

Catechism of the Society of Divine Vocations

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Chapter One

1. What are the prevailing lifestyles by which a Religious Congregation is identified?

Religious Congregations, according to their lifestyle, are identified as Contemplative, Active, or Mixed.

2. To which of these families does our congregation belong?

Our Religious Family is to be numbered among those Religious Congregation which espouse a mixed religious lifestyle.

3. In the mixed religious lifestyle of our congregation, which element has the highest priority?

The Contemplative Element must have the highest priority in the religious lifestyle of our Congregation.

4. Why must the Contemplative element rather than the Active one have higher priority in our Congregation?

Contemplation has the higher priority in our Congregation because it is only through Contemplation that we may reach Divine Union.

5. How important is this Divine Union to our Congregation?

Divine Union is everything to our Congregation.

6. For what purpose was our Congregation established?

Our Congregation was established for the propagation, apostolate and achievement of the Divine Union. This is our main goal.

7. Is there a formula by which this goal might be summarized?

Our goals may thus be summarized: Contemplation in action and action for Contemplation.

8. What is meant by the expression: “Contemplation in Action”?

The expression “Contemplation in action”, is meant to convey the idea that we must surrender ourselves to contemplation, not only in our daily prayers, but in all of our daily activities as well.

9. What is meant by the expression: Action for contemplation?

With the expression “Action for Contemplation” we convey the idea that all of our works and endeavors, both internal and external, are meant to serve as a means to reach a contemplative state, both in ourselves and in others.

10. If all our efforts are focused on Contemplation, won't it be rather difficult to carry out and bring to fruition our apostolic activities?

Our efforts aimed at achieving the contemplative state, rather than constituting a hindrance to our apostolic work, are a guarantee that the supernatural effectiveness of our activities is accomplished, since Divine Union must be at the heart of every apostolic action that we undertake.

Chapter Two

11. Through which of God's gifts do we achieve Divine Union?

Divine Union is achieved through the gift of the state of grace. The state of grace is inseparable from the acceptance and practice of the supernatural Virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, through which we gain and grow in sanctifying grace, until we reach the Union with the Divine Persons.

12. How do we explain that sanctifying grace brings us into Union with the Divine Nature and the practice of the supernatural Virtues brings us to Union with the Divine Persons?

In accepting and practicing sanctifying grace, we partake of the Divine Nature. In this participation, we achieve Union with Divine Persons through the practice of the Theological Virtues (Faith, Hope and Charity), Union with the Divine Perfection through the practice of the Cardinal Virtues (Prudence, Justice Fortitude and Temperance), and Union with Divine Action through the acceptance and implementation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Counsel, Fortitude, Piety, Fear of Lord).

13. Then, if we are in the state of grace, is the practice of our prayers and works the only necessary thing for the achievement of the Divine Union?

In order to fully implement our apostolate of Divine Union, it is not sufficient simply to be in a state of grace. We must continually strive to keep and deepen this state and teach others to do the same.

14. What are the best means, by which one may obtain, maintain and increase the grace that one receives?

The best way by which one may receive, maintain and increase grace, is to receive the

Sacraments, which we zealously promote, especially the Sacraments of the Eucharist which we should receive as often as possible. Grace increases also through the practice of the supernatural Virtues, the acceptance and practice of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and- in a very special way- by performing as many acts of love as possible, in all of its many forms.

15. How does one put the program of prayer and apostolate for Divine Union into practice?

In order to put the program of prayer and apostolate for Divine Union into practice, it is necessary to be deeply knowledgeable of this subject and extremely prayerful. This objective can be achieved only if we endeavor to preach every day.

16. How do we display to others this program for the achievement of Divine Union?

By promoting deep study and intense prayerfulness and through the continual use of Homiletics.

17. Are study, prayer, and homiletics simply means for reaching Divine Union, or are they related in some other way to Divine Union?

Study, prayer and homiletics are indeed means by which Divine Union is achieved, however, at least initially, Divine Union takes place in the very practice of these activities.

18. How does this happen?

In our study we unite ourselves to God with our intellect, in prayer we unite ourselves to God with our will, and in homiletics we unite ourselves to God through dialogue.

19. What is the Trinitarian and personal objective of the initial, albeit imperfect union with God?

Through study we unite ourselves in a special way to the Son, through prayer we unite ourselves in a special way to the Holy Spirit, and in homiletics we unite ourselves in a special way to the

Father.

