools or universities. In such cases, their spiritual and pastoral formation should in no way be disregarded, especially if they are not yet priests (cf. OT 18).

195. At the present moment in the Church and the Congregation, the chapter feels it is necessary for our specialization preferably to concern:

- a) the formation of our prefects, professors and spiritual directors;
- b) the special ministries of the Congregation, according to the criteria assigned by this Chapter itself in the Decree on the apostolate; and the applications to be made by the general and Provincial Prefectures of apostolate in their respective spheres;
- c) the studies traditionally cultivated in the congregation, to the degree that they coincide with the indications set forth in the preceding sentence.

196. Our members' specialization should not be limited to any one sphere. The entire gamut of discipline is necessary to attain for the apostolic and teaching goals of the Congregation and must be suitably covered.

197. During theological studies, the Prefect of Students, in close cooperation with the entire team of educators and with the students themselves, should endeavour to discover the particular inclinations and qualities each one of them has, and inform the Provincial Prefect of Studies of this.

198. This particular matter will be determined:

- a) as soon as possible; perhaps before priestly ordination;
- b) by the respective provincial superiors, after listening to the suggestions of the Provincial Prefect of Studies, and the rightful demands of the General Prefecture.
- c) taking into account, as a general norm, each student's intellectual vocation and inclination as he manifests this himself, even within the time of studies during priestly training.

199. The practical realization of specialization will be made as a general rule once training is concluded. But during ecclesiastical studies, it can already be begun with a view to future specialization, as long as the common basic studies do not suffer in the meanwhile.

# DECREE ON ADMINISTRATION

## Preface

The congregation, as an integral part of the Church, participates of its divine-human condition (cf. LG.8). As a primarily divine society, its human condition should be ordained and even subordinated to its divine and transcendent life (cf. SC 2).

The Church, and within it the Congregation, is a pilgrim in this world, and tends towards a fixed goal, the future city. This should be the source of all its strivings (cf. LG 44; Const. II, 10).

The Congregation, as an Institute of perfection (LG.45) in the bosom of the Church, should emphasize with special vigour the eschatological traits of the People of God. In a particular way it must manifest the superiority of the Kingdom of God over terrestrial things and proclaim its lofty requirements (LG 44).

This basic striving for the Kingdom of God will produce a more authentic and profound love toward our brothers and urge us to practice justice through the inspiration of charity (cf. GS 72). Whence finances should never be an end in itself. On the contrary, our financial holdings must be directed, through the guidance of Superiors, toward the attainment of the goals of the Congregation. And the goods necessary for our apostolate should always be utilized with a profound respect for the evangelical dimension of our poverty.

The Church, as a divine-human society, is subjected to a dynamic law of incarnation (cf. GS 40). For this reason, it should be directed like every society on earth by a group of laws, even in financial matters. We should know these laws and observe them, because the goods of the Congregation are also ecclesiastical goods, subject in their administration to the sacred canons and the other norms of the Church.

They are not merely private goods. Vatican Council II has prescribed that future priests in recently Christianized areas should

be given the necessary formation to carry on ecclesiastical administration in a precise fashion. This is to be understood in a financial sense as well (AG 16).

The Sons of the Congregation in imitation of our holy Father Founder, will associate the most absolute detachment toward money with an exquisite faithfulness in controlling and administering the goods which are entrusted to them. A living example of this faithfulness was left to us in the painstaking notations contained in the book of expenses of Archbishop Claret's house when he resided in Madrid, as can be seen in the General Archives. On the other hand, our Father Founder showed his apostolic genius, enterprising and dynamic, through the great social innovations on the island of Cuba, the glorious cultural enterprises he created in Madrid and his restorations at the *Escorial*. For works for the glory of God, for the formation of libraries, for the apostolate of the press, for relief of the poor, he never spared expense.

The Congregation, because of its ecclesial situation, its status as an Institute of perfection (LG 45) and its special sonship in the heart of Mary, is above all a communion of love.

The profound and intimate communion which flourishes in the family of God has its origin and pattern in the life of the Trinity (cf. I Jn 1,3) and should be projected also in the financial sphere (cf. II Cor 9,13). Our unity of heart and soul should be translated, as it was in the primitive Christian society (cf. Act 4,32) into a fundamental community of goods between organisms which possess more and those which possess less (PC 13) "that there may be equality" (cf. II Cor 8,14). Even more, the Congregation opens its heart (cf. II Cor 6,11) and remedies, as much as it can, the general needs of the Church and of the poor (PC 13).

## CHAPTER I

### Aptitude and Formation of Treasurers

1. It is fitting that the office of treasurer be given all the importance which it deserves, by appointing trained persons who know how to put the stamp of efficacy on their administrative work.

Our Treasurers do not administer the goods of the congregation as owners wherefore, in the exercise of their office, they are required to be faithful to the established norms.

The Treasurer is responsible for implementing the ordinary budget, without departing from it during the course of the fiscal year.

He controls and supervises the administrations subordinated to him.

2. Incumbent and future treasurers of the Congregation should be given suitable preparation for the faithful fulfillment of their duties. This should include seminars conducted by professional businessmen and those who are specialized in modern methods.

The norm should also be applied to coadjutor brothers as circumstances permit.

3. Because of the implications of finance upon other problems in the Institute's life and development, it seems desirable that treasurers enjoy voice and vote in councils.

## CHAPTER II

### Use of Temporal Goods

4. a) As long as health and age permit, let everyone feel obligated by the common law of labour. Compensation received for it will provide for his own support, will help the centers where the Sons of our Religious Family are being formed, and will provide just wages for those who render them service and assistance for the needy, along with a needed and adequate period of vacation each year (cf. PC 13; PO 1,20).

b) The following phrase of the Holy Constitutions should be modified: "Denique paupertatem exercent... nihil muneris aut pecuniae in mercedem pro sacro ministerio accipiendo" (II, 16). The text should be rendered in the following form: "Denique paupertatem... nihil muneris aut pecuniae sibimetipsis accipiendo nec in mercedem pro sacro ministerio exigendo".

c) No. 450 of the CIA should be faithfully preserved, concerning the obligation of accepting alms on occasion of ministries, or because of them.

d) All striving for profit in the exercise of the ministry should be avoided.

e) In order to preserve the primitive spirit of the Institute gratuitous ministries should be fostered in our communities and on behalf of poor parishes or needy convents.



f) Let each province establish a fund to provide gratuitous ministries as a testimony of gratitude for the benefits which God has conferred on us (cf. CIA 549).

5. a) Our employees must be treated not only according to the norms dictated by the social laws of each country, but also with a true spirit of social justice, as well as generous Christian charity.

b) The Congregation must make an effort to give individual and collective testimony of poverty, living from its own labors, avoiding every appearance of luxury, of excessive profit and the piling up of material goods. Its Houses and structures of apostolate must be founded upon an evangelical sense, which inclines us to seek out eternal values within temporal goods.

In the budgets of the different organisms of the Congregation, a quantity should be set aside and used to relieve the poor, whom all religious should love in the Heart of Christ (cf. PC; Const. II, 15).

### CHAPTER III

## Conservation and Care of Goods

6. The preservation and care of temporal goods is not only the competency of the Treasurer or Administrator by reason of his office. All should feel themselves as one in preserving and caring for them, as it occurs in every family united in brotherhood. Wherefore:

a) Let financial affairs be treated publicly in the periodic meetings of the entire community, something which would be very much in keeping with our brotherhood and with everyone's cooperation in common interests (cf. PC 14,15).

b) In the most suitable form, let the Congregation be informed each year of the financial state of the general administration. This norm should be applied equally to provincial and local administrations in relation to their organisms.

c) Let the idea of solidarity be inculcated beginning in the years of formation.

### 7. The Houses and Capitalization

a) The formation of an endowment for our internal centers of formation is evidently desirable, but it should be administered by the Provincial and General Treasurers.

b) Houses cannot capitalize with their surpluses, but they may accept pious foundations with the required approval of the Major Superior. The better to assure that the aforesaid foundations and endowments are safely and gainfully employed, it is advisable that, *salva proprietate*, they be administered by the provincial Administration.

c) Outside of these cases, it is not advisable to grant to the Houses the right to capitalize so as to avoid eagerness for profit (PC 13) and in order to provide a better collective testimony of poverty and not make difficult the help which each house might suitably give to other poor houses according to the spirit of the Council (PC 13) and the recommendation of our Holy Founder (Letter of Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 1858 to Fr. Xifre).

## CHAPTER IV

### Fundus Credititius

8. a) The Fundus Credititius has been in the past and can continue being in the future of great benefit to the Congregation's interests.

b) It is recommended to all the Congregation's organisms that with the permission of the respective superiors they make deposits in the Fundus Credititius, preferably with funds from burses, pious foundations, etc.

c) A new set of by-laws for the Fundus Credititius should be formulated, by which a board of directors should be established from among the largest depositors. This board should be advised by someone who is a specialist in banking. The aforesaid board of directors will be changed periodically in accordance with the by-laws which are to be established. The first board of directors will be designated by the General Government. Outside of this case, the election will take place by a vote of the depositors themselves.

d) The Fundus Credititius should be separated from the general administration.

e) The Fundus Credititius can establish branches in different nations, in agreement with the respective major superiors, and in accordance with the new by-laws.

## CHAPTER V

## Inheritances

9. The Motu Proprio, "Ecclesiae Sanctae" (n.24), affirms that "it is the right of Institutes with simple vows to decree in General chapter whether the renunciation of inheritances which have been acquired and will be acquired should be incorporated into the Constitutions and, if this is done, whether such renunciation should be obligatory or optional. They should also decide when this is to be done, i.e., whether before perpetual profession or some years later."

a) It seems better to begin this experiment by leaving it free to the choice of individuals.

b) With the approval of the Major Superior.

c) The time for making this renunciation is to be not before ten years after the perpetual profession.

d) Other details of this renunciation will be determined by the General Government .

e) This faculty of renouncing one's inheritances should be set forth in the Holy Constitutions.

f) Those who do not renounce their inheritance, in order to save the initial capital against constant devaluation of money, could accumulate the interest from their inheritance. This point affects the Constitutional text (I, 81).

## CHAPTER VI

## Contributions and Quotas

10. a) One of the principal foundations of our economy is that the property and administration of our Houses and Provinces are subordinated to the common necessities of the congregation (cf. CIA 180, 192, OAG 61).

b) Provinces and Houses should share material goods with one another, in such a way that those who have more, help those who suffer need (PC 13). Our holy Father Founder had had the

same idea: "whatever is left one in one House, should make up what is lacking in another" (Letter to Fr. Xifre, Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 1858). In keeping with these norms, let the system of quotas of the Provinces to the General Administration and of the Houses to the Provinces be preserved (cf. CIA 203; OAG 49).

c) The respective superior can assign the times in which to satisfy the assigned quotas.

11. a) In principle, all major organisms of the Congregation and all General Houses that are not centers of formation should pay a quota to the General Government. This quota will be a symbol of cooperation on the part of all the Sons of the Congregation in the common expenses of the General Government.

b) Financially strong organisms shall send in addition a special quota to help in the formation of personnel in our centers of formation, our missions and needy organisms and the expansion of the Congregation.

c) Quotas should not constitute a grave burden for the subordinate administrations. Let the quota be dispensed with in those organisms which may have suffered some financial reverse, either because of a noticeable devaluation of money, or for other similar causes. These causes easily transpire today in some countries of Latin America.

d) Let the norms be revised by which the General Administration must offer equitable assistance to needy organisms. Each organism, as an ideal, must seek effectively to suffice for itself financially.

e) It is recommended that the General Administration establish an emergency fund on the basis of voluntary donations of the different organisms, so that the General Government may be able to alleviate the necessities of different organisms in time of grave crisis or disaster.

f) The different organisms can make agreements directly with one another concerning mutual help in personnel or finances, submitting them to the General Government for ratification, and without prejudice to the quota assigned for the General Administration.

In any case, the general Government will take care to avoid that the most needy organisms, lacking in personnel or resources, be left unassisted. Rather let them be sure to favour them with preferential solicitude.

12. a) The Chapter recognizes that a better distribution of the Congregation's personnel in accordance with the Council's norms (cf. GS.88; PO.10) can also contribute to the resolution of financial problems.

b) The organisms of the Congregation should be urged to help one another generously, either in personnel, or in temporal goods, remembering what our Lord said: "It is better to give than to receive" (Acts 20,35).

## CHAPTER VII

# Insurance for Persons and for Goods

13. In order to take care of our sick brothers with the greatest charity the chapter urges that all members of the congregation have:

- a) health or hospital insurance
- b) old-age insurance

A form of establishing internal insurance in these cases should be studied.

14. Individuals who by reasons of illness or old age leave the Province where they have worked for the greater part of their life, either because they are transferred, or because they request a transfer to their province of origin or to another province, should obtain a subsidy for the province to which they are being transferred. If they are insured, the insurance should be transferred with them.

15. The most suitable way to insure, in large and solvent companies, furniture, buildings, automobiles, against fire and other accidents which can occur, should be studied. Let insurance be centralized in the Province or nation in the same company for the purpose of obtaining a reduction in premiums.

## CHAPTER VIII

# The Administration

16. a) In accordance with what is prescribed by our Order of General Administration, 87, 88, the formation of a Financial Council should be urged, to advise the General Administration. This Financial Council will advise in the formulation of budgets, and will render its judgment on projects which are submitted for its examination, and on other affairs of general interest.

b) It shall have its periodic meetings at the times assigned and furthermore will meet in extraordinary session whenever it may be necessary.

c) Annually a certified public accounting firm will review the general administration and reconcile the book and bank balances.

17. The norms of the previous number are to be applied equally in provincial administrations and in the others which have acquired importance in the commercial or industrial fields.

18. Interprovincial meetings of Treasurers, similar to the Conferences of Major Superiors, are recommended.

### 19. Decentralization

a) In accordance with the prescription of the *Motu Proprio*, "Ecclesiae Sanctae," 18, let a wider freedom in matters of administration be granted to major organisms. Let the provinces be authorized, with prior notification to the general Government, to undertake necessary expenses and works, as long as they do not contract debts by these acts and the obligation of the quota with respect to the General Administration is safeguarded.

b) In the same way, a greater autonomy can be granted to local governments. Thus for extraordinary expenses, without contracting debts, they should only depend upon the permission of the respective provincial Government.

c) Local governments, in soliciting this provincial authorization, should have their ordinary expenses of the normal budget assured: food, services, quota and the rest.

d) In reference to debts and alienation, without recourse to the General Government, Provincial Governments can authorize up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the amount which bishops in their respective countries can authorize.

## CHAPTER IX

## Modification in the Holy Constitutions

20. Let there be a separation in the Holy Constitutions (I, c.VI) between what concerns the Treasurer and the Procurator General. An entire Chapter should be dedicated to the General Treasurer.

21. It is suggested that there be added in the Holy Constitutions (I, 38) when they speak of the local treasurer some words which indicate the spirit with which he should exercise this office: "Spiritu servitii vere fraterno". The text might be formulated in the following manner: "Praecipuum vero oeconomii localis officium erit rerum temporalium curam habere spiritu servitii vere fraterno."

## CHAPTER X

## Modifications in the OAG

22. Without eliminating them from the CIA, let whatever is said there of administration be reproduced in the OAG.

23. And the following: cf. "Conclusions of the Commission on Administration" at the end of No. 24 which remain unchanged (this is a long and detailed list which was not formally considered, but remanded to the post-conciliar commission).

**XVIII CLARETIAN GENERAL CHAPTER:  
CHAPTER DOCUMENTS**



# **XVIII GENERAL CHAPTER**

## **CHAPTER DOCUMENTS**

**Rome, 1973**

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# XVIII GENERAL CHAPTER

## Chapter Documents

Rome, 1973

The Eighteenth General Chapter, which has just now concluded is traced along the lines set out by the Second Vatican Council. In effect, it follows the norms and prescriptions of the decree, "*Perfectae Caritatis*", and continues the task of putting into practice the concrete directives of the *Motu Proprio*, "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*". Furthermore, it has aimed at enlivening the whole congregation with that renewing and prophetic spirit which distinguishes the Church in our times.

To achieve this, our chapter has striven to assure its continuity with the extraordinary general chapter of 1967, whose doctrine it has sought to "fill out and update... in those matters demanded by the dizzying changes of these years" (OL,5a).

In truth, the documents of the 18th chapter which are offered here, are meant to serve as a response to the restlessness and problems which have arisen in the congregation during the past few years, largely because of the effort to apply and live the decrees of the chapter of 1967 in various countries and sectors of the congregation.

While maintaining the full force of the doctrine and determinations of the 1967 chapter, except in those matters that the 18th chapter has decided to modify and renew, we now offer the congregation these new norms and directives, which are contained in the present documents and which immediately enter into the executive planning of our institute.

Since the impetus for all our innovations in government has mainly been directed to the imminent celebration of a number of provincial chapters, we are promulgating today, without waiting for the publication of our constitutions and additional code of law, all

those points and rules on government which are required to set in motion the various structures that are currently valid for the religious-apostolic government of our congregation.

So that the work and programming of chapters may be a truly living thing, the Church calls especially for the collaboration of all the members of religious institutes not only in preparing for chapters, but in carrying out their deliberations (ES,2). But Paul VI immediately sets us on guard against the danger of an exterior formalism, which would lead inevitably to the stagnation of our spiritual energies. It would be lamentable for us, who have been called to an authentic living of the charism of our founder, to live according to a style and system opposed to his. It is necessary, then, to revitalize our life and external rule continually according to the touch-stone of our spirit and charism. (ET,12).

As the elder brother of our Claretian family, I make my own and extend to the whole congregation the exhortation of the Pope, when he tells us that hope is a postconciliar sign and that it should be the fruit of our "spiritual generosity" (ibid.,1), the sincere attitude of all those who, having been consecrated to the Lord, desire to form such a communion of life as will fully bring about that "*cor unum et anima una*" that characterized the early church.

Let us open our hearts, then, to this perennial generosity, which is destined to produce within us happiness and joy, authentic gifts of the spirit and spontaneous witness of our belonging to Christ (ibid.,55).

We trust that in this manner the guidelines of this 18th general chapter will find, throughout the congregation, the "good earth" of openness and availability, so that Mary, the Queen of Hope, may fill us with her maternal grace.

## Word of Greeting from Father General to His Holiness at the Beginning of the Audience

Most Holy Father,

For almost two months, we, *the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary - the Claretian Missionaries* - have been gathered in general chapter to balance the ledger of duties in our congregation during the six years that have lapsed since the extraordinary chapter of 1967.

We believe that we have been sincere in our self-criticism and faithful to the *magisterium* of the Church, in accord with the teaching of Vatican II and of your Holiness.

During these days of work, we have gone back to examine our identity as profoundly as possible in the light of the authentic Claretian charism. To safeguard our identity, we have reaffirmed the concept of fraternal communion and underlined the urgency of prayer and the value of Christian detachment in attaining a generous following of Christ and an effective apostolic mission.

We have committed ourselves to the search for vocations and the painstaking formation of our candidates. In the apostolate, we have reaffirmed our preference for the missions, for developing nations and for those fronts which most urgently concern the Church, with a desire to collaborate - in a humble spirit of service - with the Holy See and with the Bishops in the "*ministerium verbi*" according to the will and spirit of our founder, St. Anthony Mary Claret.

The immediate fruits of these days of mutual experience and communion have been the reworking of the text of our Constitutions renewed in conformity with the norms of Vatican II - and the drafting of some capitular documents to offer a response to current problems in the congregation, according to the signs of the times.

Now that the general chapter has come to a conclusion, these Claretians, representing the 41 countries in which the congregation is working, desire to receive the spiritual encouragement of your Holiness with regard to their immediate program, so that the Claretian Congregation may learn how to follow in the footsteps of its founder in the mission and work of evangelization that has been entrusted to it.

## The General Chapter in Audience with the Holy Father

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, Friday, October 26, 1973)

On the morning of October 25, the Pope held an audience for the participants in the 18th general chapter of the Claretians, which had been in session since the first of September. The visitors, from 41 different nations, were led by Father Anthony Leghisa, who was re-elected Superior General in the course of the Chapter. The Holy Father, in answer to the greetings of Father Leghisa, delivered the following discourse:

Beloved Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary!

We express to you our deep pleasure at this visit you pay us at the conclusion of the meetings of your General Chapter. We hope that the work you have carried out these days will be fruitful. We hope that the dedicated service of the Superior General and of the other members elected to form part of his Council will be effective and helpful for the purpose of your religious Family.

We cannot overlook a particularly illuminating circumstance, which makes this joyful meeting more attractive: yesterday we celebrated the liturgical feast of St. Antonio Maria Claret. You yourselves made known for this reason your desire to visit Peter's Successor. We thank you for this gesture of support, in which we see a testimony of exquisite spiritual affinity with your Founder. How could we fail to recall before his sons the deep devotion he felt for the Vicar of Christ? And how could we fail to venerate his memory in view of his eloquent and moving profession of faith in papal infallibility at the Vatican I Council? All that obliges us gratefully to open our mind to you in confidence, so that you know that it is in perfect harmony of religious sentiments with your own.

## The Claretian Image

We are sure that during these days of your Chapter, the protecting and guiding presence of St. Antonio Maria became more intense and exacting among you. And we like to divine too that, when tracing the lines of renewal, you took as your fixed point of reference the most genuine faithfulness to the origins of your Institute and to the teachings on the consecrated life that the Vatican II Council proposed and we ourselves have repeatedly inculcated. Allow us to savour the image of the Claretian, as St. Anthony Mary contemplated it, in its purest outlines. We read it yesterday during the lesson:

"I tell myself: a Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a man burning with charity who sets fire wherever he passes. Nothing disheartens him: he takes pleasure in privations, meets difficulties, delights in slander and rejoices in torments. He thinks of nothing except how to follow and imitate Jesus Christ, in working, suffering and struggling always, and only for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls" (*El celo*, c. I. BAC 188 (1959), p 777).

See here, projected towards you, a whole program of holiness, based on courageous renunciation of oneself, the fruit of its fertile evangelical vitality. It points out to you clearly, with expressions of clear Pauline dynamism, the good to which your personal and community life must aspire: the following and imitation of Christ in impulses of a charity that is always operative.

## Bearers of Values

If to this program of interior life we add the very special cult of the Blessed Virgin he inculcated in you together with the primary dedication to the ministry of the Word, we have the complete picture of the Claretian vocation and spirituality. These and no others were the motives that gave life and meaning to the irrepressible zeal of the son of Sallent. And none other was the stamp of religious austerity that he imposed on himself to make his ministry more worthy of credit and more in conformity with the demands of the divine call. To proclaim the Good News to the point of sacrificing oneself for the good of one's brothers, to teach men the ever new language of charity characterized his overwhelming pastoral task as Archbishop of Santiago in Cuba.

Rightly could we say of him as of the Apostle of the Gentiles, that his vigour as "herald and teacher in faith and truth" (cf. 1 Tim. 2, 7) suffered no decrease in the midst of difficulties. On the contrary, his

pastoral cares, his missionary anxiety found a way to express themselves continually in new ministerial initiatives, at home and abroad, inspired and nourished by the spirit of faithful service to the Church.

Beloved sons: appreciate this spiritual patrimony of yours; spare no effort in tending its roots, if you really wish to be a tree always young and flourishing, able to adapt itself to the environment, to the changing requirements of the times in order to continue to give ripe fruit to the Church, as it did in the past and continues to do at present, through its most illustrious sons.

At the Chapter you have just held, you have been able to convince yourselves that you are bearers of certain values that do not grow old, because they are a select part of the heritage and the universal vocation of the Church. The Christian community itself asks you for faithfulness and discretion, generosity and disinterestedness in order to accept you and recognize you as the living and united sign of its human and spiritual aspirations.

We do not wish to expatiate at greater length. Entrusting these thoughts to you, we wish to encourage you in your aspirations to holiness with our prayers to the Immaculate Heart of Mary so that, with the help of her motherly intercession, you may be exemplary sons of the Church. As confirmation of these desires and as a testimony of particular benevolence we warmly impart the Apostolic Blessing to you and to the whole Claretian Family.

*After reading the preceding discourse in Spanish, the Holy Father turned spontaneously to the members of the Chapter and addressed the following words to them in Italian, taped by one of those present at the audience.*

And after this trial of our little knowledge of the Spanish language, let us use Italian for a more direct contact with you. We would also like to add a warmer, heartfelt word, to tell you truly that we are much obliged for this visit, which is indeed a signal witness to your fidelity.

## **Fidelity to Your Traditions. Be Claretian!**

Fidelity to your love for the Church. See to it that this be your great concern. When you ask me "What should we do? What is our most urgent duty in this situation?", my answer is "fidelity to the Church!" Fidelity to the Church, which implies another transcendent fidelity: fidelity to Jesus Christ, to the Gospel, to the entire heritage of faith, hope and love which our religion offers.



Be truly faithful! Be an army which is truly militant in the cause of Christ with perfect, full adherence among you to your union in a religious Congregation. May your new Father Superior find, in you, true collaborators, true brothers. May he find governing you easy, because he encounters in you a predisposition to facilitate the government of your congregation.

And know that we truly have great confidence in your religious family. Even for reasons that might seem secondary, but which can sometimes be highly influential, such as having known some members of your religious family. How many of you knew Father Maroto? I knew him, too. What a beautiful soul! What great intelligence! What a faithful son of the Church! What an outstanding professor in our schools! And Father Larraona, the Cardinal. How many times, in the course of our own ministry, have we had occasion to approach him and see, as it were transparently, the purity of his heart and intentions. We saw him once when he was Apostolic Visitor to a religious family in need of assistance. Such charity and loftiness of spirit! What an elevated and noble and, at the same time, powerful vision – a vision coherent with the laws and exigencies of the Church.

And then, we also knew Father Leghisa when he was in Milan, in the nearby foundation at Lago Maggiore. Is that not so?

Hence, you can see that we are not total strangers. We hope to be able to know you even better, and to be able to say that these good wishes may be a pleasing memory for you, for us, and for the Church.

And I give you a blessing. May the Lord bless you. May the Lord render you efficacious. May he foster your proposals and strengthen them. May he make them truly fruitful and effective.

And now, to extend this blessing to all your confreres, you, when you return to the midst of each of your communities, tell them: The Pope was delighted to send you his blessing. Isn't that so? That's not a very difficult thing to do!

But then, tell them, so that they will know that our thoughts go out to all in your religious communion. And bring the message to all those works confided to your ministry – your schools, your communities of the faithful, your study centres.

Know, then, that we now invoke the Lord's blessing on this entire beautiful and flourishing Claretian family.

And after the blessing, I will come down among you for a photograph of us all together, to seal the memory of this time of our being present with you.

8 XVIII GENERAL CHAPTER DOCUMENTS

*Sit nomen Domini benedictum - Ex hoc nunc et...  
Adiutorium nostrum in Nomine Domini - Qui fecit...  
Benedicat vos Omnipotens Deus, Pater et Filius et  
Spiritus Sanctus. - Amen*

As you leave, you will be given a copy of the Easter card we had printed this year. Hence our parting remembrance will be joined with the remembrance and the spirit of the Resurrection!

