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**CONSTITUTIONS AND RULES
OF THE
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

**PARIS
The Motherhouse of the Congregation
of the Mission**

95 Rue de Sèvres

1954

**CONSTITUTIONS
of the
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION**

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WILLIAM SLATTERY
Superior General of the Congregation
of the Mission
to our
beloved in Christ
Priests, Clerics, and Coadjutor Brothers
of the same Congregation
Greetings in the Lord!

Behold at last, my very dear brethren, if I may speak to you in the words of Saint Vincent, behold the Constitutions of our Congregation, so much desired by you. Three general Assemblies labored diligently to adapt all the laws of our Congregation to the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law. After everything had been thoroughly examined and discussed, the Sacred Congregation for Religious approved them with some few additions and changes.

Pope Pius XII in His kindness to our Congregation, by His Apostolic Letter of the 19th of July, 1953, the feast of Saint Vincent, our Founder, has deigned by His Supreme Power to approve, confirm and sanction our Constitutions in specific form.

Therefore, by reason of our office, we promulgate them and declare them to be promulgated, asking and beseeching you in the Lord Jesus, most beloved brethren, that you so devote yourselves to their exact observance that our Congregation, God willing and Saint Vincent helping, may thrive and flourish more and more, and may gather a greater abundance of fruit in its ministries, and that all its members, imbued with the primitive Vincentian spirit, may everywhere be the good odor of Jesus Christ.

Given at our Mother-House in Paris, on the 25th day of January, 1954,

On the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.
WILLIAM SLATTERY,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission.

POPE PIUS XII
For Everlasting Remembrance

To preach the Gospel to the poor, especially to those dwelling in country places, to train sacred ministers properly in piety and in knowledge, to perform all kinds of works of charity, is the distinguished and salutary work that Saint Vincent de Paul, in obedience to a certain divine impulse, set before his society of priests, which is called the Congregation of the Mission.

This society, approved in the year 1632 by Our Predecessor, Pope Urban VIII, due to the fact that it preserved the institutes established by its Father, has been made to abound with joyful growth and has contributed much to the glory of the Church and to the salvation of souls. But in order that, just as in a well-ordered body politic, there should be full agreement between laws and duties, another Predecessor of Ours, Pope Clement X, ratified and approved what are called the Select Constitutions, to which in the course of time there have been added many decrees of the general Assemblies of this same society.

TITLE I

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE CONGREGATION, AND THE ORDER OF PRECEDENCE AMONG ITS MEMBERS

CHAPTER I

The Nature and Purpose of the Congregation

1. — The Congregation of the Mission, founded by St. Vincent de Paul in the year 1625, is an exempt clerical society, in which the members, although not religious properly speaking, nevertheless follow the way of life of religious, dwelling in common under the rule of Superiors according to their own Constitutions, and with vows, which are not public, but privileged.
2. — Its general purpose is to labor for the glory of God and the personal perfection of its members; its special purpose is: 1° to preach the Gospel to the poor, especially the country people; 2° to help ecclesiastics to acquire the knowledge and virtues required by their state of life; 3° to carry on works of charity and education.
3. — The Congregation is made up of clerics and lay persons.
 - § 1. — It is the work of the clerics to seek the salvation of souls, by preaching missions wheresoever they may be called by the Ordinaries or pastors, by urging and hearing confessions, by settling quarrels and disputes; to carry on sacred missions in pagan countries, by the mandate of the Holy See; to direct diocesan seminaries and to teach in them; to conduct retreats for the clergy and the laity; to set up and direct conferences of the clergy; to establish Confraternities of Charity, and to carry on other works suitable and conformable to the aforesaid functions.
 - § 2. — The coadjutor brothers in their religious life, according, however, to their state, have the same rights as the clerics, but they have no part in the direction of the Congregation. Their work is to assist the clerics in the ministrations mentioned above, according as they shall be directed by the Superiors.
4. — The special purpose of the Congregation may not be changed without the permission of the Holy See.

CHAPTER II

The Order of Precedence among Members

5. — The order of precedence among the members of the Congregation shall be as follows:
 - § 1. — The Superior General; the Assistants general in the order of their election; the Secretary general, the Econome general, and the Procurator general to the Holy See, according to the order of their vocation and age; Visitors and Vice-Visitors according to vocation and age; the local Superiors according to the order of their vocation and age; the other priests and clerics according to the grade of Order, and in the same Order according to vocation and age; the coadjutor brothers according to the order of vocation and age.
 - § 2. — In our houses only the Superior and the Assistant Superior have a special place among the members.
 - § 3. — The Visitor has the first place in all the houses of his province.
 - § 4. — A delegate sent by the Superior General to make a canonical visitation of any house occupies the first place in it during the entire time of the visitation.
 - § 5. — In Assemblies, this shall be the order of precedence:
 - 1° In a domestic assembly, all those having a voice in the assembly take their places after the Superior, the secretary and the tellers;
 - 2° In a provincial Assembly, the Superiors, the provincial Econome and the delegates take their places according to the order of vocation and age, after the Visitor, the secretary of the Assembly and the tellers.
 - 3° In a general Assembly, the secretary of the Assembly is seated after the Superior General, then the Assistants according to the order of their election, the Secretary general, the Econome general, the Procurator general to the Holy See, and the Visitors according to the order of vocation and age, and then the delegates according to the same order, the substitute of a Visitor unable to attend, is seated with the Visitors, but in the last place; the substitute of a delegate, among the delegates according to the order of vocation.

**TITLE II
THE GOVERNMENT AND
CONSTITUTION OF THE
CONGREGATION**

CHAPTER I

The Government of the Congregation

6. — § 1 — The Congregation is governed by a legitimately elected Superior General, in whom resides supreme ordinary authority to be exercised over the whole Congregation according to the sacred canons and the Constitutions, that is, over each of its members, as well as over each of its provinces, vice-provinces, houses and affairs.

§ 2. — The Superior General is, nevertheless, subject to the authority of a general Assembly according to the norm of the law.

§ 3. — Other Superiors have that authority which is contained within the limits of their official duties.

7. — The Superior General in governing the Congregation makes use of the Assistants general as his helpers, in such fashion, however, that the power of deciding what things are to be done resides in him, except in those cases expressly mentioned by the law and the Constitutions.

8. — The general Assembly, the Superior General, Visitors of provinces, Vice-Visitors, Superiors of houses, whether they be formal or not, have over their subjects, besides dominative power and that which flows from the vow of obedience, ecclesiastical jurisdiction for the internal as well as for the external forum, both powers to be exercised according to the norm of the sacred canons and the Constitutions.

9. — § 1. — The Congregation of the Mission, its seminarists not excepted, with its houses and churches, enjoys, by special Apostolic grant, the privilege of exemption from the jurisdiction of the local Ordinaries, except in those cases expressed by the law, especially in what has respect to the missions.

§ 2. — All the members of the Congregation, the coadjutor brothers and the seminarists not excepted, enjoy the privileges of clerics described in canons 119-123, and others granted to the Congregation.

10. — § 1. — The Superiors, both major and minor, shall have consultors.

§ 2. — Whenever the law states that Superiors need consent or counsel to act, then, if consent is required, the Superior who acts against the majority vote of his consultors, acts invalidly; if counsel only is required, e.g., ‘de consilio’ or ‘audito consilio,’ it suffices for the validity of the act that the Superior hear his consultors.

§ 3. — Nevertheless, although he is held by no obligation of following their votes, even though they are unanimous, the Superior should give great deference to their unanimous vote, nor should he act against it without a reason which, in his judgment, more than balances theirs.

11. — Major Superiors, who according to the norm of canon 198, § 2, come under the name of Ordinaries of the Congregation, can appoint notaries for ecclesiastical business pertaining to our Congregation, and also judges, to be chosen from our confreres, for the tribunals of the Congregation, without prejudice, however, to the prescript of canon 655. § 1.

12. — Superiors are held to promote among their subjects the knowledge and the observance of the decrees of the Holy See which have reference to our Congregation.

CHAPTER II

Provinces, Vice-provinces and Houses of the Congregation

13. — The Congregation is divided into provinces and vice-provinces, with fixed territorial boundaries.

14. — § 1. — A province, which is governed by a Visitor, ought to consist of at least six houses canonically erected.

§ 2. — A vice-province ought to consist of at least three houses, and is governed by a Vice-Visitor.

15. — A vice-province can be one of two types:

1° An autonomous vice-province, namely, one which depends on no fully constituted province, but which is governed by a Vice-Visitor under the direct and immediate power of the Superior General, like other fully constituted provinces;

2° A filial vice-province, that is, one which takes its origin from another province already fully constituted, from which it receives its members and with which it forms one whole; this vice-province is ruled by a Vice-Visitor under the direct and immediate power of the Visitor of the province to which it is united.

16. — § 1. — The establishment, union, and division of provinces or vice-provinces, as well as any modification of their boundaries and their suppression, are reserved to the Superior General, who must have the deliberative vote of his Council, and also, if there is question of a province or of an autonomous vice-province, the permission of the Holy See.

§ 2. — The Superior General shall see to it that among the different provinces there is due proportion as to the number of houses and subjects, and, if there is need, that those that are too extensive are divided, especially if they cover greatly distant regions.

17. — If a province or an autonomous vice-province is so divided that a distinct province or autonomous vice-province is established, then all the goods of the province or vice-province, as well as the debts contracted for the province or vice-province, ought to be divided equitably and with due proportion by the Superior General with his Council, observing the wills of pious founders and donors, as well as rights legitimately acquired and the particular norms by which the province or vice-province is governed.

18. — § 1. Each house is governed by its local Superior; those houses are said to be formal houses which consist of six members who have taken vows, of whom four at least ought to be priests.

§ 2. — The foundation and suppression of houses pertains to the Superior General with the consent of his Council. permission having been obtained in writing from the Sacred Congregation for Religious and from the local Ordinary, as well as from the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith or of the Oriental Church, if the house to be erected is in a place subject to them. The Superior General should not proceed, however, without having first heard the Visitor or the Vice-Visitor with his Council.

§ 3. — The permission given by the local Ordinary to establish a new house carries with it the faculty of having a church or a public oratory connected with the house, according to the norm of Canon 497, § 2.

19. — The Superior General has the right, for a just cause, to transfer members from one province to another, or from one house to another, as well as the right to erect a house of one province in the territory of another, for a grave cause and with the consent of his Council, having first heard the Visitors concerned.

TITLE III

THE SUPERIORS AND ASSEMBLIES

OF THE CONGREGATION

CHAPTER I

The Superior General

20. — The Superior General is chosen for life by the general Assembly in an election in which he must secure two-thirds of the votes, according to the norm of articles 78-80.

21. — For the validity of the election, it is required that the Superior General:

1° Be born of a lawful marriage;

2° Have completed his fortieth year of age;

3° Have completed at least twelve years in the Congregation since taking his first vows;

4° Not be a Bishop, nor have the office of Vicar or Prefect Apostolic, even though lacking the episcopal character.

22. — Moreover, one should be elected who:

1° As far as human frailty permits, is free from every inordinate affection and is most zealous in the pursuit of virtues, especially humility and charity;

2° Is most closely united to Jesus Christ in his prayers and in his actions;

3° Has sound judgment and superior knowledge, and, what is even more important, has prudence and discretion, and knows how to join correctness and severity with meekness and kindness;

4° Excels in vigilance, strength and firmness of mind;

5° Has acquired a sufficient knowledge and experience of the affairs of the Congregation;

6° Has a sound and well-formed body, as well as a good reputation among our own members and with externs.

23. — § 1. — The Superior General shall make a spiritual retreat as soon as possible after election; after which, in the presence of God, he shall write on a card the name of him whom he judges suitable in the Lord, to fulfill the office of Vicar General after his own death until the future election of a Superior General, and he shall place the card, folded and sealed, in a box to be kept carefully in the archives of the house in which he customarily resides.

§ 2. — If the designated Vicar should die in the interim or become unfit, the Superior General will be able to name another.

24. — It is the right and duty of the Superior General:

1° To take great care that the spirit of our Holy Founder is maintained strong and ardent everywhere, and that the Constitutions and the Rules are observed;

2° To make regulations for the good of the Congregation, which must be observed, unless a successor or a general Assembly decides otherwise;

3° To make canonical visitations of the houses, provinces, vice-provinces and missions, either personally or by some one delegated by him;

4° To use the special faculties granted by the Holy See to the Congregation through indulgences, and to communicate them to his subjects, or to limit or revoke them, in so far as he judges it more expedient;

5° With the consent of his Council, to appoint a Secretary general, an Econome general, a Procurator general to the Holy See, Visitors, vice-Visitors and their officials, and Superiors of houses, and to remove any of them from office for a just cause;

6° If the need should arise, to make use of the help of Commissaries who shall have only such power as the Superior General will judge necessary;

7° With the consent of his Council, to establish provinces, vice-provinces and houses, and to suppress them, observing the conditions prescribed by law and the Constitutions;

8° With the consent of his Council, to admit members to the Congregation and to first vows; with the advice of his Council, to admit to perpetual vows those whom he will have judged worthy; also, with the consent of his Council, to admit candidates to the order of holy priesthood, without prejudice to the right of the Visitor and the autonomous Vice-Visitor;

9° With a deliberative vote of his Council, to dismiss members bound by vows, according to the norm of the Code of Canon Law; to use canonical penalties against those who are contumacious;

10° To enter into contracts of major importance, observing, however, the prescriptions laid down by law; in matters of the greatest importance, he needs the consent of his Assistants, according to the norms laid down by the general Assembly;

11° To convoke a general Assembly, to direct it, and, with the consent of the Assembly, to dismiss the delegates;

12° In every Assembly over which he presides, to have the prerogative of breaking a tie in votes, according to the norm of canon 101, without prejudice to articles 36 and 83;

13° Having consulted his Assistants, to admit ecclesiastical guests to any of our houses for a notable time or for the remainder of their lives;

14° Every five years to send a report of the state of the Congregation to the Holy See, according to the rules laid down by the Sacred Congregation for Religious, and other reports whenever they are requested by the Holy See.

25. — § 1. — The Superior General cannot sanction additions, changes or derogations in the Constitutions approved by the Holy See, nor can he authentically interpret them; he can, however, give them the interpretation of custom.