20. What purpose is served in all this study, prayer, and preaching?

It all serves the purpose of achieving personal piety, the spreading of Catholic ascetical teaching, and the promotion of the Religious State.

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Chapter Three

21. What is the meaning of the letters of our Motto: G.A.U.D.I.U.M.?

Gloria Amor Voluntas Dei In Universo Mundo. Glory Love and Will of God in the entire World.

22. What special message does God wish to convey to us through these words?

Through these words God wishes to convey the message that we have been created for the Divine Glory, are saved by the Divine Love, and will achieve holiness through the Divine Will.

23. What special message do we wish to convey to the Lord through the use of these words?

With these words, we intend to say: Lord, may your Will be done, your Love reign, and your Glory shine, always more in me and in everyone as in yourself.

24. What does it mean to work for God's glory, love and will?

It is to work for Universal Sanctification.

25. What is necessary to bring about Universal Sanctification?

In order to bring about Universal Sanctification it is necessary for all people to accept the *true*

religion, and to practice it with the greatest perfection, so that they may become true religious followers of the Holy Trinity, in whatever state of life they may be.

26. What are the main instrument by which Universal Sanctification is brought about?

The main instrument by which Universal Sanctification is brought about are: **the Priests, the Religious, and the Souls of heroic virtue.**

27. Why are the priests, Religious and Saints the main means by which Universal Sanctification is brought about?

This is so because, Priests, Religious, and the Saints are, through the glory, love and will of the Lord, the indispensable ministers and cooperators in Universal Sanctification.

28. What is the mission that has been entrusted to our Congregation by the Divine Call in furthering the work of Universal Sanctification?

The special mission that has been assigned to our Congregation in the furtherance of Universal Sanctification is the specific service of forming Priests, Religious and Saints.

29. How do we begin this great and holy work, and how do we carry it on?

This work begins with the cultivation of vocation to Faith and Holiness in all people in general, and to the Priesthood and Religious life in particular. It is carried out in a concrete manner through various stages of Consecrations and Ascensions, supported by ascetical teachings and by Physical and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

30. Which goal do we seek by performing this great and holy work?

The blessed goal to which we are to aim with all our strength in this work is, and must always

remain, an ever greater degree of Union with the Blessed Trinity.

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Chapter Four

31. What are the activities to which our Congregation is dedicated?

Our Congregation is dedicated to those physical and spiritual activities, which might in any way be related either to service to and formation of Diocesan and Religious Clergy, or of those who seek holiness of life.

32. Does our Congregation generally perform these activities in its own name or under someone else's auspices?

Our Congregation generally prefers to perform under its own name all the activities aimed at the formation of and aid to Priests, Religious and those who are striving for holiness. A Vocationist will achieve his objective through his service to Parochial, Diocesan and Pontifical activities, in a total union with and complete dependence from the proper ecclesiastical Authorities.

33. Which activities are specifically geared to the formation of Priests, Religious, and of those seeking holiness?

Our Congregation teaches catechesis to spiritual groups on Parish level, staffs Apostolic Schools and Vocationaries on Diocesan level, and local and foreign Mission on the universal level, in order to achieve formation of Priests, Religious and souls in quest of holiness.

34. Is our Congregation essentially bound to these activities?

No, Our Congregation is not essentially bound to all or some of these activities, as they are simply

a means and not an end in themselves. Our Congregation, under the direction of Superior and according to the circumstances indicated by times and places, may use other means to reach our goals.

35. What is meant by the distinction of “ends and means” as applied to the works of our Congregation?

By distinguishing “ends and means” in speaking of our works, we wish to make it clear that the goal of all the activities of our Congregation is the formation of Priests, Religious and of those who aspire to holiness as well. This goal can be neither changed nor forfeited.

36. What do we exactly mean when we say “means”?

By saying *means*, we declare that our Congregation may use whatever method, either the most basic one mentioned above, or other methods in the pursuit of our goal, as long as that goal is achieved.

37. Who and what will decide as to whether we shall use the means mentioned above or some other means?

The choice of means is contingent on the demands made by changing times and circumstances, as interpreted and recognized by our Major Superior in the Congregation, and the competent Ecclesiastical authorities outside of the congregation.

