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The Generalate Team

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PREPARATION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTIONS

Const. 1 – May 1981

Congregazione dello Spirito Santo – 195, Clivo di Cinna – 00136 Roma

SPIRITAN, WHAT DO YOU SAY OF YOURSELF?

My dear confreres,

Here is the first stage in a long task that we must undertake together: the revising of our Constitutions, as other Congregations are also doing or have already done. The Church asks it of us, and many of you have also expressed a strong desire for it. The last General Chapter entrusted its realization to the General Council.

Do not be put off by the length of this document. Do not put it aside, but begin reading it straight away – it is important. You will see in it the reasons for the task, what it entails, and the different stages to be gone through. You will find specific questions on which you are asked to reflect and give your opinion. I hope that each of you will feel directly concerned and will make his contribution. We must try to express, to ourselves and to the Church, the ideal that binds us together. Our Founders proposed it to us, and generations of Spiritans have lived it according to the demands of their time. It is up to us now to formulate it in today's terms.

It is not a question of trying to codify the source of our life and dynamism. What we wish to do is to write a succinct, concrete, simple Rule of Life which will help us to listen to the Spirit and be moved by that dynamism, in fidelity to our common calling. We begin this work now, and hope that all will take part in it.

I realize that it will require time and energy on your part. It will mean meetings and long periods of reflection, individually and in groups. I know that you have little time and that your energies are taken up by your ministry and apostolate. I would like to convince you that this work that we are asking of you is not something marginal to your own work but concerns it directly. Our membership in the Congregation and our fidelity to its spirit are closely connected with our service to the Church, which we accomplish in community and in the name of the community.

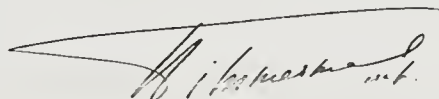
Poullart des Places and, later, Libermann, gave us a Rule of Life, which has been modified and adapted in the course of our history. In view of the changes that have taken place in the world, the Church suggested an experimental period, which has come to an end, and she asks us now to revise our Constitutions in the light of this research and to say something clearer on ourselves. Spiritan, what do you say of yourself? How will you express to yourself, to the Church and to other communities, what is your vocation, where you seek your inspiration, how you intend to live the Gospel, to what you commit yourself in the Church and in your Congregation? The Church asks us to do this for she wants to see how we see ourselves. She wants to welcome and support our common vocation within the wider community of the faithful.

I invite you, then, to an act of faith and of obedience: An act of faith, first of all, in the importance of Constitutions for our life and apostolate. In doing this, I am aware of speaking to you as the distant successor of our Founders and in fidelity to their spirit. An act of obedience too, in accepting the Church's judgement that the time has come for a more stable Rule of Life, even if this view is not shared by all. Together we will draw up this Rule of Life, which, as I said, should be simple, concrete and clear – a source of inspiration rather than a body of law, a plan of life rather than a code.

We must begin straight away, as it is a difficult task and will take time. In reading this document you will see for yourselves that we shall need every bit of the five years that we have for it. I appeal to you, therefore, for your cooperation, and I feel sure of it for, thank God, solidarity is one of our strong points.

In speaking of solidarity, I would like to thank sincerely the many confreres who have shown it in connection with the recent bereavements at the Generalate. Many thanks indeed for your sympathy and support.

Thanks too to the Committee that has drawn up the present outline of our common project. Let us do our best together, and may the Holy Spirit inspire us!



Frans TIMMERMANS
Superior General C.S.Sp.

Preliminaries

0.1 A decision of the 1980 General Chapter:

“The General Chapter directs the Superior General and the General Council to take all necessary means to ensure that a draft of the Constitutions will be ready for consideration by the General Chapter of 1986, which will determine the final text and approve it before submission to the proper ecclesiastical authority” (SL, 236).

0.2 At the Church’s request

In its Apostolic Constitution *Perfectae Caritatis*, the Second Vatican Council explicitly asked for such updating:

“The Council’s intention here is to deal with the life and discipline of those religious institutes whose members make profession of chastity, poverty and obedience, and to provide for their present-day requirements” (Perf. Car., 1).