§ 2. The Superior General can restrict, limit or even take away the use of our privileges from his subjects.

§ 3. He cannot accept ecclesiastical dignities without the consent of the general Assembly, unless by command or

permission of the Holy See.

§ 4. — In order that he may more diligently and more perfectly devote his time to the government of the whole Congregation, he shall not be occupied in any way with the government of any particular house or of the house of the general Curia.

§ 5. — He shall personally engage in no outside work, even though it be a pious one, that does not pertain to his office or to the Community, unless the greater glory of God, and the urgent necessity of the neighbor should demand it on occasion.

26. — The Superior General ceases to hold office when his resignation has been legitimately accepted by the Holy See, or his deposition has been decreed by the Holy See.

27. — If it should happen that the Superior General becomes manifestly unworthy or unfit to fulfill his duties, then it will be the duty of the Assistants to notify the Holy See, by whose mandates all shall abide.

28. — The Superior General may not change his residence from the Mother House without consulting the Holy See.

CHAPTER II

The Vicar General

29. — § 1. — In the vacancy of the office of the Superior General from any cause whatsoever, on the very day of the vacancy, or as soon as possible, the first of the Assistants present in the house shall call together all the priests who are present in the house at the time. the norms prescribed for the occasion being observed.

§ 2. — The card, written in the hand of the Superior General, naming a Vicar General, is to be read in a loud voice by the Secretary general of the Congregation.

§ 3. — He, whose name will be found on the card, shall be considered Vicar General without any controversy, and shall be accepted as such by all.

30. — § 1. — If the one who is named Vicar General on the card shall have died in the meantime, or is impeded either by a serious illness or some other cause, so that he cannot be free for the office, or even if it should happen that the Superior General died without having named a Vicar General, or if, for grave cause, the Vicar General is not available, then the First Assistant shall be accepted by all as the Vicar General.

§ 2. — The Assistants, the first excepted, shall judge by a majority of votes on the illness or impediment of the one named Vicar General.

§ 3. — If, however, the first Assistant also shall have died, then the Assistant oldest by reason of his election shall be accepted ipso facto as the Vicar General.

31. — § 1. — The Vicar General, as soon as he has been designated and recognized, shall receive from the first Assistant the keys of the safe and the files in which are located the documents that the Superior General held in his own keeping; none of these shall he remove, however, unless necessity demands it, and then only in the presence of two Assistants and the Secretary general, and he shall restore them as soon as possible, in the presence of the same witnesses.

§ 2. He shall diligently see to it without delay that the suffrages for the deceased Superior General are offered.

32. — § 1. — The Vicar General shall use the same Assistants, Admonitor, Secretary and Econome general, Visitors, local Superiors and other officials named by the Superior General, whom he may neither change nor send elsewhere, except for a most grave cause approved by the majority of his Council, with the exception noted in § 2, immediately following.

§ 2. If one of them should die, or, according to the norm of § 1, be sent elsewhere, the Vicar General can, if necessity should demand, substitute another in the place of the aforesaid one, but only with the consent of the majority of his Consultors.

§ 3. — If, perchance, the Vicar himself had been an Assistant, or if one of the Assistants should die, he can, with a majority vote, substitute another, not as an Assistant but as a Consultor, who, as such, does not have the right to attend the general Assembly.

§ 4. — If the office of Admonitor becomes vacant, it devolves ipso facto upon the first Assistant, or upon the Assistant oldest by reason of election.

§ 5. — Finally, after the election of delegates to an Assembly, either provincial or general, the Vicar General may not send any one of them to a place where he would be prevented from coming conveniently and in good time to the aforesaid Assembly.

33. — § 1— With the exception of the case mentioned in § 2 below, the Vicar General cannot:

1° Change anything in the government of the Community, in its Constitutions, common Rules, or Rules of Office, or in the functions, exercises, usages or customs of the Congregation;

2° Permit new foundations of houses, or abolish them;

3° Sell or otherwise alienate the stable goods of the Congregation;

4° Undertake a journey to very distant regions;

5° Dismiss anyone who has taken vows in the Congregation.

§ 2. — If, however, necessity or a most grave cause should require it, he can decree and execute all these things, with a majority vote of his Council.

34. — § 1. — The Vicar shall, as soon as possible, convoke the general Assembly for the election of the Superior General, and shall designate the day and place, so that it may not be delayed beyond six months time, unless necessity should force some delay, not, however, to exceed three additional months, and this only with the consent of his Assistants.

§ 2. — In the general Assembly he has the prerogative of breaking a tie in votes according to the norm of canon 101, except in elections.

§ 3. — With the approbation of the Assistants he shall appoint a custodian of the conclave, to whom he shall give an associate.

§ 4. — Before the election he shall absolve the electors from censures, and the election completed, he shall proclaim the one elected and shall formulate the decree of election.

§ 5. — After the election his office of Vicar ceases; and in the following sessions of the Assembly, taking first place before the Assistants and the Visitors, he shall have the right to vote.

CHAPTER III

The Council of the Superior General

35. — The Council of the Superior General is made up of the Assistants general.

36. — The general Assembly elects the Assistants by an absolute majority of the votes.

37. — The Assistants remain in office until the next general Assembly according to the norm of article 69, §§ 1 and 2; they may, however, always be re-elected. They are present in the Assembly to the end, even if they are going out of office.

38. — § 1. — Six are to be elected, either from those who are present at the Assembly or from those absent, and each Assistant ought to be chosen from a different country.

§ 2. — It is required, moreover, for validity that those to be elected have completed at least ten years since pronouncing their first vows in the Congregation.

§ 3. — They shall be exemplary men and zealous for the divine service; free from all inordinate affections, as far as human frailty permits; loving the good; burning with desire and zeal for preserving the Community and promoting its primitive spirit, and well experienced in the Community and its affairs.

39. — The Assistants ought to reside in the same house as the Superior General; they cannot be sent elsewhere for any length of time except in case of necessity; at least three should always and necessarily be present, so that with the Superior General they may form a Council.

40. — The duties of the Assistants are:

1° To help the Superior General in the government of the Congregation by work and counsel, both in matters pertaining to doctrine and in things to be done;

2° To make known their vote or opinion on all matters proposed by the Superior General in Council, and to do this

with sincerity and fidelity, in the presence of God, and free from all partisanship, according to the teaching and practice of our Congregation; and to maintain a strict secrecy about all these matters;

3° To make provisions for whatever pertains to the food, clothing and expenses of the Superior General, as well as for his bodily well-being.

41. — § 1. — If one of the Assistants dies, a substitute is named by the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of the other Assistants.

§ 2. — But if a general Assembly is to be held within six months, the Superior General will not be obliged to name a substitute.

42. — § 1. — The Assistants can be removed from office for the same reasons as the Superior General.

§ 2. — While holding office they can be deposed by the Superior General with the consent of the other Assistants, provided that the Holy See concurs.

CHAPTER IV

The Admonitor of the Superior General

43. — The Admonitor of the Superior General shall be taken from the Assistants, and he is elected by the general Assembly by an absolute majority of the votes, just as in the election of the Assistants general.

44. — His office is:

1° To remind the Superior General about matters which are of some moment, and which affect the latter's person and office, and to do this with the greatest humility, charity and prudence;

2° To pray in a special manner for the Superior General, since he is held by reason of his office to keep watch over the soul of the General.

CHAPTER V

The Secretary General

45. — The Secretary general ought to be most devoted to the common good of the Congregation; most zealous for its affairs as well as experienced in them; he should be most faithful to the Superior General, whom he shall serve as both memory and hands with regard to all things that are to be written or transacted.

46. — He is nominated by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, and is not to be chosen from the Assistants; his tenure of office is dependent on the will of the Superior General, who may not remove him, however, except for just reasons.

47. — § 1. — It is the duty of the Secretary general:

1° On the order and in the name of the Superior General, to write letters and documents which pertain to the business of the Congregation; likewise to handle affairs pertaining to the Superior General, by his authority and according to the norm of the law;

2° To have charge of the archives of the Congregation, in which he shall carefully preserve all useful documents; to make known the Acts of the Holy See relative to our Congregation, also the decrees of the general Assemblies and the circular letters of the Superior General, and all that pertains to the history of the Congregation; to make up the catalogue of provinces, vice-provinces, houses and members of the Congregation; to send out notices of our dead for the application of suffrages; and to publish, according to the instructions of the Superior General, the notices of our members who have died a holy death.

§ 2. — He has the right of assisting at the general Assembly with the further right of voting, and he helps the Secretary of the Assembly to formulate the decrees.

48. — The Secretary general by reason of his office is present at the deliberations of the general Council in order to write the minutes, but he has no vote; he, also, is bound by the law of secrecy.

CHAPTER VI

The Econome General

49. — The Econome general, who administers all the goods of the Congregation, should be a man of outstanding ability in administration and in carrying on business; he ought to excel at the same time in fidelity and diligence.

50. — He is named by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, and remains in office at the will of the General; he cannot be removed, however, except for just reasons.

51. — The Econome general is held by office:

1° To administer the goods of the Congregation under the direction of the Superior General and under the watchful care of the general Council, according to the norm of the Constitutions, of the sacred canons, and in keeping with the intentions of benefactors or donors;

2° To watch over the provincial and the domestic economies, as well as over all those who have any share in carrying on the business of the Congregation;

3° To render a report on his administration twice in the year to the Superior General with his Council.

52. — § 1. — The Econome general assists at the general Assembly with the right to vote; he helps the Secretary of the general Assembly in formulating the decrees.

§ 2. — He is present in the general Council with the Assistants only when called by the Superior General to give a report on business pertaining to his office; however, he has no vote.

CHAPTER VII

The Procurator General at the Holy See

53. — § 1. — The Procurator general at the Holy See is one of our priests who, under the direction of the Superior General, handles the affairs of the Congregation at the Holy See.

§ 2. — He resides in Rome having the precedence of honor in the Congregation after the Visitor and before the local Superior.

54. — He is named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council and is directly responsible to the Superior General. He may not be chosen from the Assistants.

55. — The duties of the Procurator general are:

1° To fulfill the commissions entrusted or commended to him by the Superior General, with the greatest reverence and fidelity toward the Holy See;

2° To remind the Superior General of matters that should be taken up with the Holy See, and to transmit to him the decrees, rescripts and other documents of the Holy See that have reference to our Congregation;

3° To acquaint the Superior General with all those things that he has learned from the Holy See and with the decrees of the Sacred Congregations that would seem to be useful to our Institute also.

56. — § 1. — He shall never undertake the business of any province, house or individual, beyond petitioning the ordinary faculties, without having first made sure of the consent of the Superior General when the matter has to do with what concerns the whole Congregation or some province, or without hearing the Visitor when it has to do with matters concerning the houses of his province.

§ 2. — All business of the Congregation, of its provinces or houses, as well as that of individual confreres, to be taken up with the Holy See, is to be carried on through the Procurator general.

57. — He shall diligently and carefully preserve all the documents and writings that have to do with his office in the archives of the Procurator general

58. — The Procurator general is present at a general Assembly with the right to vote.

59. — Unless the Superior General will have appointed another, the Procurator general, with the written mandate of the Superior General, can discharge the office of Postulator general at the Roman Curia, observing diligently all those things which are set down in the Code of Postulators.

CHAPTER VIII

Assemblies in General

Article I — Active and Passive Voice

60. — § 1. — All priests who have pronounced at least temporary vows and who have completed the course in Theology have an active voice, unless they have lost it on account of some crime against the common law or the law of our Congregation.

§ 2. — For the right of passive voice it is further required that priests shall have completed six years after taking their first vows, all other particular conditions for the different offices being fulfilled.

§ 3. — Anyone of our Community who has been raised to the episcopal dignity, even though only nominated, has neither an active nor a passive voice, either during or after the completion of the term of office; similarly, during their term of office Prefects Apostolic, even though not consecrated Bishops, unless they are at the same time Superiors of some particular house of the Congregation.

§ 4. — No one can have a double vote.

§ 5. — Anyone who will have voted for himself shall be deprived of both active and passive voice at the good pleasure of the Superior General with his Council.

61. — § 1. — They are to be elected delegates, who have an outstanding knowledge and experience of our affairs and functions, along with an ardent desire and true zeal for the preservation and promotion of the spirit of our Institute; members who observe the Rules and Constitutions, and who are endowed with prudence for acting.

§ 2. — Election as a delegate obligates the one elected to attend the Assembly, for it is to be considered as a mandate of obedience.

62. — No one may, of his own will, substitute another in his place in Assemblies, but only according to the norm of the Constitutions and decrees, as is bad in the case of a Superior or Visitor who cannot attend an Assembly at which he should be present by law, as is provided for in the proper places.

63. — § 1. — Before the elections it is lawful, even fitting, to seek information for oneself and to give it to others concerning the qualities of those to be elected.

§ 2. — The electors shall beware however, lest there be any electioneering, direct or indirect, either for themselves or for others.

64. — § 1. — If anyone of the electors is present in the house in which the election takes place but cannot attend the election on account of infirmity, his written vote is to be collected by the tellers of the election, unless it is otherwise provided for by particular laws or legitimate customs.

§ 2. A vote is null, unless it is:

1° Free; and therefore a vote is invalid, if the elector was forced either by grave fear or deceit, directly or indirectly, to vote for a certain penalty or for many disjunctively;

2° Secret, certain, absolute, and determined.

§ 3. — Any conditions attached to a vote before the election are to be considered as not attached.

Article II — Method of Procedure

65. — § 1. — In elections, all of which are to be by secret ballot, three tellers are always required for counting, reading and proclaiming the votes; they shall take an oath of observing secrecy and honesty with regard to the election.

§ 2. — These tellers, before the election of the secretary and the assistant of the election, are by law, along with the presiding officer, the two priests oldest by vocation among those present.

66. — § 1. — All the sessions begin with the invocation of the Holy Spirit and of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
§ 2. — Then, seated in order, and having before their eyes solely the good of the Congregation, the members shall take up the matters to be considered in the Assembly, the secretary faithfully setting down what is done and the decrees that are passed.
§ 3. — The acts approved by the members, and written down and read out by the secretary are to be signed by the presiding officer, by the same secretary, by the tellers and all the members of the Assembly, and, having been stamped with the seal of the Congregation, are to be carefully preserved in the archives.