38. So in what spirit do we embrace Pontifical and Missionary works?

We embrace these works in honor and imitation of, in service to, and in union with the Divine Person and Mission of God’s Incarnate Word, Jesus.

39. In what spirit do we embrace Diocesan works and the service of the Vocationaries?

We embrace diocesan works and service in the Vocationaries in honor of and service to, and in imitation of and union with the Divine Person and Mission of the Holy Spirit.

40. In what spirit do we embrace parochial and ascetical works?

We embrace parochial and ascetical works in honor and imitation of, in service and union with the Divine Person and Action of the Father.

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Chapter Five

41. What does the spirit of our Congregation urges us to do, above all else, in order to cultivate Divine Union in everyone and in everything?

In order that we might cultivate Divine Union in everyone and in everything, the spirit of our Congregation prompts us, above all else, to place ourselves in the Divine Presence personally, through the practice of interior actions, which brings us into closer union and relations with the Three Individual Divine Persons, in their perfections and activities.

42. Where is the presence of Jesus, the Incarnate Word, to be found?

We find the presence of Jesus, in the Eucharist, close to sinners, in the Saints, as Teacher in the Scriptures, as a divine beggar, in our neighbors, and most of all, in the mission of the Holy Spirit, in the Will of the Father, and in the womb of Mary.

43. Among the actions we perform which ones will unite us interiorly to the Divine Word?

We unite ourselves interiorly to the Divine Word in Eucharistic Visitation and Adoration, in the Sacrament of Communion, in religious study, in spiritual reading, in all of our works of mercy, in

Jesus' Ascension to the Father, and in His exultation in the Holy Spirit.

44. Where do we experience the presence of the Holy Spirit?

We experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in ourselves, in other people, in prayer, in the supernatural inspirations, in the impulses of His gifts, in the fruition of His anointing, in the offering of heroic actions.

45. With which actions do we unite ourselves inwardly to the Holy Spirit?

We unite ourselves inwardly to the Holy Spirit in the cultivation of our inspirations, in our spiritual direction, in the ministry of the word, in the ministry of education, in the practice of acts of love, in consoling souls, in our striving toward heroism, in our letting Him take us to the Father.

46. Where do you experience the presence of God the Father?

We experience the presence of God the Father in the daily providence for our physical and spiritual life, in all authorities, both civil and religious, in the manifestations of the Divine Will, in the demands of the Divine Love, in the splendor of the Divine Glory, in the mission of the Word, in the mission of the Holy Spirit.

47. With which acts do we internally unite ourselves to God the Father?

Internally we unite ourselves to God the Father in directing our actions to His glory, in the reverence and obedience to His representatives, in the trust and confidence in His love, in the trust in and surrender to His will, in the zeal for the conquest of His Kingdom, in His rejoicing in His Son, in His rejoicing in His Holy Spirit.

48. Where will we experience the presence of the Most Holy Trinity?

We will experience the presence of the Three Divine Persons in the inferior creatures as their

vestiges, in the superior creatures as their images, and especially in their dwelling in every soul in the state of grace.

49. *With which acts will we unite ourselves inwardly to the Holy Trinity?*

We will unite ourselves inwardly to the Holy Trinity through the contemplation of the natural and supernatural world; in the reverent and respectful use of the creatures; in our devotion to the Holy Trinity in our neighbors, living and personal images of the Lord; in the Apostolate of devotion to the divine Inhabitation; in the study on our progress in virtue and in grace.

50. *How is it possible to care about all this?*

It is not necessary and it is not even possible to apply ourselves to all these activities simultaneously; it is sufficient that, through some of these unitive exercises, everyone apply himself quietly and fervently to prayer, leading to contemplation, each according to his own talent.

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51. *Whom does the union of the soul with the Lord specifically depend on, in its reality and its degree?*

The union of the soul with the Lord, in its reality and degree, depends, above all, on the infinite goodness of God, our Father and Creator, on the infinite merit of God's Son and our Savior, on the infinite love of the Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier.

52. *What are the conditions and obligations of a soul toward this diving gift?*

The essential conditions and obligations of a soul toward this divine gift are: penance and fight

against any sin, flight and segregation from the world, self-denial, solitude and prayer.

53. Do others personal unions of a soul with creatures constitute a hindrance to or help for the achievement of the Divine Union?