# OPEN LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

## from the

### XVIII GENERAL CHAPTER

Dear Brothers,

As the XVIII General Chapter draws to a close, we would like to extend our fraternal greetings to you and to give an account of our reflections and deliberations during these weeks with the avowed purpose of serving the congregation in its present circumstances.

## I. The Chapter

1. First of all, we would like to tell you of the gratifying *experience* of communion we have lived during these days. They have been days of fraternity in the Claretian family, which now embraces 41 countries throughout the world. This experience has allowed us to perceive directly the manifold vitality of our founder's charism. The testimony of our brothers has enriched us. We have shared experiences and points of view which, though diverse, have not prevented fraternal understanding through the common language of our vocation to the service of the Gospel.

2. We have kept in mind all our brothers in the congregation, not only as we worked, but particularly in our daily Eucharistic celebration. We were thus confident that the Lord's Word and the celebration of His Memorial would effectively suggest to us the proposals and decisions that would be most suitable for augmenting our fraternal communion.

3. We cannot hide the fact that, along with moments of satisfaction, the chapter's activities inevitably led to moments of anguish, of confusion in our search for the right path, of tension and fatigue within a fluctuating process. Nevertheless, we did not attempt to evade this experience, since we were conscious of the expectations of the members of the institute and of the support provided by your fraternal understanding.

4. We should also report to you, in addition to this experience, the chapter's *consciousness* of its own task. In this respect, there were two indispensable points of reference:

5. a) This chapter had to situate itself historically within the period of conciliar renewal, according to the *Motu Proprio*, "*Ecclesiae Sanctae*", n. 6, but within a particular context that had to distinguish it from the 1967 chapter. The chapter's responsibility was not to initiate "appropriate renewal," but rather to verify its progress, to evaluate the experiments in legislation and life adopted during these years, and to perfect its forms and their application. In this perspective, the chapter could not help but confirm at all times during its deliberations the substantial validity of the doctrine and norms of the 1967 chapter. They are still a valid pattern for our times. If certain new documents have been formulated, they are only intended to be a complement and updating of the doctrine of 1967 in those areas affected by the rapid changes of the intervening years.

6. b) The second point of reference was the congregation's expectations. These expectations were abundantly manifested throughout the entire precapitular process – in the meetings on different levels, the proposals, the surveys, etc., all of which were carefully analyzed by the various precapitular commissions. The commissions themselves also offered very valuable suggestions. Definite preoccupations were detectable in all this material. At times they resorted to extremes of pessimism with regard to the congregation's present and future. At the same time, they also manifested comforting youthfulness of spirit, with an insistence upon a deepening of our evangelical commitment and an acceleration of the process of renewal. In everything and in everyone we found an evident sincerity which could not help but encourage us to adopt an identical attitude toward the congregation. The chapter undertook seriously the task of discerning according to the Spirit all the currents of opinion, approaches to life and patterns for the future which are now emerging in the institute. We have undertaken the responsibility of interpreting all these signs according to the touchstone of our Claretian vocation and of conveying humbly and clearly to our brothers its judgement concerning them.

## II. How We have Seen the Congregation

7. It was the responsibility of this chapter to examine the life of the congregation, and the process of renewal initiated by the 1967 chapter. In addition to the personal accounts, we found very useful for this purpose the statistical studies at our disposal, the precapitular

surveys, the documents of commissions and provincial chapters, the sexennial reports for the provinces, and the Report on Government presented by the preceding general government. It is impossible to provide in a few lines the total image of the congregation, its abundant vitality, its multiform missionary activities, its desire for renewal and authenticity. But we cannot dispense ourselves from mentioning the points that most deserve attention in our present situation.

8. a) Although the congregation has continued a 10% expansion in the number of foundations in the past six-year period in comparison to the former (1960-66), it experienced a 22% decline in *personnel* in the same period. This phenomenon abruptly brings us face to face with a critical situation that cannot legitimately be glossed over. This fact is evidenced by a 62% drop in first professions and a 26% drop in ordinations, accompanied by a 29% increase in departures. This is true notwithstanding that the correlation between the number of persons and the number of houses now shows an increase of employment of the Claretians.

9. b) This situation has taken several *organisms* by surprise and roughly halted their growth and vital autonomy. It has also worsened the already existing imbalance in our structures and raised up once again the problem of the distribution of personnel.

10. Furthermore, it is also true that we have witnessed a certain drawing together resulting from interprovincial conferences. A process of decentralization foreseen by the 1967 chapter and intended to produce a healthy pluralism also has been at work. Nevertheless, some contradictory things have appeared: the danger of provincialism, and a certain lack of communication between groups and between various levels.

11. c) It is clear that the chapter could not preoccupy itself with numbers and structures without considering the vital and personal aspects of this crisis. Though a general one in the Church, this crisis cannot be considered less of a preoccupation for us. We refer to the *vocation crisis* we are suffering, with regard to admissions as well as to perseverance. It is a crisis, too, of Claretian identity and of belonging to the congregation, at a time when secularism is obscuring the meaningful outlines of the pattern of religious life and the prophetic service of the Word; a crisis of disillusionment and pessimism on the part of many, be it because of the delay of a renewal which had been considered at hand; be it, on the contrary, the distaste provoked by the excesses to which the actual run of things has given place; a crisis of vacillating faith, perhaps, with regard to the content of our vocation;

of confused judgment, which some have attributed to the tardy publication of the postcapitular legislation (Constitutions and Directory) and to a kind of abdication on the part of superiors of their function as leaders of the community.

Add to this the failure to make use of certain resources that had been provided for (prefectures, community meetings, etc.). There is an alarming abandonment of the life of prayer, both personal and community prayer, from the moment when personal conviction did not take the place of what was formerly sustained to a greater degree by the support of rules. There is a disappearance of the spirit of the Cross, of abnegation and mortification, which seem to have lost the place attributed to them by our founder – in his apostolic spirituality.

12. Alongside these disturbing facts we have found great satisfaction in noticing in so many of our brothers numerous *positive and renewing* elements: a deepening of the content of their vocation, which they have studied and know better, and which they live in faith and hope in the midst of situations that encourage abandonment and mediocrity; a sincere search to provide, in the renewed community, a kind of life in charity which will make our living together a reality of evangelical value; a desire of a better life of poverty which, although containing certain contradictory elements, has already produced exemplary attitudes of missionary disposability.

13. d) In our *apostolate*, we have noted that the congregation has maintained and even extended its widespread field of action. We can't fail to give glory to God as we learn from reports and from the living testimony of our capitular brothers the work that the congregation is undertaking in the most far-flung areas. The missionary spirit has come to life again, and several of our missions have been reorganized as a result of placing them under the authority of the provinces. Although many gaps still exist, a remarkable effort has been made to provide specialization for our personnel.

14. We note, however, that the great bulk of our work in such divergent areas has exposed us to the risk of dissipating our energies. Any reasonable amount of planning has become more and more difficult, especially when at times the two standards of urgency and efficacy required by our charism seem to be neglected. As a matter of fact, there is evidence of a tendency toward a more radical approach regarding the process of restructuring our apostolates, especially education and parishes, which presently employ the largest contingents of our personnel and which in enough instances have not experienced the transformation outlined by the chapter of 1967.

15. At the same time we have received a broad impression that there has not been much creativity in putting into effect the program of the 1967 chapter, regarding the adoption of new and more advanced forms of missionary presence and action, with the audacity characteristic of our founder. On the other hand we cannot avoid mentioning with regret that along with many outstanding instances, there has been a somewhat general lack of availability for missionary assignments, which would have led to the quick solution of urgent problems.

16. e) In the area of *formation* the chapter has had reason for preoccupation in the lack of vocation recruiting programs in some of our organisms. There are those who have been postponing for some time any effort at serious and organized commitments in this matter, perhaps as a result of past disappointments. This neglect is more general with regard to recruiting missionary brothers.

17. We have indicated this earlier: at the moment, the vocation problem is in every instance and practically in every section of the congregation, one of the most important. On the other hand, the present day crisis whether in the external world in general, or in our own way of life, finds its most sensitive echo among our young members in formation. We must admit, too, that they sometimes fail to discover among us any image of the evangelical life.

18. Although we thank the Lord for the gift He has granted the congregation in the form of good formation directors, we must lament that their number has decreased. As a result, seldom can the desired formation team be established, and much less the formation community. This fact, along with the precipitous decline in the number of those in formation, has caused many formation centers to disappear and has required a search for more realistic arrangements sponsored by other groups. At times, this has given the impression of a retreat, of abandonment of the field.

### III. How We Judge this Reality

19. The picture we have described offers us subject matter for serious reflection. We can't escape the humble admission that, in various aspects, the situation is quite more deficient than what we might have expected from the perspectives offered by the preceding chapter. As superiors or representatives of the congregation, we have accepted the *responsibility* incumbent on us as a result of these factors. We have accepted it realistically, but not defeatedly. For we are

conscious of the substantial health the congregation still enjoys today and its great reserves of evangelical spirituality.

20. Nor does it appear to us strange that in a living organism tensions and imbalance should arise, especially in periods characterized by intense evolution like the one launched by the Council. Added to this we want to say that the congregation's present condition must be understood within the *general situation* of the Church and the religious life.

21. Certain aspects of the present reality (vocations, uncontrolled development, personnel problems) could have caught us by surprise, among other things, without serious and responsibly controlled *programs*, and consequently left us without any *preferred options*. We might have adopted these options in the present circumstances with a certain amount of boldness, and at the same time with the *creative spirit* which should perennially characterize the congregation in imitation of our founder.

22. Our general impression is that we are very far from having effectively concretized the doctrine and the directives of Vatican II and the 1967 chapter, along with the program of Claretian life which the latter clearly outlined. Perhaps what has been decisive in all this is not to have activated in sufficient measure plans for renewal and for continuing education for our personnel. Furthermore, these plans would have favoured the communion of spirits, which the different mentalities, generations, attitudes towards life, etc., has hampered during these last years.

23. For the same reason, the chapter felt obliged to retain the teachings of the Council and the doctrine of the 1967 chapter as the sources of its own thinking. But because of the need to confront new problems, which have risen precisely as a result of the process of renewal, it could not escape the duty of a more up-to-date reflection and evaluation of the experiments that have taken place during these last years.

24. The chapter has desired to be a *moment of deepening*—a deepening in the mystery of the Church-communion, proposed as something of a focal point in the doctrine of Vatican II and a deepening which permits us to confer a new validity upon the evangelical fraternity we wish to live as a fulfilling sign of salvific communion; a deepening in the charism and spirit of our founder and of the congregation in its religious-apostolic unity, whence the pattern of Claretian life acquires its complex and demanding vitality, and, at the same time, its creative availability. It is necessary to effect this same deepening in the entire institute, both individually and collectively, with patience and



perseverance. Without it, the alarms which can be sounded at the present time will not serve except to generalize the spirit of frustration to which some have already succumbed, and to slow down renewal.

25. We consider providential the *new consciousness* which the Claretians have today, and which can be felt in the most far-flung regions of the congregation. This consciousness must come face to face with the principle of recuperation in a revitalized community, which feels itself called together by the Word of God in love, which is nourished on the presence of God in prayer, which should be conducive to apostolic service without limitations, which should be committed as such to the works of salvation, and which should be a message of reconciliation for the world of our time, a world branded with injustice and man's loneliness, and at the same time beset by a thirst for more radical hope of which there is a scarcity of witnesses.

#### IV. For the Immediate Future

26. Inspired by the resolve to follow the guidelines of the 1967 Chapter to its ultimate consequences, we have decided that a fundamental duty of this chapter toward the institute, along a sincere review of our life in the light of the Gospel, had to complete its work of adapting the Constitutions in fact now present the new text, prepared by the chapter itself. A capitular commission has been appointed solely for stylistic corrections and for translation.

On the other hand, the text of the *Directory* remains unfinished. It still requires an immediate revision. The chapter leaves the material for this version in the hands of a responsible commission. The remaining *chapter documents* now published express the guidelines of the chapter's thinking in the various areas of its concern.

27. Among all its reflections and decisions the chapter wishes to emphasize here certain aspects that should have program status for the coming years. It wishes to call these matters to the attention of those responsible on the different levels of government, and of all Claretians as well.

28. a) Beginning with the congregation's most urgent needs and at the same time making use of its best evangelical substance, the chapter proposes that we galvanize our efforts in the coming six years toward a revitalization of our *community*. In effect, the chapter dedicated a great part of its reflections and decisions to this subject, in the hope that a renewed life of community will deepen the evangelical roots of our vocation and affirm anew its present validity as a pattern of life. We have desired to provide greater creative

energy to the local community, greater weight in the organization of its own life and apostolate. We have provided this through the application of the principles of participation and co-responsibility, without excluding a certain amount of pluralism. We consider this a richness of our institute.

29. b) As a consequence of these same principles, which we have adopted with loyal conviction and in response to the numerous requests received on the subject, the chapter invested an important part of its time to deepening the reform of the structures of organization and government (constitution of local and provincial governments, forms of election, etc.). The changes introduced in this area are important. From, everyone, they will require a sense of responsibility, because the effectiveness and validity of these new structures will depend on it.

30. c) In view of the descending curve which the demographic chart of the Congregation will certainly follow in the coming years, an effective evaluation of our actual commitments will be necessary. We must also eschew the expansion of our apostolic boundaries through new foundations. In view of the real situation that has emerged, the general government will have to continue reviewing our organic structures, in order to update them. They are too numerous. They should not present another obstacle to flexibility in our missionary work. The federations of provinces can facilitate the way toward a simplification which the chapter did not consider opportune at this time.

31. d) The problem of *vocations* is another vital area for which the entire Congregation should assume responsibility. This applies especially on the level of the local community, since only when it reflects an image of testimony, and offers its prayer to the Lord of the harvest, can this gift be guaranteed to those who have been called today or at an earlier time. But we cannot pass over lightly here the responsibility incumbent on all provincial governments and communities in general to undertake an effective program of vocation recruiting, even at the cost of other activities and of other interests. And we refer to vocations for both priests and brothers. The present situation in the congregation leaves no room for ambiguities or delays in this matter. It is incumbent on the general government to keep everyone's attention alerted toward this problem and to bring to bear whatever resources it considers necessary to solve it. The chapter also reminds the provinces of the urgent need of preparing formation directors and of strengthening our formation communities.

32. e) The chapter invites everyone to continue to study

tirelessly the *Claretian charism* in order to perfect our identity with the Church more and more and to disseminate within it the gifts of grace with which our Lord has called us in the fraternity of the congregation. We want to call special attention to our way of living the Cordimarian content of our charism, which seems to have waned in the last period and which deserves to be deepened in our piety and in our theological reflection.

33. f) Concerning the very serious problem of *prayer*, which so many have abandoned to some degree or another, the chapter also puts its hopes on the new dynamism of our community. If it is understood in the authentic dimension of the Gospel, it must at least be creative of opportunities for personal and collective encounter with God. In addition to being the touchstone of the true community, a recover of the spirit of prayer and the exercise of prayer itself will be our surest guarantee that the congregation is faithfully living its mission. The chapter believes that this is a key point in facing the crisis of religious apostolic identity which has affected us during these years.

34. g) We consider of primary importance for the coming six-year period the establishment of programs of *continuing education* for our personnel, both priests and brothers. The emphasis placed on specialization by the 1967 chapter should be continued in these programs. But it is of even greater importance that these programs provide our personnel with an opportunity for evaluation and reflection, for a rediscovery of vocational values, for renewed contact with the sources of evangelical and Claretian spirituality.

35. h) The chapter considers it necessary to encourage a serious *evaluation* of our *apostolates* according to the criteria already provided by the 1967 chapter. Till now, they have not been given sufficient consideration. We expect more apostolic *creativity* from our local and provincial communities. This creativity must be borne of a fruitful and enthusiastic faith, and a sensitivity to the needs of the present world, which has been left out of our framework of action in so many areas. These apostolates should be constantly evaluated from the point of view of the objectives of evangelization. The chapter placed special emphasis on missions to non-Christians. In addition, our charism also demands of us new forms of presence and the proclamation of the Good news to the poor, to the outcast, to those who suffer injustice and who don't know love, to those who have lost the reason for hope ...

36. i) From this apostolic creativity should arise a new and expanding form of our missionary spirituality, communicated in a vital manner to our *co-workers and associates* and cultivated in them

with perseverance. The chapter decided to occupy itself with these associates in the consciousness that the congregation should give them an efficacious testimony of fraternity in the Claretian spirit by aiding in their spiritual formation, by encouraging them, by assisting them in the development of their apostolates, etc.

37. j) The chapter considers it necessary for the congregation to acquire a greater consciousness of the planning process in its own life and resources as it faces the immediate future. Every organism should undertake as soon as possible a serious *programming* of its activities, assign priorities which will serve to inspire them and which should be periodically reviewed at definite intervals. In these programs the points we have just cited for the entire congregation should be kept in mind.

38. Dear Brothers: Everyone is aware that this 18th general chapter had to confront a situation that was delicate at the very least, full of uncertainty and worry, and, at times, resistant. We too have kept this reality constantly before our eyes. However, we have preferred to situate it within the process of life and the history of salvation, where faith and hope have an irreplaceable position, where charity is always creative and regenerative, where Christ's Passover overcomes every form of death, of discouragement, of dispersal.

One thing that has sustained our vision—a thing that has touched us with a deep sense of gratitude—has been the example of so many sons of the congregation who are joyfully carrying out their missionary tasks, great or small as they may be, their sufferings, their fatigue,—all of which prepares the way of the Lord

The chapter, which has brought us together from our daily duties and from the most scattered parts of the world, has confirmed our unity in this hope and this desire for a new life for the congregation. We know that this hope effectively maintains the unity of all Claretians, despite differences in age, in outlook on life and thought, and in cultural diversities. Far from making unity difficult, this wide diversity enriches our communion while at the same time inspiring our search for the most fruitful forms of apostolic service.

The present moment summons us all to close our ranks in the unity of this resolve: to maintain the youthful vigour of the "great work" of St. Anthony Claret. This resolve will require of each of us a profound purification to the extent of promoting anew an attitude of availability, the most genuine version of creative love. The fundamental proposition of the chapter consists in this: to give our life of fraternity a testimony of love upon which the Father, in the gift of His Son through Mary, patterns and constructs the salvation of the world.

Rome, Feast of St. Anthony Claret, 1973.

# THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

## Introduction

1. In the judgement of the 18th general chapter, a careful study of questions relating to the government of the congregation is one of its most important duties. In fact, many voices from the ranks have called on us not so much for a revision as for a complete redrafting of the Decree on the Government of the Congregation prepared by the extraordinary general chapter of 1967.

The 18th general chapter has deemed it opportune to answer this call in the present document, which has been prepared in its entirety with a view to current personnel and material problems, in a valiant effort to search out the means for an adequate renewal of the Claretian, religious and apostolic community, on all levels, according to the signs of the times.

Given the pluralism of criteria that had to be maintained, the chapter was unable to draft a perfectly coherent document. Among such criteria were: base-level participation, team-formation, congregational unity, flexible procedures, the risk of electing unqualified personnel, etc. Nevertheless, the chapter considers this document to represent a forward step in the direction of greater sharing and co-responsibility on the part of all members of the congregation, both as regards its structures and its activities.

**PART ONE**

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **I. Community and Government**

2. Community and government—each to be understood in relation to the other—are two interrelated entities that must so mutually interact that they result in the fullness of community.

3. This interrelation of community and government must be achieved on all levels, starting from the local community, proceeding through the provincial community and culminating in the general community of the institute.

4. Religious government is government of a particular sort, shaped by the kind of community and mission it serves. Religious community is distinct from political, financial and other sorts of community. It is even different from the universal ecclesial community, although it is born within and exists for this community.

5. Hence, religious government must conform to the characteristics of religious community.

### **II. Origin of the Claretian Religious Community**

#### **A. Religious Community on the Theological Level**

6. Religious community is a response to a call of the Spirit to adopt a lifestyle resembling Christ's in chastity, poverty and obedience: a lifestyle lived precisely within the evangelical framework of brotherhood in Christ. Thus, religious community means, precisely, living an apostolic life together with others in interpersonal relationships.

7. The Spirit moves according to manifold plans, and we have been called to live a religious life in common, in that particular form of apostolate which the Spirit has called forth in the church on the model of the apostolic charism of St. Anthony M. Claret. Being a Claretian means a special, communal way of living the evangelical dimension and apostolic mission prevalent in the congregation from its very origins.

## B. The Claretian Community on the Institutional Level

8. The concrete makeup of the Claretian community involves the gifts of grace and nature with which each of us has been called to live the Claretian charism in community. The community character of our call and of our response to that call makes our personal vocation harmonize at every moment with the mission of the congregation in the Church.

9. Hence, in understanding the makeup of community the following elements must be borne in mind proportionally:

- a) personal endowments of nature and grace;
- b) religious-apostolic mission to be lived in the local provincial and general community;
- c) harmony between the concrete mission of each local or provincial community and that of other communities within the provincial or general community of the congregation;
- d) the concrete needs of the people of God whom we are called upon to serve in our apostolic activities.

10. It belongs to the superior general, as servant of the religious-apostolic mission of the local and provincial communities, to bring these elements of our Claretian mission and vocation together within the province and the congregation.

## C. The Claretian's Participation and Co-responsibility in Community

11. The Claretian religious, in response to a call from the Spirit, has committed himself through his religious consecration to live together with his brothers. Hence, as an adult person, he must take an active part in all that concerns his religious-apostolic life in union with his brothers.

12. Participation and co-responsibility in community are exigencies that flow from the commitment whereby a conscious, free and responsible person has said "yes" to and in the Spirit who called him to live the Gospel together with his brothers in the Claretian community.

13. This participation and co-responsibility must be manifest on all levels of his integration into the Claretian community: local, provincial and general.

14. Each member of the community should find within it an opportunity for complete fulfilment, a chance to bring all his gifts and abilities into play within it and to be enriched within it by his brothers.

## **D. The Right to Active and Passive Voice**

15. Having examined Chapter III of the Decree on Government and having seen both the need to fill in certain of its gaps as well as the advisability of an articulate treatment of its entire subject-matter, this general chapter has deemed it opportune to establish the following norms for the exercise of the right of active and passive voice.

### **a. General Norms**

16. All perpetually professed members enjoy both active and passive voice in our congregation, in accordance with the following norms, which supplant all previous norms touching on these matters.

17. Temporarily professed members or members bound to the congregation by promises may be heard in matters of a particular nature or in matters of a general nature that particularly affect them.

18. No one may enjoy a double active or passive voice.

19. A member may be deprived of the right to active or passive voice only for a grave and culpable cause recognized by common or particular law.

20. Perpetually professed members with a rescript of exlaustration or on leave of absence from community life for reasons other than those of ministry, do not enjoy this right so long as the said juridical condition lasts.

21. The positions of superior and vicar, whether on the local, provincial or general level, as well as those of master of novices and prefect of students, are restricted to priest-members.

22. Every Claretian should be enrolled in the congregation via a definite province or independent major organism and should exercise within it his right of active and passive voice in all instances not covered by the established exceptions.

23. Those incardinated in an interprovincial house exercise within it their rights of active and passive voice in all that pertains to local government and participation in community life. Their participation in higher instances will be exercised via the major organism in which each is incardinated.

24. Likewise, those whose permanent local incardination is in a house under general rule participate within it in all that pertains to



that community. But they exercise their rights of active and passive voice in their own provinces, except for the election of a delegate to the general chapter, in which case they form an electoral college of their own.

Those who reside in such houses for reasons of studies or who are not permanently enrolled in them, are to abide by the norm established in n. 26 below.

25. Those who reside in organisms dependent on a province exercise their rights of active and passive voice within that province, since they are members of it.

26. Those who, by reason of studies or of ministries performed in the service of their own province, are locally incardinated in houses that do not belong to their own province, participate within such houses in all that pertains to the local community. However, in higher instances, they participate within their own province.

27. Those who are locally incardinated in a house which does not belong to their own province, by reason of services rendered for the aforesaid house or for the province in which the house is located, exercise their rights of active and passive voice within the major organism they are helping, both in provincial and general instances.

28. Residents in organisms dependent on a province (dependent delegations or missions) will be represented at the provincial chapter according to norms determined for each case by the provincial government and approved by the general government. In any case, however, the prevailing general principle must be that everyone has a right to be represented by means of a freely chosen delegate.

29. Perpetually professed students not living in a house of studies exercise their rights under the same conditions as the other members of the house in which they reside.

30. Perpetually professed students living in a house of studies are represented by a delegate elected by them for matters requiring a deliberative vote in local plenary sessions, according to the following norms:

- a) For every four perpetually professed students and for every remaining fraction of less than four, a delegate is elected;
- b) The delegate must be a perpetually professed student belonging to the local community;
- c) The election will take place at the beginning of the school year and last for a term of one year;
- d) In particular cases, the major superior may provide.

31. In affairs and elections of a provincial or general nature, perpetually professed students will exercise their right of active and passive voice personally.

32. Every independent major organism will establish a committee of tellers who, together with the provincial, will verify the vote-count whenever elections by ballot are held in the province. The election of tellers will take place at the provincial chapter, which will also establish their number and the manner of their replacement. Their term of office will last until the next provincial chapter.

## PART TWO

## PARTICULAR FORMS OF COMMUNITY

## Section One

## Community on the Local Level

## I. Notion of the Local Claretian Community

33. The local community is made up of those who live the Claretian religious-apostolic life together, sharing and co-responsible in it as a community called together by the Lord and joined about Him at every moment to form a true community of faith, hope and love. As our Constitutions tell us: "fraternal life becomes a reality, principally in the local community."

34. Local community is not determined so much by the location or "domus" as it is by living all levels of our Claretian life together. Hence, our communities should enjoy a certain flexibility as to the manner in which they are established, so that a single community might even be formed of members living in different, more or less neighbouring groups, united not merely at the top (or superior), but in the totality of the community.

35. So that the members of these more or less neighbouring groups might exist fully according to their religious-apostolic ideals and genuinely experience true Claretian fraternity, they should meet frequently with their brothers in the community they belong to, especially around the table of the Eucharist, which is both the sign and cause of unity. The same applies to quasi-residences in relation to certain communities.

36. The communitary nature of our Claretian charism does not allow for our brothers to live habitually alone. This does not mean, however, that certain ministerial or personal reasons might not persuade major superiors to authorize occasional exceptions. In any case, each religious must be assigned to a local community which he must visit frequently in order to live in Claretian fraternity with his brothers.

## II. The Superior

37. *Image*: The superior is the centre of unity in each Claretian fraternity.

38. *Functions*: The superior in the community offers a service of unity and of apostolic mission:

a) in a joint search for God's will concerning the community and each of his brothers;

b) in a joint effort at discerning God's will. In the normal course of events, once this discernment has been reached, it will remain only to carry out faithfully what was logically implicit in the commitment we made at our profession;

c) by fostering, animating and guiding his brothers' sense of enduring in this fidelity;

d) by taking opportune decisions which oblige the community when, despite a search for discernment, an accord has not been reached. This, however, does not dispense the community from the need for continuing in search of greater clarification;

e) by giving the rest of his brothers an account of decisions he may have taken personally as superior in urgent cases;

f) by keeping the community in close communion with the provincial government and with other communities in the province and in the congregation;

g) by representing the house and the community and taking its place in all juridical actions, canonical or civil, according to the norms of law and without prejudice to the economy as regards ordinary administrative acts;

h) by harmonizing the activities of the community and its members with the overall pastoral plan, as well as co-operating, as need be, in the social advancement of people in the vicinity of the community, bearing in mind our particular Claretian religious-apostolic character.