“Therefore, constitutions, directories, customaries, books of prayers and ceremonies and other similar volumes must be revised accordingly and brought into line with the documents of this sacred Council, by the suppression of anything obsolete” (Perf. Car., 3).

“The missionary spirit must be preserved in religious institutes and, according to the character of particular institutes, must be adapted to modern conditions, so that the Gospel may be preached more effectively to all peoples” (Perf. Car., 20).

0.3 Some directives

“This renewal must be brought about under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church” (Perf. Car., 2).

“No effective renewal or valid adaptation to modern times will be possible without the cooperation of all members of religious institutes” (Perf. Car., 4).

In the section of *Ecclesiae Sanctae* dealing with the application of *Perfectae Caritatis*, Pope Paul VI distinguished between

- a FUNDAMENTAL CODE containing only what is stable and permanent: Constitutions in the strict sense (12-13), and
- ANOTHER DOCUMENT containing elements *“that are liable to change as customs change with time, or that correspond to merely local situations”* (14).

Congregations were given a period of 8-12 years to bring about this updating. The experimental period, reflected in our recent Chapter, is now over, and we are asked to evaluate it and to draw up new Constitutions, distinguishing what is permanent from what is transitory. Many Congregations have already completed their Constitutions, while others, like ourselves, are still in the process of rewriting them.

Approval, finally, by the Church means recognition that the Institute, through its Constitutions, contributes to the building up of the Body of Christ.

D.4 Getting underway

On 12 Nov. 1980, the General Council decided to set up a committee to undertake the initial work for the revision of the Constitutions, and the members of the committee were named on 24 Jan. 1981: Fr. Georges-Henri THIBAUT (France, chairman), Anthony GEOGHEGAN (Ireland), Joaquim Ramos SEIXAS (Spain) and Antoine MERCIER (Canada). Their first meeting was fixed for 6-11 April 1981, in Rome.

The General Council hopes that everyone will participate fully in the preparation of the new Constitutions – a preparation that should become, for each Spiritan and for the communities, an important object of prayer and reflection for the next few years.

D.5 Committee meeting (6-11 April 1981)

The Committee set about its work by getting information from experts and from Congregations that have already revised their Constitutions, consulting the documents on the revision of Constitutions, and going through, as a starting point, our old Constitutions, along with the texts of the last three General Chapters (CDD, GA and SL). A useful reference work was that of Fr. Michel DORTEL-CLAUDOT, S.J.: *Que mettre dans les nouvelles Constitutions, règles de vie ou normes des congrégations religieuses?*

As a result of their meeting, the Committee drew up a plan, a questionnaire, some texts and a time-schedule (cf. no. 7 below).

D.6 Plan and questionnaire

The plan that was drawn up is merely a provisional working tool, bringing together and arranging in some sort of order the subjects to be treated in the two documents (cf. no. 3 above), without distinguishing these for the moment.

As the subjects to be treated come largely from Spiritan sources, an effort has been made to indicate the main references. It has not seemed worthwhile, at this early stage, to distinguish "what is stable and permanent" from what is subject to change.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to stimulate reflection on points on which it would be particularly useful to have the opinions of the confreres.

D.7 The four stages

- A – Distribution to ALL CONFRERES of the present document (containing the plan and questionnaire), with an introductory letter from the Superior General.
- Return of the replies to the Generalate by 31 Jan. 1982.
- Work on these replies at the Generalate during the month of February 1982.
- Meeting of the Committee (1-13 March 1982) to prepare a report, based on the replies, for the 1982 Enlarged General Council.
- Report to the 1982 Enlarged General Council.

- B – Appointment of a Committee for the writing of a FIRST DRAFT of the Constitutions.
 - Distribution to ALL CONFRERES, between 1982 and 1984, of the first draft, for their comments.
 - Report to the 1984 Enlarged General Council.
- C – Between 1984 and 1986, the writing of a SECOND DRAFT, taking into account remarks and suggestions made by confreres on the first draft.
 - Distribution of the second draft to ALL CAPITULANTS for the 1986 General Chapter. They will be asked to collect the opinions of the confreres.
 - Amendments and approval of the Constitutions by the 1986 General Chapter.
- D – Approval by the Holy See.