Any other personal union of a soul with creatures constitutes a hindrance to the achievement of this Divine Union. However, a spiritual intimacy with the Saints, the Angels, and especially with St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and most of all the union with the Divine Humanity of Jesus will be very helpful.

54. In our itinerary towards Divine Union with the Lord, should we rather have in mind the Unity of Divine Nature or the Trinity of the Persons?

In the Divine Union with the Lord, according to the spirit of our Congregation and for the fulfillment of our mission of the same Divine Union, it is more helpful to have in mind the distinction of the Three Divine Persons.

55. How do we distinctly address the single Divine Persons, in our prayer of adoration for instance?

We distinctly address the single Divine Union Persons in our prayer of adoration, for instance, by begging the Father and the Son for the gift of the Holy Spirit; in a prayer of love, we address the Divine Persons by joining ourselves to the rejoicing of the Father in His Son, and with the rejoicing of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. etc.

56. Could this way of praying, perhaps, affect our faith and our worship of the Divine Unity?

Our faith and our worship of the Divine Unity will not be affected, but rather perfected, because in each Person we contemplate and glorify the other Two, on account of their circuminsession in the

Unity of their Nature.

57. Do we follow this personal method and itinerary in our work on behalf of the souls also?

We follow this personal method and itinerary also in our work on behalf of the souls, aiming at performing not only virtuous deeds, but at establishing ourselves also in a state of perfection, through a real and true consecration, in honor and imitation of the acts and states of the Incarnate Word.

58. In our spiritual work, what do we expect to obtain through this personal method and itinerary?

With this Personal method and itinerary we expect to obtain, in our spiritual work, that every person, with all of its being, may live in the elevation to the supernatural state that the Divine Love has bestowed upon us, and may obtain the Relationship of the Divine Union to which the Divine Love has invited us.

59. How do we hope to respond, through this personal method, to our vocation and mission of forming religious and saints?

We hope to respond to our vocation and mission of forming religious and Saints through this personal method, in that this method is the most suitable to the achievement of our goal, inasmuch as the religious is essentially a soul consecrated to a life lived in the supernatural, and the Saint is a soul ever ascending to higher degrees of union with the Lord.

60. Could the same thing be said about the formation of Priests?

For the formation of Priests this method is also the most suitable and efficient, because since he is to be the most consecrated man in his soul and the most effective consecrator of the souls, he

first is to tend to an ever stronger personal union with the Lord.

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61. What should then be the daily preoccupation of a Religious of Divine Union?

The daily preoccupation of a Religious of the Divine Union should be a continuous endeavor to derive from everything, from every circumstance, from every relation, as much profit as it is possible for the Divine Glory, and the pursuit of his own sanctification.

62. How can we express more clearly, in a concrete prayer form, what we mean by the words “derive as much profit as possible?”

Grant me, Lord, to know and please You evermore. Let me be united to You and possess You in this thing, in this circumstance, in this relation, etc.

63. This is valid for ourselves, however what should we do when our neighbor is involved?

When our neighbor is involved, our worry should also be to render an ever greater glory to the Lord in the personal sanctification of our brothers.

64. How can we express even more clearly our paramount concern for our neighbor?

Before a child as well as before an adult, before a rich as well as before a poor, before a healthy person as well as before a sick person, a soul will whisper, “Lord, let me help him to become a Saint”.

65. Should we find ourselves in the presence of our superior, either in authority, or in knowledge, or - as it often happens – in virtue, how will we manage to show our care?

Thinking and praying thus: “Lord, make him evermore holy, more united to you and lead him to help the souls to become increasingly saints, starting from myself”.

66. Do we really believe that these little prayers, however frequent, are sufficient to make a good Priest, a good Religious, a great Saint?

Prayer only is not sufficient, but it is the first and the most effective requirement: in order for a person to become a religious, for a chosen one to become a priest, and for a soul to rise to holiness, a host of other helps are needed.

67. If we wish to provide this multitude of helps to others, won't we remain entangled in a multiplicity of activities, which will hinder our sanctification?

Precisely because a single person could never provide the multitude of helps required for neighbors, and so in order that his own sanctification may not be hindered by the multiplicity of his activities, we live in a Congregation.

68. In which ways does our Congregation provide this host of helps for others, and how does it rescue us from the distractive multiplicity of activities?

Our Congregation provides whatever necessary for the sanctification of its members and of the souls of our neighbors, through an accurate division of work and classification of workers.