67. — § 1— At the beginning of any Assembly the election of the secretary of the Assembly shall take place.
§ 2. — He shall be held elected who has the greater number of votes, the invalid ballots not counted, and, in case of a tie the older in vocation and age.

68. — § 1. — The electors are held to observe secrecy about all those things that require it either by the natural law or by the divine and canon law, especially about the information on the candidates given or received at the time of the Assembly, and with regard to making known those for whom each one voted.
§ 2. — The session finished, the ballots are to be burned.
§ 3. — Where the Superior General or the Visitor or the Vice-Visitor, having consulted his Council, calls together a particular class of persons, such as the Visitors who can attend, the Superiors of houses, professors of Seminaries, missionaries, for the purpose of investigating new questions or new forms of the apostolate for our age, something which experience sufficiently demonstrates to be fitting, such an Assembly has no juridical power.

CHAPTER IX

The General Assembly in General

69. A general Assembly is held for various reasons:

I. Ordinary: 1° For the election of a Superior General; 2° For transacting the business of the Congregation every eight years after the last general Assembly.

II. Extraordinary: Outside of the above stated times, as often as the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, judges that it should be held for solving some problem that is both urgent and of great importance, and which it is thought cannot be well settled except by a general Assembly.

70. — A domestic and a provincial Assembly should precede the celebration of the general Assembly.

71. — The general Assembly is convoked by the Superior General, or by him who holds his place, at a time and place agreed to by the Council, with the reason for the convocation stated.

72. — The following ought to be present at the general Assembly: the Superior General, if there is one, otherwise the one who takes his place, who shall preside over and direct the Assembly; the Assistants general; the Secretary general; the Econome general; the Procurator general at the Holy See; the Visitors; two delegates elected in each provincial Assembly; one delegate elected in the Assembly of each autonomous vice-province.

73. — § 1— If, however, according to the norm of article 62, a Visitor should not be able to attend the general Assembly, he shall substitute in his place one of the two elected as delegates in the provincial Assembly; the first substitute then becomes a delegate.

§ 2 — If a Visitor has died or no longer holds office, the provincial Consultor who has the interim government of the province shall attend the general Assembly in the place of the Visitor.

CHAPTER X

The General Assembly for the Election of a Superior General and the Assistants General

74. — § 1. — When all who have the right to take part in the Assembly have convened, and the ‘Veni Creator’ has been recited and the Vicar General has given the exhortation, then before proceeding to the election of the Superior General, the following are elected in secret ballot by a plurality of votes:

- 1° The secretary of the Assembly who shall be the first teller of votes;
2° Two other tellers of votes;
3° An assistant of the election, whose duty it will be to see that everything proceeds according to the proper order.
§ 2. — Then, that part of the Constitutions shall be read, which has to do with elections.

75. — In order that all the electors may give one another timely information about the qualities, capabilities and merits of those to be elected, and that they may give themselves earnestly to prayer for the happy outcome of the election, no one shall go out of the house during the two days before the election, except in case of urgent necessity.

76. — When the day of the election comes, all the members of the Assembly shall offer up Mass for the success of the election, and at the hour appointed shall be enclosed in conclave, the Vicar General or, in his absence, the first Assistant general presiding.

77. — The session shall begin with the invocation of the Holy Spirit and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The electors having been closed in, the Vicar, or someone delegated by him with the approval of the majority of the Assistants shall deliver a brief exhortation. Then, after a quarter hour of prayer made in silence and in the presence of the Divine Majesty, each one shall choose him who he believes before God should be elected.

78. — On prepared ballots, each shall write the name of him whom he chooses for Superior General, and in proper order approach a table, which is prepared like an altar; then, kneeling, he shall say in a clear voice: “I call on Jesus Christ, who is to judge me, as witness, that I, N.N., elect and name him for Superior General who I judge before God should be elected”; having said this, he shall rise, and shall put the folded ballot in the ballot box.

79. — When all the ballots have been cast, they are counted, and if the number is greater than the number of the electors, the vote is null, and new ballots are to be written and collected. Otherwise, the names found on the ballots are read in a loud voice and the one who will have received two-thirds of the votes, ballots that are null not counted, he shall be the Superior General.

80. — If in the first vote no one will have received the necessary majority, a second vote shall be taken in the same manner as the first; if not in the second either, then in like manner a third, fourth and fifth vote shall be taken. After the fifth inefficacious balloting, a sixth shall be made, in which those two candidates only shall have a passive voice, who in the fifth balloting had the greater number of votes even though it was an equal number. If, on the sixth balloting, the votes are still equal, he shall be considered elected who is the older in vocation, profession or age.

81. — § 1. — The election having been carried out legitimately and the decree of election drawn up, the Vicar General, or he who presides, shall proclaim in a clear voice the result of the election; but, if the Vicar himself has been elected Superior General, the secretary of the Assembly shall draw up the decree and he shall proclaim the name of the one elected.

§ 2. Immediately, all those assembled, one by one, kneeling on the floor, shall salute the one elected and shall humbly kiss his hand.

§ 3. — The one elected shall not refuse the burden committed to him and the aforesaid salutation, except for a grave cause approved by the Assembly.

§ 4. — When the election has been completed, the ballots are to be burned, the hymn “Te Deum” is to be recited alternately, and the doors are to be opened.

§ 5. — If the newly elected is not present, he shall be called, and the Assembly is to be suspended until his arrival.

82. — The office of the assistant of the election ceases after the election of the Superior General.

83. — § 1. — There shall follow, in another session and with separate balloting, the election of the Assistants and the Admonitor of the Superior General according to the usual method; in these elections the Superior General is not to cast a ballot.

§ 2. — They shall be considered elected who have an absolute majority of the votes; and they shall be declared elected by the presiding officer of the Assembly.

§ 3. — If in the first and second balloting no one is elected, then in the third he shall be declared elected who will have received a relative majority of the votes, or in the case of a tie vote, the senior in vocation or age.

§ 4. — If any one of the elected Assistants is not present, and cannot easily be summoned before the end of the

Assembly, the Superior General shall notify him of his election, and shall finish the other matters that ought to be accomplished in the Assembly.

84. — No matter what the purpose for which a general Assembly is convoked, if it happens that after it has been called, or has met, or even within six months after its dissolution the Superior General should die, the delegates sent from each of the provinces to the general Assembly, without any new deputation, shall be called by the Vicar General to elect a new Superior General.

85. — The other sessions of the Assembly shall be held according to the manner prescribed for a general Assembly for the transacting of business, as set down in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XI

The General Assembly for the transacting of Business and the Proposing of Postulata

86. — § 1. — A general Assembly has the full right of decreeing and determining those things that would seem to promote the successful and fruitful government of the Congregation, by establishing laws or decrees, which constitute the discipline of the Congregation.

§ 2. — Decrees at one general Assembly can be abrogated by another general Assembly; those that are not abrogated are considered as confirmed, and maintain their force.

87. — § 1. — In a general Assembly those grave matters or affairs are to be treated which have to do with the observance, the apostolic ministry, the formation of our youth, and the government of the Institute.

§ 2. — Those in the Assembly ought to be by all means careful not to propose anything against the common law and the Constitutions.

§ 3. — If, however, grave inconveniences have already followed in certain places from the observance of any prescription of the Constitutions, or if it is clearly foreseen that they will follow, the proposal can be made that efficacious remedies be provided by the Assembly for these by no means light inconveniences, or that recourse be had to the Holy See.

§ 4. — It will be lawful, however, to seek a declaration or an explanation from the Assembly concerning all points, even substantial ones, so that, if it seems expedient to it, the Assembly may give some explanation with regard to the point proposed.

88. — § 1. — Matters shall be proposed in writing and disjunctively. That shall have the force of law which has pleased the absolute majority of those who cast ballots, the invalid votes not counted; if the votes are equal, a second ballot is to be taken, and, in the case of another tie, the Superior General will be able to determine the matter.

§ 2. — But if the matter cannot be proposed in disjunctive form, then that shall have the force of law which has pleased the absolute majority of voters, the invalid ballots not counted, or, after two inefficacious ballots, the relative majority in the third. If the votes are still equal after the third ballot, the Superior General shall break the tie by his vote.

§ 3. — For any changes which are to be sought from the Holy See, two-thirds of the votes are required.

89. — The postulata to be proposed to the general Assembly will be those which the Superior General himself, having heard his Council, will judge in the Lord should be proposed together with the postulata of the delegates.

90. — § 1. — For the examination of the postulata which have been delivered by the delegates, a Commission shall be set up, over which the Superior General shall preside, its members shall be six of those at the Assembly elected by a plurality vote in a secret ballot and indiscriminately; at least one of them shall be from the Assistants general.

§ 2. — The duties of this Commission are:

1° To examine the postulata which the delegates have brought, and to refer them to the general Assembly with its own vote on the opportuneness of discussing them or not;

2° To examine whether and in what ways the Institute has departed from its primitive spirit or from its Constitutions, Rules, pious exercises, laudable usages and customs, or whether it is in proximate and evident danger of departing from them.

91. — § 1. — Therefore from the day of the setting up of this Commission until a day set by the Superior General each member of the Assembly shall bring to it, if they have not previously been sent, both the postulata they have to propose in the name of the provincial Assembly, and those observations that they themselves have made about the aforesaid postulata. Everything ought to be put in writing and signed.

§ 2. — The acts of the Assembly, faithfully set down by the secretary of the Assembly and read to the members, are to be signed by them, and are to be promulgated by the Superior General at a time and in a manner that are opportune.

CHAPTER XII

The Provincial Assembly

92. — § 1. — A provincial Assembly shall be held whenever the election of delegates is required for a general Assembly, for whatsoever reason convoked.

§ 2. — in this provincial Assembly the postulata shall be considered which are to be proposed in the name of the province to the general Assembly, or to the Superior General.

93. — § 1. — It is the duty of the Visitor to convoke the provincial Assembly, to set the day and to designate the house in which the Assembly is to be held.

§ 2. — It is the right and the duty of the Visitor to preside over and to direct the Assembly, and to see to it that everything proceeds in due order, manner and form, according to the statutes and decrees of the Congregation.

94. — § 1. — The following should be present at the provincial Assembly: the Visitor, the provincial Econome, the Superior of each house of the province; also from each house the priest who has been elected a delegate by the domestic Assembly.

§ 2. — If a Superior is legitimately hindered from attending the provincial Assembly, the Assistant of the house shall substitute for him, if he is suitable and has completed six years since taking his vows in the Congregation, according to the norm of article 60, § 2.

§ 3. — Autonomous vice-provinces have the right of sending to a general Assembly one delegate, who is elected in a vice-provincial Assembly. Vice-provinces that are not autonomous have only the right of electing two delegates who are to be sent along with the Vice-Visitor to the Assembly of the province on which they depend.

95. — § 1. — By a plurality of votes one of those present is to be elected the secretary of the Assembly. He shall carefully write the minutes, which, when they have been read to the Assembly, are to be signed by all those present and by the secretary himself.

§ 2. — An assistant of the Assembly is also to be named, who shall see that discipline is preserved; he shall be elected, as was the secretary, by a plurality of votes.

96. — § 1. — When these things have been done, the Assembly shall take up in a second session those matters which the province wishes to propose either to the general Assembly, or to the Superior General; for this purpose, the postulata shall be proposed to the Assembly to be discussed and approved by those present.

§ 2. — It shall be the duty of the secretary to gather all the acts of the Assembly in writing; those that the Assembly will have approved shall be sent to the Superior General at the time set by him.

97. — Then, on the day and at the hour designated by the Visitor for the business of electing the delegates, all the members shall meet in the appointed place, and, having invoked the Holy Spirit and made mental prayer for fifteen minutes, they shall proceed to the election of two delegates and two substitutes by an absolute majority of the votes, according to the norm of article 83, §§ 1, 2, and S for the election of the Assistants general.

98. — Anyone of the priests of the province can be elected, who:

1° Has completed six years since taking temporary vows in the Congregation, and has finished the complete course of theology; these conditions are for the validity of the election;

2° Has acquired a more than average knowledge of and experience in the affairs and the functions of our Congregation;

3° Has an ardent desire and zeal to promote our spirit;

- 4° Observes the Constitutions and Rules faithfully;
- 5° Has prudence both in deliberation and in action.

99. — When all the votes have been publicly counted and read, the Visitor shall proclaim those who have been elected delegates and substitutes; the ballots shall be burned by the secretary.

100. — § 1. — When all these things have been done, the Visitor shall declare the Assembly ended, and the “Te Deum” shall be recited.

§ 2. — All the acts, as well as the postulata approved and not approved, drawn up by the secretary of the Assembly, shall be signed by all the members, according to the order of seating, beginning with the Visitor, and they shall be sealed with the seal of the Visitor.

§ 3. — A copy of these acts, drawn up by the secretary of the Assembly and signed by both the Visitor and the secretary, shall be given to the first delegate; the same shall be done with the postulata that have been approved, and which are to be sent to the Superior General at the time determined by him.

CHAPTER XIII

The Domestic Assembly

101. — A domestic Assembly can never be convoked either by the Visitor or by the Superior and celebrated in the usual manner for any cause, other than that of electing a priest to be sent to the provincial Assembly.

102. — § 1. — It is the right of the legitimate Superior of the house, or of the Assistant who exercises the full office of superiorship, to convoke the Assembly and preside over it, after the Visitor has indicated the obligation of holding it.

§ 2. — All the priests of the house, who have taken at least temporary vows and have finished the complete course in theology are to be called to the Assembly.

§ 3. — Under the same conditions missionaries, who happen to be present and who cannot attend the Assembly of their own houses, can be called; these, however, do not have a passive voice.

103. — On the day before the election to the provincial Assembly, the Superior shall bring the aforesaid priests together at a suitable hour, and shall explain the qualities requisite in the one to be elected according to the norm of article 98.

104. — § 1. — On the following day, at the hour and place assigned by the Superior, when all the members are present and after a quarter of an hour has been given to mental prayer, the secretary of the Assembly is elected in a single ballot.

§ 2. — He shall be held elected secretary, who will have the greater number of votes. In case of a tie, the older in vocation or age shall be held elected.

§ 3. — 1° — After the secretary has been elected, the delegate to the provincial Assembly and his substitute shall be elected in the same manner, the secretary taking the votes out of the ballot-box, counting them and reading them in a clear voice, in such a way that the Superior and the other teller oldest by vocation or profession, may inspect the ballots, and all may hear.