0.8 Participation of all Spiritans

The participation of all in the drawing up of the Constitutions is essential: *"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good"* (1 Cor. 12:7). It is the contribution of each confrere and of each community that will clarify "our apostolic life" and how we wish to live it.

Two years ago you already made an important contribution in replying to the pre-capitular document *Our Spiritan Life* for the 1980 General Chapter. Those replies will be taken into consideration in drawing up the first draft. It is not, therefore, necessary to reply again to identical questions – a simple reference from you would suffice.

It would perhaps be better for you to make a choice among the questions below, according to your fields of special interest or competence, and to treat these more explicitly, while replying only briefly to the other questions.

Experts in different fields (Scripture, theology, Spiritan spirituality and other areas) and those who are experimenting in new types of apostolate will certainly have a particular contribution to make.

0.9 The Committee proposes that all confreres meditate on this text from Libermann:

"As members of a Society you have a purpose, and this purpose can be fulfilled only with the cooperation of all. This necessary unity can be brought about only by a Rule and its observance.

"As God has called us in a Congregation, He wants us to work out our salvation through the means He has established there, namely the Rule. Our Rule is nothing else than the evangelical counsels applied to our vocation, our state in life, and in it, therefore, we find the practice of perfection.

"If there is no Rule, there is disorder; if the Rule is not observed, there is no unity; if it is badly observed, the missionaries will not be fervent. Without order, unity and fervour, what good can we do compared with what we could achieve when filled with the same spirit, governed by a single will, moving in a single direction and fired with holy enthusiasm?"

(*'Règle Provisoire'* of Libermann's Missionaries,
Text and Commentary 'pro manuscripto', Gloss, p. 1.)

Part I: THE CONGREGATION AND ITS FOUNDERS

The aim of this first part is to help reflection on the essential elements that characterize the Congregation from its sources – its Founders and its traditions as lived down to the present time. There must be an effort to identify what is commonly referred to as the CHARISM OF A CONGREGATION.

Founders and Tradition

"They must acknowledge and preserve the spirit and intentions of their founders, together with those sound traditions which form the heritage of each Institute" (Perf. Car., 2b).

Our recent Chapters have stressed how important it is to know our Founders, our history and our spiritual heritage, and to draw inspiration from them and reinterpret them for today (cf., e.g., GA, 48-49). The revision of the Constitutions will give us an opportunity to deepen and clarify our knowledge. You will do a great service to the revising Committee and to the Congregation by pointing out what seems essential to you in our Founders and traditions, as well as the texts, articles and Chapter documents that best express these ideas. The following remarks are merely to stimulate reflection.

1.1 Claude Poullart des Places

"... evangelize the poor ... be completely available ... humble and difficult work" (cf. Latin Rule, 3).
A good number of Spiritans feel that we do not give enough importance to Poullart des Places.

1.2 Libermann

"... the poorest and most abandoned" (Règle Prov., 1, quoted in CDD, 1). "... the poor, the weak, the unfortunate ... those who are furthest from salvation and whose needs are greatest" (quoted in CDD, 5). "They shall be the advocates, supporters and defenders of the weak and lowly against all who oppress them" (N.D. II, 256, quoted in SL, 77).

Because of the diversity of those whom Libermann refers to as "the poor", some clarification of his thought on this point would be welcome.

Libermann often stresses "community life", "religious life" (cf. quotations in SL, 85). In view of the difficulty the Congregation has in harmonizing life and action, nature and end, it would be useful, here too, to bring out more clearly the thought of Libermann in this area (cf. quotation on "apostolic life", *Règlements* 1849, in SL, 68).

1.3 Tradition

Our tradition, as actually lived in the footsteps of the Founders, can be summed up in three main points: consecration to God – for the apostolate to the poor – in community life.

These essential elements, lived by Spiritans through the years, have been stressed by the different Chapters, especially in texts dealing with the *Nature and End of the Congregation* and *Community Life*.

There is general agreement on these points, but, in reinterpreting the Spiritan charism for different periods, the Chapters have sometimes insisted on one element rather than another, with the risk of causing a dichotomy. There must be an attempt to define the Congregation in a way that will bring out both **its inner nature and its end**, and **the link between its religious and missionary life**. It should be noted that the expression *religious-missionary* and the *international* character of the Congregation have taken on greater importance in the last few years.