69. In this division of work and classification of workers, which duty remains common to all, with respect to the Congregation?

Every worker of the Universal Sanctification, whatever will his specific task, is bound, before the Congregation, to provide through prayer the supernatural means for himself and all the others, and, through a profitable work, to provide the natural means of sustenance for himself and at

least for one additional candidate.

70. How does our Congregation provide the host of workers required by the extensive work of universal sanctification?

Our Congregation provides the large number of workers needed for the Universal Sanctification through the Religious and Lay-Associates, and expects that every Religious and Oblate gather, around themselves, a college of apostles and disciples, in conformity, - in this also –with the public life of the Lord.

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Chapter Eight

71. What is the field and what are the areas of work for the universal sanctification in our Congregation?

Our Congregation considers the entire world as the field for the universal sanctification, and to that effect calls it “the Grand Shrine”; however the Congregation works more directly for the sanctification of the souls in its own residence, schools, parishes and missions.

72. Under which name do we identify these various areas of work of our Congregation?

In a language reserved only to our Society, we call “Perfectionary” every religious house, “Vocational” every school, “Ascensionary” every Parish, “Religious” every foreign mission committed to us.

73. What do we mean by all these names which sound still very uncommon or even strange?

By the name of “Perfectionary”, we indicate those houses where the real workers for universal

sanctification are formed. By the name of “Vocational”, we indicate those houses where we cultivate vocations. By the name of “Ascensionary”, we indicate those places where we work to bring the faithful Christians to a higher practice of their religion. By the name of “Religious”, we indicate those places where we work to bring new people into the Church.

74. Which is the first work division and the first classification of workers in the above mentioned areas of our work field?

The first division is composed of Directors and Teachers, who are respectively called Perfectionist and Devotionists in the Perfectionary; Vocationists and Doctrinists in the Vocational; Ascensionists and Annunciationist in the Ascensionary; Religionists and Evangelists in the Religious.

75. Which other division of work and classified of workers could there be in the above mentioned areas of our work field?

Another division of work and classification of workers in the above mentioned areas of activities is related to the specializations that are necessary to four areas, and to the religious who have specific training for each one of them. Thus, the Misericordists are necessary in all areas, the Congregationists are necessary in the Ascensionary only, the Consecrationists are necessary solely in the Vocational, the Predilectionists are necessary only in the Perfectionary.

76. What are the duties of the Directors and their respective functions?

The Perfectionist are responsible for the recruiting and continuous formation of our religious, the Vocationists are responsible for the constant search and cultivation of vocation to Religious life and Priesthood, the Ascensionists are mainly responsible for Parishes, Mission Churches, Chapels, and especially for all sacramental and liturgical life therein. Religionists are responsible for the establishment of a foreign Mission and for the organization of a Catholic life style among the

converts.

77. Who are the Teachers and what are their respective functions?

The Evangelists are in charge of the perpetual preaching of the Gospel of Jesus, both to the pagans and to the faithful, aiming especially at their conversion to the faith and to the state of grace; the Annunciationist are in charge of the perpetual catechesis to every type of vocation, with special emphasis on vocations to consecrated life and to priesthood; the Devotionists are in charge of providing a high and profound teaching of all Catholic devotions, with special emphasis on the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity and its relationship with us.

78. Who are the Misericordists and what do they do that is so important to all areas of our work field?

The Misericordists are in charge of all the works of mercy, especially the corporal ones; as a result they are in charge also of all the financial means necessary for the functioning of the rest of the area. Many of them are needed, and in turn they need a profound virtue; therefore they require a special formation. We owe them a great veneration as the hidden heroes and the mother-souls of all the activities of the Congregation.

79. In addition, who are the special workers of the Ascensionary, Perfectionary and Vocationary, and what do they do?

The special workers of the Ascensionary are the Congregationists. They are in charge of all the associations aimed at establishing the Kingdom of holiness in the Parishes. They try, in special way, to imitate and reproduce, through permanent committees, the Sacred Roman Congregations in everything that can be and should be done in Parish; at the present they are responsible also for the progressive functioning of the Catholic Action, having always in mind the formation of

Priests, or Religious, and Saints.

80. And who are the special workers of the Vocationary and Perfectionary?

In the Vocationary, the special workers are called the Consecrationists. They are to lead the souls on the road of free and progressive consecration, to an evermore perfect interior state, with the aim of the Divine Union always in mind.