2° — He will be elected delegate who will have more than half the valid votes, according to the norm of article 83.

106. — § 1. — The election completed, an instrument of deputation shall be drawn up according to the formula prescribed in the minute-book of the Assembly, and it shall be signed and sealed with the Superior’s seal; if the secretary himself will have been elected delegate, the priest, oldest by reason of vocation, shall sign the document. The votes shall be burned by the secretary.

§ 2. — After everyone, including the delegate has signed the minute-book, and thanksgiving has been made to God, the domestic Assembly is ended.

CHAPTER XIV

Visitors and Vice-Visitors

107. — The Visitor is a major Superior having proper ordinary power, who is placed over a province to govern it according to the Constitutions and the Rules, under the authority of the Superior General.

108. — He is named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, and is established in office for six years; this term may not be extended beyond another six years.

109. — § 1.—For valid appointment to the office of Visitor, it is necessary to choose a priest of the Community who is over thirty years of age, who has been born of lawful wedlock, and who has completed at least ten years since his first profession in the Congregation.

§ 2. The one named shall be, moreover, an outstanding priest, exceptionally well informed in the works of the Congregation, obliging to his confreres, and a truly devout man.

110.— § 1.— It is the right and duty of the Visitor:

1° To make a visitation of the houses of his province every year, or at least every other year, and to send a report of his visitation to the Superior General;

2° With the consent of his Council to admit candidates to the internal Seminary, and to exercise great care in its direction;

3° With the consent of his Council to permit Seminarists to take temporary vows after two years of probation; and, having heard his Council, to admit the professed to the renovation of vows or to the taking of perpetual vows at the time determined by the Constitutions;

4° To help the scholastics of the province with zealous care in the cultivation of virtue and in the acquisition of necessary knowledge, by providing suitable masters;

5° With the advice of his Council to examine and approve the course of studies in all disciplines, both philosophical and theological likewise, the matter for the quinquennial examination of young priests, and for the examination to obtain the faculties for the hearing of confessions;

6° To present for orders, under the title of common table, those whom he will have found suitable, and to give the dimissorial letters for their ordination, and this with the consent of his Council, if the orders are major;

7° With the consent of his Council to present to the Superior General, when he requests it, the priests who will be named by the latter as Superiors of houses, Director of the internal Seminary Director of Scholastics, Consultors, Admonitor and provincial Econome;

8° With the advice of his Council to name the Assistant the sub-assistant, the consultors, the admonitor, the econome of each house and the professors; by his own choice to name the ordinary confessors of the Community and the preachers;

9° With the consent of his Council to enter into necessary and suitable contracts according to the norm of the law and the amount set by the Superior General;

10° To keep a careful watch over the observance of the Constitutions and the Rules, and to promote this observance by correcting abuses, and by using canonical penalties, if there is need, on the incorrigible and the contumacious;

11° To provide houses suitably with the necessary members, and to change them, sending them elsewhere, within the limits, however, of the province; these things he shall do only after he has heard his Consultors, except in a more urgent case about which he should nevertheless inform his Consultors;

12° To foster with all his energies the good and the growth of the Congregation, as well as its ministries and its works, especially the missions;

13° To fulfill exactly whatsoever the Superior General will have commanded him, and to give him a faithful report on the matter;

14° To have a vote in a general Assembly;

15° To preside over and to direct the provincial Assembly, which he should convoke as often as a general Assembly is lawfully called;

16° To enjoy the privilege of breaking a tied vote in any non-secret balloting.

§ 2. — The approbation of the Superior General with his Council is also required for three of the preceding numbers: 3° for the admission to first and to perpetual vows; 6° for admission to the sacred priesthood; 9° for a contract which involves a sum reserved to the Superior General or to the Holy See.

111. — The Visitor approves our confreres and confers on them the jurisdiction necessary to hear the confessions of members of the Congregation, and also, without prejudice to the right of the local Ordinary, to preach the word of God; these faculties he may delegate to others.

112. — § 1. — The place of residence of the Visitor cannot be changed without the consent of the Superior General.
§ 2. — The Visitor shall have a register or archives, in which he shall carefully keep instruments, writings and all documents which have to do with the province, and which ought to be preserved because of their necessity or utility.

113. — § 1. — Vice-Visitors are established in office by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council for a term of six years, not, however, beyond two such terms.

§ 2. — They govern the vice-province with vicarial power in the name of the Superior General or the Visitor, according as the vice-province is autonomous or filial.

§ 3. They have the same rights, faculties and obligations as Visitors, except in those things which the Superior General or the Visitor, having heard his own Council, will have reserved to himself, and also in those things which may be fixed by the Constitutions.

CHAPTER XV

The Council of the Visitor and the Examiners

114. — § 1— The Council of the Visitor is made up of four Consultors, one of whom shall be his Admonitor.

§ 2. — A provincial Econome shall also be appointed, who may be called into the Council but without a vote, whenever matters concerning the temporal goods of the province are discussed.

§ 3. — These Consultors, as well as the Admonitor and the provincial Econome, are named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after having heard the Visitor.

115. — § 1. — Provincial and vice provincial Consultors are appointed for a six year term.

§ 2. — On the death of the Visitor, or on the vacancy of his office for any other reason, the interim rule of the province goes to the provincial Consultor first by reason of nomination or vocation, until some other provision is made by the Superior General.

116. — The duties of the provincial Consultors are:

1° To assist the Visitor in the government of his province;

2° To attend the Council called by the Visitor at least once a month, and as often as it shall seem good to him in order to transact the affairs of the province;

3° To give their opinion or their vote, either consultive or deliberative according to the matter being considered, sincerely and faithfully, in keeping with the doctrine and the practice of our Congregation; and to observe secrecy on all the matters discussed.

117. — § 1. — The term of office of the provincial Econome is six years.

§ 2. — The provincial Econome should be endowed proportionately with the same qualities as the Econome general.

118. — § 1— In each of the provinces there shall also be Examiners, to be appointed by the Visitor for a term or at his pleasure.

§ 2. — The missionaries appointed to this office should be suitable, serious, prudent and outstanding in their zeal for regular discipline.

119— The help of the Examiners may be used by the Visitor:

1° In examining candidates before they are admitted to the internal Seminary, so that their intention, aptitude and vocation may be known;

2° To weigh the vocation, character and other qualities required by the Constitutions of those who are to be admitted to vows use being made even of secret information; and to give opinion on the suitability of the candidates;

3° For the approbation to hear confessions and to preach the word of God, as often as the Visitor judges it opportune;

4° For giving the examination to our young priests, according to the prescript of canon 590 of the Code of Canon Law.

CHAPTER XVI

Local Superiors

120. — The local Superior is appointed by the Superior General and is removed by him, with the consent of his Council and after having heard the Visitor with his Council.

121. — § 1. — The local Superior is appointed for a three-year term, at the end of which he may be appointed for a second three-year term, not for a third term, however, in the same house, except in the case of Superiors of Diocesan Seminaries who may remain in office even for many three-year terms, if the local Ordinary and the Superior General so agree.

§ 2. — He may be removed from office for a just and proportionate cause whenever it seems good in the Lord to the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

122. — The office of Superior shall be entrusted to priests capable of directing spiritual men. They shall be desirous of their own perfection as well as that of the whole house given them to govern. They ought to be closely united to God in their prayers and other actions, solicitous for the common good, and capable of combining severity with kindness. Lastly, they ought to be sufficiently experienced in the affairs of the Community.

123. — It is the right and duty of the Superior:

1° To see that each member of his house attends to the observance of the Rules and the vows; that all perform the customary spiritual exercises of the Congregation, especially those which ought to be made in common; he, himself, should excel all in word and example;

2° To take care of his subjects, both in spiritual and temporal matters, and indeed with great humility and charity;

3° To admonish and correct his subjects;

4° To inform the Visitor, every three months, about the state of the house confided to him;

5° To convoke and direct a domestic Assembly as often as it is determined by the Visitor; and to be present at the provincial Assembly.

124. — § 1. — The Superior has, by reason of exemption, ordinary power in the internal forum for his subjects and for others dwelling in his house day and night; he can delegate this power to others, according to the norm of canon 875, § 1 (for the Sacraments of the sick and the funerals of our members, see article 227).

§ 2. — He can also, like a pastor, dispense his subjects from the common law of the observance of feasts, and similarly from the observance of fast and abstinence.

125. — § 1. — In the direction of the house, at least of a formal house, the Superior is aided by an assistant, a sub-assistant, consultors, an econome, as also by an admonitor, all of whom are named at the will of the Visitor, after having heard his Council.

§ 2. — The assistant, in the absence of the Superior, exercises the entire office of superior, according, however, to the rules of this office.

§ 3. — The office of econome, although it is preferable that it be separated from that of local Superior, may be combined with it, if necessity demands, which necessity should be interpreted strictly in large houses.

§ 4. — Other duties and minor offices are confided to other priests and coadjutor brothers of the house by the Superior.

126. — § 1. — The Superior should ordinarily call a meeting of the house council at least twice each month, in which meeting he shall set forth those matters that have to do with the spiritual and temporal good of the house confided to him.

§ 2. — The consultors shall give their opinion according to that which they will have judged in the Lord, and the Superior shall abide by the provisions of article 10, §§ 2 and 3.

127. § 1. — The Superior shall not introduce any innovation in his house, or permit any to be introduced, without the permission of the Visitor, nor shall he depart from the legitimate customs without the approbation of the Visitor.

§ 2. — He shall not undertake any new construction, or contract any obligation, without the permission of the Visitor.

128. — The Superior shall have archives and a seal of his house.

TITLE IV
CONFESSORS

129. — § 1. — Anyone who has been granted the faculty for hearing confessions by the Superior General can absolve any member of the Congregation anywhere.

§ 2. — One who has been granted this faculty by the Visitor can in like manner absolve confreres of the province anywhere.

§ 3. — One who has received the faculty from the local Superior can absolve our own and others who live in the house habitually day and night.

130. — § 1. The Ordinary of the place in which the confessions are heard grants to priests, both secular and religious, even exempt, the delegated jurisdiction to hear the confessions of anyone, whether secular or religious.

§ 2. — Our priests shall not use this faculty, however, without the permission, at least presumed, of their Superior, according to the norm of the Constitutions.

131. — In each of our houses, according to the number of members, several legitimately approved confessors shall be named, with the power of absolving even from cases reserved in the Community.

132. — Without prejudice to prescriptions which require or advise that confession be made at stated times to designated confessors, if anyone, for the tranquillity of his conscience, goes to a confessor approved by the local Ordinary, the confession is both valid and licit.

133. — § 1. — Observing all the requirements of law, Superiors can hear the confessions of subjects who freely and of their own accord ask this of them, but they shall not do this habitually without grave cause.

§ 2. — Superiors shall take care not to induce any subject, either personally or through another, by the use of force, fear, importunate persuasions or in any other way, to confess his sins to them.

§ 3. — Subjects, however, are not forbidden to open their mind freely and voluntarily to Superiors; indeed, it is expedient that they approach Superiors with a filial trust and explain to them the doubts and anxieties of their conscience.

§ 4. — Superiors are, nevertheless, strictly forbidden to induce in any manner those subject to them to make a manifestation of conscience to them.

TITLE V
TEMPORAL GOODS

134. — Not only the Congregation, but also a province and a house are capable of acquiring and owning temporal goods with stable or funded revenues.

135. — The goods of the Congregation, as well as those of a province and of a house, ought to be administered by the respective economes under the direction of the Superiors and the vigilance of the Council, within the limits prescribed by the law and the Constitutions.

136. — § 1. — In the alienation of things precious by reason of the material, the art, history or antiquity of the object, or of other goods whose value surpasses thirty thousand francs or lire, or in the contracting of debts and obligations beyond the indicated sum, the permission of the Holy See is required for validity.

§ 2. — If, however, the value does not exceed the sum of thirty thousand francs or lire, but does exceed the sum permitted to Visitors, the permission of the Superior General is required and suffices for validity; it must be given, however, in writing and with the consent of the Superior General's Council made known by secret ballot.

§ 3. — Visitors and local Superiors, in alienating goods of the Congregation, have only the powers granted them by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

137. — § 1. — In petitions for permission to contract debts or obligations, other debts or obligations, with which the

Congregation or province or house is burdened at the time, must be mentioned; otherwise the permission obtained is invalid.

§ 2. — In the alienation of goods, both movable and immovable, an appraisal of the item made in writing by honest expert, as well as a just cause, is required for the lawfulness of the action.

138. — § 1. — Since, on account of the varying conditions in different provinces, it is impossible to set up any general rule governing the amount which local Superiors may not lawfully exceed without special permission, the matter shall be defined for each province by the Visitor with the provincial Council, and proposed for the approbation of the Superior General, so that it may receive force and authority.

§ 2. — The Superior General cannot spend beyond the sum approved by the general Assembly, or, if the circumstances shall have changed and necessity requires, beyond that fixed by the general Council.

139. — Permissions in this matter, unless given in writing, are considered null.

140. — § 1. — Neither Superiors nor economes can perform actions of administration in the name of the Congregation, except within the limits of their office, and according to the norm of the law and the Constitutions.

§ 2. — Therefore the Congregation, province and house shall be responsible only for the acts of administration that are carried out according to the aforesaid norms; for the rest, those who have placed the unlawful or invalid acts shall be responsible.

141. — § 1. — Economes are to give a report to their Superiors on their administration together with an account of receipts and expenditures, which report, in the case of the Econome general, is to be examined twice a year by the Superior General with his Council in the case of the provincial Econome, this examination is to be made four times a year by the Visitor with his Council; and if it is a question of the local econome, the local Superior is to make the examination each month; moreover, the accounts are to be signed, if found to be accurate.

§ 2. — The general accounting of the whole year for the entire province should be referred to the Visitor by the provincial Econome after the end of the year; and for each house to its Superior by the local econome, at the end of the year; the Superior shall in turn refer the report to the Visitor. The Visitor, after the end of each year, shall send this accounting of the whole province and of each of the houses to the Superior General.

142.— It is forbidden to spend money. to which obligations of Masses or other burdens are attached, before the obligations have been satisfied.