Likewise, concerning the end of the Congregation, the evolution of Mission has led different Chapters to formulate it in different ways. The traditional view of mission has found itself faced with concepts such as openness to *universal mission*, *missionary situations* rather than mission fields, and the greater stress on *justice and peace*. We have not yet been able to define precisely who are "the poor" for us today. We may remember how upset a large number of Spiritans were when the "specific end" of the Congregation was defined almost exclusively in terms of "first evangelization". It is important to define the aim of the Congregation in today's terms, while maintaining a close link with our Founders and tradition.

To help reflection, here are a few references:

- On the NATURE AND END OF THE CONGREGATION: Latin Rule, 3-5; Const., 5-7; CDD, 1-32 (especially 1 and 20-22); GA, 1-5, 24-26; SL, 56, 59, 61.
- On RELIGIOUS-MISSIONARY: cf., in SL, the numerous references under this heading in the index.
- On the POOR: CDD, 4; GA, 46-47; SL, 4, 59, 60, 75, 78-80, 143, 146, 152, 168, and the whole section on *Justice and Peace*.

1.4 "Spiritual heritage". Spiritan spirituality

The Chapters have insisted especially on Libermann's writings.

CDD, 337, lists some characteristics of Libermann's spirituality: his "*sensitivity to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, his special attraction for the most abandoned, his simplicity and peace of soul, his prayer of practical union with God, his acceptance of his own weakness and his devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*". These seem indeed to be key elements in our "spiritual heritage".

Other Spiritan sources should also be explored: Claude Poullart des Places, Blessed Jacques Laval and other less known Spiritan 'saints'.

SL (181), for its part, enumerates some elements in our "*common spirit*".

In this spiritual heritage, the Holy Spirit and Our Lady hold a special place: "*The Congregation consecrates its members in a special way to the Holy Spirit, who is the source of all holiness and of apostolic zeal, and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*" (*Règlements*, 1849).

N.B.: Here and later in this document, we have limited ourselves to 'Spiritan' sources, but the Committee is also looking into other sources, such as Scripture, Church documents, etc.

Questions

1. How would you express, in a few lines, the essential elements to be brought out in a description of the Congregation and its charism today, in fidelity to the Founders and to Spiritan tradition?
2. The poor, the most abandoned, difficult ministries, first evangelization, missionary situations, Justice and Peace ... these are several approaches in determining our apostolic orientation.
 - a) How would you express the Congregation's essential aims and end?
 - b) What criteria would you give for judging fidelity to the Congregation's charism?
 - c) Who are the "poor and abandoned" for us today?
3. The recent Chapters have used the expression "religious-missionary" to describe Spiritans. Do you think this is an apt formula? Why, or why not?
4. What, for you, are the key elements in our "spiritual heritage"? How would you describe "Spiritan spirituality"?
5. There is not a uniform name for the Congregation. In CDD, 1, it is called "the Congregation of the Holy Ghost under the patronage of the Immaculate Heart of Mary". Should we try to have greater uniformity, and, if so, under what name? Would you agree to a more general use of the name 'Spiritan'? If not, what would you suggest?

2.0

Part II: SPIRITAN LIFE

In this Second Part we would like to develop the essential points already mentioned in Part I: A) Consecration to God, B) for the apostolate to the poor, C) in community life.

The various Chapters, responding to the needs of their times, have handed down valuable reflections to us on these subjects. What we would ask you now is to try to pick out the more important elements, to point out what you would consider the more important developments, and to answer the questions below, with a view to the needs of our own time and in accordance with your own particular charism or interest.

Our Founders also have something to say:

"*Three things make up the spiritual basis of the Congregation: community life, the apostolate, and the religious spirit which should be the soul of both community life and apostolate*" (*Règle Prov.*, Part II, Chap. 1, 1).

"*Apostolate is the aim of our Congregation; community life is the means by which we try to achieve this aim; and the religious spirit is the principle that should animate both of these*" (*Ibid.*).