Finally in the Perfectionary, the special workers are called the Predilectionists. They apply themselves, almost exclusively, to develop and live the entire life of action of our Congregation, and, as contemplative religious, they are to cater to the spiritual needs of all other areas of activity.

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Chapter Nine

81. Does not one get the impression that our rules are exceedingly complicated, our duties too numerous and our activities too extensive?

They would not only look excessive, but they would really be such, if all rules, activities and duties were meant for the single religious; however, since they concern the Congregation as a whole, they are not excessive.

82. What do we mean when we say: our works, rules and duties concern the whole Congregation and not a single subject?

We mean that, among all the works, rules and duties through which the Congregation strives to lead to universal sanctification, only some of them are common to and mandatory for all; the rest are restricted to a single individual, so that everyone may and ought to specialize in one of them

only.

83. How do we explain the criterion for the distribution of our observances, functions and works?

Every single subject, barring those duties that are common to every faithful, the religious and those who are ordained, is to be committed – permanently or at least for a continuous period of three years – solely to one activity of our Congregation, and will simultaneously fulfill only few other functions. Meanwhile, during his work, he will be bound only by those religious observances that are more in conformity with and helpful for his work and assignment.

84. Is, this specialization in one of our activities and in a few of our functions, contingent on Superior's will or on the subject's choice?

This specialization remotely is contingent on the personal ability and on the choice of the subject, and proximately depends both, on the Superior's will and on the wisdom of obedience. All these elements put together form everyone's specific vocation in the great common vocation.

85. Why does our Congregation include so many activities, functions and observances?

Our Congregation is essentially clerical, and therefore it can and ought to extend itself to every possible priestly apostolate, including all the activities of the priestly ministry, always mindful of the Lord's revelation: "In domo Patris mei mansiones multae sunt", in my Father's house there are many mansions".

86. How is it possible to achieve the formation and training for every activity and function of our Congregation?

Our Formation and training is basically the same as the Holy Church imparts to Levites, who aspire

to priestly ministry.

87. If our formation and training is identical to the one administered to the diocesan clergy, how do we identify ourselves as religious?

Our congregation adds, to the formation and training of the diocesan clergy, one year of novitiate, two years of apprenticeship and two years of advanced training; during these periods, a specific formation and training for the single activities and functions can well be administered.

88. Can we see some danger of fragmentation and schism between the various classes and categories of Religious?

This danger certainly is not any more real than elsewhere, when we name the places of our activities; note how these names well describe the different programs and ideals of each function, and how these functions well correspond to the different elements of the work of sanctification.

89. Why have we decided to train and use specialists even in the spiritual field?

We have been compelled to do that both, by the universal principle that “ad plura intentus, minor est ad singula sensus”, a sense that tries to care about a variety of things loses its strength in its care for a single activity”, and much more by the words of the Lord: “Non sum missus nisi ad oves quae perierant domus Israel”, “I have been sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”, and also by St. Paul’s words: “Non misit me Dominus baptizare, sed evangelizare”, “The Lord did not send me to baptize, but to evangelize”.

90. By which common bond are our religious unified in the midst of all these distinctions?

They are unified in their common goal of worship, apostolate and achievement of the Divine Union, which consists in the spreading of the ascetical Catholic teachings through holy books and the practice of the lives of the Saints, in a spirit of universal service and in the devotion to the

Holy Trinity and in the fidelity to the inspirations.

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Chapter Ten

91. Does our Congregation prefer particular or universalism in its spiritual specialists?

Our vocation and mission require that we, in our prayer always strive to universalize, extending ourselves to and embracing all people and the whole universe; yet in our immediate action we always tend to individualism, both in cases concerning ourselves and in those concerning the souls of our neighbors.

92. Does our congregation try to develop or to rather mortify the personalities of its members?

Our Congregation expects that we, in our relation with creatures, try to rather hide our personality; in our relation with the Lord, our Congregations wants we develop our personality to the best; in relation to our activities, it is desirable that everyone, in his fidelity to the Holy Spirit, would find treasures of initiatives and always new energies.

93. Does our Congregation hold in higher esteem all that is the common duty of its religious, or rather all that is the particular duty of their functions?

Our Congregation expects, first and above all, fidelity unto heroism to common life and duties, because only from it the spiritual specialists can draw and feed the ideas and strength needed for every particular activity, function and observance of its members.