143. — Gifts from the goods of the house, province or Congregation are not permitted, except as alms, or for some other just cause, with the permission of the Superior and according to the norm of our particular law.

TITLE VI

ADMISSION TO THE CONGREGATION AND THE PROBATION OF CANDIDATES

144. — The prescriptions of the law being observed, the right of admitting candidates to the Congregation belongs:

1° To the Superior General for the entire Congregation;

2° To the Visitors, each for his own province.

145. — From the common law (Canon 542) the following are invalidly admitted to the internal Seminary without the previous permission of the holy See:

1° Those who have belonged to a non-Catholic sect, that is, who fell away from the Catholic faith and gave their name to a non-Catholic sect;

2° Those who have not reached the age required for the novitiate that is, who have not yet completed their fifteenth year;

3° Those who enter the Congregation under the influence of force, grave fear or fraud, or those whom a Superior, under pressure of the same influences, has received;

4° A husband, while his marriage is still in force;

5° Those who are bound, or who have been bound, by the bond of a valid religious profession whether perpetual or

temporary;

6° Those over whom hangs the threat of a penalty for having committed a grave crime, of which they have been accused or of which they can be accused;

7° A bishop, either residential or titular, even though he has been only designated by the Roman Pontiff;

8° Clerics who, by a disposition of the Holy See, are bound by oath to labor for the good of a diocese or of the missions, so long as the obligation of the oath perdures.

146. — From the common law, unless permission is had of the Holy See, the following are unlawfully, although validly, admitted to the internal Seminary

1° Clerics in sacred orders, who have not consulted the local Ordinary, or who have gone against his will, when he refused permission claiming that their departure would cause serious loss to souls, which loss could not otherwise be avoided;

2° Those who are in debt, and insolvent;

3° Those subject to rendering an accounting, or otherwise implicated in secular negotiations, from which the Institute may have reason to fear lawsuits and difficulties;

4° Sons whose parents, that is, father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, ought to be helped in the grave need in which they are placed, and fathers whose children need their help for support or education;

5° Those destined for the priesthood, from which, however, they are debarred by an irregularity or some other canonical impediment (a son, whose father or mother is still living in heresy)

6° Members of the Oriental rite in provinces of the Latin rite, without the written permission of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church.

147. — From our own particular law, unless there is had the previous permission of the Superior General, the following are unlawfully, although validly, admitted to the internal Seminary:

1° Those who received the habit in some religious Institute, even though never professed;

2° Those dismissed from our Congregation, or who left the internal Seminary of their own free will;

3° Those who have some notable deformity of body or who because of infirmity are not equal to the labors of our Congregation.

148. — § 1— Candidates, before they are admitted, should present certificates of the reception of Baptism and Confirmation.

§ 2. — There shall be required from our postulants a written agreement signed by them, in which it is stated that in case they leave or are dismissed from the Congregation, even after vows, whether temporary or perpetual, they have no claim against the Congregation for any work performed by them.

149. — § 1. — For candidates to the state of coadjutor brother, the requirement of a postulancy of six months is to be observed, which time may be lengthened by major Superiors, but not beyond six months.

§ 2. — The postulancy shall be made in the house of the internal Seminary, or even in some other house of the Congregation in which discipline according to the Constitutions and Rules is strictly observed, under the special care of an exemplary missionary designated by major Superiors.

150. — § 1. — Before the candidates and the postulants begin the Seminary of probation they shall make a spiritual retreat of three full days, and, according to the prudent counsel of a confessor, a confession of their whole past life.

§ 2. — For each candidate or postulant the beginning of the Seminary of probation is computed from the day when each one is declared by the director, in writing, to have been admitted to the Seminary, and ends two full years from that day, so that the day of entrance is not counted, and the time is finished with the completion of the last day of the same number.

151 — The time and manner of probation are governed solely by our own Constitutions and customs.

152. — § 1. — The establishment of an internal Seminary pertains to the Superior General with the consent of his Council

§ 2. — To the house in which it has been established, only those missionaries and coadjutor brothers are to be sent who are most exemplary in their zeal to preserve discipline.

153. — § 1. — The director of the Seminary of probation is presented by the Visitor with the consent of his

Council. but ought to be named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

§ 2. — He should be a priest full of the spirit of our vocation; notably well versed in things spiritual; conspicuous by his prudence, charity and observance of Rules; easy of approach, so that all the seminarists may have recourse to him to declare their difficulties and anxieties of soul.

154. — § 1. — It is the duty of the director: to instruct and to educate the seminarists in those virtues which conduce to our way of life; to test them and to consider diligently whether they have those qualities of body and soul which will enable them to perform properly and commendably the functions of our Institute; to admonish, reprove and correct them; to be more solicitous about the qualities of soul than the number of candidates, for those who are mediocre in everything are a burden to the Community.

§ 2. — He shall be under the authority of the Superior of the house in those things that have to do with the direction of the Seminary; he shall not set up any unusual practice or innovation without the permission of the Superior or the Visitor; at least every third month he shall have a conference with the Superior of the house about each of the seminarists, and every six months he shall make a report to the Visitor on the state of the Seminary and give a complete account of each of the seminarists, especially towards the end of the first and second year, as the time approaches for the seminarists to pronounce their good purposes or temporary vows.

155. — § 1. — According to the number of seminarists there shall be one or more ordinary confessors, who shall dwell in the house.

§ 2. — The director, and his associate, shall abstain from hearing the confessions of the seminarists, unless, in a particular case and for a grave and urgent reason, the seminarist requests it.

§ 3. — Other confessors shall also be named, whom the seminarists may approach freely.

§ 4. — There shall also be an extraordinary confessor, whom all the seminarists shall approach at least four times in the year, if only to receive his blessing.

§ 5. — The seminarists shall also have the right of enjoying the faculty contained in article 132.

156. — § 1. — All the seminarists, including the coadjutor brothers, enjoy the privileges of clerics and the spiritual favors granted to the Congregation.

§ 2. — In case of death, they have the right to the same suffrages that are prescribed for those who have taken vows; and in danger of death they are permitted to pronounce our vows, which cease, however, if they recover.

157. — On the completion of the two years of probation, if he is judged suitable, the seminarist shall be admitted to the three-year vows, otherwise he shall be dismissed; if there is doubt, however, about big fitness, the time of probation may be lengthened by the Superior General or by the Visitor, but not beyond six months.

158. — Before the taking of vows, either temporary or perpetual, the seminarists or scholastics ought to make a retreat of three full days.

159. — § 1— It shall be the office of the Visitor, after consulting his Council, to dismiss seminarists for a just cause, without being held to make the cause known to the one dismissed.

§ 2. — The following should be dismissed:

1° Those who seem unable to correct themselves in certain evil affections or vices that offend God gravely;

2° Those in whom, during the time of probation, impediments or notable defects are found, which they should have made known in the examination for entrance;

3° Those who are recognized as useless or unfit;

4° Those who refuse to obey and to submit their own judgment to that of Superiors;

5° Those, likewise, among the aspirants to the priesthood, for whom dismissal is prescribed by canon 1371.

TITLE VII

THE VOWS

CHAPTER 1

The Nature of the Vows of the Congregation

160. — The members of the Congregation of the Mission pronounce vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and stability in the Congregation, in order to devote themselves to the salvation of the poor country people.

161. — § 1. These vows, although not public, are nevertheless privileged, after the manner of simple vows, and perpetual; and no one below the Roman Pontiff or the Superior General can dispense from them.

§ 2. — They cannot therefore be validly dispensed from or commuted or otherwise dissolved by reason of any jubilee, or the *Cruciata Bull*, or any privilege, indult or concession, not making express mention of the said vows.

§ 3. — The Superior General, however, for a grave cause can dispense members from temporary or perpetual vows, either in the case of a legitimate departure from the Congregation, canon 641 being observed if the person is in sacred orders, or in the act of dismissal by privilege of the Bull of Alexander VII, the prescriptions of the following canons being observed: 647, 655.668, 671 and 672 (cf. articles 281-285). The Vicar General may likewise dispense, if necessity urges.

§ 4. — These vows are to be pronounced according to the norm of canon 574, so that after two years of probation a profession is made binding for three years, on the completion of which, perpetual vows are pronounced, unless the age required for perpetual profession has not been attained or there is need of further probation, which is not to be prolonged beyond another three years.

§ 5. — Temporary vows bind the conscience of the professed in the same way as perpetual vows except for their temporary force.

162. — For the validity of these Vows, it is required that:

1° Admission to the profession of them is granted by a legitimate Superior according to the norm of the Constitutions;

2° The one taking them shall have completed two years of probation;

3° The taking of the vows is free, without force or grave fear or deceit;

4° The profession is expressed;

5° Moreover, for perpetual *vows*, temporary *vows* for three years shall have preceded them, and the one taking them shall have completed his twenty-first year.

163. The time of temporary vows *ends on* the same recurring date on which it began, but their renewal or the perpetual profession can be made at any time throughout the same day, without any delay, according to the norm of canon 577.

164. — After the pronouncing of the vows, whether temporary or perpetual, the Visitor shall see to it that the one professed immediately writes out and signs the statement of his profession in the book used for this purpose.

CHAPTER II

Poverty

I— By reason of the Vow:

165. — § 1. — All the members of our Community bound by the vows shall hold all things in common, and the following shall be distributed to each one by Superiors, according to need: food, clothing, books, furnishings and the like.

§ 2. — No one may dispose of these goods of the Congregation or dispense anything, except by the mandate or permission of the Superior, according to the norm of canon 537.

§ 3. — Moreover, no one shall have anything without the knowledge or permission of the Superior; or which he is not prepared to give up immediately on order.

§ 4. — No one shall use anything as his own; nor shall he give, or receive anything, or make a loan, either for consumption or for use, or seek anything in any other way, without the permission of the Superior.

166. — Each one of our members, bound by vows, either temporary or perpetual, retains the ownership of his goods

and the capacity for acquiring other goods, of which, however, the use and the revenue are restricted by the norms which follow.

167. — In regard to immovable goods:

§ 1. — We have dominion over:

1° Goods and simple benefices, which we possess when we take the vows, or which we shall possess in the future;

2° Immovable goods which come to us by right of inheritance;

3° Immovable goods acquired with our own money, or by title of a gift made to us, or by legacy, or in any other legitimate way. We may dispose of these things either by a voluntary deed of conveyance, or by a will, without the permission of the Superior.

§ 2. — We can also freely accept and resign a simple benefice; we cannot, however, incur any expense to do this, without the permission of the Superior.

168. — in regard to movable goods:

§ 1. — We have dominion over:

1° The revenues of the above-mentioned immovable goods and simple benefices, but we may not spend them, convert them to our own uses, or use them for works, even of a pious nature, without the permission of the Superior;

2° The movable goods acquired with our own money, or given to us as a personal gift (when there is doubt, according to canon 1536, it should be presumed that they are a gift to the Congregation) or acquired in any other legitimate way; and these we may dispose of by will. If, however, they are of lesser value and suitable to the use of missionaries each one is thought to cede them to the Community; but if they are precious and not suited to our state, we cannot keep them without the permission of the Superior, or use them, even with his permission, without violating the vow of poverty.

§ 2. — With the money, which has come to us by hereditary right through blood relationship or from an intestate, we can, without permission, acquire immovable goods or annuities, but not movable goods.

§ 3. — We cannot, however, without the permission of the Superior, buy either movable or immovable goods with money that has come to us by a legacy, or by a gift made to us personally or in any other legitimate manner, or even from revenues accruing to us from immovable goods or simple benefices.

§ 4. — He does not sin against the vow of poverty who, without permission, spends his money in making necessary repairs of his immovable goods or benefices, or who assigns to a steward the income from his immovable goods, or even a portion of it. If this assignment is due either in justice or in equity; permission is required, however, if the donation is liberal and merely gratuitous.

§ 5. — He sins against the vow of poverty:

1° Who, without the Superior's permission, carries his money about with him or has someone else keep it for him;

2° Who allows his income to accumulate without the intention of spending it with the permission of the Superior, either on his own necessary uses, or on some pious work;

3° Who, without the permission of the Superior, gives, either by word or writing, the revenues of his patrimonial title or other immovable goods to parents who are not in needy circumstances;

4° Who spends money, no matter how acquired, in uses contrary to the canons, the Rules of the Congregation, or the Decrees of the general Assemblies, even with permission granted by any Superior whomsoever.

169. — In regard to the goods of the Community and the stipends of functions:

§ 1. — He sins against the vow of poverty, who, without the permission of the Superior:

1° Keeps for himself what has been given to him by reason of the functions, duties or ministry entrusted to him, or retains that which has been obtained by the employment of his own talent (as from books of which he is the author or editor), or from a pension received on account of wounds or infirmities incurred in military service, or the stipends of Masses; and he is also guilty of injustice, if he spends this on his own or another's Use;

2° Takes the goods of the Community for himself, gives them away, or in any other manner converts them to his own or another's use;

3° Sells or gives to another books and other things, even though they have been bought with his own money.

§ 2. Superiors, who consume and waste the goods of the Community in uses foreign to our state, are guilty of a sin against poverty and justice.

170. — Superiors cannot grant permissions that are indefinite as to time and manner, nor can they grant permission to spend money on uses forbidden us by the sacred canons, the Rules, or the Decrees of the general Assemblies.

II— By reason of the virtue:

171. — Members of the Community shall abstain from every inordinate affection toward temporal goods, and shall be prepared to suffer the loss of them willingly, considering poverty as the foundation of the Congregation.

Therefore:

1° No one shall seek superfluous or choice things;

2° Moreover, in necessary things, each one shall so moderate his desire for them that in the matter of food, room and bed he shall accommodate himself to what is suitable for a poor person; and in these, as in all things, he shall be ready to feel some of the effects of poverty;

3° Each one shall willingly suffer that even the worst things in the house be given to him.

172. — No one shall have anything that he is not ready to give up at the will of the Superior; and in order that nothing may give the appearance of ownership:

1° Our rooms shall not be so closed that they cannot be opened from the outside;

2° Nor shall there be any trunk or anything else kept in them under private key, unless with the express permission of the Superior.

173. — Since the virtue of poverty can be violated by even the inordinate desire for temporal goods, each one shall diligently guard lest this evil desire invade his heart, even for seeking benefices under the pretext of spiritual good. Therefore, no one shall aspire to any benefice or ecclesiastical dignity, under any pretext whatsoever.