39. *Appointment*: In appointing a superior to lead a house or residence, the following norms, which visibly express true participation and co-responsibility by the members of the community, are to be observed:

a) the superior is nominated by the major superior with his consultors after a previous sounding not only of the province in general, but of the community itself in particular;

b) if their respective provincial chapter so determines, particular provinces have the option of either appointing the superior as indicated above or through an election made by the community itself, subject to confirmation by the provincial government; or also, if the provincial chapter so determines, both systems may be followed, allowing larger communities to elect their superiors directly.

When the option of election is followed, the following norms should be borne in mind:

- 1) an absolute majority is always required;
- 2) if six successive votes yield no positive result, the right of appointment passes to the provincial, according to legal norm.

40. *Term of office:* The appointment as superior, by whatever legitimate form it is conferred, lasts for three years, after which he may be reassigned for another three years and, in special cases, for a third term in the same house, in conformity with the law.

The chapter notes that great care should be taken not to form a rotating system whereby the same people are re-appointed endlessly to different houses, thus depriving new superiors of the opportunity to contribute their dynamism to communities.

### III. Vicar, Econome and Representatives

41. In all our communities, besides the superior, there should be a vicar, and an econome.

42. In those communities where it seems convenient, the plenary session may name representatives who, together with the superior, vicar and econome, can study and resolve the ordinary affairs of the community. Consequently, the so-called "consultors" are suppressed, with an aim towards letting all members of the community feel more responsible for the total life of the community.

#### 43. *Functions:*

a) Since it is desirable that the entire community participate co-responsibly in everything affecting its religious-apostolic life, the functions of the vicar, econome and representatives are limited. It is their task to assume those responsibilities which cannot conveniently be carried out by the community itself;

b) The vicar takes the superior's place when the latter is absent or incapacitated. The superior can designate an "occasional" vicar in the event that both he and the vicar should be absent;

c) The local econome's main duty is to care for the temporalities of the house, for which he is empowered to make those

expenses and juridical acts that belong to ordinary administration (cf. Const. 226).

44. *Appointment*: The vicar and econome are elected by the community itself and presented to the provincial government for confirmation. For their election, the same norms as those for the election of provincial and general consultors are to be borne in mind.

## IV. Participation and Co-responsibility in the Local Community

45. The local community should participate co-responsibly in its commitment to the evaluation and discernment of its own mode of being and exercising its apostolic mission:

a) as a community called together by the Lord and united about Him as a community of prayer;

b) as a committed, evangelical community which frequently questions its fidelity to the Gospel according to a lifestyle expressed by our consecration to a communal life of chastity, poverty and obedience;

c) as an apostolic community, faithful to the charism of St. Anthony Claret;

d) as a community dedicated to incarnating the Gospel within an ecclesial and local community, always maintaining that kind of missionary availability that nourishes our sense of belonging to the congregation through the local community.

46. The participation and co-responsibility of the local community are expressed both inside and outside the community.

### 47. *Inside*:

a) Through a permanent attitude of openness and communication in genuine interpersonal relationships both on the level of human values and that of religious-apostolic life: a permanent attitude of fraternal dialogue;

b) Through community meetings in which all share and assume responsibility for the entirety of their community life and apostolic mission.

### 48. *Outside*:

a) As a living cell in constant and direct contact with a changing world to be evangelized, the community is capable of achieving the needed renewal of that world and of responding more easily to the signs of the time;

b) As a community of adults they should respond creatively to the historical situation and assume responsibility for all aspects of human life in accord with their aims and values.

## V. The Plenary Session of the Community

49. The plenary session stems from the very nature of the community as just outlined—a community sharing and co-responsible as such in the commitment to and evaluation and discernment of its own nature and activities.

50. The frequency and procedure for these plenary sessions should be determined by the community itself, with a view to its own particular circumstances. A plenary session should be held at least once a month.

51. One of the most important themes of the plenary session is the yearly planning and review of the community's programs both as regards its nature and activities. This planning and review should focus mainly on the following points:

the way the evangelical counsels and commitments are being lived; prayer life; community life in its inward and outward expression; pastoral activity as it affects both the community and the location; administration.

This planning, approved by the provincial government, will serve as a stimulus for the dynamism of the local community, aided by those observations and guidelines the provincial may make during his visits.

52. Cases which required a deliberative vote of the local council in our former norms, henceforth belong to the plenary session, which replaces the local council.

## VI. The Local Chapter

53. The local chapter is suppressed with the disappearance of its principal task: the election of local delegates to the provincial chapter. Henceforth, these delegates will be elected by all perpetually professed members of the province.

## VII. An Attitude of Openness to Other Communities

54. Each Claretian community, in accord with the charism of its founder and its essentially missionary character, must be open towards other communities of the congregation. This does not, however, prevent its being a true community incarnate in the local church.

55. A thing to be avoided is any sort of highly localized commitment which cuts off communication—and a sense of belonging to, with, the congregation. Equally to be avoided is a type of living which is only a marginal commitment to the particular people we are trying to evangelize.

### Section Two

## Community on the Provincial Level

### I. Notion of the Province as Community

56. We accept as perfectly valid the definition of province given in the Code of Canon Law (Can.488,6): "the union of several houses under the same superior, constituting one part within the same institute."

57. We are dealing then, with the interrelation of several communities which fulfil the mission of the congregation as one of its parts.

58. The province should be a genuinely intercommunitary union, expressing this trait of intercommunion in every structure within the province.

59. The provincial superior serves this intercommunion, animating, promoting, and directing the province as a community. He accomplishes this service:

- a) by activating the growth and life of each community in its intercommunitary relations;
- b) by stressing the importance of this intercommunitary relationship;
- c) by promoting the apostolic activity of the entire province.



60. The provincial community which results from this interrelation of a group of communities must maintain an openness towards the general community of the congregation of which it is a part. The provincial should spark and foster an awareness of this higher insertion within the totality of the congregation, thus enabling the province to be more open towards other provinces and to the entire congregation under the leadership of the superior general.

## II. The Structure of Community in the Province

### 1. Provincial Government:

61. The structure of the provincial government, as outlined here on the analogy of a pyramid, aims at maximum efficiency in communication between the apex and the base. It is composed of the following elements:

- a) the provincial superior;
- b) the provincial council, made up of consultors (whether prefects or not) and an econome, who is likewise a consultor. The number of consultors should correspond to the needs of each province;
- c) the provincial secretary, who may or may not be a consultor;
- d) the provincial chapter;
- e) the provincial assembly.

### 2. The Provincial Superior

62. *Qualities* (cf. Const.)

63. *Functions* (cf. Const.) It is not urgent that the canonical visitation take place "once a year"

64. *Election*: The provincial is elected at the provincial chapter after a previous sounding of the province. His election must be confirmed by the general government. For this election, the chapter must bear the following norms in mind:

- 1) an absolute majority is always required;
- 2) after six votes have failed to achieve a positive outcome, the seventh vote is restricted to the two names which have received the greater number of votes in the previous voting.

65. *Term of Office*: Six years in formed provinces; three years in provinces in formation.

### 3. The Provincial Council

66. *Image:* It is made up of the provincial with his consultors and is properly a structure of government, serving as the centre of intercommunitary relations and as the focus of union between the province and the general community of the congregation.

67. *Functions:* Animating, promoting, and governing with a view to the fulfilment of the Claretian mission among its communities and in each particular community, within the overall Claretian mission of the congregation. It exercises the same functions as it has heretofore.

68. *Number of Consultors:* There are four consultors in formed provinces; two or three, in provinces in formation, as well as in those formed provinces whose provincial chapters have so petitioned the general government.

69. *Election:* The consultors and economo are elected by the provincial chapter, after a previous sounding of the province. The same norms apply as for the election of general consultors.

70. *Term of Office.* Provincial consultors and economo have the same term of office as the provincial.

71. *Provincial Vicar.* (Cf. Const.)

72. *Provincial Secretary.* (Cf. Const.)

### 4. Exception to the General Norm

73. The general government is empowered to grant any province whose provincial chapter has expressly requested it, the use of any of the following three formulas for designating the provincial and his consultors:

1) The formula of the extraordinary general chapter of 1967 (cf. Gl 66 and 69)

2) For the designation of the provincial, the province presents the general government a slate of three names, from which the general government will designate one as provincial. For consultors, the province presents a list of names (one for each consultorship) from which the general government will designate the consultors, previously informing the provincial of their names.

3) Direct election, by all of the perpetually professed members of the province, of both the provincial and his consultors. It belongs to the general government to confirm this election.

### 5. Permanent Advisory Board

74. *Existence:* Each province, in its provincial chapter, will

decide as to the existence, structure and functions of a permanent advisory board within its respective territory. Where it exists, this board serves as a structure for mutual participation and co-responsibility among the communities of the province, under the direction of the provincial council.

#### 75. *Functions:*

a) As an organ for participation and co-responsibility among the communities of the province, it acts as a permanent advisory board in all that relates to the Claretian mission in the province.

b) Whenever the provincial council deems it fitting, the board will participate deliberatively, in matters of importance affecting the entire province, in order to facilitate the governing task of the provincial council by way of evoking a greater degree of co-responsibility on the part of all the communities in the province.

c) Under the direction of the provincial council, it will research the feasibility of creating committees needed in the province, especially those of apostolate, formation and economy, providing them with the greatest possible assistance to guarantee their effectiveness. In such committees, members of the permanent board as well as other specialists may take part, if convenient.

## 6. The Provincial Chapter

76. The provincial chapter is composed of:

- a) the superior general or his delegate, as president;
- b) the provincial with his council and secretary, even if the latter is not a provincial consultor;
- c) the local superiors;
- d) as many delegates as local superiors. These delegates are to be elected from a general list of all the perpetually professed members of the province;
- e) the prefect of professed students;
- f) the master of novices;
- g) two perpetually professed members may be appointed by the provincial.

77. If there are several prefects of professed students, the prefects themselves designate the one who will represent them at the chapter. If there are only two prefects, the ordinary norm of seniority by profession applies.

Residents of interprovincial or general houses enjoy active and passive voice in their own provinces with respect to the provincial

chapter. The provincial government may petition the general government for certain limitations on the right of attending the chapter, for just reasons, in the case of those residing in delegations or missions dependent on the province, always taking care however, that in these cases, the right of election prevails over the right *ex-officio*.

78. All perpetually professed members of the province are candidates for the office of delegate.

79. *Functions:* Those enumerated in n.216 of the Constitutions, suppressing subnumber 3).

80. *Kinds of Chapter:* The distinction between the chapter of affairs and the chapter of elections is suppressed. The distinction between ordinary and extraordinary chapters remains.

81. *Frequency:* The ordinary provincial chapter is held whenever the provincial government is to be elected.

82. The decisions of the provincial chapter require confirmation by the general government.

## 7. The General Assembly of the Province

83. *Participants:* All the personnel of the Province

84. *Functions:* Fraternal gathering, information, review, and planning of the life of the province.

## III. Federations of Province

85. The better to express and foster communion in one and the same spirit and to collaborate mutually in planning and carrying out apostolic activities, it is desirable that major organisms in the congregation form various federations. Although every major organism should belong to one of these federations, the present general chapter recommends it especially for those organisms with particular geographical or cultural affinities or with similar pastoral problems.

86. A federation may adopt various modes of expression:

1) through the interprovincial conference formed by the major superiors of the federated organisms;

2) through the establishment of interprovincial commissions and councils, especially those of formation and apostolate;

3) through other meetings and fraternal gatherings made up of members of federated organisms.

87. The statutes of federation governing the makeup of the various organs of a federation must receive the approval of the general government.

88. Neither the interprovincial conference nor the interprovincial commissions or councils are structures of a supraprovincial juridical character.

## Section Three

# Community on the General Level

## 1. The Superior General

89. The superior general, his vicar, consultors, and general officials, constitute the general government of the congregation and are the centre and expression of the fraternity and apostolic mission of the whole congregation.

90. So that the whole congregation may tend faithfully towards its goal, it is governed by a superior general, who must strive with particular solicitude to keep the congregation alert to the service of the Church, in step with the needs of the times. He is a sign of unity for the entire Claretian community.

91. The person elected to be superior general must be a perpetually professed priest who has completed his thirty-fifth year of age. He must have shown evidence of prudence, ability, apostolic zeal, love for the congregation, observance of the Constitutions and the practice of other virtues.

92. *The duties of the superior general are:*

- 1) to keep the congregation in a state of readiness to serve the Church in accord with the needs of various places and times;
- 2) to direct the congregation effectively toward its apostolic goals and to foster a vigorous religious life in it;
- 3) to foster the spirit of fraternal communion in the life and ministry of the congregation and to promote teamwork among all;
- 4) to clarify by his personal teaching, in conformity with the directives of the general chapter, the implication of our charism, for the benefit of all in the congregation;

5) to procure the preservation and growth of the congregation and to promote vocations in all sectors;

6) to work with truly apostolic spirit for the expansion of the congregation, above all, in the missions;

7) to see to it that superiors fulfil their duties;

8) to do everything possible to promote the spiritual and temporal well-being of all the members of the congregation;

9) to do all he can for the formation of our members;

10) to observe meticulously the norms of our own or of common law and to see to it that all observe them;

11) to make general visitations and preside over provincial chapters either in person or through delegates;

12) in general, to exercise the greatest solicitude in caring for all that refers to good government of the congregation.

93. In his own right, the superior general represents the whole congregation and takes its place and has the sole right to oblige it to, or free it from, obligation, whether canonical, civil or moral, within the norms of the common law or our own particular law.

94. The superior general is elected in the general chapter, by an absolute majority of votes, for a term of six years, after which he may be re-elected for another six-year term, again by an absolute majority of votes. In order to be re-elected for a third term he requires a two-thirds majority of votes.

95. The election of the superior general must take place in strictly canonical form and in the manner legitimately established. Once the election has been made in the general chapter, the president of the chapter will announce the name of the one elected and proclaim him elected in the following words:

"I, N.N., president of this chapter, proclaim, in the name of the chapter, that N.N. is elected superior general of our congregation of Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Immediately thereafter all present will offer their homage to the superior general elect.

96. If, God forbid, the superior general must be removed from office because, in the judgment of his vicar and consultors, his government is very harmful to the congregation, the matter should be brought to the notice of the Holy See and before the general chapter convenes to remove the superior general, he should be gently persuaded to resign spontaneously.

97. When the position of superior general is vacant by reason of death, resignation, or removal, the vicar general or, in his default, the next in order among the general consultors will convoke, according to the legitimately established form, the chapter of election of the superior general.

## 2. The Vicar and General Consultors

98. The vicar and the other general consultors are true helpers of the superior general:

99. Those may be elected general consultors who have taken perpetual vows and are, moreover, distinguished by their prudence, by their religious and apostolic spirit, and by their love of the Church and the congregation.

100. *The special obligations of general consultors are the following:*

1) to be, together with the superior general, a centre and service of Claretian unity;

2) to fulfil a mission of illuminating and clarifying the Claretian charism for all the congregation;

3) to point out urgencies and priorities in the fulfilment of our Claretian mission;

4) to set in motion the planning indicated by the general chapter or by the general government under the advisement of competent teams in accord with the directives and teachings of the chapter;

5) to encourage Claretian communities on the provincial and interprovincial level and even, when necessary or convenient, on the local level;

6) to review and evaluate the progress of religious life and apostolic mission in the congregation;

7) to take part, in the name of the congregation and according to the established form, in the nomination of major superiors;

8) to advise respectfully and confidently the superior general, either privately or collectively if, in God's sight, they judge it necessary or opportune, concerning matters in which his conduct was less than fitting.

101. The general consultors are elected at the general chapter according to strictly canonical form and in the established manner, from various regions of the world in which the congregation is

established, with a view of the office or prefecture to which they may be assigned. When one of them is lacking, the superior general and the other consultors must elect another to replace him. The general consultors are elected for the same term as that of the superior general and their term ends with his; but they may be re-elected.

102. The superior general chooses one of the general consultors as his vicar. He is first among the consultors and takes the general's place when the latter is absent or incapacitated and likewise enjoys those delegated powers the general may grant him.

103. The general consultors express their participation in the government by means of a deliberative or consultative vote. A deliberative vote is required in the general council whenever it is expressly called for in common law, pontifical documents, the Constitutions, or whenever the matter in question is assigned to the general with his council or simply to the general council.

104. The superior general is obliged to seek a consultative vote of his consultors only when it is called for by common law, pontifical documents, or the Constitutions; nevertheless it is recommended that he seek it in important or doubtful cases that may arise.

### 3. The General Officials

105. There are three general officials: the economer, the secretary, and the procurator before the Holy See. Since their duties in the general council are of an executive character, it is important they be endowed with the necessary qualities. The economer and secretary are among the general consultors.

106. It is incumbent on the general economer to administer the temporal goods of the congregation in a spirit of poverty, charity and justice in the service of the entire institute; to put all donations and legacies to those uses designated by benefactors or, if they were not so designated, to use them according to the norms given by the general or, as need be, by him and his council; to give the general council an annual account of the administration of the congregation's goods, of its financial status and its gains and of the uses to which they are put.

107. The secretary general, under the direction of the superior general, prepares the sessions of general council and drafts its proceedings and decisions. He is likewise in charge of writing the official letters of the superior general and his council, sharing in their responsibility. The secretary should be endowed with solicitude, prudence, and friendliness.

108. The procurator general, under the direction of the superior general, attends to the congregation's transactions with the Holy See.



Hence he should have a great love in the Lord for the congregation and be most devoted to the superior general. Although he is not a general consultor, he is elected in the general chapter in the same manner and for the same term of office. During his term of office the general procurator cannot be removed from office without consultation of the Holy See.

#### 4. The General Chapter

109. From both an existential and institutional point of view in our religious and community life, the general chapter is the highpoint of all our structures as the supreme expression of their vitality and authenticity. "Fraternal life is realized above all in the local community" (Const.). And in the general chapter, this overall brotherhood finds the supreme expression of its communitary character in the fulfilment and living of our own charism and in our mission of authentic service to the Church. Hence, all the expressions and structures of the congregation are supremely centered in the chapter, inasmuch as the general chapter, *per se*, means and is, the full representation of the whole congregational community. This suffices to give an idea of its competency.

Above all the chapter must maintain an attitude of supreme service to the congregation, preserving and respecting the values of the Claretian community: a brotherhood living a consecrated evangelical life and an institution approved by the Church. And from the fundamental supremacy of this perspective all the other functions of the chapter – governing, teaching, and encouraging – derive and are applied.

110. **Definition:** The general chapter is the highest expression of the communion in religious life and apostolic activity of the whole congregation. It authentically represents the entire congregation and collegially expresses the participation and interest of all its members in the life of the congregation and in its activity in the Church. Hence, it is the supreme authority in the congregation.

111. **Frequency:** As an ordinary rule, the chapter is held whenever the superior general is elected.

Extraordinarily, the general chapter is held whenever, in the judgment of the superior general and his consultors, it is deemed necessary for the growth, spread and renewal of the congregation, or for any other cause of great benefit to it.

112. **Competency:** The general chapter treats of matters which concern the whole congregation. With a spirit always alert for the voice of the Lord, who speaks through the Church and the signs of

the times, and faithfully sensitive to the demands of the entire Claretian community, the chapter decides and orders what needs to be renewed or done. It promulgates declarations in which the Church's teaching on religious and apostolic life is applied to the congregation. It exercises a teaching function as regards the nature of the spiritual heritage of our congregation and the ordering of our Claretian life. It interprets doubts and difficulties that may arise concerning the meaning and observance of the Constitutions. It solicitously promotes an adequate renewal. Finally, it promulgates those decrees and orders which it deems necessary or opportune.

It also belongs to the general chapter to elect the superior general and his consultors and officials.

113. **Representivity:** The general chapter is attended by:

1) the superior general as president, the vicar general, and the other general consultors and officials;

2) provincial superiors;

3) a delegate for each province and independent delegation;

4) the superior general with his council may designate four perpetually professed members to attend the general chapter;

5) one representative from among those permanently enrolled in general houses and one from among those enrolled in houses established *ad instar delegationis*, should there be any, according to the manner determined by the superior general with his council;

6) each general chapter shall determine, for the immediately following chapter, the proportion of representatives from each province.

114. **Observations:**

1) Representatives at the general chapter according to ministries may be achieved on the precapitular level and by the presence of *periti* during the *capitular* period;

2) All elected delegates to the general chapter may be elected by direct vote of all the perpetually professed members in their respective organisms;

3) Perpetually professed students also enjoy passive voice;

4) Members of interprovincial houses have voice and vote only in their own province of enrollment;

5) Those enrolled permanently in general houses form an electoral college to designate their own delegate by direct election,

6) No one may enjoy a double active or passive voice.

## Section Four

# On the Organizational Structure of the Congregation

## I. Major Organisms

115. According to their various degrees of development our provinces may be classified as *formed* provinces or as provinces *in formation*.

116. In consonance with the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, dated July 4, 1970, this general chapter has decided to include the following number in the constitutions:

"Erectio et innovatio Provinciarum a Superiore Generali cum voto deliberativo Consultorum fit, auditis sodalibus necnon Consiliis Provincialibus partem in causa habentibus" (The erection and innovation of provinces is to be accomplished by the superior general with the deliberative vote of his consultors, having heard the members and provincial councils involved in the matter.)

117. This general chapter deems it opportune to reaffirm the principle of territoriality with regard to our major organisms, as traditionally held in our congregation. Nevertheless, it also deems it necessary to add certain observations in this connection:

1) The territory of each organism should be clearly defined in its decree of erection and marked off geographically in accordance with the realistic potential of the organism.

2) The superior general, with the consent of his consultors may, for grave reasons, allow a major organism to found a house within the territory of another, after previously hearing the provincial superior of the latter.

3) At the moment of entrusting a mission territory to a given province, the practical application of the principle of territoriality shall be established for the said province and other organisms concerned.

## II. Distribution of Personnel

118. Given the disproportionate distribution of personnel in our major organisms and in view of the last six year's experience, the general chapter has seen fit to lay down the following principles:

119. We reaffirm the faculty which our system of government accords the superior general of excardinating members of the congregation from one province and incardinating them in another, bearing in mind the needs of the Church, appropriate decentralization and the fostering of voluntary compliance on the part of the individual person.

120. In virtue of the principal of communitarity, all organisms of the congregation are urged to exert a real effort towards mutual and effective cooperation in covering our most urgent needs, and all our members are asked to show a full availability in accepting any appointment in the service of the Church and of the congregation.

121. As regards those temporary assignments referred to in the last general chapter's document on religious government (125), experience has taught us that, as a rule, they should not be undertaken in ministries which essentially require a continuity of local involvement. They may, however, be useful in the case of specific or qualified services.

122. Definitive assignments to organisms in great need of personnel should not be made unless these organisms have previously explored their own vocational possibilities, precisely with eye to promoting them. Such organisms, before applying for new personnel, should review their ministerial planning and apostolic urgencies and make a dedicated effort mainly at promoting their own vocations.

### III. General House

123. Among the reasons justifying the existence of general houses, according to the last general chapter's document on government (106), it is fitting to enumerate the following:

- a) a particular mission that exceeds the possibilities of one province or a group of provinces;
- b) strategically important new foundations that do not fall under the jurisdiction of another major organism or that cannot be entrusted to them for geographic, ethnic, or political reasons;
- c) houses already founded by a major organism which for the reasons alluded to, or for similar reasons, can no longer continue in a state of dependence on it.

When, for the aforesaid reasons, there are a number of houses directly dependent on the general government, all or some of them may form an organism *ad instar delegationis* with juridical effects of such an organism *aequa proportione servata*.

## IV. Interprovincial House

124. The increasing urgency for planning which exceeds provincial boundaries, especially those of provinces within the same country, requires the collaboration of different organisms in common tasks. Such tasks, consequently, acquire an interprovincial character and should be carried out by means of common accords between the provinces involved.

125. The performance and permanency of such works may also call for the formation of interprovincial houses.

The government of an interprovincial community as to its local higher instances it will depend on the provincials involved to delegate one of their number for its immediate government. The delegated provincial will enjoy, in relation to the interprovincial community, and *according* to the particular statutes, all those attributes that our law extends to a major superior, including the appointment to charges and offices in such a community. The particular statutes for those who direct an interprovincial community must be approved by the general government.

# THE MISSIONARY BROTHERS

## Informative and Doctrinal Synthesis

### I. Analysis of Renewal Among the Brothers During the Last Six Years

1. The extraordinary general chapter considerably clarified the idea of the nature and function of the lay vocation within the Claretian charism and took a decisive step towards the renewal of the brotherhood by establishing principles for their formation and for their close integration into the life and activities of the congregation.

This general chapter would like to clarify still more certain doctrinal points, to review the practical effects of the 1967 chapter's directives, and to take concrete steps to stimulate the renewal process among the missionary brothers in the congregation.

2. The brothers' renewal during the period between chapters has, in general, achieved numerous successes thanks to the programs of encouragement and formation organized on the provincial and interprovincial levels and to the application of the decree on the brothers.

But a detailed examination of various aspects of the renewal called for by the chapter reveals that, together with these gains, a number of deficiencies were disclosed.

#### 3. Principal gains

a) Cursillos on the interprovincial level, organized in Vich and Salamanca; similar cursillos on the provincial level in certain provinces—study sessions, fraternal gatherings, and spiritual exercises for brothers; the publication of the review "Claretian Missionary Brothers."

b) Formation programs for brother postulants and the young professed, including courses in basic formation and first-rate technical specialization. Special formation given certain brothers destined to the missions.

c) Almost complete integration into prayer life and familiar life; in a good number of communities, sharing on the part of all members in domestic tasks; the promotion of some brothers to the office of economo and consultor; some promotion, although not very widespread, to significantly apostolic tasks, such as liturgical direction, Christian teaching, bookstores, works of pre-evangelization in the missions, etc.

d) The establishment of functioning commissions of brothers, although not in all provinces.

e) The circular letter of the most reverend father general: "Criteria for a proper formation for the brothers."

#### 4. Principal deficiencies

a) Little effort at recruiting vocations to the brotherhood. There has been no presentation, either in vocational propaganda or in personal testimony, of a brother's image that conforms to the traits outlined in the decree on brothers and in recent studies on the theology of the religious life. Even though defections from the brotherhood have been relatively fewer during the past six years, as compared with those registered in other sectors, the average age of the brothers has gone up considerably precisely because of this lack of vocational promotion.

b) The effort at integrating the brothers into community life and the apostolate has encountered difficulties in some communities; a sufficient number of individuals have shown an attitude limited to the consideration of deficiencies and obstacles, rather than studying the possibilities and developing them. There has also been a certain resistance to renewal programs even on the part of those responsible for fostering them.

c) In some communities the custom still persists of saying community prayers in a language not accessible to all; in a sufficient number of houses the liturgy of the word is hardly ever performed participatively.

d) Concrete formation plans, in some provinces, have not fulfilled the demands called for by the extraordinary chapter. A large enough number of brothers have limited their aspirations for renewal to a simple accommodation of certain secondary aspects of community life; they have not made use of available time and some have shown resistance to any innovative renewal.

e) Some appear to be confused as to the nature and mission of the brothers and of their historic origins, considering them as a sort of lay appendix accidentally added in time to a sacerdotal

congregation. Still others have said that the activity of the brothers should be limited to tasks of a domestic nature, and they consider this as a tradition and the founding intention of our founder.