94. What is the duty common to all religious, in whatever activity or function they are assigned?

The common duty of all Religious is a life of prayer prescribed also to diocesan clergy, the

penitential work prescribed even to lay people, the life of a ministry of sanctification prescribed to all our Religious.

95. Can we more clearly explain how the duty to the life of prayer is common to every clergy?

If every Diocesan Priest, in addition to the canonical hours, is bound to have meditation every day, to visit the Blessed Sacrament, to say the Rosary, to make his examination of conscience, to go the confession frequently, all the more a Religious Priest should feel this same duty.

96. What do we mean by the words “a life of potential work prescribed even to regular lay people”?

As every adult lay person has an obligation to normally work for himself and his family, thus fulfilling the labor law which resulted from sin, in the same way all our Religious have an obligation to work, in order to provide the daily living for themselves and at least for another aspirant of the Congregation.

97. What do we mean by the words “complete living for themselves and at least for another aspirant of the Congregation”?

For “complete living” we mean all that is necessary not only for food, but also for clothing, books, housing, as well as a sort of a guarantee of his commitment to the work of the Congregation, through- for instance – the establishment of scholarships.

98. Who can estimate the real value of a manual, mental or mixed work of every religious?

The local Superior, together with his council, estimates the real value of a manual, mental or mixed work done by the religious, from the compensation which is customarily given in other institutions for similar activities, to someone who is not bound either by a vow of poverty or by an

obligation to common life.

99. Would and should we, in our Congregation, take into consideration the Mass offerings also, while computing a labor's value?

In our Congregation, we should never count the Mass offerings for our sustenance, because the Congregation expects that every celebrant apply his Holy Mass everywhere for the universal sanctification. Should he receive Mass offerings, they are to be turned over for works of mercy, and thus be considered as extraordinary offerings.

100. Could we quote some words and apostolic example about this duty of the religious, to work for themselves and others?

Yes, St. Paul, who says: "I have never wanted anyone's money or clothes. You know how I have worked with my own hands, to make a living for myself and my friends. By everything I did, I showed how you should work to help everyone who is weak. Remember also that our Lord Jesus said: "More blessings come from giving than from receiving" (Acts 20, 33)

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Chapter Eleven

101. Which Community books are to regulate our Congregation's work life and its functions?

We have three groups of Community books: the first group is composed by the "Constitutionary", which contains the rules for our juridical- economical life; by the "Ascensionary", which is a guide for our religious and ascetical life; by the "Devotionary", which comprises a collection of devotions for our chorus and prayer life.

102. Which is the second group of spiritual books for our Community?

The second group of spiritual books of our Community is composed of the “Perfectionary”, which is the theoretical-practical directory on religious virtues; of the “Consecationary”, for the oblations and professions; of the “Directionary”, for a detailed regimentation of all activities.

103. Which is the third group of spiritual books of our Community?

The third group of spiritual books is made up of meditations, liturgy, religious instructions, History of the Church texts etc., which are presented by the proper authority of the Congregation.

104. How should we regard the Community spiritual books approved by our Congregation?

The Community spiritual books, upon approval by the right authority, are to be respected and venerated, studied and meditated upon, used and put into practice as treasures of divine inspiration given to us for our religious goal.

105. How do these Community books rank in importance?

The most important of these Community books is our Constitutionary, which deals with our rules. Yet, for the religious formation in itself and especially for our formation, the most important Community book is the Ascensionary.

106. Does not our Ascensionary overburden you with a multitude of requirements which are impossible to practice?

Our Ascensionary presents, for every event of our religious life, a treasure of inspirations, from which everyone choose those most appealing to him, in accord to his grace.

107. Would not it be preferable to clarify this statement with practical examples?

For instance, to achieve the religiosity of our silence, of our strolls, of our recreations, of our meals...it is not prescribed that the Religious strive, to actually have all those intentions or perform all those interior actions described in the Ascensionary, but it is sufficient that he try only some of them.

108. Could we also say the same thing of all graces during the ascetical periods, and of all the practice of the theological virtues and of the evangelical counsels as well?

Exactly the same. It is not necessary that our religious strive to practice all those duties, as described in our Ascensionary. Nevertheless, they are all to be explained to him so that he may know them all, and may choose some, which are more to his benefit.