CHAPTER III

Chastity

I— By reason of the vow:

174. — By virtue of the vow of chastity, all, both clerics and coadjutor brothers, bind themselves to celibacy, so that matrimony is gravely illicit for them; they oblige themselves, moreover, by the virtue of religion, to abstain also from any act, either internal or external, opposed to chastity.

II— By reason of the virtue:

175. — In order that each one may better observe chastity:

1° He shall most watchfully guard his senses, both interior and exterior;

2° He shall never converse alone with a woman in a place or at a time that is not appropriate; in speaking or writing to them, he shall entirely avoid the use of words, even though pious, indicating any tender regard for them;

3° In hearing the confessions of women, as in speaking to them outside the confessional, he shall not come too near them; nor shall he presume on his chastity.

176. — § 1. — Moreover, all shall persuade themselves that it is not enough for missionaries to have attained a more than ordinary degree of this virtue; it is further required that every effort be made to prevent, if possible, anyone from having even the slightest suspicion about any of our members with regard to the contrary vice.

§ 2. — Therefore, to prevent this evil or to remove it, we shall use every means that can be had, not only ordinary, but if need be, even extraordinary, such as: not to perform, on occasion, some works, otherwise lawful, and even good and holy, when, namely, in the judgment of the Superior or Director these seem to give room for fearing such suspicions.

177. — § 1. — Confessors are forbidden to give spiritual direction in the parlors of our houses; this shall be done in the place destined for the confessions of women, and this place shall be open and in plain View.

§ 2. — The parlors destined for the reception of women shall be well lighted and so arranged that one on the outside may easily see through the doors or windows what is taking place within.

178. — § 1. — It is strictly forbidden that anyone of us whosoever admit any woman under any pretext whatsoever, whether of necessity, relationship, consultation, work infirmity or piety, into our houses or villas, except in those

places destined for the reception of women.

§ 2. — Superiors shall not permit confreres to visit any women, no matter how pious, or of whatsoever condition or age they may be, unless necessity demands it, or at least a considerable good is to be derived; and this is to be permitted only to men long proved and endowed with Christian prudence. This holds also with regard to visits to the Daughters of Charity.

179. — if sometimes there is a cogent need of employing women servants, the judgment of this necessity and the permission is reserved to the major Superior; the consciences of the local Superiors are gravely burdened to state the truth both about the necessity of women servants and the means employed to avoid all the dangers that might follow; it is also their duty in conscience to see that the preceding articles are observed, so that servant women are admitted only to those places where they have to work.

CHAPTER IV

Obedience

I— By reason of the vow:

180— By virtue of the vow of obedience, the members of the Congregation contract the obligation of obeying our Most Holy Father, the Pope, as our Supreme Superior, the Superior General of the Congregation, the Visitor, the Superior of the house and all who fully substitute for them, in all things which, directly or indirectly, concern the observance of the vows, the Constitutions and the Rules.

181. — § 1. — The obligation by reason of the vow holds under pain of mortal sin only when a legitimate Superior expressly commands in virtue of holy obedience.

§ 2. — Superiors, especially local Superiors, shall impose a precept of this nature rarely, cautiously and with prudence, and only for a grave reason; it is useful, moreover, to impose it in writing, or at least in the presence of two witnesses, and the major Superior shall be advised of the imposition of the precept.

II— By reason of the virtue:

182. — All shall faithfully and sincerely give reverence and obedience to the Bishops into whose dioceses the missionaries are sent to give missions or to exercise other functions of our Institute outside of our houses, or in places subject to the local Ordinaries (as in external seminaries or hospices), and with respect to those things that regard these external functions.

183— All shall obey the Superior General promptly, joyfully and perseveringly in all things where sin is not apparent, and with a certain blind obedience, submitting their own judgment and will, not only to his will manifested to them, but even to his intention, judging that always to be better which he commands, and committing themselves to his disposition, as a file in the hands of an artisan

184. — This obedience shall likewise be rendered to the other Superiors, both local and Visitors, and to the subordinate officials as well; indeed, each one shall also strive to obey the sound of the bell as the voice of Christ, so that at its first signal he will be prepared to leave even a letter unformed.

185. — No one, having suffered a refusal from one Superior, shall approach another Superior about the same matter without making known to him the previous refusal and the reason for it.

186. — § 1. — No one making a journey and passing through a place where there is a house of the Congregation shall make use of any other lodging; and, as long as he remains there, he shall be subject in obedience to him who presides over the house; and he shall engage in nothing there without his counsel and direction.

§ 2. — The same shall be observed by him who comes there to transact any business.

187. — § 1. — Since, moreover, obedience is very necessary for the sick, they shall show it not only to their spiritual, but also to their medical physicians, to the infirmarian and others assigned to take care of them.

§ 2. . — All who feel themselves ill shall make it known to the Superior or the prefect of health or the infirmarian;

and no one shall take any medicine, make use of our doctor, or consult any other, without the Superior's permission.

CHAPTER V

The Vow of Stability

188. — The members of the Congregation take a special fourth vow, proper to the Community: to labor during their whole lifetime in the Congregation for the salvation of the poor country people, according to the principal and special end of our institute, from which it takes its name: "of the Mission."

189. — By this vow a twofold promise is offered to God, namely:

1° Of remaining permanently, that is, for one's whole life, in the Congregation;

2° Of laboring, at the command of our Superiors, for the salvation of the poor of the country places, that is, the inhabitants of the villages, country districts, hamlets, little towns, and especially by preaching the gospel to the country people.

190. — It will be permissible to preach also in the cities, especially in the suburbs and in the places where the working-men and the poor live, provided that the word of God is handed down by us according to the method used in our Congregation, and that the truths of faith and those things that are required for salvation are preached after the manner of a spiritual retreat.

191. — § 1. — This vow is fulfilled especially by the work of the missions, which our missionaries ought never to neglect, not even for any other pious and otherwise more useful work. Therefore, each one of our missionaries shall devote himself wholeheartedly to the work of the missions.

§ 2. — They sin against this vow, who, having been assigned to the missions by the Superior, refuse the appointment without a just cause approved by him.

192. — Since there are also other works, besides the missions, which the Congregation carries on as its purpose, such as our ministry towards ecclesiastics, which was considered as a complement of the missions by our Holy Founder, or others which are in conformity with it, as the ministry of instructing young people in Christian precepts and doctrine in our Colleges, etc., the fourth aforesaid vow will be fulfilled by us in doing those things that will be prescribed by Superiors. We will be prepared, however, to undertake the missions whenever obedience calls us.

TITLE VIII

THE COURSE OF STUDIES

193. — In those things that pertain to the course of studies the members of our Congregation are held by the norms set up in these Constitutions and by the special prescriptions given by the Holy See.

194.— § 1. — If possible, each province shall have its own scholasticate, which should be erected in a suitable place, chosen by the Visitor with his Council, and approved by the Superior General so that our scholastics may devote themselves properly to the studies of philosophy and theology.

§ 2. — When, however, the founding of such a scholasticate is impossible, the Visitor, with the approval of the Superior General, shall send our students to the scholasticate of some other province or to a public Catholic University approved by the Holy See, or to schools founded for this purpose, where the course of studies is well ordered according to the norm of canon 1365.

§ 3 — Apostolic schools shall be set up in every province. These schools are most useful in fostering the vocation of boys and for instructing them in religion and in secondary disciplines.

195. — § 1. — Our scholastics shall devote at least two whole years to rational philosophy with its related studies.

§ 2. — The theological curriculum shall last at least a full four years, and, besides dogmatic and moral theology, it should include especially the study of sacred scripture, church history, canon law, liturgy, sacred eloquence and

ecclesiastical chant.

§ 3. — Courses shall also be given in pastoral, ascetical and mystical theology, in pedagogy, social science, Catholic action, on the manner of performing the functions of our Institute, especially the conducting of missions, and, for those who are being prepared for the foreign missions, a course in missiology. Practice exercises shall be had in the manner of teaching the catechism to children and others, in hearing confessions, visiting the sick, and ministering to the dying.

196. — § 1. — According to the judgment of major Superiors, they shall be appointed professors in the philosophical, theological and juridical subjects who, other things being equal, have their doctorates in these subjects, or are at least well versed in them. Priests are to be selected, moreover, not only for their knowledge, but also for their outstanding virtue and prudence, so that they may be able to profit the students both by word and example.

§ 2. — In the study of rational philosophy and theology, and in the instruction of the students in these courses, the professors shall by all means follow the method, doctrine and principles of the Angelic Doctor, and shall steadfastly adhere to them.

197. — During the time of studies, neither the professors nor the students shall be burdened with any work, ministry or duty that will take them away from their studies or in any way interfere with their classes.

198. — The Visitors, in their prudence, shall send scholastics and young priests who are outstanding in piety and intelligence to Rome, or to some University approved by the Church, so that they may there complete their sacred studies and obtain academic degrees.

199. — § 1. — Since curiosity makes one guilty, not learned, and knowledge puffs up, all, especially the scholastics, shall be on their guard continually, lest an inordinate desire of knowledge gradually invade their hearts to the detriment of their spiritual progress.

§ 2. — Let them not, however, give up the diligent pursuit of the studies necessary to rightly fulfill the functions of a missionary, provided that their chief care is to learn the science of the saints taught in the school of Christ, so that all may put on and preach only Jesus Christ.

200. — Since new and singular opinions very frequently do harm both to their authors and to their adherents, all shall beware of novelty and singularity of this sort; indeed, as far as possible, they shall always be of one mind both in word and in writing.

207. — § 1. — The care of our scholastics shall be committed to a Director, who shall form their spirit to the perfection of our state by opportune warnings and exhortations; and he shall see to it with all zeal and diligence that they keep the spirit of humility, poverty, obedience, mortification and prayer, which scholastics ought to have taken from the internal Seminary.

§ 2. — The Director shall be watchful lest they so apply themselves to piety as to neglect their studies, or, on the other hand, that they so devote themselves to study that they omit or perform perfunctorily their spiritual exercises.

202. — § 1. — The Director of scholastics is presented by the Visitor, but his appointment should be confirmed by the Superior General.

§ 2. — The Director shall conform exactly to the common observance and to the submission owed to the Superior of the house.

203. — Confessors shall be appointed for the scholastics, according to the norm of canon 1361, without prejudice to the right also established for them by canon 519.

204. — A Prefect of studies shall be appointed by each Visitor for his province.

205. — After completing the course of studies, all priests, unless they have been exempted by a major Superior for a just cause, shall undergo an examination every year for five years in the various sacred sciences according to the manner prescribed by the Visitor, and on matter previously and opportunely designated by him.

206. — Conferences on moral and liturgical subjects shall be held in each of our houses, even in the major

Seminaries at the time and in the manner usual in the Congregation.

TITLE IX

SACRED ORDINATION

207. — Members of the Congregation cannot be licitly ordained by any Bishop without dimissorial letters from the proper major Superior.

208. — § 1. — The Superior General and the Visitor grant dimissorial letters for their subjects wherever the latter may be living.

§ 2. — To those who have temporary vows dimissorial letters can be granted only for first tonsure and minor orders.

§ 3. — Before dimissorial letters are granted, the major Superior with his Council shall examine whether all the requirements for the ordination of his subjects have been met, and, when this has been ascertained, he may licitly admit them to orders and draw up the dimissorial letters.

209. — The dimissorial letters should testify that:

1° The one to be promoted is a member of a house subject to the major Superior;

2° He has taken temporary vows, if it is a question of minor orders or first tonsure, and perpetual vows, if major orders are involved;

3° The preceding order has been received or, if it is a question of first tonsure, that the candidate has received baptism and confirmation;

4° Studies have been completed according to the norm of canon 976, also the examination, spiritual exercises and other things demanded by canon law;

5° The oath has been taken concerning the law of celibacy and the free embracing of the burdens proper to the ecclesiastical state (cf. Instruct, of the S. Cong. of the Sacraments, Dec. 27, 1930 and Instruct, of the S. Cong. for Religious, Dec. 1, 1931).

210. — The canonical title of sacred ordination is the title of common table or of the Congregation.

TITLE X

COADJUTOR BROTHERS

211. — The coadjutor brothers, like the other missionaries, are obliged to put on the spirit of Christ according to their ability, and they shall diligently cultivate His virtues, especially simplicity, humility, meekness, mortification and zeal for souls.

212. — It is required, therefore, that they observe exactly the common Constitutions and the special Rules pertaining to each one's duty, that they be diligent in their pious exercises, and that they spend time every day in spiritual reading.

213. — They shall not spend time uselessly; they shall especially avoid any familiarity with externs, being busy each with his own duty, having the good order and the temporal welfare of the house before their eyes.

214. — To avoid many sins against poverty and other grave inconveniences, they shall faithfully make an accounting of their expenses to the econome, according to their own and the rules of the brother buyer.

215. — It shall be the special charge of Superiors to see that the coadjutor brothers are present at the spiritual readings and conferences customary in the Congregation, and that they are diligently instructed in the Christian life and in the virtues proper to our Institute.

216. — § 1. — The coadjutor brothers shall hold the priests in honor as the ministers of Christ and shall serve them in the Lord, looking on them with the eyes of faith as sacred persons and spiritual fathers, and they shall obey them

humbly.

§ 2. — From the very time of probation they shall strive to learn some trade, useful to the houses.

217. — None of the brothers shall aspire to the ecclesiastical state; but they should be mindful that, even though they do not have the priestly dignity, they form one body with the clerics, i.e., the Congregation, of which they are, in the words of our blessed Father Vincent, precious members.

TITLE XI

OBLIGATIONS AND EXERCISES OF PIETY

CHAPTER 1

Obligations

218. — § 1. — All members of the Congregation ought not only to observe faithfully the vows pronounced, but also to order their lives according to the Constitutions and thus to strive for the perfection of their state.

§ 2. — They should also observe the particular Rules of offices and the Decrees of the general Assemblies.

§ 3. — Although the disciplinary prescriptions of the Rules and Constitutions do not bind under pain of sin, but only to submission to the penance perhaps imposed by Superiors, nevertheless, their transgression carries with it a positive imperfection, or even sin, if it proceeds from formal contempt or from an evil motive, or if it causes scandal. The prescriptions that concern divine or ecclesiastical laws, the vows or other virtues bind in conscience according to the gravity of the matter.