"*It would be good to point out to the confreres . . . that mission is the aim, but that religious life is a means 'sine qua non' and that this means should receive their full attention and care*" (N.D. XIII, 354-355).

A) CONSECRATION

(Cf. Const., 239-274; CDD, 18-35, 61-125; GA, 40-47.)

When one reads the Chapter texts, one sees:

- a desire to establish a clear link between consecration and apostolate;
- a search for the apostolic dimension of consecrated life; and
- increased stress, in the last few years, on a deepening of religious life.

These concerns should also be ours in the revision of the Constitutions.

1. **Consecrated to God in and through the apostolate**
(cf. CDD, 13-14, 18-35; SL, 87).
2. **To be an apostle, following Christ**
(cf. CDD, 18-19ff, 27, 61-63; GA, 41; SL, 47-48).
3. **The evangelical counsels, with a view to mission**
(cf. CDD, 66-70; GA, 42; SL, 166).
 - a) **Poverty:** vow – common life – dependence – sense of poverty – apostolic value (CDD, 87-111; GA, 46; SL, 168).
 - b) **Chastity:** vow – celibacy for the Kingdom – significance in other ways – celibacy and community life (CDD, 71-86; GA, 45; SL, 167).
 - c) **Obedience:** vow – God's will to be sought – authority as service – obedience and mission: sending, link between them (CDD, 112-114, 121-123, 125, 146-153; GA, 47; SL, 169).

Questions

6. **Consecration and apostolate.** How do you see the link between these two? Is apostolate an expression of one's consecration?
7. **Poverty.** What do you consider essential in the way one lives one's poverty? What elements should be brought out in the context of conditions today?
8. **Chastity, celibacy.** What, do you think, is its meaning and value in our apostolic life? Are there some particular aspects that should be stressed today?
9. **Obedience.** How do you see the link between obedience and mission? Is it essential?

B) APOSTOLATE

The Chapters have already done an important work of updating in this field (cf. CDD, 1-60, 327-427; GA, 1-20; SL, 8-84). On most aspects of it, confreres have already expressed their views in their replies to the questionnaire *Our Spiritan Life* for the 1980 Chapter. There are still some questions to clarify, and others to develop, and these are mentioned in this section.

2.1 Participation in the Church's missionary activity

Several points merit further reflection: openness to universal mission; the choice of "missionary situations" and the criteria for this choice; new or recent fields of apostolate; the integration of education in the Common Project; commitments in the home Provinces; diversification of our commitments; the place and specific role of the consecrated layman. Cf. especially: CDD, 1-7, 379-406 (Our Missionary Activity); GA, 2-20; SL, 55-68 (Orientations and Priorities), 69-84 (Justice and Peace).

2.2 Evangelization

In the study of Mission today, special attention is paid to inculturation, dialogue, exchange, liberation – themes connected with the growing influence of the Churches of the 'southern hemisphere'. Openness to the world about us was stressed by our recent Chapter, and missionary institutes are showing a greater desire to commit themselves to 'frontier situations'. Importance is also given to the witness of one's own life.

Cf. CDD (the nos. mentioned above); GA, 4, 5, 9, 14; SL, 61 and also 47-54 (the understanding of our mission today), especially 51 (an exodus, a meeting with the 'other').

2.3 Relations with local Churches

It will be necessary to clarify our different loyalties – to the Congregation, the local Church and the universal Church: how we can be faithful to them all, with a minimum of clashes.

Cf. CDD, 3-13, 415, 419, 429; GA, 10, 11, 15; SL, 57 especially, and 117.

2.2.4 Cooperation with others

Working with others is becoming more and more a feature of missionary life: working with the local Church, with other institutes, with missionary organizations, with other religions, with all men and women of good will, and especially in the field of ecumenism. This aspect must also find expression in our new Constitutions. Cf. CDD, 16, 425-426; GA, 17, 94; SL, 22, 48.

2.2.5 Other points

- Missionary animation and vocations: CDD, 11-12, 374-375, 416-418; GA, 19; SL, 141-148.
- At the service of the Congregation: CDD, 11, 12, 374-375; GA, 19, 141; SL, 218.
- Common project and personal project: GA, 22, 23, 60; SL, 63-65, 152, 169, 178.

