

Abbreviations
Decree

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

Documents of the Second Vatican Council

AA Apostolicam Actuositatem, Decree on the Laity

AG Ad Gentes, Decrees on the missionary activities of the Church

IM Inter Mirifica, Decree on the methods of Social
Communication

LG Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution of the Church

OT Optatum Totius, Decree on Priestly Formation

PC Perfectae Caritatis, Decree on the renewal of Religious Life

Pontifical Documents

CIC The code of Canon Law, 1983

ES Ecclesiae Sanctae, Act of Administration of Paul VI., 1966

ET Evangelica Testificatio, Apostolic Exhortation of Paul

VI., 1971

JPII Talk to the Religious of the United States (Washington
D.C.), October 8, 1979, & to the Major Superiors on
November 14, 1979

RD Redemptionist Donum, Apostolic Exhortation of John
Paul II., 1984

Church Documents

MR Mutuae Relationis, Directive on the Criterion of the relationship between Bishops and Religious,1978
DCVR Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life, Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, 1980

2CIV Second International Congress for Vocations, 1981

Spiritual Patrimony of the Congregation

1R Volume one of the Religious Observances (Big Rules)

2R Volume two of the Religious Observances (Big Rules)

Asc The Ascension, 1937

C1948 Constitution of the Society of Divine Vocations

DdV Directions for Virtue

RV Rules of Life of the Society of Divine Vocations, IX
General Chapter,1983

1D Devotional part One

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CONGREGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INSTITUTES

Prot.n N.60-1/85

DECREE

The Religious Congregation, The Society of Divine Vocations, whose General House is located in Rome, has as its specific mission the searching out and formation of vocations to Consecrated Life and to the priesthood, especially among the "underprivileged."According to the directives of the Second Vatican Council and other ecclesiastical ordinances, it has prepared a new text of Constitutions that have been presented to the Holy See for approval by the Superior

General, in the name of the Chapter. This Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, after having had the text examined by its consultants, and considering the favorable vote of the Congress, which took place on November 19th, 1985; with this decree approves and confirms it with the changes recommended by the same Congress, according to the original typed in Italian, which is kept in its Archives, observing that which is necessary by Law. Following the examples and teachings of our Founder, Fr. Justin Mary Russolillo, May the Vocationist Fathers and Brothers continue with generous dedication, under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, honored with the title of *Our Lady of Divine Vocations*, the specific apostolate entrusted to them by the Church, so that those who consecrate themselves totally to God and to the service of the brothers may be always more numerous.

Rome, January 18, anniversary of the Founder's Birthday, year of our Lord 1986

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OUR VOCATION AND MISSION IN THE CHURCH

1. The Society of Divine Vocations (S.D.V. – Vocationist), founded by Fr. Justin Russolillo, is a Clerical Religious Community of Pontifical Right, whose members intend to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, living His chaste, poor and obedient way of life. Their first duty is *“to be with Him.”*

Our Goal

2. Its ultimate goal is to direct and lead all Members, and through them, all people, to perfect union with the Divine Persons, through communion with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

3. In order to achieve this Divine Union, it works for Universal Sanctification by promoting

an ascetical and mystical life and propagating religious life in every walk of life.

4. For the achievement of Universal Sanctification, it considers the whole world to be “a great sanctuary” and directly works for the furtherance of all parochial, diocesan and Pontifical ascetical activities.

5. Within the Church, the Society of Divine Vocations embraces as its own particular mission, the searching out and formation of Priestly and Religious vocations, especially among the underprivileged, through its characteristic work, the **VOCATIONARY**.

6. Through this charism received from the Lord, it serves the Church in dioceses, fostering local vocations both for the Diocesan clergy and the Life of Special Consecration.

7. Imitating the mercy of the Good Shepherd, it intends to rehabilitate in the Divine Love every inactive priest and former Religious.

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Spirituality

8. The Holy Church, the Holy Family, and the Divine Trinity are the center and axis of the Society of Divine Vocations. The Vocationist works in the Church, with the Church and for the Church. He imitates the Holy Family in the relationships of soul-child, soul-spouse, and soul-mother of God.

9. The spirit of the Vocationist toward the Lord is that of a living image and likeness of Him and of a personal relationship of love with Him indocility to the divine inspirations controlled and approved by the Church.

10. Toward the neighbor, in every ministry, the spirit of the Vocationist is that of the humble, faithful and loving servant, who becomes everything to all men, according to the characteristics of the *good servant* revealed in the Old Testaments, in order to unite all to the Lord as true Religious of God.

11. Toward himself, the spirit of the Vocationist is one of daily conversion to the Gospel, in the silence of his being, and of the multi-faceted oblation of himself to the Lord, in order to be entirely absorbed in His glory, love, and will.

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Fields of Apostolate

12. The **VOCATIONARY** is the Congregation's most characteristic work and its most special field of action.

13. The Vocationary welcomes and forms, both spirituality and academically, free of charge, all those who show signs of a vocation and have not yet decided whether to enter the seminary or join a specific Religious Community.

14. In a spirit of service to the local Church, whenever requested by the Ordinary, the Vocationary may function as a Seminary.

15. The Vocationary must be in a constant relationship of mutual support and assistance with those fields of action found in our Communities, parishes, schools, and missions.

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Parishes

16. The Congregation accepts the pastoral care of parishes and considers them to be permanent centers of catechesis and meeting places of groups and ecclesial associations of various kinds, precious instruments of assistance for priestly and Religious vocations.

17. The Vocationist pastor pays special attention to the care of families, both for their sanctification and for their great contribution of support to the possible vocation of their children.

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Schools

19. The Congregation may maintain and staff facilities, schools and other activities which educate and form young people from every walk of life, spirituality, morally, academically, and socially.

20. In addition, the Congregation can support social programs which respond to the needs of the times, according to the charism of the Institute.