§ 4. — Moreover, the prescriptions that have reference to the government of the Congregation, and those that define the necessary functions of this power, or the duties and offices by which it is exercised (that is, for the basic norms), and the prescriptions that determine and consecrate the nature and special purpose of our Institute, oblige in conscience according to the gravity of the matter.

219. — All should hold the common Rules given to us by our holy Father, Vincent, in the highest esteem and veneration, since they constitute a code of perfection proper to our Institute. It will be helpful to refer here to some of the teachings of our Holy Founder.

220. — § 1. — In regard to modesty we will be mindful that, since we are obliged by our Institute to have frequent dealings with the neighbor, we ought always to be fearful lest, what we have built up in the Lord by the work of our ministry, we destroy by bad example or even the least immodesty.

§ 2. — Therefore, all shall see that nothing frivolous or childish, nothing affected or worldly appears in their demeanor, their dress or their deportment.

§ 3. — In order that we may more easily and more readily practice modesty in the presence of others, each one shall strive carefully to conduct himself with modesty in private, even when alone in his own room, mindful of the presence of God; and no one shall leave his room unless he is decently clothed.

221. — § 1. — Outside the time of recreation silence shall be observed among us, so that no one shall speak without necessity, except in passing and in very few words, and in a low voice, especially in the church, the sacristy, the dormitory and the refectory.

§ 2. — Whenever we speak, even in the hours assigned to conversation, we will always avoid loud or quarrelsome talk, since such conduct can be a source of disedification both to our confreres and to externs.

§ 3. For the better observance of silence, each one shall take care that, while moving about in his room or going about the house, especially at night, or in opening and closing doors, noise is avoided as far as possible.

222. — § 1 — In our daily conversations and recreations we will so combine modesty with cheerfulness that we will, as far as possible, always mix the useful with the agreeable and thus be an example to all.

§ 2. — No one shall curiously inquire about the administration of the house, or talk with others about it. It is also forbidden to speak directly or indirectly against the Constitutions, the Rules or even the pious customs of the Congregation.

§ 3. — No one shall complain about the food, clothing or bedding.

223. — § 1. — In order that the charity of brotherhood and a holy union may always be among us, each shall hold his brethren in great reverence, after the manner however of dear friends; all shall diligently avoid particular friendships, just as they shall avoid aversions, since experience has proved that these two vices are the cause of divisions and the ruin of Congregations.

§ 2. — No one shall even lightly impugn the good reputation of others, especially of Superiors, or murmur against them, or censure anything said or done in our Congregation or in other communities.

§ 3. No one shall speak against other countries or provinces.

§ 4. In speaking, we will avoid with great care any appearance of stubbornness or contention; we will even strive, as far as possible, to prefer in the Lord the opinion of others to our own in all things not forbidden.

§ 5. — All shall take special care in conversations not to take anything unkindly or in bad spirit, nor show themselves offended by anyone nor give offense either by words or actions or in any other way.

224. — The local Superior shall take care that, besides the accustomed private reading, our Constitutions are read publicly at least once a year, on fixed days, and also the Decrees that the Holy See will prescribe to be read publicly.

225. — The decrees of the general Assemblies are to be read in our houses at least once every year in the presence of the priests and clerics who have taken vows.

226. — Catechetical instruction, adapted to the capacity of the hearers, shall be held at least twice a month for our coadjutor brothers and for others who dwell with us (cfr. canon 509, § 2, 2°).

227. — § 1. — It is the right and duty of Superiors, personally or through another, to administer Viaticum and Extreme Unction to our sick, even the seminarists, or to others dwelling in our houses day and night by reason of service or education, hospitality or poor health.

§ 2. — A modest funeral shall be given our members in our churches or oratories according to the norm of canon 1221; with regard to the other persons mentioned above canons 1216-1218 shall be observed.

§ 3. — As to suffrages for our dead, the following shall be the general norm:

1° For every deceased member of the Congregation each priest shall say one Mass; the other confreres, both clerical and lay, shall offer one Communion and recite either the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary or the Office of the Dead;

2° No other special obligation binds the house in which one of our members dies;

3° One Mass shall be celebrated every month by our priests for the deceased of the double Family, with an added special intention for the preservation of the primitive spirit; likewise, the other confreres, both clerical and lay, shall have the same intention in their Communion, and in the recitation of the prayers prescribed for our dead;

4° Poorer provinces may have recourse to the Superior General to obtain some reduction of these obligations,

228. — The right and duty of taking care that the burden of Masses is fulfilled in our houses and churches pertains directly and immediately to the Superiors.

229. — The major Superiors of the Congregation are held, at least every year, to examine diligently, either personally or through others, the book in which the number, intention, offering and celebration of Masses are noted.

230. — § 1. — No one shall write, send or open letters without the permission of the Superior; those that one writes he shall give unsealed to the Superior, so that the latter may mail them or keep them as he shall see fit.

§ 2. All the members of the Congregation may send letters, subject to no inspection, to the Holy See and to its Legate in the country, to our major Superiors, to the Superior of the house if he is absent; and they may receive letters from all these, likewise subject to no inspection.

231. — § 1. — No one shall leave the house, unless he has the approval of the Superior, who may designate a companion if he judges it suitable.

§ 2. Whenever anyone asks permission to go somewhere, he shall make known at the same time where and why he wishes to go; on returning, he shall make a report to the Superior of what he has done.

§ 3— No one shall go out before daybreak, and each one shall return to the house before nightfall, unless the necessity of duty demands otherwise.

§ 4. — In visiting externs we will converse with them about necessary matters only, or about those things conducive to the edification and salvation of the one visited or of ourselves or of both. We will do this with becoming seriousness and modesty according to the circumstances of persons, places and times.

§ 5. — It is not lawful for Superiors to permit their subjects to dwell out of the house, except for a grave and just cause and then for as short a time as possible, according to the norms traditional in the Congregation; for an absence that exceeds six months the permission of the Holy See is always required, except for the sake of study and for the proper functions of the Congregation.

232. — § I. Superiors shall see that the members of the Congregation, designated by them, shall, without prejudice to the discipline of the Congregation, willingly discharge their ministry to meet the needs of the faithful, especially in the diocese in which they live, both when they are asked to do so by the local Ordinaries or pastors, as well as in our own churches or public oratories.

§ 2. — In our parochial churches the prescription of canon 415 shall be observed, so far as it is applicable.

§ 3. — Superiors shall see that the celebration of the divine offices in our churches does not interfere with the catechetical instruction or the explanation of the Gospel to be given in the parish church.

233. — No one shall either write or translate a book, and publish it, without the express approbation and permission of the Superior General; the prescriptions of canons 1385-1394 of the Code of Canon Law must also be observed.

CHAPTER II

The Exercises of Piety to be Observed in the Congregation

234. — Since, according to the Bull of foundation of our Congregation, we ought to venerate in a special way the ineffable mysteries of the most Holy Trinity and the Incarnation, we will strive to accomplish this most diligently and in every way possible, but especially by observing these three practices:

1° By eliciting frequently from our innermost heart acts of faith and religion toward these mysteries;

2° By offering some prayers and pious works every day for their glory, and particularly by celebrating their feasts with solemnity and the greatest possible devotion;

3° By striving attentively, in our instructions and by our example, to instill in the minds of the people knowledge of these mysteries, along with honor and devotion to them.

235. — § 1. — To best honor these mysteries, there can be no more excellent means than the proper worship and good use of the most Holy Eucharist, whether we consider it as a sacrament or a sacrifice. Indeed it contains in itself an epitome of the other mysteries, and of itself sanctifies and finally glorifies the souls of those communicating and sacrificing worthily. In this way it gives the fullest glory to the Blessed Trinity and to the Word Incarnate. Therefore, nothing shall be more pleasing to us than to show due honor to this sacrament and sacrifice by celebrating holily and by visiting it daily.

§ 2. — Moreover, we will solicitously care that the same honor and reverence are paid to this mystery by all. This we will endeavor to accomplish to the best of our ability, especially by preventing, if we can, any irreverence to it by word or deed, and by diligently teaching others what they should believe concerning this mystery and how they should worship it.

236. — Since the same Bull expressly commends to us that we likewise venerate the most Blessed Virgin Mary with a special devotion, and since this devotion is otherwise her due and by various titles, all shall strive to fulfill it perfectly with the help of God:

1° By daily venerating this most worthy Mother of Christ and our Mother with a particular devotion;

2° By imitating, as far as we can, her virtues, especially humility and chastity;

3° By earnestly exhorting others, whenever the opportunity and occasion offer, to render her constantly the greatest honor and a worthy service;

4° To honor her by the daily recitation of her rosary.

237. — § 1 — It shall be our greatest care to recite the Divine Office properly; this shall be done according to the Roman rite, and, if possible, in common, even on the missions.

§ 2. — In whatever place or at whatever time we recite the canonical hours, we will be mindful of the reverence,

attention and devotion we should have, knowing that we then celebrate the divine praises and therefore fulfill the office of the angels.

238. — § 1— Since one of the principal ministries of our missions is to urge others to a worthy and frequent reception of the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, it is proper that we, for a greater reason, give them an outstanding example in this matter. We will therefore strive to do this most perfectly.

§ 2. — And, that all things may be done according to order, the priests shall cleanse their conscience in the sacrament of penance twice or at least once each week, and shall say Mass daily unless hindered.

§ 3. — The others, who are not priests, shall confess every Saturday and on the vigils of the principal feasts, and, with the proper dispositions, shall receive the most holy Body of Christ, even daily (canon 595, § 2). They shall also hear Mass every day.

239. — Although we cannot wholly imitate Christ the Lord who spent entire nights in prayer to God in addition to His daily meditations, nevertheless we will do so as far as we are able. Therefore all shall diligently give themselves to mental prayer for one hour each day, and, according to the custom of the Congregation, in common and in the place assigned for that purpose.

240. — § 1. — No one shall permit a day to pass without reading something from some spiritual book, in keeping with the needs of his soul, and for a period of time determined by the Superior or Director.

§ 2. — Moreover, the priests, and all the other clerics, shall read a chapter of the New Testament and shall venerate this book as the rule of Christian perfection; for greater profit, this reading shall be made on bended knees and with the head uncovered.

241. — In order to have a clearer knowledge of our defects, and thus, with the divine help, to make expiation for them and to acquire greater purity of soul, each one shall daily make two examinations of conscience; the one, the particular examen, shall be made briefly before dinner and supper on some virtue to be acquired or some vice to be rooted out; the other, the general examen on each of the actions of the day shall be made shortly before retiring.

242. — To honor the solitude of Christ, especially the forty days that He spent in the desert, all, both clerics and coadjutor brothers, shall make a spiritual retreat with a confession from the last general confession, the seminarists every six months, the rest once a year according to the custom of the Congregation.

243. — § 1. — Just as one can hardly make progress in virtue without the help of a spiritual director, so, unless the one to be directed confers at certain times with his director on his interior state, as is right it will be most difficult for him to attain the perfection proper to him.

§ 2. — Therefore all shall make a report on the state of their conscience to a priest of the Congregation whom they will prefer in the Lord, at least every three months, especially at the time of the spiritual retreat. They shall do this with all sincerity and devotion.

244. — All shall be diligent and devout in their attendance at the spiritual conferences, which shall take place at least once a week, and which, for the most part, shall have to do with the denial of our own will and judgment, the practice of doing the divine will in all things, fraternal union, zeal for our own perfection, and progress in other virtues, especially in simplicity, meekness, humility, mortification and zeal for souls, which virtues compose the spirit of the Mission.

245. — § 1. — In order that we may, according to our weakness, imitate Christ in some little way, in that He humbled Himself and wished to be counted among sinners, each one shall declare his faults every Friday in the presence of the others to the Superior, or to the one holding his place. This declaration shall be made both at home and on the missions; and all shall willingly accept the admonitions and the penances given them.

§ 2. — In like manner the pious custom of seeking public admonition of our faults in chapter shall be observed; and on these occasions each one shall take care to give such admonition in a spirit of humility.

246. — Moreover, in order that we may more speedily grow in the love of our own lowliness, and thus make more and more progress in the way of perfection, we will try to embrace calmly in the Lord whatever occasions of humiliation offer themselves at any time whatsoever, even outside of chapter.

247. — § 1. — Although the labors of the missionaries do not permit them to be burdened by rule with mortifications and austerities of body, each one shall, nevertheless, value them highly, and shall always be favorably disposed toward them; one may even, so far as his health and serious occupations permit, practice them, after the example of Christ and the first Christians and even many who, full of the spirit of penance, live in the world.

§ 2. — No one, however, shall undertake any corporal mortifications without consulting the Superior or Director, unless they are imposed in confession.

248. — in order that we may honor the passion of Christ in some way, each one, unless he is on the missions or making a journey, shall be content at the evening meal every Friday with one dish, consisting of herbs or vegetables.

249. — On the Monday and Tuesday after Quinquagesima Sunday we will abstain from meat at home, so that by this small mortification we may honor God at a time when many Christians are offending Him gravely by their dissipations and excesses.

250. — The customary order of the day in the Congregation shall be exactly observed by all, whether at borne or on the missions, especially with regard to the hours of rising and retiring, of making mental prayer, reciting the Divine Office, and taking our meals.

251. — In order that the mind may be nourished together with the body, reading shall be had at table in all our houses, as also on the missions, throughout the whole time of the meal.

252. — Other praiseworthy customs of the Congregation are also to be observed, among which are these:

1° Immediately before leaving the house, as also on returning, to visit the church and salute Christ in the Blessed Sacrament;

2° To catechize the poor, particularly beggars, when the opportunity presents itself, especially in making a journey;

3° To kneel down on entering or leaving our rooms, so that we may ask God's help before any action, and give thanks to Him on its completion.

TITLE XII

THE WORKS OF THE CONGREGATION

CHAPTER I

Missions, Seminaries, and other Works of the Congregation in behalf of the Neighbor

253. — § 1. — Each one, when the occasion offers, shall strive to help the neighbor by counsel and admonition, and shall urge him to the practice of good works.

§ 2. — No one, however, shall undertake the direction of anyone, except in spiritual retreats, on the missions, and in those houses of the Congregation, in which our confreres have the care of souls, when they have been appointed to this work by the Superior.