Questions

Among the points to be clarified or developed, we would like to call attention to the following:

10. What are the works or missionary situations that you recognize as suitable for Spiritans? Could you draw up a simple list? What elements would you highlight?
11. From Poullart des Places down to our time, Spiritans have always been involved in educational work (poor clerics, seminaries, colleges, universities), and the Chapters have recognized this ministry (cf. e.g., SL, 39, 78, 81, 146, 217). In spite of this long tradition, there are tensions in the Congregation on the subject. In what way do you think the new Constitutions could or should try to solve the issue?
12. Do you think that our Chapters have sufficiently clarified our respective loyalties – to the Congregation and to our local Church (both of origin and of our missionary work)? If not, what would you suggest?
13. What elements should go to the making up of a real 'common project' – at the level of the Congregation, of the Province or District, of the local community?

2.3

C) COMMUNITY LIFE

Spiritans sources on community life are abundant. Apart from replies to Chapter questionnaires and other sources, cf. CDD, 36-60, 248-272; GA, 64-90; SL, 85-103. It would be unreasonable to ask confreres again for their views on this subject. However, it might help the Committee if the main tendencies were picked out from these sources: e.g. the growing tendency towards apostolic community, towards greater sharing at all levels, towards a life that is both deeper and more open to others, towards engagement in various milieus and loyalty to these, towards diversification in types of community and community lifestyle. The following plan is proposed:

2.3.1 Community of life

- In general: cf. CDD, 45-60, 248; GA, 43, 64-90; SL, 170-172.
- Particular persons or groups (e.g. the sick, retired confreres): cf. CDD, 15, 48, 316-317; GA, 97-102, 171; SL, 44.
- The families of confreres: cf. CDD, 109.

2.3.2 Community of prayer

Cf. CDD, 57, 126-143; GA, 29-39; SL, 86; and also the prayers for our dead.

2.3.3 Spiritan membership

Membership through Profession (CDD, 13-14) – desire to belong to a community of faith, an apostolic community (CDD, 52-54, 292) – rights and duties (CDD, 280-282) – lifelong membership, absence or separation from the Institute (CDD, 49, 289; GA, 103-107).

2.3.4 Other forms of apostolic and spiritual membership

Cf. CDD, 14; GA, 61-63; SL, 61, 101-103.

Questions

14. Should there be a special paragraph on prayer?
15. New forms of membership have been encouraged by the Chapters and tried out in a few circumscriptions. What should we say about them in the Constitutions?

Part III: INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

The following points call attention to the main ideas expressed in CDD, 329-376, GA Annex, and SL, 139-213.

A) MAIN LINES OF SPIRITAN FORMATION

- 1.1 Formation is the process of conversion and personal growth, expressing itself in a commitment to follow Christ in the Congregation (SL, 149-152). It is the work of a whole lifetime.
- 1.2 All aspects of this process receive inspiration and unity from the apostolic life, which is its aim (SL, 154; CDD, 330-333, 336-337).
- 1.3 Formation tries to instil the moral, intellectual, spiritual and apostolic qualities required for lifelong fidelity to one's Spiritan vocation.
- 1.4 The Congregation comprises consecrated laymen and priests, with varying personal talents. Because of the variety of missionary situations, formation should be marked by both UNITY and DIVERSITY (SL, 173-181, 196).
- 1.5 As the Congregation is an international fraternal community with a transcultural mission, formation should include an INTERNATIONAL aspect (SL, 201-205, 212; CDD, 352-354).

B) INITIAL FORMATION

- 2.1 The educative process of formation is described in SL, 153. Cf. also SL, 154-177; CDD, 338-346.
- 2.2 Those in overall charge of formation are the Superior General and the Provincial Councils. It is up to them to give dynamism and unity to Spiritan formation and to lay down the general guidelines (SL, 182-185).
- 2.3 Those in charge of formation should be well trained for their task and, within each area, should work together as a team (SL, 186-195; CDD, 343).
- 2.4 Work for vocations is a service to the local Church and is the first step in formation (SL, 139-148; CDD, 374-376).
- 2.5 Some stages of formation (pre-novitiate, apostolic experience and specialization) differ in length and in the order in which they take place in the different regions (SL, 196, 198; CDD, 347-351).
- 2.6 NOVITIATE: aim – criteria for admission (SL, 197, 148) – length – nature of commitment at the end of the novitiate – who receives the commitment – length of commitment.
- 2.7 PERPETUAL PROFESSION: By his perpetual profession, a definitive consecration to the apostolate, a Spiritan becomes a full member of the Congregation.