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Missions

21. In obedience to the evangelical command: *“Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you,”* the Congregation, as a child of the Church living in a temporal world and being missionary by nature, works for and is always prepared for apostolic action in the missions *ad gentes*.

22. According to its specific charism, it searches out, fosters, and forms vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life even in mission countries in order to benefit the newly formed Local Church.

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Patron Saints

23. The Congregation honors the Church Triumphant in the choirs of Angels and in the Saints, especially the Holy Apostles, Doctors, and Founders.

24. The Congregation gives special honor to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, under the title of ***Our Lady of Divine Vocations***, and is associated with St. Joseph in all private devotions.

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LIFE OF CONSECRATION

25. The Evangelical Counsels of consecrated Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience, founded on the words and examples of the Lord, and recommended by the Apostles, Holy Fathers, Doctors, and Pastors of the Church, are a divine gift received by the Church from her Lord, and are preserved through His grace.

26. Through the profession of the Evangelical Counsels expressed through public vows, the Vocationist responds to a Divine Call and consecrates himself to the service of God.

Therefore, this Profession must be held in the greatest esteem and honor, and be an object of desire and fulfillment. Through Profession, he witness more fully to the new and eternal life obtained through the redemption of Christ.

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27. The Vocationist Religious is Consecrated to the Lord with the following formula:

O my God and my all! Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

I... in communion with the Holy Church, with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and with Your own Divine Love, in the hands of Your servant...Major Superior of the Society of Divine Vocations (or, Delegate of ...), offer and consecrate all myself to You alone, all myself to You forever, while with all my mind, with all my heart, and with all my strength, I vow (for one year, or, in perpetuity) perfect Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience according to the Constitutions of the Society of Divine Vocations.

I also solemnly promise, servitude to the Church in the clergy, fidelity to the Holy Family in the Congregation, and love to You Blessed Trinity in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

O Holy Trinity accept this consecration for the greater glory of Your name, the fulfillment of Your will, and for the expansion of Your kingdom of holiness.

O Divine Truth and Love, O Divine Unity and Trinity, O my God and my All!

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Chastity

28. The Vocationist understands that Chastity is a sign and gift of God's grace, embraced for the Kingdom of Heaven. Chastity frees the heart in a special way so that it may always burn with ever greater love for God and all mankind.

29. In order to follow Christ with an undivided heart, the Vocationist binds himself through this Vow to perfect continence in Celibacy. Aware that Chastity is also something that must be won and that it requires constant ascetical commitment, he jealously guards his heart and body from any external or internal acts which might wound it in even the smallest way.

To this effect, he regards with great esteem the suggestions of our Founder and Christian

asceticism.

30. In order to live chastity as a nuptial relationship with God, the Vocationist draws the necessary strength from the daily nourishment of the Eucharist, meditation on the Word of God, and "friendship with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, - our - Immaculate Family.

31. Chastity, lived in this way, reaches the inner self and transforms the individual. It helps to reach for that sublimation toward which every human love should tend, and dispose the heart to be generous toward his brethren and to love them in Jesus.

In this way, the gift of self, made to God and to others, will be a source of profound peace.

32. Brotherly love lived in a family spirit, in addition to fostering true friendship, sharing of material and spiritual goods, and cooperation in the apostolate, sustains and nourishes chastity and is a source of spiritual fruitfulness in this world.

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Poverty

33. In order to follow Christ, the Religious embraces through his vows evangelical poverty. Through it, he shares the poverty of the Lord Jesus Christ, who being rich became poor for the sake of all men, in order to make all rich with His poverty.

34. In order to express concretely his participation in the life of Christ, he keeps his heart free from excessive material preoccupations, refrains from seeking comforts, renouncing all the that is unnecessary, living a life of simplicity and laboriousness, sharing with the Congregation the fruits of his work in order to promote the well being of his confreres.

35. While avoiding all forms of luxury, the Communities must pay their employees a just wage, have great generosity toward the needy, contribute to Parochial, Diocesan, and Pontifical activities and cooperate in the initiatives put forward by the Local Church.

Above all, the services provided by our Vocationaries must remain free of charge.

36. Thus living individual and communal poverty in a concrete and visible manner, they seek to sensitize the consciences of the wealthy to the needs of the poor, and seek to respond to the needs of social justice taught in the Gospels and by the Church.

37. In force of the vow of poverty, the Vocationist renounces all faculties of disposing and licitly using all material goods, without the permission of his legitimate superior. He may

retain however, the ownership of such goods and the ability to acquire others.

In force of the vow, he cannot retain the administration of his goods, nor use them, or benefit from their usufruct.

38. Before the profession of vows, the Novice surrenders these rights to whomever he wishes and freely disposes of their use and usufruct; He must prepare a Last Will and Testament for the disposal of all of his goods that is valid according to civil law before he professes Final vows.

Should the Religious leave the Congregation both the Will and the transfer of the administration become null and void.

Whatever the Religious acquires either through his own labors or in the name of the Congregation belongs to the Congregation. Whatever he receives in the way of pension, Social Security, compensation or insurance also belongs to the Congregation.

39. The Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, may allow those in Perpetual Vows to renounce ownership of their possessions. However, this should not be allowed before the 25th anniversary of his First Profession. As far as possible, this should be done so that it will be recognized by civil law.

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Obedience

40. Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to do the will of the Father. He submitted to it, becoming obedient for the sake of the redemption of mankind. His death on the cross is the highest expression of His unity with the will of the Father and His love for all men.

Calling his brothers to follow him in this submission, the Lord Jesus gives them the grace to accomplish the total offering of their will and unites them more closely to the service of the Church, making them sharers in His redemptive mission.

41. In a spirit of faith, while fulfilling his duties, the Vocationist shows filial and faithful solidarity with the Church, Bride of Christ, and with its authentic Magisterium. This generous and fervent solidarity is a pledge of fruitfulness in every apostolate and in the correct interpretation of the signs of the times.