§ 3. — But even in these cases, no one, without the permission and approbation of the Superior, shall ever give any instructions or rule of life in writing.

254. — § 1. — No one shall preach publicly, or catechize from the pulpit, unless he has been approved for this work by the Visitor, and has been appointed to it either by the same Visitor or by the immediate Superior, and has been fortified with the proper canonical mission, according to the norm of canon 1328.

§ 2. — On the missions, however, their director, when it shall seem expedient to him in the Lord, and there is danger in the delay of waiting for an answer by mail from the Superior, can change the preachers and catechists temporarily, substituting others, but he must make the reason of the change known to the Superior as soon as possible.

255. — § 1. — Those setting out on the missions shall always have the faculties for preaching and hearing confessions from the Ordinary of the place in which the mission is to be given.

§ 2. — When the missions are finished, before the missionaries return home, they shall make a report to their

Excellencies, the Bishops, if the latter approve, on what they have done on the missions; but the Superior is to be consulted first, in order that he may designate the person to make the report and the manner of doing it.

256. — § 1. — On beginning and ending a mission, the missionaries shall seek the blessing of the pastors, or, in their absence, of the vicars.

§ 2. — They shall do nothing of importance without first informing them, and shall be careful not to undertake anything without their consent.

257. — In the missions we will give all our services gratis, as far as possible; if shelter and food are offered, they may be accepted. If, perchance, the pastors of their own free will make an offering, it may be accepted as an alms to meet the necessities of the Institute and shall be handed over to the Superior of the house.

258. — Each one ought ardently to desire and, when need arises, even to ask humbly to be assigned to the work of visiting the sick, or of settling quarrels and disputes, especially during the course of missions; however, in order that charity may be well ordered by obedience, no one shall undertake works of mercy of this type without the permission of the Superior.

259. — § 1. — In proposing doubts about cases of conscience met in confession, great caution and prudence shall be used, so that the person concerned may never be discovered.

§ 2. — In order that the evils that could thus arise may be avoided, no one shall propose doubts about any case of conscience of any importance heard in confession without first consulting the Director of the mission.

260. — In the missions, the particular order and prescriptions of the Directory shall, as far as possible, be carefully and even religiously observed without neglecting any new means apt to make our ministry more efficacious.

261. — The Visitor shall appoint the Director of the mission; and the missionaries working with him shall obey him in everything with all humility, as they would Christ.

262. — Missions to the infidels, so highly recommended by the Holy See, and undertaken by our confreres even in the time of our Father St. Vincent, shall be very close to our hearts; therefore we will endeavor with all our strength to maintain and make flourishing the missions confided to our Congregation.

263. — In the mission territory we are obliged to follow not only our own statutes and Rules, but we are also held to obey the prescriptions of canons 293-311 of the Code of Canon Law, and the particular decrees and instructions of the Holy See.

264. — Care shall be taken that at least one formal house is established in our missions, and that, as far as possible, the canonical visitation is made regularly by the Visitors.

265. — As one of the principal works of their apostolic ministry the missionaries shall devote themselves to the formation of a native clergy, whether religious or secular, just as it has been handed on to us.

266. § 1. — The goods of the mission shall be carefully defined, those that belong to the mission being separated from those that belong to our Institute; the former are to be administered according to the norm of the Instructions of the Holy See (either of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, or of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church); the latter according to the norm of our Constitutions.

§ 2. — Without prejudice to the prescriptions of the law, care shall be taken that at least some houses are erected which will belong to our Congregation.

267. — As for goods that are received in the missions, the intention of those offering them is to be respected.

268. — It is most useful, even necessary, for success in the foreign missions, to make a more careful and practical study of at least one of the principal languages of the place in which the missionaries live, whether for exercising the ministry among the Catholics or for spreading the faith among the infidels, schismatics and heretics.

269. — § 1. — Since the direction of nuns and religious would interfere considerably with the missions and the

other works of our Institute, all shall entirely forego their direction, nor shall anyone visit them, or preach to them, even in the course of a mission, unless he shall have first obtained the express permission of the local Superior to do so.

§ 2. — Although the direction of the Daughters of Charity has been assigned to our Congregation from their very foundation, still no confrere shall undertake their direction or visit them without the permission of the same Superior.

270. — It shall be the special care of the Congregation to visit and help the sick, not only in our own houses but outside of them as well, with the consent of the Superior; to minister to them the corporal and spiritual helps that can conveniently be given, especially in the missions; and, moreover, to give special attention to founding and visiting the Confraternity of Charity.

271. — § 1. — Simplicity, as a primary and most characteristic virtue of the missionaries, ought to be faithfully exercised by them always and everywhere; we will put it into practice more carefully, however, on the missions, especially when we announce the word of God to the country people, with whom, as to simple people, He must speak through our lips.

§ 2. — Therefore, the style of our sermons and catechetical instructions shall be simple and within the grasp of the people, and according to the simple method which the Congregation has used up to the present time.

§ 3. — Moreover, each one shall abhor soft and affected speech; nor shall one seek to give expression in the chair of truth to curious and far-fetched ideas and to unprofitable subtleties.

272. — § 1. — Of the greatest moment is another purpose of the Congregation, to labor for the education of the clergy, for it is most important that the Church have worthy ministers; therefore, the members of the Congregation shall strive with all their strength for a high degree of sanctity of life and a more than ordinary knowledge so that, when they are called to it by the Holy See or by the Bishops, they may be found fit for this truly divine ministry, to use the words of St. Vincent.

§ 2. — Without prejudice to our privileges, our missionaries shall faithfully follow in the directing of Seminaries not only our own Directory adapted to the usages of the different countries, but also, and particularly, the canons, decrees and instructions of the Holy See and the local Ordinaries.

273. — Those who are appointed to the external seminaries or to the direction of ordinands, to the conferences for pastor and other ecclesiastics, or to other similar works, shall likewise use the same simple and popular way of speaking; and they shall strive, moreover, to move all these classes, both by word and example, to piety no less than leaning; they shall endeavor especially to deal with them in all humility, meekness, reverence and kindness. Those who are assigned to give spiritual retreats shall observe the same, as far as possible.

274. — Let the spread of the holy Medal of the Blessed Mary Immaculate be strongly commended to the zeal of the missionaries, both for the promotion of its devotion and the reformation of morals; likewise the use of the Red Scapular bearing the signs of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, as also the commemoration of the Prayer of our Lord in the Garden.

CHAPTER II

The Rectors of Parishes

275. — Wherever the Congregation has parishes confided to it, the rules that follow shall be observed by our confreres who serve as pastors or assistants in these parishes.

276. — § 1. — To preside over a parish confided to the Congregation, the Visitor presents one of our priests to the local Ordinary, who, observing the prescriptions of canon 459, § 2, installs him as pastor.

§ 2. — Such a pastor is, by reason of person, removable at will, either by the local Ordinary, the Visitor having been informed, or by the Visitor, with notification to the Ordinary, each having an equal right, the consent of the other party not being required; nor is either one required to make known to the other the reason for his decision, much less to prove it, the right of recourse to the Holy See without suspensive effect remaining intact.

§ 3. — The Visitor, having heard the pastor, presents the assistants to the Ordinary, whose right it is to approve them; their removal is governed by the same norms that were given above for pastors.

277. — § 1. — In those matters which pertain to the discipline of the Congregation, the confrere is subject to the Superior, whose right it is, and, indeed, to the exclusion of the local Ordinary, to inquire into his observance of the vows and Constitutions, and, if need be, to correct him.

§ 2. — A pastor or assistant, even though he exercises the ministry in a house or place where major Superiors reside is immediately subject in every Way to the jurisdiction, visitation and correction of the local Ordinary, just as are secular pastors, with the sole exception of the observance of the discipline of our Congregation.

§ 3. — Where a pastor or assistant will be found wanting in his duty, the Visitor has the right together with the local Ordinary of decreeing penalties against him, in this way, however, that, if the Visitor should decree one thing and the Ordinary another, the decree of the Ordinary prevails.

278 — § 1. — Goods that come to one of our members by reason of the parish over which he presides are acquired for the parish itself; other things he acquires in the same manner as other members of the Congregation.

§ 2. — Notwithstanding the vow of poverty, the rector is allowed to accept alms offered in any manner or to collect them for the benefit of the parishioners, or for the Catholic schools or pious institutions connected with the parish, and to administer what has been accepted or collected; and likewise, safeguarding the will of the donors, to expend these offerings according to his prudent judgment, without prejudice to the Superior's right of supervision; but to accept, keep in one's own possession, collect or administer alms destined for the building, maintenance, restoration or decoration of the parish church is the right of the Superior if the church belongs to the Congregation; otherwise that of the local Ordinary.

§ 3. — With regard to temporal goods:

if money is given to the parish or to the mission or to the Congregation for the parish or the mission, the previous consent of the local Ordinary is required for its investment; it is also his right to know about the administration of funds or legacies which were given for expenditure in the place itself in behalf of divine worship or for good works; the same holds for the administration of money given to the parish or the mission or the Congregation for the benefit of the same parish or mission.

TITLE XIII

DEPARTURE AND DISMISSAL FROM

THE CONGREGATION

279. — § 1. — Whoever, while bound by the vows, leaves the house unlawfully with the intention of not returning, or who, having left legitimately, does not return, with the intention of withdrawing himself from religious obedience, is in no way freed from the obligation of the Constitutions and the vows, and is held to return without delay to the Congregation.

§ 2. — The same is to be said of him who, without the permission of the Superior, leaves the house with the intention of returning.

§ 3. — The Superior ought solicitously to make search for these delinquents, and to receive them back, if they return moved by a true spirit of penance; however, the penalties incurred or to be imposed, according to the norm of canons 645 and 2386, are in force.

280. — When the time of the temporary vows has been completed, a member may freely leave the Congregation; likewise a major Superior can, with the consent of his Council, for just and reasonable causes, exclude him, from renewing his temporary vows or from taking perpetual vows, not however because of ill health, unless it is certainly proved that he was deceitfully silent about or concealed the infirmity before taking vows; if he is a cleric in sacred orders, he should return to his proper diocese and be received by his own Ordinary.

281. — § 1. — During the time of vows, either temporary or perpetual, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, can dispense members from their vows in the case of a legitimate departure.

§ 2. If the member is a cleric in sacred orders, dispensed from temporary vows, he should return to his own diocese as mentioned above; for one dispensed from perpetual vows, the dispensation does not have its effect until he has found a benevolent Bishop who will accept him, canon 642 being observed. If he leaves the Congregation before he has found a benevolent Bishop, he remains suspended.

282. — § 1. — The following are to be held as ipso facto legitimately dismissed:

1° Public apostates from the Catholic faith;

2° Those who have fled with a woman;

3° Those attempting or contracting matrimony or even the so-called civil bond.

§ 2. — In these cases it suffices that the major Superior with his Council issues a declaration of the fact; he shall take care, however, to preserve the collected proofs of the fact in the archives of the house. He shall also send all the proofs to the Superior General, so that he may dispense from the vows, and the matter shall then be brought to the Sacred Congregation for Religious

283. — § 1. — The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, manifested by a secret ballot, can dismiss any member bound by temporary vows, after having observed the following:

1° The causes, whether from the standpoint of the Congregation or of the member, must be grave, such as an incorrigible defect of the religious spirit, which is a scandal to others, lack of obedience, and so forth;

2° Although the cause for dismissal should be certainly known to the Superior, it is not necessary that it be proved in a formal judgment. It ought always to be made known to the member, who should be given full freedom to answer it; and his answers shall be faithfully submitted to the dismissing Superior;

3° The one dismissed has the privilege of recourse to the Apostolic See against the decree of dismissal, and, during the recourse, the dismissal has no juridical effect.

§ 2. — One dismissed according to the norm of § I is released ipso facto from the vows taken in the Congregation, but the burdens connected with major orders remain, if he is in sacred orders: he also has the obligation of returning to his proper diocese a cleric in minor orders, however, is reduced to the lay state by the act of dismissal.

284. — § 1— A member with perpetual vows taken in the Congregation cannot be dismissed, except by the process outlined in canons 656-667.

§ 2. — The crimes or causes for dismissal are to be taken principally from the common law; however, the following are to be added:

1° Unlawful departure from the Congregation according to the norm of article 279;

2° Obstinate resistance, according to the judgment of the Consultors, to a Superior commanding in virtue of obedience;

3° Formal contempt for the Rules, accompanied by disregard of admonitions;

4° The acceptance and obstinate defense of doctrines opposed to the morals or discipline of the Church or the Congregation.

§ 3. — After a confirmation of the sentence has been given by the Holy See according to the norm of canon 666, the Superior General orders the sentence to be carried out, at the same time dispensing from the vows; if the dismissed cleric is in sacred orders and has found a benevolent Bishop, he shall remain under his jurisdiction and special vigilance, without prejudice to the prescription of canon 642; otherwise canons 671 and 672, 2 shall be observed; if he is in minor orders he is reduced to the lay state by the very fact of dismissal, according to the norm of canon 669, § 2.

285. — In the case of grave external scandal or of a very serious imminent injury to the Community, a major Superior, with the consent of his Council, or, if there is danger in delay and there is not time to recur to the major Superior, the local Superior, with the consent of his Council, may send a member back to the world. The habit of the Congregation must be laid aside at once by the one dismissed, but a process shall be immediately instituted for him, if it has not already been started, according to the norm of the preceding Constitutions. The matter shall be referred to the Sacred Congregation for Religious.

At the same time by these Letters and Our authority We abrogate and declare to be abrogated whatsoever is not found in these Constitutions approved by Us. All things whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding.

These things We publish and decree, declaring that these present Letters are and are to remain perpetually fixed, valid and efficacious; that they are to have and to hold their full and complete effects; that they are to favor most fully, now and for the future, those whom they concern or can concern; and that they are thus rightly to be judged and defined; and that from now on whatever to the contrary may be attempted in these matters by anyone, by

whatsoever authority, whether knowingly or through ignorance, is made null and void.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the seat of the Fisherman, on the nineteenth day of the month of July, on the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, in the year nineteen hundred and fifty-three, the fifteenth of Our Pontificate.

By a special mandate of His Holiness.

For His Eminence, the Cardinal for the Public Affairs of the Church,

Gildo Brugnola

Regent of the Office for the sending of Apostolic Letters.