## II. Missionary Brothers in the History of the Congregation

5. St. Anthony Claret wished to found a truly religious-apostolic congregation, made up of priests and brothers. The latter existed in the congregation from the beginning. (Cf. P. Fernandez, Vol. I, p. 148.)

6. The brothers' section developed very rapidly and came to outnumber considerably the priests' section for a quarter of a century (Cf. Analyses and Catalogues of the Congregation).

7. The early brothers did not limit their activity to simple domestic tasks. There were brothers in posts that demanded contact with all classes of people. Their activities were in many cases on the professional level. Their role in establishing the teaching apostolate in the congregation is particularly significant (General Chapter of 1888; P. Aguilar, pp. 51 and 106).

8. Until the beginning of the present century the brothers were the object of relatively exacting selection and formation by the cultural standards of the regions in which the congregation was established (Cf. General Council, April 15, 1865).

9. From the beginning of the century, at the same time as the cultural level of people began to rise, there was no notable bettering in the formation of brothers, who found their field of action growing ever more limited. In this situation there arose a crisis of perseverance and recruitment which shows in the catalogue of the congregation from 1930 to the present.

10. The extraordinary chapter of 1967 took sharp notice of the plight of the brothers' section. From that time on, there has been a great effort in the congregation for the total renewal of the brotherhood.

## III. Theological Content of the Vocation of the Missionary Brother

11. The missionary brother is a constituent member of the Claretian congregation, called to it personally by Christ and, as one fully consecrated to God, receives from Christ the lay Claretian



charism. In virtue of this charism he is ennobled and called to participate in the Claretian mission of evangelization, in which he takes part by joining his lay values and activities with the ministerial function of priests and deacons.

12. The missionary brother belongs to the congregation as a member in the full sense with equal rights and obligations. His presence in the apostolic Claretian community realizes the original plan of our founder: a community made up of clergy and laity.

13. The missionary brothers' vocation is complete in itself. It does not require to be further complemented, nor is it destined to be crowned by the diaconate or priesthood.

14. Because of his full consecration to God in the congregation, the missionary brother is a real and complete Claretian religious. Hence, he is totally committed and available, from the standpoint of his lay values, in the Claretian life and mission. This involves a clear separation from the world and a full integration into the life and activity of the congregation.

15. The Claretian lay vocation supposes on the brother's part a radical ability and need to dedicate himself to fulfill the evangelizing mission of the congregation. Hence, every Claretian brother must have an aptitude and show an availability for the apostolate of the congregation which has the duty of promoting him and the right to count on him for carrying out its mission.

16. The apostolic activity of the missionary brother is an integral part of the congregation's evangelizing mission, since that mission is integrally composed of ministerial and lay apostolic action.

#### IV. Principles for Integrating the Missionary Brother into the Life and Works of the Congregation

17. Integrating missionary brothers into the life and works of the congregation is not just a simple means of living a more perfect community life or of reinforcing our apostolates; rather, it is an immediate consequence of the charism of the congregation. This task of integration must take place simultaneously on three levels of our religious life: community in *prayer*, in *brotherly love*, and in *apostolic service*.

18. The primary encounter of religious takes place around God whom they love above all else. Every community is a community of

*prayer*. Obviously, our community prayer cannot truly be such if it is not made in common and in a language within the grasp of all.

19. The religious community is essentially a community of *brotherly love*, whose members are called upon to form a faithful reproduction of the community of Apostles gathered around Christ. This implies a total and mutual self-gift, a common pooling of the talents and charisms of all, and the equality of members in duties as well as rights.

20. The image our houses manifest should be that of communities of a family-like life in our treatment of each other and in the common sharing of responsibilities as regards the concrete organization of our life. Thus, domestic chores should be looked upon as the proper responsibility of everyone, although some missionary brothers might care to exercise their charism and mission at these tasks.

21. The profession of one and the same religious-apostolic life demands also that the brothers be included in the task of planning, carrying out, and reviewing the life of the whole community by means of their participation in community meetings and in the structures of government.

22. The integration of the brothers into the life of the congregation will not be perfect as long as their participation does not arrive at full active and passive voice on all levels.

23. Integrating the missionary brothers into the community of *apostolic service* means, above all, promoting them, after due preparation, to positions of active participation in directly apostolic lay activities and binding their indirectly apostolic activities as closely as possible to concrete apostolates of the congregation.

24. This integration should induce us to reorganize the apostolic work of the congregation, so that the missionary brothers might assume many of those indirectly apostolic responsibilities presently being undertaken by Claretian priests, thus allowing the priests to dedicate themselves more fully to sacerdotal ministries.

25. This integration involves both tasks which are indirectly apostolic and tasks which belong to community organization. This should be done in conformity with the times and by means of technical preparation, mechanization, and better work conditions. These activities, in virtue of our profession and in virtue of their being tied to the overall apostolate of the congregation, have an apostolic and sanctifying value.

26. The integration of the brothers into the community of apostolic service does not consist in entrusting diaconal functions to them although where the exercise of these functions answers a pastoral emergency, ample use may be made of the faculties the church grants in this context.

27. The integration of the brothers into the apostolate of the congregation requires a change of mentality in certain sectors, a reorganization of our apostolic activities and, above all, an effort throughout the congregation for the formation of missionary brothers.

## Proposals of the Chapter

28. This general chapter has analyzed the extent of the renewal of lay religious life in the congregation required by the Vatican Council (PC. 8, 10, 15) and planned by the extraordinary chapter of 1967 (charism; spiritual heritage; brothers). The present chapter reaffirms the validity of the doctrine of the chapter documents of 1967 on the charism of the missionary brothers.

Likewise, it accepts the new dispositions from the Holy See concerning institutes of our nature (S.C.R., 7-X1-1969), incorporating them into our legislation and maintaining the attitude of the chapter of 1967, an attitude of joyful anticipatory openness to any new disposition of the Holy See (Bl, 15).

29. The general chapter recommends that the congregation incessantly work at a profound updating, on the personal and community level, of the lay Claretian charism in the congregation. The chapter charges the general government, in collaboration with the major organisms, of establishing effective means of consciousness-raising, such as mobile teams, gatherings for prayer and study, and other means deemed effective.

30. The missionary brothers must make an effort at participating actively in community prayer as the source of their spirituality. This requires that our communities place a special emphasis on the community aspect of our prayers so that all may participate in the celebration of the Eucharist and the recitation of the Hours. Where there are just reasons preventing such participation on a regular basis, it should take place at least on set dates, such as retreat days, community meetings, inter-community assemblies, etc.

31. Other concrete expressions of communitary fraternity would be:

- normal sharing by all members of the community in necessary domestic and familiar tasks;
- preparing all members of the community for dialogue and sharing in community meetings, marked by respect and consideration for the criteria and just proposals of everyone;
- sharing, on the part of the missionary brothers, in the responsibilities of the community.

32. All of us in the congregation, clerical and lay, are servants of the proclamation of the Gospel, within the universal scope of means desired by our founder (Charism, 31). The missionary brothers should be still more effectively integrated into the apostolate of the congregation. As much as possible, their dedication to directly apostolic tasks should be intensified.

Pastoral councils, in planning the apostolate of provinces should become aware of functions proper of the lay vocation, so that brothers may assume many indirectly apostolic responsibilities presently being exercised by Claretian priests, so that priests may dedicate themselves to other apostolic endeavours more properly within their sphere.

33. The lack of vocations to the brotherhood is particularly grave, even within the widespread general vocation crisis in the congregation.

Whatever this chapter decides on vocational promotion in the formation commission is equally, or even more, urgent for Claretian lay vocations. It is very important, in this respect, to present the vocation of the Claretian brothers as an integral part of the Claretian vocations, parallel to that of Claretian cleric.

In addition to an insistence on prayer to the Lord of the harvest, the entire congregation should make a special effort to present the world with a renewed image of the Claretian brother, which will prove attractive to today's man.

34. The disposition of the 1967 chapter as to the formation of young brothers and the renewal of the rest, remains in force.

The juniorate for all newly professed, without exception (B 1, 30), should be put into practice, as well as the period preparatory for perpetual profession (B 1, 31).

As to the continuing formation of brothers, the general recommendations of the formation commission of this chapter should be applied.

35. Considering all that still needs to be done to achieve the full

integration and renewal of the brothers, it is fitting to continue for another six years the mixed commissions on brothers, still retaining the aims pointed out in the Decree on Brothers (36 - 37).

The members of these mixed provincial commissions should be elected by the brothers of the province. The provincial government should previously establish the number of members and norms for election, afterwards confirming the results.

The conferences of major superiors should designate one of these members to coordinate the interprovincial action of the provincial commissions in their zone.

The general commission should take special care to study more profoundly the nature of the missionary brother's vocation in all its aspects: theological, historical, apostolic, and juridical, and to inform the congregation of the results of its investigation.

# RELIGIOUS LIFE

## I. Facing the Future

1. From the responses of the congregation on Claretian religious life collected by precapitular commissions, it may be gathered that we have not yet arrived at the goals set by the preceding general chapter. This means that:

2. a) Both the renewal and adaptation of our life continue to be a concern for all the members of the congregation. Any separation of these two complementary aspects would threaten the very integrity of our evangelical-apostolic life (ET,3,6).

b) Since we are in the process of rediscovering a new lifestyle in religious community, this renewal-adaptation cannot afford to overlook this fact, if it is to respond to this sign of the times.

c) We need a serene but bold sense of discernment to distinguish between what should be conserved and what should be changed in our communities on all levels. The two norms that will provide us a sound criterion both for discerning the signs of God among the signs of the time and for regulating the scope of change, are a growing knowledge:

- of the Gospel and of our charism,
- and of what the Holy Spirit is accomplishing today.

d) In great part, the malaise of our communities is due both to not knowing *what* our Claretian-religious life is, and, as a consequence, to not hitting upon the *manner* of restoring it. Another aspect of the problem is that of presenting the congregation today not just as one more fact but as a fact of value for the modern world.

e) We need a remodelling of structures, a re-examination of models of value, a review of formative methods, of language, etc., taking as our point of departure a fidelity to the very nature of religious-apostolic life, to our Claretian identity, and to the founding intentions of the congregation.

## II. The Charism and Spirit of the Congregation

### A. General Principle

#### 3. The Chapter reaffirms

- our *identity in being and in life*, as lived by our founder and transmitted to the congregation (CF, 10-22; SH, 6ff).

and our *ministerial identity*: the service of the Word by all means (CF, 19ff).

### B. Awareness of our Charism

4. a) *The fact*: there is still a deficient community awareness of the charism of our congregation.

#### 5. b) **Alleged caused of this fact:**

- Some say that it is not well defined.

- It is esteemed, but thought not to be distinct from that of other religious.

- A lack of effective channels for serious and continuing information and motivation to make the 1967 capitular documents on our charism reach into the life and structures of the congregation.

- The progressive loss of our cordimarian spirituality, through not knowing how to respond maturely and adequately to the needed demythologization of certain supposedly traditional values.

#### 6. c) **Consequences:**

- Disorientation or indecision in undertaking or dropping certain ministries.

- A loss of a sense of *belonging*, because of an ill-understood universalist spirit, forgetting that "being" Claretians and "acting" as Claretians is for us our concrete way of being and making the Church.

- A failure to integrate our mutual values and a consequent waste of energies due to differences in mentality, to individualism, and to a type of cold war.

### C. The Chapter's Response

7. a) The essential elements and rationale of our charism are sufficiently explicit and well defined in CF and SH of the 1967 general chapter.

b) On the other hand they do not seem to have been sufficiently assimilated personally or communitarily, or fully integrated into our life.

c) There has been a corresponding lack of living the "spirit," whose traits also seem sufficiently well defined in the chapter document on charism.

d) A greater personal and community assimilation of what our "charism-spirit" means and demands is urged.

e) Fidelity to our charism today especially demands:

- a *renewal and adaptation* which call, on our part, for a profound disposition very similar to a conversion (SH,59)
- service and work (RLI,58 and SH,78)
- community-mindedness
- *sensitivity* to what is most urgent, opportune, and effective in each time and place, without becoming tied down to fixed methods of apostolate, etc.

f) We must accentuate the role of the Virgin in our charism-spirit, by means of a deeper living knowledge of her person and her significance in salvation history, as well as of her role as "prototype and outstanding model" of all spirituality and fulfillment in every charismatic mission and of her function as "Mother of the Church," with her attendant "munus maternum" in connection with every budding form of ecclesial life. Given the intensity with which the image of Mary and the living out of her mystery figured in the mystical life of our founder, it is evident that the Marian (cordimarian) aspect forms an essential part of our charism and constitutes an indispensable trait of our spirituality. The living of our cordimarian sonship provides us with a special dynamism to fulfill the kind of being and mission that define the Claretian religious.

g) Both our charism, in its objective value (always capable of homogeneous evolution), as well as our *spirit*, (or the manner in which we live our charism) belong, to the extent that they are evangelically inspired, to the order of the Christian "mystery." Hence, they are something substantially permanent. But the demands of time and place oblige us to seek new adaptations and methods as to the manner of living and updating them.

h) It belongs to the general and provincial governments to plan channels for raising our level of awareness in order to achieve a more profound living of our charism. To promote a renewal of the Claretian spirit, the Constitutions must be assimilated, and to that end, a definitive redrafting of the Constitutions is required.



i) We call upon our theologians to offer the congregation a serious study on our charism and on the spirit of our founder, the deeper knowledge of which will help us better incarnate them in our historical circumstances.

j) The real crisis in the congregation is fundamentally a crisis of the interior life according to the demands of the Gospel. What the congregation is looking for and needs today is a sincere review of our Claretian life in the light of the Gospel. Only those who have carried out this review of life can follow through with the kind of serious commitment which our Claretian charism entails. The chapter urges that everyone undertake such a review on all levels of the congregation.

### III. Consecrated Life

8. Our congregation is, in the strict sense, a religious-apostolic institute. And our religious life as Claretians is constituted by a special kind of consecration that consummates our baptismal consecration, carrying it to its ultimate consequences (PC, 5) which, if they were not realized through the religious life, would leave the church, as it were, unfinished in the line of sanctity (LG, 44). "Consecration," then, is a value of the first rank in all religious life. One of its decisive roles is that of "witness."

#### A. New Experiences

9. a) *The facts:* It is undeniable that the process of "secularization" has had an impact on the congregation, giving rise to doubtful life-attitudes, some of which conform and others which do not seem to conform to the consecrated and witness values of our life. Likewise, especially in Latin America, the phenomenon of "liberation" has come to have considerable repercussion on religious life.

10. b) *Evaluation of these facts:* There has been a certain lack of preoccupation about fitting them into a "theology of the signs of the times." There has also been a lack of clear ideas on a proper orientation of life and conduct.

11. e) *Desiderata:* — as regards "secularization," a clarification of its notion, content and scope; — as regards "liberation," the forming of a new Claretian image in Latin America (Paipa), bearing in mind all the consequences that must be faced (CICLA). Guiding Principles:

## B. Guiding Principles

12. a) *Secularity and secularization*: Leaving aside "secularism" as being a completely negative concept, we must admit that "secularity" has a positive value and meaning. It refers to the legitimate relative autonomy of earthly things (GS, 36). For man, the world is the place where he finds human and Christian fulfillment, performs a service for those he lives with, and discovers God.

The process of "secularization", understood as an affirmation of these values, must be promoted by all, since it falls entirely within the plan of God. Thus understood, "consecration" and "secularization" are not mutually exclusive. The very incarnation of the Word implies an acknowledgment of the secular and its advancement.

13. b) *"Secularization" and religious life*: But man is not definitively measured either by time or by the world. He is already, here and now, projected toward a future reality. The religious, by his consecration, without ceasing to live in the present world is, as it were, already installed in this future reality, signifying and witnessing to all man that they do not belong definitively to this world but must travel towards the future city (cf. LG, 44; PC, I); and the better to give witness, he effectively renounces things that, even though they are good in themselves, are not proper of the heavenly state of the Church. More specifically, the religious life signifies and testifies to the absolute transcendence of God and to the eschatology of the Kingdom. Thus, the religious must learn to combine the principle of *service* (being in the world) with the principle of *purification* (not being of the world). He should bear existential witness:

- to his "sacred" character, since the sacred essentially implies a reference to someone beyond the worldly and human condition: to God. This is not simply a moral implication, but one which affects his being, his values, and his actions.

- to his particular distinction from the merely secular. The distinction between the sacred and the secular is based primarily on the difference between *total*/belonging to God and the *autonomous* character whereby any reality can be defined without immediate reference to God and can operate according to the dynamism proper of its being. The religious life can neither be defined without immediate reference to God, nor operate apart from the dynamism of the Kingdom which it signifies and incarnates.

- to a certain "separation" from the world. To be in the world but not of the world. Such is the meaning and content of consecrated chastity, poverty and obedience.

14. c) *Consecration and apostolic mission.* In the congregation, from its very origin, commitment to the apostolate has been the path to consecration in and for the evangelical lifestyle. Hence, our consecrated life is radically apostolic and finds its fullness in the apostolate (SH, 28). Even safeguarding the primacy of the theological and spiritual element over the actual exercise of the apostolate, consecration should be aimed at that exercise, so that our consecrated lives should be lived with a view to the apostolate and our apostolate should always develop within the dynamics of consecration.

15. d) *The dynamism of Consecration.* The religious must be a *visible* sign, "an outstanding sign" (PC, I). He lives in the world to introduce into it the Church's "not being of the world." The reference here is to a "prophetic" sign. The religious is *God's man*; he is a prophet through the eloquence of his own life, which relates immediately and totally to God. The propheticism of the religious life is a passage through the world to enrich it and give it its truest and deepest meaning by disclosing the radically provisory nature of all that man knows in his earthly life.

A lack of adjustment with the dynamics of consecration leads to a weakening of the religious life in its most specific and serious aspect, ending by reducing it to its purely human dimensions, as experiences attest.

We must overcome every *false* separation – sociological, cultural, etc. – from the world. But we must faithfully keep to those truly evangelical separations which all consecration demands, in accord with our own Claretian modalities. In view of all this, a just form of secularization for a Claretian is a search for living in rhythm with history, an effort at sharing in the most human and most spiritual enterprises in order to collaborate with and serve all man. Living with others and for others, but not living just as others do: this is the best service our consecrated life can offer the world (PC, 6). This means that "secularization", for the religious life, cannot be an arbitrary or absolute objective, but only inasmuch as it is measured and conditioned by the evangelical-apostolic structure of the Claretian charism.

16. e) *The phenomenon of "liberation":* We are waiting for proper clarification from theologians and the magisterium of the Church on this theme. Our religious-Claretian consecration commits us, out of love, to the liberating service of the Church and all humanity especially the poor (CF, 12). In places where there is an urgent need, Claretians should be in the vanguard in an attitude of loving service, to be "the voice of those without a voice" and to denounce with apostolic charity, but with holy liberty, social injustices, etc. (ET, 17-18.)

17. f) *A glance at Christ in the Gospel*: Christ offers us the exact measure of a just secularization, since His humanity forms part of the secular world; but He is also beyond all secularization, because Christ the man is also the Son of the Father and His humanity is entirely informed by the mission of existentially signifying and carrying out the salvation of the world. Seeing that all religious life has the essential mission of "re-presenting the lifestyle of Christ in the Church" (LG, 44), it is impossible to legitimize any sort of secularization that would do away with the signifying mission of the religious life by emptying its content of total and immediate reference to God visibly manifested through certain signs and a particular practice.

### C. In Relation to Practice

18. a) *Common demands*: In our Claretian religious form of life that synthesizes the positive and the renunciatory, we must commit ourselves seriously to incarnate the future Church in our own lives by means of the sincere practice of the evangelical counsels according to the Constitutions and by means of the community and their effective communion. We must accept personal and communal responsibility for the fulfillment of our mission with that sort of sincerity before God, and Church, and the world that will enable all to grasp the true meaning of life by means of our example more than by means of our words. Thus alone will we be an "outstanding sign."

19. b) *Concrete demands*: In the name of fidelity to our charism-spirit, by incorporating *mortification* into the theology of our *consecration-witness* (RL, 75) and by respecting the principle of adaptability "in consonance with the circumstances of time and place" (Const., 53), the chapter urges a life of evangelical abnegation. Each community, according to its particular situation, should adopt its own form of mortification to express the sacrificial dimension of our consecration. "Those who profess the evangelical counsels, in order to follow more closely the Lord's life of poverty and tend more easily and effectively towards the perfection of charity, must fulfill in the manner most perfect the precept of penance" (Paul VI, Const. *Poenitemini*). We must react against the infiltration of whatever might appear, even in the judgment of secular persons, as revealing a worldly spirit opposed to the witness spirit of religious consecration. We must frequently submit our personal and community attitudes to review.

In the face of naturalistic criteria hardly consonant theoretically or practically with our consecration and evangelical commitment, those

dedicated to formation must insist, above all during the novitiate, on a "re-reading" of the grand principles of consecrated life and of our charism-spirit.

## IV. Community Life

20. Among the determining factors of decadence in the religious life, we must include a lack of awareness of its community meaning. On the other hand, our community life is beset today with special difficulties, because of the tensions we are experiencing. We need to achieve a greater harmony between legitimate pluralism and essential communitariness.

### A. A Glance at the Past Six Years

21. a) *The facts*: During these years the congregation has been sensible to the phenomena of "personalism" (the worth, dignity and respect for the person) and of "interpersonal communion." While recognizing many positive gains, we must admit that there have been several negative postures, e.g., a certain individualism in community living, in apostolic commitment, and even in the life of piety.

22. b) *Among the causes* of this phenomenon we may enumerate: individualism itself, at least in part; the absence of supernatural motives in the kind of community life governed almost solely by psychological-social criteria; a lack of sincere, individual and collective conversion; the little that has been done to overcome ideological conflicts and the generation gap; a failure to live our Claretian charism; a system of government that is still too vertical; the scarceness of opportunities for new communities reflecting newly rediscovered values; a lack of balance between today's pastoral demands and insufficiently updated methods, customs, practices or institutional forms of our life.

23. c) *Facing the future*: There is a desire to overcome our difficulties; what we need is a clear idea of what community life is or is not and an effort on the part of all for the renewal of our communities.

### B. Guiding Principles

24. a) *The community as a communion of distinct persons*:

1) The Claretian religious community is the charismatic community of all of us through the common and continued response

to the same vocation which is at once the foundation for true communion and the irreducibility of the persons within this communion.

2) It is the congregation's task to be a sign of this call for different persons, so that they communicate truly, in their different ways, in answering the same call.

3) Differentiation should be promoted, but always carefully safeguarding the fundamental unit of the bond of charity that joins all differences together.

4) Such differentiation, as necessary and dear to God as unity is, has an impact on all levels of thought (ideological pluralism); on the level of catechesis (according to times and places); on the level of community (according to ministries); on the level of commitment (according to the social milieu); on the level of daily practices (without uniform norms). And at every level, differentiation must be conjoined with communion.

5) Instead of aiming at uniformity, we need to evoke the creativity of the members for the benefit of the community and the creativity of the community for the benefit of its members.

6) Living in communion does not consist in artificially reducing tensions between persons, ideas, or levels. Each must feel responsible for the richness of our tradition and the promise of our projects.

#### 25. b) *Community and institution:*

1) Our Claretian identity implies three different elements of unequal value: charism, belonging to the community group and a certain group structure.

2) These elements constitute a certain theological whole, not only because of their unity of end but because of the fundamental unity of foundational origin.

3) As an ecclesial community and as a "sign" of the Church, it is not a strictly democratic community which assigns value or meaning to things only on the basis of a majority vote. The essential values of our evangelical-apostolic life should be recognized and guaranteed for each and every one, since they come to us from the Gospel, by way of the charism of our founder.

4) Although it belongs to the charismatic structure of the Church, religious community already has within it a certain internal structure of government as an essential condition for its existence and development and as an indispensable force for fraternity.

5) But government and community exist in an intimate relation

which is translated into living together, dialogue, collaboration, and co-responsibility.

26. c. *Every community has the charismatic mission* of searching for the will of God and of making the realization of His plan for individuals and community possible. Superiors and their brothers form a unity by means of their different, but always complementary, functions.

1) Authority is not something *above* community, but something in its very heart, as the dynamic principle of community life.

2) Although they are always open and available for interpersonal and community dialogue, which must be promoted and fostered, it belongs to authorities to be, of themselves, the instruments of the final decision, and thus be an immediate and strengthening service to a fruitful community life.

27. d) *The inner force of charismatic community.*

1) We are the servants of "truth" in "charity." It is charity that impels and insures communication in truth.

2) The charismatic community cannot be apposed to all forms of institutionalization. In religious institutes, as in the Church, charism and institution are but two aspects of one and the same ecclesial reality (CF, 8). But within its institutionality, the important thing is to build a community as one heart and soul, according to the Claretian charism and spirit.

## C. The Dynamics of the Principles

28. a) From the point of view of the community as a communion of distinct persons:

1) Pluralism is the logical and necessary, but fruitful, consequence of every differentiated group that aims at achieving unity. So that unity may not be jeopardized, especially in view of today's incessant changes, greater attention must be paid to all that clearly creates and promotes the desired communion.

2) We need to be careful about a growing phenomenon in our midst. Rather than a productive tension there is real opposition between conservatives and progressives (admittedly equivocal terms). Each party, although sharing the same deep concerns, comes to regard the other as the greatest danger, reaching the point of rejecting all contact and dialogue, forgetting that every tradition is dynamic and forward-looking and that every life project is rooted in a living tradition.

3) Dialogue demands an attitude of receptiveness, understanding and mutual respect – a fundamental attitude of conversion – and should always develop in a climate of charity.

29. b) *Form the point of view of community and institution:*

1) It should be recognized that God has willed his Church to have an institutional character, which extends, somewhat, into every charismatic community, whose internal unity thus comes to be both signified and protected by authority. But at the same time, it must be admitted that this institutional character achieves its fulfillment in the diversity of individual members or communities.

2) Those who legitimately uphold pluralism and their own charisms must maintain a sense of community responsibility and discipline. Authority, too, in the very way it exercises its functions, must show that it accepts the community's pluralism.

30. c) *From the point of view of community and authority:*

1) As opposed to authoritarian rule, which arises from regarding authority as a power rather than as a service, religious authority is a service of love dedicated to the true interests of persons and fidelity to that community mission which is truly the "common good".

2) Authority should refrain from countering the groups that arise from pluralism. It should only intervene when the foundation of unity and the common good are threatened.

3) When it is necessary, in virtue of the function proper of all authority, superiors can and should adopt clear positions, set down proper guidelines, and take the decision which they prudently consider most fitting (PC,14; ET,25; Decr. S.C.R., Feb. 2, 1972).

31. d) *From the point of view of the inner force of a charismatic community:*

1) The progress of a community by way of dialogue, etc., is possible only so long as communion is not cut off in the midst of differences.

2) Union is the constant, everyday task of everyone.