42. With the vow of obedience, in a spirit of faith, he binds himself to observe the commands of his legitimate superiors in all that either directly or indirectly has to do with

the observance of the Constitutions.

43. All of the members of the Congregation owe obedience to the Holy Father, as their supreme authority, through the force of the vow of obedience; they are subject to the local Ordinaries according to Universal Law.

44. The Vocationist cultivates a profound and supernatural respect toward his superiors and toward every legitimate ecclesiastical and civil authority.

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Chapter Three		
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Community Life (62-75)		

COMMUNITY LIFE

45. The sacrifice of Christ has obtained for us God’s love within our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Imitating the perfection of the love that offers itself, the Vocationist offers himself, through Community life, to the Brothers who share the same vocation.

46. Thus, as sharers in the love that unites Christ to the Father in the Spirit, they strive to make effective the joy of living together.

47. The Religious Community must live in a house legitimately established under the authority of a Superior, and observe Community life. The Religious should not leave this house without the Superior’s permission. In case of prolonged absence, the Major Superior can grant to his subjects, permission to remain out of the house for a period of time no longer than one year, except in cases of sickness, study or work to be done for the Community.

48. The Superior, should always promote, through word and example, the spontaneous and joyful participation of everyone for the common good.

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Community of Prayer

49. Above any other thing in the life of Community, the Vocationist must have at heart, the perfect organization and constant functioning of the life of prayer.

50. They cultivate with constant fidelity and care the spirit of prayer and prayer and prayer itself, drawing from Sacred Scripture, the source of Christian spirituality, and the works of the Founder.

51. Faithful to the word of the Lord: *pray unceasingly*, they commit themselves to constant prayer.

52. The Liturgy of the Hours, voice of the whole church in prayer, is held in great esteem in our Community life. Every day they will recite in Community, Morning and Evening Prayers. Deacons and priests are required to recite the entire Liturgy of the Hours.

53. They will participate in the Community daily Holy Mass, dedicate themselves to mental prayer for at least a half-hour, and to those devotional practices proper to the Congregation, particularly the Offertories of the Most Precious Blood.

54. Those Religious who are legitimately unable to take part in the Community devotional practices prescribed by the Constitutions and Directory must do them faithfully and diligently in private.

The Superiors must make sure that everyone has the time necessary to do these things.

55. Every first Thursday of the month, they will solemnly celebrate the Divine Institution of the Priesthood and of the Eucharist, in order to ask the Lord for more workers in His vineyard in accordance with the charism of the Congregation.

56. The Community is entrusted to the high protection, motherly care, and queenly superiority of the Blessed Mother. The Virgin Mary, exemplar and guardian of every Consecrated life, is venerated with special devotion, including the recitation of the Rosary.

57. In order to cultivate a spirit of humility and reconciliation, and to strengthen brotherly love, they will have periodical Community penitential celebrations, and according to the guidelines of Mother Church, they will often receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

58. Every year, all Religious must attend an annual retreat. Every month, there must be a day of recollection.

59. Notwithstanding these common rules, the Superiors must judge in a favorable light the cases of those Religious who might have a special vocation to contemplation or to a particular type of apostolate. If such a vocation is found to be authentic and in accord to

the spirit of our Constitutions.

Likewise, the Superiors should be generous in granting days of solitude, a month or even forty days of retreat to all who make such a request.

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Community of Penance

60. The Vocationist should generously practice self denial and corporal mortification, so that they should need to be restrained rather than encouraged.

They understand that the best use they can make of the body is to offer it as a holocaust on the cross, in communion with Jesus' sacrifice in the Eucharist.

61. In the life of penance, there should be great consideration for the importance given by our Founder to Community life, laboriousness, early morning rising, abstinence from smoking and alcohol.

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Community Life

62. Aware that charity, spread in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been sent to us, is the soul of every communitarian and apostolic project, the Vocationist cultivates intense brotherly love.

63. They build Community life on the foundations of loyalty, gentleness, and sincere understanding; they are solicitous for the needs of their confreres, open to acceptance and dialogue, sensitive in brotherly correction, generous and eager in forgiving, always ready for reconciliation.

64. They apply themselves to console every pain, rejoice in every good, cooperate in every work; becoming all things to all men for the Lord.

65. Each Community in accordance with the prescriptions of the Directory, determines its own schedule in such a way as to maintain the necessary equilibrium between prayer, work, and free time. The schedule of the Community must be approved by the Major Superior.

66. Life together requires a certain silence which is an expression of love and deference for

others and respect for those times assigned for work, prayer, and rest. Silence fosters listening and reflection, facilitates encounters with the Divine, and makes missions fruitful.

67. They seek to sow peace and joy everywhere; especially surrounding new members, guests, the tempted, the sick, the poor and the very young with kindness; seeking, loving, and serving Jesus in them all.

68. They will share times of recreation, celebration, and family life as this is helpful in maintaining a peaceful equilibrium and fosters the spontaneous union of hearts.

69. Seeing Jesus in every person, they welcome everyone with unsophisticated and attentive courtesy, and when needed, practice hospitality with careful attention and intelligent prudence.

70. They are particularly grateful to their parents, considering them their most important benefactors. They will support them spiritually, morally, and, in cases of necessity, with the Superiors permission even financially.

71. The Superiors should make sure that in every house there is a section reserved exclusively to the Religious.

72. They use the means of social communication in order to gain information, for their apostolate, and for their relaxation. Correct and prudent use of these means is determined by the demands of Religious Life and the duties of the apostolate.

73. They consider every sick confrere to be a real treasure for the Community and surround him with attention and brotherly care.

74. The elderly confreres who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Congregation will be surrounded with affection and understanding. They enrich the confreres with their experience and are the visible sign that Community/ Family that is desired according to the spirit of Fr. Justin.