C) ONGOING FORMATION

(Cf. CDD, 357-373; GA Annex; SL, 206-213.)

- 1.1 Ongoing formation is needed because of changes in the world and in the Church, the continual evolution of mission, and the importance of renewing oneself constantly at all levels.

3.3.2 Responsibility for ongoing formation falls both on the individual confrere and on his superiors.

3.3.3 Means for ensuring ongoing formation.

Questions

16. What do you think should be said in the new Constitutions about internationality in formation?
17. Candidates for Spiritan life differ in origin, education and culture, and will have differing ministries (as consecrated laymen or as priests). What should be said about unity and diversity in the formation of young Spiritans?
18. What should the new Constitutions say about ongoing formation?

4.0 Part IV: SPIRITAN AUTHORITY AS SERVICE

In this part and in the following, it has been possible to draw up a more detailed plan. Although legal elements are naturally more in evidence here, it will be necessary to keep an inspirational aspect even in these parts. It would be good to include:

- some texts from Scripture: Mt. 20: 25-28; Jn. 19: 10-11; Eph. 4: 11-16; 1 Pet. 5: 1-3;
- and from Libermann:

"Superiors should consider themselves as servants whom Our Lord has given to their brothers to look after them constantly and see that they lack nothing that they need for their physical or spiritual welfare . . . The rule that includes all others, and the model that they will try to follow, will be Our Lord among his Apostles and how He would act" (Règle Prov., N.D. II, 317, 320).

4.1 A) AUTHORITY AND GOVERNMENT

(General principles: CDD, 146-147)

Authority as service

- Authority and obedience; mission and obedience (CDD, 113-117, 52).
- Seeking of God's will by all (CDD, 123; GA, 47).
Realism in faith (CDD, 118-119, 122, 125).
The Superior as the first one to be obedient.
- Respect for the person, for persons, groups, minorities, majorities (CDD, 124-152; GA, 24, 39, 60, 73, 111; SL, 87).
- Authority at the service of decisions to be taken and carried out after dialogue between men of God (CDD, 148, 151).
- Authority at the service of unity in diversity; authority as witness of a wider community (GA, 26, 54, 87).
- Authority at the service of fraternal communion and true brotherhood in an international institute (CDD, 45).
- Authority at the service of information and communication (CDD, 146-149, 187; GA, 28, 75, 82-85, 110b, 123, 139).
- Authority at the service of animation (CDD, 148, 185; GA, 121, 126).

Personal authority; Councils; Chapters.

Solidarity (CDD, 58-59; GA, 110c, 138).

Subsidiarity.

Right of appeal.

4.2 B) DESCRIPTION OF THE STRUCTURES OF THE CONGREGATION

Dependence on the Holy See – Institute of Pontifical right (Const., 5, 10).

The different structures of the Institute (CDD, 147, 190-193).

4.3 C) GOVERNMENT

General Chapter (CDD, 154-165; GA, 112-117).

Superior General (CDD, 170-173; SL, 227-229).

General Council (CDD, 167-169, 174-189, 293; GA, 118-130; SL, 225-226, 230-235).

General Functionaries (GA, 144-145).

Enlarged Councils (GA, 131-137; SL, 220-224).

Provincial and District Chapters (CDD, 190-247; GA, 157-163; SL, 214-219, 229).

Principal Communities.

Groups (GA, 156).

Spiritan Foundations (SL, 104-138).

Local Communities (CDD, 248-272; GA, 160-166).