109. What is more advisable: that the religious strive to fulfill those ascetical practices either all together and successively during Pentecost days and weeks, or that he limit himself to one practice for a certain time?

Everyone should enjoy full freedom of changing every day or to stick always to the same ascetical practice, depending on what is more profitable for his spiritual progress. Perhaps, even in this case, the middle of the road is more advisable, because it is more useful to the goal.

110. What is the middle of the road?

It is to remain with the same intention and in the practice of the same interior exercise for an entire week, in order to avoid the opposing defects of monotony and inconstancy. However, when a soul is motivated by a good spirit, it can do whatever is best for the goal.

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Chapter Twelve

111. Could we think that by constantly urging the souls toward whatever is more perfect, we forsake what is more necessary?

This danger is totally non-existent, because true piety translates into practice the Master's words: "These are the important things you should have done, though you should have not left the others undone either"; and so St. Paul can say: "Piety helps you in every way, it promises life now and forever" (1Tim 4, 4), which means that piety is a guarantee of success both, in affairs of this life and of the life to come.

112. Could we explain, with a practical example, how what is necessary to our soul is guaranteed by our pursuing what is more perfect?

Just as "What is more contains what is less", and "in the whole we find the part", in the same way in the true practice of the ascetical teachings we find the practice of all Christian morality. By way of an example, we all know that the best way of avoiding mortal sin is to fight against the venial sins, and the best way to avoid losing the divine grace is to constantly strive to grow in it, through the practice of the Sacraments and of Christian charity.

113. Don't we realize, however, that not every soul is called to holiness and not all of them are fit per perfection?

We cannot agree with this statement at all. We know that all souls have been created for God's glory, love and will, and we know that only through our own sanctification the Lord's glory shines. His love triumphs and His will is fulfilled. Besides we know that every being is not unfit for its end, but rather it tends to it constantly.

114. Does not this way of thinking seem that it does not take into consideration the damages inflicted on us by original sin and by our actual sins?

We take all this into consideration, but we consider also that abundant and overflowing grace of Redemption, the grace of the Sacrament of regeneration (Baptism), of the Sacrament of Christian perfection, of the Sacrament of Divine Grace constantly transferred and fed in us, and the Grace of God with us, for us, in us.

115. What do we hope then to achieve or do?

Nothing else but the Kingdom of Jesus in all mankind, so that the Lord's prayer (the Our Father) may be fulfilled, and the world may be as perfect as the Father in Heaven, as the Lord has commanded, and truly become the mystical body of Christ, our Head.

116. Which method will we, generally, follow in working toward this end and for the achievement of this goal?

Since we are talking here of cooperation with the Divine Operation, there is no better way to achieve our goal than through the imitation of Divine Perfections, and of the most sweet, wise and efficacious ways of our Divine Lord, always endeavoring to unite ourselves with Him more than to follow Him, as instruments which only in their docility to the hand of the artist help produce the masterpiece.

117. Which is the most outstanding way our Lord generally uses to effect the universal sanctification?

Through the centuries, our Lord has always inspired chosen souls who honored Him more than all the other mediocre and common souls; He has resorted to these souls in order to save and sanctify people and do much good to everyone.

118. Whom do we plan to imitate in this Divine itinerary leading to Universal Sanctification?

First of all, we shall let the ideal of sanctity shine before the multitude, imitating the Teacher who

preached His Gospel to all people indiscriminately, and secondly we shall strive to lead the multitude to an ever more determined and constant fight against any shadow of sin, and to an ever superior and more intense practice of goodness.

119. Could we think that in this way we tend to address ourselves to a multitude, not to the chosen souls?

If we try to purify from evil and raise to a superior goodness an entire environment, the chosen souls will spontaneously surface and entrust themselves to the cares of our Religious, who will try to follow and lead them to an ever greater perfection, according to their own grace.

120. Practically, how do we plan to imitate the Lord's ways with relation to the universal sanctification?

We plan to imitate the Lord's modes with relation to the universal sanctification, by becoming seekers of chosen souls, and by making every effort to organize them for the work of Jesus' Kingdom, based on the example of the College of the Twelve Apostles and of the band of the Seventy-two Disciples, whom He chose from those who were listening to Him and whom He cared for always personally. The most important of these Community books is our Constitutionary, which deals with our rules. Yet, for the religious formation in itself and especially for our formation, the most important Community book is the Ascensionary.

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