75. The Communion that unites them in life continues and is fulfilled at the transition to the Father's House. The entire Congregation and each Community is committed to praying for their deceased confreres, the Holy Father, Diocesan Ordinaries, the Vocationist Sisters, relatives, and benefactors, as prescribed by the Directory.

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<u>Admission and Formation</u>	<u>Vocation Apostolate</u> (76-80)	<u>Itineraries of Formation in the Congregation</u> (81)
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ADMISSION AND FORMATION

Vocation Apostolate

76. The invitation to participate in the experience of the crucified and risen Lord, which starts in baptism, is carried out in the variety of particular vocations founded in the different gifts that the Holy Spirit pours out for the growth of the Church.

77. Faithful to their charism as promoters of vocations to the ordained ministries and to other forms of consecrated life, the Vocationists give special attention to the work of intense sanctification of families, in schools, institutes of learning, associations, and, above all, in parishes.

78. In the above mentioned fields of activity, they foster a climate of Eucharist and liturgical, Marian and missionary fervor; being confident that the possible calling of the Lord will find a true and adequate reception.

79. They dedicate themselves daily and lovingly to catechesis integrated with Sacred Scripture and the lives of the Saints; teaching principles of liturgy and promoting the beginning of ascetic life.

80. Imitating Jesus, who personally calls and forms His Apostles, the Vocationist must all be promoters and educators of vocations among children, adolescents, youth, and adults.

In this vocational work, they are constantly aware of the fundamental role of prayer, remembering the precept of the Lord: "*Beg the harvest Master to send out laborers to gather his harvest. (Mt. 9:38)*"

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Itineraries of Formation in the Congregation

81. Formation is a continuous requirement throughout all Religious Life. There is however, an initial period of formation in which the action of the educator prevails.

This period extends from the acceptance of the Candidate in the Religious family until his Perpetual Profession. It develops progressively in three specific stages: **Postulancy, Novitiate, and Profession.**

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Postulancy

82. The Postulancy immediately precedes the Novitiate. The Postulant aims solidifying virtuous habits through a healthy enthusiasm for Religious ideals. The Postulant will be assisted by expert educators who must be sharp-sighted and firm, motherly- sensitive, and distinctly spiritual.

83. It is the duty of the Local Director, with the consent of his council, to admit the candidates to the Postulancy, decide how long this period of formation should last in each case, or to dismiss them.

84. The Postulancy starts with an Act of Devotion to the Blessed Mother and ends with the Consecration to the Blessed Trinity in the Holy Family.

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Novitiate

85. The Novitiate is the most important period of formation and with it starts Religious Life in the Congregation. In the spirit of the Congregation, the Novice dedicates himself to know the essential principles of Religious Life and of the Evangelical Counsels, which he must later profess.

He applies himself with particular diligence to the study of Sacred Scripture, to the knowledge of the Constitutions, of the writings of the Founder, of the history and life of the Congregation, while encountering God in vocal and mental prayer in Community life and in educational experience of apostolate.

86. Since the Liturgy is the necessary nourishment for spiritual growth, the Novice studies it with constant diligence and, maturing in the charism of the Congregation in the shade of the Eucharist as he prepares himself carefully for the ministries proper to the Institute.

87. Living together in the service of the Lord, the Novice learns how to harmonize his own freedom with respect for others and with the requirements of Religious Life. So, while preparing himself to be totally faithful to the Lord in appreciation for his vocation, he forms always more uprightly his character in sincerity, simplicity, and kindness.

88. The Novice Master is in charge of the programs and methods of formation, while the Local Director is responsible for the discipline of the house.

89. The Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, admits the Postulant to the Novitiate. In order to be validly admitted to the Novitiate, the Postulant must be at least 17

years of age.

For all of other requirements for the validity of the Novitiate, the norms of Universal Law must be observed.

90. The Novitiate takes place in a house legitimately designated for this purpose by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, and lasts for one year.

It starts with the Act of Devotion to the Holy Apostles and ends with the temporary Profession of the Vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience.

Absence from the Novitiate House which lasts for more than three months, either continuously or interrupted renders the Novitiate invalid. An absence of more than fifteen days must be made up.

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The Master of Novices

91. The Novice Master is appointed by the Major Superior with the consent of his Council. He must be a Religious priest in Perpetual Vows, outstanding in devotion, prudence, and regular observance; for his esteem and love for the Congregation, and should have the trust of the Community.

92. It is the duty of the Novice Master and his assistants to discern and ascertain the vocation of the Novices and gradually train them to live the life of perfection according to the Rules of the Congregation.

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Religious Profession

93. The incorporation in the Congregation and the consecration to God through the ministry of the Church, takes place specifically through the profession of the Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and three Promises, made under no obligation but that of love, of servitude to the Church in the clergy, fidelity to the Holy Family in the Congregation, and love for the Blessed Trinity in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Through Profession he becomes an effective member of the Congregation from which he receives all that is needed for his human and spiritual growth, with rights and duties

defined by proper law.

94. The Religious, through his Profession, commits himself to leave everything in order to dedicate himself completely to God, and to the service of all God's people. The Church, in the person of the Superior, accepts this oblation and presents it to God.

95. The Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, admits to the Profession of Temporary and Perpetual Vows, which he receives personally or through a Delegate. For admission to renewal of Vows only the consultive vote of the Council is required.

96. Temporary Profession is made annually, for a period of at least three years. Both Temporary and Perpetual Profession must be preceded by a retreat.

97. As an external sign of his Consecration, the Vocationist wears the Religious Habit, which for him is the same as for the local clergy.

98. The Professed members who wishes to leave the Congregation, should be exhorted to persevere in his Consecration to the Lord.

Those how lawfully leave the Institute, or are dismissed from it, cannot claim remuneration from the Institute for any work or service performed in it. However, the institute is to show equity and evangelical charity toward the member who has separated form it. (Can. 702, par. 1 & 2)

For exclaustation, indults to abandon the Institute, transfer to another Institute of Consecrated Life, dismissal from the Institute, and readmission to the Institute, the norms of Universal Law will be followed.