3) To reinforce this inner unity, we must be on our guard with respect to three possible threats to any community: – separating the charismatic from the institutional, which would be particularly harmful in an apostolic community such as ours;

- separating the two functions of community



- institution: its inner cohesiveness and its service to the world;
- separating doctrine and life.

## D. Community Life in Action

32. Community life should be thought of mainly as a life of love for God and our brothers and of apostolic charity for the world.

### a) *A community of prayer before God:*

#### 1) In forming a proper mental outlook;

- We are united, in the gift of our charism, to live together in apostolic community;

- Community life receives its full meaning from living the mystery of Christ in common;

- We are in need of a theological renewal which consists of making God the dynamic, living center of our being and activity. Only an intense theological life such as this can make our life into a prayer and our prayer into a vital attitude; and it alone can give full worth, meaning, and creativity to our crucial moments at prayer;

- Our community prayer is unthinkable apart from the stimulus and nourishment it derives from the common gift we share;

- We cannot divorce our apostolate from our theological life; or regard it as marginal to our theological life, since apostolate should branch and blossom from prayer and communion with God. (cf. PC, 6 & 8);

- In celebrating the Eucharist in common, in the liturgy of the hours, in reflecting on the word of God, in prayer that analyzes the facts of our lives and contrasts them with the Gospel: all these are the focal points where our expression of faith and our community prayer take shape as a common encounter and dialogue with the Lord (cf. PC,6).

### 33. 2) *In practice:*

- frequent community celebration of the Eucharist;

- fostering initiative and preparation in the liturgy, celebrating it without haste and with the serious reflection demanded by the word of God;

- when possible, making the concelebrated Eucharist the basic community act (RL, 114, 122);

- emphasizing the community review of life in a climate of prayer;

- planning retreats and spiritual exercises with a view to a sense of community;

- (since the liturgy does not exhaust all the possibilities of prayer life), introducing certain additional practices that are consonant with our spirit and duly updated;

- warmly fostering individual personal prayer as an indispensable condition, even for community prayer.

#### 34. b) *A Community of love for our brothers:*

##### 1) In forming a proper mental outlook:

The project that an evangelical-apostolic life aims at is a communion of life and mission with Christ (Mk.3,13), expressed, as such, in a communion of life and mission with our brothers. Consequently:

- Fraternity does not just mean living under one roof and rule, but living in interpersonal relationships of knowing and loving and, above all, of faith and charity; communing in one and the same ideal and spirit.

- The criteria for forming community cannot be the simple functionality of persons. Even the institutional aspect of our work is more solidly guaranteed when it rests on the criterion of fraternal union, which creates a feeling of co-responsibility towards our institutional task.

- It would be exaggerated or even false to blame the lack of genuine interpersonal relations on the institutional nature of our work or on the fact that large communities are an obstacle to community living or on the fact that some communities are made up of people with diverse mentalities and educational backgrounds.

- True fraternity is the total gift of each person to the other, in faith and charity. Lack of mutual openness, acquaintance, acceptance, and trust; hard feelings and, above all, a lack of faith, hope and charity, are the real causes that militate against fraternity.

- All evangelical fraternity has its start and consummation in Christ. Attempts are often made to save community on mainly psychological grounds: a procedure which may only result in forming a spirit of clubhouse or camaraderie, lacking the witness value of an evangelical-apostolic fraternity. Each individual must seek "the" community, rather than just "his" community.

##### 35. 2) *In Practice:*

- We need to join in a fraternal search for new ways of overcoming the indifference, misunderstanding, and ridicule that arises between different generations.

- If "juridical houses" do not, *ipso facto*, constitute fraternal communion, it is not a foregone conclusion that so-called "alive communities" *ipso facto* constitute evangelical fraternity, if they are only based on psycho-social criteria.

- The primary aim and function of government should be the service of brothers loved by God and placed in the Church to prolong the apostolic community, realizing that the success of this or that project, economic accomplishments, or the prestige of the institute are all of secondary concern.

- It is fundamentally important that we give greater attention to the local community, since that is where interpersonal relationships are ordinarily lived and where the person achieves the fulfillment of his natural and supernatural potential.

- But the local community cannot live as an outsider, on the margin of other communities, any more than the province can, with respect to other provinces.

- We should allow for the creation of new types of community, set in the *milieu* we wish to evangelize.

- In virtue of the principle of subsidiarity, we should promote a greater autonomy and creativity in communities, as to their own internal goals and projects (prayer, apostolate, poverty, etc.).

- Persons without serious psychological or vocational problems might be allowed experiments in communities animated by the same impulse or ideal, although they should always have an attitude of openness towards their superiors.

- We might also experiment with greater mobility of communities or of personnel as regards rigid provincial divisions or fixed structures. We should integrate the missionary brothers into our community life.

- Difficult cases are presented by those who will not adapt or who plan their activities on the margin of the community or the superior or who only remain in the congregation to secure their future.

### 36. c) *A community of missionary service to the world:*

#### 1) General principle:

- Ours is an essentially apostolic congregation sharing, thus, through our charism, in the mission of the Church. It may ever be said that the missionary apostolate is the *raison d'être* of our institute and of our Claretian vocation.

- Springing essentially from the sacrifice of Christ, from which it derives its definitive and ultimate value (PC,1), our personal and

communal apostolate will only achieve authenticity when persons and communities live a life fully rooted in the sacrifice of the Lord (cf. AG,5), a life known by its spirit of "self-sacrifice for all," abandoning comfort and personal tastes, etc., a life of "spending and being spent" for others, following the immediate example of our founder.

2) In forming a proper mental outlook:

- The community as such has received a mission: to bear witness to the values of the kingdom and to spread them through its life and activities.

- The voluntary nature of our apostolate not only favours, but demands, teamwork.

- Community of work means sharing and expressing, within our personal and communal differences, but convergently, the mission of the local, provincial, and general community.

- This communal mission should unfold through our committed witness, in any environment whatsoever, always under the developmental influence of our charismatic mission.

- The principle governing our missionary work is to attend to what is most urgent, necessary, and effective, without fear of abandoning commitments, activities or houses that have lost their original goals.

37. 3) In practice:

- As regards full incorporation into the overall pastoral ministry, though within the characteristics of our own charism, each community must plan the best way to achieve it, in accord with those responsible for its organization in the diocese or in our place of residence.

- The practices and customs of both our religious and our apostolic life should be so balanced that the one set does not prejudice the other. Timetables must be accommodated to the apostolic needs of place, time and persons (SH,30).

- As an expression of true community spirit on the congregational level, local or provincial communities, as the ease may be, should manifest a willingness to be deprived of a valuable member, when, in the judgment of the superiors, a higher good calls for it.

- For further details, we refer you to the Commission the Apostolate.

## V. Evangelical Life

38. The ultimate justification for our evangelical-apostolic life is the person of Christ, with His life of chastity, obedience and poverty, embraced freely, in order to fulfill the mission entrusted Him by the Father. What remains perennially valid, as being of divine origin, is the personal and communal living of an evangelical life in order to conform ourselves to Christ. The so-called evangelical counsels determine the spirit of our religious consecration.

### A. An Overall View

39. a) *Positive aspects of our living of the evangelical counsels:*

1) The counsels have been given a more positive meaning by emphasizing their consecrative, witness value.

2) In practice, there has been a noticeable growth in sensitivity to the communal witness value of poverty and to new ways of living it.

3) Still, they have not yet been fully converted into personal and communal values.

40. b) *Negative aspects:*

1) A certain confusion and some mistaken criteria as to the nature and concrete demands of the counsels.

2) A somewhat bourgeois lifestyle, marked by a lack of commitment.

3) Because they have been lived as something taken for granted, rather than as vital dimensions of the person and the community, they have not been absorbed organically and harmoniously into personal and community life.

4) These deficiencies are due, in part, to the fact that community life and manner of government have not functioned as they should.

41. c) *Guidelines*

1) The evangelical counsels are not just at the service of perfection in charity, but are, in themselves, a perfect expression of charity. If there is ample room for *adaptation* of structures, there is still more ample room for *renovation* of life, according to the spirit and demands of the evangelical counsels.

2) The trilogy of poverty-chastity-obedience embraces the three deepest dimensions of the human person

It is important to stress:

- the "personalist" and "personalizing" meaning of the counsels, whereby, in offering God what we *are*, rather than what we *do*, we place ourselves in a context of perfect self-realization as men and as sons of God

- their "community" value and their power for "communion," an aspect which defines the sociological character of the lived experience of evangelical chastity, obedience, and poverty;

- and their "prophetic" and evangelizing value.

3) Since the living of the counsels is subject to the dynamism

- of permanent personal conversion,

- of community progress

- and of apostolic mission itself, we must deepen our knowledge of the demands which derive from it, as they are revealed to us in the spiritual maturity of our founder's life.

## B. Particular Analysis

### 42. a) *Chastity.*

1) *Negative aspects:* they seem to have more bearing on the realm of conduct than that of ideas. But there have been a number of erroneous, equivocal or dangerous ideas.

#### 2) *Towards renewal:*

- *personal:* to urge upon oneself a life of sacrifice;

- *community:* as a sign of new love, chastity can only be strengthened in a community of feelings and life-project where true charity reigns among brothers. How many crises would, perhaps, have been overcome in this climate!

3) Chastity should be a form of community witness before the world to the realities of the Kingdom of God, among which the "communion" of the sons of God, stands as supreme reality and end.

4) Consecrated chastity, far from leading to dryness of the heart or sapping the strength of the emotional and social dimension of the personality, strengthens and universalizes it with a wonderful spiritual productiveness. More precisely, the witness value of consecrated chastity lies in the dynamism and creativity it develops for giving oneself to all men, with that fullness of love which comes from total surrender to God. Even in its aspect of denial, consecrated chastity does not deny love; it is a renunciation made out of love for God and out of love for all men in Christ.

43. b) **Obedience.**1) *Negative aspects:*

- *Theoretical disorientation:* a lack of clarity as to its scope; a lack of clarity as regards the position and functions of the superior; the prevalence of absolutely collegial criteria of government which place information, dialogue and final decision all on the same level.

44. *Life-attitudes:* timidity or indecision on the part of superiors; isolationism among many of them and little community consciousness before the will of God; alienation from or indifference to, superiors; the distaste with which one speaks of them as if they were not brothers; lack of availability for appointments and occupations; apostolic commitments marginal to the community.

45. 2) *Towards renewal:*

- *As regards theoretical causes:*

obedience does not oblige us to think of, or see things as the superior does, but rather to do what he decides (submission of practical judgment), believing, in faith, that this is a living way of entering into communion with the paschal attitude of Christ, who accepted the will of the Father through human persons, institutions, etc. Other directives will be pointed out when we speak of community.

46. - *As regards life-attitudes:*

The superior's "docility to God" determines, in part, the quality of love which his community attains and the perfection with which it shares in the charity of God. More than a keeper of discipline, the superior should be an educator of charity. It is not enough, in order to be in line with God's will, simply to obtain the superior's "placet." One must try to judge, in his prudence and in his charism, whether or not a given option is in conformity with God's plan, as it may be discerned in the Constitutions, the goals of the community, the talents of the persons involved, etc. We are committed by our obedience not only to the quality of charity in community, but also to the rights which charity has over us and which we respect through obedience. For a perfect interrelation between authority and obedience we need maturity, sincerity, and an attitude of service, all of which make us commune with the attitude of Christ in his loving response to the love of the Father and to His saving will.

47. 3) **Communitary obedience**

Our obedience must be characterized by fidelity to the plan of God for each and everyone, in and for the community. This fidelity equally affects both superiors and brothers in their distinct, yet complementary roles. Authority-obedience should be a service in

communion and for communion: both should be creative of community.

#### 48. c) Poverty

##### 1) *Negative aspects*

- *Faulty ideas as to its nature and demands.* In general, the lack of a theological and biblical vision of poverty. Poverty is often thought of in regards to *having* rather than to *being*; hence it is limited to considerations of economy.

49. - *Personal and communitary life-attitudes.* Community witness is sometimes weakened through a lack of personal witness, or even, antiwitness and vice-versa. There are some abuses in the use and appropriation of money. There is a lack of dedication to work. The community does not function as it should. There is a lack of creativity in making our communal way of living fit in regions characterized by their poverty.

50. - *Structures that hinder collective witness.* Some systems of capitalization, together with deficient forms for the mutual sharing of goods.

#### 51. 2) Towards renewal

##### *On the level of ideas*

- A deeper knowledge of the religious meaning of poverty as radical availability; as life-style and as spirituality. Our poverty must be a Ushering in the poverty of Christ (PC,13), a poverty whose immediate rationale and content are not founded on purely socio-economic values. An effective and universal detachment from material goods is a sign and expression of the poverty of Christ in its religious-soteriological reality.

- Poverty then, must be so lived that it witnesses to the *primacy of being over having*.

- The *effectiveness* of personal and communal poverty is a *real sign*; therefore, it has a material element which is seriously and responsibly expressed by *living* off the goods of the Kingdom, thereby *announcing* and both personally and communitarily *witnessing* the Kingdom. Effective or external poverty should be a mixture of genuine abnegation and authentic freedom in the use of goods, in harmony with the Claretian spirit and the goals of the congregation. Our poverty should be guided by criteria of apostolic service, according to the mind and practice of our founder. Effective poverty, holding all goods in common, witnesses to the spiritual communion which unites the members of the community (ET,21). A vision of poverty based on



predominantly economic criteria may give rise to unpraiseworthy attitudes, opposed to the spirit of charity and even justice.

52. *On the level of life-attitudes*

- We should deepen our knowledge of what poverty implies and demands as a *personal attitude*, being content with the indispensable and, at length, accepting the ultimate demands of real poverty.
- We need to know that the root of all renewal, especially in this area, is a certain experience of the goods of the Kingdom, without which it is impossible to experience the emptiness of material goods. How can we deepen our friendship with Christ today? Each individual and community must face this question loyally.
- Urgent remedies must be applied against abuses and appropriation of money. There should be a greater awareness of and feeling for the obligation to work. We should even accept the possibility of dedicating a period of life to the experience of work in the midst of today's society.

53. *On the level of structures*

- We need to subject the system of capitalization to a profound review.
- We should intensify intercommunication of goods and make it work, so that from the point of view of poverty as a *community attitude*, we should have no more than our other brothers, and share everything with them.
- We should concretely spell out, within the possibilities of each community and organism, the scope of this sharing of goods, considering, above all, the needs of the place where the community is and the needs of the Church, etc.

54. 3) **Poverty and service to the poor**

Towards a Proper mental attitude

- Our poverty demands and is a service to the poor.
- Our witness would be very deficient if we were to live on a middle or upper class level, not only as regards personal or communitary consumership but as regards *social communication*.
- Even though it maintains that we should be friendly toward all, the Claretian spirit demands that we prefer the poor.
- But it would not be evangelical to exclude from our apostolate those who are rich in material goods, since they may have even greater religious and apostolic needs.
- Zeal for the poorer social classes should never awaken within us sentiments of rancour towards the rich, inciting to violence or

class-struggle. This is not the way to preach the Gospel, for it would be a realization of Christ's message in a manner foreign to the redemptive meaning of Christ's work and without love for Him. This does not mean that we should refrain from resisting, with zeal and holy freedom, any form of social injustice, systems of alienation and oppression, etc.

55. *Towards practice*

- We should adopt, as Christ did, a permanent attitude of detachment and availability, as a condition for uplifting man for the Kingdom of Heaven.

- We should exercise poverty as a gift of oneself, of one's time, of one's material, cultural, scientific and spiritual gifts, to all who are poor in them, no matter what their socioeconomic situation might be.

- We should be daring in our commitment to entering those zones and regions marked by poverty and social insecurity.

- Each province and local community should examine the way in which they concretely express an effective and demonstrated predilection for the poor and for those living on the margin of society, effectively dedicating themselves to these people, according to our Claretian charism.

56. d) **Fidelity to the call of the Gospel**

We have been called by God to this kind of evangelic apostolic life, to be his living word to the world. This special vocational gift has its origin in God's love, and it continually demands of us a radical and progressive answer to love, in conformity with the dynamics of the call. Freedom does not consist in the ability to say "no" to that call or in the ability to unsay, at a given moment in life, the commitment made before God in response to His call. Freedom, here, means making personal and community life a reality according to God's plan for that life. The value of one's own life as being and as activity and, to some extent, the value of the life of others through the life of each one, is indissolubly bound to the "yes" of our vocation. On this theological existential level, every failing in fidelity involves a degree of personal and communal frustration, with its resultant, inevitable repercussion on the life of the Church and the world of souls.

It can be seen, then, that fidelity to our apostolic evangelical life does not consist in the simple fact of living and dying in the congregation but, rather, in an ever-increasing equation between what ought to be

and what is, between the scope and demands of the call and the scope of our response as manifested in the charism and spirit that define us concretely as Claretians.

## 57. Conclusion

Religious life is following Christ "more nearly" (LG,44). Like Christ himself, whom we have embraced, Claretian religious should embrace the world and the cross. And for him to penetrate ever more deeply into our personal and communal life, according to the demands of our baptismal and religious consecration, we need personal and communal *work*, which is creative, and *sacrifice*, which obliges us to die. It is of paramount importance that we embrace life, which makes man grow, so that he may be sanctified; but it is also of paramount importance that we embrace death, which humbles man, so that his own life and that of others may be sanctified.

# THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CONGREGATION

## Introduction

1. The eighteenth general chapter has examined the state of the apostolate in the congregation and has listened to all those Claretians who chose to voice their judgment in the matter. In comparing our fields of apostolate with the documents of the extraordinary chapter of 1967 on apostolate, missions, and Christian education, we have found its principles and guidelines to be fundamentally valid. But the experience of these past six years calls for a calmly realistic outlook on three key issues:

## A Realistic Outlook

### 2. 1) *Realism as regards the Church:*

A year before the synod, which is to meet in Rome in October, 1974, and which plans to deal with the theme of evangelization, we Claretians feel called upon to examine the process of evangelization, which we are carrying out as an apostolic institute, from the standpoint of all its laws:

- The law of community: a living and cultural incarnation shared by those evangelizing and those being evangelized.

- The law of wholeness: our call is to the man of our times, in all his aspects – spiritual, temporal and sociological.

- The law of timeliness: the Good News does not instantly embrace all historical limits but is subject to stages of growth and maturation.

### 3. 2) *Realism as regards the world:*

Our missionary sensibility, which brings us into contact with men, also enables us to detect a number of conditions that make evangelization difficult:

- Social conditions: structures of injustice, systems of alienation.
- echnological conditions: a more numerous society and the results of a technological and urbanized society.
- Psychological conditions: conditions, which tend to erase the image of Christ in man, in the family, and in society; or which set up a barrier of prejudice to our message.

#### 4. 3) *Realism as regards the Congregation:*

There are 2,848 Claretians, and a glance at our student roster does not allow us a sense of euphoria regarding any grand apostolic master plans. Poverty of numbers conditions us on several levels:

- *Geographic:* We are located in 41 countries, and the same dispersal which favours pluralism hinders apostolic incisiveness.

- *Institutional:* We make up 30 major organisms, many of which are fighting for survival and are unable to expand their fields of work.

- *Renewal:* Neither in the renewal of apostolic structures nor in the assimilation of new forms of apostolate nor in general reorganization, have we attained all the goals set by the extraordinary chapter.

This realistic outlook obliges us to face up to the task of reviewing our apostolates, to our overall programming, and to our immediate objectives.

## PART ONE

# REVIEW OF OUR APOSTOLATES

## (Phenomenology and Critical Evaluation)

### I. Direct Service of the Word

#### A. Phenomenology

5. The number of Claretians engaged full time in the direct service of the Word is about a hundred. There are about a 29 houses dedicated to this work. Symptoms of a continuing decrease in this field are in evidence.

6. There is a downtrend in older mass pastoral methods and we have not updated or evolved them to suit the needs of the people we evangelize.

7. Experiments at founding mission bands or missionary teams has not gone past the level of good intentions in nine provinces .

8. There have been some gains in teams fully dedicated to this ministry.

9. Specialized pastoral practice lends itself in this field to small groups, *comunidades de base*, adult instruction, shared experiences, etc.

10. Although two new retreat houses have been opened, there is still the standing problem of making retreat houses work up to their potential within diocesan pastoral programs.

## B. Critical Evaluation

11. The very title of this structure is questionable since "direct service of the Word" is not exclusive to any one structure.

12. Obviously this apostolate is undergoing an acute personnel crisis quantitatively (fewer Claretians dedicated to it), and qualitatively (lack of preparation, specialization and creativity).

13. The major emphasis for this apostolate has been among religious, but to the great detriment of missionary service to the people as people, who in our judgment are often simply abandoned.

14. There has not been the same effort in preparation for this ministry as for others in the congregation.

15. The religious life institutes founded during the past six years deserve the highest praise; but we think that they should not tend to tip the balance of the congregation solely toward the study of religious life but rather readjust the balance toward the study of religious-apostolic life.

## II. Social Communications Media

### A. Phenomenology

16. The information received points to a fairly generalized lack of awareness as to the urgency of the apostolate through these particularly effective instruments.

17. We have 7 publishing companies and 23 reviews, 4 of them

scientific, 5 pastoral, 6 popular and the rest cultural, with an overall yearly output of a million and a half copies.

18. Although we do have a leaflet apostolate only two of our leaflets exceeds 50,000 copies per printing.

19. In the field of radio we have two broadcasting stations of our own, and there are twelve provinces with regular programs on outside stations.

21. There have been some new ventures in records, cassettes and filmstrips.

22. Our scientific-literary output during the past six years has been in the vicinity of 200 titles.

23. There is a new Advanced School of Sacred Music at Buen Suceso in Madrid.

## B. Critical Evaluation

24. Claretian involvement in this field has been very modest and the ideals set forth for all Claretians in the extraordinary chapter (API,50) are still fully valid today.

25. Critical evaluations of our publishing houses vary widely, but it might generally be asked that they be run on a more technically competent and apostolic basis.

26. In our judgment, our Madrid-based reviews are positive in their approach, acceptable in their scope, and well equipped.

27. Our output on the scientific-literary level is appreciable, but the same cannot be said of the popular level, which is a particularly Claretian field. There are some provinces which offer nothing on this level.

28. We judge it laudable that during the past six years eighteen of our members have specialized in audiovisual media and journalism.

## III. Christian Education

### A. Phenomenology

29. Statistics from the general prefecture for the apostolate list 63 schools of our own and 8 residences with a total of 321 members in this apostolate, or 11% of all Claretians.

30. This latter figure includes those working in outside centers: secular universities (30), institutes (26), and other centers.

31. The majority of provinces admit that their communities have not become the spiritual centers of apostolate asked for by the 1967 chapter (API,4-7).

32. Our schools do not ordinarily meet with the requisites of recent pastoral planning. They are open to review, reinforcement or suppression. Some believe that, as they are presently functioning, they cannot be considered an apostolic priority in the congregation.

33. There is an attitude of hostility towards this structure, fostered by those who do not work in it. Those committed to it do not question its value, although they do believe that it needs some profound reforms.

34. Some Claretians have made praiseworthy experiments in the field of so-called Liberation-Education, a movement which affects a wide arc in our present apostolic commitment.

## **B. Critical Evaluation**

35. The clarity of the extraordinary chapter's decree on Christian education illuminates the place of this form of apostolate within our charism. There is no reason, then, why an organism should not be as involved by preference in this service to the Church, as in any other.

36. Radical solutions, which would include the suppression of some of our centers, should be undertaken by the respective provinces with a view to their own overall pastoral plan and priorities.

37. The 23 Claretians specializing in catechetics during the past six-year period are far from fulfilling our possibilities in this field within or outside our schools.

38. We urgently need to extend our educational activities to the field of pre-evangelization, where fostering human advancement is part of the evangelizing process, because the goal of that process is total liberation.

39. Innovations in this field should aim at offering our services to state or outside private centers rather than at institutionalizing our own schools and residences.

## **IV. Parishes**

### **A. Phenomenology**

40. According to the statistics of the Prefecture of Apostolate, we presently have 218 parishes, staffed by 581 Claretian missionaries,



19.7% of our membership, the highest percentage in any field in the congregation. Of these 218 parishes, 32% are in urban centers, 17% are urban but not in urban centers, 14% are suburban, 27% are rural and 5% are dedicated to emigrants. It is important to note that parochial ministry is developing in all major organisms and, in six of them, is the principal ministry.

41. During the past six years there has been an effort to accept parishes of a missionary type. Progress has been made in the abundant sowing of the Word of God and laymen have been promoted to take part in parish life on the level of parish and apostolic activities. We may also call attention to a greater awareness of involvement in local and diocesan pastoral planning and a notable increase in liturgical-sacramental life. Attention has been focused on the needs of emigrants through special parochial services, and there has been a decided effort toward promoting social works in favour of those on the fringes of society.

42. Despite the efforts made in our parishes, we must call attention to the lack of specialization among those dedicated to this ministry which, together with their rather advanced average age of 52 years, contributes to the sacramentalist character that predominates in some of our parishes. A sufficient number of our parishes have not established Claretian teams and there is an observable lack of lay participation in the organization of our parishes.

## B. Critical Evaluation

43. The number of parishes we have is not per se either for or against our charism. But to justify the existence of Claretian parishes, we must consider our reasons for accepting them and the way we run them, the needs of the local Church expressed in the petition of the bishop involved, and the desire for becoming incarnate in all areas where there are people who need our missionary apostolate.

44. Despite our constant restlessness to live the Claretian charism more authentically in our parishes, we have not yet achieved the transformation desired in them, for these reasons, among others:

a) *Because of the structures themselves.* At the time we decide to accept a parish, we are not always motivated by reasons of conforming to our Claretian charism, but by secondary motives, such as the continuance of an already established community, prestige, rich urban situations, the solution of economic problems through parishes with a profitable income, etc.

b) *Because of personnel:* Advanced age and lack of preparation for this missionary apostolate.

c) *Because of the kind of work done:* Too sacramentalist and routine, without the creativity demanded by today's parishes.

45. Given the current number of our parishes and our alarming drop in available personnel, we do not think it advisable to accept new parishes, except for urgent apostolic reasons. Rather, we need to attend competently to the ones we have, working vigorously at transforming them and looking carefully for possible new missionary structures in accord with the demands of the Claretian charism.

## V. Missions

### A. Phenomenology

46. Currently the Congregation has 21 mission territories, in which 293 Claretians, or 10.2% are working. Only six territories belong to the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. In fact, only one, Japan, is dedicated to the evangelization of non-Christians. Three mission territories are major organisms: the Philippines, Guinea and Japan. The last-mentioned has an agreement with Catalonia. The Philippines and Guinea are under general rule.

47. Of the 14 organisms that replied to the questionnaire from the general prefecture on apostolate, 7 say that we have too many territories while the others say we have just enough.

48. Five provinces have two territories: Germany, Argentina, Betica, Castile, and Portugal. Seven others have only one territory. Nigeria is dependent on the general government.

49. Ten organisms have a mission procuratorship.

50. Various missions regret the lack of a general prefecture. From various places we have received requests for a general prefect of missions.

### B. Critical Evaluation

51. Growth in mission territories has accompanied a growing missionary awareness in the provinces.

52. Missions on the general level have not received the help needed to solve all their missionary problems.

53. Although the form of provincial rule adopted by the 1967

chapter might be criticized from some points of view, we believe that it best corresponds to current conditions.