Questions

19. From 1968-69 to 1980, a substantial evolution has taken place in the government of the Congregation, with a movement towards decentralization, subsidiarity, solidarity, coresponsibility. Do you think that the last General Chapter (SL) has given satisfactory expression to the form of government suited to the Congregation? Are there points where a balance needs to be re-established?
20. The Spiritan Foundations (presented in SL, 104-108) are an important innovation and will have a bearing on several questions to be treated in the Constitutions. Could you point out these questions and the elements that will have to be taken into account?
21. How would you describe the form of service that the authority of a local Superior should take?

5.0 Part V: TEMPORAL GOODS

(Const., 25-27)

5.1 A) SPIRITAN ATTITUDES

Material goods at the service of evangelization (CDD, 2, 88, 92, 106, introd. to chap. VII; GA, 167).

Individual poverty (simplicity) and community poverty (community witness) (CDD, 89-91, 99, 105, 108).

Responsibility and involvement of all (CDD, 102, introd. to chap. VII; GA, 167; SL, 168).

Charity, justice, real care for the poor (CDD, 93, 393, 410-411; SL, 78).

Solidarity (CDD, 109; GA, 138b, 167).

Faith in Providence and provision for the future (Latin Rule, 42-43).

5.2 B) OWNERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

5.2.1 Spiritan temporal goods (CDD, introd. to chap. VII, notes at end of chap. VII).

Ownership of these goods: goods of the Congregation (Const., 226-238; CDD, 319-320 and notes). The Congregation, Provinces, Districts, Principal Communities, Local Communities (CDD, 321).

Administration of the goods (CDD, 294-296), always in accordance with canon law, the Constitutions and civil law. Administration by the Superiors, and by the Bursars under the responsibility of the Superiors (CDD, 99). Budgets, accounts and balance sheets. Capital funds, investments (justice to be observed), reserve funds, inventories (CDD, 300). Allocations. Insurance of property, health and old-age insurance. Personal contribution (CDD, 318; GA, 168). Training for administration; competence.

Contracts with dioceses and works employing Spiritans (CDD, 321-337, 422).

Goods of the community and of non-Spiritan works (CDD, 319-320).

5.2.2 Inheritances

Their administration and use; wills, renunciation of inheritance (CDD, 110).

C) THE VARIOUS BURSARS

(CDD, 294-302)

The General Bursar (CDD, 303-308). Provincial and District Bursars (CDD, 309-313).

Local Bursars (CDD, 314-318). Procurators.

Questions

22. The 1980 General Chapter drew up a text on 'Justice and Peace' (SL, 69-84). On the basis of your reflection on temporal goods, what elements from this text do you think should be included in the new Constitutions?
23. We speak and write easily about the poor. How should we express our commitment to them and our solidarity and sharing with them?
24. It is often said that we should give a collective and community witness on behalf of the underprivileged. What should we say and do in practice?
25. The poor have no 'reserves' or 'capital'. Has the Congregation, as a body, the right to have these?
26. How can we ensure solidarity with the poorer circumscriptions, in really practical terms?
27. What do you think of the 'personal contribution'? Should it be maintained, modified or suppressed? Why?

FINAL QUESTIONS

28. The Congregation will have a body of law comprising: a) a **RULE** (first book), which is stable and can be modified only by three-quarters of the votes of a General Chapter and with the assent of the Holy See; and b) a **DIRECTORY** (second book), which is less stable and can be modified by a simple majority in a General Chapter. Should these two parts be:
 - two volumes, separately bound, or
 - a single book divided into two separate parts, or
 - a single book with each question divided into two parts, with different type to indicate what is stable and what is less so?
29. What do you think of the five-part plan for the Constitutions outlined in this document? Is it complete? Are there points to be added or omitted? What further details should be included?
30. What sort of style should the text use: impersonal ("The Spiritan..." "Spiritans...") or personal ("We", "You", "I")?
31. We are among the few Congregations to have a Latin Rule in addition to our Constitutions - a heritage from the older Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Poullart des Places and Bouic). Should we keep this or drop it? Why? If we keep it, should we reproduce it just as it is, in Latin, or translate it as it is, or adapt it? Should we put it as an introduction, or as an appendix?

We remind you that replies to the questionnaire must be received by the Generalate by **31 JANUARY 1982**. They may be made out by an individual confrere, a group of confreres, a Provincial or District Council, or a whole circumscription (it is important to specify which). Thank you in advance.