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The Brothers

99. Brothers are those Religious who consecrate themselves to God in the Congregation, and to the People of God, through those functions, activities, and ministries which are common to Lay persons.

100. The Brothers are bound to the Religious observance with all the rights and duties determined by these Constitutions.

After Religious Profession, a Brother may become a cleric at the request of the individual and according to the judgment of the Major Superior.

101. Brothers should be directed toward achieving a profession or trade so that they may be prepared to exercise various services within the Congregation according to these Constitutions

102. They will be helped to develop their talents and inclinations through the exercise of various ministers. They will take care, in a special way, of the Catechetical ministry. Every ministry will begin with a solemn, appropriate consecration which formally makes them, as cooperation of the clergy, ministers of sanctification for the people of God.

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The Oblates

103. The Congregation admits to the life of Community, as Oblates, those who even though they are not Vocationist, want to serve God following our spirituality and cooperating in our ministers, provided that they always offer solid expectation of being a rich help to the internal observance and to the external ministries.

104. Their spiritual formation, the modalities of their private Profession of the Vows, their rights and duties, and their relationship with Congregation are defined in the By-Laws approved by the Apostolic See.

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External Cooperators

105. External Cooperators are members of the People of God who live in the world according to the spirit of the Congregation, and offer their prayers, work, and sacrifices for the apostolate of the Divine Vocations.

The Congregation encourages, guides, and assists their spiritual formation and growth, and coordinates their apostolate for vocations.

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Vocation Educators

106. Every educator of vocations should provide, in ways adequate to the category entrusted to him, human/religious, individual, and Communication formation; urging individuals toward spiritual progress, Religious education, and to an ongoing ascension to God. The educator consequently, should have all the intellectual and moral qualities that

are needed for such a sensitive and important task.

107. There must be a climate of co-responsibility and brotherhood between the educator and those who serve other ministries in the same Community, so that the distinction of tasks does not interfere with the necessary unity of the formation, but, may contribute to more abundant wealth of the work of formation.

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Academic Formation

108. The Vocationist, a perpetual disciple at the school of Jesus the Teacher, consider all the time dedicated to study and to school as a time of communion with the Divine Truth and the Person of the Incarnate Word.

109. The curriculum of studies is contained in the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Congregation, which is prepared and updated according to the requirements of the Apostolic See, and must be approved by the same Apostolic See.

110. In every House, or group of House, there should be a periodic lecture on the Bible, Liturgy, Theology, Canon Law, and documents of the Sacred Magisterium.

111. The Vocationist students, if possible, are to study at Pontifical Universities, so that they may obtain a profound knowledge of the Sacred Sciences.

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Continuing Education

112. All Superiors must diligently make sure that the individual Religious be engaged, in the light of the Vocationist's charism, in continuing intellectual and spiritual formation; and that they achieve those levels of general and specific learning that better respond to the needs of the times and of the fields of activity in which they exercise their ministry.

The Superiors are to provide their subjects with the necessary resources and time to do this.

113. Each Religious, after three years in a special assignment, whenever possible, without prejudice to the activities, may spend in special Houses, a period of rest and spiritual renewal.

Likewise, after six years, he may spend a sabbatical year in special House for spiritual development.

114. The constant practice of spiritual direction, the familiarity with the main schools of asceticism and the study of the writings of the Founders of these schools greatly contribute to a solid spiritual formation. The lives of the Vocationist should be like a synthesis of all the main schools of asceticism in the Divine present.

115. In order to carry out his apostolate effectively, the Vocationist uses the most advanced means, avoiding what is outdated, void of content, or formalistic.

With this view in mind, they offer and attend courses of theological development, and provide for themselves and others, specific training in the various pastoral and vocational activities.

116. The Vocationist should be present and active most of all in every form of apostolate for vocations, at all levels; both in order to be enlightened, and at the same time, bring their own contribution as servants of the Divine Vocations.

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Chapter Five

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THE SERVICE OF AUTHORITY IN THE CONGREGATION

Authority and Service

117. The exercise of authority, service of love in the example of Jesus Teacher, is a vital task in the life of fraternal communion and of apostolic ministry of the Vocationist.

118. The Superiors should exercise their authority in a spirit of service toward the confreres in order to express that love with which God loves them.

They should establish a rapport of friendly trust with the confreres and should promote their cooperation in seeking the good of the Congregation and the Church.

119. The accomplishment of this duty requires constant prayer, meditation, and consultation; but also, courageous decisions in the awareness of one's responsibilities before God, the Church, and all the confreres who expect this service of love.

120. Every Superior should give a good example in their Religious observance; should be the first to every Community act without exception or dispensation, save real necessity. Should he habitually need dispensations from some of the Community acts, it would be better for him to resign, save always the approval of the Major Superior.

121. The Superior should make sure that each Religious, according to his abilities and the needs of the Congregation, are well trained for the various positions and ministries, as determined by special guidelines, for a well organized activity and for the most complete observance of the Constitutions.

122. The Superiors, with joy and sweetness of supernatural love, should be firm in demanding the observance and wise in allowing full freedom for every good initiative.

123. The supreme authority of the Congregation is ordinarily exercised by the Superior General with the assistance of his Council and extraordinarily by the General Chapter when it is legitimately convened.

124. The Congregation is divided into Provinces and Regional Delegations

- A) The Province is governed by a Provincial Superior and his Council, according to common and particular law. The Province is subdivided into local Communities governed by a Superior with his Council.
- B) The Regional Delegation is governed by a Delegate with his Council appointed by the Major Superior. The Regional Delegation consists of groups of Local

Communities in particular situations.

125. The Major Superiors are the Superior General and his Vicar, the Provincial and his Vicar.

126. The Major Superior and his Council express and promote the particular charism of the Congregation within the Church in its three fields of apostolate; Parishes, Missions, and Schools, and especially in its own characteristic work, the Vocationary.