54. We know that it is difficult to abandon certain fields of apostolate in order to reinforce our activities in marginal areas but such is the wish of Vatican II and our provinces should bear this clearly in mind.

55. The number of missionaries specializing in missiology during this six years has been relatively scarce (8). We think it opportune to insist on the need for such specialization, availing ourselves of the various centers established for it.

56. In its document on missions, the 1967 chapter omitted important scriptural and theological elements which need to be formulated.

## VI. Secular Apostolate

### A. Phenomenology

57. There has been a significant positive effort in the congregation towards forming *comunidades de base* and other small groups. On the other hand, the decline of pious associations is a significantly negative phenomenon.

58. There is a diversity of attitudes towards the Claretian stance on political issues.

59. The greater part of our reports coincide in assigning greater priority to the formation of lay leaders.

60. Most organisms see little feasibility in their own lay institutions.

### B. Critical Evaluation

61. This should not form a section within the prefecture of apostolate, since it is a subject which involves all other sections. Hence it will not be referred to from now on.

62. The hour seems to have struck for studying the establishment of the "extended Claretian family," since many Claretians are working among groups outside the congregation.

63. It behooves us to insist on greater incisiveness in this field within the structures of the local church.

## VII. General Organization

### A. Phenomenology

64. The general prefect had a curial adjutant for only three years. We did not set up a body of *periti* for the general prefecture. We limited ourselves to individual consultations without ever arriving at joint dialogue.

65. Of 30 organisms, 20 had pastoral councils. Five of them were said to be effective, while nine were said to be null.

66. There has not been an efficient interrelation between general and provincial prefects of apostolate.

67. Various organisms have considered the prefecture to be too broad in scope, too ramified and diversified. Some have opted for a general prefect of the missions.

68. We have not established the scientific statistical service recommended by the extraordinary chapter.

### B. Critical Evaluation

69. Within our organizational structure there are no specialized organisms for distinct types of apostolate. Everything is centered in the person of the prefect.

70. There is an absence of structures permitting responsible grassroots participation on all levels.

71. Relations between prefectures and base-level organizations have been bureaucratized and channelled largely by correspondence.

72. There is a disproportion between the horizontal outreach of our organizational structures and the vertical power of the executive: only one prefect for such a great diversity of fields.

73. The inefficiency of relationships and contacts between the general prefecture and *periti*, lesser prefects and councils is based on the infeasibility of the current systems of relationships. Binding everyone to a general prefect in Rome cannot be done by correspondence or by any visits he might be able to make.

## PART TWO

## GENERAL PROGRAMMING

## I. Criteria for Action

74. 1) The missionary implanting of the congregation cannot rest inertly on the laurels of our forbears, but must start from theological-pastoral criteria that will facilitate our present and future commitments. The chapter sees an overwhelming need to examine our conscience on the following points:

*2) Evangelization:*

75. Evangelization is the service of the Good News which puts men in contact with the saving plan of God, in order to establish or restore the Church. This is the goal that catalyzes all our structures.

76. The initial perspective for evangelization is the greatness and dignity of man, who is the object of God's love, and the choosing of a people, with Christ as their head, the new commandment of love as their law and the spread of the Kingdom throughout all times as their goal.

77. Evangelization is not perfect until the local Church arrives at full development as a community of communities with native priests and religious and committed laity.

78. The simple proclamation of the Gospel of its very self already contains great power to condemn alienating situations injustices and systems of oppression, and the missionary must be prepared to run whatever risk that might arise as a consequence of this faithful proclamation of the Gospel.

79. The announcement of the Gospel is not limited merely to the denunciation of personal sins, but extends also to situations that wound the dignity of God's children. This denunciation should always be viewed within the framework of the Church's teaching, the directives of the joint pastoral planning commissions, and our own Claretian charism.

80. This denunciatory function derives its universal power from prophecy, a baptismal gift underscored by the mission to leadership inherent in our vocation, which contains various elements:

– The discernment of what is authentic for the people, as the first road to liberation.

– The continuous search for means apt to attain their liberation.

– Commitment with our brothers in the use of these liberating means.

81. The difficulties and personal risks involved in announcing the Gospel "require that daring of the Spirit and that balance from God" (Medellin) which brings union with Christ, prayer and communion with our brothers.

82. Evangelization, in our day, must be joined to a great effort towards human advancement, i.e., consciousness-raising and the social advancement of the people to be evangelized, always seeking that the people themselves should be the agents and protagonists in their own development. The missionary should feel and act as if he were the focal point of reconciliation, since he is the representative of Him who united all through His blood (Eph.2,13)

83. As Claretians, we perform the service of evangelization within our own charism and spirit; hence, the door is always open for revising or eliminating, according to this charism and spirit, whatever is not in conformity with the saving content of the message.

### *3) Recipients of evangelization:*

84. The 1967 chapter drew up an ample list of the recipients and fields of apostolate (API,27-37), which included practically all mankind. Although, in reality, all men are subjects of our evangelizing, nevertheless, the present chapter, with a view to a better distribution of our active missionary forces, would like to point out those recipients toward whom our apostolic activities should preferably be directed during the coming six-year period:

1) From a socio-economic point of view, we should concentrate on evangelizing the poor and those on the fringes of society (workers, emigrants and farm labourers), in preference to other social classes.

2) From a socio-political point of view, we should prefer countries at a lower degree of development rather than those better-developed or over-developed.

3) From the point of view of the degree of evangelization of the recipients of our missionary action, we should give preference to leaders and activists, who are both recipients and agents of evangelization. Among these, consecrated persons should occupy an outstanding place. From the same point of view, we should give preference to the unbaptized and the baptized who are not yet

sufficiently evangelized (the missions) rather than to those who are de-Christianized or to practicing Christians.

4) From a socio-ecclesial point of view, we must stress the importance of family movements, since the family is the basic social cell and, as it were, the "domestic Church," in which parents and children provide a privileged field for education in the faith.

5) Finally, from the point of view of effectiveness in transforming the world, young people and adolescents, the life-giving sap of the society of the future, should attract our missionary activity in a special way.

85. The chapter judges that, from among these general options for the whole congregation, each province should concretely propose its own objectives with regard to what is most urgent, opportune, and effective.

Nevertheless, no one should underestimate the urgent need of apostolic movements and leadership formation. Special priority must be given to the formation of responsible Christians, committed to temporal organizations, so that they may become full, active participants in our apostolic activities.

We urgently need to prepare laymen to be animators of Christian communities deprived of pastors and to enable them to render certain services reserved in other times to priests alone.

#### **4) *Agents of evangelization:***

86. The Good News brought by Christ, the only Evangelizer in His own right, has been entrusted to His Church, which brings about a real living of the Word, the proclamation of the Word by all means and the celebration of the Word and of the sacraments.

87. The congregation, which arose historically in the Church as a group dedicated to re-evangelization and which later undertook the religious life, performs all these functions as a religious missionary congregation. Insofar as we are religious, our consecration makes us qualified agents among all the baptized, since we are totally committed to a search for God and the expansion of His Kingdom (PC,5). Insofar as we are missionaries, our consecration puts us in a state of detached readiness to make ourselves present among all peoples (AG,5).

88. Every Christian community, inasmuch as it is the active subject of evangelization, should question itself in the light of the Gospel it announces and also from the point of view of those it evangelizes, in order to maintain its transparently missionary character.

89. The entire Claretian community – on the general, provincial and local levels – must live and act as integrated into the universal

and diocesan ecclesial community, and all its members must accept the responsibility of spreading the Gospel and of incarnating themselves in the culture and lifestyle of the people they evangelize.

90. All of our organisms should be involved in the joint pastoral plan in whatever place they work; and where such a plan does not exist, they should contribute to establishing and encouraging one.

### 5) Claretian *communities in the service of evangelization*

91. *Our communities* can be apostolically justified only insofar as they have an evangelizing commitment among the recipients listed above. We are obliged thus:

- To reinforce the witness aspect of these communities with those traits of apostolic spirituality that come to us from our founder. Outstanding among these is a living devotion to the Heart of Mary, an expression of that "maternal love" of the Virgin, "by which all should be fittingly animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church on behalf of the rebirth of men" (LG,65).

- To keep reviewing whether some of our houses, organisms, and institutions are relevant or not.

- To foster the creation of new types of Claretian community inserted in the milieu to be evangelized such, for example, as in the world of workmen, with missionaries dedicated to manual labour, even on a full-time basis.

92. *Local communities.* During the next few years, all of our local communities should apply themselves to a study of their reason for being, undertaking a sincere review of their apostolic situation, in order to readjust themselves to contemporary demands on evangelization, suppressing those incapable of responding to those demands and reinforcing those with greater capability. We need to establish homogeneous communities and, generally, communities dedicated to the same type of apostolate, in order to facilitate the study, planning and common sharing of experiences, and the review of apostolic life.

93. *Provincial communities* must re-examine the distribution of their effective forces for evangelization and their real and efficient participation in the pastoral objectives of dioceses in which they serve. The provincial prefect of apostolate should be the animating force behind all the apostolates of the province.

94. *The general community.* The whole congregation urgently needs to submit its own organization to the judgment of the Gospel of justice and fraternity. The general prefecture of the apostolate should



contribute to renewing its structure and constantly urging review and organization in general.

### 6) *Means of evangelization*

95. The congregation excludes no means or instrument useful for evangelization, leaving its members free to choose those they deem most urgent, opportune, and effective in their respective region and circumstances.

96. The first means for all is the use of Sacred Scripture as personal and communitary contact with the Word of God, the fount of faith and life.

97. There should be no gaps, barriers, or countersigns between the spoken, written, or transmitted word and personal and collective witness. We need, in particular, to arrive at that stage where men may discover in our life as well as in our teaching, the profound roots of poverty, chastity, and detachment which are opposed to the deepest roots of all sin.

98. The congregation has at its disposal a large reserve of means for evangelization, running from preaching to group dynamics, from the Word in the liturgy to contact with all milieus. While we cannot exclude mass media when they are needed by the masses, we must also utilize more sophisticated media.

99. The prefecture of apostolate, on its part, must constantly urge the review, assimilation, and dropping of means that various organisms may prefer.

## II. Activities of Our Structures of Apostolate

100. 1) By "*structures of apostolate*," we mean the five general sections among which the principal apostolic activities of the congregation are divided:

- Direct service of the Word
- Media of social communication
- Christian education
- Parish apostolate
- Missions

It is indispensable that the greatest coordination exist among all these structures of the apostolate so that they may mutually aid and reinforce each other.

## 2) *Direct service of the Word*

101. By "direct service of the Word," we mean the preaching of the Christian message in any of its forms. This service may be stable, in ordinary pastoral structures (parishes, schools, etc.) or it may be more movable, for greater forcefulness (popular missions, retreats, cursillos, etc.) or it may be integrating, for the creation of a Christian-human community.

102. By "communities in the direct service of the Word" we mean those which are by preference dedicated to this sort of ministry, outside of parish or school structures proper.

103. These communities have not lost their relevance; rather, they have great possibilities for today. All evangelization occurs through the Word-witness and undergoes a process that culminates in the Eucharist. Hence, these Claretian communities in the service of the Word should incarnate it in a perpetual call to conversion and re-evangelization, creating groups of catechumens and strengthening catechesis on all levels.

104. The field of consecrated souls holds immense possibilities for this ministry, which should be reinforced on the provincial and interprovincial levels, since its action does not end with the consecrated, but goes on, through them, to all whom they evangelize.

## 3) *The media of social communication*

105. We recognize our inability to set the great mass of the media of social communication in motion, especially in view of monopolies or manipulation of them in certain places. Nevertheless, we cannot abandon our access to them, since they are an imperative of our Claretian vocation.

106. We must promote an examination of conscience throughout the congregation concerning the decisive importance, in this age of image and sound, of the use of these media in our commitment to the Word, and concerning the fidelity with which they should be used in the strict service of the Gospel. This fidelity includes:

a) A total submission of the use of communications media to the needs of spreading the Gospel, so that they might be effective instruments in mediating the Word. Hence, there must above all be a decided effort to learn the language of communications media and to know how to communicate the Gospel message in that language.

b) A purification from every sort of dominating and alienating activity in the use of communications media, so that they may have a truly liberating effect.

#### 4) *Christian education*

107. We must promote the formation of an objective mentality as regards Christian education and its effects among students, parents, representatives, professors and outsiders, so as to avoid prejudice and errors in understanding and evaluating it.

108. All priests should work directly in the Christian formation of professors, students, and families. As regards subject-matter, they should give preference to the most formative, such as religion, philosophy, literature, and the human sciences. However, this does not prevent someone from dedicating himself to the teaching of scientific and technical subjects, since one can evangelize within these fields, too.

109. All structural deficiencies in the religious community school should be mended, so that as a homogeneous and unified group, full of the spirit of brotherhood, it may be the animating cell of the formative team, made up of laymen and religious, and of that great educative community—the school—in which lay teachers, students, and parents must be integrated as active participants in the educative process.

110. No one without a teaching vocation should be assigned to a school. Both our founder and Father Xifre counselled that only those who had a decided vocation should be assigned to schools. In order not to miss potential teaching vocations it is necessary that in our seminaries experienced personnel provide information and formation on the possibilities and apostolic effectiveness of Christian education. Our lay brothers should be guided and formed to take part in the noble task of education.

111. All those assigned to teach in schools should have a degree and adequate preparation for this apostolate. Our schools, with the routine nature of their tasks, being tied down to timetables and the students, etc., have a tendency to rapidly “burn-out” our school personnel. Hence, it is absolutely necessary that the superiors involved see to it that every five or six years, educators take a full-time renewal course.

112. The aim of our educational centers is to form Christians and leaders, to prepare our students for an adequate choice of professions and, above all, for a personal Christian commitment which will allow them to decide on a lay, priestly or religious way of life.

We must avoid all timidity or lack of enthusiasm, when the time comes, to personally explain the problems of religious vocation to a student. This is one of the factors that tells the significant difference between one school and another, in the number of vocations recruited for the Church and the congregation.

113. In accord with the recommendation of the 1967 chapter, we insist that our apostolic activity in universities should not be limited merely to the direction of residences (API,36). We have to seek out new spheres of influence on young university students. The congregation can in no way afford to overlook this important field of the apostolate.

114. The 1967 chapter recommended the drafting of a Claretian educational handbook. This no longer seems opportune, since it would soon be out of date. On the other hand, it does seem necessary to include in our Directory an account of the essential objectives of our educational plan.

### 5) *Parishes*

115. The parish today seems to be a structure well adapted to the unfolding of a dynamic process of evangelization. Hence, our missionaries should regard parish ministry, along its present lines of development, as a particularly efficacious structure for the exercise of our charism and they should enthusiastically devote themselves to the many forms of apostolate and opportunities for evangelization offered by parishes, which lend themselves to the creation of new types of apostolate.

116. For planning and continuity in the apostolate, for awareness and formation of the Christian community, and as a means of assuring its effectiveness, the existence and stability of Claretian parish teams should be regarded as one of the pastoral exigencies of a parish.

117. In order to make our pastoral apostolate more lively and efficient, with a deep sense of complementarity, we should foster encounters between our parish teams and other teams in the congregation, as well as with other structures in the Church, so as to achieve a more complete and orderly missionary effort.

118. In parish service, the Claretian ideal is the creation of a community that proclaims the mystery of Christ to those who have been alienated or who are on the fringes of the Church, as well as one that reinforces the faith, worship and charity of already practicing Catholics. To this end, our missionaries should strengthen the bonds of their Claretian community and share their responsibilities with laymen in the pastoral and administrative organization of the parish and become involved in the joint local and diocesan pastoral planning commissions.

### 6) *The missions*

119. In speaking of our missions, the expression, "missions to non-Christians," is not adequate. By "missions" in the congregation,

we mean our apostolic activity among the nonbaptized or among the baptized who have not been fully evangelized, wherever the Church has not yet arrived at full, local independence.

120. Actively incorporated into our missionary endeavours, the coadjutor brothers offer valiant support to our missionary pastoral work by both their work and their manual arts.

121. We must abandon less urgently needed forms of apostolic work to direct our efforts more to the missions, reinforcing them by way of personnel and economic help, beginning with those in greatest need. (M, Foreword)

122. The present general chapter deems it opportune to reaffirm the principles stated by the 1967 chapter in numbers 7 and 8 of its decree on the missions, with regard to provincial rule in our missions. This rule should respect personal options for going to any mission in the congregation, even though it is not dependent on the province in which one is incardinated.

123. While retaining provincial rule in the missions, we should favour maximum interprovincial missionary cooperation, above all in emergency situations and special needs of a given mission.

## PART THREE

# IMMEDIATE PLANNING

## I. Direct Service of the Word

124. The chapter asks the general government, through the prefecture of apostolate, to promote an urgent plan for preparing specialists to update our evangelizing force from earlier modes of incarnating the Claretian charism. Such a plan should include the following:

### Characteristics

- 1) Begin with specialization for those missionaries who have already experienced some current success in new forms of preaching.
- 2) Specialization should be planned according to criteria of complementarity, so that overall pastoral planning, catechetics,

religious life, etc., may function through teamwork. This, in itself, would allow us to intensify our apostolate to the *consecrated*, even on an interprovincial level.

3) During the period of specialization, specialists should have mutual encounters and contacts with the realities of the apostolate they worked in and which aroused their creativity.

4) The great utility of scientific and university specialization in this field is recognized, but preparation in workshops and in fieldwork may accomplish identical results.

125. To the greatest possible extent, each major organism should foster the creation of teams for a renewed service of the Word, aiming at specialization in various sectors: popular service of the Word, service to youth and religious. These teams should be favoured on an interprovincial scale.

126. In countries with a Christian heritage, teams in direct service of the Word should be put at the disposal of the hierarchy for the task of re-evangelizing the people.

127. If preaching does not afford our communities in direct service of the Word with sufficient means of subsistence, the missionaries may undertake other part-time jobs compatible with their type of ministry, or they should be remunerated from the fund referred to by the 1967 chapter's decree on economy (n.4).

## II. Media of Social Communication

128. Organisms of the congregation involved in this ministry should create an apostolic action team in the MCS (Medios de Comunicacion Social) and it is desirable that this be reinforced on the level of interprovincial conferences.

129. This team would be directly responsible for carrying out everything indicated in n.50 of the 1967 chapter's document on apostolate.

130. Our publishing houses and bookstores should be studied to form an exact idea of their current apostolic situation and their future potential.

131. The scientific-literary output of the congregation should not diminish.

### III. Christian Education

132. In order to continue eliminating anti-witness traits in our educative centers all possible clarifying measures should be adopted.

It is urgent that we do all in our power to see to it that no one is denied access to our schools for lack of financial resources. Whenever, despite all our efforts, a school or a section of a school remains elitist, the community and province should forthrightly judge, in the light of evangelical and Claretian criteria, whether or not such a school or section should be suppressed.

133. The general prefecture of apostolate shall urge provincial governments and pastoral councils to review periodically whether each of their schools is justified in the light of the needs of our charism and whether the number of Claretians working in our schools is excessive. Let them bear in mind the need, the effectiveness and urgency for this apostolate in each region, the vocation of individual members and the need of the Church and the congregation in other sectors and fields. If necessary, they should insist on a better distribution of personnel, the reform of teaching centers, or their suppression.

134. The missionary activity of Christian education need not be carried out only within the structures of our own centers, but may also be accomplished quite effectively in outside state or private centers and, indeed, even outside any school structure.

During the forthcoming six-year period we need to stress this line of educational activity; and with all the more reason, wherever the state raises difficulties for the existence of our own centers or insists that they be elitist in character.

### IV. Parishes

135. The chapter urges each organism in the congregation to undertake a serene and forthright review and planning program for our parish apostolate, bearing in mind the following points:

- 1) The number and characteristics of its parishes, considering the problems and urgent needs of each of them, seeing whether or not they are being run according to the demands of the Claretian charism;

- 2) The importance attached to preaching the Word and to concrete methods of evangelization;

- 3) The care given in the concrete to the priorities of our apostolate;

4) The degree of sensibility of those working in our parishes to make them instruments of apostolic creativity and to launch from them new structures of an opportune and effective apostolate, e.g., *comunidades de base*, distinct apostolic movements, etc.

136. *To revitalize our Parishes:*

1) We urge that in our seminaries objective information and formation be provided by experienced personnel, on the possibilities and apostolic effectiveness of parish ministry.

2) Young and specialized personnel should be assigned to parishes, so as to infuse their dynamism and creativity into the parish apostolate.

3) Older fathers should be included in Claretian parish teams, since this field holds many possibilities for their exercising important apostolates and ministries quite proper of their age.

4) We urge the founding and fostering of courses in specialization which will keep our missionaries in a state of continuing formation and renewal. This applies to both the young and old.

## V. Missions

137. Since the missions are such a fundamentally important field and are so deeply ingrained in the current awareness of the congregation, there shall be a general procurator for the missions to coordinate and foster all mission activities and to remain in continual contact with mission bases.

138. The chapter urges the creation of mission procures in those provinces which, although they have charge of missions, have not created such procures. Provinces and organisms which do not have missions should collaborate with the general procurer.

Besides the obligations common to all mission procures, provincial mission procures should place special emphasis on:

1) Stimulating missionary mindedness and availability on the part of all members of the province;

2) Providing up-to-date information on the provincial and congregational levels concerning planning, problems, and achievements in our missions;

3) Promoting the participation of lay missionaries (doctors, teachers, mechanics, etc.) in our mission work, in accord with the indication of the 1967 chapter (M,32), which have not yet been taken seriously.



139. It is necessary to review the current situation of our missions in Equatorial Guinea and the Philippines and resolve their problems quickly and efficiently.

## VI. The Provincial Pastoral Council

140. The provincial pastoral council shall be composed of a prefect and a representative or delegate for each of the really developed apostolates in the province.

141. The prefect of the pastoral council shall be free of other charges that might impede his full dedication to the fulfillment of his functions.

142. Each delegate member of the provincial pastoral council, who should be truly committed to his respective field of work, will be elected by all members of the province working in that particular field of the apostolate (parish, school, MCS, SDP, etc.).

143. The functions of the provincial pastoral council are listed in the 1967 chapter's document on apostolate (n.19).

144. The prefect's function is to convoke and preside over meetings of the council and to inform the provincial government and all communities in the province of the proceedings of its meetings. It is also his duty to report to the general prefect of apostolate.

145. To obtain maximum efficiency from the pastoral council, the provincial government should listen to it in matters affecting the pastoral life of the province, especially as regards the distribution of personnel and the opening or closing of apostolates. Likewise, it would be very helpful for the provincial government to ratify those things agreed on by the pastoral council and urge their fulfillment.

146. In organisms with scant personnel, this pastoral council need not be formed. Its functions may be fulfilled by a commission or by the provincial government itself.

147. The functions of delegates in the provincial pastoral council are:

1) To coordinate, on the provincial level, the pastoral activities of their specific apostolic field, they should meet periodically with the representatives of those communities which they represent on the council;

2) To coordinate their work with that of provincial delegates in the same type of apostolate in other provinces of the region.

## VII. Services for Publication and Statistics

148. A publications service and a statistical service, both dependent on the secretary general of the congregation, will be established.

149. It belongs to the statistical service:

1) To make a socio-statistical study of the congregation and keep it up to date.

2) To gather and elaborate whatever data may be requested by the general government and prefectures.

150. It belongs to the publications service to publish:

1) The Annales (only for official documents),

2) N.U.N.C. (as a frequent service of short notices),

3) An illustrated periodical review, which will gather news about anything that might contribute to our mutual understanding, particularly concerning new experiments and apostolic activities in the congregation.

4) It shall likewise be in charge of serving those news agencies of the congregation which it deems convenient.

# FORMATION

## I. Introduction

### Problems in Formation

1. The 18th chapter, after analyzing the congregation's problems in the field of formation, has come to the conclusion that among them we may detect nearly all of the current crises and difficulties which appear today in the phenomenology of the Church.

2. Throughout the congregation there is evidence that the impact of the new culture of today's world is causing problems in formation. A new mentality has arisen within the Church, one characterized by the appearance of new ideologies which influence the mentality of our professors and students. Intense social change has radically affected structures in society, in the Church, in the religious life, and in the world of values, which must be assimilated in the formative process. The reference groups into which our young religious are thrust in their studies or work – *comunidades de base*, apostolic groups, universities, etc. – have devalued their sense of belonging to the congregation, above all, through the new values which such groups have aroused in them.

3. As a positive consequence of this situation there has arisen in the awareness of many, a new image of the Church, the priest, the religious and, logically, the Claretian. There has been a felt need for adapting ourselves to the new spirit of today's man and for accommodating and establishing new formative methods and objectives. Formation has become more realistic and human, penetrating deeply into what is essential in religious and Claretian values; it is based on living and dynamic doctrinal principles; young missionaries feel themselves more closely integrated with the world and with men in need of being saved; religious and ecclesial values have been purified; educative values are assimilated more personally and the sense of asceticism and renunciation has acquired

a more positive and constructive value. The new culture is a new spirit and a total impulse towards continual constructive renewal.

4. As to negative consequences, among those problems noted, some stand out as having a larger incidence in formation and these have been the object of more insistent attention. We may cite the following:

a) A crisis of Claretian identity, within the framework of the general crisis of priestly and religious identity in the Church. Together with this, there is a *crisis of belonging to the congregation* which runs the risk of losing our community value in the Church and the disruption of our Claretian vocation from the noviciate on.

b) A *crisis in Claretian communities* which, when they do not offer the authentic Gospel witness of religious life in today's world and Church, on the one hand, block the entry of new vocations into the congregation and, on the other, do not provide the stimulus needed for joyfully living our Claretian vocation.

c) A *crisis in formation directors* who, on the one hand, feel ineffectual in their formative task and, on the other, are diminishing in numbers and dedication. They experience within themselves the sum of the entire problematic world of religious and priestly formation.

d) A *crisis in spiritual life and formation* affects the doctrinal as well as practical levels of formation. This crisis derives from the religious change through which the world, the Church and the congregation are passing (GS,4-11).

e) A *vocational crisis*, which can readily be appreciated through a study of the statistics on our centres of formation, with a steadily diminishing number both of novices and of students and brothers – a crisis not only of incoming vocations but also one of perseverance.

## II. Guidelines for Solving the Problems Indicated

5. The chapter understands that many of these problems have no clear-cut solution either because they are too broad in scope or because they are still in the course of developing as, for example, the problem of culture, the problem of the new image of the Church and the priest, the problems of the existential manner of living the religious life, etc. Nevertheless, it believes that we have to keep on looking, in faith and hope, for new solutions, trusting in the presence of the Spirit of the Lord who moves history and the Church and is

present in our communities. Hence, we are proposing to the congregation certain guidelines towards solutions, so that they may be studied by various provinces and centres of formation and adapted to various situations in the congregation.

## The Congregation

6. First of all, the present chapter has decided to adopt as its inspiration and guide in formative matters, the 1967 decree on formation, bringing it up to date with respect to new problems that have arisen during the past six years. In fact, many of the formational guidelines of the decree of 1967 are still valid today. In the second place, the present chapter, in updating the decree, does not intend to issue another decree on Claretian formation but, rather, to *present a plan for concrete and realistic action*, to be put into practice during the period facing us. This plan of action will, on the one hand, insistently urge putting into practice some of those solutions in the decree of 1967 which are of greatest importance to the congregation (e.g., the vocation problem); and, on the other hand, it will offer solutions and guidelines for new formative problems that have arisen during the last few years.