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The General chapter

127. The Chapter is an organism consisting of several physical persons operating on a level of equal collegiality, representing and expressing the entire Congregation.

128. The Chapter has the task of protecting the spiritual heritage of the Congregation, looking after its common good, promoting its apostolic life, making its charism better known, protecting its unity, keeping abreast of the constant renewal of aggiornamento of both structures and members; it elects the Superior General and his Councilors, the Representative to the Holy See; treats questions of major importance, and establish norms which are binding to all members of the Congregation.

129. The Ordinary Chapter:

1. Is convened by the Superior General with the deliberative vote of his Council. It is held every six years or whenever the position of Superior General becomes vacant. In this case, it is convened by the Vicar General.
2. An Extra Chapter can be convened by the Superior General with the deliberative vote of his Council whenever it is deemed necessary for the good of the Congregation.

130. The General Chapter is presided over by the Superior General and consists of both *ex officio* and elected members:

1. The *ex officio* members are: the Superior General, the General Councilors, the Provincials, the former Superiors General, the Regional Delegates appointed by the Superior General, and the Representative to the Holy See. The *ex officio* members may not compose more than one third of the participation at the Chapter.

2. All of those in Perpetual Vows enjoy active and passive voice in the election of the Delegates to the Chapter.
3. The methods used for the election of the Delegates, and that used for the convocation of the Chapter are described in special By-Laws which are revised from time to time by the same General Chapter.

131. It is the duty of the Superior General to communicate to the entire Congregation, as soon as possible, the complete list of the Chapter's members and their substitutes.

132. The decision made by the General Chapter remain in force until the following Chapter.

133. The General Chapter:

1. Examine the reports presented by the Superior General and the Treasure General. In the light of these, the General Chapter examines the spiritual and apostolic life, observance of the Constitutions, and the financial status of the Congregation.
2. The General Chapter examines the ordinances of the previous Chapters in order to ascertain the observance and the feasibility of same.
3. It studies the problems, and the proposals prepared by the pre- Chapter committee, and by individual Religious; it also makes plans for the growth of the Congregation in the Church.

134. It is not permissible to change the proper characteristics of the Congregation, modify articles of the Constitutions, add or maintain on a permanent basis, activities that are not mentioned in the Constitutions, without a qualified majority (2/3) vote of the General Chapter and the approval of the Apostolic See. The authentic interpretation of Constitutions is reserved to the Apostolic See.

135. The affairs of the General Chapters are decided by a majority of (50% + 1) of the votes.

136. The Superior General will promulgate the decrees of the Chapter. Interpretation of and dispensation from some of the Chapter's decrees is the responsibility of the Superior General with the permission of his Council.

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Election of the Superior General

137. The Superior General is the visible sign of the unity of the Congregation. Every Chapter member should elect to this office a Religious who is worthy not only for his talents and experience, but also for his piety, deep spirituality, fidelity to the Church and its visible head, to the Congregation, and to its Constitutions and ministries.

138. The Superior General must be a Religious priest in Perpetual Vows who is at least forty year old, and has been Perpetually Professed for at least ten years.

139. His election is achieved by an absolute majority of votes, If after the third ballot, that majority has not been attained, there will be a fourth ballot containing only those Religious who, in the previous ballot have obtained the largest number of votes and who will have passive but not active vote. If the fourth ballots results in a tie, the one who is senior in vows is considered elected; however, if they took their first vows on the same day, the older one is considered elected.

140. The Superior General is elected for a six year term, and can be elected only for a second term without interruption.

After he has accepted the election, he will make a Profession of Faith in the presence of the entire Chapter.

141. He who has been legitimately elected Superior General should, in humility, accept this serious and sensitive appointment, trusting in the grace of God which never fails us. However, if after serious reflection, before God, he should decide because of serious personal reason, not to accept it, the Chapter in the same session, will decide the day for a new election.

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Election of the General Councilors

142. The Councilors express the participation of all the members for the well-being of the entire Congregation. They must effectively and harmoniously assist the Superior General in governing the Congregation; giving their deliberative or consultive votes in those decisions that must be made, and proposing to the Superior General, all those measures that, before God, they deem as most appropriate in each case.

143. In order to be elected to the office of General Councilor, a Religious must have been in Perpetual Vows for at least five years, and must be at least thirty years old.

144. There are six Councilors; the Vicar General, the Assistant for Parishes and

Vocationaries, the Dean and Assistant for Schools, the Assistant for the Missions, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. The Vicar General, the Assistant for the Parishes and Vocationaries, and the Assistant for the Missions must be priests.

145. In the election of the General Councilors, the same procedure is followed as the that used in the election of the Superior General.

They are elected for a six year term, and can always be re-elected.

146. The Representative to the Apostolic See, has the task of dealing with the Sacred Roman Congregation for the affairs of the entire Congregation, and of the individual houses and members, always under the guidance of and dependence from the Superior General.

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Service of Unity of the Superior General

147. The Superior General

1. Has authority over the entire Congregation, its houses and members;
2. Promotes the moral, intellectual, spiritual, and apostolic growth of all Religious;
3. Presides at the Profession of Vows, either personally or through a Delegate, saving the rights of the Provincial;
4. He is the first to take responsibility for the well-being of the Congregation;
5. He authorize all extraordinary expenditures within the limits of his power;
6. He assigns personnel to Communities which depend from the central government, according to the Constitutions;
7. He visits all of the Communities either personally or through a Delegate at least twice during his six year term;
8. He address letters of instruction or exhortation to the entire Congregation, according to circumstance, on the subject of Religious Life, in harmony with the laws and decrees of the Holy See.

9. He can direct individual Religious and Communities through appropriate initiatives of formation and direction;
10. He can appoint a Visitor for part of the Congregation or for some particular affair;
11. He can dispense, for a limited amount of time, individual Communities and Provinces from the observance of some rule of the Constitutions for reasonable cause;
12. He convenes the General Council;
13. He gives permission to Religious to preach in the churches and chapels of the Congregation.

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The General Council

148. The General Council is convened at the request of the Superior General or through the request of at least three members of the General Council.

149. The Superior General submits the following to the deliberative vote of the Council:

1. The establishment of Province and Regional Delegations, the approval of the By-Laws of the Delegation, and the appointment of Novice Masters, saving only the right of the Provincial.
2. The appointment of Delegates, Regional Councilors, and Local Superiors for those Communities depending from the central government, after suitable consultation.
3. The opening of new houses with the written consent of the Diocesan Bishop, and the closing of existing houses, after consultation with the Bishop.
4. The establishment, transferal, or closing of Novitiate houses through a written decree.
5. The admission to Novitiate, and Temporary Vows, for members of those Communities depending from the central government.
6. The admission to Sacred Ordination, saving only the right of the Provincial.
7. The election of a General Councilor whose term will extend to the next Chapter,

whenever a position becomes vacant due to resignation, death, removal, or prolonged incapacity.

8. The appointment of a substitute for any General Councilor who is temporarily absent or incapacitated.
9. The removal of any General Councilor and the Representative of the Apostolic See, with the previous concurrence of the Holy See.
10. The Convocation of the General Chapter and determination of the time and place where it will be celebrated.
11. The transfer of the General Curia, after having informed the Apostolic See.
12. The appointment of a Visitor General for the entire Congregation.
13. The designation of houses of study for members of the Congregation.
14. The transfer or removal from office of a Local Superior during his term of office, for just reason, according to the Constitutions and Directory, for those Communities depending from the central government.
15. The approval of the financial reports of the entire Congregation that must be prepared by the General Treasurer at specific times as per the Directory.
16. Contracts of alienation, debt, acquisition, and any other financial obligation stipulated by the Congregation and by the individual Provinces, observing always the prescriptions of Universal Law.
17. The affairs of major importance, which are defined as such by the General Chapter, and all cases that according to common law and Constitutions require the consent of the Council.
18. Any decision of serious and extraordinary importance that affects the entire Congregation.
19. The authorization of apostolic or Community experiences which are not considered by the General Chapter, always provided that they are in harmony with the specific goal of the Constitutions.
20. Presents to the Bishops, for appointment, the Pastors for those parishes entrusted

to the Congregation, saving only the rights of the Provincial.

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Service of the Councilor

150. The First Councilor, as the Vicar General, replaces the Superior General whenever he is incapacitated or absent, succeeds him in governing the Congregation, when, for whatever reason, his office is vacant.

The main task of the Vicar General is to convene the General Chapter, which must be held within six months of any vacancy in the office of Superior General.

151. The General Assistant for the Parishes and Vocationaries, coordinates the various activities of the Vocationist pastors, in harmony with the pastoral and vocational plans of the Dioceses.

He is the general coordinator of the Vocation Directors of the Congregation.

152. The Dean of Studies updates and implements and *Ratio studiorum Generalis* of the Congregation, as approved by the Apostolic See. He oversees the focus of studies and makes sure that the *Ratio* is faithfully followed in every house of study.

He also oversees the efficiency and order of libraries and school records. He coordinates the educational programs in the Vocationaries and boarding schools.

He coordinates the work of the various Deans of Study in the Provinces of the Congregation.

153. The General Assistant for the Missions, Promotes and coordinates the activities of the Vocationist missions, with programs that are harmonious with the spirit of the Congregation and the needs of the Church, as expressed in the various organizations of the same Church.

154. The Secretary General takes the minutes of sessions of the General Council, and prepare letters and acts which are to be signed with the Superior General. He prepares and preserves, in the Archives, all of the documents of the history of the Congregation.

155. The General Treasurer, aware of his sensitivity mission, renders his service in a spiritual and apostolic perspective.

156. While administering with a spirit of freedom and generosity, the fruits of the works of

the Confreres, he tries to be a living witness of justice, realism, and equilibrium in the evaluation of all things. Above all, in difficult situations, he must witness a great trust in the Providence of the Confreres.

157. The General Treasurer administers all the goods and real estates of the Congregation as such, under the guidance of the Superior General, and the control of the Council to whom he will supply any explanations when necessary.

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The Provincial Community

158. The Province is a reality of communion. In its function of mediation and link between the local Communities, both among themselves and the rest of the Congregation, it safeguards the unity of vocation and mission in the multiplicity of geographical expressions.

159. A group of Communion in a particular territory that has the capacity for it's own administration and government may form a Province.

160. It is within the powers of the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of his Council, to erect, modify, or suppress a Province, or merge it with another Province.

161. In the Province, the authority is exercised ordinarily by the Provincial and his Council, extraordinarily and collegially by the Provincial Chapter.

162. The Provincial Chapter expresses the participation of all members in the life and growth of the Province. It is regularly convened every three years by the Provincial with the consent of his Council.

163. A Provincial Chapter must be held before every Ordinary or Extraordinary General Chapter.

164. The Provincial Chapter is made up of both *ex officio* members and elected Delegates.

1. *Ex officio* members are: the Provincial and the Provincial Councilors.
2. All of those members who are regularly elected by the Religious of the Province are members of the Chapter as Delegate.
3. All Religious in Perpetual Vows have both active and Passive voice.

165. The forms under which the Provincial Chapter operates, the election of Delegates, and the convocation of same, are described in special by-laws which are revised from time to time by the same Provincial Chapter.

166. The Provincial Chapter:

1. Examine the general condition of the Province concerning spiritual life, apostolate, and Religious observance, based on the financial reports presented by the Provincial and the Provincial Treasurer.
2. Sets goals to be achieved for the common good of the Provinces.
3. Elects the Provincial and the Provincial Councilors.