### A. Some Principles for Guidelines in Formation

7. Claretian missionary formation must seek, as its principle objective, to reproduce the style of life and existence of Christ, according to the charism of St. Anthony Mary Claret. To do so, formation must be based on certain guiding principles on the human, Christian-ecclesial, religious-evangelical apostolic-Claretian and priestly levels. These principles are fully discussed elsewhere (FI,3-39).

We are now concerned with emphasizing certain guiding principles for formation, which may aid us in solving some of the more urgent problems in formation. Among them we may single out the following:

8. Our formational personnel must interpret formative guidelines always within a *creative perspective*, which will enable them to discover vital solutions and practical possibilities for those urgent problems of adaptation demanded of the Claretian by the Church and the world. We insist that, in order to be faithful to the present moment, Claretian formation must be living, creative and effective within a strict fidelity to our mission. A wise creativity will make room for *formative pluralism*, which will spark a variety of formative styles within the unity of the congregation.

9. The formation of Claretians must be founded on an ever deepening search for *communiterity*, which must impregnate their lives and progressively bring those in formation closer to evangelical and missionary community. Along these lines of community-mindedness we must stress the urgency of *formative co-work*, whereby those in formation share in the planning and carrying out of their formation during their distinct developmental stages, according to their varying capacities.

10. An integral Claretian formation should to some extent incorporate the cultural, socio-economic and political sensibilities of current society. This aspect fits in perfectly with our Claretian spirit inasmuch as it involves the *prophetic* trait in our founder which those in formation must progressively live and assimilate. Hence, it is important that those in formation be educated for social and temporal commitment according to the Church's social teaching as adapted to the diverse needs of peoples.

## **B. The Sense of Claretian Identity and of Belonging to the Congregation**

11. We must realistically confront the Claretian crisis of identity and of belonging to the congregation with efficient means, despite the troubles we are currently experiencing in expressing ourselves concretely. The very situation of today's youth, searching anxiously for a personal identity, fully lived and recognized in society, is the issue that lies at the base of the problem we face. If we want to be realistic, we have to deal with this conditioning which is deeply rooted in the nature of those in formation. Nor can we by any means separate our crisis from the general crisis of religious and priests; and, hence, the solution we choose will depend on developments that these problems take in the Church. In the process of clarifying religious and priestly existence in the Church, Claretians, too, will discover the answer to many questions currently being asked of us about our own specific vocation.

12. Nevertheless, we must attempt, from the viewpoint of the Claretian charism, to provide some elements that may prove helpful to prefects and students in assimilating our own spirit, making it alive and real in today's world. We do not pretend to make a complete sketch of the charism of our holy founder. There are other documents that expressly deal with this. We would merely like to underline some traits in his spirit and certain apostolic commitments he undertook throughout the length of his missionary life in order to solve our current formative problems.

a) Traits that appear throughout our founder's life:

- A progressive assimilation of the mystery of Christ, the Son, by following and imitating His lifestyle in his own life both within and outside the congregation.

- A marked tendency towards forming a community of collaborators in the missionary proclamation of the Gospel during the ten years following the foundation of the congregation and, in particular, during his pastoral experience in Cuba.

- A prophetic spirit, clearly manifested in his apostolic life, whereby he perceived the concrete spiritual needs of the people of God and employed the means most adequate for the solution of those needs, in both the religious and social fields.

- A total commitment as a missionary and bishop who became directly involved in combating sin and spreading the Kingdom of God without fear of denouncing true evils in social structures, when they violated the fundamental rights of man.

b) As Claretians faithful to the charism of our founder in the present moment of the congregation, we should place greater stress, from the very first years of formation, on the fact:

- That we are committed to Christ within an evangelical community.

- That we must live the brotherhood within communal charity, in the service of the Church and mankind.

- That we must have, and live in, a constant and universal missionary attitude of proclaiming the Word of God. Claretian missionary formation would not be authentic if our young men in formation did not practically assimilate in their lives that availability to be sent anywhere in the world to preach the Gospel of Christ.

- That there can be no fully missionary attitude without identification with Christ in His death and resurrection by assimilating this redeeming sacrifice during the formative years. The Claretian missionary "thinks only of how he may follow and imitate Christ in praying, working, suffering, and striving to achieve, always and only, the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls" (Constitutions).

- That we must work to discern prophetically the signs of the times in the various activities of the Church and the congregation, denouncing every sin and unjust order opposed to the historical realization of salvation as the total and integral liberation of man.

c) Two basic formational objectives should be the identification of those in formation with the Claretian ideal in the world and in the congregation of today, and their real incorporation into the Claretian community. To accomplish this it will be necessary, on the one hand,

to create a climate of mentalization in our formative communities to aid in an ever deepening assimilation of our Claretian reality; on the other hand, it will be necessary to activate all possible means to live community life intensely both on the local and congregational levels.

Community living of the Claretian spirit in a concrete community is the best guarantee of finding our own identity and of feeling a sense of belonging to the congregational community. Likewise, the knowledge and genuine interpretation of the history of the congregation, of the fundamentals of its origin, and of its development throughout the years in various parts of the world, etc., will all help in attaining this objective. Hence, it would be fitting to assure a widespread distribution of all those Claretian publications which might help both formation directors, as well as those in formation, to a greater and better knowledge of the congregation in its past and present historical moments.

## C. The Creation of Evangelical and Claretian Communities

13. We endorse the idea that a great number of formative problems can be overcome within an *evangelical and Claretian community*. Those in charge of formation should insist on the community's being based on its members' development in faith and on the deepening of their interpersonal relationships. A fraternity without shared faith does not satisfy the demands of authentic religious community and a fraternity without genuine interpersonal relationships is a community that dwindles and disappears.

The evangelical and Claretian community, in its specific value, is a community founded on fraternity in Christ; it is born of the universal love of virginity; it directly expresses itself and grows in concrete community; and it aims at total apostolic giving, in the universal self-gift of the missionary.

In this sense, we propose the practice of the following:

a) The creation in our formative centres of true formative communities with all the exigencies they imply. A true community should be made up of persons who as such wish to live the mystery of fraternity in Christ. This mystery lived in its fullness will never diminish the inner liberty of its members nor disrupt their personal intimacy, but will enable them to face the problems and difficulties of religious and apostolic mission with full personal responsibility, even in the deepest solitude.

b) The community manifestation of faith should be intensified



by listening to and reflecting on the Word of God, by personal and community prayer, by frequent communal celebration of the Eucharist, and by review of our apostolic and community life.

c) Likewise, whenever convenient, we should use modern techniques to strengthen community life and structures, such as group dynamics or other psychological methods which may be valid for the religious life always, however, respecting personal freedom and intimacy.

d) We should live, as communally as possible, a life of poverty in all its modes of expression, so that we will arrive not only at an education in spiritual sensitivity but also at a real and authentic, communal and committed poverty. Work should be not only a witness to the human meaning of man's activity, accomplished in freedom of spirit, but also an expression of the fraternal sharing of all the members of the community (ET,20,21), and may even go to the extent of self-financing, for reasons of poverty and formation, without prejudice to studies. Thus, a serious formation in poverty should review some of the foundations on which our religious poverty is actually based, as well as certain attitudes that make us live inconsistently with what we have professed.

e) A fuller integration of those in formation into Claretian communities may take place on two levels:

- Incorporating students into the local and provincial formation commissions without, however, preventing formation directors from holding separate meetings in any given circumstance. The object of this, besides fostering a more effective and creative pedagogy, is to lay greater stress on a more community-minded formation in which all members of the formation community – prefects *and* students – play an active role, thus avoiding any sort of individualism which might prejudice the advance of the formative process.

- Incorporating students into the organs of government on the local, provincial and general levels, in conformity with our legislation.

## D. The Claretian who forms Claretians

### The Formation Team

14. The congregation has manifested a palpable concern for *formation directors*, both as regards their number and as regards their dedication and preparation. In practice, it is difficult for one

person to combine all those qualities demanded of prefects and masters of novices in our Documents, Directory and Constitutions (FI,76-83,121;Dir,238-241;CC, 108-116). This is all the more true now, in view of the greater number and complexity of current problems in formation. Hence, it can be seen that the concepts of prefect and master have to be expanded and enriched with elements derived from community pedagogy, making them applicable to a group or team which combines in itself most of those qualities which the Church and the congregation demand of those directly charged with the formation of candidates.

a) The intention of the general chapter is not to take away the ultimate responsibility of the prefect or master of novices. A realistic sense of formative direction, on the one hand, and the development of the concept of responsibility towards an ever greater sharing in co-responsibility, on the other, demand that, to the greatest extent possible, formation centres in the congregation should be run by formation teams.

b) The formation team should possess a combination of requisites in order to be effective in their formative task:

- It ought to be in agreement over what constitutes proper psycho-pedagogical criteria and procedures.

- It should include directors of formation who together combine positive pastoral experience, solid formation in theology, a notable ability and readiness for renewal and adaptation (GE,5) to the circumstances of place and time, a deep formation in religious and priestly life, and a sensitivity towards the spiritual life.

- It should maintain, in its concrete operations, a perfect unity of action, although allowing for the personal lifestyle of each member of the team.

c) The director of formation, above all when he is not integrated into a formation team, needs a great deal of communication and interchange with other formation centres and with people in his confidence who may aid him in fulfilling his complex task.

d) Major organisms should give greater attention to fostering, within the means at their disposal, the vocation of the director of formation, effectively offering him the preparation he needs to carry out his charge properly.

## E. Intensifying Spiritual Life and Formation

15. Today, more than ever before, we need to bear in mind the obstacles to a truly solid *spiritual formation*, given the influence of our culture and of changing attitudes towards spirituality in the Church. In fact, some of the concrete norms of asceticism and many expressions of an earlier spirituality have lost their meaning and value. Hence, it can be seen that directors of formation must be ready to adapt themselves and their spiritual practices, to be open to new ways and to accept pluralism in expressions of faith, and in this case to prepare for these changes and necessary experiments.

Faced with this situation, the chapter recognizes the importance of spiritual formation for the Claretian missionary in today's world. The spirituality proposed to our students should be positively related to the development of our mission in the present and future world. This means a formation not so much of flight from, as one of prudent encounter with, earthly realities and human values, joined to a constant maturing towards the fullness of Christ, under the guidance of the Spirit.

The entire formation of the Claretian religious – hence, his spiritual formation – should lead the student to an encounter with the Christ of the Gospel, according to the way of life and existence He undertook, which remains humanly valid. Thus, he will feel fascinated and attracted by the saving Christ, whom he has promised to follow. Hence, aware of the difficulties just pointed out, the chapter proposes to the congregation:

a) That spiritual formation programs should deal with the concerns of present-day asceticism, such as:

- the need to build authentic communities – a truly difficult task that demands serious and continual personal conversion on all levels of Christian existence:

- the renunciation, for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, of all that is implied in virginity, especially in a world which is immersed in eroticism and overrated sex, a world which is also a source of constant mortification and conversion to overcome the existential tension which the religious must bear;

- the full meaning of evangelical poverty, which implies a full uprooting, dispossession, availability and faith in those other goods brought by Christ, without denying our obligation to create a new world, based on liberty, justice, and service in its human and Christian dimensions.

b) That dynamic structures be set up for continuing spiritual formation and review, founded on sound teaching and in agreement

with the magisterium of the Church. To this end, we should foster spiritual encounters, shared living experiences, retreats, reviews, etc., where we face the basic themes of Christian and Claretian spirituality.

c) That in our formation centers there should be required studies in spirituality aimed at laying a firm biblical and theological foundation for the spiritual life of our students and, in particular, for their Marian devotion and the external expression of that devotion.

d) That the personalized formation of each candidate be intensified, so that during his vocational journey he may continue to overcome the crises and difficulties that beset his own age and vocation. To achieve this it is of the highest importance, both from a pedagogical and from a spiritual and religious point of view, that a serious and deep relationship exist between formation directors and students, by way of spiritual direction, vocational guidance, pastoral dialogue, interpersonal encounters, sharing of vocational experiences, etc.

e) That – always within the exigencies of the religious life as to personal and community prayer and within the practical guidelines set forth by the congregation – each formative community should organize its own community prayer life, so as to prepare students to face the difficulties of the future.

Wherever Lauds and Vespers are already being said as a form of uniting ourselves to the prayer of the Church, there should be an opportunity for experimenting with other forms of prayer, e.g., community prayer – dialogue about the Holy Scriptures or about life-experiences or any other expression of community faith. In any case there is a need now, more than ever before, for formation in a true, personal and communal prayer life, in accord with the present situation of the world and the Church in which a profound interior life must be lived. Furthermore, we should foster frequent apostolic prayer, which will manifest the missionary interest and concern of our students for personal apostolic enterprise (2Cor.6,1-13; Phil. 1,2ff).

## F. Pastoral Planning for Vocations

16. From the questionnaires received and from various statistical studies we may make a *few statements* on the *problem* of vocations and the realism of minor seminaries.

a) A truly large number of members – priests, students and brothers – have left the Congregation during the past few years. Moreover, the number of entrants has diminished considerably, so that the number of novices is at present greatly reduced.

b) It is also a fact that few young people enter the congregation from our own working apostolates (schools, parishes, etc.).

c) Some provinces have, in fact, abandoned vocational promotion, giving the impression that the vocational field is of little interest to them, since they either do not have a vocational recruiter, or have closed their minor seminaries without substituting some other form of vocational activity. Other provinces leave recruiting to one man, without creating a vocational consciousness in each and every one of their communities.

d) Many claim that our lack of personal and community witness and a lack of creativity and updating in our apostolic endeavours are an obstacle to attracting many young people to our vocation.

e) It seems that the minor seminary is regarded as a positive phenomenon in some places and as a negative one in others. The circumstances and problems of each country or region are considered as decisive factors as to whether conducting minor seminaries is of positive or negative value.

17. These statements show us that we are involved in the grave vocational crisis affecting the Church generally and that solutions are not at hand because they depend on many factors influencing the general milieu of society and the Church (Cf. nos. 2-4). We might add that even our well-considered and perfectly executed solutions do not always produce the results we had contemplated in theory.

On the other hand, we believe that the problem of vocations cannot be resolved on a purely methodological and pastoral basis. It is a much deeper problem, solutions for which must be sought precisely along those lines suggested earlier in dealing with problems in formation (5-12). After all is said and done, the attractiveness of the evangelical life lived in community is the decisive factor in promoting vocations.

18. Nonetheless, the problem of vocations is one of the most serious and urgent problems we will have to face in the years to come and, hence, one that must occupy first place in our congregational and formative priorities. The congregation must make a high-prioritized effort and use all the personnel and money needed to resolve it. It is the duty of every one of us to intensify our faith in the future of the Church and the congregation so that we may feel driven and committed to the promotion of Claretian vocations.

19. From the viewpoint of guidelines, the decree of 1967 continues to apply with full validity in the field of vocational recruitment. It contains a great many of the solutions being proposed even today for overcoming the vocations crisis. We are not going to say anything particularly new in this sense. What the chapter wishes to propose to

the congregation are a few lines of immediate action to be put into practice as rapidly and efficiently as possible:

a) The point of departure and source of vocational promotion should be the firm conviction that the priestly and religious vocation is a supernatural gift from God. Hence, the principal means of fostering vocations must also be supernatural in character as, e.g., faith, constant prayer, the witness of that evangelical and fraternal life we profess, and creativity and relevance in our apostolic activities.

b) On the other hand, in promoting vocations we should use the most effective methods for each place, without becoming bogged down or enslaved by any one particular method, always opening new horizons for promotion.

c) As soon as possible, within its overall plans, each organism should establish or review its vocational planning; it should create a team of recruiters dedicated full time to the vocational apostolate (within their youth apostolate, etc.), suppressing other, less urgent activities, if necessary. The same applies to our missions, where the work of evangelization cannot be considered to be fully achieved until well-formed native vocations have been secured. The task of this vocational team will be searching for candidates – not just hoping for them – and maintaining and increasing a sense of vocational co-responsibility in the provinces. The Conferences of Provincial Superiors should be preoccupied with elaborating joint plans for vocational promotion and creating, on the level of larger zones, effective methods of collaboration and promotion.

Finally, the general government and major organisms should seriously study the vocational outlook for the congregation in certain organisms and offer them the effective support of trained personnel (Cf. GI, 133).

d) Accepting the fact that minor seminaries, when duly updated, may be realistic options for some places, we must make a greater effort at intensifying our vocational initiatives among youth. As practical suggestions, we offer the following: youth groups, meditation groups, vocational groups in our schools, travelling teams of recruiters, vocational attention to adolescents and young adults in their homes, associations, clubs, etc. Likewise, we must in every way seek to promote adult vocations by means of personal pastoral contacts, cursillos, etc. For adults, as for young people, each organism should offer them, in its communities, a milieu full of fraternity, evangelical living and apostolic enthusiasm, where they can better

discover their vocation by joining in.

e) It is also a good idea to involve teachers and Christian leaders – especially our associates – in vocational promotion plans of our communities. Their efforts can be highly effective both as to vocational selection and as to the formation and perseverance of vocations.

### III. "Renovationis Causam"

20. The general chapter approves for another six years *ad experimentum*, the faculties granted by the decree:

*Renovationis causam* as regards the noviciate, adopted by decree of the general government, June 27, 1970, as expressed in the Directory (Ch. VI-IX and XV).

### IV. Dynamic Structures in Formation

21. Every major organism should concretely restore *realistic planning for formation*. This planning should begin with a sincere review of the province's formation resources, considering its limits and potential, and should result in an adequate plan of formation, accommodated to needs of the province, to be carried out during the next six years according to the guidelines of the present general chapter. Such planning should also include a continuing evaluation by means of effective dynamic structures, on the provincial and general levels, as we shall presently explain.

22. *Co-responsibility in formation* may be practically fostered in a number of ways: by encouraging dialogue and facilitating frequent encounters between the students and other members of the province through gatherings, retreats, sharing apostolic and missionary experiences; by inviting priests and brothers to visit our formation centres; by the active co-operation of these centres in vocational and apostolic fields, etc. Our formation centres should inform our apostolic centres of all vocational initiatives that might serve to stimulate and guide vocations arising in their own fields.

This dialogue in co-responsibility must assume deeper manifestations besides those just mentioned. There must be a dialogue between formation directors and those who plan the apostolate in the province, in order to be realistic in meeting both the needs of formation and the full operation of the apostolate. Thus, within the universal Claretian spirit formation directors will also orient our young

missionaries in responding to the concrete needs and special characteristics of each people or region.

Likewise, the formative endeavour should always be open to all members of the congregation and the provinces, so that all should feel a commitment to formation and when necessary, even question formation directors, through the proper channels, about progress in formation. As regards the students, it might be productive, if deemed opportune, to have encounters with students from other provinces to study, analyze; and solve, in an active manner, formative problems.

23. Throughout the length of the entire process of priestly studies, there must be a painstaking and progressive pastoral formation, acquired through apostolic practice, pastoral experience, and pastorally oriented studies that will help the young missionary in choosing among future options for specialization and make him really feel in his own life the need for austerity and sacrifice in the apostolate.

In any case, it is very important that balance and personal synthesis be maintained between the aforesaid practices and one's dedication to the study and cultivation of the spiritual life, so as to avoid any deviation from a unified formation and assimilation of values.

24. As to the pastoral year, the general chapter affirms the need of specific pastoral formation for young missionaries, a formation that may be accomplished according to the method described in FI, 137, ff., or according to other more pluralistic or dynamic methods. In such cases the objective is that young missionaries enter the priesthood with a complete preparation:

- a) *in theory*, in matters concerning pastoral care;
- b) *in practice*, through experience in the most representative sectors of ministerial practice;
- c) *relevant*, so that it should provide them with as complete a view as possible, of the pastoral panorama of the modern world;
- d) *personalized*, i.e., oriented in accord with their personal qualities and the socio-cultural circumstances in which their young missionary lives will be spent.

25. Every major organism is obliged to organize pastoral formation either by means of the pastoral year in the strict sense (FI, 137) or by means of other equivalent ways that may lead to the objectives referred to above. Among the possible variants the following, already in practice in some places, may be suggested:

- a) yearly courses on pastoral subjects offered in various universities and institutes, as long as these theoretical courses are complemented by directed pastoral experiences;



- b) the establishment of a specifically pastoral diaconate year as an integral part of seminary training before priestly ordination;
- c) two or three years of specialization (licentiate in ecclesiastical sciences) as long as an adequate complement of practice in the ministry is guaranteed.

## B. Permanent Formation

26. Throughout the congregation there is a deep preoccupation with the need for the permanent renewal and formation of our missionaries. It may be affirmed that in the congregation there is a growing number of members who are not updated either theologically or pastorally, either for lack of possibilities or for lack of serious effort at renewing their mentality, apostolate, or life. Our constant preoccupation with new vocations should not cause us to set aside our care for persons presently in the congregation who may prove to be a real problem, by reason of their lack of enthusiasm and adaptation and by reason of their passivity in the face of current problems.

27. The aim of this renewal course is not limited to simple information and updating of doctrinal and pastoral ideas, by means of classes, cursillos, and conferences; something much more profound and personal must be attempted:

- a) true renewal of personal life, implying a serious and sincere review in the light of the Gospel and one's own charism and a rebuilding of vocational fidelity to one's own apostolic mission (Fl, 143, 144).

28. In carrying out this permanent renewal, we must distinguish two levels:

- a) an ordinary level of permanent renewal by way of readings, lectures, community meetings, retreats, etc.;
- b) an organized level of intensified moments of renewal which could take the place of the so-called renewal course. This level must be periodically obligatory for all members of the congregation. There must be an effort at putting all the members of each province in a general attitude of permanent renewal.

29. This intensified level of organized and obligatory renewal might be replaced, among others, by the following alternatives:

- a) intensive courses organized by the congregation itself, as has already happened on various occasions;

- b) courses organized by groups outside the congregation;
- c) after a certain number of years, through a system of supply, every member of the province should have an opportunity for a sabbatical – a time free from common tasks and occupations in order to dedicate himself to a serious specialized renewal in competent centres.

30. Major organisms, by means of their respective prefectures of formation, in co-ordination with their other prefectures, should establish the manner in which renewal courses most apt for each individual are to be made and the competent centres which are to be attended. All things being equal, centres of the same pastoral milieu as that in which the individual performs his apostolic ministry are to be preferred.

### **C. The Ordo Studiorum Generalis and the Permanent Commission of Formation and Studies**

31. As regards the OSG, the general chapter, seeing that a majority of the congregation does not want one and that a great part of our students attend outside centres for their ecclesiastical studies, has decided not to publish one under the present circumstances.

Similarly, it does not believe it useful to name a permanent commission of formation and studies, as indicated in (FI, 162-164).

32. Nevertheless, the chapter believes in the necessity and great utility of frequent and occasional meetings of specialists in formation and studies in our congregation, to treat of problems relating to their work, on a general level.

These meetings should also be convoked on the provincial and interprovincial levels, with the advantages that they may be more practical and adapted to the circumstances of provinces.

33. General meetings on formation and studies, to be effective, should fulfil all of the following integral conditions:

- a) that their members come from various countries and are fundamentally dedicated to formative tasks;
- b) that they report on and study problems on various levels, and the main ecclesial trends in the formation of candidates to the religious and priestly life;
- c) that, within formative pluralism, they achieve a certain unity of criteria;

d) that they produce periodic evaluations of the guidelines given by the general chapter with regard to formation.

## D. Centers of Studies

34. The chapter reaffirms the convenience, according to the possibilities of each province or provinces, of major superiors' instituting our own centres of studies, both on the provincial and interprovincial levels, as long as they maintain the conditions and level demanded of such centres by the Church and the needs of our own apostolic operation (Fl, 149, 151, 153).

35. As regards studies pursued in centres not directed by the congregation, it is necessary to stipulate the following

a) The Claretian and missionary formation of our students should be guaranteed by making up in our houses whatever belongs to the properly formative fields and by fostering a real commitment in living our spirit.

b) Our students should be given a complementary formation that includes the assimilation and living of the Claretian charism according to the various aspects of the theology of the religious life, Marian and apostolic spirituality, and of the lay or priestly apostolate, as the case may be .

c) Over and above duly selecting the centers of studies to be attended, we should check periodically in order to be able to guarantee their academic and formative level.

d) Insofar as possible, we should prepare members to become professors in the centres attended by our students.

# ECONOMY

## I. Introduction

1. The document of the extraordinary chapter of 1967 on administration is still valid and nearly all of its articles have been incorporated into the Constitutions or the Directory.

It does not seem to be necessary to redraft it or prepare another document. It has been deemed fitting only to revise those corresponding numbers of the Constitutions and the Directory and the treatment of certain special points and particular cases.

*Affirmations:* As constants which should guide current economic policies in the congregation, we would like to make two affirmations:

2. 1) *Capitalization*, properly speaking, which tends to allow us to live off our revenues, should not be accepted in the congregation as a valid principle on any community level: local, provincial, or general (Dir., 401). Nevertheless, for the development of its activities the congregation may avail itself of the economic tools of the society in which it operates, bearing in mind that economy is not an end in itself and that we must use the "necessary goods with deep respect for the evangelical dimension of our poverty" (Adm., Preface).

3. 2) The process of change which the form and content of community is undergoing, should cause the following elements to stand out on the level of economic administration:

a) A new tenor and image for economies, as collaborating servers of the community and within the community.

b) Decentralization, as a demand of co-responsibility and effectiveness in building provinces and communities, rather than as a juridical phenomenon (Adm., 19).

c) A process of adult formation in the use of money and goods in conformity with justice and poverty.

d) Merely individual Claretian poverty is not a valid sign in contemporary society, if it is placed in the context of a congregation that is not poor or is apparently rich.

## II. Capitalization and Poverty

4. a) Our concept of poverty rests, over and above the just and poor use of goods, on the universal law of labour (PC, 13; ET, 20).

Hence, for us today, on all levels, capitalization properly so called, which tends to allow us to live off our revenues, must be regarded as antievangelical.

5. b) It is not regarded as capitalization properly so called but, rather, as savings, to have a prudential reserve fund proportionate to the needs and scope of each organism.

6. c) At a given time, any organism may with competent authorization, accumulate funds towards a determined and concrete investment purpose contemplated in the near future.

7. Accordingly:

1) Houses cannot accumulate funds except for a determined end and with competent authorization of the major superior. Even in these cases it is fitting that such funds be deposited with the provincial administration.

8. 2) Provinces can have and accumulate funds, in prudent measure, to provide for the needs of those in formation, of missions, of gratuitous apostolates, etc., and to provide for cases of emergency.

9. 3) The general government may act, with fitting latitude along the same lines as the provinces.

## III. The Economic Council

10. The general econome will be aided in his functions by the general economic council, of *which* he is the president.

11. The general economic council is made up of its president and six members with voice to be named by the general government. Of these members, two shall reside in Rome, while the other four reside in different parts of the world.

12. The meeting of the six members with the president constitutes the plenary council, which should be held at least once a year. The meeting of the two members, who reside in Rome, with the president, constitutes the non-plenary council, which should be held at least every six months and whenever the general government or the general econome require it, for the treatment of economic matters.

13. It is the duty of the general economic council: to issue their

technical opinion on as many important economic affairs as present themselves for the resolution of the general government; to advise in making budgets, investment of funds, etc.; to report once a year to the general government on the progress of the general administration and on the fulfillment.

## IV. The Formation of Economes

14. The 1967 chapter underlined the need for the formation of economies, suggesting seminars as a means (Adm., Ch.I). Even though we recognize that something has been done, it does not seem that any excessive attention has been given to this point. Hence, accepting the suggestion of the precapitular commission, we believe that the following concrete norms may be made, the first two of which might be in some form incorporated into the Directory:

a) An elementary knowledge of administration and economy, to be acquired during the years of formation, should be obligatory for all priests and brothers. Since we lack other means, recourse might be had to correspondence courses.

b) It would be fitting to organize short courses for specialization, obligatory for economies and administrators on the job, whether on the provincial, interprovincial, or, even, general levels.

## V. The Fundus Credititius

15. The situation of the F.C. clearly indicates that it does not interest the major organisms, since of the \$1,500,000 which formed its assess on June 30, only \$225,000 belonged to them and, of these, more than \$100,000 belonged to a single province. On the other hand, it is of continuing interest to nearby smaller provinces and to particular individuals in the congregation who, with due permission, place in it special funds of donations for specific ends, seeking security without complications as well as an adequate return. In view of this, the chapter, given the difficulty of making a decision in this matter, gives the general government a vote of confidence to attend to a transformation of the Fundus in the manner it finds fitting.

## VI. Insurance

16. The reports received from the provinces demonstrate a clear advance in awareness on this point, although some still find it difficult to understand the reason for disability and old age and retirement in

a religious congregation. As to plans already in effect, there are still a good number of provinces that have not taken any definitive measures.

a) We approve the criterion of the chapter of 1967 (Adm., 13) which urges the need for health and retirement insurance for the congregation.

b) Given the diversity of situations and opinions in the various major organisms, we believe that each province should resolve the fittingness, urgency, and practical manner of carrying them out.

## VII. The Sharing of Goods

17. 1) *Aid to needy organism*: This is a duty of the general administration which controls the distribution of goods in the congregation to assist organisms in need. While its funds allow, it should aid all major organisms in the congregation that ask for and need aid.

To be able to receive this aid, each needy organism should present to the general government at a sufficient time in advance, a perfectly detailed estimated budget, including all ordinary operating expenses, estimated outlay for development, apostolate, studies, vacations, etc., requesting the necessary aid.

These estimates should be studied and carefully controlled by the general economic council so that it may grant the aid needed. The general administration is obliged to supervise in a special way the administrations of those organisms which it aids.

Naturally, the general administration can only attend to these needs if it, in its turn, is helped by the economically well-off provinces, by means of the special quotas mentioned in n. 361 of the Directory.

18. 2) *Shared expenses*: As a minimal but significant concrete form of sharing goods, those attending study or recollection days, encounters, chapters, etc., might, by common accord, adopt the system of equitably splitting all costs, including travel.

## VIII. Old Age Pension

19. The sharing of goods practiced in the congregation through quotas and grants in aid, basically aims at remedying unjust inequalities that would otherwise exist in the congregation if rich provinces existed in isolation from needy provinces. But there are other unjust situations, two of which we would like to point out here.

It is not a rare occurrence that the aged or invalids move from one province to another without a pension. Although they should be well received and usually are, those involved suffer a kind of inferiority complex because they feel that they are a burden on the new province.

We propose that:

a) *For the future*, when an elderly person or an invalid moves from one province to another, the former will give the latter a quantity equivalent to that of the old age pension in the new province.

b) As regards the past, provinces which can, should attend to the petitions of elderly persons who once worked in them, whether these petitions are made by the elderly or by the new provinces.

## IX. The Economic Situation of Students Outside the Province

20. Another not uncommon situation of injustice is that which arises from sending individuals to study outside the province with the obligation of financing their own expenses. There are usually two injustices involved in this case: against the communities who generously receive them, for which they usually become a source of complaints; against the individuals themselves, for whom it becomes a source of bitterness.

a) When a province sends one of its members to study, it should resolve beforehand the problems of lodging in our communities, study expenses, etc., which does not prevent the persons in question from helping by means of their work, thus economizing for the province.

b) On their part, communities that receive these members should always do so in a fully understanding spirit, even when what has been suggested here has not been fulfilled.



# ASSOCIATES OF THE CONGREGATION

## 1. The Claretian Project

One of the ideas which St. Anthony Mary Claret fostered from the first years of his priestly ministry was the incorporation of the laity into the apostolate. Thus he was quite rightly called "precursor of Catholic action" by Pius XI. In his projects, our founder had it in mind to establish an association made up of priests and of lay people of both sexes. The congregation, taking cognizance of this idea, sought to realize it to some extent in the apostolic organization of "Claretian Collaborators," approved by the Holy See on July 16, 1943.

## 2. The Extraordinary Chapter

The chapter of 1967, recognizing the apostolic insight of St. Anthony Mary Claret and seeking to give it life, proposed "the founding or cultivation of some work proper of the congregation, which might be relevant within the overall pastoral plan" (Apl, 78). Moreover, in response to the desires of many of the laity, it affirmed "the opportuneness of a lay extension of the Claretian family in the missionary line of our charism, marked by our cordimarian consecration and even open to taking shape as a true secular institute" (Apl, 84).

## 3. Position of the Present Chapter

Following the criterion established by the 1967 chapter, the present chapter echoes the aspirations of those who manifest a desire to become associated with the Claretian congregation.

1. It recommends that the general government seek for convenient means to associate with our congregation and to give all

needed and fitting aid to those who, as we said, desire and are disposed to collaborate with us.

2. "At the same time, the congregation can do no less than joyfully and gratefully accept the help of those who – singly or in groups – wish to serve the Church voluntarily within the Claretian charism, participating in the congregation's own works" (Apl, 77). This collaboration and co-responsibility in common works, if it rests on a strong common family base, with the freedom and flexibility deriving from the mode of being proper to the groups, all of which are born, directly or indirectly, at the same charismatic font, may offer a highly positive outlook for the fullness of service that the Claretian family renders to the Church (Cf. the documents of CICLA and of Belo Horizonte, n.6).

## 4. Description of this Work

1. Those of the clergy and laity who share in the Claretian charism and who are committed permanently, in varying degrees, to live it in communion with the Congregation of Missionaries, are considered as Claretian associates.

2. The basic elements which explicate the Claretian charism and which the associates must interpret according to their own vocation are:

a) An *apostolic spirit*, born of a progressive identification with the self-sacrificing charity of Christ, in a process which St. Anthony Mary Claret expresses in St. Paul's formula: "the love of Christ impels us."

b) A *life of witness*, "in the style of the Apostles," which pre-supposes a following of Christ as the Apostles did.

c) The missionary service of the Word, directly or indirectly using all apt means to do so, with an acute sensitivity towards what is most urgent, opportune, and effective, in a spirit of universality, showing a certain preference for the poor and those in great need.

d) Apostolic consecration to the Heart of Mary, in the profound sense of living the aforesaid elements in close filial union with the inner mystery of the Virgin Mother of the Church: a mystery expressed in her faith, her hope, her obedience to the saving plan of God and, above all, her charity (LG, 61). This is, in the expression of our holy founder, the "furnace" in which all who share in the Claretian missionary charism are formed.

e) *Secularity*, a particular trait willed for these groups by our founder, one which, according to Vatican II, "proceeds from the witness of the life of the laity towards their characteristic obligation of the Christian restoration of the temporal order" (Apl, 6 and 7).

3. Being an associate means being in communion with the Congregation of Missionaries in common service to the Church. This service is carried out in a spirit of co-responsibility and of a community of objectives with the congregation which, in its turn, gives itself over to teamwork, review, programming, and executing the common work, even in those places where the associates work alone. They will always bring their own point of view to bear on temporal realities and on those means which are most apt for the attainment of our common apostolic aims.

## 5. Integration

1. Groups of Claretian associates will enjoy total autonomy, although they share the identical basic ideas and fidelity to the Claretian apostolic charism. This supposes, on the part of the congregation, authentic service towards these associates so that they may arrive at their own maturity and, on the part of the associates, a communion with the congregation and its superiors, in the field of apostolic labor.

2. The discipline or organization needed by these groups should arise within them and not be imposed by the congregation.

3. The congregation will offer its services in accord with the need for formation and orientation.

4. These groups should maintain mutual communications, fostering them by shared information, life-experience, etc.

## 6. Pluralism

Diversity of life and commitments demands a maximum of pluralism in the work of the associates and, concretely:

1) as to the various kinds of members, they may be of both sexes, of varying age levels and states of life;

2) as to the degree of dedication, they may have a commitment or they may be consecrated;

3) and as to the structure or organization they deem necessary.

## 7. Degrees of Dedication

The associates, even though they constitute a single organization in the congregation, are distinguished, nonetheless, by various degrees of dedication:

- a) those living together in matrimony
- b) unmarried members without vows or promises, who live in their own family environment or even in community;
- c) those who are evangelically committed, even by private vows, recognized by the congregation and dependent, in taking them or being dispensed from them, on a superior in the congregation.

## 8. Those Committed by Vow

The chapter acknowledges that there are groups of associates who, having opted for the third degree of dedication mentioned above, wish to maintain their bond with the congregation. Without prejudice to the principles adopted when speaking of the integration of groups of associates, it seems fitting to indicate a minimum of channels to be used in rendering the service referred to above in n.5, 3). This matter is commended to the attention of the general government of the congregation.

**9.** It belongs to the general government, through the prefectures of religious life and apostolate, to animate the communion and promote the dynamism and continuity of the distinct regional and national groups or centers, for which the congregation will take the responsibility on various levels.

## APPENDIX I

### PRAYER IN THE CONGREGATION

1. Over and above the careful treatment of prayer in the Constitutions, the chapter, in the name of the congregation, has felt it desirable to make a review of life on this important theme. The data gathered from the inquiries made before the chapter and from the experience of those who attended it show that there is a sufficiently widespread concern about prayer throughout the congregation.

Summing up these data we might say that:

*As a positive element*, it can be seen that there is an ever growing awareness, on all levels, that prayer is utterly necessary for the congregation. Moreover, there are many ongoing efforts and experiments to promote prayer.

However, we would be lacking in candour if we were to deny that the data received point to a crisis in prayer. Either we pray less than before or we pray little, both on the personal and the community level.

2. *Possible causes*: It is difficult to give a complete list of the causes underlying this complex phenomenon. Among them, by way of a helpful illustration for our brothers, we may point out the following:

- There seems to be a lack of deeper understanding of our motives for praying. We need to clarify certain misunderstandings and dispel certain confusions. The nearly perfect doctrine on prayer found in various documents of the Church and the congregation, does not seem to have penetrated sufficiently into our consciousness, on the personal or community level.

- It may also be the case that, in abandoning those structures that called (at least, externally) for more time at public prayer, we have done away with what some regarded as an aid to prayer and what others regarded as the appearance of prayer.

- It seems that some are unaware of the profound relationship that exists, in the Church's teaching, between liturgical prayer and personal, intimate prayer. Hence, a dichotomy may arise between the two whereas, in reality, it should be just the opposite.

- For others, the crisis may arise from not valuing the practical effect of those strong, express moments of prayer on the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly rhythm of their lives. They confuse the obvious need and worth of what is called continuous prayer, spread throughout the whole day (the attitude of prayerfulness) with the practical usefulness of those peak moments of prayer which, in fact, keep continuous prayer alive for most people.

- Another common confusion arises among those who say that every action, especially an apostolic action, even one not connected with the prayer of our people, is already a prayer, as long as it is done with a right intention.

- Almost the reverse of this confused attitude is one that sees a "dichotomy" between apostolate and prayer. It cannot seem to grasp that certain genuine, express acts of prayer, especially the celebration of the Eucharist, may serve, at one and the same time, as acts of apostolate and of our prayer as religious. This can lead to various forms of overload and duplication.

- Deeper environmental causes may be those arising from the contemporary condition of the noise, whirl, anxiety, and fascination for the external, in which modern man so often moves.

- Likewise, there is a lack of creativity in trying out new forms of prayer to respond to these circumstances. It seems that, for some, praying according to a non-traditional system is not praying at all.

- There seems also to be a lack of sufficient preparation and formation for prayer, either because of a neglect in primary formation or because of a neglect in its continuing development or because of a formation which inadequately equips a Claretian to face the reality of the circumstances he finds himself in.

- In some cases – we believe, exceptionally – the question may touch on deeper problematic levels, involving a non-evangelical view of the very nature of prayer. Questions asked by contemporary man: Why pray? Is it human to pray? Is prayer a human weakness? Does God need our prayer? Isn't prayer as ordinarily understood a convenient form of evasion – a form of "alienation"? It may be that, consciously or unconsciously, such questions are undermining the fundamental motivations for prayer.

3. The chapter has seriously reflected on the wealth of teaching on this theme: in the Documents of Vatican II (PC,6); in those of the popes, especially in Pope Paul VI's exhortation, "Evangelica Testificatio," which states that "fidelity to, or abandonment of prayer are the paradigms of vitality or decadence in the religious life" (ET,42); in the importance our founder gave to prayer and the stress he laid on its apostolic character; in the doctrine of the chapter of 1967 (GE 15; 31, 111, 133, 134; RL 114, 124, 129; FI, 50); and above all in the compressed synthesis and motivational force of the Constitutions. The chapter does not feel that it needs to repeat this doctrine here, but recommends that all our members meditate on the well-known texts that apply.

Rather, the chapter believes that it is necessary that everyone, starting from the local community and rising to all those responsible on every level, should begin a whole movement of consciousness-raising, a tireless, gradual but penetrating movement, based more on witness and dialogue than in long discourses and explications on this theme.

4. Furthermore, certain clarification must be made:

Continual prayer, a prayerful attitude or spirit, is certainly necessary, but to some extent, express acts of prayer or peak moments of prayer, are also necessary in the practical order. We have to sacrifice some time to God in order to dedicate ourselves expressly to prayer.

We must view our prayer within the totality of our missionary apostolic vocation. Let us not divide our prayer from our missionary life.

5. 1) The chapter recognizes the diversity of situations in each community and hence, believes it necessary to admit a sane pluralism as to the manner, time and occasion for organizing the prayer-life of each community.

2) Rather than setting forth a series of mechanical acts of prayer, the chapter prefers to exhort all to beyond the minimum expressed in the Constitutions. To fall below this minimum, established by long experience and the lives of many heroic Claretians, especially if the failure is prolonged or habitual, sooner or later may lead to a collapse. This is a well-founded observation which the chapter feels obliged to express clearly. To brush over it in silence would be, in our opinion, tantamount to brushing over our founder in silence.

3) Given the spirit of prayer within this Claretian framework as marked out in the Constitutions, we are aware of many fitting

forms for manifesting and publicly requiring express acts of community or personal prayer. These have in fact varied throughout the history of the congregation according to varying circumstances, for we are dealing here with another dimension of the problem of prayer, yet one for which the congregation assumes responsibility according to the diversity of times.

On this level, then, in view of present circumstances, the chapter, after mature reflection, adopts the following format for the whole congregation, under normal circumstances:

A. As the required minimum for community prayer:

Supposing daily Mass, as required by the Constitutions:

a) The recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, or some other community prayer, daily for about a half hour;

b) Each month, if possible, concelebrated Mass;

c) Monthly day of recollection and yearly retreat.

B. As the required minimum for individual prayer:

A daily hour of personal prayer or meditation, and a half hour in exceptional cases.

C. For the rest, according to our Constitutions, the chapter warmly recommends it to the conscience and inner control of each person, bearing in mind what is said below in number 7.

4) Nevertheless, this should not be regarded as some sort of magic formula. Over and above this, the chapter wants the congregation to work with Gospel freedom and the help of the Spirit. It would like to create a climate of spontaneity and creativity in prayer life, and thus:

6. It recommends a sound openness to experimentation:

The chapter is aware that the special circumstances of our rapidly changing modern world are a challenge and a call to solve the concrete problems and difficulties inherent in the practice of prayer. Moreover, it considers that these circumstances may very well offer an occasion for discovering new ways of praying with which to enrich the community and personal experiences lived in the past by the great masters and saints. Hence, it exhorts everyone to be open, with the seriousness demanded by this undertaking, to communal and personal experiences made within the congregation, or with others, and even to take the lead in theological studies of spirituality or in concrete solutions, to open channels for men of our day, especially for those whose vocations are similar to ours, in the life of prayer.



## Practical Responsibility

7. The chapter, following the general lines that have guided its deliberations, sees in community responsibility a practical means of great importance for bringing these guidelines and proposals into real existence.

Let everything said in the other documents of this chapter concerning community and the position of the superior in it be borne in mind. Hence, when we speak of community responsibility, we by no means wish to exonerate the superior from his responsibility or his obligations to serve the community precisely by animating, urging, and deciding. Rather, the chapter calls on all superiors in the congregation to fulfill their eminent duty of service in their respective communities, particularly in a matter so grave as that of prayer.

In this context, then:

1) Each community should frequently review, normally every month, the theme of prayer, to assure itself and each of its members, under ordinary circumstances, space and time enough for the so-called "peak moments" of prayer. Moreover, the community should normally provide a suitable environment for creating a climate of continual prayer.

2) If a community or any of its members finds itself unable to make prayer habitually or for a long time, as explained above, they should seriously question their situation, asking whether it is really justified, or whether it is not, rather, a sign that they are caught up in a situation that should be studied and for which remedies should be sought either as to ill-advised goals and structures or to unrealistic forms of prayer. Such a situation would finally lead to questioning the very existence of the community or member as Claretian.

8. Finally, although our reasoning may seem roundabout, we should have recourse to humble prayer, to obtain from the Lord, through the intercession of our Mother, a renewal within us of the spirit of prayer willed to us by our founder. We hope confidently for this grace during the coming six years, so that we may not defraud the Church of her due.

## APPENDIX II

# NORMS FOR PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

Extract from Part Three of our Directory  
As Adapted to the Norms of the XVIII General  
Chapter

### Sources:

- Const. 1973 Constitutions
- G1 Government Document, 1967 Chapter
- G2 Government Document, XVIII General Chapter
- Dir. 1973 Directory

## I. General Norms for the Period Before the Celebration of the Chapter

### 1. Kinds of Chapter

There are ordinary and extraordinary provincial chapters. The ordinary chapter is celebrated whenever the provincial government is to be elected (Const., n. 215).

### 2. Nature

a) The provincial chapter is a true chapter, within the competency assigned it by the Constitutions. Consequently, the

approbation of its conclusions by the general government does not alter their nature and they continue being capitular conclusions for the province.

b) The provincial chapter does not of itself exercise executive power, which is proper of the provincial government. When the provincial chapter deals with matters pertaining to the executive order, these must be regarded rather as guidelines and criteria not absolutely binding on the part of the provincial government.

c) The acts of the provincial chapter are, according to our law, strictly collegial acts and are governed by the laws of collegial moral persons (Dir., n. 450).

d) Chapters, by means of a legitimate act, can delegate the rights and faculties they possess to persons or entities in the congregation (Dir., n. 429).

### 3. Competency

Besides that granted in the Constitutions (n. 216) and in the Directory (nn.451 and 477), the chapter is also granted these special faculties:

1) in an exceptional case, to choose between the alternatives which (G2, n. 73) offers for the designation of the provincial superior, consultors and econome;

2) concerning the designation of local superiors, not only to choose the option authorized by the Constitutions (n.191) and G2 (n.39b), but also to determine whether the election may fall to any member of the province or is to be limited to those assigned to the respective community; likewise, whether both forms of designation may be used simultaneously in the same province, leaving the direct election of their superior to more or less large communities;

3) to elect the permanent provincial tellers and designate their number and the form for replacing them;

4) to decide on the existence, makeup and operation of the permanent advisory board provided for in the Constitutions (n. 216) and G2 (n. 74);

5) to petition the general government, should the case arise, that in a particular formed province there might be less than four provincial consultors, as is required by the general norm (G2, 68).

#### 4. Those Attending with Voice

Those designated in the Constitutions (n.218) and in G2 (nn.76-77), bearing in mind the following indications:

a) Not only the provincial secretary, even if he is not a consultor, (Const.218, 2), but also the provincial economer, even if he is not a consultor (Const., 211), have voice *ex officio*.

b) In case there are several prefects of professed students, G2, 77.1, is observed.

c) The provincial government may petition the general government for some limitations on the right to attend of those residing in a dependent delegation or mission (G2, 28 and 77,3).

d) Since quasi-residences do not properly speaking have a superior, it is clear that their "delegates" neither attend the chapter nor enter into the count of eligible capitular delegates (Const., 218,4).

#### 5. Delegates

A. In each province, the following enjoy active and passive voice to elect or be elected delegates to their provincial chapter:

1) All perpetually professed members enrolled in the province and residing in it (G2, 78) or in interprovincial houses (G2, 23 and 77);

2) Those enrolled in the province, but locally incardinated, on a permanent basis, in a house under general rule (G2, 24 and 77), or who reside in one because of studies or are not enrolled on a permanent basis (G2, 24 and 26);

3) Those enrolled in the province, but locally incardinated in a house not belonging to the province in which they are enrolled, by reason of studies or ministries in the service of their own Province.

4) Perpetually professed members who are not enrolled in the province, but enjoy local incardination in it by reason of a service they render to the said community or to the province to which the house belongs (G2, 27).

- No one can enjoy double active or passive voice. Thus, those mentioned in n.3) have active and passive voice only in their own province of enrollment; those in n.4), only in the province where they reside.

6. B. *The election of delegates* will be conducted by the ballot-system, in true canonical form, according to the tenor of canon 101, paragraph 1.

For the election, the community will hold a plenary session, during which the voting will take place, the ballots of which the superior will place in an envelope which he will sign and seal in the presence of the community, and cause to be delivered quickly and securely to the provincial tellers. Whoever, for any justifiable cause, might have been unable to attend the aforesaid plenary session, or likewise, those who reside in a community outside their own province (Cf. A, above); shall send their vote directly to the tellers, duly accompanied by a letter in their own hand.

The three votes will be successive, previously informing those who vote of the results of the preceding votes. All delegates may be voted on simultaneously. A substitute or substitutes who might be judged fitting, will be voted on last, after the election of delegates has been concluded; and it would be fitting that the order of replacement be indicated.

## 7. C. Norms for Replacement

1) If the major superior or a local superior is prevented from attending the chapter, the right of attending passes to the next in order (Dir., 454c).

2) Whoever, of his own right, has a voice in the chapter, cannot be elected or sent as a delegate.

3) If anyone comes to have a voice in his own right after having been elected a delegate, his first role as delegate ceases and the substitute takes his place (*ibid.*, b).

4) The substitutes designated replace delegates who are prevented from attending.

5) Whoever attends the chapter in virtue of a double or multiple title, cannot cast more than a single vote in it (*ibid.*, a).

## II. Norms for the Celebration Itself of the Chapter

### 8. Convocation

1) To whom it belongs to convoke the chapter, those who are convoked and the manner of convocation, are well determined in the Directory, nn.457-458 and 479.

2) All those who enjoy active voice in the chapter must be legitimately convoked. They are obliged to attend unless, in the judgment of the provincial superior, they have a just and proportionate cause for not attending, which cause will be definitively judged by the chapter itself (Dir., 452).

## 9. The Presidential Table

In provincial chapters, the presidential table is made up of: the superior general or his delegate, as president; the provincial superior (or, if he is president, his vicar) as vice-president; the secretary of the chapter (and, before his election, the provincial secretary).

## 10. Capitular Tellers

In the elections and votes of the chapter the following are tellers *ex officio*: the president, vice-president and capitular secretary. Until the election of the capitular secretary has taken place, the provincial secretary fills this office (Dir., 459).

## 11. Reports

On this point see Directory nn.455-456.

## 12. Capitular Elections

Elections in the chapter itself:

### A. *Election of provincial tellers:*

The election of provincial tellers will be held at the provincial chapter, which will also designate its number and system of replacements (G2,32). The election is to proceed according to the tenor of canon 101, paragraph 1.

### B. *Election of the provincial superior.*

The provincial superior is elected at the provincial chapter, after a previous sounding of the province, by an absolute majority of votes.

After six votes, as described in the previous paragraph, have failed, on the seventh vote the right to passive voice is restricted to the two names that have received the greater number of votes in the sixth vote.

Whenever passive voice must be restricted to the two candidates who received the greater number of votes and there are, in fact, more than two who have received an equal number of votes, then those who are younger in age and profession shall be excluded, so

that only two remain for the seventh vote. In case of a tie in this last vote, proceedings will follow the norms of law, excluding from the president the right to break the tie (Dir., 474-475).

Confirmation of the provincial's election belongs to the general government (G2, 64).

*C. Election of the consultor and economo:*

1) There shall be four provincial consultors in formed provinces. In provinces in formation as well as in those formed provinces whose provincial chapters have petitioned the general government for it, there may be two or three, according to their needs (G2, 68).

2) The consultors and the economo, after a previous sounding of the province, will be elected at the provincial chapter by an absolute majority of votes.

But if no one obtains an absolute majority in the first three votes, in the fourth vote the right to passive voice is restricted to the two who have received the greatest number of votes in the previous vote, in accord with what was said above (n.13, B) for the election of the provincial.

3) Confirmation of this election belongs to the superior general (Const., 208).

4) If during his term a provincial consultor or an economo should be lacking, he will be replaced by the general government, as prescribed for the replacement of general consultors.

**13.** An elected candidate who renounces or one who is absent from the chapter.

Those norms will apply, in both suppositions, that appeared in the old Constitutions (Part I, nn.61-62).

## Additions

1. For the forthcoming chapters, if they lack provincial tellers, the general government has disposed that the members of the provincial council fulfill their function. The council, then, will be charged with gathering and carefully keeping the votes that arrive until the day when (according to a fixed date) the general scrutiny is held, which should be done in full council session (Previous Const., Part I, n.66).

2. So that all (as was said in 5,2. and 3. above) who enjoy active and passive voice in the election of delegates might easily exercise this right, provincial secretaries will see to it that the corresponding lists are opportunely prepared and take care that the notifications reach them with due advance notice.

## **General Government**

### **Practical Norm for the Designation of Alternates for Provincial Chapters.**

During the preparatory period of Provincial Chapters, some Secretaries have written to the General Government indicating the practical difficulties they encounter in the application of the canonical norm for the designation of Alternates, which requires three ballots with an absolute majority in the first two and a relative importance for the proper preparation of Chapters, the General Government, at the meeting of February 6th, decided to ask the following norm:

“The designation of alternates for Provincial Chapters will be completed in the ballot which completes the election of Delegates: Having elected the Delegates, the remaining three who have the largest number of votes will be considered alternates *ex officio*.”

On February 21st, the Sacred Congregation replied in a rescript, Protocol No. 20196/74, which grants the request:

“In virtue of the faculties granted by the Supreme Pontiff, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, having carefully considered the petition, replies in the affirmative to the request, the general norms being observed; this matter shall be considered in the next General Chapter.”