167. The Provincial, as link of communion within the Province, fulfills his service in Religious cooperation with the Superior General. He encourages and strengthens the Communities within the Province in their Religious and apostolic life and does his best to keep them open and sensitive to the needs of the entire Congregation and the Church.

168. The Provincial must be a Religious priest in Perpetual Vows. He must be at least thirty-five years old, and have been in Perpetual Vows for at least five years. His election must be confirmed by the Superior General. The Provincial must make a profession of faith in the presence of the Superior General or his Delegate.

169. As a Major Superior, the Provincial has ordinary powers over the members and Communities of the Province, within the limits of common and particular law.

170. The Provincial:

1. Promotes Religious spirit, the observance of the Constitutions and Directory within the Province.
2. Frequently visits the Communities and Religious under his jurisdiction, as is appropriate;
3. Sends an annual report on the status of the Province to the Superior General;
4. Admits, with the consent of his Council, the candidates for the Novitiate, for Temporary and Perpetual Vows, and Sacred Ordination.
5. Establishes Regional Delegation within the Province, with the consent of his Council, and provides for the composition of local Communities; likewise he appoints

Delegates and Regional Councilors, within the Province, with the consent of his Council.

6. Appoints the Novice Master, with the deliberative vote of his Council and, likewise, the Local Superiors after suitable consultation.
7. Transfers or removes from office, for just cause, the Local Directors during their term of office, according to the norms of the Constitutions and Directory.
8. With the consent of his Council, he presents to the Bishop for appointment, those pastors of parishes entrusted to the Congregation.
9. For a good reason, may temporarily dispense individuals and Communities from some of the disciplinary norms of the Constitutions.
10. Convenes the Council.
11. Informs the Superior General of important decisions and problems, consulting him in matters which may have repercussions in other Provinces, and in the Congregation.
12. Grants permission to his subjects for publishing of materials on faith and morals, in addition to the permission sought of the Local Ordinary.

171. In governing the Province:

1. The Provincial is assisted by four Councilors, the first being the Vicar Provincial, the second, Dean of studies and Assistant for Parishes, Vocationaries and Missions; the third, the Provincial Secretary; and the fourth, the Provincial Treasure.
2. They are elected by the Provincial Chapter.
3. They are elected for a three year term, and can always be reelected.

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The Regional Delegation

173. The Regional Delegation is governed by a Delegate and two Councilors, appointed by the Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, after consultation as prescribed in the By-Laws.

174. The powers, limitations, and qualifications of the Delegate and his Council are described in special By-Laws approved by the delegating Superior, with the deliberative vote of his Council.

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The Local Community

175. The Religious Community, as a Community of brothers, united by spiritual, apostolic, and legal bonds, is the concrete expression of Community Life, and constitutes the normal environment where the development for the life and actions of each Religious takes place.

176. The Local Community promotes, nourishes, and guides the development of individual members in accordance with our Vocation and Mission in the Church.

177. The Community is presided over by a Local Superior. He is the faithful and prudent servant. He is like good father and mother that the Lord has appointed as the head of the Religious family, in the image of Himself, and of our Celestial Superior, Mary Most Holy.

178. The Local Superior should preside over the life of the Community, being aware of individual Religious observance, promoting good spirits, laboriousness, brotherly union, and make periodic reports to the Major Superior.

179. The Local Superior must be a Religious Priest in Perpetual Vows, according to the norms of the Directory. He must be an exemplar in Religious observance, and in as far as possible, an expert in administrative matters.

180. The Local Community consists of at least three Religious. The Superior Vice- Superior, and the Treasurer, together form the Local Council. This Council coordinates administration, apostolic and Community life in accordance with the Directory.

In a small Community, all Religious would constitute the Local Council, and in such a case, the Local Council, would also be the Family Council.

1. The Family Council consists of all of the members of a Community.
2. This Council is called together at least once a month, is presided by the Local Superior, and has only consultative value.

181. The Family Council:

1. Determines the Communitarian and apostolic plan according to our consecration, and periodically examines its implementation.
2. Gives a tangible answer to the problems of the local church in the areas where the Community works.
3. Examines the commitments that are to be made concerning parochial, and diocesan apostolate, with especial concern for the vocation apostolate.
4. Is informed of the ordinary and extraordinary administration of the house.

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Administration of the Goods of the Community

182. The Congregation has the juridical capacity of administration, acquisition, procession, and alienation, according to general and particular law.

Likewise, those Provinces, Delegations, and Houses within their jurisdiction.

183. The legal representation of the Congregation should be entrusted to a Religious who is elected by the General Council, from among its members, with the exception of the Superior General and the General Treasurer.

184. The income of the Congregation should consist of funds derived from real-estate, contributions from Provinces, Delegations, and individual Communities, as well as from any activity of the Congregation.

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Importance and Force of Constitutions

A. These Constitutions are intended to guide us, through the persuasive force of love, on our pilgrimage of communion with God the Trinity.

They show us as inspirational models, Jesus, the Virgin, and the Holy Family, and give to us the standards of our consecration which are necessary to make the consecration constant and effective.

In demanding observance of the Constitutions, the Congregation prepares the hearts of its members to a continuous renewal, to love of God that sanctifies them through the perfection of their status and expands the possibilities of development in the original charism of the Founder, Fr. Justin Russolillo.

B. The prescriptions of the Constitutions do not bind under pain of sin, excepting only those norms which concern the Vows, the Law of God, and the Church. However, the Religious who disobeys the prescriptions of the Constitutions through explicit contempt or dishonest motives is not immune to fault.

All religious, conscious of the commitment taken with their Profession must faithfully observe the Constitutions.

C. The Superiors should pledge to do their best to make sure that every observance is derived from internal conviction and heartfelt need, correcting and exhorting for the everlasting bloom of the communion of life among the members of our Communities.

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Last Updated: