

Duquesne University

Duquesne Scholarship Collection

François-Marie-Paul Libermann Collection

Spiritan Collection

2015

Provisional Rule of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary: Text and Libermann's Commentary

Francis Mary Paul Libermann

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/libermann-collection>

Recommended Citation

Libermann, F. (2015). Provisional Rule of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary: Text and Libermann's Commentary. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/libermann-collection/60>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Spiritan Collection at Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in François-Marie-Paul Libermann Collection by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection.

Provisional Rule of Father Libermann

TEXT AND COMMENTARY

TRANSLATED BY WALTER VAN DE PUTTE, C.S.Sp.

THE PROVISIONAL RULE OF THE MISSIONARIES OF THE
HOLY HEART OF MARY

TEXT AND LIBERMANN'S COMMENTARY

Translated by Fr. Walter van de Putte, C.S.Sp.

1967

With Introduction by Fr. François Nicolas, C.S.Sp.

ISBN: 978-0-9964579-0-3

Center for Spiritan Studies

Duquesne University

18 Chatham Square, Pittsburgh, PA 15282

April 2015

This edition is printed from the digitized version titled,
*The Birth of Missionary Spirituality. Provisional Rule of the
Missionaries of Libermann, Text and Commentary.*

Copyright © Center for Spiritan Studies
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh
April 2015

Printed by:
Bookmobile
5120 Cedar Lake Road
Minneapolis, MN 55416
United States of America

Table of Contents

References.....	1
Introduction.....	3
Some Historical Data. The Birth of a Code of Missionary Spirituality ...	3
The Memoir of 1839: Project of a Creole Seminarian.....	3
The Memoir of March 17, 1840 sent to the Propaganda	8
The Provisional Rule and the “Glosses” of 1840	11
From 1841 to 1846: The Living Rule	15
The Publication of 1845.....	18
The Commentaries Gathered by Fr. Jerome Schwindenhammer.....	20
Memoir to the Congregation of the Propaganda in 1846.....	21
A Few Data Regarding the Life of Fr. Lannurien	24
The Provisional Rule of 1845 and the Rules of 1849.....	28
Provisional Rule of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary.....	35
PART ONE.....	37
Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary.	37
Its End And The Means To Achieve It.....	37
CHAPTER ONE.....	37
CHAPTER TWO	53
To Whom Is The Congregation Dedicated? Who Are Its Patrons?...	53
CHAPTER THREE	65
What is the Destination of the Congregation?	65
CHAPTER FOUR.....	71
What Should Be the Special and Continual Occupation of the Missionaries Who Labor For Souls So That Our Lord’s Designs May Be Accomplished?	71

CHAPTER FIVE	75
First Means To Be Used For The Salvation Of Souls: The Missions	75
CHAPTER SIX	87
Second Means for Saving Souls. Diverse Forms of Ministry	87
CHAPTER SEVEN	93
Third Means of Saving Souls: Ministry for the Benefit of Priests	93
CHAPTER EIGHT	101
Fourth Means that Can Be Used By the Congregation to Save Souls: A Native Clergy	101
CHAPTER NINE	103
Some Rules of Conduct to Be Observed With Respect to Those We Have to Evangelize	103
PART TWO	119
On the Constitution or Spiritual State of the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary or the Spirit that should Animate it and Animate Its Holy Functions	119
CHAPTER ONE	119
On the Constitution, or the Spiritual State of the Congregation in General	119
CHAPTER TWO	125
About Poverty	125
CHAPTER THREE	145
About Chastity	145
CHAPTER FOUR	167
On Obedience	167
CHAPTER FIVE	187
On Community Life in General	187

CHAPTER SIX	197
Rules to be Observed in the Community	197
CHAPTER SEVEN	217
Rules of Conduct towards Others	217
CHAPTER EIGHT	245
Apostolic Zeal	245
CHAPTER NINE	277
On Some Principal Virtues Which Are Like the Foundation of Apostolic Zeal	277
CHAPTER TEN	315
About Preaching	315
CHAPTER ELEVEN	345
Of Confession and Other Sacred Functions	345

References

- LS François-Marie-Paul Libermann, *Lettres Spirituelles du Vénérable Libermann: premier supérieur général de la congrégation du Saint-Esprit et du Sacre-Cœur de Marie*. 4 vols. Paris, 1888.
- ND *Notes et Documents relatifs à la vie et à l'oeuvre du Vénérable François Marie Paul Libermann, supérieur general de la congrégation du Saint-Esprit et du Saint Coeur de Marie*. 13 vols. 2 Appendices. Paris: Maison Mère, 1929-1956.
- Manual of Religious Law of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Heart of Mary*, Knechtsteden, 1927.
- Retif, A. S.J. *Spiritual and Missionary Poverty*, Edit. Spes, 1956.
- Spiritual Letters to Clergy and Religious*, Vols 1-3. Edited and translated by Walter van de Putte, C.S.Sp. Pittsburgh: Duquesne Studies, Spiritan Series, 1959-63.

Introduction

The text given in this document is the oldest commentary we have of the first Rules of the Missionaries of Venerable Francis Mary Paul Libermann. Father Lannurien, then a novice, took down Father Libermann's commentary of his Provisional Rule, and in his notes we possess the faithful echo of the Founder of the Missionary Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who later became the Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Missionary Congregation.

In a letter written by Father Libermann on July 9, 1840, the said Founder wrote the following to Dom Salier:

“I am trying to inculcate the spirit of the Society and teach the Rules that should be practiced. In it I aim at leading souls to the perfection of the missionary life, or of the Apostolic State, as I have conceived it to be.”

This Commentary clearly reveals the intentions of the Venerable Founder. Vatican Council II has invited religious to return ever more faithfully to the intention of their Founders so as to follow the principles for the renewal of religious life.

We give a short biography of Father Lannurien (1823 -1854) who, most fortunately, took notes of Father Libermann's conferences in which he explained the spirit of the Rule.

Some Historical Data. The Birth of a Code of Missionary Spirituality

The Memoir of 1839: Project of a Creole Seminarian

It was at the St. Sulpice Seminary of Issy (France) that the Venerable Libermann's Society of Missionaries was conceived. Missionary concern was activated in the minds and hearts of the students and their directors by the presence of two young men who were natives of Bourbon (now Reunion) and San Domingo (now Haiti). These were Frederick Le Vasseur and Eugene Tisserant. These two seminarians were deeply affected by the wretched condition of the Blacks in their countries of origin and sought for means to come to the rescue of those neglected souls.

It was in 1839 that Le Vavas seur presented a Memoir to his seminary director. In it, he proposed “gathering some apostolic men who could act as complementary ministers of the pastors,” for the purpose of consecrating themselves to a ministry for the Blacks, most of whom received insufficient religious instruction, and to minister also to Whites who failed to go to Church. For the latter, as well as for the Blacks, “the only means that might give some hope to instruct and win them is to go to them and offer them the Word of life.”

For the realization of that project the author of the Memoir proposed the formation of men who would live a community life and would preach “missions” similar those that were given in Europe. He added that “those men should be bound together in a single body through a Rule and a superior; they should have a house in which they would be able to come together for the purpose of renewing their zeal and their fervor, and to set out from there afterwards to evangelize the Whites and the Blacks who had no connections with the pastors.

Le Vavas seur insisted that the said communities should give testimony of a spirit of poverty.

In order that the missionaries may be successful in their wonderful mission, it is necessary that they should adopt a kind of life that is poorer and more mortified than that of the Blacks; for as long as those poor people see the missionaries leading a life that is more comfortable than theirs, they will not understand them.

That concern for poverty found its application even with respect to the dwelling of missionaries:

The missionaries could easily build a group of cabins similar to those built for the Blacks. In the middle of that group there could be the chapel, and there could be the place where the missionaries could gather to reanimate them in holiness and fervor. Then each missionary could go from house to house, as was done by Father Claver...

This goes to show that this kind of life which Le Vavas seur considered absolutely necessary, according to him, “would be almost impossible to be found among members of the ordinary clergy; they would never be able to undertake that sort of work.” This is why he demanded community life and obedience.

Another point stressed by the author of the Memoir was the great importance of having the missionaries be subject to the Congregation of the Propaganda.

If this Congregation grants permission for establishing that kind of work, the missionaries, after obtaining their Bishops' permission to devote themselves to that undertaking, shall put themselves wholly at the disposal of that Congregation; they will present to it their Rules under which they desire to be united (without saying whether these Rules will be those of Father Eudes). They will choose one of their members, if the Congregation of Propaganda permits it, who will go to receive the orders from Rome to be applied regarding the ministry of those priests in the particular colony the said Congregation will prefer.

Le Vavas seur's Memoir thus presents three principal elements, which later on will be taken over and developed by the true Founder of the new Society, Father Libermann. Here they are:

1. The missionary purpose of the Work: to go to those who are most abandoned, that is, who are deprived of contact with an already established Church.
2. The carrying out of such a task cannot be achieved without the support of a community life lived in obedience and in the testimony of poverty.
3. Direct tying up with Rome. To Le Vavas seur, this was an indispensable condition for a truly missionary apostolate, that is, one that was detached from the ordinary structures of dioceses and parishes.

Le Vavas seur already had met Libermann at Issy in 1836. The latter, assistant bursar for over four years, had been given the job of welcoming Le Vavas seur at his arrival at the Seminary. Le Vavas seur became a zealous collaborator of Libermann in the "*Work of the Bands.*" In 1837, when Libermann, who was still only an acolyte, left for Rennes as Master of Novices for the Eudists, Le Vavas seur continued to be in close relationship with him. During the vacation of 1838, Le Vavas seur travelled to Rennes and dealt explicitly with his friend, explaining his plan for an apostolate to the Blacks, which was beginning to develop in his mind.

On February 2, 1839, Le Vavas seur and Tisserant happened to meet once more Father Desgenettes, who was pastor of Our Lady of Victories parish, and told him about their identical concerns. The result of those meetings was a clearer project of “The Work for the Blacks” and the drawing up of the Memoir of Le Vavas seur. Fathers Gallais, and Pinault of St. Sulpice Seminary were favorable to the project and even suggested the creation of a new Congregation. Father Pinault, moreover, had been the first to speak to Le Vavas seur about the necessity of community life, although Le Vavas seur, even after his talk with Libermann in 1838, did not yet think about that (*Notes et Documents* (henceforth ND) 1, 628 and 634).

On March 8, 1839, Libermann, who was informed about that project, answered in a letter sent from Rennes, encouraging Le Vavas seur. The latter had proposed that the future members of the Society should for the time being join the Eudists. The Master of Novices gave his opinion about that matter (ND 1, 638):

I have proposed that idea to Father Superior and it has given him great joy. He has told me he would receive you with the greatest pleasure, and he said that he would consider himself most happy if the poor Congregation of Jesus and Mary were able to undertake a work so great and so pleasing to God. There would be great advantage in that for you; and even for the advantage of so great a work it seems almost indispensable that such a work should be undertaken by a Congregation. If you and the other men were scattered in the world, there would not be unity, self-consideration would soon manifest itself and the work would be unstable. There are many reasons that could be given. Moreover, it is absolutely necessary that you should prepare yourself during several years for so great a ministry. That is why I greatly agree with the advice of Father Pinault that the members should belong to a Congregation. If the good Lord turns you to your own, it will be a great consolation for me and a great benefit for this society. Moreover, our Constitutions will be good ones, and you would have only to make some changes dictated by your project. They fit perfectly for that kind of project. Our spirit is nothing else than the apostolic spirit, and everything in our Constitutions tends solely to form a missionary Congregation according to the spirit of our Lord.

During the same month, in a letter to Tisserant (ND 1, 648), the future Founder states more precisely the qualities that should be possessed by those who chose to devote themselves to the “Work of the Blacks”:

Please tell Father Le Vavas seur not to choose slack and weak individuals. What he needs, I mean, are men who are ready to leave everything for it, men who are devoted to God’s glory, men who have already overcome their principal defects, or who, at least, are already occupied with overcoming themselves, and from whom great things can be hoped for....Moreover, it is necessary that all who want to engage in that holy work be docile and pliant in their mind; they must be ready to submit to any kind of job assigned to them by the Superior and they should most punctually obey him. They should observe the Rules given them, for whatever be the way the work is organized, it is necessary that you live in community and that order be firmly established among you.

Until then, Libermann had been satisfied with giving advice to Le Vavas seur and Tisserant. His situation with the Eudists did not allow him to become more involved in the Work of the Blacks. Nevertheless, on the 25th and 28th of October 1839, he received special graces from God which gave him, as it were, an intuition of the missionary work which divine Providence was to accomplish through him. Tisserant did not hesitate to date from that moment what he calls “the African Vocation” of Libermann. In a letter of October 28, 1839, addressed to Le Vavas seur, the future Founder already thinks of creating a Society and of writing its Constitutions:

In my free moments I shall think a little about the Constitutions... I would have preferred to wait until that thing had passed through the hands of the Holy See. But Fathers Gallais and Pinault want it, and I recognize a certain advantage in having them ready before the project is presented to the Holy See, especially when I consider on what foundation it should be established. I believe that my plan will meet with difficulties. I shall follow it nevertheless, leaving it to our Lord to remove every obstacle....

I should like to have something that is solid, something that is fervent and apostolic – either everything or nothing: But that “all” will be much, and weak souls will not want to give and do “all.” This should be only a source of joy for us. We should not have weak souls in that wholly apostolic Congregation. We should have only fervent and

generous souls which give themselves entirely and which are ready to undertake everything and to suffer everything for the greatest glory of our adorable Master... It is only at that price that we come to have a share in the spirit and the apostolic glory of Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Lord and the great Model of his Apostles. (ND 1, 662).

The Memoir of March 17, 1840 sent to the Propaganda

Libermann left the novitiate of the Eudists on December 3, 1839, on the Feast of St. Francis Xavier (ND 1, 664). This day coincided with the solemn condemnation of slavery and of the trade of Blacks by Pope Gregory XVI, in the Letter "*in Supremo Apostolatus*" (ND I, 670).

Following the advice of Father Pinault, Libermann had decided to go to Rome to present the project of the Work of the Blacks to the authorities, to which work he was from that time on wholly to consecrate himself. He wrote a Memoir which he presented on March 11, 1840 to Mgr. Cadolini, Secretary of the Propaganda (ND II, 68-76). That Memoir repeated the three points established by Le Vavas seur in 1839. The purpose of the Work was that of giving and "devoting themselves wholly to our Savior for the salvation of Blacks, as being the most wretched souls, the souls farthest away from salvation and the most neglected in the Church of God." After this, the Founder strongly insists on the necessity of community life, but he specifies in a note (p. 72): "Although we demand community life, we would not wish to be established as a Congregation; we are too weak at this moment to dare to think of such a thing..." His second note observes that everyone very frequently repeated to him that they would never be granted the permission to form a Congregation. "That is why I have renounced that for the time being, for fear of losing everything. Hence I asked only for the permission to establish a Community, and after that, if our ministry serves the good of souls, we shall do what our Lord will inspire."

Here is the way Libermann at that time conceived community (common) life:

The plan of life which we propose to ourselves and on which we believe our success will depend, is community life. We shall reduce it to three Articles: 1) Not to be placed permanently in a parish (rectorship), or in some other similar charge, but to work under the orders of a Bishop or Prefect Apostolic, going through the country to which we have been sent, sometimes the whole community together giving missions similar

to those preached in France, or going two together and remaining for some time in certain sections to catechize, encourage, sustain and console poor people according to their needs, or exercising the ministry in some other way, according to the needs and circumstances, but always avoiding being alone, and returning to the community after a definite time, in accord with the orders of the Superior; 2) to live in a most exact obedience to a Superior chosen from among us, and to the Rule of life which we shall determine; 3) to practice perfect poverty. We desire to take vows which will be made without solemnity and which the Superior will have the authority to dissolve, so as to avoid all the inconveniences that might result from them.

Here are the reasons why we so ardently desire community life:

1. The fear of losing ourselves while saving others. Imminent danger for a missionary who is isolated and master of his decisions and actions; whereas in community life, faithful obedience and perfect poverty will protect us against all dangers.
2. The very good of the mission and the salvation of souls. For, first of all, if we sustain one another in fervor and piety, we will labor with more zeal and produce more fruit than if we were to become lax, and this would infallibly happen for many if they were living isolated from others. Secondly, if we live in community, we will be a great help for the abandoned priests of those countries to sustain them in being good and zealous shepherds, and this is one of the principal points of our design: to try to win the confidence of the priests by all kinds of means and give them all the help of which we are capable.

Moreover, if we live in community, we shall perhaps be able to form a native clergy in the countries to which we have been sent. This seems to be a very precious and most necessary means to cure the ills that afflict those countries. Finally, when we live in community and are directed in everything by one same Superior, the good we shall do will be considerably greater than when we are isolated from confreres. Then our undertakings will be more extensive, we shall have a definite plan, a regular and well-organized march. There will be great energy in the execution of the project, greater harmony and union in our activity, everything will be more orderly and better conceived.

The Superior, then examines his undertaking with his council. He measures beforehand the difficulties that can be expected; he prepares the means to be successful and regulates all circumstances. He is able to undertake considerably more things because he possesses more powerful means and can appoint his subjects where he chooses. Besides that, since each one is committed to the work for which he is best suited, projects will have a better chance of success; also, since everyone has to be occupied only with the work entrusted to him, he will more readily consecrate himself entirely to the function assigned to him. There are in fact innumerable advantages of community life.

In his Memoir of 1839, Le Vasseur had strongly insisted on direct dependence on the Holy See. Just like changing the Society into a Congregation, that arrangement could meet with difficulties. What sort of authority would be taken on by the Work for the Blacks? The Holy See would not consider it possible to approve the Work before it had proved its viability and value. Besides that, to rely on the protection of already existing Congregations (such as the Picpus Fathers, Foreign Missions, Holy Spirit Congregation) was not without danger. These Institutes had their own particular ends, and also, none of them would be able to guarantee the community life to which the Founder (Libermann) attached so great an importance:

Whatever might be the Congregation we join, we would never obtain the community life, the life according to a Rule, a life of obedience and of perfect poverty. None of those Congregations sends its subjects in a group or “community,” but all are sent to live isolated and dispersed. The Community of the Holy Ghost is also particular by the fact that it sends its subjects to parishes, and that means there would then no longer be any possibility of living a life of poverty. (ND II, 72).

Even though Libermann did not want to insist upon changing the Society into a Congregation, he took the risk of continuing to demand that the Work would be directly subject to the Holy See in order to safeguard the spirit of the Work of the Blacks. The Founder had to wait a long time for an answer from the Propaganda to the Memoir of March. It was on June 6, 1840, that Cardinal Franzoni, Prefect of that Congregation of Propaganda, gave his approval to the project, adding, to the delight of the Founder, that it would be possible to establish a true “Congregation” to take care of the religious needs of the Island of Bourbon and of San Domingo. The Propaganda, of course, reserved to itself the right to approve or disapprove the Work at a later date. When

Libermann was in possession of that answer, he decided to prolong his stay in Rome for the twofold purpose of following the final development of the project, and in order to finish properly the writing of the Provisional Rule of the Congregation. He remained in the Holy City until mid-November and it was then that he was the guest in the house of Patriarca.

The Provisional Rule and the “Glosses” of 1840

Full of faith and confidence in divine Providence, Libermann had begun to draw up the Rules of his Institute before receiving an answer from the Congregation of the Propaganda. In March, 1844, he was to write to Father Desgenettes, the pastor of Our Lady of Victories parish in Paris, the following very revealing words (*Lettres Spirituelles* (henceforth, LS) III, 363):

My confidence was principally in the goodness of the Holy Heart of Mary and in the countless and fervent prayers of the Archconfraternity. That is why my soul experienced perfect repose; and my heart felt an unshakeable trust in God to the effect that he would accept the Work and make it successful in spite of all contrary appearances. So great was my assurance and confidence that at a time when everything seemed to be lost, I began to draw up the plan regarding the management of the Work, the course to be followed in executing the plan, and the spirit that should animate us in our life as members of the Society. During that labor, a singular thing happened to me, in which the good pleasure of the Most Holy Heart of our good Mother was clearly manifested, and which still now gives me great consolation. It was Tisserant alone who was of the opinion that we should consecrate our Work to the Most Holy Heart of Mary. Le Vasseur and I, too, did not think that an Apostolic Work should be consecrated to the Holy Heart of Mary, although our whole confidence was in that most Holy Heart...

So I clung to another idea regarding such a consecration. I gave myself much trouble in trying to draw up a said plan, but I was unable to find even one idea; I was in profound darkness. After that, I made visits to the seven churches, and also visited some church particularly dedicated to devotion to the Most Holy Virgin. After that, without knowing why, I decided to consecrate the Work to the Most Holy Heart of Mary. I returned to my room and immediately started to work once more to draw up the plan. Now I saw everything so clearly that with one glance I beheld the whole ensemble and all the developments with their details. This gave me inexpressible joy and consolation. It is true that in the

course of that work and in the explanation of said details, difficulties sometimes arose; I was then in obscurity; I made up my mind to pay a visit to one of my churches of devotion... At my return, I felt certain, I would have only to pick up the pen. The difficulties disappeared; uncertain things became clarified; never has this sort of thing failed to happen.

Father Tisserant, in his Memoir of 1842, regarding the origins of the Work of the Blacks (ND II, 9) adds:

It was under that impression, or to speak more correctly, it was under the guidance of the Heart of Mary, that he (Libermann) began to draw up the Rule as we have it today. When he had finished with it, he realized for the first time that Mary herself had taken up that task, inspiring those regulations, making him put them in proper order and interconnection in a way he had not thought of.

When later on Father Libermann read Father Tisserant's notes once more, he added to them the following sentence, also in connection with the drawing up of the Rule: "The order and the concatenation is not perfect and it demands serious corrections. But that order has presented itself to me, as it were, of itself," and Libermann noticed indeed, and only at the end, that the order was much better than he had hoped for.

Those few lines enable us to see the importance of the Rules of 1840. Of course the Founder did not yet have at his disposal the experience that would be gathered later on regarding the ministry in mission countries. The Rule drawn up before that had many weaknesses, and important improvements were necessary later on. Nevertheless, we find in that Provisional Rule that which is essential in the spirit of the Founder. He himself and his successors were to return to it to fill themselves with the spirit of the Institute. Father Libermann himself, in July 1840, gives evidence of that in a letter which he addressed to Dom Salier (ND II, 153):

Father Pinault and myself believed that it was necessary to write a Provisional Rule from the beginning and before the departure of the Missionaries, refraining, however, from making it definitive until several years later. Our reason for this is that if the Missionaries leave for a distant country, disperse and establish themselves in several countries, if they commit themselves wholly to their works without having any Rule,

it will be almost impossible for them to organize that “Work.” They will get a variety of experiences because the works will be organized in a very individualistic way. There will be a great lack of uniformity which will be very harmful. There will be no unity of spirit. Moreover, obedience will be much more difficult and orders will be given very arbitrarily because each Superior will act according to his own ideas. It seems to me that this will result in many abuses and there will be very great obstacles to the establishment of the Work (of the Blacks).

Add to this that perhaps I shall see myself obliged to remain in France to direct the novitiate, and in all probability many will not have much time to prepare themselves before going to the missions. However, the Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers and one director of St. Sulpice have a contrary opinion. They say that because I have no experience of the ministry which the missionaries will have to exercise, it is not possible for me to draw up a Rule.

I realize that, but there is no question of writing a complete and definitive Rule, but to give an impulse to the Work and to establish the true spirit of the society. Later on, changes will be made dictated by the experience that will have been obtained. I have begun to write that Rule, knowing that opinions differed in that regard, and I have finished almost half of that job. Here is the way I have followed:

There is first the text of the Rule, which is divided into Parts, Chapters and numbers. Each Rule has its number; besides that, on each Article, I have added a gloss (commentary) which gives a rather long explanation. In it I try to inculcate the spirit of the Work, and show the way those rules must be observed. It has been my aim to guide our men to the perfection of a missionary life, to the perfection of the apostolic life as I understand it. The Rule is much longer than I had thought it would be before I started to write it. But this does not disturb me, for its length is due to the explanatory glosses, and I do not consider it bad that this Part should be lengthy, so long as it is not the Rule itself.

It is unfortunate that the original manuscripts of the Rule written in Rome have disappeared, but we know through Tisserant’s Memoir that the Rule which was explained in the novitiate of La Neuville would be identical with the commentary of 1840 (ND II, 9). It seems that the Founder transmitted his manuscripts to his counselors at St. Sulpice, sending them parts of his works as

soon as they were ready. In a letter of August 1840, addressed to Father Luquet, Libermann asks information about the arrival of what he had sent (ND II, 126):

Please ask Father Pinault whether he has received the three copybooks which I have sent him on one particular occasion. They go as far as page 140 inclusive. Please let me know this in the next letter you will send me from Paris. I have still to send him the two copybooks of what I have finished writing. I desire to wait until a safe occasion (for sending them) presents itself.

Father Cabon, in the *Notes et Documents* (II, 514), tells us more explicitly that “those copybooks, if they are similar to those of the Commentary on St. John’s Gospel, contained seven sheets, 28 pages.”

Since the last of those copybooks went up to page 140, we are justified in thinking that our Venerable Father had already sent five copybooks at that date. Father Cabon thinks likewise (ND II, 126) that the glosses of the Rule “transmitted to Father Pinault were burned when a fire started in the room of that professor.” Libermann must, nevertheless, have had a copy of the Rule and of the glosses, since he referred to them in a letter to Le Vasseur in October, 1841, as we shall see. In that case, the Founder would himself have destroyed his first draft after the revision that was made in collaboration with Le Vasseur and Collin.

We possess the copy of some fragments of the primitive glosses which were rediscovered by Father Delaplace. Here is what the latter writes on the manuscripts of our Venerable Father (I think this was done at Monsivry):

I found those fragments of manuscripts of our Venerable Father wrapped around one or two Agnus Dei which the Venerated Father most probably had brought from Rome on the occasion of his first journey to that city, for they were very old. This makes us believe that these were the first drafts of the long glosses made by Libermann in Rome, of which he speaks in one of his letters from Rome, and to which he probably refers also in another letter in which he speaks about having sent to Father Pinault very important copybooks containing his writings.

The paper seems similar, moreover, to the one he used for his Commentary on St. John’s Gospel, which he wrote in Rome. Those simple fragments make us greatly regret the loss of the papers, which no doubt

contained texts of great beauty. (Archives, C.S.Sp., 30, Rue Lhomond, Paris, 56, Box 44 – Dossier B – Wrapper IV).

From 1841 to 1846: The Living Rule

Adjusting and Perfecting the Rule and Its Glosses. A Discussion with Father Le Vavas seur

After leaving Rome in January, 1841 and returning to France, Libermann was ordained a priest and began the first year of the novitiate of his Institute on September 27, 1844 together with Frs. Le Vavas seur and Collin. Tisserant stayed for some time in Paris to exercise a ministry there, and he was able to make his novitiate only by means of an exchange of letters with Father Libermann. He spent only a few weeks at La Neuville novitiate in November, 1842. Another member of the Society of the Holy Heart of Mary, Father Jacques Désiré Laval, also did not make his novitiate and left immediately for the Island of Mauritius. When we consider that Father Le Vavas seur was to take the boat already in February 1842 for Bourbon, we realize that at that time a “novitiate” was not thought of as it has been determined following the Decree *Auctus admodum* of 1892. Outside of the great Regular Orders, a strict novitiate was not obligatory. Hence we see novices arriving at La Neuville or leaving from there for the missions in the middle of the year. Moreover, Father Libermann did not want to postpone the first departures too long, for he was anxious to have men laboring in mission countries so that the Institute might benefit by their missionary experience and that the members might better adapt themselves to that task.

In 1847, there took place what Father Le Vavas seur calls his “temptation” and one of the principal causes was the examination with Father Libermann of the Rules the latter had written in Rome. Fr. Le Vavas seur, as well as Fr. Tisserant, after all, was dreaming of an iron Rule. He did not have that profound knowledge of a human being which enabled Father Libermann to manage and properly balance the demands of the Rule. If Father Tisserant readily put his confidence in the Founder, Le Vavas seur felt unable to do the same. He recalled himself, later on, the trial and ordeal he had to overcome at that time (ND III, 24):

That (temptation) began during the communication which our dear Founder made of the Rules he had written in Rome. I desired us to examine them together. As soon as that examination began, from its first Rules we failed to agree. Each article of the Rule was accompanied

by a long gloss. After discussing the Rule, we had to discuss the gloss. I had left the seminary with a rigid desire to do good, with exaggerated ideas about perfection, and a harshness and severity which was wholly opposed to the contrary virtues, to those dispositions which constituted, as it were, the fundamental attitude of the beloved Father... I wanted a poverty similar to that of the Trappists, but the dear Father wanted what the good Lord sent. This makes you see how during the examination of the Rules we were constantly opposed to each other. I haggled over everything. Sometimes it was because a certain word was not truly French, or that a sentence was improperly constructed. Sometimes it was an article that was not sufficiently complete or another that was too long; one was dangerous, another was too soft, etc....

The good Father did not consider the novitiate, as I conceived it, to be advantageous. I was too much on the level of speculation; I was too attached to my exaggerated ideas of poverty, of penance, etc....they would have done more harm than good. It was only experience which would have sufficient strength to get me to soften and moderate my exaggerated ideas. The dear Father was convinced that if I were away from him, my bad dispositions towards him would immediately disappear... It was decided, therefore, that I should leave by boat for Bourbon as soon as possible....

Father Collin, on his part, entrusted to Fr. Delaplace, in July 1856, the following more complete information (ND III, 370):

Father Libermann decided to write that Rule alone. Through humility and a spirit of charity and deference, he had first decided to work out that project together with Le Vasseur. However, because he distrusted himself regarding writing in French, he asked Father Collin to help him in that work. Here is the way he announced this to him. He made known what his ideas were; he showed he had confidence in him, but told him that he should refrain from considering himself important, for after all, he had nothing to do with what constituted the fundamentals of those Rules and glosses... Our Venerable Father was Master of Novices and it was as such, and to form Collin, that he spoke that way to him. That, then, is the way he wrote the Provisional Rule. Father Cabon remarks: that he sent back the General Rule which he had written in Rome. As he proceeded in his work, he read it to Father Collin, who then made remarks regarding the forms of expression.

Libermann readily accepted them when he considered them to be right. It was in this way that the Provisional Rule was written.

Since the Rule was not yet printed, the novices carefully copied the text and for each article wrote down the commentary that was given by Father Libermann. As soon as the first missionaries had sent news about their works, the glosses reflected the lessons taught by that experience. Father Libermann was then always ready to take account of the experience of Fr. Le Vasseur... In the copybooks of Father Lannurien, which we here publish, we find, for example, the following remark with respect to food (67):

Fr. Le Vasseur, filled with the thought that we should conform our life as much as possible to that of the peoples we go to evangelize, wanted us to eat the same kind of food as the natives. For dinner, he wanted us to eat rice and for supper, a porridge made of corn and rice taking the place of bread, and nothing more. I had difficulty in dissuading him from imposing that sort of regime. But now that he has gathered experience, he has certainly changed his mind about that. The precautions demanded by a change of climate require that a missionary should have substantial food. If he is strong and wants to mortify himself, he will be permitted to do so with the permission of his superior. But we should not establish a Rule which would be subject to more exceptions than half the number of those for whom the Rule was made. This is why in our Rule we have done our best to come as close as possible to what constitutes the food of the poor, but only to the extent that this is permitted by the health of missionaries.”

We find here again the wisdom which inspired St. Benedict in drawing up his Rule. The two Founders have in common the charism of a profound psychological knowledge of man and moderation which had made them, above all, learn from what is taught in the school of life. (“The Text and the Commentaries Taken Up by Father Lannurien.” Archives C.S.Sp., 30, Rue Lhomond, Paris, Ve. Boie 44, - Dossier A – Chemise IV – Number 2).

The first copy we possess of the Rule and the glosses is that of Fr. Lannurien. It is a copybook of 223 pages, which is itself a re-grouping of several copybooks. It is written in a delicate and close writing, and Fr. Delaplace has given a title to the ensemble (ND XII, Appendix – 4):

Gloss, or Explanation, of the Provisional Rule of the Holy Heart of Mary, according to the Conferences of the Venerable Father, gathered by Father Lannurien, 1844 – 1845.

It seems that the dates given by Fr. Delaplace are too restrictive; some important parts of the copybook were drawn up in 1846 (see pp. 97 and 117 for references given by Fr. Lannurien).

In that copy of Fr. Lannurien, the first two parts of the Rule are explained, with the exception of the last articles of the last Chapter of Part II (from Article VIII). This is the text we reprint here. If we remind ourselves of the methodical character of Fr. Lannurien and of his function as secretary of Father Libermann (cf. the data regarding him below), we may feel sure about the value of that precise and carefully corrected text. Over and above that, the editor marked the changes that might be made in the teaching of the Founder. Thus, regarding the vows (p. 55), he adds: “On March 21, 1846, Father Superior, while explaining that article, proclaimed that henceforth everyone would have make vows.”

The Publication of 1845

The Provisional Rule was published at Amiens in 1845 (ND II, 235). A Circular of the Very Rev. Fr. Schwindenhammer would, later on, in 1855, explain the circumstances of that publication (ND II, 232):

After the manuscript Rule had been followed for a length of time, it was considered opportune, as it easily recognized, to print the same... Our Venerated Father thought it proper on that occasion to make some changes in it, on the basis of the experience that had already been acquired. The first of those changes concerns Coadjutor Brothers. Our holy Founder at the beginning had in mind only a society composed of Priests and not at all a Society composed of Priests and Brothers. At that time those Priests, animated by the spirit of humility and poverty, would themselves be able to take care of all the ordinary material needs of the communities. But experience quickly showed that those kinds of occupations would make the missionaries lose much precious time which they would be able to use more profitably for the task of saving souls. That is why our Venerable Father decided to establish in our Society a second Order of Coadjutor Brothers. These would help the missionaries in providing for diverse material needs in their establishments. He thus

consecrated the principle of their existence, inserting a special Article regarding such Coadjutor Brothers in his Provisional Rule.

Let us note that Article I of the Rule, through forgetfulness, omits mentioning that change (which, however, is found in Article II of Chapter II, Part IV). For he defines the Congregation as “an Assembly (“Reunion”) of Priests who, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and sent by him, wholly devote themselves to announce his Holy Gospel.” It is true that from 1844 on, the copybooks of Fr. Lannurien take note of that change in the explanation of that same Article. In his commentary, the same copyist begins, writing: “The purpose of the Congregation demands that it be composed of Priests....” But he then crosses out that sentence and writes in its place: “The purpose of the Congregation demands that at least one part of its members be endowed with the priestly dignity. Nevertheless, after its foundations had been laid, Brothers have been adopted, who also are members of that Society....”

Father Libermann attached more and more importance to the role of Brothers in the Congregation and for that reason, after the rule of 1849, he published a special Rule for the Brothers (ND XI, 485 ff.).

According to Fr. Schwindenhammer (ND II, 233), the Venerable Founder made a second change when publishing the Rule of 1845. This was in order

to make several Articles more general and less definite, when said Articles had been too specific and had entered too much into details concerning the apostolic life and community life, and in which too little consideration had been given to eventual transformations and developments in the missionary enterprise.

[Note: Let us remark here that the reasons given by Fr. Schwindenhammer for the establishment of Brothers do not truly represent Libermann’s ideas about that at the time when he edited the Rule of 1845. The Brother could consecrate himself to a task that is specifically missionary in character and the Brother’s function should not be reduced to a work which is purely occupied with material needs (Regarding this question, see Andre Guellec, C.S.Sp., “The Mission of a Brother, according to Libermann,” in *Spiritus* (Cahiers de Spiritualité Missionaire), 13 (December, 1962), 397- 415]

Nevertheless, “Letters of Venerable Libermann, ensure the fact that the text of 1845 is indeed, taken as a whole, the one that was proposed to the first novices of La Neuville, and which each novice copies for his personal use” (ND II, 235). Moreover, we shall be able to show that the variants between the text of Fr. Lannurien and the text of the printed Rule are few in number. (It is true that Fr. Lannurien was taking down those notes just before the time of its publication, and that Libermann no doubt had already had time to make several corrections in the primitive text).

The Commentaries Gathered by Fr. Jerome Schwindenhammer
(Archives, C.S.Sp., 30, Rue Lhomond, Paris, V; B. 44-Doss. B-Ch. VI).

From the same period, and somewhat belatedly, we obtained the commentaries gathered by Fr. Jerome Schwindenhammer. He had arrived at La Neuville in June 1844, and he was to remain there almost three years, until he left for Bourbon in June 1847 (ND IX, 197). Father Jerome, as he was called, so as to distinguish him from his brother, Ignatius, who was to become Superior General, began to take notes on October 15, 1845. His notes end in June 1846 (Father Jerome marked said dates on his copybooks). Father Jerome does not give the text of the Rules, no doubt because printed copies were at the disposal of the novices. The commentaries filled two copybooks. The first, which has 90 pages, explains Part IV of the Rule dealing with the novitiate and the sending forth of missionaries. Then it goes back to the first Part of the Rule, giving the explanation of the first two Chapters. The second copybook – 83 pages – comments on what follows regarding Part I and stops at Article IX of Chapter II, Part II. The copybooks of Fr. Lannurien and those of Fr. Schwindenhammer partially complete each other, but what we still do not have is the Commentary of the end of Part II (Chapter IX, Art. 9 to 24) regarding “Confession and other Sacred Functions,” and especially the commentaries regarding Part III, about the Government of the Congregation.

The notes of Fr. Schwindenhammer are more detailed than those of Fr. Lannurien, but the style is less strong. Since they are of a later date than those of Lannurien, they enable us to witness some evolution in Libermann’s thought. For example, regarding the matter of vows, we find, on page 59 of the second copybook, a remark similar to a note added by Lannurien in that same year of 1846. It reads:

The religious spirit, the stability and the good of the Congregation prompt us to make that commitment to God which is called religious vows...and if we see, in our modern times, that a Berulle, an Olier, a Eudes, have not established vows in the Congregations of which they were Founders, it is solely because they found themselves in circumstances which did not permit them to introduce vows, as was shown to them by the Council of Trent.

With respect to ourselves, although we are not yet permitted to take solemn vows (the copyist no doubt means public vows), we decree that everyone will make vows and will thus commit himself, at least secretly.

Memoir to the Congregation of the Propaganda in 1846

The Memoir of 1846 is of the highest importance to make us know what the Founder had learned regarding missions after some years of experience. While the Provisional Rule and its commentaries aim above all at showing how the missionary should be formed, the Memoir of 1846 at the same time traces the great lines for the organization of the apostolic work, and reveals the reasons for which Father Libermann made his Institute march in a direction that was wholly new at that time. The insistence with which the Founder stresses the necessity of a comprehensive plan and of a plan for the future with respect to the directions of the missions, shows us clearly that in that document he wants to give us a second Rule, as it were, namely, the Rule regarding the Missionary Activity of his Institute.

In that Memoir, Father Libermann is interested in converting the whole Black race and in planting the Church in Africa. After refuting the racist arguments by which some wished to cause the failure of his Work, he explains how he desired to found a church that was truly “inherent in the soil”:

It would be a question of forming a native clergy as soon as possible and establishing clearly defined local churches; it would be necessary to engage laymen for the work of evangelization, and these could receive Minor Orders. A maximum of instruction would be given to the Blacks so that they might attain to a “perfected civilization.” This would not be confined to showing them only how to “poorly handle a spade and a tool.”

Father Libermann soon realized that the said perfected civilization “which has for its foundation besides religion, also science and labor” should not

be reduced to importing European things, but what was needed was to develop the riches found in Africa. That is why he wrote, in 1847, to the Community of Dakar (LS IV, p. 464):

Become blacks with the Blacks, and you will judge what they ought to be, not according to the European way, but leaving to them what is proper to them. Become to them what servants must become to their masters, adapting themselves to their customs and to the habits of their masters...”

A long study would be necessary to discover how Father Libermann, from 1846 on, developed and perfected for Africa a missionary doctrine which upset the traditional ideas. We know that the Founder was in close relationship with Mgr. Luquet, who had conceived a plan for the Mission in the Far East and who, it seems, had been unable to win others to his ideas, except in Rome. It was he who had inspired the Encyclical *Neminem Profecto* of Gregory XVI, upon which Father Libermann based himself to a great extent. Thanks to a steadfast correspondence with his missionaries, and the information he sought to obtain from them regarding the condition of the Blacks, Father Libermann was successful in a very short time in combining clearly in his mind the teaching of the Supreme Pontiff, the data concerning the African situation, and his personal intuitions.

Through his conclusions the Founder broke with many ideas which were accepted in France in ecclesiastical and missionary circles and which were looking more towards the past than to the future. During the Revolution of 1848, Libermann belonged to the small number of those who readily rallied to the new politics which began with abolishing slavery in the Colonies.

Here it might be well to read Father Libermann's letter regarding the Revolution of 1848, which he wrote 1 March of the same year to one of his friends, Father Gamon, a Sulpician:

We must keep in mind that we are no longer living in the way things were organized in the past. One thing that has been wrong with the clergy during the last years has been that they have clung too much to old ideas... To desire to cling feverishly to olden times and to preserve the habits and the spirit which were then prevalent is equivalent to making our efforts fruitless, and the enemy will gain strength... Let us therefore embrace the new order with frankness and simplicity and

animate it with the spirit of the Holy Gospel. We shall thus sanctify the world and the world will attach itself to us (ND X, 145, ff.).

Few Christians had concretely prepared themselves for that new state of things, in spite of the Apostolic Letter *In Supremo* of 1839, which prohibited all, whether ecclesiastics or lay people, from daring to assert that it was permissible to carry on a slave trade under any kind of pretext.

It is easy to understand that Father Libermann's insistence on the necessity of being attached to Rome served as a guarantee for the purity of his apostolate. Strange to say, that independence with regard to the common mentality that was found in his country was the reason why he was among the first who welcomed the new politics of that country:

It is a grace for a Missionary Congregation to have been founded by a man who was somewhat nation-less (*apatride*), who was not closely and affectively bound to a particular civilization, to a mentality, or to a fatherland. He entered the field of apostolic endeavor with sovereign freedom, with perfect lightness and alacrity... Radically deprived of a spirit of ownership regarding his own country, he cast on things and persons a new and sympathetic look, a look laden with love and goodwill which resembles that of God (A. Retif, S.J., *Spiritual and Missionary Poverty*, Edit. Spes, 1956, p. 27).

Recently a Jewish writer, Andre Schwartz-Bart, gave the reasons which had made him, as a Jew, become interested in the Blacks, and particularly in ancient slaves...

What has made me truly look upon them as brothers...is the word "slavery." Certainly that word touch me, a Jewish man, a member of a community which had just undergone the full fare of human life. And yet, strange as it may seem, that word touched me above all as being a Jewish child, a distant descendant of a people that was born in slavery and which emerged from it three thousand years ago" (Figaro Litteraire, no. 1084, January 26, 1967).

In conclusion, we see that Father Libermann has at the same time striven to give his missionaries a spirituality that should be a guide to them in their personal life, and to his Institute a plan for carrying out their mission. A plan for the future is by its very nature the most evolving element, and the Founder

himself has suggested that the purpose of his Congregation might some day call for a change of the means. Our general purpose and end is:

To evangelize the poor. However, the Missions are the principal object we must aim at, and in the Missions we have chosen the souls that are most wretched and most “abandoned.” divine Providence has made us choose to work for the Blacks, whether they be in Africa or in the Colonies. They are no doubt the people who are most wretched and most abandoned, even up to our own time. We shall also desire to work in France, but always keeping the poor as the principal object of our labors... (Letter of Father Libermann to Dom Salier, 1851, ND XIII, 170).

“I should like to found a Work that extends to all the poor classes, a work that would be outside the work of parishes; I mean that the clergy of the parishes would not be able to undertake those works because our work is outside the ordinary ministry” (A. M. Germainville, 1849, ND IX, 147-145).

Father Libermann points out to his sons that missionary constancy will always be able to justify the existence of our Congregation: TO GO TO THOSE WHO ARE FARTHEST AWAY...

A Few Data Regarding the Life of Fr. Lannurien

These few data regarding the life of Fr. Lannurien will help us to judge the value of the copybooks he has left us and which have been translated for you in this book. According to his immediate successor, he has been “an outstanding” member of the Congregation. He, who was to be the Founder of the French Seminary in Rome, has been the man who remained the greatest number of years with Father Libermann, and this was because it was our Founder’s explicit will to have Fr. Lannurien with him to accomplish his task.

Louis Marie Barzer de Lannurien, Breton of Finistere, belonged to an ancient family of Morlaix. Born on March 10, 1823, his childhood slipped away uneventfully within his family in his native city, then at Rennes where, in 1834, he entered the College of the Eudist Fathers. He was endowed with a lively and profound intelligence, had great ability for study and was soon attracted to the priesthood. So, in 1840, he entered the Sulpician Seminary at Issy. Here he

became very enthusiastic concerning philosophical and theological studies. Soon, however, he became afflicted with spiritual dryness and he found nothing better than to have recourse to Father Libermann, who recently had established himself at Amiens. Libermann's reputation for holiness had not yet disappeared from the Seminary. It was in 1837 that our Founder had left St. Sulpice for Rennes, and it is possible that as a young man, Lannurien had then known him, at least by reputation.

The first letter we possess, and which Libermann sent to his young *dirigé* is dated October 23, 1841 (ND III, 43). A little less than a month before, Libermann had started the Novitiate of La Neuville. It was through Libermann, his correspondent, that Lannurien recovered peace of soul, thanks to the counsels that wonderful spiritual director gave him. For the length of three years those two would write regularly to one another. This goes to show the great influence Libermann continued to exercise at the Seminary at Issy, though physically absent from it, and we know how masterful was his direction to lead to port a man who was called to a missionary vocation.

At the end of the school year of 1844, it was understood that Lannurien would enter La Neuville Novitiate in October. So Father Libermann gave his protégé some practical advice so that he would feel free to leave the diocese of Quimper, in which had been ordained subdeacon (N D VI, 260). One motive for fear was the opposition of Lannurien's father to his son's vocation. At that time people knew little about the Missions. Missionaries were looked upon as adventurers who were ready to risk everything in an engagement which seemed uncommendable. This makes us understand why the family of the young subdeacon, who wanted to follow an apostolic career, was alarmed. What would then result for that family who enjoyed a good reputation in the city? Father Libermann was acquainted with the prejudices against such a vocation, but he did not want to use violent means. What he did was to suggest words to young Lannurien which could soften the touchy and sensitive head of the family.

A letter of Libermann, of September 13, 1844 (ND VI, 335) reached the young Lannurien, who was then on vacation with his family in Morlaix. The nearness of his entering the novitiate, and perhaps also new fears manifested by his parents, had made the young postulant ask Father Libermann a series of questions regarding the forms of religious life. To all those questions Father Libermann replied with great precision and in a spirit of good will. Without yielding to weakness, he knew how to make some derogations to the Rule which would procure greater good for souls. He also recognized the sacrifice Christian

parents make by giving their sons to God. The tone of the letter is very paternal on the whole, but there is a supernatural note in it which impregnates all the passages. Father Libermann clearly shows himself here as a man of God, who was at the same time profoundly human. (Cf. *Spiritual Letters to Clergy and Religious*, Volume III, Duquesne Studies, Spiritan Series. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1963. Letters to Lannurien, nos. 185-274, pages 137-165).

Lannurien entered the Novitiate of La Neuville on October 4, 1844. There he made an excellent novitiate. It was during that year that, like the other novices, he re-copied the text of the Provisional Rule, with the commentaries given by Father Libermann during conferences. On August 23, 1845, when he was only a deacon, he made his religious profession as a member of the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary. After that he went on vacation, following an agreement between Libermann and himself, in view of the demands of his family. From La Neuville, he received on September 17, 1845 (ND VII, p. 308) a variety of information, and then short answers to questions Lannurien had asked his superior regarding patrimonial goods, annual retreat, etc....

Lannurien had also suffered headaches on the occasion of a prolongation of his vacation until October 5, 1845. Upon his return to the Novitiate, he was given several charges. During that year, 1845-1846, he was to be Director of the Novitiate and was also to exercise the function of secretary for Libermann. He was also professor of Holy Scripture and of Canon Law. He exercised other functions for his superior, who was overwhelmed with work. He was also appointed confessor for the Sisters and the orphans of Louvencourt, which was close to Amiens, from March 1846 – he had been ordained a priest on that date and was then 23 years old.

All those functions go to prove the high esteem Father Libermann had for Father Lannurien. In 1845, a few months after this young man had entered the novitiate, Libermann wrote about him to the Community of Bourbon: “Here, at La Neuville, we have one of the most fervent seminarians of St. Sulpice, a very talented young man” (ND VII, 119). A few months later he writes: “M. Lannurien has been received into the Congregation; he is one of our best members. I say this because of his solid piety, his simplicity and his talent.” (ND VII, 295).

In spite of those qualities, Lannurien was not without faults. He had an immoderate desire for vacations with his family; he had a certain negligence in his way of writing. Sometimes Father Libermann complained and said with a

sense of humor that his secretary's writings resembled "fly-scratches"; he also used a transparent and almost white kind of ink, so that sometimes it was almost impossible to decipher what he had written (ND VIII, 276 and 282).

At the return for classes in 1846, 28 students of theology and philosophy entered the Abbey du Gard, which is at a distance of about nine miles from Amiens. The Superior, Fr. Schwindenhammer, had as assistants to direct that new house, Frs. Clair and Lannurien. The letter which Lannurien wrote showed him to be rather indifferent regarding the fusion of the Congregation with the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the important transactions of the month of August, 1842, led to the right understanding and agreement for the union of the two Societies. On September 1st, Father Libermann wrote a long letter to Fr. Lannurien which contains numerous precious details regarding the fusion of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary (ND X, 297).

The fusion of the two Congregations brought with it the installation at the Holy Spirit Seminary (Paris) for the 1848-1849 school year. Fr. Lannurien arrived there as a professor of Dogma. The coexistence of theologians come from the Gard and Holy Spirit seminarians, was an occasion for sensitive difficulties for the whole school year. Father Libermann, who had charge of the direction of the Seminary, became ill in April, 1850 and had to be absent from the Seminary until mid-September. Fr. Lannurien sought to insure order at the most difficult time and found it very hard to maintain discipline. Father Libermann, by letters, charged him with the task of making proper arrangements with Mr. de Falleux, Minister of Cult, regarding the recruiting of colonial priests, also with the Archdiocese of Paris regarding the legal statutes which had to regulate the relations of the Congregation with the Diocese (ND XI, 152).

In particular, he brought with him several memoranda destined for the Propaganda regarding the changes to be introduced into the Rules of the Holy Spirit (Society).

After his return to the Seminary of the Holy Spirit in 1850, Fr. Lannurien resumed his functions as professor and counsellor until 1853. Among those functions there were priestly conferences, which were under the direction of Father Libermann and about which Lannurien had to draw a report. On the occasion of those conferences there were gathered together ecclesiastics of every rank, who came to be instructed and edified through their contact with the Venerable Libermann.

It was at those meetings that Fr. Lannurien became acquainted with Bishop de Segur, who shortly after that would give him precious support in Rome. For in 1852, after assisting Father Libermann during the last moments of his life and faithfully gathering his last spiritual will, Lannurien was sent on a mission to Rome to execute the project of the Superior of the Congregation to found the French Seminary.

Having arrived on the site towards the end of February, 1855, he found in a short time, thanks to the help of Bishop de Segur, a house which was suitable to receive the first seminarians who had come from France. In October, 1853, the year began with fifteen students. It was a fatiguing year for the young superior, from every standpoint: installations, meetings with authorities, administrative and financial troubles. He was not spared anything that was laborious. But his ardor did not weaken. He multiplied his efforts, and throughout the school year of 1853-1854 his overflowing activity knew no breathing-space.

Nevertheless, his days were numbered. During the summer cholera broke out in Rome and immediately caused the death of many persons. Lannurien failed to take precautions. He neglected to take care of himself, in spite of the fatigue and exhaustion which already afflicted him. So, on September 3rd, he was stricken with the terrible plague. He died a few days later amid horrible sufferings, on September 6, 1854, aged 31 years.

The Provisional Rule of 1845 and the Rules of 1849

After the fusion that was achieved in 1848 between the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary, Libermann found it necessary to revise the text of the Provisional Rule to adapt it to “the new state of things.” Since it was not possible to change the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, in 1849 the co-Founder drew up the “Rules of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit,” which were the complement of the Latin Constitutions.

The Society of the Holy Spirit had been founded in 1703 by Claude Francois Poullart des Places. It had been consecrated to the Holy Spirit, under the invocation of the Holy Virgin conceived without sin. The spirit of that Institute was a spirit of renunciation and simplicity, of humble and generous devotedness to neglected souls, of intimate union with God through mental prayer. At the time of its foundation it was only a secular Society, like that of the Sulpicians, the Lazarists, or the “Foreign Missions.” Claude Francois Poullart des

Places died before having written a Rule. He nevertheless left to the Seminary of the Holy Spirit “Particular and General Rules” for the use of the Seminary, which inspired his second successor in drawing up the rule of 1733 (which was approved together with the Congregation in 1734). Between 1733 and 1848, that Congregation had tried to insert community life and community of goods in its Rules.

In 1848, before the fusion, Fr. Le Guay, Superior General, had proposed a plan for reorganizing the Society which, in particular, included the following arrangements:

In the Missions, the members would lead a community life. There would be a central governing power with ecclesiastical Superiors, to which the missionaries would be subject. The professional salaries would be left to each individual, on the sole condition that what was left over should be put in the common treasury, without any necessity to give an account at the end of the year.

The weak point was, first of all, the practice of poverty, which was practically abolished. Soon another inconvenience showed itself with the creation of a second order, which had only a purely spiritual connection with the Society. Finally, in order to leave no room for falling off, those two points were inserted in the Rule and approved by the Holy See on February 21, 1848 (Litha. *Manual of Religious Law of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Heart of Mary*, Knechtsteden, 1927, p. 84).

The Rules which were drawn up in 1849 had for their purpose to lay down regulations “regarding points which were not foreseen in the Constitutions.” (ND X, p. 209). Father Libermann attached the greatest importance to this that the spirit of the Provisional Rule of the Holy Heart of Mary Congregation should be preserved. The approved Rules should be left untouched. In the meantime there would be a new recasting of those Rules, namely, concerning community life and poverty. The co-Founder would thus be able to reassure the missionary, who had been formed according to the spirit of La Neuville, that there had been no changes in essential matters with respect to the primitive orientation which he had given to the Work before the fusion.

Transmitting those Rules to Fr. Collin in March 1850, Father Libermann thus explained their nature:

In what constitutes the body of those Rules, all the Rules of our Provisional Rule which have some importance for the maintenance of fervor in the Congregation, have been preserved.

All the changes were made with respect to:

- 1) The divisions. I have tried to divide the ensemble of the Rules in another way so as to make them clearer, in order to distinguish more exactly what is positive and what belongs to perfection and to avoid repetitions.
- 2) The style, which I have tried to make more concise and more correct, in order to avoid robbing it of the unction of piety as much as possible. There may still be defects, but they will not amount to much.
- 3) Regarding the constitutive part, nothing has been changed. As before, the Society is founded on the consecration and the promises, and the vows are permitted and recommended; it continues to have community life, poverty, etc... If you see some difficulties in the Constitutions of the Holy Spirit Society, I must tell you that part of those difficulties have already disappeared at this time. Fr. Lannurien, who is in Rome because of illness, has transmitted a memorandum written by me to the Propaganda, to make changes in the Constitutions which I have considered useful. Those changes, moreover, amount to very little. I have introduced community life into the Constitutions. That was not mentioned in them.
- 4) The organic part. From that standpoint, you will find some changes and some new articles in our Rules. I have introduced them, in part because of the extension of the development of our works, in part because of the experience we have acquired, and in part also in order to harmonize them with the Constitutions. To sum up, you will see that you can live exactly as you have lived in the past” (ND XII, 122, 3).

The drawing up of the Rules of 1849 was, moreover, in line with Father Libermann’s desire of longstanding for a correction of the Provisional Rule:

All the changes which I made in those Rules were those I decided to introduce before there was question of uniting with another Congregation. All those changes are only an improvement which fosters piety, or facilitates the administrative process of the Congregation (A. Laval, N. C. XI, 58).

If the fusion with the other Congregation had made it necessary to make a new draft of the Provisional Rule, experience on its part had also made it necessary: “I have added to it some points necessitated by the extension and development of our Work, on the basis of the experience we have acquired since the time we have Bishops... I had the authority to do it by way of explanation” (To Fr. Le Vasseur, ND XI, p. 88).

Moreover, it was also necessary to subject the Rules of 1849 to what was taught by the twofold experience of the missions and of the fusion with the ancient Society. That is why Libermann does not ask for their immediate approbation:

A few years from now, after we shall have acquired the experience of their observance, we then shall draw them up again in union with the ancient Constitutions of the Holy Spirit Society. We will correct the latter; we shall make an ensemble with it, and this we will then propose to the Holy See for its approbation.

We know that Father Libermann was unable to execute the plan himself. It was to be done by his successor, Fr. Schwindenhammer. The latter, soon after becoming Superior General, called a General Chapter in 1853. To its members he gave “An account of the present State of the Congregation,” in which he explained his ideas concerning the Rules. The summary of his ideas is given in a Report made by Fr. Emonet, at the request of Fr. Schwindenhammer (ND Supplement 1856, p. 219):

As a consequence of our Union with the Holy Spirit Congregation, we have now two volumes of Rules:

- 1) The Constitutions of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, approved by Rome and which have become our Constitutions;
- 2) The constitutive Rules, written by our Venerated Father, and which has no other approbation than the work of L (probably

Loewenbrick), according to which we are permitted to follow them entirely. Those two volumes are truly inconvenient because in the Constitutions there are several articles which have neither significance nor meaning in the present conditions of the Congregation.

Other points, on the contrary, to which we attach major importance because we look upon them as fundamental, are not found in said Constitutions. Such is, for example, community life. Moreover, because we greatly cherish the spirit of our Founder, we have greater love for our constitutive Rules, which are written in that spirit, than for our "Constitutions." These do not, or scarcely do, contain what we desire, either because they poorly express certain things, or especially because said Constitutions do not sufficiently enter into details.

Our Venerated Founder was aware of those inconveniences and he had the intention of rearranging the proper contents of the two volumes into one volume. This he intended to submit for the approbation of the Holy See. He had even begun to work for that project, but his numerous occupations prevented him from completing that work. Again, he would not have desired to present it immediately to the Holy See. Not a sufficient time had elapsed since the approbation of the Constitutions of the (Congregation of) the Holy Spirit.

Father Superior, after showing the inconveniences deriving from the existence of the two volumes and explaining the intention of our Venerated Father, told the assembly that it was his intention to execute the design of the co-Founder, and he asked the members of the Chapter to express their opinion about it. All unanimously voted in favor of executing that project as soon as possible. The Superior General also said that he desired to add a short supplement which would contain some prayers that should be recited as well as some points of discipline. This was also accepted unanimously. Seeing how the members agreed on those proposals, the Superior then remarked that it would be a good time for adding a few things which were missing in said volumes of Constitutions and Rules, so that it would not be necessary to come back to those things later on. (These points were: 1. The Chapter; 2. Community Life; 3. Vows; a contract; 4. The Brothers; 5. The Elections).

The Constitutions of 1855 and 1875 are the materialization of Fr. Schwindenhammer's project. It is important for us to note that we were granted

the permission to make religious vows in virtue of a Decree of May 6, 1855. From that time on, our Society, from having always been a secular Society – in spite of the fact that the members were living the life of religious – then became a true Religious Congregation. When Fr. Schwindenhammer asked the Holy See to grant the taking of “religious vows” he was not unfaithful to the intentions of Venerable Father Libermann, and we are permitted to say that it is in that domain that his idea is most respected.

If, however, we consider the evolution of the Rule of Libermann from 1840 to 1878, date of the reorganization of the Rule by Fr. Schwindenhammer, we witness a deviation in its spirit that is due, in part, to the circumstances of the fusion and secondly, to the temperament of Fr. Schwindenhammer. For we have noted that Father Libermann had divided the Rules of 1849 in two great Parts, one regarding the organization, the other dealing with the spiritual life (the Chapters of those different parts are in parallel harmony).

From 1849 on, therefore, the Holy Spirit Fathers (Spiritans) not only had two sets of Rules, as Fr. Schwindenhammer regretted, but they had three. This meant that there were two “juridical” texts (the Spiritan Rule and the first Part of the Rules of 1849) and a spiritual text, more directly inheriting what was found in the Provisional Rule (the second Part of the Rules of 1849). It was Father Libermann’s intention to arrive at putting the two juridical texts together in one volume and this is the task he entrusted to his successors. In fact, Fr. Schwindenhammer preserved the two juridical texts, which became the Rules and Constitutions, and he was to eliminate entirely the spiritual Part which functioned to give a soul to the Rule.

The variations in the composition of the texts enable us to see more clearly the necessity of uniting, in these “compositions,” the juridical and the spiritual, as is demanded by the Motu Proprio, *Ecclesiae Sanctae* of August 6, 1966 (Part II, no. 13):

The union of those two elements, the spiritual and the juridical, is indispensable to insure a stable foundation for the fundamental Codes of Institutes. These must be impregnated with an authentic spirit and made a rule of life. Therefore it is necessary to avoid drawing up a text that is purely juridical and a text that is purely exhortative.

The Rule of 1845 was above all spiritual and did not perhaps sufficiently, according to Father Libermann himself, distinguish “all that was

positive, constitutive and absolute, from that which was concerned only with perfection and counsel” (ND X, 88).

To make too pronounced a separation of the two aspects, as was done in the Rules of 1849, seemed to constitute one danger. In fact, each individual, according to his mentality, would tend to go to school in one part to the detriment of another, and the spiritual part would most readily be neglected, as history shows. It would be possible to envisage Constitutions which take over entirely the spirit of the Rule of 1845, adding to it the necessary and precisely expressed juridical rules. For instance, each juridical text could be immediately followed by its commentary, or its spiritual justification. Thus all would be able to relish reading the Constitutions. The plan of the second Part of the Provisional Rule, in particular, seems to preserve the integrity and the unity of the Apostolic Life very well, which includes in its full concept both community life and the substance of religious life.

François Nicolas, C.S.Sp.

Mortain, February 2, 1967

Provisional Rule of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary

All for the greater glory of our Heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ, Our Lord, through his divine Spirit, and in union with the Holy Heart of Mary.

Necessity of having a Rule and of having Motives for keeping to it.

We must have a Rule and we must adhere to it with fidelity. *First*, as creatures: all creatures follow laws to which God has made them subject. There are laws even in hell, laws of justice and of punishment. *Secondly*, as rational creatures: we must have laws which govern our intelligence and our will. God gave laws to the angels. He has never left men without a law. There is the natural law and there is the Mosaic Law. *Third*, as Christians: our divine Savior and Lord has instituted his Church. He has given laws to her; he has given her shepherds and a Supreme Head. *Fourth*, as members of a society: we have an end, a purpose. That end cannot be attained without the cooperation of our wills and of our actions. This cooperation, this uniformity, which are so necessary, cannot be obtained without rules and without the observance of those rules. *Fifth*, for our own sanctification and perfection: a) First, God, who has called us to become members of a Congregation, wants us to work for our salvation by the means he has established. Now these means are the Rule of that Congregation. b) Second, our Rules are merely the application of the evangelical counsels to our particular state, to our vocation; therefore in our Rules we shall find a means to practice perfection.

I hear an objection: failing to observe the Rule is not a sin. It is true that it is not a sin in itself; but very often it will be sinful, either because of the motive that prompts us not to obey the Rule, such as contempt, sensuality, vanity, etc.; or because of the results of breaking the Rule, such as scandal, making confreres deteriorate in their spiritual life. “*Qui spernit modica paulatim decidet*” (he who despises small things will fall little by little, Sir 19:1). *Sixth*, for the good of our brothers: we constitute one same body; now, when in a body a member is dislocated, when it is out of its proper place, all the members suffer. Application with respect to our Rule: when someone fails to observe the Rule, especially when this becomes habitual...it causes great harm to our brothers. It is, first of all, a fault against charity. It is also a fault against justice; for when you entered the

Congregation you committed yourselves to cooperate for the good of the Society, just as the Congregation commits itself to procure your spiritual well-being.

Seventh, for the salvation of souls: when there is no Rule, there is disorder. When the Rule is not observed, unity no longer exists. If it is badly observed, the missionaries will not be fervent. Now, without order, without unity, without fervor, what good can we produce in comparison with what we would be able to achieve if we are united in one same spirit, governed by one same will, moved to act under one direction, and fired with one holy fervor.

Nota Bene. In our Rule we must distinguish two kinds of regulations: those which prescribe positive actions – and these are obligatory as the Rule itself is obligatory – and those which deal with the interior dispositions – and they are only counsels of perfection. The latter do not impose an obligation. All the members of the Congregation are not bound (by their rules), for instance, to rejoice in poverty, in suffering contempt, in bodily sufferings. Such rules merely indicate by those counsels the kind of perfection a Missionary of the Holy Heart of Mary should strive for.

We call this Rule “Provisional” because experience will be able to suggest various changes with respect to external behavior and means to be used for the good of souls. But the inmost part of the Rule, that which concerns the spirit of the Congregation, should not be changed. It was necessary to have a Rule from the beginning because members are destined to live at great distances from the Mother House and from one another; it was necessary therefore to have a Rule to preserve unity among the members – unity of spirit and unity of endeavor. (Although this is a Provisional Rule, the members are obliged to observe it as if it were a definitive Rule and had permanent stability, until and unless some changes are made later. It belongs to the Provincial Superior to make the changes which he considers suitable in particular countries and circumstances where he is stationed, but this is not permissible to anyone else).

PART ONE

Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary. Its End And The Means To Achieve It.

CHAPTER ONE

Article I

The Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary is a Society of Priests who, in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and as sent by him, devote themselves wholly to announce his Holy Gospel, and to establish his reign among the souls that are poorest and most neglected in the Church of God. Hence we present the following Articles.

The Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary is a Society of Priests: the purpose of the Congregation requires that at least some of its members be endowed with priestly dignity. Nevertheless, after the foundation of the said Society is established, we shall also have Brothers as members of that Society. For the Brothers can be very useful and they can cooperate for the attainment of the end of the Congregation: when they are occupied with material needs, they can give the priest time to consecrate himself wholly to the ministry of souls. It was in a similar way that holy women rendered material services to the first preachers of the Gospel, and these were thus freed from earthly occupations. Secondly, Brothers can take the place of the priest for the instruction of uneducated people, thus leaving the priest more precious time for his apostolic functions. We must, therefore, act in a saintly way towards them and treat them as good brothers who are willing to share our labors for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Those who are to become priests are permitted to make their consecration, their promise, and their vows before their ordination to the priesthood.

We are gathered in the Name of Jesus Christ, and dedicated to go and bring his reign among the poorest souls. That is why we have a twofold

obligation to imitate the Apostles: first, like them, *relictis omnibus* (leaving all things); second, in their union with our Lord which must be a source of our whole apostolic life. It is through that union that we are enabled to labor efficaciously for the salvation of souls.

Article II

They must consider themselves as apostles sent by our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why they must engrave deeply into their hearts and announce everywhere the holy maxims of his Holy Gospel; they must reveal his mysteries and his divine will to those who do not know them. They must attract to him the souls that are on the road to perdition and fill with love and holiness those who are on his good road.

The first condition for walking in the steps of the Apostles and leading an apostolic life is detachment from all creatures. Our Savior tells us in his Holy Gospel that he who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be his disciple; that the one, who, after having put his hand to the plough, looks back, is not fit for the Kingdom of God. Jesus told one who desired to follow him but wished first to say goodbye to his father that “it was necessary to let the dead bury the dead.” If, therefore, detachment is necessary for being a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ, how much more is it necessary for an apostle. That is why he desired that those whom he had chosen to be his first Apostles should leave everything to follow him. During those first periods after they were called, we still see them returning sometimes to their occupation as fishermen. But once they had become true fishers of men, they left all earthly things in order to consecrate themselves wholly to the important task which Jesus had entrusted to them.

Jesus himself has given us the perfect example of renunciation of creatures: he led the life of a poor man, not even having “where to rest his head.”

All priests who are called to represent our Lord and be successors of the Apostles, must imitate that detachment. This applies not only to missionaries who go to foreign countries, but also to priests who remain in their own country. The only difference that exists in this respect is that the missionaries effectively practice that detachment and have much greater happiness than the others in practicing that detachment of heart which is absolutely necessary for all. And that facility is proportionately greater according to the extent of the effective

practice. This is the reason for the advantages of religious life over the condition of the priests who are obliged to live in the midst of the world, its goods, its honors, its pleasures and its seductions.

They must keep deeply engraved in their hearts the maxims of the Holy Gospel. This demands that they study these teachings in a holy manner, in a prayerful spirit, and endeavor to translate those truths into their conduct. The science which will engrave those holy truths in our souls and into the souls of others is not the science acquired by mental labor; it is not obtained through natural intellectual effort. Rather, it is by a science acquired through mental prayer. St. Francis of Assisi was not a scholar nor a learned man, yet how great were his spiritual lights. And how great were the fruits which his words produced in souls. The Apostles also were not learned men; and our Lord himself, of whom we are told that he “grew in wisdom,” did not desire to consecrate time to study. Thus has he shown us from what fountain and source apostolic men must principally draw the science which has sanctifying power. This does not mean that we should neglect study: to study is in accord with the divine will. But we must look upon natural science as wholly insufficient if it is not accompanied by a spirit and a life of prayerfulness, particularly mental prayer.

For instance, they must preach the mysteries of our Lord and what is his divine will. These mysteries must be preached to make them know where the source of sanctity is from which they must draw inspiration, and this holds true also for the missionary. They must make known to others what God wills and show them how to put those divine desires into practice. Thus they will draw to Christ souls that are on the way to perdition. But let them not confine themselves to that; let them not merely go after wandering sheep. Let them also aim at sanctifying and perfecting souls which are firmly Christian and fervent, helping them to cooperate with the grace that God is giving to them. From this a threefold advantage will follow: a greater glory given to God; a greater sanctification for those souls; and a very great good for the peoples whom they try to evangelize. For the prayers, the examples, and often the words of those fervent Christians, who frequently will have more access to and more influence with their countrymen, will consequently have greater facility in transmitting the sacred truths to them than strangers as we are in mission fields.

Article III

Let them not fail to remember that if they are called to establish the love and the reign of Jesus Christ in others, so much the more must they establish it first and most firmly in their own souls.

The missionaries before all else must make every effort to sanctify themselves: *first*, Jesus Christ, their divine Model, began to do and then taught; *secondly*, the demon, who is grieving so greatly because souls are taken away from him, is constantly looking for favorable occasions to cause the perdition of the missionary; at least he would like to make him neglect the work which God wants him to accomplish. Hence it is necessary for the missionary to be constantly on guard concerning himself; *third*, if the missionary is not animated with great holiness, he will accomplish little for the glory of God and salvation of souls because he will lack courage and constancy and, because of his infidelities, he will be short of an abundance of divine lights; *fourth*, he will not inspire great confidence in people – or at least he will inspire much less confidence than he ought. *Fifth*, three considerations should powerfully inspire us to labor with all our might for the acquisition of a genuine holiness: 1) our creation, and the end God had in view in creating; 2) our redemption; 3) our vocation and the abundant graces which God has granted us to make us worthy instruments of his merciful designs.

Article IV

Their divine Master sends them to the most wretched souls; hence they can undertake missions only among those that are most neglected (abandoned).

Our destination is the ministry for the poorest and most neglected souls. When looked at from the standpoint of human reason, that ministry is something great and noble – even in the eyes of the world – because of the devotedness it requires; but considered closely, it offers only humiliations to us. When it is looked at from the standpoint of faith and before God, however, it is truly glorious; it makes us resemble our Lord, who said he had been sent to evangelize the poor.

Is it not beautiful to go and liberate those poor people from their state of debasement, people who are despised by other men? Is it not something very

sublime to bring the Good News of salvation to those unfortunates who are seated in the shadow of death, who are not helped by anyone, and who are not even able to call for help?

It is indeed a very great honor and a source of happiness for us to be called to those very holy functions which are so pleasing to our Lord. Another advantage of this vocation, in comparison with ministry exercised in our own countries, is the great good that can be done in our missions – a much greater abundance than that which can be achieved at home. If a missionary stationed in Guinea were able to convert only ten persons, he would do a vast amount of good, for he would thereby have planted the faith in one country. What a glory for a missionary to have become the founder of a church! How great a reward is in store for him! What should also arouse our zeal to run to the help of those poor souls is that we see ministers of erroneous doctrines, enemies of Holy Church, rush to those countries and spread the poison of their harmful doctrines.

It belongs to us to raise those poor people from their state of degradation. It is our task to enlighten them, not only to give them a sense of dignity, but to make them Christians and Saints. Let us express our great gratitude to God because he has given us so beautiful a vocation. Let us beg him to make us worthy of such a vocation. And, that we may correspond to it, let us apply ourselves to acquiring the virtues we need if we want to be true apostles: the virtues of humility, renunciation to self-satisfaction and union with our Lord. Constancy and courage will make us overcome the obstacles we will meet; and that grace will not be denied us if we are faithful, and our works will certainly meet with success.

Article V

They will constantly keep before their eyes that they are committed to those poor souls; they will remind themselves that they are their servants; they should think and desire and be occupied with nothing but their salvation.

Sent by our Lord, acting, laboring in his Name, we must enter into his spirit, live as he lived, and act as he would act if he were in our situation. Now the whole life of our Lord was a life devoted to the glory of God and to our sanctification. It was to redeem souls that he had been sent by the Father. This must be the purpose of our life also. We must forget ourselves and our temporal

interests, our natural satisfactions, and so live only for his glory and the salvation of those poor souls which he has entrusted to us. We must look upon ourselves as being servants of those poor souls. Here again we have the example of our divine Master: He did not come to be served but to serve – he, the Son of Man.

This is what is fundamental for the apostolic spirit. Not desiring to walk everywhere among men in his sacred humanity, he has put in his place apostolic men. He has conferred that mission on them but, besides that, he has marked them with the priestly character. But he wants them to be sacrificed as he was, being victim and priest at the same time. He wants everything that he has given us – health, energy, mind, talents, thoughts, affections, resolutions – to be so many consecrated instruments, which he wishes to use to free those poor souls from the slavery of Satan.

We must, therefore, surrender and abandon ourselves wholly and without reservation, and with the exercise of all our powers, to that divine Savior. He wills to use and sacrifice us according to his good pleasure to the service of souls which are so dear to him. Not only must we sacrifice every temporal interest, but we must look upon ourselves as servants who have no possessions and who labor only for the benefit of their Master. We must, in short, sacrifice even our spiritual interests, in the sense that we should not fear to lose something when we have to give up some exercise of devotion, or to renounce certain means of perfection, when the good of souls and the exercise of our ministry demand it. It is clear, for example, that a missionary should not want to live the life of a Carthusian.

If we fear nothing, if we zealously devote ourselves to our ministry, and if we are faithful to grace, our Lord will take care of our own sanctification. If we have the spirit of self-renunciation, if we are wholly unselfish (“empty ourselves”), then grace will not find any obstacle in our souls but, on the contrary, will do great things in us and produce consummate sanctity in us. The Spirit of God takes special delight in possessing souls which are devoted to the work of sanctifying other people.

It is during the time of the novitiate, however, that we must endeavor to establish ourselves firmly in that self-renunciation which is the basis and the support of all the virtues proper to our vocation. Let us therefore be vigilant in trying to purify our souls. Let us never forget our human weakness and that we must always distrust ourselves. But also, when we have that self-distrust we have nothing to fear. To it we must join a perfect confidence in our Savior; he is so

very good towards those who sincerely seek him and is particularly watchful over his ministers.

Article VI

They must ceaselessly esteem themselves below and absolutely unworthy of so great a vocation, and consider themselves wholly incapable of fulfilling those great and divine functions. They must put all their confidence in the Master who sends them, and must try to do everything in their power to correspond with the utmost perfection to the great designs God has in their respect.

We have seen how great is our vocation. Keeping that in mind, we can readily understand that there is nothing so beautiful, nothing so high upon earth as the apostolate. Contemplative life, though possessing the splendor of high favors and the sweetness of its outpourings, is inferior to it, for contemplative life represents only a portion of the life of our Lord. Apostolic life, on the contrary, includes the perfection of our Lord's life and is modeled on that life. More than any other kind of life, it makes us be like Christ. It demands an absolute and continual sacrifice, for it is based on perfect love which transforms us into Jesus Christ.

In spite of the excellence and sublimity of our vocation, we must avoid self-esteem. We always remain poor fellows, wretched men, weak and blind. All our greatness, all our power comes from and resides in him who sends us, as in their source. Though we are less than nothing because of sin, and are vessels of corruption, the Lord has designed to choose us to make inestimable vessels of us destined for his service.

From all of this, we may conclude that on the one hand we must never forget our baseness and unworthiness; at the same time we must preserve confidence in a Master who is so good and so powerful. The greatness, the excellence of the functions to which we have been called should, therefore, not make us lose courage. "*Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat*" (I can do all things in him who strengthens me). To lose courage would be cowardice; it would be an insult to our Lord's munificence. It would be an offense against the Donor of those gifts. It would also do harm to the souls for whose salvation those gifts were given to us.

Though we are wretched, we are not allowed to withdraw. It is useful for us to remind ourselves of our baseness and our unfitness. It is even advantageous to find nothing that is valuable in ourselves on which we are able to depend, so that we may rely on our Lord and may seek in him our light and our energy. “*Cum infirmor, tunc potens sum*” (when I am weak then I am strong). Grace humbles us, but (improper) self-love leads to discouragement. Let us learn to remain like beggars before God, waiting for our daily bread without worrying about tomorrow, and accepting gratefully and lovingly whatever we receive from his generous hand. Let us faithfully make use of the talents he will entrust to us, laboring zealously, but relying only on his care and his power, so that our work may be fruitful. It is his work! Our job – that which concerns us and which constitutes our duty – is to remain faithful instruments in his hands.

I hear someone say: “I have no doubts about grace, but what makes me tremble is my weakness; I am afraid of being unfaithful.” I answer: “that fear, no doubt, is useful when it keeps us humble. But it is an illusion of self-love and cowardice when it is excessive and when it inspires pusillanimity, or discouragement. “*Si Christus pro nobis, quis contra nos*” (if Christ is with us who is against us?). There is nothing worse for a missionary than faintheartedness and cowardliness. We have nothing valuable in ourselves, but God, whose treasures are infinite, has promised to help us. We have merely to present ourselves to him every day with humility and confidence to receive that help; he will never fail to give it to us. Sometimes that discouragement, that grief, or that interior displeasure spring from our desire to receive at one and the same time so great an abundance that we are led to feel and admire our own riches. Then we become proud and ungrateful beggars. This then is in reality the basis of that pusillanimity which men often interpret as a virtue; it has a veneer of humility, but in reality it springs from pride and cowardice.

That sort of thing is contrary to the designs of God, who wants us to be always wholly dependent upon him. He will never fail to give us what we need if we have recourse to him. But he also wants us to remind us constantly of our wretchedness, of our poverty, and of our need to have recourse to the source of all that is good. Let us keep our eyes on our nothingness, but at the same time let us always remember the greatness of our vocation or, rather, look at our Lord who calls us and who offers us all the help we need to accomplish what he expects of us. If the sight of our wretchedness inspires fear, let us recall that “*infirmia mundi elegit Deus, ut confundat fortia*” (God has chosen what is weak to

confound the strong). It is in the choice of weak and miserable instruments that the power and the glory of our God shine forth.

The Apostles were weak and wretched, perhaps more so than we are. If we desire to become strong and faithful apostles, as they became, let us be humble with genuine humility, that is, a humility that is full of confidence. A person who does not have that humility, or who yields to discouragement and then fears to undertake anything, or presumes to rely too much on his own powers – which he thinks to find in himself – quickly meets with obstacles which force him to come to a halt, and he is unable to overcome them. He becomes angry, but finally admits his defeat; he falls into discouragement and quits everything. A truly humble person, on the contrary, puts no confidence in his own powers but, basing himself on the words: “I can do all things in him who strengthens me,” nothing can make him fear, no obstacle can discourage him; he patiently perseveres in the work he has undertaken. God and his grace raise him above his own nature; he remains peaceful, waits for God’s own time, acts only for his glory and is perfectly docile to the inspirations of his divine Spirit. He is always attentive to what our Lord expects of him. He continues his work in spite of all difficulties, without worrying about the outcome.

The missionary who is not humble will yield to the suggestions of his imagination; he will make plans and will draw magnificent projects; he will seek to produce something that will appear great in the eyes of men. On the contrary, a humble missionary will have only one end in view: that every moment of his life should please our Lord. He lets himself be guided by grace. He executes in all simplicity what he is called to do for the good of souls and for the glory of God. His action is strong and constant because in it he is not self-seeking and does not rely on his own powers. It does not matter whether his work is pleasant or painful to nature, abundant in consolations or in pains; his happiness, his consolation, his only care is to execute the will of him who has sent him.

Article VII

They must live in great union with our Lord Jesus Christ, as with their Superior, their Father, their Sovereign Master and their Head. Their attitude before him will be that of disciples who are eager to listen to him, and to receive his orders in all things. They will obey him with faith and love, like children who are full of the desire to be pleasing to him in everything, and to glorify him always and everywhere.

We must be united to our Lord; he is our Master, our Head. Only in him and through him can we have virtue and power. In him we will find the life and the strength which are demanded by the holy apostolate. Or rather, it is he who wants to continue the great work of the Redemption of mankind, by living and acting in us. Let us convince ourselves that we are not the ones who save souls. Only the Holy Spirit can work that wonder. We are only useless instruments which he designs to make use of. Great things have been accomplished by the ministry of St. Paul, but that great Apostle exclaimed: "I have planted, Apollo has watered, but God has given the increase." Let us deeply engrave that important maxim into our souls.

If we want to follow the inspiration of the Spirit of our Lord in everything, we have merely to remain before him in all simplicity and suppleness. Let us remain calmly and peacefully at his feet, always attentive to his voice as soon as he speaks to our hearts. He will then make himself be heard and will give us guidance. But if we wish to indulge in too much reasoning, we will fail in fidelity to his guidance. "*Regnum Dei non venit cum observatione*": (God's reign comes unobserved). In our conduct we must acquire the habit of walking in God's presence, of constantly having recourse to his light and grace in order that we may worthily accomplish his work. It is in that spirit that we must act. Let us have no thought, no project, no desire except for God. Let us cling with our heart only to that which is pleasing to him and glorifies him. Acting thus, we are certain that we are accomplishing his will and are pleasing to him.

Article VIII

Their life will be a life of faith. Being united to our Lord Jesus Christ, they will keep him in mind in all things: he is the Source, the Principle and the Soul of all their works. He must be their Light, their Virtue and their Love. They must love him in all things – In all things, in him and for him.

Our life must be a life of faith. It would be a great misfortune for us if we lived the kind of natural life full of moral weaknesses which worldly people live. By detaching ourselves from the world, we have renounced everything that is worldly. We must now belong solely to our Lord. A missionary who would wish at one time to live the life of faith and at another the life of the world would be unable to correspond totally to God's designs in his regard. He would be irresolute. In general we can apply here the axiom: the effect will be similar to

the cause. If in all things we conduct ourselves guided by the light of faith, our life will be holy and supernatural. If we follow our inclinations inspired by nature, our life will be full of faults and our ministry will be fruitless. If our life is half in conformity with the life of our Lord and half in conformity with the carnal life of men, we shall neither be happy nor shall we enjoy peace, and we shall accomplish but little that is good.

We must belong wholly to our Lord; this is absolutely necessary if we desire to be true apostles. If we yield to natural thoughts, desires and actions, our words will likewise be natural and sterile. We then shall be unable to give any food to souls. It is possible that we shall make some impression on the senses and on the imagination of others, but we shall not produce anything solid in the depths of their hearts. A saintly man often does more good by his mere presence than a missionary who is imperfect and who works and speaks much. St. Francis Xavier produced wonderful effects on all those who saw him. The holiness of his soul shone on his face and was revealed in his way of acting, even in his walk, because everything in him was ruled by the Holy Spirit. If we want to convert people we must be able to touch their hearts. Making an impression on their senses or on their imagination is insufficient. Moreover, an effect is necessarily similar to the cause. And converting and sanctifying souls are supernatural effects, and they can be produced only by supernatural causes. That is why our Lord must be in us, and be the soul of all that we do for the spiritual good of our neighbor. Every Christian must be united to our Lord and must be moved by his Spirit. And if that be so, what union with the divine Master is evidently necessary for the missionary who is called to sanctify others! Let us not imagine that the life of a priest can be an ordinary life. Let us convince ourselves of that truth by looking at those who will be forever our models, namely, the Holy Apostles: they were dead to the world, dead to themselves. They used all their days in works for the apostolate for spreading the Good News. And we know that the Apostle of the Gentiles spent the night working with his hands to earn a modest living; for he tried to avoid being burdensome to others.

That then is the way we must live, absorbed, as it were, in Jesus Christ, living by his life, depending on his Spirit, self-forgetful, seeking only the glory and the interests of our divine Master, acting only through him, aiming at gaining many adorers for him, spreading his Gospel and the glory of his Name. To be an apostle it is not enough to celebrate Mass and say the Breviary, to make our meditation in the morning and later on, our Particular Examen, to hear the confessions of those who have recourse to us, and then to use the rest of the time

for ourselves. Such conduct, no doubt, shows good dispositions, good desires, in a person who is faithful to those spiritual exercises. But the true missionary does not reserve a single minute for himself. All his moments are consecrated to his ministry: his prayer, his penitential acts, his labors for God's glory constitute his whole life. He wants at all times to please our Lord and gain souls for him; this is his unique preoccupation.

A priest who, after fulfilling his ordinary exercises of piety, then seeks amusements for himself, will make a poor meditation, will celebrate Mass with little devotion, will have little fervor and little zeal for the good of souls. He will be a person half given to God, and half given to the world. He will be weak, inconstant, and will produce little fruit in his ministry. Loving and seeking his ease are incompatible with an apostolic life. In a life and nature unspoiled by sin, we would have been allowed to seek our pleasures; but in the present condition of things, if we seek the pleasures for which our fallen nature craves, we shall be carried away by it and we shall lose our union with God. Following the inclinations of our fallen nature enervates our courage. It makes us neglect our duties, especially the duties of our state of life, particularly the state we have chosen – a state which demands our complete consecration with all our faculties, and at all times, to the sacred work that has been entrusted to us.

Let us, therefore, give ourselves completely to our Lord. Let us remain united to him, spiritually detached from creatures, trying to forget their attractions, or at least not attaching our affections to them. The action of our Lord in our souls will then be powerful and will be continuous. He will sanctify us and use us for the sanctification of souls.

The life of the soul consists in faith: "*Justus ex fide vivit*" (the just man lives by faith); but in order to have that kind of faith we must avoid acting lightly and, as it were, by chance. We must be detached from earthly things; we must renounce what our nature and our natural affections crave for and cling to. A man who lets nature guide him receives only the impressions of created things. It is in them that he seeks his pleasures, his happiness and his repose. Those impressions will be the rule that governs all his actions; they will be the source of his affections.

The man of faith, on the contrary, receives his impressions from God. He lives under the influence of grace. This does not mean that human and created things produce no impressions on him. But because everything in him belongs to our Lord, those impressions will not affect his will, for his will is

wholly directed Godwards by the Holy Spirit. There we have the life of faith; this has been the life lived by the saints. This must be the life of all the missionaries who want to be true apostles. It is this life of faith which has given courage and an insuperable power to the saints to overcome difficulties, to suffer every sort of pain God sent them. Fully realizing their powerlessness, they fixed their eyes on Jesus living in their souls, and in him they found light, love and energy. They abandoned themselves to him and let him work in them.

To be worthy of the priesthood, we must also give ourselves totally to God. We should no longer be attached to anything else – neither to ourselves nor to things outside ourselves. The priest must live like Jesus Christ, for he is Christ's representative and must reflect his virtues. It is only by living that life that we can hope to cooperate with the great work for which we have been called, namely, the sanctification of souls. Therefore we already have the duty of working now to acquire that holiness which is demanded by the state to which God calls us. This means we must seek to annihilate the purely natural in us. We must deaden the passions of our heart and we must crucify the flesh. In a word, we must divest ourselves of the "old man," as is so strongly insisted upon by St. Paul. It is only by that means that we shall attain to the freedom of spirit, to that peace of heart which directly leads to a true union with God, and which will make us suitable instruments for the accomplishment of his divine intentions.

Article IX

Knowing how incomprehensible is the holiness of that adorable Master, they must try with all their might to retrace in their person that holiness of Jesus, imitating his virtues as perfectly as possible, and never saying: it is enough. And this they must do in order that men will feel obliged to recognize in them and in their conduct the One who has sent them – the most holy, most lovable, most gentle Jesus, their Master

Knowing that we are ambassadors and representatives of Jesus, we must endeavor to render ourselves worthy of representing him and of laboring for the great enterprise he has entrusted to us. Now, for that purpose we can do nothing better than practice the virtues of which our adorable Master has given us the example; we must live as he lived. His whole life, all his virtues must be reflected in our person, in our conduct and in the exercise of our sacred ministry.

If our conduct is not in line with the holiness of the ministry entrusted to us and does not transmit the teaching we have to impart, the peoples to whom we go will notice the difference. This will prevent them from benefitting by our words. They will say that we are doing our job – we are mere agents. If, on the contrary, we act in a spirit of faith and of holiness, our whole conduct will be a preaching which will make a most salutary impression on souls. They will recognize in us ministers of the God of holiness; they will have confidence in our words; and they will let themselves be easily gained and drawn to our Lord. Let us, therefore, strive for perfection in imitating the virtues of our Lord. Let us never say: “that will do; this is enough!” Otherwise, since we bear always within us a weight that draws us downward and find in our fallen nature an obstacle to the way of holiness, we shall never acquire solid virtues and our ministry for souls will produce few fruits. For men will soon recognize in the activity of a non-spiritual missionary movements that are purely natural. This will lessen their respect for him and the confidence necessary in order for them to accept becoming true followers of Christ. They will even permit themselves to yield to the promptings of their fallen nature in virtue of the missionary’s bad example.

Our vocation demands of us that we strive to imitate as perfectly as possible the virtues of our Lord, and that we make our interior dispositions conform to his own. This means that we must aim very high in our striving for perfection. For the weight of our natural wretchedness draws us constantly towards the world and towards creatures. Hence we must keep our eyes constantly fixed on our Lord in order to reproduce his image in us.

We often fear the sight of the holiness of our divine Master because it teaches us self-renunciation, and renunciation to everything that is connected with self-interest and with what our nature desires. Moreover, we are afraid of not having sufficient courage to persevere along that narrow road, a road so rough for nature. But this is a cowardice that is unworthy of a Christian and so much the more of a missionary. This is an illusion inspired by the devil who wants to prevent our sanctification and our work of saving souls.

We have been called by Jesus and it is he who wills our sanctification. He wants his ministers to be images of his person. He wants to use them to continue to draw souls to his Father. Jesus will never fail to assist us if we give ourselves generously to him. Already in this life he will give us a hundred times as much as what we have relinquished out of love for him. And he will give himself completely to us. He will be our light, our strength and our love. On the contrary, if we haggle with him, he will haggle with us. If we wish to belong

half to him and half to the creature, we shall experience no true satisfaction on either side. We shall feel unhappy and restless; we shall be displeased. We shall accomplish little good and we shall deprive ourselves of the reward reserved for good servants. Is it not better, then, to be generous and to deliver ourselves completely to him who has sacrificed himself completely to us?

Article X

They must be so filled with the Spirit of holiness of that adorable Master and act so much under the influence of divine grace, that they will spread it by their words and their actions and will thus fill all those with whom they come in contact.

When we are holy we are like a fire which warms all those who come near it. The simplest words – even frequently the mere sight of a saint – produce more good than the discourses of a most talented preacher. Our Lord, the divine model of all missionaries and preachers, spoke with the utmost simplicity. We can see this, for instance, in his conversation with the Samaritan woman. He begins by asking her for a drink. He makes use of material water to raise her to the knowledge of that water which springs up into life eternal. All truly apostolic men have imitated that way of acting and Christ's way of using simple and saintly language.

May Jesus Christ be praised!

CHAPTER TWO

To Whom Is The Congregation Dedicated? Who Are Its Patrons?

Article I

The Congregation is consecrated first to the Most Holy Trinity, as having existence only in order to establish Its Glory in its own members, and then among all men with whom they will establish relations, and above all, among those for whose benefit the Divine Will specially calls them.

God inspires one or other particular devotion to saints and to devout souls; for example, there is the devotion to St. Joseph. Those particular devotions, although they are not arbitrary on the part of God, who has inspired them and who does all things in virtue of his infinite wisdom, can be called arbitrary with respect to the person who practices those devotions; and such persons often have no other reason for ardently practicing a particular devotion than the intimate and strong movement and sentiment that impels them. But the devotions of a Congregation which is called to a special work should not be arbitrary. They must be drawn from the very end and purpose of said Congregation. They should give it the most appropriate means to attain that end. This goes to show that this chapter is not without importance, for it presents to us in the devotions of the Congregation the most efficacious means to obtain the spirit and the end of our Society. That is also why in choosing the patrons of the Congregation I have in no way followed “a devotion,” a liking, a particular attraction. I have merely consulted the nature of the work to which we intend to commit ourselves.

The Congregation is, therefore, first consecrated to the Most Holy Trinity. This it has in common with all Congregations, with all holy works, whatever their kind may be. All must have for their purpose to give glory to the Most Holy Trinity. All beings, after all, whatsoever, their nature might be – plants, animals, the whole cosmos – glorify God, each one in its own way. But it especially belongs to those endowed with intelligence, which are the most perfect image of the Divinity, to give the greatest glory to him. Hence every man who does not use the gifts he has received to glorify his Creator is outside the order established by eternal Wisdom, and away from the end and purpose of creation. Religion, that relationship that unites God with man, has been established only in order that this end might be attained more easily. Religion gives us more

numerous means, more efficacious help, stronger and more precious graces. Therefore there is a greater obligation in that respect for the Christian than for the pagan who does not know the religion of Jesus Christ. The Christian must consecrate his being and his faculties to his God.

However, God has chosen some men from among the faithful whom he has particularly charged, by a more complete consecration, to work for and spread his glory among men. These are his priests. And again, among his priests he has established Congregations in order that their members might work more efficaciously for that glorification according to the particular direction and destination of each Congregation.

The Congregation should, therefore, be consecrated to the Most Holy Trinity, since it has no other reason for existence than working for the Trinity's glory. That consecration includes an absolute dependence of our whole being and of our whole Society with respect to the Most Holy Trinity. In turn this demands of every member a more perfect holiness than the holiness of ordinary Christians. Every creature is obliged to tend Godwards. The Christian has the further obligation to strive in Christ's Name for the glorification of his Father. However, God still leaves certain rights to the ordinary Christian. He allows him to seek certain satisfactions which, however, may not be contrary to divine law. But a priest, and particularly one who has made a religious profession of leading a more perfect life, is a man who is wholly consecrated, and he no longer asks for nor seeks anything for his own satisfaction. He must be self-forgetful. He must henceforth seek only the interests of his Master and the Master's glory.

By a special consecration which we make of ourselves and our whole being, all our faculties must be used and devoted entirely to the service of God. The self must be erased in us. God alone must be our heritage, our life, our light, our strength, our happiness.

In order to accomplish what we have promised in our consecration, we must lead a life that is similar to that of our Lord when he dwelt on earth. Now this was a genuine sacerdotal life. In him we have a great Model. But in order that we be able to possess that priestly life in its very essence, we must follow our Lord to Calvary. This is necessary because a priestly life is a sacrificial life.

Let us listen to the Divine Lamb as he addressed himself to his Father: "Holocausts you have not desired; then I said: "Behold I come...." Hence we must renounce all search for self-satisfaction; we must leave all our interests; we

must wholly sacrifice ourselves to labor for the glory of God as much as we are able. This shows us how that consecration demands that we strive for perfection. If we do not possess it, we must work throughout our life to attain it; we must continually tend towards it by self-renunciation in small things as well as in great ones.

That is the way we must strive to glorify God: first in ourselves and then in our confreres, through prayer and good example, then in all persons with whom we come in contact. But we must particularly prepare for the kind of life (now in the novitiate) through abnegation and holiness, to make us worthy instruments that will be used some day for the sanctification of neglected souls to whom our God desires to send us that we may win them for him.

Article II

Secondly, we are wholly consecrated to our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father has given us to him for the Work in which the Father has willed to engage us. It is he who sends us into his portion of the vineyard. It is he who transmits to us his grace and his power. That is why we must labor solely according to his intentions and under his direction.

We entirely belong and are entirely consecrated to Jesus Christ. We have been given to him by his Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ has been established as the Head of the Church which he has won at the price of his adorable Blood. Jesus came upon earth to found his Church and to form for his Father men and women who would adore him in spirit and in truth. In order that Jesus might continue this work, the Father has given him apostles, priests and apostolic men. We ourselves have been given him to procure the glory of the Heavenly Father in the accomplishment of the work which the divine will has desired to commit to us.

We therefore belong to Jesus through a gift from the Father. Hence we must be completely devoted to Jesus Christ, who sends us as he sent his apostles: "Going, teach...." Moreover, it is he who will impart the grace and power necessary to accomplish that great work, which is the continuation of the work which Jesus Christ himself came to carry out upon earth. On that account we have two obligations.

First, since our Lord is the Master and Head of the Church, the One who owns the field in which we are called to labor, the One who sends laborers

to do the particular work he wants us to do, we must work only to fulfill the intentions of that divine Master; we must be entirely dependent on and submissive to him in all that we do. This demands, therefore, constant self-renunciation. We must renounce all inordinate self-love. We must act only for him and according to his designs in our regard. Secondly, we must remember that of ourselves we are nothing, having neither light nor strength. Now the work to which we are committed is of a very high order and it is greatly above our human powers. Does this mean we should yield to discouragement? Of course not! He who has called us will enable us to fulfill what he wishes, if we are faithful to him. It is his custom to make use of very weak instruments, for the glory and the power of God are thus better manifested. "The weak things of the world God has chosen to confound the strong."

Where then must we go to find the light, strength and power we need so greatly? Of course, to our Lord Jesus Christ! He is the source of graces. It is he who imparts them to each one of his workmen. He desires to give them in abundance. What must we do in order to receive all the graces he has destined for us and of which we have so great a need? Just one thing: we must be constantly in contact with him, which means to lead a prayerful life, a truly interior life. If we are thus united to our Lord, let us not entertain any fears. We shall have everything that is necessary for the work he has entrusted to us and for which he has sent us. If we act for ourselves and rely only on our own powers, we then have good reasons for losing courage at the sight of our weakness. But if we act relying on our Lord, and in union with him, we must, on the contrary, cry out with the Apostle: "When I am weak, I then am powerful."

Suppose now that our efforts seem unsuccessful; let us be satisfied. For if we have done everything that our Master asked of us, that is the only thing we must aim at. We then shall have given him everything we should desire and the one thing he expects of us. Let us remain always united to our Lord and try to make that precious union habitual. This is the kind of life that was lived by the Apostles, and it made them say that they were bound by the Holy Spirit, that they were acting constantly under the influence of the divine Spirit. This was also the life of all the saints: the life of a St. Vincent de Paul, of St. Francis de Sales, and of others.

Acting thus, we shall attain the purpose of our consecration to the Holy Trinity, which means to establish the Trinity's glory in souls. We shall be faithful to our consecration to our Lord, by which we give ourselves to that

divine Master so as to act only according to his intentions in our regard, and as guided by him for the glory of our God.

Article III

Those two first consecrations are essential for every apostolate. But that which distinguishes us from all the others who work in the Lord's vineyard is a totally special consecration, a consecration of our whole Society, of each member, of all their works and enterprises to the most Holy Heart of Mary – a Heart that is eminently apostolic and totally inflamed with desires for God's glory and the salvation of souls. We must consider her Heart as a perfect model of apostolic zeal, a zeal that should thoroughly impregnate us. Her Heart must always be an abundant and ever accessible source from which we can draw our inspiration.

(We must have a constant recourse to that source, and approach it with the greatest confidence: that Mary may deign to pour in us all the motherly tenderness she has towards us and obtain for us abundant grace for ourselves and for our works).

Our third consecration differs from the other two. The first two consecrations are obligatory for every Christian, and especially for those who are committed to the apostolate. This is not so with respect to the third consecration. Of course, our Lord wants all to honor his holy Mother. But he does not demand of all a total consecration of their being and of all their works to Mary.

The first two consecrations were in relation to the Holy Trinity and to our Savior; they are absolute consecrations, for they are related to our last end. This, of course, is not the case as regards a consecration to Mary. She is not our last end and the ultimate object of our worship. We honor, admire and love in her not the perfections which she has of herself, but the graces, the virtues, the favors and privileges which her Son has deigned to bestow upon her. Hence all the devotedness with which we consecrate ourselves to her in reality refer ultimately to the Divinity, which is the source and cause of all the greatness of Mary. In this way we enter into the spirit and the sentiments of Mary, which are so well expressed in that magnificent Canticle, and which St. Ambrose properly

calls the ecstasy of her humility – a humility that is based on truth: “He who is mighty has done great things in me.”

Our consecration to Mary is total. It comprises first of all the ensemble of our Society with all that it can have, do or undertake. Secondly, we consecrate to her personally all our works, all our actions, all our thoughts and sentiments, all our faculties. In virtue of our vocation which makes us more Christ-like, we become in a special way children of Mary, and by that total consecration of ourselves to her we hope to obtain a very special protection of her maternal affection. If every member of our Congregation enters into the spirit of that consecration, doubtlessly Mary will make us succeed in accomplishing God’s designs in our regard and in regard to souls, and she indeed will prove to be the Protectress of our Society.

Let us note that it is not merely to Mary, but to the Heart of Mary, that our Congregation is consecrated. This choice of devotion to the Heart of Mary is not the result of calculation, of reasoning, but is due to a powerful attraction and impulse. But, at the same time, nothing is better motivated, better founded, more in line with our vocation. We are called to the apostolate. Now, what is more necessary for us than to have the spirit of the apostolate? And where shall we find a more perfect and abundant spirit of the apostolate, after our Lord, than that which is found in the Heart of Mary? She was impregnated with it; her Heart was eminently apostolic. Her Heart was filled with desires for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. She did not, of course, travel over the sea and to foreign countries as was done by the Apostles, by Peter and by Paul. Why? Because this was not her vocation. But if God had wished her to be an apostle, she would have had all that was required for such a vocation. Her apostolic spirit would have led her to the activities which were in accord with God’s designs. God did not want her to be an apostle, but in retirement she was to guide the Apostles, to communicate her apostolic spirit to them, to draw down graces of conversion and sanctification upon souls. From the heights of heaven Mary continues to dispense to the Church the gifts she bestowed on her at her beginning.

Therefore it is necessary that we consider the Heart of Mary as a perfect model of the zeal that must burn in us, as well as a source from whom we can draw great assistance. She is our model, and from her we shall learn what the spirit of our Society ought to be. It must be an interior spirit, a spirit of holiness. It must have a genuine apostolic zeal like the one which Mary’s Heart possessed. Such a spirit cannot reside in a person who is dissipated, or in a heart that is

unduly attached to creatures. To imitate our model we must apply ourselves to a prayerful life, to detachment from creatures and to self-renunciation, in order that our heart may become similar to the pure, holy, charitable Heart of a good Mother.

In order to lead an apostolic life it is not enough to be engaged in much exterior activity, to run all over the world like the Apostles. All those actions are dead actions if they are not animated by the apostolic spirit. Without this animation, such activities may well be compared to what theologians call "*actus hominis*" (acts of man) and not "human acts," because they are done without springing from reason and the will. Now, since it is from the heart that interior sentiments spring, we must entertain in our hearts the thoughts which animated the apostolic zeal of Mary. If our hearts are motivated by the burning zeal of Mary's Heart, we will always be able to set on fire the souls with whom we shall come in contact.

If, on the contrary, we think only of exterior activities without giving priority to making our interior spiritual life conform to that of Mary, we will be cold. We will be spiritually cold within ourselves, and we shall have little if any good effect on others. This can be compared to a stove that is placed in a room in order to spread warmth in it. If hot coals are placed in every part of that room, little heat will be radiated. If, on the contrary, all the fire is concentrated in the stove, the whole room will be warm. So let us concentrate our attention on the careful modeling of our interior life on the interior life of Mary. When the time comes to exercise our activity for others, then we shall have no difficulty in acting in accord with God's designs in our regard just as the Apostles did. The Heart of Mary is a source that is always open to us and from which we can draw that apostolic spirit. Mary, according to the Fathers of the Church, is the channel through which God conveys all his graces. She is a mother full of kindness and tenderness towards all men. But we have a special right to have recourse to her generous Heart; we have a particular claim on her all-powerful protection, first, because we have been totally consecrated as a Society and as members of that Society to her Holy Heart; secondly, because we particularly profess to walk in the steps of her divine Son; thirdly, because Mary sees in us instruments which she wishes to use for the salvation of souls, the great object of her desires and of her zeal. We, therefore, have access to that inexhaustible source and with perfect confidence can obtain from it all the graces we need both for our own sanctification and that of others. The Holy Heart of Mary has been given to us as the guidance we need and the strength required for our labors.

Article IV

We will do our best not to let that threefold consecration of our souls remain sterile and unfruitful. This consecration must be the inspiration of our conduct, and a constant reminder of the fundamental objects and purposes of our devotions. It must propel us towards making us adore and glorify everywhere the adorable Trinity and our Lord Jesus Christ. It must make us love, praise, bless, and honor always his Blessed Mother and her Holy and Immaculate Heart.

A devotion which produces no spiritual good and which does not sanctify is not a true devotion. If, therefore, we are truly devoted and consecrated to the adorable Trinity, to Jesus and to Mary, that devotion and that consecration must influence all our conduct: first of all, our interior life, and as a consequence, all our exterior actions. That threefold consecration will draw down upon us a great abundance of graces. If we are faithful, we will act continually under the influence of those graces. And what will they prompt us to do? They will make us do all things solely for the honor of and to please the Most Holy Trinity, to renounce all self-seeking. Secondly, they also will make us imitate our Lord Jesus Christ in a life of charity and sacrifice, they will make us grow in subjection to his Spirit, enabling us to overcome the obstacles which stand in the way of a life of detachment and holiness. We shall constantly have recourse to the Holy Heart of Mary and be aroused by the sight of that perfect model. In that Heart we shall find all the graces we need. Therefore, our threefold consecration will constantly bring us back to the fundamental objects of our devotion: to the Most Holy Trinity, our ultimate end, to Jesus, our Master and our Head and on whom we totally depend, and to Mary, our model and the source from which we hope to receive the communication of supernatural life.

These then are the three fundamental objects of our devotion. Regarding the first two there is nothing more evident. But with respect to the third, namely, Mary, how can she be called a fundamental object of our devotion? St. Bernard uses a comparison which makes it readily understandable: the Church is a Body; our Lord is the Head, Mary is the neck, and the faithful are the members. Life comes to us from the Head – from our Lord; but it passes through the neck. If, therefore, we want to receive that life, we must be united to the neck as well as to the Head; or rather, we must be united to the Head through the neck; we must be united to Christ through Mary. Hence Mary must be a substantial object of our devotion. We will have recourse to her Holy Heart

constantly, to draw from it the life, love and grace which her divine Son so copiously pours down upon her, and through her causes to flow into all his members, particularly into those who are united with and consecrated to the Holy Heart of his Blessed Mother.

This interior devotion will necessarily influence our exterior activities and our relations with our neighbor. It is natural for us to manifest exteriorly in our conduct the motives which animate us. Hence if we are filled interiorly with love and devotedness towards the adorable Trinity, towards our Lord and towards Mary, we also will be prompted to make others adore and glorify everywhere the adorable Trinity and our Lord Jesus Christ, and to spread love, praise and honor towards the Immaculate Heart of our good Mother.

Let us note here that true devotion, the devotion we should have towards the objects of our threefold consecration, does not consist in sentimental affections. To say “devotion” means to say devotedness. Now devotedness is an intimate act of the soul, an act of the will. It is possible to experience great sentiments and yet not to have true devotion. He who has only a sentimental devotion - who has not sought to practice self-renunciation – will be spiritually weak, cowardly and eager to satisfy himself, instead of seeking to work for God’s interests. On the contrary, we can have true devotion without experiencing sensible emotions. However, as long as we dwell upon earth sentimentality will always mingle somewhat with our conscious activities, for this is natural to human nature in its present condition. But sometimes there may be practically no sentiment or feeling. It is precisely at such times that our devotion can be most pure.

From this we must conclude: first, that we should not be saddened when we happen not to experience devotional sentiments. God is a pure Spirit; Jesus and Mary have a body, but they are invisible to us. It is quite natural, therefore, that our senses are never impressed by those objects of our devotion. Again, this absence of sentimentality makes our devotion more pure, more disinterested and more meritorious.

Secondly, although it is not necessary to reject sensible devotion, sweet and consoling affections – when God sends them to us – we should not seek them. What we must seek is that which constitutes the essence of devotion: the love and devotedness, which the Apostle calls “charity,” and without which we are nothing, even when we have the gift of prophecy together with the gift of tongues, or that of performing miracles, etc. “If I do not have charity, I am

nothing,” says St. Paul. In order to attain to that true and solid devotion, we must now (in the novitiate) work earnestly at renouncing our self-love and become detached from creatures, for these are the two and only obstacles in the way of possessing true charity and devotion in our hearts through grace.

Article V

We shall take for our patrons and protectors, first of all, two great Apostles: St. Peter and St. Paul, together with St. John, the Apostle of the Heart of Mary as well as the Heart of Jesus. The first will be for us perfect models who, aflame with the zeal of the Heart of Mary, sacrificed themselves constantly for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. They thereby show us what we should be. St. John will teach us besides to be most beloved children of our loving Mother, and how to draw from her most Holy Heart the ardent zeal which was placed by our Lord Jesus Christ in Mary’s Heart. We put St. John among our protectors and on the same level as that of St. Peter and St. Paul because of his intimate relations with our Lord and with the Blessed Virgin Mary. He is the Apostle of Jesus and Mary.

Article VI

We shall have for our secondary patrons all the other Apostles and shall honor them in a special way. Besides this, we shall have a great devotion towards all the apostolic men who have labored with tremendous zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Everyone will endeavor to attract their protection through the piety with which we shall celebrate their feast.

Devotion to Mary includes not only the patronage which we hope to obtain from her loving Heart, but it includes on our part the imitation of her virtues as well as a consecration of our whole being and of our Society to the Heart of our Mother.

The Heart of Mary has been a model for us from which we have learned to live an interior life. With respect to the exterior exercise of apostolic zeal which must animate us as it animated the Heart of Mary, and which we are called to express outwardly, we have models for us the holy Apostles. They have worked with great zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We have

examples for us in St. Francis Xavier, to mention only one. But we have especially St. Peter and St. Paul, whose apostolic works are more generally known and whom the Church honors more solemnly than the other Apostles.

In the lives of these Saints we shall admire and try to imitate the exercise of souls, the spirit of constant sacrifice, the love of crosses, authority in spiritual government, prudence in our relations with men. St. John will teach us also. He rested on Christ's Heart. Mary was given to him as his Mother by Jesus at the time when he was about to expire on the Cross out of love for us. Therefore, John was the first "child of Mary." This shows us his intimate relations with Jesus and Mary. From their hearts he has drawn that tender charity which distinguishes him in all his conduct and in all his writings. He can therefore be called the Apostle of the Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary. That is why we must place him in the same rank as that of St. Peter and St. Paul, and often have recourse to him with full confidence and love, hoping to receive through his intercession that conformity with the Heart of Mary which he has drawn from her in his intimate relations with that good Mother and with her divine Son.

Article VII

We celebrate most solemnly the Feast of the Most Holy Heart of Mary and that of her Annunciation, a Mystery which is the SOURCE of everything we admire in her Holy Heart. Those of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. John shall be celebrated most solemnly by us, but as feasts of the second order. The feast of the other Apostles, though solemn, will nevertheless be of a lower rank than that of the preceding ones.

The feast days of our patrons will be days of fervor for us. We shall try on those days to receive Holy Communion or to celebrate Mass with renewed devotion. And we shall try to imitate and develop in ourselves the virtues which have particularly characterized the patron whom we honor.

Article VIII

Although we cannot look upon St. Joseph as our patron, and although he did not exercise any apostolate, he must nevertheless be very dear to every member of the Congregation because of his intimate relations with Jesus and Mary. We must invoke him as the protector and the model of the interior life, of which we have so great a need. So that we may be

true missionaries according to the Heart of Mary, we shall celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph with the same solemnity as that of our first patrons.

Here are motives for honoring St. Joseph, for loving him tenderly and fervently invoking his help as our protector: first, his relations with Jesus and Mary; secondly, as the model of interior life and the protector of all those who strive to lead that interior life. Besides, St. Joseph has merited to be tenderly loved by his most holy Spouse.

CHAPTER THREE

What is the Destination of the Congregation?

Article I

The Congregation has as its destination Foreign and Distant Missions. None of its members must ever be retained in Europe solely for the work done for the salvation of souls. It is only for the good of the Missions that they can be kept in Europe.

Article II

We should have in our European houses only those who are necessary for the good of the work, including old members and the sick who are no longer able to be useful in the Missions.

To keep someone in Europe when it is not necessary for the good of the missions would be prevarication against God, who has destined and formed the Congregation for the Foreign Missions. Also, it would be against the interest of the souls for whose salvation our Lord has called us and who perhaps might depend on our fidelity. It could happen that a people – or at least a very great number of souls – would be deprived of salvation because of the absence of a missionary of the Congregation who is kept in Europe. It would be contrary to the members of the Congregation themselves, for when they entered the Congregation they all had – or at least generally – (for there is possibility of receiving some who would be destined only for European houses) the vocation for Foreign Missions. Moreover, the Congregation in accepting them has made a sort of pact and a promise to use them and commit them to the service of God according to that vocation.

Capable subjects – sufficient number in Europe.

It would not be a sufficient reason for retaining a missionary in Europe if it were said that: “he has ability, could do work in Europe and could make the Congregation known; this then would be useful for the missions.”

Article III

Those who happen to be thus occupied in Europe should not forget their vocation to the apostolic life. They must endeavor to work with all their energy (this applies also to those who are sick and are still able to perform some work) to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls in the places where they happen to reside. All this, however, in accordance with holy obedience and without ever neglecting any of their ordinary occupations for the good of the Work.

Article IV

Those who are so ill, or so occupied in houses at home that they are unable to be engaged in exterior works, must at least practice in said houses the virtues that are proper to missionaries of the Congregation, in order always to be true models for the novices and a source of edification for outsiders.

All those who will live in the houses of Europe, even though they exercise their ministry outside (which they should do as much as they are able without harming their ordinary occupations for the good of the work) must always be true models for the novices and sources of edification for outsiders. Men must see in them apostolic men who are committed to the interior life; so that seeing them, the novices may develop similarly in the kind of life they should live and may become good missionaries.

Article V

The Missions to which the Congregation must apply its efforts should be those of poor peoples, of those who are despised, whose needs are very great, and who are most neglected in the Church of God, and particularly those in whom we can expect to produce much fruit.

Article VI

However, we shall not leave one mission in which we have begun work to go to another, which might possess more perfectly those

characteristics, unless the grace and blessing of God in the first be so great and its condition so good that it has no longer the characteristics described in the preceding article.

Poor, despised, neglected in the Church of God, such are the qualities which must be present in the peoples for whom we are destined. As a consequence, we must be animated first of all by a great spirit of humility, of abasement and of a love of being despised. For if it is true that from a distance and speculatively our work is admired, our disinterestedness praised, and the generosity of our missionaries recognized, it is none the less true that the contempt which afflicts those poor people falls back (in part) upon those who take care of them, or at least they are looked upon as belonging to the lower order.

Besides that, we must make ourselves as small and as simple as possible to put ourselves on the level of those people who are uncouth and who sometimes seem to be human only because they have a human body. Their very figure is so different from that of other men that there are those who are inclined to think that they do not really belong to the human race.

Secondly, we must, on that account, practice great patience and keep up great courage because of the coarseness of such people, and also because of the numerous vices, the moral corruption found among them which, however, may be the result of ignorance, of a process of degradation, or of negligence that has affected them over the course of many years.

The beginnings of a mission among such people can be very difficult and disheartening; such work may bring little consolation. If, therefore, we are not armed with patience and courage, we shall give up that kind of work. May God prevent us from abandoning such a mission! Let such cowardice stay far away from us. We should leave a mission country only when we are no longer needed, that is, when it has a sufficient (native) clergy for the needs of its people and when, therefore, we are no longer necessary. This will not happen very quickly.

There could be a good reason, however, for abandoning a mission for some time because of its particular difficulties and its sterility; for instance, when we have labored zealously there for a long time and in spite of those labors over a considerable time, we have learned from experience that there is little we can expect to achieve in that place; and if, coupled with that, we have an opening to another mission, where people are in the condition we have explained above, and

which is explicitly mentioned in our Rule, a people which makes us hope that we shall produce much more fruit among them than in the other.

Article VII

The mission which our Lord now gives us is a mission among the Blacks who eminently possess those characteristics. It seems to be God's will that we should go to help those poor souls. We shall not undertake any other work until that situation of life which presently draws us to them no longer exists.

If we apply the conditions which we have enumerated to the Mission for the Blacks, we shall see that these people are clearly the most wretched among men; they are the lowest and the most neglected of mankind. They are living in the worse conditions of human life. They suffer from the severity of the climate, they are hard to approach, they are far removed from religious people, they suffer from great ignorance, and their vices are great on account of that ignorance. So they are precisely the people who are worthy of our compassion.

Until today little has been done for them; there have been some missionary attempts, but the missions have been unsuccessful. Today God calls us and he seems to arrange everything so as to facilitate their conversion. Not only does Religion prepare its blessings and the graces of which it is the depository to help these poor people, but politics enters into the designs of divine Providence to hasten their conversion by facilitating our access to them. All eyes are now turned towards the Blacks. On the one hand, there is a movement for the abolition of slavery; on the other, more than fifty vessels have been sent to the coasts to prevent the slave trade. But we too must make haste to go to the help of these people. Crowds of Europeans will go to those places, but what will they bring to them? They will bring them moral corruption as they have already done on the coasts. In addition, there is also the influx of those who preach heresy.

Let us therefore hasten to them, for we see Protestants who have become very active. If we wait a long time after wrong things have been spread, it will be very difficult for us to heal the wounds. How beautiful, therefore, is the mission that is opened to us! Great difficulties are in the way, for these missions are less spectacular than others; but our mission is the one which will be most meritorious before God. Let us try, therefore, to make proper preparations for

that mission so as to be worthy instruments of Divine Mercy for the benefit of that wretched race.

Article VIII

Although all our designs must now be turned towards the Blacks, our missionaries will not neglect other inhabitants of the countries in which they labor. They will try to procure the salvation of all those who are on the way to perdition, provided, however, that the spiritual well-being of the Blacks suffers no loss on that account.

It could often happen that the Whites who dwell in mission countries are very much in need of spiritual help. We shall than do well to take care of them, but always under the condition that we do no harm to our principal task which is that of working for the salvation of the Blacks. To neglect the latter for the sake of the former would be contrary to the spirit of our Congregation.

CHAPTER FOUR

What Should Be the Special and Continual Occupation of the Missionaries Who Labor For Souls So That Our Lord's Designs May Be Accomplished?

Article I

Because we have been sent by our Lord Jesus Christ to establish his reign in souls, we must use the whole strength of our zeal to fight against mortal sin and to inspire a horror for it in everyone. In order to free those who are infected with it we must have recourse to all the means which our love for our Divine Master inspires and which a holy prudence will enable us to use. We must also do our very best to make men avoid venial sin by making it odious to them.

Among the peoples which we have to evangelize we shall find the most revolting vices: theft, robbery, drunkenness, impurity; for the smallest price they prostitute their wives. There have been some who even came to offer their wives to our missionaries to the consternation of our confreres. It is said that some are cannibals. In order to destroy these vices we will have to work hard. The devil will do all he can to preserve his absolute dominion over these people. The difficulties are so real that they will discourage those who are not strong.

Does that mean that we should abandon those poor souls because of their extreme wretchedness? God forbid such cowardice! Jesus has been fully aware of the depravity and malice of men and and felt it much more keenly than we can; and the vices of these peoples have been far more revolting to him than any horror we can experience by them. What we must do is to adopt the sentiments of mercy of our divine Master. He did not come to call the just, but came upon earth to call sinners. Following his example, we must sacrifice ourselves for those poor souls. We will not lack the necessary energy if we draw it from the true source, which is Jesus himself.

In order to destroy the reign of Satan and of sin in those souls we must, first of all, use all the power of our zeal to give them a great horror of mortal sin, showing them all the terrible effects and consequences of that evil. We must also make every effort to make them abhor venial sin; but here we must use prudence. We must enlighten their conscience, avoiding to make them think a venial sin is on a par with a mortal sin. This would give them a false conscience, making

them believe they are committing grievous sins when they are only slight faults. Let us, therefore, not talk about venial sins as we do about mortal sins for then their horror for mortal sins would be also less great; or again, those souls would be led to discouragement. So explain the distinction between these sins properly.

Article II

We will work with all our might to uproot the vices and evil habits which are most widely spread among the people entrusted to our care. As long as those causes of sin are not destroyed, souls will always be prompted to yield to them and they will wallow in that filth.

If the missionary merely attacks the effects of sin, he will only cut branches and leave the roots intact, and sins will reappear. It is necessary, therefore, to study carefully the mores of the people we are sent to evangelize. We must learn their habits and what are the occasions of their sins; we also must try to find out what is the ordinary source of their sins. Once these have been discovered, we must strongly struggle against those habits and try to eliminate those occasions, doing our very best to uproot the evil. Because they fail to act that way, many priests have little or only temporary success in their ministry for souls.

Article III

Because ignorance is the principal source of the sins and the coarse vices of those people, we must make use of all the means at our disposal to enlighten them. That is why we must always begin with giving them and strengthening in them true faith, imparting a solid knowledge to them of the dogmas of religion and clearly explaining to them the commandments of God and of the Church.

Because ignorance is the principal cause of the vices we meet in those people, we must begin by removing the ignorance. Politicians have realized the necessity of instructing these people in order to civilize them. Protestants likewise try to instruct them, but their way is different from ours. Some teach them oral truths without dependence on faith, and from this results lack of power to improve the morals of people who are wholly immersed in a sensual life, a life inspired by our fallen nature.

If the Law of Moses, which was the word of God but devoid of grace, merely angered consciences without giving them the power to overcome vices, how much more will moral teaching without relation to faith be unable to overcome vice. With that kind of moral teaching we merely refine their vices without correcting them. If, on the contrary, we begin by giving them a solid foundation on faith and revealed doctrine, we will make them become Christians. Then, fortified by grace, they will resist their evil inclinations; they will follow the rules of Christian morality. This will improve their conduct; it will teach them to be pure and holy. This, at the same time, is the only means to give those people true civilization. It will make them appreciate much more how sweet and gentle is the happiness of virtue compared with the coarse pleasures of the flesh which they previously had sought.

Article IV

But that is not enough. After that, we must try to sanctify them. For that purpose we must inspire them with love and religion towards the adorable Person of our Lord Jesus Christ and for all his holy Mysteries. We must do all we can to make them know those things in detail, especially must we make them realize better how great has been his charity towards us.

We must do our best to make them strive for the highest holiness. If we content ourselves with ridding them of their vices and then do not help them make progress in perfection according to their disposition and the grace that is found in them, our work would be incomplete; it would be unfinished business. There are certain souls who are in danger – those especially strong souls – who, if they do not make progress... are either very holy or very wicked. Again, we would establish nothing on a firm basis and it would be necessary to begin all over again. Finally, this is what is desired by the Propaganda...; fervent missionaries think similarly. We are even urged to found communities of men and of women as soon as possible among the peoples we go to evangelize.

These chosen souls would draw down graces upon their brethren and contribute greatly to their sanctification. Now, the great means for attaining that purpose is to make them know and appreciate the mysteries of our Lord. Those mysteries, first of all, set before them the example of the exercise of all virtues, and at the same time they include the most powerful motives for practicing those virtues. They also contain a grace which strengthens the soul in that practice and

inspires love for Jesus Christ. When we speak to these people of the mysteries of our Lord we accustom them, without their perceiving it, to meditate on them; for the history of those mysteries and the inspiring considerations that issue from them imprint themselves on their minds. They thereby relish them and are prompted once more to practice virtue and to love God.

Article V

After love and religious sentiments towards our Lord Jesus Christ, that which can prompt them to work efficaciously for their sanctification is having a tender, living, and complete confidence in the Blessed Virgin Mary. Therefore we will endeavor to fill them with such tender sentiments towards her, explaining to them and making them relish those mysteries which are most useful for their particular state of life and showing them what devotional practices would be useful to them with respect to Mary. With prudence, therefore, we could establish confraternities. But above all, we shall set the example of that sort of devotion to Mary, which is the most powerful means, always speaking about our Lady with profound sentiments of love and veneration.

Besides the general reasons which should make us spread devotion to Mary, there are those that are proper to our state and to our time. First of all, we are children of her Heart. In virtue of our consecration itself, we must do all we can to spread everywhere the honor and the love that are due to our good Mother. Secondly, St. Bernard has said well that for a long time God has desired to spread all his graces through Mary. But it seems that God has desired to manifest this much more clearly in our own time. Today we see clearly that all the good that is accomplished in the Church is due to devotion to Mary; it is due to her protection and to her powerful intercession. We are permitted to say that today the reign of Mary is more manifest.

CHAPTER FIVE

First Means To Be Used For The Salvation Of Souls: The Missions

The question of how to work for the salvation of souls in our missions cannot be given full treatment in this chapter. We will need experience in order to be able to determine in a more precise way how missionaries should act in order to attain the best results. That is why our (Provisional) Rule will express merely in a general way the principles regarding our exterior conduct. We know that religious societies have written their rules only after long years of experience, as in the case of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. As for ourselves, we need provisional rules immediately. Other societies had not need of writing a Rule during the lifetime of their founders because those founders could visit the houses of their particular societies and inspire the members by their own words, or by others delegated to make such visitations. Without a written rule, the unity of spirit could thus be maintained. But our houses in the missions are at great distances from the superior, as well as from one another. In order to have uniformity, and particularly unity of spirit, it is necessary for us to have Rules from the very beginning. However, with respect to exterior behavior, experience will teach us what is necessary for perfecting and changing those Rules.

1. The Missions

Article I

The Missions are the most efficacious way to obtain the results which were described in the preceding chapter. Missions consist in a succession of preachings, instructions, catechesis and other exercises of devotion that are more or less prolonged according to needs and circumstances, but always sufficiently long so that they may produce solid effects of grace and secure perseverance.

That course of exercises which constitute the “mission” can always be used in uncivilized countries where it is difficult to gather great multitudes, especially at the outset. Zeal must then have recourse to other means to attract those poor souls and bring them to God.

Article II

We will not undertake missions without having received permission from the Bishop, or from the one who takes his place in the country where we happen to be, nor without the consent of the pastors of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

If the ecclesiastical authorities do not want us to give a mission in the places which are under their jurisdiction, we must yield to their desire and look upon it as a disposition of divine Providence; we must humble ourselves before God because he has not judged us worthy to serve him for his glory.

Article III

The missions will be followed either by a whole community or by part of a community, or by the gathering of several members of various communities, according to the judgment of the Provincial Superior, after the Superior of the Mission has been consulted.

Article IV

They will arrange everything as to the place and the time, so that the people can conveniently come from the neighboring places and assist at the exercises.

In all the works of our ministry we must always seek the advantage of the people; we must consider ourselves as being their servants; that is why we should not seek our own ease or comfort at their expense. We are chosen for those people; they were not created for us. We would therefore be unfaithful to our duties if we were to deprive them of the spiritual blessings which our ministry could bring them.

Article V

Before beginning missions, the missionaries will agree on the principal things to be undertaken so as to produce the greatest amount of spiritual fruits to be expected and to give a solid foundation to the establishment of the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ in souls.

Article VI

At the opening of the Missions they will apply themselves to make them interesting so as to attract the people.

We must do our best to make the missions interesting from the very beginning, because usually first impressions decide the success of the mission. It is in virtue of the first good impression that people will be prompted to return, and by it also their prejudice against the missionaries and the mission will be removed.

Article VII

After the opening of the mission, the missionaries will begin by speaking of sin. A certain number of very strong and striking sermons will then be given on the great Truths, on the Last Ends, on the ugliness of sin and on the great evils that are caused by sin. The missionaries will explain what men owe to God and what men are in relation to God.

The second series of exercises will deal with the rewards that are promised for the future life; they will point out what consolations and encouragement will result from beginning with a salutary fear of God that in turn brings sinners to a beginning of hope and love.

The third series of exercises will present the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ. This will finally break the hearts of sinners which fear of God had already cast down, and which now will be expressed in a contrition that is full of love.

The fourth series of exercises is composed of instructions and vigorous sermons on the Commandments of God and of the Church, on making use of the Sacraments, on practicing devotion to our Lord, to the Blessed Virgin, to St. Joseph and to other saints.

The order of exercises given above for the various instructions and sermons is based on the ordinary process or progress of grace in a soul on its way to conversion, and it is the process that has been suggested by the Holy Council of Trent when it dealt with the question of justification. There is first the activity of fear. After that comes hope, and finally love is joined to hope.

If we wish to wrench men free from the bonds of vice, we must first present to them striking and frightening truths which will make a strong impression on their senses. The strong impression of these truths of faith, with the help of grace, will effectively oppose their evil passions. Only then shall we be able to make them realize the ugliness of sin. It is only in the light of faith that those souls can learn to have a lively horror towards an offense against God. We must show them the harm they are doing to themselves, and how great is the insult to God when a human being freely commits a grievous sin, after explaining how much we owe to God and what we are in relation to God.

Having inspired them with fear and shown them the ugliness of sin, we must lead them to milder sentiments. For this purpose we shall try to make them appreciate the happiness that is produced for us in this life by the practice of virtue and especially how great will be our blessedness in the future life. In that way we shall encourage them. They will learn to entertain sentiments of hope which always contains a beginning of love.

That love will become more living and more ardent when we shall have shown them the immense love our God has manifested to us, especially in the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is this view which finally brings about the spiritual breakthrough of a soul already disgusted with vice and attracted by the charms of divine grace. Then no longer will souls touched by grace have any other desire but to know what they have to do to please their good Master. That is the time when we must foster those good dispositions; we must prevent their weakening; we must make use of a fervor which, as is usual at beginnings, is still very "sensible," helping them to acquire the habit of practicing virtue. This is the time when we must give them solid instruction, making them know God's laws, his commandments and the commandments of the Church.

Finally, in order to sustain them in their generous designs, we must urge them to make use of the means which divine mercy has put at our disposal. We must show them the value of the channels through which we can gain abundant spiritual life and the means of attaining holiness. These channels and means are first of all the Sacraments; these give simultaneously light, love and strength. Besides this there is, of course, the fundamental devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ, and connected with that there are the devotions to Mary, to St. Joseph and to other saints. We must make them realize that those saints give us an excellent example (for our fundamental devotion to our Lord). Likewise they are powerful intercessors with respect to our Savior, from whom they received great graces and were enabled to become more Christ-like.

Article VIII

We shall not neglect to teach Catechism to the children. This we shall do as often during the week as is necessary to instruct them thoroughly regarding the principal truths of our holy Religion. We shall invite adults to assist at those instructions. We shall teach Catechism in a most simple manner and in a way that is best suited to make the children understand the particular trust we present to them. We shall use every means at our disposal to attract them to those truths and to make them become interested in them. We shall arouse their spirit of emulation to make them study well and learn thoroughly, avoiding everything however that might make them yield to vanity. It would be well to urge devout and zealous persons to instruct children who have a limited understanding and who are unable to read, so that these children will be able to receive instructions given by the missionaries.

Advantages of catechetical instruction. First, its importance: It is the means to save a whole country. You are winning over a young generation which in ten years will be the dominant generation, will set the tone, make the laws, and reform the country. It will give birth to a new generation which it will raise according to the same principles which you will have engraved in it through your catechetical instruction. Preach only to older people. By preaching to children you perhaps may bring about some conversions, but the good results will not be as effective as teaching catechism to the youngsters.

Secondly, it is easier to do good to children. They are fresh souls; they readily believe; they do not yet have deeply rooted prejudices; they have not yet offered much opposition to graces as have the older people.

That does not mean, however, that doing good to children does not have any difficulties. There are two difficulties in our way: First of all, children find it difficult to understand the truths we propose to them because their intelligence has not yet been sufficiently developed. Secondly, there is their lightheadedness due to their young age. To meet the first difficulty we shall take care to clarify the catechism to bring it to their low level of understanding. We must avoid abstract expressions and metaphysical terms. We must use examples taken from things the children know and from the habits with which the children are familiar.

We must be orderly in our instructions; but it is not always necessary to explain in detail to them what order we are following in our instruction. The catechist must have a thorough grasp of the matter he is teaching. He must be a master in that subject and must know how to express his teaching in the manner which makes it understandable to all the children in his audience. In order to overcome the second difficulty we must strive to make the catechism interesting. This in turn requires variations in the exercises, chant, instruction, history etc. Then we must study the character and the tastes of the children so that we may win their confidence.

Because children are usually impressionable and docile to grace, we must avoid giving them only a dry instruction. On the contrary, we should make the instruction unctuous and strong so as to touch and arouse young hearts.

By rewards and encouragement we can arouse competition while avoiding praises that would incline them to vanity. There is a way of encouraging a child by telling him that he has done well, etc., without flattery that would make him believe that he has done something extraordinary.

We must be very gentle towards all. We must be serious, while always gentle, when we speak to the whole group; but it is especially when we speak to each one in particular, that we must show affection to the child and show him that we are interested in him; this will enable us to gain his goodwill. Also, when we question a child and the child does not answer properly, we must not act harshly. If there is something good in what he has answered, we must point out what was right in the answer and what happened to be incorrect. Then afterwards we must make the child express what he failed to say in the first answer. If the child has not said anything that was right, we must nevertheless encourage him in a general way and gently explain things to him. We must tell him that we hope the next time he will do better, or say something else which will make him see that we are interested and have respect for him. In general we must also avoid questioning children about things which we know they will be unable to know sufficiently to give the right answer, for this might discourage them.

Article IX

Every day (during a mission) a suitable time will be set aside to hear confessions. We shall hear confessions of men and women separately as much as that is possible.

This precaution is particularly useful in the colonies where we find depraved morals. We must take care to safeguard the reputation of the missionary and avoid anything that might lead to suspicion.

Article X

Towards the end of the mission (communion), we shall have a general mission. There will be one for the men alone, and another for the women alone. These missions will be prepared with the greatest care. We shall try to fill our hearers with fervor by several exercises which will deal with such matters. We shall make our celebrations of those days both solemn and impressive

It is in that final exercise that we shall gather and ensure the fruit of the retreat or mission, and that those who have followed it will receive the power to be faithful to their resolutions, etc.

Article XI

In the course of the mission we shall make use of several occasions for celebrating a feast and organizing a celebration which will be impressive and will interest the people, in order to make them become very interested and well disposed. If possible, we shall also organize a procession with the Blessed Sacrament, adding to it a sermon on that divine Sacrament. At the end, we shall try to plant a Cross of the mission, if that is possible, or we shall make use of some other very solemn ceremony.

With respect to the distribution of the sermons for the mission, the superior may do well to consult, as much as possible, the desire and the attraction of the missionaries for one or other instructions.

The purpose of such celebrations and solemnities is to leave the people with a permanent remembrance of the mission. Such impressions can be useful for a lifetime.

Article XII

During a mission destined for the Blacks, from time to time we may give instructions to the Whites. Those instructions should be particular for them and should be given to them alone.

Article XIII

We shall rarely give a whole mission to the Whites. Before undertaking such a mission, let us examine whether this would be hurtful to the Blacks.

The good that is produced among the Whites can often have an immense influence on the Blacks. For example (in the colonies), when a master is won (to the faith), it is easy to bring about the conversion of his slaves. If, on the contrary, the master is anti-religious, he frequently will not allow his slaves to come near us, nor let us go near his slaves. In our relations with the Whites, let us have the glory of God in mind and the well-being of the slaves before anything else. And if this advantage of the Blacks were to suffer from our work for the Whites, we should not engage in the latter.

2. Rules for the Missionaries

Note: We give less attention to the different articles because they concern a kind of ministry which is that of the Colonies, at least for the time being; and because the good Lord seems to call us particularly to uncivilized countries.

Article I

All those who are called to preach a mission will prepare for it by a retreat. The time for this exercise will be determined by the Superior according to the importance of the said mission. After the mission has been given, the Superior will prescribe another suitable time for a retreat during which the one who preached the mission will examine the faults

he may have committed during the mission in order to make up for it, if that is possible, and to avoid such faults in the future.

We readily see the usefulness to the missionary of such retreats to enable him to spread in the mission what he learned during his own spiritual exercises, and similarly it is profitable for himself and for others to make another retreat for the prevention of future faults.

Article II

The Superior of the Mission will choose those who will preach the mission and he will inform them in time so as to enable them to make proper preparation for the mission and the sermons which they will have to preach. He will take care also to distribute beforehand the other functions which missionaries will be called upon to exercise.

Article III

As much as possible, those who have to preach the mission should not have many confessions to hear or have to be occupied with other work which takes up much time or reflection, so that said preachers of the mission may be quietly recollected and be wholly occupied with their saintly functions.

Article IV

The works of the mission should not prevent the preachers of the missions from following the Rule and community life. The Superior will determine the time for rising and retiring, for the different parts of the Divine Office, for meditation, particular examen for recreations, for meals, during which there will be reading if that can be done.

Article V

Before the beginning of the mission, when the arrangement of things is pretty well known, and after that, on one day of every week, the Superior will gather the missionaries to discuss things with them regarding the mission. During those advisory meetings the rules expressed in the

Third Part concerning those matters will be carefully followed. We easily realize the benefits of such counsels and rules.

Article VI

The Superior will watch with great care over the spiritual interests of his missionaries, in order that they may preserve peace, humility, interior spirit (recollectedness). He will give advice full of gentleness and charity to those who need such help. He will also warn them about faults which can be committed during the mission. These admonitions must be given privately.

Article VII

The Superior will also take care of the health of the missionaries. He will not overburden them and will not postpone comforting them when they are tired. The missionaries should, in all simplicity, make known to their Superior their infirmities and the fatigues they happen to suffer. After that the missionaries will remain peacefully before God with respect to everything that might happen to them, without worrying any more about the matter.

The superior must take care of the health of the missionaries. He owes this to the missionaries who have wholly consecrated themselves to the community and who have renounced all their own interests. This is also an obligation for the good of the mission. For in order to serve the mission, missionaries must be able to offer the service of their bodies: their mouth to speak, their lungs to continue their apostolic labors, their feet to run after the wandering sheep, their hands to administer the Sacraments and to celebrate the awesome Holy Sacrifice. There is an obligation also with respect to the Holy Spirit, of whom those bodies are the temples and the instruments. Hence their bodies must be respected, must be taken care of and must be given the necessary remedies when they are ill. Nevertheless, there should not be too meticulous a care, no excessive attention bordering on affectation and simulation; what is required is a reasonable and prudent care of the body.

The missionary must inform the superior about all the infirmities and fatigues which afflict him, but we are speaking here of serious ills. It is not necessary to go and tell the superior that we have a slight indisposition which is

transitory. If the missionary is constantly worrying about the care of his health, disturbed by the most insignificant discomfort, and always looking for remedies and for a more refined food, this would be equivalent to a lack of courage; it would be unworthy of a Christian who must lead a supernatural life. His eyes must look upwards. He must forget his ease to follow Jesus Christ, his divine Model! This over-solicitude is also so much more unworthy of a priest who represents our Lord.

Another defect, which seems more excusable, is to be troubled and anxious because we have to make use of some relief, some particular medicine, or some particular diet. Some imagine that they would thereby become lax and yield to sensuality. No doubt, there is some good in that particular fear, but mixed with it there is also some self-love, some rigidity. What then ought we do? As soon as we notice some ill that seems serious, let us, in all simplicity and openness, make it known to the superior and describe to him what ails us, without exaggerating or minimizing things. After that, let us entrust ourselves wholly and peacefully to our superior, or to the one who is in charge of the sick, with respect to the medicines and the precautions that are required. And let us commit ourselves to our Lord with respect to the efficaciousness of the remedies. Let us do everything the superior or his representative asks of us; after that let us not worry about anything that might happen.

When we act that way we shall draw benefit from those maladies for our spiritual progress, as we shall be pleasing to God. If, on the contrary, we let ourselves become troubled – whether this comes from an exaggerated care of health, or, on the contrary, because we foolishly fear to yield to sensuality and to be distinguished in the community because of the particular care given us – we are then failing to draw from our illness the (spiritual) benefit God had in view. In reality, we might then commit faults which God wants us to avoid.

So let us calmly submit in all simplicity to all that. These are the dispositions which are suitable for missionaries whom God tests by means of some illness or infirmity.

CHAPTER SIX

Second Means for Saving Souls. Diverse Forms of Ministry

The Stations

Article I

The “Stations” are temporary residences in a particular county (canton) where poor people are instructed in our holy Religion by regular catechetical courses for children and by courses followed by older persons.

This kind of ministry can be used in uncivilized countries for the purpose of spreading the faith as well as in the colonies to help them keep the faith, and strengthen the faith of Christians.

Article II

In our instructions we shall aim at: first, teaching them the truths of Religion, giving the necessary explanation of them in a way that fits their particular level. Secondly, teaching them the rules for leading a morally good life and conducting themselves as is proper to Christians. Thirdly, explaining the Sacraments to them in all the necessary details, trying to make them approach the Sacraments frequently and prepare properly for their reception. Those instructions should not be a dry kind of teaching; they must be made very interesting and must be given with great unction, so that the hearers will love the truths that are presented to them.

We must begin with establishing the dogma, first because it is the foundation of religion. Besides that, revealed doctrines have to be learned from others. On the contrary, ethics, at least with respect to its principal precepts, is engraved deeply in our hearts and it is easily known by those who are well disposed.

After that, we shall explain the rules of morality, doing it in a practical way, as was done by St. Paul, as we know from his epistles. We must carefully apply them to every state of life, every condition and age, to young people and old people, to masters and slaves, etc. After that we must explain the Sacraments

to them, urging them to receive them frequently, after proper preparation for their reception. In them they will find light, love and strength.

In order to be successful, with the help of grace, in making those truths penetrate into their hearts, we must avoid presenting them in a dry manner as is done in treatises of theology. We must present them in a clear way, bringing them to the level of everyone and using comparisons and images suggested by the things with which they are well acquainted. Our speech should be unctuous. This sort of speech penetrates, insinuates itself and spreads in souls as oil does in the body. To achieve this the teacher or preacher must himself be a man of living faith and ardent charity, which animated the Apostles and apostolic men. There is the source of properly teaching and influencing others in a spiritual way in contrast with merely impressing the imagination and playing on the sensibility of the hearers.

Article III

Besides regular instructions, from time to time we shall give vigorous sermons to stir up the people, to make sinners repent, and to strengthen the just.

Here also let us remember that if we wish to produce those spiritual benefits, purely natural efforts will be inadequate for that purpose. Grace alone can produce them, although it is in line with God's plan that we make use of our faculties and natural talents to proclaim God's word. He himself will deign to make use of those "natural" instruments to procure his glory, if we are humble and faithful.

Article IV

Catechetical instructions will be given somewhat as they are given during missions. We shall ask of the children who are able to read to learn the lessons of the Catechism by heart. We shall use all possible means to animate our zeal for instructing also those who are illiterate and coarse in their habits. We shall try to gain the affection of those children, to discover their defects, what is going on in their hearts, to stop the development of their budding vices, and finally to put them in the state of grace and prompt them to live more and more in a Christian way.

What is the advantage of making the children know even the text of the Catechism? First, it helps them to understand the explanations we give them; secondly, this will imprint those fundamental truths of religion into their minds for the rest of their lives. We must make use of all the means which our zeal may suggest to instruct also those who are totally ignorant and uncouth. It might be possible to make use of those who are our best catechetical teachers so that the language that is used by them will be best understood by such children. We must show that we truly love those children without using saccharine words. It is especially by our charitable actions towards them and by our kind conduct that we shall win their interest and their affection.

Article V

During the time when the missionaries are occupied in giving instructions to those people, they will also exercise all the functions of the sacred ministry, hearing confessions, directing souls, visiting the sick, administering the Sacraments, however, never doing anything that is contrary to what they owe to the pastors.

Article VI

In order better to ensure the success of the exercises in their Station, the missionaries, if circumstances permit, will give a retreat; they will choose the time for this that is most favorable for ensuring its spiritual success.

Article VII

When missionaries are in a Station for a length of time there will be always at least two together; they will live together in community. Each one, however, could take a particular section of the county (canton) in order to exercise their functions there. They should never be separated from one another for more than two whole days, the night included; they will be together during the day when their functions permit it.

There is danger in being alone, especially when individuals are wanting in experience and are young. We say “including the night”; this means two days and one night.

Article VIII

When they have been in a particular quarter for a sufficient time for the instruction of the people, and after things have been put in good condition, they will inform their superior about it. They will make known to him the success of their ministry and will be ready to withdraw as soon as orders are received from the authorities.

We should not become attached to places or to persons, nor listen to the pretext that we can do so much good in that particular place. Let us have only one thing in view: God's glory; and let us be ruled and guided by obedience

Article IX

During the time that the missionaries are thus working in Stations and are separated from the community, they will advise one another with great charity concerning the faults and imperfections which have entered into their behavior and about everything that might in the least lead them to laxity.

That mutual admonition will prove very useful for themselves and for the good of souls when it is done with simplicity and charity. Such admonitions must not be given during a gathering, but privately.

Preachings, Retreats, Lenten and Advent Exercises, etc.

Article I

Another way of exercising the ministry is that of living in community, and from there, in virtue of the order of the superior, going to preach and catechize in the place of the community's residence, and in the neighborhood. In this case, that preaching and teaching and other ministry will be exercised only in passing; and the missionaries will immediately return to the community residence.

During that time the missionaries will follow the community life as much as possible. This kind of ministry, of which we speak here, in no way applies to uncivilized countries, at least with respect to the celebrations of Advent, Lent, etc.

Article II

In the choice of the places where the missionaries will live, the communities will not choose those that best suit their own well-being and comfort, but they will seek the spiritual good of the poor souls to whom they are sent. As much as possible they will choose a place which can become a center of a large population and in which they will be able to find easily the help they need for their ministry.

Let us always remember that souls were not created for us, but we were made for them; we are sent to service them. Nevertheless, it would be imprudent for us to establish ourselves in an unhealthy place, in a place which has a climate that would cause serious illness to the missionaries.

Article III

The missionaries in each community will direct and hear the confessions of the persons who live there or in the neighborhood of the residence of the missionaries. For those persons they will exercise all the ministries of the apostolic life, without in any way interfering with what the local pastors have a right to. They will determine the times and the places for confessions according to the best opportunities of the particular places.

The missionaries who labor with genuine apostolic zeal are usually very successful and win the esteem of the people concerned. That esteem, if we are not careful, might do us harm as well as the pastors of the locality. It might harm us by making us yield to feelings of vanity; it might harm other priests who have care of souls, by being the occasion for these men becoming less esteemed and neglected by their parishioners. To prevent those inconveniences, or remedy them, we must show ourselves always submissive and kind towards these pastors; we must hide their faults if we happen to hear of them. Nevertheless, we should not associate frequently with them if this were to be a source of scandal.

Article IV

Missionaries will also be allowed to go out to preach retreats, for exercises during Advent and Lent, according to the orders of the superior. When preachings will take much time, we must try to send

our men together, as much as possible, two or more; and then they will follow the rules prescribed for the Stations.

As much as possible we shall not send out a missionary by himself, except for a very short time. Nevertheless, if it were necessary for the sake of a great spiritual good that he should be absent for a longer time, this could be done, but then the proper man should be chosen.

Article V

Finally, the missionaries of each community will commit themselves to exercise other ministries to which they might be called by their superiors, by the Bishops, or by the Apostolic Prefects, or at the request of pastors.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Third Means of Saving Souls: Ministry for the Benefit of Priests

Article I

We shall consider the sanctification of priests as one of the most important parts of our ministry. From it depends the salvation of a countless number of souls, and also the solidity and the preservation of the good which we can do among people.

A missionary who works only for the sanctification of lay people resembles a merchant who sells things only as a retail dealer. But the priest who works for the sanctification of priests resembles a wholesale dealer. The missionary is unable to serve the needs of all the inhabitants of a country. When he runs from one place to another, and when he leaves one place in which he has made the people well disposed, who will maintain that good disposition if not a good priest? The good priests whom the missionary will leave after him will depend, therefore, on the solidity of the good which the missionary has been able to do; it will depend also on those good priests, in virtue of the zeal that will inspire them and their works. These priests must not be satisfied with merely maintaining the good, but they should develop that good and thus procure the salvation of a multitude of souls.

Article II

We shall have the greatest respect and the greatest affection for the priests of those parishes, an affection similar to that we owe to our superiors, and which is a grace received from our Lord Jesus Christ.

No doubt, there is something very beautiful in the apostolic life. No doubt, also, it might happen that missionaries are holier than the pastors of a certain country. But it is also certain that the holier the missionary is, the more humble he also will be. Also, as missionaries we are inferior to the hierarchy, inferior to the priests of the place who have the office of pastors. These missionaries must consider them as their superiors and must treat them as such.

Article III

We will take care to act towards them in that spirit in all our relations with them. We shall always give them first place. We shall speak and act with them, manifesting that respect, and this we shall do even towards those whose conduct might be reprehensible, unless this could cause scandal.

In order to observe this article faithfully, let the young missionaries, who have just left the novitiate full of fiery zeal, be watchful over themselves so as not to be presumptuous. Let those who have already served the Church well be on their guard against vain self-complacency.

Article IV

When said priests ask for our services, we shall always be ready to oblige them. We shall not manifest bad humor or displeasure in their regard, when they show bad manners or importune us; nor should we show indifference towards those who are ignorant and who do not lead holy lives in conformity with the dignity of their state of life; nor will we in any way manifest a feeling towards them that might hurt them, etc., whatever might be the defect we notice in them. On the contrary, let us always be modest in their presence and very humble, charitable, affable, and all this without affectation and with simplicity.

Lack of consideration and rudeness deeply hurt people of the world. We are no longer of the world; we must be dead to the world. Let us have our eyes fixed on our divine Model. Let us see and consider the way he looked upon our coarseness in his regard, and these faults of ours were a thousand times worse than those which we could suffer. Let us bear everything without affectation. Let us be simple. When we say things or do things towards them which are insincere, most often we shall wound them, for they will realize that we are condemning them. Let us not put on airs of humility and gentleness. Instead, let us do our best to be humble instead of merely seeming to be humble. Let us speak with simplicity, let us speak with everyone in the language that is suitable and that fits him. In order to succeed in that way of acting which is both humble and simple, let us not be too preoccupied in advance with respect to those virtues which are to be practiced in the presence of people who might have offended us.

Rather let us desire to practice those virtues, and do everything in union with our Lord, abandoning ourselves to him, that he may show us how to practice those virtues.

Article V

We shall exercise great charity and still greater kindness towards priests who have harmed us. Let us never speak about them even among ourselves. We will never manifest that we are displeased with them nor complain about them with anyone. But we shall do everything possible to love them with an interior and sincere cordiality. We shall render them all the services we can. If, nevertheless, they do damage to our ministry, we shall do our best to destroy the evil results they have caused. But we shall do these things always with the greatest charity and in the way that is least offensive to them, taking the necessary precautions so as to do them no harm, nor affect their reputation.

Good missionaries will be the object of jealousy, hatred, even of open persecutions on the part of bad priests, because of the good conduct of the former are a living reproach to such priests, and these may seek to have those missionaries removed from the country. On such occasions, may the missionaries keep their eyes fixed on the gentleness of our Lord; let them recall his words: “to him who wants to take your mantle, let him have it and add to it also your tunic.” Let us remind ourselves that there are in us two men: the natural man and the man of grace, the minister of Jesus Christ.

As “natural” men, there is nothing we deserve except contempt, and injuries. We must in no way complain when we are despised, if we are harmed, even if we are ill-treated, we have deserved this as sinners. We must therefore bear all this without complaining. That is the way we must let go our “mantle.” As men of God, as ministers of Jesus Christ, we have sacrificed everything to him, everything that he had given us. We have renounced every personal interest so as to have henceforth only the interests of our Master, no other good pleasure than his, no other sentiments than those of his adorable Heart, no other conduct than his own. And it is in that capacity and for that reason that we should not be satisfied with not complaining, but we must suffer all bad treatment after the example of our Lord. Besides that, we must also do all the good we can to those who make us suffer. That is the way we shall add the gift of our tunic to that of our mantle. In acting thus we shall keep in mind the following.

First, that we need to expiate our sins; we need to humble ourselves before God. Secondly, we must try to become more like our Lord himself. Thirdly, we must do it in order to draw down graces upon those priests and upon the poor souls that are committed to their care and who we desire to bring to God.

Nevertheless, when the interests of Religion demand that we offer opposition to the evil effects resulting from the bad conduct of such priests, we must oppose them. But in doing this we must be watchful over ourselves so as to avoid succumbing to illusion. For we might imagine that we are defending the rights of the ministry, when in reality we are defending our own person which is hurt. To avoid that illusion as much as possible, we must enter into ourselves and examine the sentiments that are truly guiding us. When we are calm, if we are not bitter against those who are doing us harm, if we feel disposed to wish and do good to them, then, generally, we are permitted to assume that we mean well; but even then we must be on our guard.

On the contrary, when we are troubled, agitated, bitter, angry, we are justified in concluding that we are self-seeking and are not seeking the glory of God; or that, at least much imperfection is mingled with our intention. We thus may be very unlike Christ who was so gentle and mild, and this we must never leave out of consideration.

Neither is it enough to have a pure intention. The good we have in view prompts us to use means to prevent the attacks of others which do harm to our ministry. We must take great precautions in the choice and the use of those means. We must avoid wounding those persons as much as that is possible; we must do only that which is demanded by the good to be obtained. In general, it is necessary for us to keep ourselves on the defensive. When we are obliged to defend ourselves, let us try to remain calm, peaceful, abandoning ourselves to God and leaving to him the defense of our reputation. In this let us imitate the conduct of the saints, for instance, of St. Vincent de Paul, who was accused of having stolen; or of St. Francis de Sales, for we must remember that we have been sent like sheep among wolves. Sheep do not attack. We must also pray for those (who attack us) and do for those persons all the good we can. We must avoid making them feel that we are opposing good with evil; that would be a very imperfect sort of charity. We must wish and do all the good that is possible; we must in all sincerity and simplicity practice that virtue and not seek to make them know that we practice that virtue.

Even among ourselves, let us not talk about those who have done us harm. Some will object: this is not a case of doing harm to anyone's reputation, for we are speaking about things known by all. This is a vain pretext! And such talk is harmful to the one against whom it is directed and, especially, is it harmful to yourself when you speak that way. How is that? Because of the bitterness and the animosity which are aroused in your own heart by that kind of talk.

Article VI

They will do their best by their words and their example to inspire the faithful with very great docility with respect to the priests, especially towards their pastors. They will also speak favorably about them and will never manifest to the faithful any dislike they have of those whose life is not in conformity with the holiness which their state of life requires. They will bring out the good qualities of those who are good and will excuse as much as possible those who are wicked, unless scandal might result from it.

When we are unable to excuse this or that action, or a particular conduct, let us recall other actions or qualities that are praiseworthy with respect to such priests.

Article VII

They will have frequent relations with those priests, but let these be spiritual visits. Let them nevertheless, make those visits only when it is necessary to manifest their respect and submission in their regard, and to keep up friendly relations with them. We shall try rather to win them and draw them to ourselves to do good to them, without doing harm to ourselves. When we visit them, let us never take part in their games, not in their frivolous amusements. Let us, however, avoid expressing our disapprobation to them. We shall not take meals at their place without necessity, and then we shall observe what is prescribed regarding the matter of food.

In our relations with them let us practice charity, affability and kind attention. Let us avoid familiarity, for this would endanger the spirit that is proper to our state of life.

With respect to games, let us excuse ourselves under the pretext that we are unable to play, which happens to be a true fact. We can refer to our rules and show in a few words the inconveniences if the priests of our communities indulged in those kinds of games. We should not condemn such games for secular priests if there is nothing evil in them. In order to win them we must avoid everything that might ruffle them, so as to find access to their hearts. Therefore, gentleness, affability, etc., are always in order.

However, let us keep always this great rule in mind with respect to our behavior with the priests: we must never appear to be working for the good of their souls. No doubt, we must desire that good and be ready to do everything to obtain this for them, but generally, it must never look as if we were seeking to take a hand in that. This would only ruffle them and it would be wholly impossible for us to do that good (see the explanation of Article VIII).

Article VIII

We will render them all possible services and deal with them with goodness and kindness, always avoiding affectation. We must never let an occasion pass by to grant their requests, especially when there is question of helping them in saintly functions. However, this should not be done at the expense of our Rule and the spirit of piety.

Article IX

We shall invite them to make retreats in our houses, even every year if that is possible. They will be received with kind attention when they come for such retreats. We shall give them the kind of food we have for the community, only adding something for them. We shall not ask them to pay anything for that. If, however, they want to give us some donation, we shall accept it lest we cause them pain. When possible we shall invite them to come together to hear conferences and assist at the usual exercises; all this as circumstances will suggest. If there are so few that it is impossible to give them those “community” exercises, the Superior will appoint someone to give them suitable matter for meditation and readings, and to give them the help they may want during the retreat.

We shall invite them to make a retreat in our houses, but without giving them the impression that we want to force them. We shall first invite them to pay us a visit and once we have won their confidence, we can then suggest to them: “why not make a retreat with us?” ... We shall not ask them to pay anything for food and lodging. There are priests who would not come to follow a retreat if they had to pay for board and lodging (because they are poor). We must remove that sort of obstacle. Let us not worry about the costs if there are many coming for the retreat. The good Lord will provide! If they want to make a donation, let us accept it, but as an alms.

Article X

We shall do our best to make use of every occasion to be useful to their souls, always avoiding affectation, so as not to cause them pain. We shall receive them with kind attention when they arrive. We shall ask them advice with respect to their ministry and speak about other things of interest. We shall sustain them, console them, encourage them in their sufferings and difficulties, and exercise all the functions of our ministry which a truly spiritual charity will suggest.

Article XI

When we undertake to preach a mission, or conduct some other exercises in their parishes, we must do it only with their consent, which will be asked for in all humility, after having received the proper permission from the ecclesiastical authorities of the place to exercise the functions of our ministry. During the whole time we are residing in a parish for the exercise of those functions, we must show particular respect to the pastor as to our superior.

Article XII

When in spite of orders received and in spite of the ordinary means we have used to obtain his consent, the pastor refuses to receive us, we shall advise the ecclesiastical authorities who had given us the order to give the mission in the parish; we shall not do anything further unless the same authority give us a formal order. It will belong to the superior of the community and the superior of the Province to examine the case before

God, and to decide what ought to be done in such difficult circumstances so as to avoid any harm that might result for the good of souls (to express it more plainly: when the particular pastor, in spite of the orders received from the Bishop and the charitable means used to get his consent, still refuses to receive us, let us advise the Bishop and act only in accord with the Bishop's wishes).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Fourth Means that Can Be Used By the Congregation to Save Souls: A Native Clergy

Article I

When the missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary are working in a country, they must do their best establish a native clergy.

Importance of forming a native clergy: first, it will never be possible for Europe to give a sufficient number of priests to pagan countries. Secondly, foreign priests will always meet with many obstacles on account of the climate, customs, morals, prejudices, etc., which are not true obstacles for the natives. Thirdly, experience has shown the necessity of forming a native clergy. Let us merely consider Japan, Paraguay and other missions. If a native clergy had been formed there, no doubt those countries would not be in the horrible condition in which we find them. Fourthly, there is the example of the Apostles and the apostolic men who have planted the faith in our countries. Everywhere they have formed a native clergy. Fifthly, there is the intention so often expressed by the Holy See in its Rescripts given at various times, and the recent Exhortation sent to the heads of Missions.

[Note: Father Superior, this year, did not explain the rest of this Chapter (1846); I think it was because means and rules had not yet been sufficiently prepared for by experience, especially regarding the way of forming a native clergy, to which the greatest importance is attached. Note of Father Lannurien, novice].

Article II

For that purpose they will try to give suitable instruction to children who seem to have proper dispositions for the ecclesiastical state, although the missionaries themselves should not give the education in the humanities for that would be a loss of time for them, a precious time for missionaries. All their care for the children until they are ready for theological studies should have for its purpose to form their hearts for the development of clerical piety.

Article III

Before letting young men begin their theological studies, by that means or any other, we shall establish houses in which they will be formed in the sacerdotal spirit, and prepared for their sacred functions under the direction of some of our missionaries who are most fervent and most intelligent. That house of studies will be under the absolute authority of the Vicar or Prefect Apostolic.

Article IV

A Rule will be made for those houses of study, which will have for its purpose to produce and preserve in the missionaries who have the direction of the work, the spirit that should animate them.

Article V

After this Rule has been written, it will be submitted, if possible, to three missionaries who reside in the country in which the house will be established. These missionaries will be named by the superior of the Congregation, and they will give to the latter their particular observations in order that he might definitively determine what rules will have to be observed. After that, the Rule will also be shown to the ecclesiastical superior of the country where those young men will be formed, and the changes suggested by him will be incorporated in said Rule.

Article VI

No superior of a particular place will undertake the establishment of such a house, nor any other work of that kind, without, beforehand, informing first the superior of the Congregation and receiving his orders.

CHAPTER NINE

Some Rules of Conduct to Be Observed With Respect to Those We Have to Evangelize

The rules given in this chapter are for the purpose of obtaining uniformity of conduct for all the Missionaries for the Holy Heart of Mary, or at least to make all work in the same spirit, which is the spirit of the Gospel applied by those rules with respect to the relations they must have with those whom they have been called to evangelize. Now this spirit consists in sanctity, in truth, and in the perfection of virtues. First, it is necessary to cultivate an interior spirit which keeps us always united to God and which makes us always draw from him the lights we need in order to act according to his will. Secondly, that spirit must manifest itself by external actions if it is to produce fruits of salvation for souls. Therefore those actions must be supernatural, and for that reason a perfect self-renunciation is necessary so that we never listen to nature and never say or do anything to satisfy our (fallen) nature. Without that spirit we shall never act with the devotedness demanded by our great vocation to which divine Mercy has deigned to call us. So, union with our Lord Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of ourselves are the two great foundations on which the perfection of our apostolic state depends.

Article I

The source-principle of all our conduct in relation to the poor souls to whom we are sent will be a love, tender, strong and compassionate, and an ardent desire to procure their salvation and sanctify them. For that purpose we must have continual devotedness and lead a life of sacrifice, seeking no consolation nor rest until we have tried to give them those graces.

What is the end and purpose we have in view? The means we use will have to be proportionate to it. That end is the salvation of souls. That end is therefore identical with the end for which our Lord has come upon earth and for which he has suffered so much: to procure the glory of God in the salvation of souls. To attain that goal we must, as much as possible, become like Jesus, who came to save souls; we must enter into the dispositions of his adorable Heart. Now what were those holy dispositions of the Heart of Jesus with respect to the men he desired to save?

The first, which is the source of all the others, is a love, a charity which consumed him throughout his life until his death as a bleeding victim. This goes to show that the source and principle of all our conduct with respect to the poor souls which our Lord has sent us to save must be love, a charity that is perfect. This love must have all the qualities of Christ's love for us. That means it must be a love that is tender, strong and compassionate. It must be like the love of a father towards his children; that tenderness, which of necessity will manifest itself outwardly by our works, will win for us the hearts of those poor people whom we shall give to our Lord. It must be strong in the presence of all difficulties and sufferings, strong until death. It must be a love which is compassionate at the sight of the terrible wretchedness into which they are plunged.

The second disposition of the Heart of Jesus towards us, which is a consequence of the first, was his ardent desire to procure our salvation. This is the desire which must also animate us with respect to those poor souls, and must prompt us to seek every means to procure that good for them. If we are faithful, that second disposition leads us to the third which is a devotedness and a spirit of sacrifice that is continual. Here we have the whole life of Jesus under our eyes as the model of the life we must live, if we wish to work efficaciously for the salvation of souls.

If we come to terms with our (fallen) nature, if we do not once for all and by a continual sacrifice, refuse the satisfactions it constantly asks for, it will follow us everywhere, tiring us by its importunities. We will yield to it; it will make us lose our first fervor, and instead of working solely for the work of God, we shall deliver ourselves to amusements and fickleness.

How then will a missionary be able to draw souls to Christ? How will he be able to give benefits to them out of his own abundance as a good shepherd of souls must do, if he himself is without them? This goes to show that if we wish to be able to fulfill our apostolic obligations, we must be dead to and detached from all worldly affections. For if we remain attached to anything of that kind, we are then unable to preserve an apostolic spirit at all times; the heart is not free and the soul is encumbered by those affections which are foreign to God. These are like so many chains that prevent us from working for God's glory.

If a missionary wishes to work usefully, he must have a soul that is free, pure and peaceful. Nothing should weaken his heart or arrest his supernatural action. All his passions should be subdued, and he should be moved and guided

interiorly in all his conduct by that spirit which is the soul and the source of all the virtues, through that supremely apostolic spirit which makes souls always equally strong and vigorous, while at the same time tempering their action by peace and gentleness.

Article II

Animated by that wholly heavenly love, the missionaries will not lose any occasion to do good to those souls not only in the spiritual order, but also in what is temporal, and this solely with the view of directing them Godwards and saving them.

At the start, that is, while approaching those souls for the first time, it is difficult to impart spiritual gifts to them immediately, for they do not yet know their value. We must then seek to do good to them in the temporal order. With respect to those people, our services will be purely natural benefits – but be based on faith and charity. It is by that means that we shall win their confidence and their affection, and in this we shall have in view the purpose of drawing them to God and saving them.

That is why, for the sake of attaining that end, we must look upon ourselves as benefactors for the good of their bodies as well as for the good of their souls. We must sacrifice ourselves in order to bring them consolation in all their wretchedness which we find to be horrible, both with respect to the soul and the body. We shall meet there a coarseness of mind and a corruption of morals which are liable to disgust any person who is not yet dead to himself nor yet accustomed to overcome himself. Among them we shall also find those who are most wretched of all; such are the slaves in the colonies and those found in uncivilized countries. And this is not something to be wondered at when we consider the state of degradation, of suffering and of debasement of the Blacks in our colonies; for these are deprived of all the satisfactions that are offered to other creatures. They have only the pleasures of satisfying the passions of the flesh. The condition of the wretched people in free countries is the same, sometimes it might even be worse. Regarding the unfortunate... perhaps they have not to suffer from the haughtiness of their master who looks upon them as upon dogs, nor at the sight of all the pleasures the master of slaves can enjoy in contrast with the slaves who live near him. Besides that, a general cause of corruption is the ignorance in which those poor people are plunged.

The missionary, however, when he is animated with the spirit of charity of our Lord, far from withdrawing from those men whose sight is so repugnant to nature, experiences an increase of zeal for the well-being of those unfortunate souls. For us the ministry for the benefit of those wretched people must be a true treat and pleasure, and this for three reasons: first, because we can find in them the object which our Congregation has immediately in view, which is that of going to give help to those who are most neglected (abandoned); secondly, that ministry which is so repugnant to our nature by that very fact renders our works of charity more holy and more meritorious; thirdly, such a ministry makes us resemble our Lord more, for during his lifetime he took such great care of bringing comfort in all the spiritual and physical ills that afflict human beings, and these comforts are still given to us in spite of our coarseness.

All our care, all our endeavor must therefore be directed to those unfortunate people; we must care for them and make use of great wisdom. We must try to find out how we can make ourselves pleasing to them and find an opening into their hearts. Everything in them, as it were, concerns the flesh; all their preoccupations, all their affections, have no other object than that which can serve their bodily needs. This then is what we must start with. We can give them some pleasant, sweet things according to their taste, without fearing that they may yield to some sensuality. We have no intention of making them sensual when we give them pleasant things. What we wish is to win their goodwill. Our generosity, our goodness, our tenderness will make a good impression on them and will inspire confidence in our words. When, after that, we present to these poor people the great promises of our holy Religion, its advantages, the peace, the joy which it brings to us even in this life, and the treasures and the ocean of delights reserved for us in the next life, they will be impressed and consoled. They will desire those goods and hope to obtain them. Finally, if we take care to draw down heavenly graces upon them through our prayers, our labors, our penitential actions, and especially by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we will gain them for Jesus Christ.

We must give them all the assistance and consolation that lie in our power, without examining too much whether they deserve it or not. This is a very common fault: to stop to consider too much whether those poor people deserve to receive our help. No doubt it is a good thing in our works of charity to prefer those who are better disposed for the reception of those benefits. But on the one hand, we must not esteem so highly what we are giving, nor should we insist on never giving anything to those who do not merit our beneficence.

On the other hand, let us remind ourselves that no one should be excluded from our charity. Those who are well disposed are so much the more worthy of our compassion by the fact of their wretchedness. Moreover, do we not have the obligation to draw them to Jesus Christ? And is it not through our charity that we will draw them to him?

Let us not neglect any opportunity to instruct those poor people. We must begin with doing good things for their bodies, since this is their principal interest. This is their principal thirst and we must satisfy that craving; otherwise we cannot expect to make an impression on them and win them. But once we have won their confidence, we must make them know the consoling truths of our Religion. After that we shall be able to approach them without fear. We shall then not have to take as many precautions when we begin to speak to them about religion, as is necessary in our own countries where people are so indifferent and surfeited concerning things. Those poor people will willingly listen to us. Hence let us not fail to use all occasions for speaking to them about those holy truths, to make these enter into their hearts. However, we must avoid speaking to them at great length, and in a language that is too high for their proper comprehension; let us talk for a short time and in a simple manner, descending to the level of the comprehension of all, and keeping in mind their present dispositions. We shall use every means to make them receive the Sacraments frequently; these are the sources of life, of strength, of constancy. There we must give them the means to overcome their passions and become inflamed with charity. We will make a most careful preparation for such talks and instructions.

Article III

The missionaries will do their best to treat those most unfortunate people in the world with very special and holy tenderness. They will show these poor people a holy goodness of predilection. They will give them all the help and consolation possible without being too much concerned about the question whether they deserve it or not. They will often visit them and hold conversations with them in their poor dwellings. They will use every occasion to teach them the holy truths and to make them spiritually better. They will make use of all the means they judge proper to prompt them to receive the Sacraments frequently, and help them in making good preparation for their reception. They will bring to them and enrich them as much as possible with all kinds of spiritual goods.

Article IV

The visitation of the sick will also be one of their greatest and most loving concerns. They will bring consolation to the sufferers; they will strengthen them and encourage them as much as they are able. They will render to the poorest all the services, even those that are most painful and most disgusting. This they will do with cordiality, with gaiety of heart and mind. They will do their best to give to the poor the consolations they need. For those who are mortally sick they will see to it that they can receive the last Sacraments and then will not postpone giving those Sacraments to them. They will give them the opportunity to go to confession and give them the other spiritual helps which those persons are able to receive during their illness.

Since the sick person is the suffering human being par excellence, they shall have the greatest solicitude towards such a person. The missionary will often pay visits to the sick, however difficult this may be. In those visits he must show the greatest loving attention to the sick and the most affectionate cordiality. He will approach the sick person with a pleasing and open countenance while avoiding fictitious gaiety, which is not in order when we approach suffering persons. He will try to console them, to strengthen them, to encourage them, for the time of illness is often the most painful time of life and it is a source of sadness and melancholy. After showing interest in the sick person and sympathy, he should try gradually to distract him gently and to make him concentrate less on his sufferings.

The sincere love which we must have for those poor sufferers must inspire our sentiments of tender compassion and these sentiments will then naturally express themselves externally; they will make us seek means to bring them consolation. We shall like to render them even the most painful and repugnant services, doing all those things always for a supernatural purpose. By that means we shall most often win their hearts and not only theirs, but also the hearts of those who surround the patient and who will witness those charitable works. After procuring comforts for their bodies, it will be easier for us to do good for their souls. We shall then make use of that occasion to give them spiritual consolations and dispose them to receive the Sacraments.

When the patients are suffering from a grave illness we shall do our utmost, if they are not yet baptized, to administer that Sacrament to them, trying

our best to give them the necessary instruction they need, or complementing the instruction they have already received. For gravely sick persons we should not demand too much knowledge before administering Baptism to them, for we thereby risk letting them die without the Sacrament. If they are already baptized, we shall prepare them for the reception of the “last Sacraments.” In order that people may not die without these Sacraments, let us introduce the custom of going to confession at the beginning of their illness. Once that custom is established, they will have less fear of making use of the Sacrament, unlike those in our own countries who dread making use of the Sacraments and are even afraid of receiving a visit from the priest when they are ill, for they expect him to suggest the reception of Sacraments.

Article V

In general, they will have great compassion for those who are afflicted. They will bring to them all the comforts and consolations they can. They will consider it a serious fault to be negligent regarding giving help and consolation to those who suffer from poverty, sickness, or any other affliction.

We are the children and the servants of a God of mercy and charity. We must, after the example of the divine Savior, try to bring remedy to all sorts of evils; we must console the afflicted whatsoever the cause of their sufferings and afflictions may be.

Article VI

They will be the defenders, the support and intercessors of the weak and the little ones with respect to those who oppress them. It is in all those circumstances that the great charity and the power of our Lord Jesus Christ must develop in their souls. All their conduct, nevertheless, must be characterized by gentleness and prudence that are truly holy, which the divine Master will impart to them.

In the colonies and in uncivilized countries, we shall find great numbers who live under a master who treats them in a horrible way. It belongs to the missionary to defend the cause of the oppressed. They must defend the weak against those who oppress them. But the missionary should be on his guard against yielding to indignation or any other passion or violent emotion that is

aroused in him by the sight of such ill-treatment. Here again the missionary must practice self-control in order not to do anything that is imprudent and stir up the anger of others and at the same time bring no comfort to those whom he desires to help. Let him keep in mind what he has in view, namely, to alleviate the sufferings of those unfortunate persons. Therefore, let him make use of all the means that will enable him to attain that purpose and avoid anything that would prevent the good result of his efforts. Let him make use of authority, of commands, of supplications, of gentle petition, according to the condition and the dispositions of the oppressors.

If he has sufficient power or influence over their minds, let him speak energetically to the oppressors; let him upbraid them for their injustice; but let him do this in a dignified manner. If he does not have that authority and influence, it will be prudent very often to be silent about their injustice, but to act the part of a suppliant. They can, as much as possible, enter into the views of those men with respect to their subjects, agreeing that some of these commit faults, etc.; acting that way, with prudence and moderation, the missionaries will often obtain the favor they desire to receive. On the contrary, by acting bluntly and being animated by bitterness and indignation, very often they will only arouse the anger of the oppressors and make them even more cruel. In our effort to help those unfortunates we would then make the evil incurable.

Article VII

Their way of acting with those poor souls in all their relations with them will be simple, gentle, cordial; they will have towards them a charity and goodness that is truly paternal. They will show great interest in them in all circumstances. They will be always ready to listen to them in kindness, answering them in a charitable way, avoiding affectation, however. All this must be done in a spirit of ardent love towards our Lord Jesus Christ, who is represented in those poor souls.

Here we are dealing with human beings who are truly ignorant and who are deprived of all satisfactions. It is therefore impossible to reach them through reasoning. We must act upon their hearts and win them through their sentiments. This is the surest and the most efficacious way. Before everything else we must approach them with simplicity; we shall thereby give them an opening to us and a facility to approach us. After that we must add gentleness and goodness so as to win their hearts. This requires great renunciation, great

purity of heart and intention, and great freedom of spirit on the part of the missionary. We must become like them in all things, with the exception of their vices, so that they may come to us with confidence, just as our Lord became like us in all things except sin.

We must always have a fatherly attitude in our dealings with them, as well as a fatherly heart. Missionaries always must be ready to listen in a fatherly way to those who come to them; they should not reject nor neglect anyone. It will happen sometimes that boorish persons will come to importune us at any time with things of little importance, sometimes with useless things. At such times, if we are not well established in interior recollection which unites us to our Lord, we run the risk of yielding to impatience and acting with rudeness towards such persons. That is why we must be very watchful both over our interior attitude and our words; for a movement of impatience could spoil all the good which we would have done, or prevent the good we could have done. An unpleasant word is sometimes sufficient to alienate some persons forever. “But,” some will say, “such individuals make us lose time; they steal some of the moments which I could consecrate to study.” No doubt time is precious and it is important for us to make proper use of it. But it is still more important not to surrender to our ill-humor, and not to do anything that might be an obstacle to the good we are called to do for our neighbor. So let us arrange our time so that there will be a minimum of distractions from our work. But when people come to interrupt our work, let us be on our guard against ruffling anyone. We must act in union with our Lord and we must avoid acting always according to our own reasoning. We must learn how to bear and how to adjust ourselves to annoyances, derangements or contradictions.

When Christ’s life is not yet well formed in a missionary – or in any priest – a good number of faults enter into his conduct with respect to the souls whom he is called to direct. For instance, he will give more attention to persons who happen to have greater talents, or to those who have received greater graces, and he will be more obliging to such persons. When he sees them coming towards him, he will meet them with a kind smile. He will never measure the time he spends with them, however long their conversations may be; they will not make him tired nor annoyed in the least.

On the other hand, when an unpleasant person appears, one who is ignorant or simple, his face will become cloudy, wrinkles will appear on his forehead, his words will lose their softness and instead will be rude and cutting. Such behavior displeases our divine Master. It denotes great imperfection in such

a missionary. It is hard to believe that all his kind words and gentle behavior towards persons whom he likes are inspired by charity and not by his natural craving for self-satisfaction.

Charity is universal. And what else is the source of that opposition he feels towards the ignorant and boorish persons if not self-love, which he has not done his best to overcome? That difference of treating diverse persons produces bad effects on souls, even when simple and ignorant souls do not always fully recognize the faults that characterize such behavior. Such poor people nevertheless realize that there is something wrong in the missionary. Blacks are particularly sensitive. Because they see much goodness in the missionary, his way of treating the ignorant and uncouth gives them a bad impression and makes them yield to discouragement; spiritual harm is thus done to souls.

Let us, therefore, avoid partiality and favoritism. All souls must be dear to us, for all have been bought with the precious blood of Christ. Hence we should not neglect any souls whom the Lord has entrusted to our care. We must treat all souls with goodness, charity and gentleness, avoiding all affectation which makes a bad impression on souls. It leaves them cold and fosters poor sentiments towards us. True charity does not consist in words; it wells up from our heart and manifests itself outwardly in our actions and our whole behavior.

In order to make our conduct purer and more supernatural, we must try to see our Lord in souls. Otherwise we shall manifest haughtiness towards those poor people, which we sometimes behold in the behavior of Europeans. Let us be careful about that, and do our best not to commit such a fault.

Human respect might also make missionaries refrain from showing affection and cordiality towards those poor people in the presence of Europeans, as if this were equivalent to degrading themselves. It would also show that they are still weak and imperfect. If we desire to do good, if we wish to be true missionaries, we must, with the help of Christ's grace, rise above such an attitude, overcome the weakness of our nature in regard to vanity and human respect.

Article VIII

We will avoid as detestable faults all haughtiness, disdain, mockery, indifference, and other attitudes of that sort, of which we might become guilty in our relations with those who belong to the lowest rank in society, and with those who are usually most despised. We must, on the

contrary, show more heartfelt tenderness and compassion towards them. The more they are mistreated, the more we must treat them with goodness and attention.

Article IX

We will practice patience, gentleness and goodness towards those persons who are so coarse and have so many defects and vices. We must be full of a holy and tender compassion for them at the sign of their wretchedness and abasement. We must try to cure them of all the ills that affect them with gentleness and mildness. However, we shall never let them do what is wicked without reproving their conduct; we must even make use of severity when we realize that gentleness will not make them change their ways, but severity will.

Article X

In general, the missionaries must try to win the affection and confidence of those poor people by that wholly saintly charity. Nevertheless, they must be on their guard lest their charity and mildness degenerate into weakness. With respect to those who cannot be corrected through gentleness, it is necessary to make use of severity and even of rigor. But we may never manifest passion (anger). It is necessary that those whom we reprove with severity see that we love them and that love is the reason why we reprove them.

The conduct we should have in our relations with those poor people who are so coarse, have so many faults and even vices, must be full of gentleness, after the example of Christ's conduct when he was upon earth. These poor people will often act in a boorish way towards us, although there is no malice in their heart. With respect to their vices, we must be moved to compassion towards those who are infected by them, and our zeal for them must prompt us to help them to be animated by better dispositions. It is generally through mildness that we shall be able to cure them of those evils. The Blacks are very sensitive. We must therefore get hold of them through the heart and through sentiments of compassion, through having and showing true interest in them which manifests itself in our goodness. Their intelligence has not been sufficiently developed, nor is reasoning with them, ordinarily, a sufficient means

to win them. And if we reason with them, our reasoning must be most simple; but we must speak particularly to their hearts.

Let us, therefore, be on guard against allowing ourselves to be motivated by our natural reactions at the sight of those vices. In itself, of course, horror in the presence of moral evil is a good, even an excellent thing. But there are two things we must try to avoid in that respect: first, we must refrain from showing our aversion to vice to the persons themselves. Secondly, we must not let ourselves be troubled because of that quite natural aversion; after that, we must avoid acting with bitterness, impatience, brusqueness or rudeness. Such behavior on our part would ruffle those who commit those faults; we would frequently upset them and anger them; and far from arresting the evil, we might intensify it. We might put a barrier between those men and ourselves and then we would find it difficult to remove that obstacle.

That goes to show how important it is for the missionary to practice self-control. He must regulate his emotions; he must always be peacefully united to the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of peace and gentleness. We must learn how to be tolerant, patient, to remain calm and to take into consideration the dispositions of those persons. We must follow the guidance of grace, as it will inspire the way we should act.

However, if we must practice mildness, we may not let it degenerate into weakness. This could happen if we yielded to excessive fear of causing pain to a person. We should not let others do something that is wicked without disapproving of it. We must act as physicians of souls, and in that capacity we must make use of all the remedies we think proper to procure the health of the sick person. When we consider that it is necessary to use severity, we must avoid meeting an evil passion with another passion. We must do our best to make those with whom we are severe realize – at least when they have become calm – that we have nothing against them; on the contrary, we only act that way in virtue of what is dictated by our conscience; that we always love them with a spirit similar of that of St. Paul, which is nothing else but the spirit of our Lord himself. When recalling that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians with respect to the incestuous man whom the Corinthians tolerated among themselves, we note how vigorously he expressed himself: “I have judged...to deliver such a one to Satan for the death of the flesh”; but he adds: “that the spirit might be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” We see in all those words that it is the glory of our Lord and the interest of souls that he is seeking. What moves him is not his own interest, nor is he moved by passion.

Article XI

They will also avoid becoming too familiar with them. That is why our gentleness must always be full of seriousness and self-restraint. We should always have great hopes in their regard and great authority over their minds. This is absolutely necessary if we do not want our ministry for those coarse and uncivilized people to be unsuccessful. However, we must see to it that this authority and seriousness have a fraternal character, being totally in union with God, and that it never degenerates into haughtiness and affectation.

We will do our best to avoid familiarity. Why is that? Because if we let them become familiar with us as they are among themselves, they will lose the respect which they had for us and we shall no longer be able to do good for them. That is why, generally, priests have little influence over their families; that is why no one is a prophet in his own country; that is why we witness the conversion of so few of those people. Why do they not go to those priests who are so familiar with them? It is because they find it difficult to see God's representative in them. And if through their faith they honor the priestly character of their men, they do not see in them the image of the One whose place they occupy, and they have not the confidence in them they would have if the priests showed themselves to be truly worthy representatives of the Savior.

We should have a profound affection for those persons whose spiritual interests have been entrusted to us, and that genuine affection must show itself outwardly; but it must be an affection that is first of all supernatural. It must be a paternal affection, because priests take the place of Jesus Christ who is the true father of souls; also, those manifestations of affections should be truly fatherly in character and not a mere demonstration of ordinary natural friendship. If our affection is merely that of natural friendship, we are then in the mere natural order; it belongs to life in this world of our earthly fatherland, and no one is a prophet in his own country. If the marks of our affection are like those which are found in natural friendships, the impression we make on those persons will be merely of the natural order; their relations with us will be only those of ordinary human friendships. Since friendship presupposes a sort of equality, they will soon deal with us almost as they deal with their equals. As a result, it will be impossible to obtain the spiritual good of their souls. So let us always keep the respect which is due to our priestly character and to our position as representatives of our Lord. Also, let us not engage in a harmful familiarity, but

preserve a certain seriousness. Does that mean that we must have recourse to artificial means to gain that respect? Should we put on airs and speak in a haughty manner? Of course not!

What we need is a seriousness that is gentle and modest. We need to inspire the respect of souls for us and we need to have true authority over the members of our flock; but it must be like the respect which properly educated children have for their parents, a respect which does not prevent confidence in their parents and openness towards them, which always go together with respect. It must be like the authority of a good father over his children. They obey him while respecting and loving him. He does all that he desires with them, and at the same time they are free. They are satisfied and at ease with him, but at the same time full of very great respect for him and completely submissive to him.

Such must be the priest in relation to the souls he is called to direct. Regarding the way to take on and keep that seriousness and that attitude that is both gentle and serious, he should not plan such things in his imagination, determine certain ways of acting and talking, and the sort of countenance he should show or maintain. All this would be affectation and contention. Let him simply remain united to our Lord, trying to enter into Christ's sentiments towards those poor souls, and renounce sentiments which spring from the tendencies of the flesh. When the priest's interior life is properly regulated, his exterior behavior will be on the same kind.

Article XII

They will carefully study the character of those souls, examining also the inclinations of their hearts and their affections. This will enable them to know their vices and the sources from which these flow. It also will enable them to choose the proper means to acquire authority over their minds, to enter easily into their hearts and to win their confidence and affection.

In order to acquire that knowledge it is not necessary to make a philosophical and reasoned study of those souls. That sort of knowledge is acquired by peaceful observation, under the influence of grace. In order that the missionary be able to make a judgment about others, it is necessary for him, before everything else, to have a mastery over himself, to be recollected and at peace so as to receive divine lights. Among missionaries there probably would

have been very few who would have been able to study the characters of the peoples they had gone to evangelize, so as to be able afterwards to give a scientific description of the. But all missionaries are able to observe those with whom they come in contact. If they keep their mind and heart open to the lights and impressions of grace, they will be able to obtain a sufficient knowledge so as to adapt their own way of acting and speaking to the diverse needs, conditions and characters of those they are called upon to guide. This is a practical knowledge and it consists in using natural tact which is, however, perfected by grace. This enables them to penetrate into souls by a sort of immediate intuition, the result of grace, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit. This is what we admire in St. Paul and in other apostolic men who have done so much for the glory of God.

By accustoming ourselves to practice self-abnegation and to act supernaturally in all our conduct, we shall dispose ourselves to receive that help from the Holy Spirit for the good of souls, for whose salvation we are called to labor. Ordinarily those who are self-reliant and base themselves exclusively on their own natural endeavors in order to know souls, make frequent wrong judgments about the conditions of souls. They are stubborn in their prejudices and cling to their illusions. Moreover, it is not merely a matter of knowing souls. We must adapt our guidance to individual situations, to the almost countless varieties of character: some are sluggish; others dynamic, very active, weak, ardent, phlegmatic, etc. This is what few men are able to do. To be successful in that sort of thing, we must be dead to ourselves, and have a charity that makes apostles be all things to all men – flexible, supple, so as to win all men for Jesus Christ.

Article XIII

They will do their best to impart a holy energy to these poor souls, to raise their sentiments, and inspire them with thoughts of faith, thus making them give up the degraded thoughts which they frequently follow and that are the source of many vices. However, we shall avoid plunging them into opposite excesses, such as pride, free-thinking, or the spirit of insubordination.

When souls have only mean, base, ideas it is impossible for them, since they are not aware of their dignity, to have the energy to aim at the high goal and goodness to which they are called. It is necessary, therefore, to raise their thoughts, to strengthen their hearts and wills, and to show them what revealed

truth teaches about their origin and their ultimate end. We must teach them also that God has made all men equal, that he loves Blacks as well as Whites, the poor as well as the rich, that heaven is for all who accept God's plan for them, and that he will reward each one according to his merits. We must make them realize how kind God is towards men. We must arouse them by showing them how sublime their vocation is, and explain to them all the reasons based on faith to imitate the virtues of the God-Man.

Let us not go to the opposite extreme, however, making them proud by giving them exaggerated ideas about their equality, liberty, etc. Let us here follow the fundamentals taught us by the Gospel. There we shall find together the greatness and the duties of men. Let us make practical application of that teaching. St. Paul recommends that slaves (servants) be submissive to their masters, "in the Lord."

Politics and philanthropy, with all their teachings, will not change the hearts of those people. As experience and history show, it is religion alone that will be able to regenerate the nations, corrupted and degraded through ignorance and sin.

Article XIV

We shall do our best to establish between the rich and the poor, and between the Blacks and the Whites, the Christian charity which makes men consider themselves as brothers in Jesus Christ, in order to do away with the contempt and the indifference, on one side, and the jealousies and hatreds on the other; but great prudence must be used, lest everything will be lost.

We must always endeavor to establish the reign of fraternal charity among men. We must always take up the cause of unfortunate people. But in this we must act not only with zeal but with prudence. For instance, although it is our desire that all slaves should be freed, let us be on our guard against manifesting that desire when we are in the colonies. For this would make the masters opposed to us and to the slaves, and this would prevent us from helping those poor people, as we are able to do when we act with prudence.

PART TWO

On the Constitution or Spiritual State of the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary or the Spirit that should Animate it and Animate Its Holy Functions

CHAPTER ONE

On the Constitution, or the Spiritual State of the Congregation in General

We can compare a spiritual body to a physical body and the members of a spiritual body to the members of a physical body. Just as the members of a physical body are united among themselves, so must the members of a spiritual body be united, and the bond which must unite them is the Rule. I have said it before, and I repeat it, as long as we have that union among the members of our Congregation we will do much good, but if that union disappears, we then will have trouble.

Article I

Three things constitute the spiritual state of the Congregation: Community life, the Apostolate, and the Spirit of Religion which must be the soul of Community life and the Apostolate.

The apostolate is the end and purpose of the institution of our Congregation. Community life is the means by which we must strive for that end; but the spirit of religion is the source-principle which must give life and activity to it, the reason being that our end and goal is wholly supernatural and it is all for the glory of God.

Every Congregation has its different and specific spirit because of its particular end and goal. Thus, the spirit, the practices, the devotion itself of a Trappist should not resemble those of a Carthusian. One aims at imitating the penitential spirit of our Lord; the other is, above all, contemplative. The spirit of a Carthusian is not the spirit that should animate a missionary, and there are also differences in that respect between different missionary Congregations. Thus,

because there are many good things in the lives of Jesuits, that does not mean that we must always follow their particular ways or have the same spirit. They are occupied in taking care of those who belong to the higher class of people; we, on the contrary, work for those who belong to the lower classes. Hence we shall have a different spirit and different means. And so it is with the various Congregations. Although all must have the Spirit of our Lord, this spirit must be the soul of all their works.

Article II

Community life is a social life, a life of regularity and obedience to superiors. The apostolate consists in committing ourselves entirely to the salvation of souls without having a fixed post. The spirit of religion demands that we give up all personal interest and consecrate our whole being to the glory, to the good pleasure and to the interest of God alone.

Community life is the union of souls, not only that of bodies. It is the union of souls that strive for a common end and goal. In a religious community the end is supernatural. Hence community life must be wholly supernatural, God being the source-principle and the end of it. In all societies there must be a Rule. Consider what exists in the world. Even the smallest gatherings of men have their rules and regulations; otherwise everybody would be doing his own thing; there would be no more unity of intention, and therefore there would be no longer any society.

Besides that, there must also be a superior, first, so that the Rule will be observed; after that, in order that he might make use, according to the spirit and the end of those Rules, of that which each member has brought to the community, namely, his talents, his labor, his aptitude for one or other function. A society without a superior would be like a machine that has no regulator to start working or moving.

Article III

Although the spirit of religion, the stability and the spiritual good of the Congregation would make us desire to make the three customary vows, present circumstances make it necessary for us to deprive ourselves of so great a good, and not to impose those vows on anyone.

[NOTE: On March 21, 1846, Father Superior (Liebermann), explaining that Rule, declared that henceforth making the vows would be obligatory.]

Article IV

However, in order that the fervent and zealous missionaries be not deprived of that great happiness, each one will be allowed to make the vows on the following conditions. First, that it be done with the consent of and before the highest superior, if that can easily be done; or with the consent of the first superior of the Province in which the missionary who manifests such a desire resides; in that case the superior of the Congregation must be informed without delay. Superiors are asked not make it difficult for missionaries to have that consolation when they make a request for it, unless the superiors have a good reason for refusing it.

Secondly, the vows will not be allowed to be made except under the condition that the Superior General of the Congregation has the power to annul the vow when he judges it proper to do so.

Thirdly, those vows must be taken without the knowledge of the other missionaries, and the secret will be kept throughout the life of the missionary who made the vows.

Article V

To supplement those vows, every missionary, before leaving the novitiate, will make the act of consecration indicated in its proper place. No one will ever be sent to a mission without having made that consecration.

It is important to keep secrecy about those who have and those who have not taken the vows. Some missionaries might imagine that it is because they have not taken the vows that they are not looked upon favorably; or, on the contrary, some might dislike to see some who have vows get higher positions than other confreres; or that those without vows are less well treated than others. Nevertheless, the superior should show the same interest in those without vows as in those who have taken vows. The Superior General can delegate a missionary

to receive the vows of one of his confreres. When taking the vows of the Congregation one does not take the vow of obedience to the Rule; the Rule contains many counsels for the interior life; if we made the vow to obey those rules, this would be the occasion for many fears and troubles. When there is a difficulty regarding the interpretation of a rule, we should ask the superior to explain said rule.

In order to commit a sin against obedience to the superior, it is necessary that an explicit order have been given. And in order that the sin be grave, it must concern a matter that is grave. Thus, if the superior at table told a missionary: “eat that dessert under obedience,” and the missionary did not obey, he would not commit any sin because that was not a formal command, and the meaning of those words was: eat that in order to practice obedience perfectly.

[Note of Father Lannurien: Father Superior (General) urges all to make the vows. Circumstances, however, prevented him from making them obligatory from the beginning. But he hopes that they will become obligatory in the near future. He explained the immense advantages of vows for our perfection, for our perseverance, for the merit of our actions. He showed the danger attached to sending missionaries out who have not made vows. There is the danger of discouragement and of lukewarmness; there is the danger of loving wealth and an easy life in the colonies. Father Superior (Liebermann) encouraged timid ones; he urged them to give themselves wholly to God, to go to him without fear. The more fully we give ourselves to God the more he will overwhelm us with graces. If we commit some faults, he will take account of our weakness. Moreover, we must keep in mind that a vow does not make a sin grave when the matter is not grave. Since this is so, most of the time the grave faults we commit after having made vows would have been grave also if we had not made vows.

If is objected that the Sulpicians do not take vows; but their purpose does not demand it. It is their job to train priests for the secular clergy, and the Council of Trent demanded that seminaries should be administered by secular priests. Since the Sulpicians always live withdrawn from the world, they are not exposed to the dangers we meet. Until the institution of seminaries no Congregations existed without vows.]

We must note that the act of consecration which we make before being sent to the missions is not a simple resolution like those one makes during meditation, but it is a solemn promise made in the presence of God, the Blessed Virgin, the Saints, the Angels and our confreres. This then is a serious matter. Here we have a pact made under one condition: we promise God to be faithful to the promises we have made in the act of consecration, if we are accepted. Therefore, when the superior, in the name of the Most Holy Virgin, affirms that you have been received, you are obliged to fulfill these promises; and a rather serious reason is required to be freed from that obligation.

CHAPTER TWO

About Poverty

Article I

The Congregation in general, and each one of its members in particular, will practice poverty as perfectly as possible.

When we are told in the Formula of Consecration that we will practice poverty as it is expressed in the Rule, this must be understood regarding exterior and definite practices. This does not then deal with the spirit and the perfection of that virtue we are counselled to practice. Hence the words “as perfectly as possible” point to a counsel and not to a precept. The virtue of poverty consists in being totally detached in mind and heart from all that is rich, and in general from all the goods of this world. This virtue makes us choose poor furniture, and clothes also that are in accord with that spirit. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This statement of our Lord is already applicable to us in this world; for poverty, by detaching us and emptying our heart of worldly goods, opens it to heavenly goods, and in such a soul Jesus establishes the reign of grace, until he gives us a share in the riches of his glorious kingdom.

Let us practice poverty as perfectly as possible. It will be objected that there are communities which are considered to be respectable, but which enjoy certain comforts and manifest a certain affluence. This may be true, but it remains true that such an affluence is an obstacle to the perfect practice of poverty. Such communities might think that they should present that somewhat rich appearance because they are dealing with the rich. We, however, have no excuse, for our ministry is for the poorest of the poor. If we were covered with rags this would not keep those poor people away. On the contrary, if we were going around in rich clothes we might make poor people shy away from us. Again, let us not imitate what is done by other communities. It is the Gospel that is our guide. It would be dangerous for us to adopt the manners and customs of the rich. This might prompt us to court the rich, and this would be contrary to the end and purpose of our Congregation.

The advantages of poverty are immense. First, it is a source of happiness for us in this life. “Blessed are the poor”! That word “blessed” applies to our present life itself. The virtues which impose privation and sacrifices upon us bring at the same time joy and consolation. With respect to God, because

poverty detaches us from the goods of this world, it gives us a great freedom; it facilitates our going to God and uniting ourselves to him. With respect to our fellow men, it also gives us great liberty and enables those who come to us to have great confidence in us.

Poverty should be practiced by all the members of our Congregation and by every community in our missions with respect to furniture and food. But those who would be most guilty would be the superiors and those who have to take care of temporal matters. Moreover, if individual members fervently practice poverty, it will be easy for superiors to observe poverty in general in a community. If members do not want to observe it, then, of course, the superiors will find it difficult to make the community as a whole practice it.

Article II

Those who own earthly goods will not be sent to the missions until they have renounced at least the use of those goods. If they do not completely get rid of their possessions, they must at least so arrange things that they have no longer to concern themselves with them.

It belongs to the perfection of a missionary to have no possessions: “Go, sell what you have and give the money to the poor.” To be perfect we must abandon ourselves completely to our Lord; we must deliver ourselves to him with hands and feet bound. However, if a missionary, through weakness or for legitimate reasons, did not want to practice that complete renunciation, this would not be a sufficient reason for refusing to accept him as a member of our Congregation. In any case, if he retains the ownership of his property, he must, before his departure, so arrange things that he will no longer have to occupy himself with the care of his possessions. At least, there ought to be serious reasons for letting him still be occupied with the administration of his goods; for example, if the sudden needs of his family required it. But it is preferable to avoid such occupation.

A wealthy missionary is not permitted to keep the revenue of his property under the pretext that he will give it to the poor of the place to which he will be sent. This would be the occasion for serious disorders in communities. The wealthy missionary would give many alms, would attract the poor to himself, and his poor confreres who would be unable to make such gifts, would feel helpless in that matter. Moreover, a missionary who would habitually give

abundant alms might be inclined to self-love, and a self-loving missionary is a half-lost missionary. Pride always leads to great disorders. A missionary who would act that way, distributing many alms, might virtually claim to have a sort of superiority over the others, and his confreres might in turn yield to jealousy.

If a missionary wishes to donate his goods to charitable works, there are hundreds of ways to make such a donation in a more profitable way. For instance, let him give his property to the Congregation. This could then be used in the missions and put to better use than if the missionary made the distribution of those goods, and were exposed to yield to self-love. It could be objected that there are Congregations, for instance the Sulpicians, who enjoy the use of their revenues. We can answer to that that Sulpicians, who are called to educate and direct secular priests, have to lead a common life which should be a model for secular priests to follow. We have to deal only with poor Blacks, and if we live like rich people, they will not feel it so easy to have recourse to us. Also, the Sulpicians live withdrawn from the world and have little connection with it. It is probable that if a Sulpician indulged in extravagant expenditures, his superior would arrange things properly.

Article III

No one will have anything that belongs to him in his own right. But everything that is for the use of missionaries must be provided by the community to which he belongs, and all shall be wholly detached from the things that are given them for their use. They must be always ready to return them gladly as soon as the superior will judge it proper to use them differently.

As soon as the promises have been made, all the furniture of the one who made them will become the property of the community; the Congregation, in return, will leave for his use only that which he needs. No one should retain ownership of anything. However, everyone must have a cassock, a hat, shoes that fit him and which are for his personal use. There should be nothing ridiculous in the things put at his disposal. He must always be ready to give up even those things, if they are needed by someone else. He does not own them. Everyone should aim at being wholly detached from the things he uses. A missionary must be wholly free in that respect. Poverty has immense advantages: it gives a great élan to virtue and zeal. Our Lord was poor and this was fitting to his supreme dignity, which surpassed all the riches and all the grandeurs of the world. He

lived by what he received. He had not even that on which he could rest his head. All the Apostles were poor. That was their condition so that they might be called by Christ to the apostolate: “Leaving all things they followed him.”

We must take care to practice renunciation and poverty, even in small things. There are those who after they have made great sacrifices to enter a community, seek their ease and cling to trifles – to a cassock, to a particular hat, etc. Attachment to foolish things causes our hearts to shrink; we are no longer worthy of our vocation and it hinders our apostolic action.

Article IV

They will lovingly bear privations that come from poverty, even when they are the result of forgetfulness on the part of superiors. Nevertheless, in the latter case, if there might be bad consequences for the health of the missionaries or a serious inconvenience, they should make it known to the proper authorities.

It is necessary that the things which are at the disposal of the community be of low grade. Our poverty, however, should not ordinarily be that of the absolute indigence of the natives. It should be that of ordinary poor people. What is principally necessary is that each missionary should be indifferent to everything that the world considers beautiful, rich or precious. It could be that in certain places a too great external poverty might be harmful to our ministry; it would then have to be avoided. Our principal virtue is zeal for souls, zeal for their salvation. The special virtue of our vocation is not the practice of poverty. The practice of poverty must be for us a means to the life and the virtues of apostles. A missionary could, as an individual, have a special devotion to a practice of strict poverty, provided that it did not affect the order that existed in a community and was not contrary to the good pleasure of the superior. But the missionary should not judge or blame the superior if the latter does not permit him to practice severe poverty. The superior should not test the missionaries by making them suffer privations which are not essentially required by their vocation. But the more a missionary has the spirit of poverty, the better he will be disposed to exercise the functions of the apostolate. Nevertheless, one can be called to the missions and do good there without having that virtue to the degree that St. Francis of Assisi desired of the members of his Order.

When the community is deprived of certain things, the missionary must then exercise the virtue of poverty and bear that privation with a joyful heart. What is more difficult to bear and what we should accept is being without something through the forgetfulness of the superior. The missionary must then be glad that he is offered an occasion to practice poverty. However, if it is something that is necessary for his health, or if the privation would be the source of great inconvenience, the superior should be informed. After that he should forget all about it.

Article V

We shall profess great poverty regarding everything that is for the use of the Congregation and its members. We will avoid in all things that which comes somewhat close to luxury or superfluity.

We must not go around with torn clothes; our clothes should be clean and decent. But luxury must be avoided; for us that would be a great evil and it would certainly lead to our giving up work for the Blacks. A Parisian priest who had yielded to a craving for luxury and superfluities told me: "I can't go around dressed like the son of a shoemaker, because I am in constant contact with countesses, etc." That would have hampered his ministry. I replied that it is not by that sort of means that a priest must seek to be esteemed, but by virtue. Nevertheless that priest had a pretext because of his connections with people of the higher class. We, on the contrary, are destined for the Blacks and we have no such excuse. We must be neat, but let us remember that there is a neatness that is suitable to the rich and a neatness that is suitable to the poor. The latter consists in avoiding dirtiness and disorder and this should be sufficient for us.

At the same time, those who have to take care of material things, must remember that they should not make missionaries suffer severe privations, but that our poverty must be that of the lower class (of mediocrity) and it should not be a poverty of indigence. Our end and purpose is the salvation of souls and our reason for practicing poverty must be that the practice of it will serve as a surer means to attain that end; it is not principally in order to practice the virtue of mortification. On the other hand, since our (fallen) nature is inclined to pull us downwards, we must be on our guard. We must give the missionary the things that are necessary and nothing more; and those things must be of a poor quality. It is difficult to keep to the golden mean in this; we must tend rather toward poverty than to luxury and superfluity.

Article VI

Food will be ordinary, will be poor, and as close as possible to that of the poor whom our Lord has called us to serve. Nevertheless, our food should be wholesome and substantial.

Regarding the matter of food, we must keep in mind the principle expressed in the preceding article: it must be of low grade (mediocre). Father Le Vasseur, filled with the thought that we should as much as possible adapt our life to that of the people we had gone to evangelize, desired that we should eat exactly what they eat. He wanted us to eat rice instead of bread at dinnertime, and nothing more. I had great difficulty in dissuading him from doing that. Now that he has acquired experience, he has changed his mind about it. Because of the change of climate the missionary must take the precaution of eating substantial food. If he happens to be strong and wishes to practice mortification, he may do so with the permission of his superior; but it is impossible to lay down a general rule, which might require exemptions for half of those for whom the rule was made.

That is why in our Rule we have done our best to come as close as possible to the kind of food that is the fare of the poor; but this only insofar as it will safeguard the health of the missionaries. With respect to the various courses which should be served, this can be determined only after we have sufficient experience concerning the countries in which we are working.

Article VII

Their clothes as well as the furniture in their rooms will be simple and poor. When they have to be outside their communities, they will always seek the poorest lodgings, somewhat like those whom we have gone to serve.

We must have clothes that are poor, and also the furniture that is necessary for us. Our lodging, too, must be poor. It would be desirable to live in huts as was done at the beginning by Father Le Vasseur, so as to facilitate the access of the Blacks to us; but this is not always possible. At least, let our dwelling be unpretentious and poor. May they be equally so externally and internally. Let us have small rooms. The rooms of directors in the novitiate can be somewhat larger than the other rooms because they must serve special needs,

but we should always avoid luxury. In missions also, the superior is permitted to have something more in his room than the other missionaries, for instance an arm-chair for strangers who come to see us; but let this be for those strangers. Otherwise, the superior should not have anything more for himself than the others. Since we are destined for the poor no one will object to our practicing poverty in that regard. St. Vincent de Paul received princes in his room, although it was very simple.

Article VIII

We shall never have a pleasure garden; whatever we have must be something that can be productive. We must avoid symmetrical things that serve only to please the eye. In this as in everything else we must avoid manifesting a love for things that are rare and merely arouse curiosity. Everything should express a spirit of poverty and a love of lowliness.

When I say that we should not have pleasure gardens, I have in mind that we might sometimes be tempted to spend money for things that express a love of luxury. This would not be edifying in our missions; it would not be proper for (poor) people to come and see rare and luxurious things in the garden of (poor) missionaries. When the Rule says that we should avoid symmetry in our garden, we do not mean that we should have disorder. We may have lanes for those who desire to walk around, and in the missions we may even have clumps of trees, if necessary, to provide shade for those who want to use the garden in hot weather.

Also, in uncivilized countries we could even dispose things symmetrically so as to please the eyes and make the Blacks work hard and do things properly. It is, therefore, always the spirit of the Rule we must follow. We should not do anything for the sake of luxury; we should not have anything that is superfluous.

Article IX

We shall avoid accumulating books which serve only to satisfy our curiosity. We should never have superfluous books in our houses, but only those which are demanded by the ordinary needs of our state of life.

Here is a list of the books we are permitted to have:

1. Holy Scripture with some devout commentaries, but never scientific commentaries, unless these are necessary.
2. The works of the Fathers of the Church, which are most useful and most able to inspire fervor, and help the missionaries to preach in a truly apostolic way.
3. Books written by most sound theologians, and those which are most necessary to give instruction regarding things that belong to our vocation; but let us not have many authors. We should have books of a few of the best authors. Of the latter books it is permissible to have several copies.
4. Some authors who deal with Canon Law; let us take the best and not a great number.
5. Some sermon books, not those that are most beautiful and written in the best style, but those that are most fervent and most apostolic in spirit.
6. Some Lives of the Saints, especially those which can inspire devotion and fervor. The lives of those who lived an interior and apostolic life should be preferred to all others.
7. Some ascetical works of authors who are most sound and most able to help us attain perfection, those which inspire and maintain devotion in the heart. All other books should be eliminated from our library.

There is no advantage for us to have a “beautiful” library. Such a library would merely make us vain. It is enough for us to have, regarding every subject, the works which sum up what is best and most useful in all the others. If we have extra money, we shall know how to make use of it. We shall never have enough of it to help our poor people. Moreover, if we engage in studies which are outside the things we need, they will make us stay away from our poor Blacks. Now, we must avoid everything that could keep us away from the work to which we must be completely devoted.

For a missionary, living outside his community but, for instance, in a station, two books will suffice: one volume of theology and one volume of Holy Scripture, for the time when he is not yet occupied with mission work. It is

proper for missionaries, according to the time that is available, to review their theology and once more study the principles. They should also have at hand some book of casuistry to enable them to solve cases. Later on we shall name some of the preferred authors. Here also some books are needed for professors of theology. With respect to Canon Law, it will be well to have some experts in it among the missionaries, who have the necessary talent and have made special study of that matter. But it is not necessary that we should have the most voluminous books that deal with Canon Law.

With respect to sermon books, it is not in those that have the most flowery style that we shall find the best inspiration; we must go to those that inspire fervor and are most apostolic. We should not desire to be “noise-makers” in the Church! If, in the missions, a missionary endeavored to give “beautiful” and flowery sermons, he should realize that he is doing it out of vanity; for that sort of sermon is not useful over there. Our sermons should be simple but devout, and of the kind that will inspire and move the hearers. Brilliant sermons would be very harmful, for they might lead the preacher to abandon the poor Blacks. And if, unfortunately, we had some twisted minds, they will fall into that sort of trap.

With respect to Lives of Saints, we could have a good number of them. Lives of Saints are most useful, especially for beginners in the spiritual life. They give us an impetus for a life of devotedness, of piety, and practically show us the way. When we have progressed and have read a certain number of Lives of Saints, we find it advantageous to read ascetical books – and these can prove more useful.

Besides the books mentioned in the Rule, there may be circumstances in which we need others. Suppose, for example, that we desired to teach the natives how to cultivate the land – a thing which we certainly ought to teach them – we may then have need of books that deal with that matter. We should first get hold of books that explain such things. There is no difficulty with respect to buying such books, for what we must follow is not the letter of our Rule, but its spirit, for “the letter kills.”

Article X

Individual missionaries should have only the books which they need for their particular duties and they will return them to the library as soon as they have no more use for them.

Everyone can have his own New Testament, one *Imitation of Christ*, one prayer book, but even then they should not be attached to those things. The same thing applies to their cassock, their crucifix and their beads.

Article XI

The missionaries are never allowed to receive gifts. If people want to make a donation to the Congregation, they will accept it only with the permission of the superior to whom they will immediately transmit the gift.

The missionary should not receive any gift for himself; to act otherwise would be to introduce particularism and ownership. Neither should he accept a gift for the community, except with the permission of the superior; for it might be said of us that we gather possessions, especially when we are in colonial countries; but also because the superior might have good reasons for refusing the gift, and the donor might address himself to another missionary to make him accept the donation.

Even when we are living in a community, we are permitted to accept fruits and other things of that sort, because they have little value, and we might cause pain to the one who offers them to us. If we happen to be at a Station, and we are offered something that has value and it is impossible to ask the superior's permission, we must then examine this matter before God and presume the permission of the superior for accepting the gift, if we think we should do it. We must bring the gift to the community upon our return to it.

Article XII

We shall not accept Mass stipends more than three times a week, unless we have an absolute need of them for the sustenance of the community; for other sacred functions we shall never accept anything even as alms.

At first we did not want to accept any stipends at all; but serious persons who had a proper judgment about that matter have advised us not to refuse such gifts. We must remember that if we always refused stipends, we would make ourselves enemies of the bad priests who overrun the colonies, and who there seek to enrich themselves. If we refused stipends, they would look upon us as men who wish to reform things, and this would do great harm to our ministry. That is why we have decided to choose a middle course; we accept stipends only three times per week. Here, because we are poor, we accept stipends every day. However, the superior will not make it difficult for priests who are novices to offer the Mass for some particular intentions.

Article XIII

When there is an absolute necessity of accepting Mass stipends, those who will be permitted to accept them will be the sacristans in our communities and, in the Stations, the superior, who alone will have that power. The other members of the Congregation must refuse the stipends that are offered.

The sacristan will have a book in which he will record the stipends received. He will then give said stipends to the superior or to the bursar. In the novitiate, it is the superior who receives them and not the sacristan, who is a novice. Part of the money (stipends) will be spent for the chapel; the rest will be given to the poor.

Article XIV

The great resource for the sustenance of the missionaries in the countries where they are laboring must be divine Providence. Nevertheless, the communities are permitted to accept what is necessary for their existence. And a very small surplus can be used for extraordinary needs which might present themselves during the year. The communities should not receive anything nor possess anything more. Food and clothing are all we need in our houses.

In order to train ourselves for thus abandoning ourselves completely to divine Providence, we have merely to recall the words of our Lord: "Be not anxious about what you will eat nor about how you will clothe your body. Look at the birds of heaven; they do not sow, nor do they reap, nor gather things in

barns; and your Father who is in heaven feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?" So let us put our confidence in our Lord and nothing will be wanting to us. There are persons who, when they are prosperous, give themselves over to pleasures and to jubilation; but when things go wrong they become downhearted. Such persons do not live by faith. That conduct goes to show that they place their trust in themselves and not in God.

Nevertheless, we should not tempt God; we must take the necessary precautions which are usually taken, and after that remain tranquil. Those Fathers of Bourbon have always had the greatest confidence in Providence. They had nothing at the beginning and yet they have not lacked anything.

If endowments ("foundations") are offered to us we are permitted to accept them, but let us not take steps or make appeals in order to obtain them. The steps we may take are either those that are in relation to the Prefect Apostolic, in order to obtain what is necessary; or what might be done in relation to the Government, as was done by Father Le Vasseur in Bourbon, in order to get the retribution which was usually given to other priests. But we should not ask donations from individuals. We should not have a great surplus. Let us be content to have food and clothing, as St. Paul tells us, and let us have confidence in divine Providence in order to have those things.

Article XV

Surplus money may never be used for superfluities; for beautifying or enlarging things uselessly in our houses, nor for any other things that are not truly necessary.

You will notice that when houses begin to be well-off, the desire to embellish external things follows. This is wholly contrary to our spirit and we entertain great fears for that sort of thing. This might lead us to abandon our poor Blacks and become interested in rich people. It is important that the rich look upon us as being men who are good only for doing work for the benefit of the Blacks. This is particularly necessary in colonial countries. There is not so much danger of that kind in uncivilized countries. If we are occupied with the rich in colonial countries, we shall not be liked by the pastors. But if we take care only of the Blacks, they will leave us alone and will even be glad that we take care of those members of their flock, for their relations with the rich do not allow them to attend to these poor people. If these pastors see us live like the rich (in

external affluence), they will accuse us of accumulating money; also, the communities would suffer great harm from superfluous, expenditures. If we appear outwardly rich, it will be difficult to preserve poverty within our community. Finally, if we have surplus money, we shall find plenty of opportunity to spend it well in the missions. Even if we had millions, we would never have enough to undertake what is for the glory of God and which serves the salvation of men.

Article XVI

The superior of each community will establish in that community a council of almoners, which will administer the distribution of money for good works, and the president of that Council will be the guardian of that money. All the surplus money that was destined for sustenance of the community and all the gifts and alms that have been received by the superior and by other missionaries will be put in that safe. When a missionary needs money for the poor, he will ask for it from the authorities. The bursar will never be permitted to be a member of said council. When circumstances do not make it possible to have several almoners, there will always be at least one.

That council is a very useful thing, but it will not be possible to have it function perfectly except in large communities. In Haiti, for example, it will be possible to establish such a council once there are seven Fathers there. The bursar should not be a member of said council. Because he is naturally interested in the good of the community, the poor might suffer because of that preference. By the fact that there is such a council and that money is set aside (for the poor), it will happen that there is no surplus money for embellishing the community property. On the other hand, there will be money for almsgiving, and this will make people have confidence in the missionaries. In houses where there are only three members, one will be an almoner and another will be the bursar. If only one has any understanding of such matters, let him be both bursar and almoner.

Article XVII

The president of the almoners, helped by the council, must also examine the accounts of the bursar every three months. The bursar must give these to the president, together with the surplus money which was

destined for the expenditures during the three months. The president of the council of almoners will then transmit to the superior the remarks made by the members of the council regarding the accounts of the bursar. At the same time, the president of the council will give an exact amount to the superior for the use that has been made of the money that was set aside for good works. He will also give a specific description of the principal alms which he himself and the other almoners have distributed personally.

The almoners are not empowered to act as judges regarding the expenditures that were made by the bursar. They must merely make their observations about that, which the president will then transmit to the superior. The bursar, in this way, will not be free to spend money uselessly to the detriment of the poor. The president of the almoners must also give an account of the expenditures made by himself and by his almoners. With respect to alms given by other missionaries, it is sufficient to write down something like this: “give to X, Y ... as alms.”

Article XVIII

The almoners must always keep in their safe a sum of money that is sufficient to buy food for the members of the community for the period of two months. They will be allowed to spend that money only with the permission of the superior. It will thus be possible to provide for the urgent needs of the community if something unforeseen were to happen. This will also be a small reserve in view of possible emergencies.

That article manifests taking measures of precaution. We must avoid going around like blind men; on the other hand, we must also avoid having recourse to purely natural, human prudence.

Article XIX

We must avoid making the poor suffer for the sake of embellishing the Church and the chapels of the community. We shall, nevertheless, make those places most decent and neat. We should not put luxurious ornaments in them; but we are permitted to accept gifts of precious things for beautiful ornamentation.

In accord with that article, you will see that it was not in vain that I said that the chapel “was too beautiful.” Splendid things produce more vanity than devotion in our houses in those who will come to see them. We must make our ceremonies solemn to make an impression on our poor Blacks, but we should not spend money to buy extravagant things. All this would gradually turn us away from poverty.

Article XX

Those who will come and give themselves to God in the Congregation are allowed to dispose of their property the way they desire, and they will receive the same esteem and treatment when they give nothing to the Congregation or give their property to some other work, as when they give their goods to our missions. Those who give things to us and those who give nothing must be treated on an equal basis. We will accept what they give and we will use those things according to their intentions. But no one should ever, directly or indirectly, be prompted by us to make donations to the Congregation. It is necessary to let God’s grace act in each person with complete liberty.

Those who enter our Congregation can dispose of their goods according to their wishes. But it is proper that they make that arrangement at the time of their promises or vows. If they had no goods or were unable to dispose of them at that time, they can do so after becoming members of the Congregation; but this must be done after consulting the superior. We will accept the things missionaries desire to give to the Congregation. If the missionaries have a preference for a particular work in which our Congregation is engaged, but there is no special attraction to said work, it would be preferable to have the missionary give his goods to the Congregation and let the superior use them according to his judgment. If the missionaries act otherwise, there is danger that a purely human interest will be mingled with their donation.

It is very important, although this is not mentioned in the Rule, that silence be kept about the missionaries who have made donations to the Congregation. Making the donors known might give them vain self-satisfaction and rob them of part of the merit of their good action. The pleasure that is attached to giving things is very dangerous, and we must curb that satisfaction as much as possible. That is why, once we have given something away, we should

no longer give any thought to it, according to the words of our Lord: "Let not your left hand know what your right hand gives."

There also would be several inconveniences for the community, if the missionaries who had made gifts were known and happened to be charged with certain works according to their merits. Others who had not given anything might imagine that they had received that position because of their donations. On the other hand, if they were not given particular offices, the donors might look askance at those who were given such positions, although they had not given anything. We must keep in mind that it is to be expected that all missionaries will not be perfect; moreover, every person has his own times of trial; we must not give them occasions for temptation.

The superior must treat equally well those who have given everything and those who have given nothing. Of course, he is permitted to have special intentions for the benefit of benefactors in his prayers, and this will not have evil effects. But giving privileges to donors would do harm to the donors and to the community.

Those who make donations must consider themselves more fortunate because they have been able to make the gifts than the community which receives them. They must also remember that it is not the size of the gift which makes it meritorious in God's eyes; but the greatness of the merit especially depends on the dispositions of the donor when making the gift. Thus, St. Peter, giving up his net made a gift that was more pleasing to God than many great people and princes who have given things which looked more precious from the standpoint of the world.

We must be on our guard against demanding that novices should give their goods to the Congregation. Let us put our trust in divine Providence alone. Surely until now it has never failed us. May all of us have great zeal for the salvation of souls; that is what we need if we want to do much good. If, on the contrary, we base ourselves on purely human means, we will fail.

Article XXI

The missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary should not be satisfied with practicing poverty externally. They must be attached to it internally with a heartfelt affection. They will not esteem earthly riches and worldly splendor; they will avoid being influenced in any way by wealth

and by worldly greatness. They will not entertain love for people simply because they are wealthy; they will not flatter them because of their particular prosperous condition. They will, nevertheless, act prudently towards them and render to all the honor which their rank and position demand.

The virtue of poverty consists in a great detachment of the heart and in a great indifference with respect to wealth. In communities which are wholly consecrated to God, it is accompanied by a certain horror for riches, so that they feel pain when they have something that is not poor. This I have noticed in young men who had lived in families that were wealthy and who only wanted to live a life of fervor. But when the element of sweetness (sensibility) disappears from piety and only a life of faith remains, that horror for riches disappears and is replaced by indifference. They then are equally free and indifferent, being in a luxurious room or in a poor one. However, when we have to make a choice, let us choose that which is poorest. That was the attitude of our Lord, who was as satisfied and free at the table of Simon the Pharisee, where everything was splendid, as he was seated on the ground with his Apostles; as he was also in the small house of Nazareth as he would have been in the palace of Herod. Nevertheless he preferred to live like a poor man.

There we have what is fundamental in true and perfect poverty. When we are not poor interiorly (in the heart), whether we live in poor or in luxurious circumstances, we shall not cease to have a certain esteem and love for riches; we are then disposed somewhat like poor people who crouch before the rich. Their imagination makes them see in the rich something phantastic, so that the rich seem to have a sort of omnipotence in the minds of the poor.

We should have a mind that is free, a heart that is independent of such things; we should have no esteem for wealth. We should consider only the souls with whom we deal and neglect all considerations that are influenced by the wealth or poverty of others. A missionary should keep aloof from everyone in the sense of not despising anyone; but the particular condition of a person should not make any difference to him. This requires that his heart be detached from all worldly goods. He should not entertain any esteem for great and rich things. Again that does not mean that we must behave exactly in the same way with the rich and the poor. We should approach the great and the rich with a certain respect due to their position, not because they happen to be wealthy, but simply because God wants us to give honor to whom honor is due in society. Respect manifested for that reason produces in the soul something that is quite different

from a mere natural esteem of riches and worldly greatness. It is certain we need to respect the rich also, for they too have souls that are loved by the Lord, just as poor people are loved by him; but we must give ourselves principally to the poor. Respect for everyone for a religious intention leaves our heart free. This is the sort of poverty of spirit we must cultivate.

Article XXII

They will not fear how their poverty might appear in the eyes of men. They will avoid manifesting in any way that they are rich and comfortable, and that they are poor only because they willed it in order to please God, unless it be to avoid scandalizing coarse and ignorant people in divine things.

When we practice external poverty it often happens that we are ashamed of appearing with poor clothes in the presence of rich people. And why is that? Because we think the rich person will despise us. This is not the way to act. When we desire to practice external poverty, let us do it fearlessly. It is true that we do not profess absolute poverty! Unless that is necessary, we must keep a middle course, but we have no need to wear the clothes of a Capuchin who practices the poverty of St. Francis; but that middle-course poverty is considered painful by some minds who are still full of self-love.

Let us be indifferent with respect to the judgments of men. Let us not say that we are not truly poor; let us not say that we do this to humble ourselves, but let people think of it what they wish. Let us be like St. Paul, who did not mind what judgments men made concerning him. That indifference is the source of great freedom. St. Paul, poor, poorly dressed, who had a despicable appearance (*facie contemptibilis*), was a master over everything. A soul that is detached from earthly things lords it over all.

There are some who practice poverty, but they desire to be esteemed on that account. Such persons like to hear people say: “he was a rich man; he gave everything away; he became poor out of love for God.” Such a person is not truly poor and detached from everything. On the contrary, he is dominated by the desire of esteem.

However, if in uncivilized countries coarse people would despise us if we lived like poor people, and if on that account our work for them would be inefficacious, we could then adorn ourselves with gold and diamonds if that were

necessary, instead of practicing external poverty. What we must cling to is not the thing itself; it is the spirit that animates a person that has to be right. It is possible to wear most costly clothes, but to be poor in spirit.

CHAPTER THREE

About Chastity

Article I

The virtue of chastity struggles against all the leanings and all the inclinations of the heart which spring from the concupiscence of the flesh, and it tends to establish in our soul a pure and chaste love which filled the Heart of Mary towards her divine Son. However, in its strict and rigorous obligation, it consists in combating and avoiding everything that is, properly speaking, a sin of the flesh.

In the virtue of chastity, as in all virtues, we distinguish two parts: a positive part and a negative part. The negative part consists in combating everything that is opposed to the virtue. The positive part tends to establish the virtue of chastity in us.

(Perfect) chastity contains love of God. It dwells in the heart and makes our will exercise love. Our heart is full of affections which are contrary to love for God. By combating them we unite ourselves to God, and the more our heart is empty of those evil affections, so much the more is it filled with the virtue of purity. If our heart is pure, it will have a loving tendency towards God and will make us give everything to God.

We should not mistake sentiments for true affections of the heart. Our corrupted nature often disturbs us with movements that are purely natural; but the heart can be pure in spite of all that and such movements offer no obstacles to the activities of grace, so long as our will offers no resistance to it. Our task in this life is to combat the movements and the concupiscences of the flesh by refusing to consent to them. We shall not be able to destroy that concupiscence, but we shall gradually master it. Helped by grace we shall weaken it if we are faithful to grace. We shall become masters of our senses; and in proportion as we free ourselves from all the things to which concupiscence prompts us to cling, we will be more intimately united to God.

Article II

In order to preserve that precious treasure, we must entertain apprehension and self-distrust, recalling our extreme weakness and the

many dangers that surround us. We must continue to have distrust even when those dangers are removed.

We must understand this article properly. When we say we must be always apprehensive and distrustful, this does not mean that we must be constantly thinking about it or be constantly examining what is going on in our interior, for this would be dangerous. What is meant is that we must avoid danger and dangerous occasions. As soon as some action seems dangerous, for instance a reading that arouses an evil curiosity, we must omit it, unless the action were necessary. We must realize that we are weak. It consists in the fact that our senses are easily stirred up and that our imagination easily fastens upon a dangerous object. In order to remedy that situation, let us as much as possible turn our imagination away from such an object and think of other things. When we say we must “cultivate apprehension,” it means that we must be watchful regarding the use of our external senses. The other words “be self-distrustful” mean that we must be watchful over our interior senses, especially our imagination.

There are many dangers in our ministry, but if we are faithful (to grace) God will watch over us and prevent a fall. If we truly want to aim at perfection, we must form the habit of keeping our imagination on the right track and carefully avoiding the slightest faults, even remote dangers.

Article III

The missionaries will carefully avoid idleness and sloth, lest the Enemy attack us at those moments.

In times of idleness our mind is in a vague, cloudy condition; it is open to all kinds of impressions and all sorts of thoughts, and it is weak. Those three things constitute the great danger of idleness. When we are in that condition of inactivity we have almost no power to offer resistance. On the contrary, when our mind is occupied, tempting thoughts have almost no access to us. We must try to acquire the habit of obtaining a certain strength of the mind, and this we can do by habitually curbing the wanderings and deviations of the imagination. When the imagination presents dangerous or evil things to us, we must immediately turn our attention to other things, for instance, to ejaculations; but we must see to it that we are doing this through acts of the will and not merely by thoughts. Mere thinking is unable to turn the imagination away from those

objects which it presents to us. Because the senses are aroused in those temptations, the will must also influence the senses so that we shall be able to overcome the temptation; for example, we can repeat an ejaculatory prayer several times while trying to penetrate more deeply into its meaning; or be expressing our sentiments in bodily movements (such as making the sign of the cross, kissing a crucifix, and the like.) These means which we have just described should not be used only to reject thoughts and temptations against the holy virtue; it can also be helpful to avoid any deviations of the imagination. We shall thus get a mastery over it which is necessary if we do not wish to become slaves to our imagination.

Article IV

They will avoid all indolent and soft manners, and be most modest in their behavior, in the way they walk, in their gesticulation, even when alone.

This remark has particular importance for those who live in warm climates, where men are naturally inclined to softness. The senses are the gates of the soul. If they are wide-open, all sorts of images will enter. Besides the fact that the kinds of imaginings we are dealing with here are very dangerous, and that they can affect us even when we are alone, they produce a bad impression on those who see us, for people expect us to be decent. However, we must avoid a certain rigidity in our posture and in our gestures. Our external behavior and modesty must reflect our internal modesty, and this interior modesty consists in the soul's (reserve) peaceful awareness of the presence of God, a gentle filial respect towards him.

It is customary in communities to prescribe some rules for modest behavior; they are good rules, but we must try above all to be interiorly in a respectful attitude before God. Otherwise we take care only of external attitudes and that would mean "contention," a faulty external effort. Among the rules of external modesty, which are usually stressed and which we should observe, is the one that says that we should not get the habit of crossing our legs. (Here Father Superior told us the story of Arsene). Sometimes we are in the presence of people of the world who are seated in an armchair and choose all kinds of comfortable postures. Through a kind of human respect we might be tempted to imitate them. Let us not do that. Let them say what they want. Let them look upon

you as a poor person, a timid man. No matter! Avoid being troubled; let there be no contention, and let us not imitate soft manners.

Article V

Let them most carefully watch over their senses so that their hearts might not be wounded by the impure darts of concupiscence, and their imagination be soiled by its phantoms.

In order that we might make our meditation properly, we are asked to watch over our senses. This watchfulness is still more necessary for the virtue of chastity. The senses are the outposts of our soul. If the Enemy takes them away, we have to fear that he will enter deeply into our heart and will establish himself in it as its master. So we must constantly watch over our external senses, and particularly over our eyes. We must also be watchful over our interior senses, especially over our imagination which is so easily aroused.

Watchfulness over our external senses is so much more important for us because we are not destined to live a solitary life, but have been called to live in the midst of the world. Nevertheless, that watchfulness over our external senses and over our imagination should not make us engage in tenseness and concern of mind. Let us also avoid frequent self-scrutiny and try to forget ourselves. There is no sin in having impure thoughts that come to us unsolicited. Very great saints have had such thoughts, and probably St. Paul had them also, as we are allowed to conclude from his words. What we must do is to turn our mind away from them. The struggle against temptations will invigorate our soul.

The principal and universal remedy is to give ourselves wholly to our Lord. There are many fervent persons who suffer temptations; but when a person yields to temptations, it is usually because fervor was lacking. Fervor is, therefore, the great means to come out victorious. Regarding the mortification of the senses, we must also practice: first, the deprivation of superfluous pleasures; secondly, be moderate in our use of necessary things. The first remedy is not understood by worldly people. To them it seems ridiculous: "the carnal man does not know the things of the Spirit of God." But it is necessary for those who strive for perfect virtue. Regarding the second, it is more difficult to practice it than the first. We must remember that there are things which nature itself makes it necessary for us to use. There are other things which it is fitting for us to make use of, for instance, when we are at a table with a rich person and he offers us the

very best, thinking that this will please us. If we then obstinately refused such things, we would fail in humility and in charity. As regards the use of necessary things, the fundamental attitude should be one that does not make us cling to such things, but use those things with sobriety, think as little as possible upon that and partake of those things in perfect freedom and without troubled minds. If we happen to commit a fault in that respect, let us peacefully humble ourselves before God and avoid yielding to worries and a troubled mind. A little too much, a little less, these are not great things. By that kind of conduct, in sobriety, freedom and detachment of mind and heart with respect to creatures, we shall gradually gain mastery over our senses, and this is of utmost importance.

The carnal man might well continue to manifest his presence. There is nothing strange in that. Our Lord Jesus Christ has not come to cure the flesh in this world. This will take place only at the resurrection. But a spiritual man will be the master; he will be free, calm and peaceful, in spite of all the repugnances and all the complaints of the flesh. He must be like a Lucifer overcoming the Demon. He fights with great power, but he is peaceful. Let us remember what God said to Cain: “the sin will be at the door, but you will overcome it.” This is applicable to our situation. We have grace at our disposal to dominate the flesh and sin. Let us be peaceful. It is then that God can freely act in our souls.

Article VI

They will deprive their bodies of all the delicacies which men use to satisfy their senses. They will practice moderation in the necessary use of creatures and will try to remain always masters of their senses, not only when they are in their community, in which they are unable to enjoy the vain pleasures which some people in the world are very fond of, but especially when they are outside the community and are offered all sorts of comforts and delicacies that are pleasing to our lower nature.

Article VII

They will also be very watchful over their interior senses, denying them all kinds of pleasures which might make them somewhat self-indulgent. Let them avoid an unhealthy curiosity in general, but especially the kind which directly or indirectly might endanger the holy virtue of purity. In general, they should avoid everything that might make them morally

weak and soft. Let them particularly establish themselves in a firm and holy sobriety of the heart. They should never entertain tender affections that are not suitable to their state of life, which demands a love that is pure; and this even when they do not seem to be moved by an evil concupiscence.

There is a kind of curiosity that is very dangerous. We must particularly avoid all the kinds of curiosity that are referred to in this article. What is still more important is sobriety of heart. It consists in denying ourselves all worldly affections. Let us note here that there are two things that take place in our soul: there is an impression and there is an action. Both must be the object of our vigilance. We receive impressions through our senses. When an impression comes from grace and inclines us Godwards, it is very pure. On the contrary, when it has its source in concupiscence, it is bad; it is contrary to the virtue of chastity.

Every affection which is not for God is against God: "he who is not with me, is against me." Between the sentiments that are produced by grace and those that come from evil concupiscence, there are those which, without coming from concupiscence, have their origin in our nature; these are orderly. Such is a friendship based on the truly lovable qualities of the beloved person. If friendship remained on that level, it would be good; it would (virtually) come from God and would serve to unite us to God.

This love, however, never remains in the purely natural order. In a soul which has given itself to God, it becomes a love of "charity." On the contrary, in a soul that is addicted to the pleasures of the flesh, it degenerates into an evil concupiscence. Here we find the danger of natural friendships. Hence we see that in all communities, superiors make great efforts to turn their subjects away from "particular friendships." They, following in the steps of St. Bernard, show the evil effects of that sort of friendship. Such friendships begin with being based on moral qualities of the beloved person; thus far they are good; but soon they become passionate and engross the mind and the soul loses its freedom. From admiring moral qualities, such persons become attracted by physical qualities; everything seems beautiful, even that which is, in reality ugly; it may be a look or a smile, and the soul becomes passionately attached to the other. Even the mere sight of objects that belong to the particular loved person produces a sensible movement in the person who is animated by that passion. For instance, when a person passes near the door of the other, he will look in the direction of the door,

although it is impossible to see the beloved person. Gradually that love becomes increasingly gross; finally, it makes the loving person do very silly things.

It can happen that a soul which is already engrossed in that kind of passion, experiences sentiments and has outpourings of feelings towards God during meditation. Let no one be misled by that sort of thing. Those sentiments and feelings are only superficial; fundamentally the heart of such a person is not united to God. Those feelings arise from the person's passion. Everywhere, even during meditation, such a person thinks of the beloved object. Those considerations regarding the beloved stir up sentiments. Then when his mind happens to turn superficially Godwards, that first sensible movement persists, although it springs from a totally different source, and although the person might think that it is God who is the true object of his love.

Alas! His heart is not wholly and sincerely given to God! The center on which such a person's attention and love is fixed is the beloved creature. In such a situation, the soul in no way progresses in virtue; its passion is the predominant source of all its movements and actions. All this goes to show the importance of building a dam against the affections, the likings and the pleasures which our heart so eagerly seeks, even when feelings seem to be perfectly licit; otherwise we run the danger of being carried farther away by them than we wish. At the same time, however, we must not take those safeguards animated by anxiety and with feverish intentness. The great means is refusing to surrender our heart to our cravings for pleasure. This is the all-important thing; this is what we can call sobriety of heart. Those disorderly affections must be feared particularly in two cases: first, within our houses; and if that sort of thing is to be feared because of its bad effects, this is not where it more frequently happens. Secondly, with respect to outsiders, and it is in relation to these that it can have the most dreadful consequences. It is the latter which is the object of the following article.

Article VIII

We shall be most careful regarding our affections in our relations with persons of the other sex, and especially regarding the latter when they happen to be very devout. When we experience a devout affection towards such persons because of their virtues and their good qualities, we must redouble our fears, our vigilance and our self-distrust. We must be most watchful over our mind, refraining from thinking about those persons. We must avoid manifesting such affections in any way or form,

but practice great sobriety of heart, being most cautious with respect to what we say and do.

We make false judgments about things; we call certain things charity when in reality it is rather “carnality.” We form strange illusions for ourselves regarding those affections because they are directed towards pious persons, under the pretext that we feel drawn Godwards even when we are thinking about those persons. In order to avoid that dangerous illusion, let us consider what lies at the source of those affections, what are their object and their circumstances.

Here are the root-principles or sources from which those affections arise: a sensitive heart, an impressionable imagination that is also florid, a lively desire, and great craving for sensual pleasures. The object is anything that can touch that sensitive heart, can make an impression on that imagination that can satisfy that desire of pleasure. Such objects are principally persons of the other sex, and still more particularly devout persons. A good priest who wants to serve God and love him is easily touched by such persons and these will present themselves to a florid imagination in most attractive ways. He will fail to notice the defects of the person. He will not only take pleasure in the qualities of the person, but in the manners of the person, in her particular pious ways; or her particular conduct may be such only because of her character and her turn of mind. Here then we already have something that belongs to the natural order. Gradually the object of his affection will become more and more natural and physical, if he is not careful, as we have remarked in the preceding article.

The circumstances are the preoccupation, trouble, the domination which that passion exercises over your conduct, and the greater frequencies of meeting that person. A priest to whom I showed what our Rule states regarding chastity, told me that it was too severe, that such affections are very permissible, and he gave me as a proof several examples, for instance, the natural affection of St. Francis of Assisi for St. Clare, of St. Francis de Sales and St. Chantal, of Father Olier and Mother Agnes.

I replied by distinguishing several kinds of affection. There is the affection of charity, the affection of friendship, and the affection of concupiscence. The first is wholly pure; it has God alone for its object and it gives peacefulness to our heart. The affection of friendship is based on reason and it does not draw us away from God. Concupiscence draws us towards the creature and it tends to separate us from God. The affections which were mentioned by the priest who made the objection belonged to the first category.

The affections of which our Rule speaks belong to the third category, or to those of friendship. They change almost always, or always, into what is characterized by “passion.” They get hold of the heart and gain control of it; they get hold of the mind and prevent it from seeing things clearly; they then will direct your whole conduct.

I hear the objection: I pray with fervor. To this I answer: turn your mind away from those persons, and then see if you will be able truly to pray. You will not be able to do otherwise. Why is that? Because your love comes from love for that person and not from love for God. Regarding the affection of friendship, it is based on reason and as long as it remains friendship, it is not evil. But there is a danger that it will degenerate into an affection of concupiscence. You will recognize this by the characteristics which have just now been pointed out. Be careful, therefore, watch all the movements of your heart and all your affection. Fear, lest after having begun with the mind and with friendship based on spiritual qualities of a person, you end with affections of the flesh and sensual pleasures. Here are the diverse stages through which those affections pass: first, you love the virtues and the beautiful qualities of a person; you say to yourself: what a beautiful soul! You imagine that you have affections for her only because of her qualities, but in reality what impresses you is not only her good qualities, but her ways, her appearance, for example her particular devotional conduct. It is possible that you are not attached to that person by a passionate affection. However, you do not stop there. Soon you are charmed and attracted by the character of that person; this is bad, especially when it concerns a person of the other sex. Nevertheless you do not yet feel bad emotions within yourself. Soon you will be charmed by the external characteristics of the person; the way she smiles, the way she looks, the way she talks, and these things you will think about during the day; finally, it is her figure that makes an impression on you, and here grave sins will be committed.

What I have just now described is not imaginary or fanciful. A great number of priests have become victims of those affections to which they have not offered resistance (the little experience which I have gathered has already given me knowledge of several cases of that sort), and they had the reputation of being saintly priests. That is not to be wondered at. A sensual heart, an impressionable imagination, the craving for pleasure, lead that way, if we do not build a dam from the very beginning of the danger.

This danger comes frequently from the devout persons to whom we give spiritual direction, or from those whom we have converted and who are doing

well. We can become attached to them and from those intimate relations follow the effects we have described. Hence it is of the utmost importance to be on our guard and to choose the surest means to avoid being carried away. These means are the following.

We have said that the source of those affections are first the sensibility of the heart; secondly, a florid, impressionable imagination; thirdly, a craving for pleasure. Here are the remedies to be used. First, avoid the occasions when that sensibility of the heart can be aroused; as soon as we notice that our heart is sensually stirred up, see that person no longer, except when it is necessary. And when you must see that person, watch over your eyes; be modest in behavior, without affectation, however. We should not handle the person roughly, or harshly, or reject her, for we should not make others suffer because of our own wretched condition. Let us use moderation in speaking with such a person; seek to sanctify the person. Do nothing to attract her affection to yourself; avoid using saccharine words and expressions used by passionate lovers. Secondly, try to keep your imagination quiet. It will be impossible, of course, not to think at all about that person, but gently think of something else. Thirdly, and above all, never yield to sentiments of love which are aroused in you when you think of that person. Turn your attention away from such sentiments and occupy your mind with something else. Avoid manifesting in the least what is going on in your interior with respect to your sentiments towards that person. Tell no one about the feelings you have towards that person. Act gently towards that person, while acting with prudence. Do not rebuff her; avoid harshness; do not deal with her in an authoritarian fashion.

If we want to do good for souls, we must have a pure love for them; we must love them for God's sake, and we must be occupied with them only with the desire of sanctifying them. If we love them for our own satisfaction, we will lose ourselves. We must find out what was Christ's way of dealing with souls, and try to imitate that way. Christ loves them all in a general way, and we likewise must have a catholic - universal - way of loving them so that our charity embraces all. Christ loved some souls in a special way. Why was that? Solely in view of an external predestination by which the Father had chosen those souls to fill them to overflowing with graces and perfections. So it is in accord with the order of charity to love a soul more in which we see greater gifts of God; but we may never love such a person for our own satisfaction. In this matter, we must watch constantly over our heart. Our Lord had nothing to fear, for he was holy by nature. We are constantly inclined to evil and to evil passions. If we yield to

passion, we shall be blind to a person's faults as well as to our own, and on that account we will do harm to that person, if we are that person's spiritual director. If, on the contrary, we love that person only with a love of "charity," we shall see the person's defects and try to correct them. It was thus that our Lord, though loving St. Peter with a love of predilection, did not refrain from strongly reprimanding him: "Go behind me, Satan."

[What follows is a commentary on Article IX].

Let us not try to captivate their hearts; let us not seek to attract the affection of the persons we direct. If, on the other hand, we notice that they seek to win our affection, let us not appear to notice it; let us watch over ourselves without treating them harshly. Let us always behave in a uniform way in our relations with them, and never indulge in ungraciousness, nor give them occasions for being under obligation; this will gradually diminish their sentimentality in our regard and we shall be better able to give them fruitful direction. We have entered into all these details for the following reason.

First, because that matter has very great importance for our conduct (in the ministry) and we frequently need to recall the advice they contain. Secondly, they serve as guidelines for dealing also with other passions; for all generally follow the same pattern, have similar effects, and can be struggled with by the same means.

It is a very common thing to seek to attach others to ourselves. But this is particularly true for those who are inclined to those affections and pleasures which we have mentioned. You must be careful in that respect if the persons whom you direct (in spiritual direction) show they seek to become attached to you in a purely human way which will become passionate. They will not make any progress in virtue, especially if you encourage that affection, as is unfortunately done by several confessors who are delighted when their female penitents are always occupied with them and commend themselves to their prayers, to their Holy Communions, etc. The confessional then, far from being a sanctifying instrument, becomes pernicious for the confessor and for the penitent. Under the pretext of pious conversations (the kind not to be held in the confessional) they spend considerable time talking about all sorts of things which have nothing to do with Confession; but they are merely occasions for enjoying togetherness, and this is bad. Then, no doubt, the penitent, who shows great docility will ask permission to make a vow of obedience to her confessor. The latter will be very wrong if he permits it, for all that fervor does not come

from “charity” but from a purely human attraction; and if he permits her to make that vow, the penitent will be in great trouble, will become greatly upset, and it will be very difficult to free her from that condition.

Here are the means the confessor should use: first, from the start he must avoid forming any close connection with such persons. If they seek to attract us, let us remain calm, cold, without affectation – for we must always be gentle in our behavior. Let us always act in a similar way when they address affectionate words to us; let us manifest no attention to such words. Let us always treat them with great mildness, but never in a way that shows special affection. Let us use words dictated by (supernatural) charity, not words of purely human friendship. When speaking to such a person let us keep in mind that she has been redeemed by the Blood of Christ, but not fix our attention on this particular woman.

They will express their grief, their need of finding consolation and of being comforted. Let them talk; console them, using charitable words but not those of human friendship. Say to them, for instance, that they are permitted to say what troubles them, that you are the servant of Jesus Christ, that you are the servant of souls, that you would be willing to shed your blood for them – and this even for most wretched souls – etc. But let all your words be inspired by faith. It is possible that they will talk about you and complain that you are cold, that you are dry; this you should never be. But if they complain because you do not yield to purely human sentiments, let them say whatever they want. Be always the same and avoid all bluntness; gradually the sentimentality of such persons will wane, and you will then be able to propel them on the way to perfection. If they cannot accept that kind of treatment, they will leave you and go to another. Never try to keep a penitent.

Secondly, avoid useless words, even when it is under the pretext of devout conversations. Listen quietly to what the penitent says, especially when certain persons cannot express in a few words what they have done. In your advice speak to them only of what concerns them with respect to what you must deal with in the confessional. They will perhaps complain about that. Let them talk. Confessors must do three things regarding their penitents: promote the work of grace in their souls, correct their defects and strengthen their weakness. There is nothing else they must do beyond that.

Article IX

They shall also avoid doing anything to draw others to themselves, especially persons of the other sex. Let us endeavor always to preserve our freedom and detachment from any bond, doing our best to make the others love only Jesus and Mary.

Article X

In our relations with persons of the other sex, let us always conduct ourselves with modesty, with seriousness, gentle and moderate in our speech, acting and speaking in a peaceful non-exuberant way. Let us avoid as much as possible all useless talk with them. We must talk to them about the things that can be useful for their salvation. We must remain with them only as long as their spiritual advantage requires it. Never express any kind of jocosely things to them; make no unbecoming gestures, avoid loud vulgar laughs, lively and abrupt movements. This does not mean, however, that you should take an austere attitude, quick movements, and a tone of speech that is dry and expresses indifference. This holy seriousness should be animated by a gentle charity.

The precautions mentioned in this article are of great importance for the soul of the confessor, for the good of the penitent, and for the reputation of the confessor as well. Particularly in the colonies, where the morals are very depraved, and it does not take much to have unfavorable rumors spread about the behavior of missionaries. So we must avoid any kind of familiarity. And we must be so much the more careful because our poor Blacks, who are accustomed to being ill-treated, will tend easily and quite innocently to seek familiarity with their (spiritual) Father who manifests so much charity towards them.

Three young persons have told me that their confessors indulged in addressing them in too endearing terms (*tutoyer*). I have given them the order not to go back to those ecclesiastics. Our conduct should tend wholly to give glory to God and serve the sanctification of souls. Let the persons who want to find in us purely sensual and human affections, find nothing but charity in us. This does not mean that they are not permitted to seek even human consolations in us. How could we prohibit this to poor despised persons who are ill-treated, repulsed by everyone. But while consoling them, let us be on our guard against

yielding to improper affections towards them. Neither let us encourage their expression of sensual affections towards us. In that respect let us always act the same towards them; let us be gentle and charitable, but modest and prudent, acting without affectation.

In general it is useful to deal with persons of the other sex only in the confessional. Nevertheless we must receive them with kindness in the parlor, if they themselves ask for it. Listen to them; console them when they are afflicted. Do not speak to them about their condition of life, and when you have nothing more to say to them, dismiss them gently, addressing charitable words to them and exhorting them to live a good life. This will not seem improper to such persons with whom we do not need to use the same minute precautions which are sometimes required towards persons of high rank. Do everything, however, that they may be satisfied with their visit. This is a general rule to be followed in the exercise of our ministry, while always avoiding arousing sensual affections.

While taking into account their weakness, it is not necessary to have long conversations with those persons. We must grant them the time required for their advantage and even for their consolation, but not for the sake of giving them (sensual) pleasure. We must act seriously and modestly. We must nevertheless keep an open attitude, even one that is joyful. Let there not be loud outbursts of laughter, nor words which cause such outbursts. But there is no harm smiling and in saying things sometimes that will make people smile. Loud outbursts of laughter are out of order and lead to undue familiarity. We must likewise avoid all rudeness. Both those faults engender a wrong kind of familiarity and will be harmful to your direction of souls.

Avoid also making such persons undergo an extraordinary experience. Such thoughts in confessors sometimes have their source in the formation of a certain imagination. Nevertheless, we know several saints who have tried that way; it is possible that such a thing was successful. The conduct of their spiritual directors in several circumstances, however, has seemed questionable to me, in spite of all that.

NOTE: Those persons almost always act in virtue of an impression and not on the basis of reasoning. We are obliged not to upset them by ruffling their feelings, if we do not wish to make it impossible for them to do good. With respect to letters of spiritual direction, they should not be permitted more than once a month, unless they are necessary; and this should be allowed only for

persons who live at a good distance from the director. Persons who live near the director should be told to come to the confessional.

We would avoid permitting frequent visits to the parlor for two reasons. First, because of the great abuses that arise in communities and the dangers such visits entail. It is in parlors that sensual affections are most naturally developed. Secondly, in order to preserve our good reputation, especially in bad countries where there are plenty of occasions for starting bad rumors, and we must be constantly on our guard. It is proper for our parlors to be well lighted and it should be possible for those passing by to see what is going on in them.

Article XI

Persons of the other sex should never enter into our houses when they have to speak to one of our missionaries. They should be received in the parlor. As much as possible, counsels or directions should be given in the confessional. If after that and in spite of that, there is a need for someone to talk to one of us, we must receive that person with kindness and charity, trying to avoid this taking place too frequently.

Article XII

We should not pay visits to those persons unless this is found to be necessary, or unless it is our duty to do so. We shall then try not to be alone with those women.

During those visits, which we should avoid as much as possible, let us be on our guard and not say anything to those persons which might be interpreted as expressing special (sensual) affection. Never be alone with those women, unless it is necessary, and then be so placed that it would be possible for others to see you.

Article XIII

We will not hear the confessions of persons of the other sex in any other place than in Church or another public place that is set apart for that purpose, and at a time when people frequently visit that place.

This article is very important. It is also necessary that there be a screen between you and them. If this cannot be done, we could have a window as was done in China. Finally, if that is impossible, for instance in the middle of a field among the Blacks who are at work there, place yourself at a proper distance so that they can see you, and make the penitent speak louder. Let us remind ourselves how wretched we are and that we bear a treasure in fragile vessels. With respect to sick people who cannot speak loudly to confess their sins, we are obliged to go closer to them. But there is less danger here, for the horror which sickness inspires, the ravages it has brought about, prevent it from making a bad impression on our senses.

N.B. Article XIV is in reality Article XV; Article XIV made in 1845, reads as follows:

When we hear confession in the evening, let us always have a light near us when we are hearing confessions, so that we can be very closely seen by other persons.

Article XIV

Those who hear the confessions of religious (women) must always give spiritual direction in the confessional. Neither these, nor anyone else of those who exercise sacred functions in a convent, should go to the parlor, unless it be impossible to hear confession somewhere else. They should then not remain long in the parlor; they must talk only of what directly concerns the salvation of souls; let them never talk about other useless things. As much as possible have an understanding with the superior. Send back to her all the religious so that everything can be arranged by said superior.

I have known a convent which became disorderly because the chaplain went too frequently to the parlor. A new superior appointed to the convent asked for another chaplain. There were Sisters who remained a long time without going to confession because they did not want to go to confession to any other priest than said chaplain.

You will meet Sisters who will seek strong pretexts for getting you to speak to them in the parlor. For example, they will say if they speak to you only in the confessional, they will not dare to tell you everything for fear of seeming to be too long in the confessional in the presence of other Sisters. Do not accept

those pretexts, but do this without being rude. Answer them with gentleness and make them agree with you and speak to you only in the confessional.

There may be occasions, however, when the good of souls requires that you speak to them in the parlor. But let this be done infrequently.

Here is a general rule: Do not offer to direct the Sisters in anything that belongs to the matter of discipline. This belongs to the superior, who has to form the Sisters according to the Rule and the spirit of their Order. This does not mean that sometimes you are not permitted to give some advice to Sisters, for example, to give them consolation or to cure their scrupulosity. Nevertheless it remains true that it is the superior who has the direction for the Sisters, and if we desire to procure something good, to reform a community, it is to the superior that we must address ourselves. Another important advice is not to insist strongly with Sisters, for they might be offended, and then we can no longer hope to get anything from them. Your efforts will be useless with respect to spiritual good, and you might occasion great harm.

The direction of religious Sisters presents major difficulties, sometimes because they have received a bad direction or formation, or because they still have many natural defects; these defects have sometimes become worse. There is a great difference between what is commonly called “devotion” and “perfection.” Those who are called devout persons are those who love God and desire to please him, but at the same time they frequently have serious defects which come from their character. This is found to exist more often in women than in men. These defects increase if we do not take care to make their devotion aim at struggling against the particular faults. Among those defects we especially find curiosity, the desire to be well thought of by others, etc.

Now that should not make us despise them or show indifference towards them. Such behavior would frequently have bad effects and would upset such persons. Try to establish them in an attitude of calm and peacefulness. Such persons are very sentimental and they have a very shifting imagination. That lively sentimentality joined with self-love gives birth to susceptibility and after that to stubbornness.

At the beginning they give themselves to devotion and they experience great facility for approaching God; but frequently, they give insufficient attention to striving to correct their defects. This you will find to be the case with many who come to you as penitents. If you wish to correct their ways, never be harsh.

On the contrary, console them, encourage them, but never flatter them, although you are allowed to point out the good things that are found in them and the grace they receive from the Lord which is at work in them. Finally, try to discover what is taking place in their interior, and this you cannot hope to know except in mental prayer. If they notice that you know them well, they will have confidence in you.

If they complain about their defects, sympathize with them and suggest remedies; prompt them to remain calm and to practice a holy indifference towards their self. If you succeed in this you will make them become perfect souls. If you are unable to get from them all that you want, do not become angry; this would only aggravate the evil; you would make the wound more painful. It is preferable to tolerate an imperfection. In general we must refrain from putting the hand to the evil, if it is impossible to cure it.

One great difficulty about those persons is the regulating of their Communions. There are confessors, who, when they notice the sensible devotion of such persons, make them go to Communion every day. This is a mistake, for the only devotion that is found in such persons is of a sentimental nature. Permit them nothing more than weekly Communion, for when that sentimental devotion disappears, such persons will fall back into their bad habits and they will commit their old faults once more; or you might feel obliged to diminish the number of the Communions. This, then, would be dangerous, for it could discourage them, and this is something we should greatly fear. It is preferable to let persons who are imperfect receive Communion frequently. Sometimes we should order weak persons to do that, for becoming discouraged upon realizing their weakness, they then might not ask for permission to go to Communion.

If, after sensible devotion has ceased, you see that certain persons remain solidly pious, you may allow them to receive Communion two or three times a week. All persons who are destined to make great progress in virtue pass through a time of trial and temptation; until that time has come and is over, we should not permit them to receive Communion frequently. When such persons are agitated, troubled, or embittered, seek to calm and alleviate them. In general, their fears come from their habit of self-scrutiny which is dangerous and evil. Never become frightened in giving directions to such persons, however difficult they may be. Realize that you cannot do anything, but that God can do everything. There are confessors who then treat them severely; they become

impatient. When confessors handle tempted penitents that way it is a great evil, and great is their guilt.

What we have just said is applicable to persons who apply themselves to devotion. Something special has to be said about the direction of religious Sisters. There are two kinds of such Religious: there are those who live a life that is wholly withdrawn and who are not engaged in works of zeal. These give the greatest trouble, because they have fewer distractions; they are constantly in the presence of their own self. The others, and they are almost the only ones we shall have to deal with for a long time in the countries to which we are sent, are engaged in works of zeal.

Religious Sisters easily become attached to their confessors. That is why we must be additionally watchful over ourselves; we must be cautious and have as few relations as possible with them. With respect to Communions, we should apply to them what we said above about other persons. Grant permission for frequent Communion only to those who have solid virtue. Nevertheless, a Sister should receive Communion more frequently than people of the world, for a Sister leads a life which in itself is consecrated to God. Moreover, for the sake of good example in the community and to prevent dis-edification, we should, as much as possible, make the less fervent ones come close to the practices of the fervent ones regarding Communion.

Ordinarily, and almost always, religious Sisters have goodwill. Their faults are faults of weakness. The means to strengthen them is to let them go to Communion; for if Communion is refused to them, they run the danger of getting lost.

Father de Brand told me the method he uses in the direction of Sisters, and his is a very wise way. He said that he did not take a hand in the particular direction of Sisters, but left this to the care of the superior. However, he took care to direct and form the superior and one or two religious Sisters who had most influence over the others. Regarding the other Sisters, we should content ourselves with general advice, for instance with respect to the virtues, prompting them to practice obedience. If we give detailed direction to one Sister, we then spend much time and run the danger of disturbing the community and giving to one particular Sister a direction that differs from the direction given by the superior. Perhaps someone will say: but will the Sisters then be properly directed? No matter; this may be an inconvenience, but it would be worse if we did not

follow the general order of divine Providence who entrusts the direction of the community to the superior.

Article XVI

In their relations with children, the missionaries will carefully avoid heartfelt complaisance, purely natural and sensual affection sometimes expressed to them under the pretext of their innocence, their piety, etc. Let them avoid looking with satisfaction at their figure. Avoid affectionate caresses, embraces, etc. We must love them with a charity that is tender and we may even have a sensible affection towards them; but let it be wholly supernatural, pure, simple, a love that remains wholly in God. Let us not permit our evil heart to indulge in the purely human pleasure it finds in children, even when there is nothing sinful in it. Towards children we must always show great gentleness and great goodness, but let it be done the way Christ practiced it, or the way Mary did it in relation to her divine Child.

Let us never have a particular love for a child because of its figure. A sensual affection towards children is dangerous, though less bad than the one we have described above in several articles. We must take care not to show preference to a particular child because of the special affection we feel towards the youngster. This would be very harmful to the child and could prevent the good which could have been done to a group of children. It is a bad thing to look with pleasure at the features of a beautiful child. Let us be watchful in our relations with children. I would like you not to touch them. If you feel a particular attraction and affection for a child, that is one more reason for being watchful and careful.

Nevertheless we must show a sensible affection to the children. The reason is that we can win them by that means. This is not done through reasoning. They judge things only through sensible things. We must adjust ourselves to them, become all things to all; but once again, let there be no preference based on carnal affection. Let every child believe that you have a great affection for it. Before a group of children remain serious and watchful. Be gentle and avoid weakness and familiarity. If they see that you have esteem for them, they will fear to displease you.

Article XVII

Not only shall we take every precaution to keep the holy virtue of purity intact and stainless in our soul, but we shall also avoid with the greatest care everything that might give men the least suspicion regarding that delicate matter.

Especially in the colonies, people will readily suspect wrong things regarding that matter, first, because scandalous things do happen; secondly, because there are many corrupt persons, and these kinds of people love to find scandalous things that can be said about priests. If your reputation is attacked and rumors about your conduct are spread around, you will no longer be able to do any good. This will also do harm to the good your confreres try to do. This is why you must exercise the greatest prudence; but let no one use affectation in so doing. Let it not be said that you take great precautions because you do not want to give rise to suspicions. In such a case that very thing would start bad rumors.

Article XVIII

The Superior will be most watchful that all that has been said in this chapter be faithfully observed, and avoid all the inconveniences which might arise regarding that important article, so that not the slightest abuse will ever be made in that respect.

It is not possible for the Rule to foresee all the things that might happen, so the superior must be animated by the spirit of the Rule and be watchful. Missionaries must be very docile to use all precautionary measures and do whatever the superior will judge proper to prevent all troubles. If a missionary found it very repugnant to do what the superior had prescribed, this would go to show that it was necessary for him (to obey that particular order of the superior.)

For instance, if a superior desired to take a missionary away from the direction of a convent, and if the missionary did not wish to obey, this would show that he is already affected by the purely natural affections of which we have spoken.

CHAPTER FOUR

On Obedience

Article I

Obedience is the renunciation of one's own mind and will so as to submit oneself to the Holy Will of God, which is manifested by the Rules of the Congregation and by its superiors.

This article does not deal with that which constitutes the object of the vows. It considers that which makes obedience perfect, the obedience to which we must tend.

In obedience, as in all virtues, we can distinguish two parts: the negative part and the positive part. The negative part consists in renouncing our own mind and our own will. The second consists in union with God and in submission to his will.

That virtue of obedience is very perfect. It embraces the exercise of faith by the submission of our mind, and the exercise of charity by the submission of our will to the will of God. The Rule and our superiors are the means by which we know God's will.

In order to practice obedience perfectly, it is not enough to renounce our will; we must also renounce our own mind. Hence, executing the will of the superior while interiorly reasoning and condemning his command, is not practicing perfect obedience. In order to have perfect obedience we are not permitted to stop at reasoning about the commandment. This does not mean that we are always able to say that the superior is telling the truth, he judges rightly, he has chosen the best solution. Such would be the case were the superior to see a small animal running around and say: "Look at the lion running around," and then a subject were to say: "Yes." But when a superior prescribes that which is not the best in itself, we must execute it as being the best for us, because it is God's will; then we must no longer think about it. We must refrain from passing any judgment about it, and we may not judge him to be wrong.

Obedience has great usefulness. It is useful and necessary for every community. It is impossible for a community to exist without it, for since there are as many wills as there are persons and almost as many different wills, without obedience there would be complete disorder. Therefore, if God calls us to

become members of a community, he calls us to obey, and by obeying within that community, we obey God.

Obedience is very useful for each individual person: First, it sanctifies all his actions, conforms him to God's will. Secondly, it makes us practice humility; it is in fact the most efficacious means to overcome pride. Thirdly, it makes us practice mortification at all times, by having us follow various exercises which often are painful, and it mortifies particularly our own mind and will. Fourthly, it makes us constantly practice love for God. For we do not practice obedience as is done by galley slaves, who obey through slavish fear. But we should perform every exercise, submitting to it for love of God. Fifthly, it makes us repress our passions by taking away our liberty to satisfy them. It follows that a truly obedient person is holy, and that is why it is much more difficult and rarer for persons living in the world to reach perfection.

By obeying a superior and by obeying the Rules, we obey God. This is so because it was to follow a providential call, an attraction of grace, a movement that came from God, that you entered a community. Now this community cannot exist without Rules, nor without a superior. Therefore God, who wants us to enter into a community, also demands that we obey the superiors and the Rule. So, by obeying them, you are obeying God.

Moreover, by entering into a community you virtually made a contract with it. The community promises to provide that which serves your spiritual and temporal needs, but under the condition that you observe its Rules. You have consented; you are therefore bound in justice, which means you are obliged by God's will to obey.

Besides that, it is in virtue of a providential order that the said community has been established. It cannot exist without obedience to the Rules. Therefore if you do not observe the Rules, you are destroying, according to the measure of your power, the work of God. You are acting contrary to his designs and his will. Those Rules are based on the Gospel; they are an application of the Gospel to the state of things to which he has destined you. Hence, if you transgress them, you are acting contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. That superior has been established in virtue of a providential order. Here is what St. Paul says in general about those who exercise authority: "Let everyone be subject to the higher powers; for all power comes only from God. Now, things that come from God are in order. So he who resists the power, resists God's plan."

By obedience we subject our will to that of God manifested by our superiors. If a superior were to give us an order that is contrary to God's law, or to an order clearly expressed by a higher superior, it is clear that in that case the order of your superior is not an expression of God's will and you should not obey it.

The same thing should be said if your superior were to tell you to do a certain thing that is contrary to the Rule, and the superior said that he knew it was contrary to the Rule and against the spirit of the Rule. I say: "he declares that it is against the rules and spirit of the Rule"; for it might be that what is ordered by the superior seems to be contrary to the Rule and its spirit, but is not really contrary to it, because of the superior's right to interpret the Rule, and in that case you ought to obey. (But this will never happen.)

We must keep in mind that (in such cases) whatever is commanded, whether the superior is a good man or not, talented and humble or not talented, and a wretched individual, we must always obey him, because it is divine Providence who has established him as our superior, and by that providential order God shows us that he wants us to obey him. He does not want to perform a miracle at the death of each superior, or send us an Angel, to designate the one whom he wants us to obey!

Article II

We must not only obey the higher superior and the particular superior of our domicile, but also all those who are over us with respect to certain offices or functions we must exercise.

In those cases the motive for exercising obedience is the same, namely, submission to the will of God manifested through a providential arrangement which establishes a particular superior in this or that office or function. Here we must be on our guard; for with respect to those lower-grade "superiors," we are naturally inclined to be less obedient to them, since they are superiors only with respect to that function or charge. But faith should make us as exact and punctual regarding that obedience as to obedience to higher superiors, or the superior of our community. Wherever there are two confreres living together, one will be the superior and it will not be necessary for the other to obey him. This, however, does not mean that a confrere cannot have greater familiarity with his superior than there is with a superior of a large community.

Article III

In order to practice obedience, we must be very docile and obey all those who have a certain function in the house regarding their functions, even to the last of them.

Even when you have some business concerning the function of another confrère, for example, in the kitchen, there you must obey said confrère. So do nothing according to your own choice; take nothing without consulting him or without asking whether he minds. This does not mean that we should use expressions of most profound respect such as “would you grant me the permission to . . . , etc.” for we must not divinize others, for some might be led to become authoritarian. Nevertheless, we must be modest in our request, saying for instance, “may I take this”, or “am I bothering you?” If the confrere were to refuse what is asked for and we need that particular thing, we could then have recourse to the superior to whom the confrere is subject.

Suppose there was a real necessity of obtaining a thing, suppose charity demanded that we should have a medicine immediately for a patient, if the superior is not around we would then be allowed to take that medicine; but in such a case let us be gentle and mild towards the confrere who refuses the necessary article.

With respect to the sacristy and the Chapel, the sacristan has charge of what belongs to those places. Regarding expenditures, he depends on the bursar.

We must obey the infirmarian regarding the case of our health. We are too often inclined to neglect that. We might think we are mortifying ourselves by accepting what the infirmarian prescribes, or we do not want to have exceptions made for us and thus stand out among others, or think others will say we are not mortified, or we might declare we are not sick. We are permitted to let fall some remarks, but when the infirmarian prescribes something we must obey him. If, however, we thought we were not truly sick, we can tell the superior, and then follow his direction. The infirmarian, on his part, must be careful, refraining from exaggerating his precautions so as unreasonably to annoy the patient.

Article IV

We will obey the superior from the time when he first manifests his will, whatever be the way he uses to make it known, and this must be done without objecting or starting an argument.

Because to obey a superior is to obey God, our obedience should be prompt. We must obey as if Christ were directly giving us a command. The Rule does not say: “you must obey the superior at the first manifestation of his will.” The reason is that we must not be content with obeying simply the letter of the order; but as soon as we know what the superior wants, we must obey, since that will in our regard is God’s will. This we must do immediately and do it the way he wants it to be done, although sometimes, for the sake of prudence or some other motive, he has not expressed his whole will by word of mouth.

We must obey the superior even when the superior does not want us to do something which we consider to be very useful – even if there were question of saving a thousand souls, even if the superior is less intelligent than we are, or even when he has a bad intention – a thing which will not happen. Moreover, if that were the case, the evil would not last very long, because he would not be chosen at the next election; but until then it would be necessary to practice patience. And you would have to tolerate that the good you wanted to accomplish has not been done.

We see how Father Claver had no obligation to obey that companion who was a Brother, or even a slave, and it is this that makes his conduct so wonderful. But if that companion had had authority over him, he would simply have followed the rules of true and perfect obedience. This wholehearted obedience to the will of the superior is not a weakness, but a virtue. His will in regard to you is the will of God, so by following it... Do not allege that if you (obey that way) you are not doing it out of love for God. Attribute your repugnance rather to your stubbornness of mind, to your self-love. Moreover, God loves those souls; but if he does not want to save those souls (the way you had in mind), why do you want to save them according to your way? You should remember, after all, that even if (disobeying your superior) you were able to save some souls, that would not do you any good: “what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and he himself suffers loss.”

Also, the good Lord would have blessed your obedience and would have made it produce more abundant fruit than that which you seemed to neglect. If we now consider this matter from the standpoint of the community, you either are a great missionary, that is, one who has great power and talent, or you are a mediocre missionary. In the latter case, how rash it would be on your part to prefer your own judgment to that of your superior. In the first case, what a bad and dangerous example you would give your confreres regarding the good of the mission and of souls. If the missionaries do not accept the views of the superior, he will be embarrassed; he will not be able to do all the good he had planned, and there will be no unity in the community. If, on the contrary, they are one in judgment and in will with the superior, then....

Besides that, if the missionaries adopt the views and intentions of the superior, those projects often will be better executed than if missionaries “did their own thing.” The plan might be better than the one the missionary had conceived, even if the missionary was more talented than the superior, for instance in the matter of catechizing, of preaching, or of developing an idea. However, if the non-expressed intentions of the superior presented grave inconvenience, it would then suffice to fulfill what the superior had explicitly expressed. For example, suppose your superior were to send you to a certain house, telling you something about the disorders against which you should protest. His intention, I suppose, would be that you should attack those disorders in the person of the master and in that of the slaves. However, he does not say that explicitly. You happen to know the master and you foresee that if you ruffle his feelings, he will prevent the good you might otherwise do. In this case, do not ruffle him. This is what is pointed out in Article VII.

That Rule says: “without objecting or starting an argument.” You are not forbidden to make a remark you consider useful for the enlightenment of the superior, and you even should make such a remark; but this is not to be done in order to exempt yourself from a painful task; the remark must be made in a peaceful way. Once it has been made, you must follow the decision made by the superior; you must adapt yourself to his mind and speak only in order to help him decide things with sufficient knowledge of the case. To do this great humility is required, not only in the words you use but with sincerity of heart; for it is possible to use humble words and say things with a tone of humility, without wholly submitting to the will of the superior.

Article V

We must obey even when we foresee great inconveniences, and great difficulties will result from the thing that was commanded. We shall then, in all humility and modesty, also in perfect simplicity and frankness point out those difficulties, without making too many efforts to have the Superior accept our view; and we must be ready to submit ourselves perfectly to what he decides.

Article VI

We will obey the higher (principal) superiors, even when they order things that are contrary to the Rule, or against its spirit alone, every time such a thing will happen; but we should not fail to make observations about that. If they persevere, we will act according to their orders. But, under pain of formal disobedience to the Rule, we must inform the Superior General of the Congregation about that order given by a superior, also about the remarks made to him, and of the answer received from the same. In this we should not listen to our own superior if he forbids recourse to the Superior General.

We mean by “principal” superiors the Superior General, the Provincial Superior, the Superior of the Mission, and the particular superior of the community. It is important for superiors to have very extensive powers, for if it were necessary to have recourse to the Superior General for each particular case, things would drag on because of the distance of the missions (from the Mother House). On the contrary, there is no great danger to be feared that authority will be misused because of the precautions indicated in the Rule. If the superior, in spite of the objections presented by a missionary, insisted on ordering a thing (clearly opposed to the Rule), the missionary should obey. But he has an obligation to write to the Superior General. On the other hand, let him not do this animated by passion, but here is the Rule he should follow in order to do what is perfectly right: let him simply write down what order was given, what objections were made against it, and the answers received from the superior.

Article VII

We will obey according to the spirit and the intentions of the superior in giving the order and we will execute what he wills to its whole extent, even when the superior has not explicitly expressed his intentions, provided those non-expressed intentions do not present grave inconveniences.

This article is an appendix to Article IV and we have explained it when explaining that article.

Article VIII

True obedience is not only an obedience of the will, but a docility and perfect submission of the mind; the mind must judge things as the superior judged the things he has ordered; and because he judges things that way, we must avoid examining and making reflections upon them. We will also avoid with great care scrutinizing the order established in the community. We shall avoid, even with great care, all grumbling and displeasure. We shall never propose our advice against an established custom, or regarding another custom to be established. It will be permitted only to speak about that in a council, and in particular to the superior. And then, we will not cling to our opinion, and we will obey in all simplicity that which has been decided. We shall be satisfied to obey the orders of superiors.

There are three degrees of obedience: first, to do what we are ordered to do; secondly, to will what the superior wills and to do it most goodheartedly; thirdly, to submit our mind to the judgment of the superior, judging things as he judges them and because he judges them that way. This does not mean, of course, that when we see that the superior is evidently making a mistake, we must judge that his judgment is right. It means only that we must not stop to judge what the superior commands. This means that if the thought comes to us to examine or to judge what the superior has ordered, we ought to dismiss such a thought, just as we dismiss evil thoughts, or as we turn our eyes away from a dangerous picture.

We should not examine what is the intention, the conduct or the judgment of a superior, unless it be in order to be instructed and to enter more and more into what he has in mind, just as a Christian who has a strong faith can examine the revealed truths, to penetrate ever more deeply into them and to draw benefits from them for himself and for the neighbor. In a word, we must act with respect to obedience as we do with respect to faith.

Similarly, suppose you obey the order given you by your superior – of course unless what he commands is evidently evil in itself – believing that it is good, you do this without examining the matter. It is true that your superior is not infallible in his judgment; but you know that he is in your regard the transmitter of God's will and that if you obey only after examining the order and after you have become convinced that what he has commanded is indeed the thing that is proper to be done, in this case you are not practicing the virtue of obedience.

We must also be on our guard against examining the order established in the community. Grave disorders follow from such criticism; for judgments and mentalities vary considerably, and what pleases one might not please another. Moreover, when a missionary is sent from one country to another, for instance from Haiti to Bourbon, he would often be prompted to criticize the customs – which differ somewhat – which he could find in the country to which he has come; now the different order in a community might be dictated by different usages in said country.

In such cases constantly new changes would be proposed; it is much more simple to be satisfied to obey. If something seems shocking to you, suffer it patiently. Propose your advice for a change or an innovation only if you are called to the council and an occasion comes up to speak about that. A critical spirit, and especially grumbling, is a bad spirit. It can only cause a disturbance of the peace in a community, and it will cause scandal when the critic is an older missionary and one who has some authority. Grumbling springs first from being inclined to bad humor; then the least thing appears burdensome; then it becomes a habit and we become unbearable to everybody. Secondly, it comes from love of ease. Thirdly, it comes from a selfish spirit which wishes to judge everything. Fourthly, it springs from a certain rigidity of character.

Article IX

Let us also refrain from judging our superior or scrutinizing his conduct, either with respect to the things that belong to his office or those that regard his person. We shall even be more careful not to express to others the judgments the Devil prompts us to make. Never say anything about your superiors except what is good and so as to make others give him precise and perfect obedience.

We are not supposed to judge anyone; a fortiori we should not judge our superior. This does not mean that we must yield to trouble of mind if now and then we happen to commit that fault. We do that because of our wretched nature and the vivacity of our mind. The best way for us is to stop, to turn our attention to something else, to act as if we did not notice anything about our superior's weaknesses.

If we notice something that might be harmful to souls in the superior's behavior and in the way he fulfills his task, we can tell this to his assistant, who has to give warnings to the superior; but then we must be greatly on guard against two things: first, let us refrain from making bitter judgments and from speaking about those faults to our confreres. We should never judge anyone with bitterness; we should not even judge ourselves with bitterness, but always with a mildness inspired by charity. Secondly, we should never talk about such things to our confreres; this would always have bad effects. First of all, if what we say about our Superior is false, this is very mean. If what we say about him is true, we will leave a lasting impression upon the one to whom we communicate the criticism. In this way the authority of the superior is weakened. He will meet with obstacles in his government; he will no longer enjoy freedom in giving orders. In our time people are particularly prompted to judge their superiors, because in the world this is all that one hears and the nature of our civil government is such that it is permitted to judge all its actions. Hence we are often tempted to extend that criticism to the actions of ecclesiastical superiors. It thus comes about that many ecclesiastics permit themselves to judge their Bishops, often going so far as to condemn them. This is a sad condition of affairs. But it would be even worse in a religious community, because there the subjects and the superior are living together and are constantly in contact with one another. If, as a result of this, there is no unity between a superior and his subjects, there will be constant impediments in the way of his action and his direction. He will be afraid of giving orders when orders are useful, for fear of

meeting with opposition or repugnance on the part of his subjects. Hence let us never say anything but good things about our superior, while avoiding to say anything that might flatter his self-love and his vanity.

Article X

All must present perfect readiness to go where their superiors desire to send them and must accept the particular function destined for them. Nevertheless, it is permitted to tell the superiors why they fear to accept a certain task; they can also make known to him their likes and dislikes, but this must be done in perfect simplicity and docility. They should leave immediately when they are told to do so and then fulfill their function, trying to do everything in the spirit of true obedience.

It might happen that we formally disobey a superior, or that we obey him but with resistance; or, finally, we might obey, showing a sort of bad humor and displeasure towards the superior. All that cannot be called good; it does not belong to true obedience. Of course, we could also feel repugnance while trying to be patient. All that is a source of great embarrassment for the superior.

The superior, on his part, must avoid giving a function to a confrere which could be harmful to the good of his soul. Moreover the superior should try, as much as possible, not to cross but rather to follow – to bring about equal good – the likes and dislikes and the inclinations of the missionaries. But when it is demanded for the good of souls, it is proper that missionaries should neglect their likes and serve that which is considered to be useful (for souls). The superior suffers great trouble when his subjects do not practice true obedience. For he sees the good that could be accomplished; he knows that this particular missionary would be more suitable than others for a particular function. But the missionary does not like it and so the superior will see himself obliged to renounce that advantageous project, if he fears that the subject might become guilty of formal disobedience. So sometimes a whole projected work will have to be given up. He fears that the subject will obey only while offering resistance and showing displeasure.

The case will be quite different if the missionary is supple and ready in the hands of his superior, if he is in perfect union with him and knows how to overcome natural repugnances, even when nature is not yet perfectly subjugated. In this case, the superior will feel free and it will be easy for him to decide things.

We must be ready to obey in everything. But one of the greatest difficulties is when an order is given to go to a different place. When we are in a particular locality and are doing good work there, and we are then ordered to go elsewhere it is natural to experience pain. Thousands of pretexts present themselves to our mind to excuse ourselves from accepting the change. There is the good we are doing, the experience we have acquired, etc. But these are all vain excuses. What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but fail to do God's will?

It is dangerous and evil to cling to one place; that is why, though there are real inconveniences in such changes, communities that are well ordered frequently make their members change places. We shall not have to wait a long time before we shall not have to fear such changes because in general we shall be perambulating, mobile missionaries; we shall not have a fixed home. We might, nevertheless, have some fixed communities and then those who belong to them will have to be ready to leave when the superior will consider it proper to do so.

In spite of that, it is permissible to make some remarks to the superior, provided it be done with docility and humility; and we even ought to do so, so that he might know what will serve the good of the missionaries and the good of souls. For instance, when a missionary has a particular facility and liking for preaching, and if hearing confessions were dangerous for him. But, we repeat once more, let him be ready to act according to what the superior will decide. And he must not even delay to execute what he has been ordered to do.

Some might object: the missionary spirit should be a free spirit. Let us make a distinction. An apostolic man must be free from the shackles of his passions. This is true, but this does not mean that he must freely follow all the fiery promptings of a lively and excited imagination. True liberty, the liberty of apostles, consists in being wholly abandoned to the will of God, without any attachment to prevent us from being docile instruments in his hands. Now obedience, far from being an obstacle to liberty, fosters that liberty and makes us more united to God's Will, which is manifested by our superiors. History also shows us that among the apostolic men who have done good for souls, there have been more who were members of a Congregation than were seculars.

The great principle that should profoundly inspire us, if we want to do some good, is that we are in reality useless instruments in God's hands. Even if we possessed the greatest talents and natural advantages, it is only through grace that we can convert souls. The one and only thing we must take care of is to

remove as much as possible all defects which affect us as instruments of God – defects which could prevent us from doing greater good, as we are employed by God’s hands. For the fewer defects we have, the more beautiful will be the work of the Divine Workman. A perfect instrument, of course, is one that has no defects.

Article XI

No one should at any time undertake a ministry without receiving an order from the Superior in that respect. And it is to him that all requests must be transmitted when those requests are made outside the function (obedience) that has been entrusted to us.

We should act only when an “obedience” or a task has been entrusted to us and we must act within the order received. If a project for a good work is proposed to us and it is not within our “obedience” or task, we must send word of it to the superior and let him decide what we ought to do. If the superior cannot be approached because he is at a good distance from us, it then belongs to the missionary to judge whether it is proper and useful to engage in that good work; he then presumes the superior’s permission.

It is important for us to act thus only as subject to the superior. Otherwise we would not have any order. The superior would not know what to do; it might happen sometimes that he had accepted a mission for some other good work and then he would be unable to find someone to engage in it.

Moreover, we should not imagine that this dependence and that subjection to the superior narrows down the work of the missionary too much. When a task is given to a missionary, it ordinarily gives a rather large field for his endeavors and his zeal. For instance, when he is charged with the care of a certain section. In such a case he can do all the good in his power within that section for which an occasion is offered; he can engage himself in all sorts of works which his zeal inspires, unless there is question of some extraordinary work which could have great consequences, such as founding a religious house for women. He would then have to consult his superior. He also should not go beyond the boundaries of the section entrusted to him, for instance to preach in another section; he then would require the permission of his superior. To act without such a permission would lead to disorder; the superior would no longer be able to choose freely. Also, in order to do a small amount of good outside our

territory, it is not proper to omit a greater good that can be done within our section. We should remain within the limits of the territory to which our superior has sent us and act in obedience to his will.

Article XII

No one will ever take steps or use any indirect means in order to be sent, or not to be sent, to any work or mission; or in order to remain, or to be called back from a place or ministry. Let everyone be satisfied with expressing to the Superior what are his inclinations and aptitudes and then keep quiet about the matter.

We should never have recourse to a third person to get the permission to go to a particular mission or to be given a particular ministry; for instance, asking an Apostolic Prefect or someone else to tell the superior to give us that appointment. You do not dare to ask the superior because you are afraid that he will refuse your request. So your personal desire, your self-love or passion prompts you to obtain that favor by means of a third person to whom the superior will not refuse such a thing. This is not being loyal and it is doing harm to your community; for you put an impediment in the way of your superior, taking away the freedom he needs to do good. Unfortunately, such subterfuge afflicts many communities; certain members want to “do their own thing” and have recourse to all sorts of pernicious means. That is why we must be on our guard lest we imitate the improper conduct.

Article XIII

They will obey their Superiors not as men obey men, but as one must act towards God Himself. Their obedience must also be holy, prompt, exact, humble, gentle, simple, full of love and joy.

Our obedience must be supernatural. He who obeys a man, as man obeys another man, always does harm to himself. Moreover, he loses his time, for that kind of obedience shall in no way count for his heavenly reward. Finally, a habit to obey for a purely natural motive will have bad consequences; for then he obeys through self-interest, or because he recognized the superior talent of the one whom he obeys. Or again, if those are the reasons for his obedience, as soon as those motives no longer exist he will no longer obey when he is given another superior in whom he does not find the same kind of superiority of talent.

It is very important, therefore, to learn to be obedient solely to God in the person of your superior, and then you will obey any kind of superior. It is not that the qualities we recognize in a superior, or the talent he has to attract minds, do not greatly incline people and facilitate prompt and joyful obedience. This is not a bad thing, and because such persons naturally prompt people to obey them, this is not a good reason to resist them. However, we must look upon those things as means and helps to make us obey; but these should not be the motives of our obedience.

The great principle which we should never forget is that we must obey GOD ALONE in the person of our superiors. From this will flow the qualities our obedience should have if we thus seek to do the Will of God as manifested by our superiors. It will be prompt. This does not mean we should immediately start running when the superior has spoken; but our will should immediately agree and offer no resistance. It will be exact, doing all that the superior wants with respect to the thing itself, and also as regards the time, places and circumstances. If, on the contrary, we were merely obeying a man, we would change and would refuse to obey his orders; we would do what we like according to our own judgment. We must, therefore, be full of love and joy, because every action we perform will be an act of love for God. This is a source of great joy and consolation for the superior and for those who obey in that way.

Article XIV

We shall practice perfect obedience to our superiors not only with respect to the function he has entrusted to us, which we will accept, but in general to all our conduct towards him.

Article XV

In their words, their actions, their bearing, in all their conduct, they must show respect to their superiors. This respect, however, should not prevent them from acting towards him with simplicity, frankness and openness, which must spring from true affection for him, as for the very person of Jesus Christ, whose place the Superior takes.

They must see God in the person of their superior. They will then preserve modesty and respect in his regard and obey him, and their whole conduct will bear those qualities. Together with respect, they must be full of

affection towards him. Let there be no affectation in the marks of respect given to superiors. What is necessary between the superior and the subjects is that there be not familiarity properly so-called, but a certain ease, simplicity, frankness and openness of heart. The trouble the superior takes to be useful to us and at the same time not to cause us any pain, besides the great motive that he represents our Lord, should make us do everything possible to make his task easier to perform. This we shall do if we always execute everything he orders or suggests, giving him great freedom to act in our regard the way he chooses.

It is true that it is better for a superior to have some hard things to bear than to have consolations; but we are not the ones who should provide sufferings for him. On the contrary, we ought to do everything in our power to avoid giving him any trouble in his direction of the community.

Article XVI

We shall accept in a spirit of religion and with great mildness, modesty and humility, the reproofs made by our Superiors as if they came from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Instead of yielding to chagrin and displeasure towards the one who made the corrections, we shall try to preserve always the same affection towards him.

Among us corrections may never be made in a harsh manner. Our spirit must be a spirit of mildness and gentleness. If a superior, nevertheless, happened to yield to anger and spoke harshly to us, we should always accept the correction with calmness, gentleness, humility and submission, even if the superior is making a mistake. No doubt, in such a case it is not our Lord who is unjustly reproving you, for our Lord cannot err. But our Lord is nevertheless permitting that sort of thing, and this correction is for our own good. Let us then be on our guard against yielding to bad humor; in order to benefit by the correction we must be modest and humble.

Article XVII

We shall avoid yielding to self-love or to vanity, excusing ourselves and justifying ourselves, claiming we are not guilty or reprehensible. If we are not guilty, we must make it known in all simplicity and modesty if this seems useful for the glory of God. Let us not be scrupulous about

that. But if there is no reason for exculpating ourselves, we shall do something that is pleasing to God by not exonerating ourselves.

The Saints have followed the rule of not exculpating themselves when accused every time the glory of God did not demand such exoneration. But this is very difficult for persons who have not wholly overcome their self-love. These always find pretexts for excusing themselves. At the same time, however, since they find in themselves some reproaches for following their self-love, they experience both interior and exterior trouble.

When charity requires it, we should exonerate ourselves. For instance, if someone imagines that we have shown that we despise him and we fear on that account he will be ill-disposed towards us; or the superior thinks we showed great repugnance in accepting a certain job which he considered proper and useful to entrust to us, and he now will not dare to give us that job. In cases like that we must exculpate ourselves, doing it with calm and simplicity. I repeat this, for there are shrewd and proud worldlings who will use humble words and gestures when excusing themselves to get what they want; or again, some will exonerate themselves in an angry manner thereby making their excuses less credible.

When charity or the glory of God does not demand that you exculpate yourself, you should then remain silent, and this will be a very virtuous act. We know the beautiful example of St. Claver. This good man did not excuse himself but asked pardon, falling on his knees.

Here is the general rule we should follow: enter into yourself and try to become wholly indifferent to what others will think or say about you. You will then be able to judge things properly and decide whether you should exonerate yourself or not, for the sake of God's glory. If you have exonerated yourself when it would have been better to remain silent, humble yourself before God but do not be troubled; preserve a peaceful mind.

Article XVIII

When the Superior insists, after we have exonerated ourselves and refuses to believe us, we must then remain silent and rejoice with all our heart before our Lord, thanking him for the grace resulting from being treated that way and thus being able to atone for past faults. Let us then try to preserve the same affection and respect for our superior as before.

When the superior seems not to believe that we are right, although in reality we are not guilty, then this is a small humiliation for us which we should accept with joy. This humiliation we have well merited, not because of the recent fault for which we were unjustly reproached, but for many other faults for which we deserve great humiliations. Let us then place ourselves in an attitude of great indifference with respect to ourselves, and we will not excuse ourselves when we are falsely accused, whether it be done by a stranger or by our superior; it is even more important to do so in the latter case.

When we are young we are less shocked when we receive a reprimand, for we have not yet done great things which could make us have exalted ideas about ourselves; but we have then also less control over our passions which happen to be fiery. When we are older, we are more calm; also we have virtue that is more firmly established, if we have striven for spiritual progress. On the other hand, we have increased our self-esteem and the esteem of others because of our works, our success, our experience, etc. There is therefore a greater need for us to receive a reproof properly. We must be always watchful over ourselves and struggle against self-love. Although you have become mature men, remember that you remain a child of God. So obey and submit with the docility of a child to God who is represented by your superior.

Article XIX

Let us never be ashamed of being docile and obedient with respect to our Superior in the presence of strangers. And let us be as exact, as prompt and also as humble and modest, as satisfied in our obedience when we are outside the community as when we are in it.

Within our community we would not dare to manifest disobedience, for we thereby would suffer the contempt of our confreres. But when we are with strangers, it often happens that we fear to exhibit subjection, because people of the world do not appreciate that which is really great; they often seem to have low esteem for being submissive to another. For instance, if you are with your superior they will be occupied with your superior and you will be treated as one treats a child. Accept this, and act as you would do in your community, that is, with the docility and respectfulness of a (good) child towards your superior. Those who are particularly exposed to be wanting in that simplicity and humility are those who have acquired some esteem outside their ordinary functions, for example, through their preaching. If besides this, they have a wrong attitude of

mind, they will feel ashamed of seeming to be submissive (to a superior). This will prompt them to take a wrong attitude. Let them be watchful over themselves, refuse to yield to their foolish self-love, which could produce great scandal. Act as a child. If your superior tells you before others to go out and fetch something for him, go out promptly, modestly and in all simplicity. Be careful not to appear to be annoyed, sad, or especially, do not look peevish. Such conduct will be very edifying for the neighbor and will be very meritorious for you.

Article XX

Older men, those who have had principal charges and functions, those who have done great work for the glory of God and the salvation of souls and, in general, all those who have acquired the greatest authority in the Congregation, far from being exempt from obedience, must practice it in the most perfect degree, so as to be an example for all the others.

The reason for this article is evident. Everyone knows the great influence which the example of older men and of those who have been endowed with the greatest authority have on the rest of their confreres, and in particular on the younger men and those who have just entered into a community. The latter are full of good desires, but they are naturally inclined to follow the customs of the house they have entered. They have their eyes principally on the older men and on those who have exercised the greatest authority. On that account the bad example of older men would cause true scandal; not only would they fail to edify others, but they could be the occasion for a fall and the infidelity for their confreres. On the contrary, their good example will be a powerful incentive for the younger men and for the newly arrived with respect to obedience and fervor.

CHAPTER FIVE

On Community Life in General

Article I

It is an important and fundamental rule in the Congregation that its members should live in a community, being subject to a common Rule, and that they should never work separately and alone outside their community.

When a missionary lives alone there is a great danger that he will become lax. There are terrible examples of this. In China there is perhaps less danger of disorder than elsewhere because over there the European missionary cannot do anything outside his residence without being seen and without causing a very great scandal. But in our missions, and especially in the colonies, it is rather easy to accumulate a great amount of money and there are dreadful dangers. Isolation fosters relaxation of the wrong kind. Besides this, the missionary is deprived of the consolations of community life; he is inclined to become discouraged; you will find few who are able to undergo that trial with the strength of soul and the patience of Father Laval. Among one hundred you will not find one.

That is why our missionaries will not be sent to a work where they will be alone. Our first three missionaries were sent that way because this was dictated by the circumstances. This could be done for instance to go and explore a particular territory about which we have insufficient knowledge. But these are extraordinary circumstances, and for such projects we should choose men who are solid for whom there would be no danger, although they would suffer from isolation. We have seen by the letters written to us by our first three missionaries how painful it was for them to be alone. They urged us to send them confreres; and they complained about their "relaxation," although in this they were not saying the truth, for on the contrary their fervor constantly increased.

Article II

When it is necessary to send out some missionaries to exercise their ministry living alone, we will choose for such a mission those who are most exact with respect to the Rule and who apply themselves most to the interior life. As much as possible we shall not send the same men too

frequently for such a solitary mission. Ordinarily we shall put an interval of one month between missions of this kind.

It will be permissible to detach a member of a community to send him for a particular mission, but it is necessary then not always to choose the same one. Ordinarily let there be an interval of one month between such missions; this will enable the missionary to recover his fervor in recollection and in the observance of the Rules. Also this will prevent him from acquiring habits of freedom of action and so find it difficult after a while to observe the Rule.

Article III

Communities should never have less than six members. They should not have too many members either. If a certain mission requires more than thirteen men, we shall try to establish two houses there, and each house will be established at the center of the portion of the country assigned to it.

This article has not been observed. The needs of our diverse missions did not allow its application. Nevertheless, as much as possible, there will be no less than six in a community, because when we have fewer in number, regularity will be greatly endangered. Neither should we have a much greater number of members in a community; for if too many are gathered in one community, the other missions or other parts of a country will suffer on that account.

Article IV

It is not necessary that the missionaries who make up those communities should always be together; each one can be divided into two or three others, according to the needs of the country and particular circumstances. Each portion of a community will be placed according to the orders of the Superior (as is said in the First Part, Chapter VI) in the different quarters – as assigned by the Superior – and they will dwell there as much as is necessary to instruct and sanctify the people of those quarters. After that, according to the orders of the Superior, they will have to go to other quarters to do the same things, or they will return to the community.

Article V

Every time the Superior thus sends two or more missionaries for the exercise of the evangelical ministry, he will make one of them the Superior whom the others will have to obey exactly.

There will always be a superior in order that it will always be possible to practice obedience. When the superior of a community sends two or more together, it is always necessary to obey one who will act as a superior and is appointed by the superior to be obeyed as one obeys a superior, though he is not addressed as “Father Superior,” and his authority must be equally respected.

Article VI

During all that time they will observe all the rules which are observed in the community; as much as possible they will follow the exercises in common and will not neglect anything so that the exercises be followed fervently.

The exercises which are not observed in common in the community, such as the recitation of the Divine Office, nevertheless will be made at the proper hours, if this is possible and as much as possible.

Article VII

Although it is not absolutely necessary to have their spiritual exercises at the very hours during which they are followed in the community, the definite hours for those exercises should nevertheless be determined, keeping in mind not to interfere with their ministry; let them have definite hours for those exercises and let missionaries be faithful to them as much as possible.

There would be an advantage if the exercises could be followed at the same hours as in the community; but here it is necessary to keep in mind before all else the needs of souls and the ministry. But once the hours have been determined, let us carefully hold to them. Where there is exterior disorder there will soon be interior disorder also.

Article VIII

Neither those who are thus occupied in a station nor those who live in a community will exercise the holy ministry during the hours determined for the exercises of devotion, for the meals and for the recreations except in extraordinary and pressing cases, and then with the permission of the Superior.

If this article is not observed, all regularity will disappear. Someone will say, is it not better that I go to hear confessions, to visit the sick, than to stay in recreation? No, it is no! For maintaining regularity is extremely important. Since our communities have few members, if we absent ourselves from them for the “sake of utility” we will soon have no one, or only one for recreation and for the other common exercises, and there will be no more regularity. That is why we must give much thought to weighing the terms of the Rule properly. Except in extraordinary and pressing cases. Thus it is not sufficient that it be an extraordinary case, such as going to see a sick person who has asked you to visit him or her. It is also necessary that it be a pressing case, for instance that the sick person is in danger, or if you do not go there immediately the sick person will suffer much. In order to have regularity it is necessary when we enter into a particular country to study its customs, the hours of labor of poor people, and then to appoint the time for our exercises accordingly; for example, we could have our dinner while the poor are working.

Article IX

Food in a Station, or when the community is gathered, should be poor and ordinary, as close as possible to that of the people we are taking care of. Nevertheless it should be wholesome and substantial.

We must note that what is common and ordinary in one country is not common in another. The Rule speaks of the food that is common in the country where we happen to be. Our food must be poor, but not in the sense that it must inconvenience the missionary. The missionary spirit does not consist in austerity. What is fundamental in the apostolic spirit is that the missionary be indifferent to everything which concerns his own person for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Our Lord said to his Apostles: "Eat what is offered to you." This is not a rule of austerity, but it is a rule of indifference with respect to everything that concerns the care of the body. Before he went to the missions, Father Le Vasseur wanted the missionaries to conform to those poor slaves with respect to food. But he certainly changed his mind afterwards, and he feeds his missionaries properly. For it is necessary before all else to preserve the health of the missionaries for the good of souls. When the missionaries have arrived in a country, let them assemble to determine the kind of food they will take according to what is eaten in that country. This they will do according to the spirit of the Rule. With respect to details, let him who is in charge of temporal affairs decide what will be offered.

Article X

We should not take meals in the homes of people of the world unless it is absolutely necessary, or when the success of our ministry absolutely demands it, as when we are occupied with instruction of the Blacks in the place where they dwell. We might then perhaps take one or two meals with their masters. It belongs to the superior to decide whether that should be done, after he has considered this thing before God.

There is great danger in taking meals with people of the world. This leads to dissipation, to disgust with regularity, etc. This rule is particularly important in the colonies. We could easily get lost if we did not observe it. In non-civilized countries there is not so much danger. On the contrary, there will often be a great advantage in accepting to eat with a native and there will be no danger of yielding to sensuality.

In our work for the Blacks in the colonies, perhaps we shall have the obligation to take a meal with the master occasionally, if the master does not tolerate our work otherwise. For we must, before all else, keep in mind the good of the Blacks. But we must not go to dine with people of the world without a serious reason and then only for the purpose of doing good for someone by accepting that invitation to dine. Then we must explain our reasons to the superior and follow what he decides.

Article XI

In those circumstances, we shall behave according to the rules of the utmost sobriety. We shall remain at table as shortly as possible and we shall avoid taking drinks.

When we are dining with those people we must be on our guard so as to avoid all excess; by this we do not mean to eat so as to do harm to ourselves – a thing that will not happen in mission countries and which, moreover, would be very dangerous in hot climates; but let us avoid taking pleasure in what we eat and seeking particular dishes and repeated servings. We should not manifest to them the pleasure we have in satisfying our tastes. This would be out of order and unworthy of us. Let us not be like those St. Paul speaks of, “whose belly is their god.”

In the colonies, in the houses of the rich, the table is covered with a very great variety of foods; there might be as many as twelve or fifteen. It is clear that the host will not be displeased if you fail to eat portions of all of them. Let us remain a minimum of time at table, offering good excuses which will in no way offend the host. With respect to drink, Father Tisserant said that at Santo Domingo it was necessary to take alcoholic beverages. On the other hand, a medical doctor who has practiced medicine in Senegal for twenty years told me that they are harmful; and I am inclined to believe that he is right.

Article XII

Every six weeks or two months, the missionaries will return and get together in the community to spend two or three days there in order to reanimate their fervor in the spiritual life. The superiors will choose the best time for the reunion of the missionaries and for the advantage of all, taking into consideration their particular tasks; but it must be done in such a way that the missionaries will never be more than two months without such reunion.

Retreats are very useful. First, the missionary who remains a long time without making a retreat will lose much of his fervor. Secondly, by making a retreat, we imitate our Lord; after he had sent out his disciples to preach to the people he made them rest awhile. Thirdly, during a retreat the missionaries can consult others regarding their doubts and troubles. Fourthly, the superior will

learn things that concern the mission and this enables him to give better direction to missionaries.

Article XIII

During those reunions every missionary will write down all that concerns the ministry he has exercised and this written account will be given to the superior. In it the missionary will describe everything that has taken place in the exercise of the holy functions during the preceding time, what kind of ministry he has exercised, how often he has preached and how many persons he has dealt with in the confessional. He should state how frequently people come to confession, whether catechetical instruction has been given, the number of children and adults who have been helped, whether the missionary has been an instrument of divine mercy for remarkable conversions, what difficulties have been encountered on the part of men in the exercise of the ministry, what the missionary has done to overcome them and how well he has succeeded. The missionary will go into greater detail regarding the ministry exercised for the benefit of the poor, for whose welfare we must give our principal attention. In general, the missionary shall describe in that account all the outstanding things that took place in his ministry, and the good God accomplished through his instrumentality.

Article XIV

The superiors will give every individual, according to his condition and office, the counsels that are suitable. The missionaries should also examine themselves, writing down the results of their examination. This will enable them to give a proper account to the superior of the Congregation regarding themselves and also regarding those who are subject to them.

Article XV

Every year a suitable time will be chosen for the retreat in common for the missionaries. The retreat shall last from eight to ten days. If there are several communities in one country, the missionaries will assemble in the “mother house.” A retreat should be a time of holy repose which

brings consolation to the missionaries and enables them to renew one another spiritually in fervent love towards God and zeal for the salvation of souls; also that they may be strengthened in the observance of their Rules. Those who have failed to make a retreat together with others gathered in that annual exercise will not neglect making a retreat in the course of the year.

When we are exercising an active ministry retreats are a necessity. A retreat is also a great consolation for missionaries. Now, we must give them all possible consolations, but especially those which do good to their souls. Moreover, such a retreat preserves love among the missionaries and between the communities of the same country. Without such a common retreat, missionaries either never or rarely see one another. Finally, when many communities are making a retreat together, there is an occasion for consulting confreres regarding cases of conscience in which there might be difficulty if it were necessary to consult men of one's own community, for these might know the persons involved in said case of conscience.

If a missionary has not been able to follow the common retreat, he will make a private retreat. But this should be an extraordinary case. The common retreat should be followed by all except when there is real necessity, in spite of the fact that travel over poor roads might be difficult and that souls might have to be neglected for some time. It will be more useful for the flock to have the shepherd make a good retreat because it will make him a better missionary. So much a retreat will be good for the missionary and good for the people he is sent to serve.

Article XVI

During that general retreat the superiors will see to it that every day some of the principal points of the Rule and the things that are most important in the missionaries' holy functions will be explained. Those conferences must be very simple and the lecturer must avoid saying brilliant things in order to distinguish himself before his confreres. There will be question only of the abuses which might have been introduced and of emphasizing the importance of certain points which have been neglected. The lecturer will also explain certain points which need to be properly understood.

If the lecturer sought to be brilliant when explaining the Rule, he would fail to impress the retreatants. So let lecturers speak with great simplicity.

Article XVII

The superiors of the various houses will also assemble every day to take counsel together regarding the affairs of the mission, the condition of the community and its members, so as to find a remedy for all the difficulties and foster the greater glory of God, assisted by those they will have chosen to facilitate their counsels. For this they should always choose those who are most filled and animated with the spirit of our Rules, who have the greatest zeal for the salvation of souls and who are doing things that are truly good. They should not choose those who are merely great scholars and have great minds.¹ In those gatherings all the Rules laid down (Part III) for Councils must be observed.

Article XVIII

Before parting company, the superiors will write a description of the state of the mission, mentioning also what resolutions were made in their reunions, and the principal motives for said resolutions. This memoir will be read and examined in these same reunions; it will be signed by all who have been members of the assembly; then this will be sent to the superior of the Congregation, so that he will be informed about all that is taking place, that nothing might be done without his orders.

It is important that the superior be informed about everything that is taking place. He must know what resolutions were made, so that he might direct everything with full knowledge of the facts. The observance of this article will give great authority to the superior. This is necessary to prevent any schism or disunion, as well as for the sake of preserving the unity of spirit of the Congregation. This is particularly important with respect to countries which might provide candidates to the communities that are established there without having to get them from the houses in Europe – a thing that may happen later on in Haiti.

¹ (N.B. The last sentence of this Article was suppressed in 1945).

In order that the memoir sent to the superior might not be misleading, as could happen if the one who wrote it did not show it to anyone else – even if he had great talent for carrying others away – the Rule tells us here to use two precautions: first, this memoir must be read in the assemblies of which the writer was a member; secondly, it is not sufficient to write down the resolutions taken, but mention must be made of all the motives that inspired them.

Article XIX

It is during those general gatherings of the missionaries that the changes, appointments and displacements will be made. However, if there were an urgent need of making a change during the year, the Superior of the Province will be permitted to make it, after informing the Superior General.

As a rule, changes should be made during general reunions, for it is proper that they be made with the agreement of the various superiors. Otherwise, if the Provincial Superior were alone charged with that matter, he might be tempted to favor one section of the country where he happens to reside. Nevertheless when there is urgency, he has the power to make such a change. He then writes to the Superior General and without waiting for a reply he makes the change. The missionary must obey immediately without examining whether this is or is not an urgent case and whether or not it is painful to him. Secondly, it will be considered a great source of happiness for particular superiors when once more they become ordinary members and obey as such. In such a spirit of obedience they will find great power to support the yoke of subjection to superiors. If the Provincial Superior is absent, the oldest among the superiors will then be considered to be the superior.

Article XX

The Superior of the Province will be the only Superior during general reunions. All other Superiors will have the rank of ordinary missionaries during that time.

CHAPTER SIX

Rules to be Observed in the Community

Article I

As much as possible the time for rising in communities will be one hour before the ordinary time when the people of the country where they are get up. A suitable time will be given after that for getting washed and dressed and other necessary things at that time. After that there will be one hour of meditation and the prayers said at that time. Meditation will be made as in the novitiate.

That rule has for its purpose to give the missionary enough time for freely making his meditation before the people of the country come to ask things from the missionaries. This is particularly necessary in uncivilized countries in which people will constantly be around us. A sufficient time will be given for doing what is necessary at that time and for getting dressed. If there are those who can make the bed and take care of the room, let this be done. It is then not necessary for the missionary to do that himself; he will thus have more time for other things. In that case it would not be necessary to give thirty minutes to the missionaries from their time of rising to the time for meditation.

Meditation should occupy one hour; this will seem difficult when distractions plague the missionaries, but there will be a benefit for the soul in spite of all that. This time of meditation is more important than if it were used to prepare a catechetical instruction or something else, though it might not seem so. Perseverance in making one's meditation is a great means to make progress in perfection, in spite of the distractions we might suffer.

There have been great saints, men and women, who for a long time had distractions in their prayers. It is preferable to leave the novitiate with what has been called a meditation of distraction than with an emotional (sensible) meditation, for the missionary needs a mental prayer that is solid.

They will make their meditation as is done in the novitiate. This means that it will be done in common with others. This meditation done in company with others draws more grace down upon those who practice it. Moreover there is a stimulation through the presence of confreres; whereas when the meditation is done privately one might yield to sleep.

Article II

After meditation each missionary will say his Mass at the hour and the altar determined for him.

This presupposes that there is a complete community and that there is a chapel. But wherever we are, there should be a definite time for saying Mass.

Article III

Every day, as much as possible, before the midday meal the missionaries will make their particular examen during a quarter of an hour, according to the manner used in the novitiate.

This will be done as much as possible before the midday meal. If it has been impossible to do it at that time, it must be done at some other time. Someone might say: "This is useless. There are other things I could do which are more useful." This is not so! That time of particular examen is usefully employed. Even if during that quarter of an hour you merely remained recollected before God. If you find nothing in your examen, you can remain before our Lord with the desire that he will make you know your wretchedness and your (spiritual) needs. Moreover, if you have no need of particular examen, your confreres might have such a need. It is important for the life of a community to keep that exercise in common; it is the second one of the day. If this common exercise is eliminated, soon there will be no more particular examen.

Article IV

Meals will be taken in common. There will be reading at table as is done in the novitiate. The reading will be devotional and recreative. In the matter of sermons, we shall never read any but those that are devout and apostolic. Twice a year the Rule will be read.

If there are not enough confreres (let us say there were only three), we could be satisfied with reading Holy Scripture at the beginning of the meal, but then we should train a child or an adult to do the reading and we could give them some recompense for it. This is what we have done in the novitiate when we had few members. We formed a child who at first read badly, but later

tolerably well. That reading must be devout and recreative. We could read the History of the Church, the Lives of the Saints, and certain sermons from time to time. But we should not read sermons constantly. We should also not read merely apostolic sermons or those which might turn us away from the kind of sermons we are called to preach.

Article V

After the two principal meals there will be one hour of recreation. No one should exempt himself from it without a good reason and without permission of the Superior. A very serious reason would be necessary for missing two recreations the same day.

The missionaries will do their best to spend their recreations together. This is an important point to maintain union among the members of a community. If we do not see one another during recreations we shall soon become strangers to one another. Let no one say: "but I shall not know what to say during recreation." Such a difficulty is only imaginary. Let us be peaceful; once recreation has begun we shall always find something to say, here or in mission countries; for over there missionaries lead an active life. Missionaries are not cooped up in a novitiate. Missionaries can always find something to talk about; and if we find nothing, our confreres will find matter for conversation.

Article VI

We shall converse with gaiety, gentleness, charity, attention, obligingness and simplicity. We shall carefully avoid disputations and contentions. Superiors will never tolerate disputations. We shall not talk about theological matters nor about cases of conscience. As much as possible, recreations should be edifying and agreeable to all.

In order to avoid dissipation for some and contention for others, we should observe the rules expressed in this article. If you observe them, you and your confreres will greatly benefit by those recreations. There are persons who always want to talk about devout things during recreation; others want to talk only of amusing things. Neither is right. If you take a firm resolution of talking always about pious things, you will end by falling into a quarrel, and minds will feel constricted. If a talk about piety is not pleasant, it will not be useful. In order that a devout talk should produce a good effect, it is necessary that the words

should flow naturally from a heart that is full of devotion. In those devout conversations what is our purpose? It is to animate us with true piety and prevent us yielding to dissipation.

Now, this means is not necessary in the novitiate, since there on the one hand the exercises of the whole day in general inspire piety; and on the other hand we have nothing that would lead us to dissipation. In a novitiate like ours we are not many; we are not like those who live in a seminary which has many students, and where there are some who might engage in conversations that lead to dissipation and even are dangerous.

Besides that, in a Congregation there should be perfect union. Now pious conversations will not be pleasing to everyone. If, therefore, they are out of order, there will be disunion between those who like and those who dislike such conversations. Some will be called fervent men; others will be branded as lukewarm. If pious conversations become usual, many will feel annoyed and may even become vexed, for among these there are those who truly love God. I have known such seminarians at St. Sulpice who were very good men and became very good priests, but they felt awkward with respect to that kind of conversation during recreation.

Finally, there is another inconvenience in such conversations, and the bad effect is considerable: they are the occasion for great temptations to self-love for those who constantly talk about divine things. This is the reason why, from the very beginning, we have not desired to make it a custom in our recreations to talk about devout things in the novitiate.

Father Collin at Issy seminary, who had an ardent desire for devout conversations, thought this strange and found it difficult to adjust himself to that rule. But later on he got accustomed to the rule which prohibited such things and confessed he was greatly pleased with it, and that after the recreation it was easy for him to remain recollected. It is true that Father Lasalle and Father Eudes established the practice of devout conversation in their Rules; they adopted that measure to prevent neglect of such pious conversations. The one who was questioned by the president of the group had to speak about a definite subject, as was determined by the Rule. Those who belong to a Congregation where that custom is obligatory must respect the guidance of those wise men, who no doubt considered such a rule proper in their particular circumstances.

This is not a good reason for us to make such a custom obligatory. Other founders who were not less wise have not desired to put that in their Rules. Father Olier and St. Vincent de Paul did not make such a thing obligatory. After all, such conversations are merely an external means to impress the senses and the mind and to foster piety. Missionaries should have hearts that are wholly given to God and it is not necessary for that purpose to have pious conversations.

Some might still object that we have the example of our Lord, whose every word referred to his Father. We answer: first, that Christ had a divine power (virtue) so that all his words could and should have affected his hearers, although he did not always speak about God. Secondly, the evangelist recalls only the principal words of our Lord, and it is probable that he spoke also of human things to descend to the level of his hearers. It has also been said that the Saints constantly spoke about God. This is not true. In the lives of the Saints, the authors principally report the devout words because these are usually more striking and because historians neglect the others. Nevertheless we notice in their lives some traits which show they also spoke of other things, that they said amusing things, became men with men, and this is the way we win our neighbor.

Mother Agnes played hide-and-seek with her religious Sisters. It is true that it was recorded that one day Father Olier reproved an ecclesiastic for not thinking of divine things; this was at a time when he was asking this clergyman what he was thinking about. It was at a moment when Father Olier was completely absorbed in the thought of God. But I do not believe that Father Olier under ordinary circumstances made reproofs like that to the seminarians.

So we should not desire to talk all the time about devout things. Neither should we say that we will never talk about matters of piety during recreation. If we love God, if we love our state of life, it will be natural to talk about such things and we will like to talk about them. No doubt recreations are for the sake of re-creating ourselves. But if your heart is wholly God-given, you will not dislike it when someone speaks about him. On the contrary, dissipation does not truly refresh you. There are people who when they notice that someone is mentally tired or sick, seek to make the person become dissipated. This is a mistake; they thus only aggravate the evil. The thing that serves to relax us is a peaceful and gentle expanding of mind and heart. Therefore we should like and esteem devout conversations, but let such conversations be tempered by lovable gaiety. Let us not force anything so as to start such a conversation, nor try to prolong them. We are permitted to ask someone to explain a text we have not properly understood, or mention something that has impressed us. However, let

us not be eager to say such a thing, nor force the conversation into such matters. It might happen that we have said something of a devout nature and have noticed the annoyance of one or other confrère; it was not exactly what you said but the way you said it that they disliked.

Talk with simplicity, from the abundance of the heart; make no efforts, remain calm and self-possessed. Have no other intention than that of pleasing God when you are at recreation, and aim at pleasing the neighbor by contributing to a good recreation for him.

Here are the faults we should try to avoid regarding recreation: First, avoid taciturnity, which comes from melancholy, from some pain we are suffering, from boredom, from a liking for some particular occupation. These are purely human motives, and these we must despise and do our best to overcome these repugnances. Even if it comes from the motive that we prefer to talk with God than with men, we should not remain silent; for this would be wanting in charity. Let us not mention some seminarians who spend their recreations in that kind of silence. What the *Imitation of Christ* says about the loss of the time when we are conversing with men must be understood as referring to a religious who loses himself in earthly things. Charity demands that we be communicative, ready to keep up a conversation with a confrère.

Secondly, there is dissipation. Let us always avoid screaming with laughter. We can imagine our Lord smiling, but not laughing in that way. Then there is vanity sometimes. Some talk through vanity, and this is the worst defect. Other confreres do not talk for such a purpose; however, when they have said something for fun, or something that pleased others, or expressed themselves gracefully, they become self-complacent and self-laudatory. Or again, when what they have said is badly received, it bothers them throughout the day. Now all such thoughts full of self-love should be dismissed. We should not say that all conversation about worldly things, about politics, etc. should be banned from our conversation. Let us also avoid insisting on saying things which are contradicted by others, for we should avoid quarrels. If we happen to have an opinion which differs from that of another, let us state it in all simplicity, but refrain from controversy. Avoid trying to say “smart” things, paying compliments as is done in the world; such things are connected with vanity. Others are even inspired by a sort of pride. Some want to talk all the time, or some want to talk only of history, of literature, or of science. Let us avoid this, for such conversations usually are not advantageous, and vanity is often mingled with such talk. Others want to discuss theological questions; this should not be done.

Finally, there are others who constantly speak about their own country. This too must be avoided. Let us not seek those who please us most or with whom we feel more at ease. This we must avoid for there should be a total fusion among ourselves. On the contrary, if we do not feel at ease with a confrère, this would be a reason to come closer to him, so that all of us might be perfectly united.

We must avoid all contention and uneasiness. We should have a calm spirit and a heart that is free. Then when recreation is over, we shall not find it difficult to raise our mind Godwards. We must not try to lead the conversation to what we prefer, for example, do not be so eager to say something clever, to talk about history, etc. do not try to play the clown and the joker, for such a spirit is very bad. Do not imagine that those who have such a spirit are interiorly joyful persons; they can be people who, on the contrary, are very sad. Avoid sadness; let us try to have a modest cheerfulness and a willingness to smile. If you do not feel like being joyful, let this not prevent you from acting with simplicity, which consists in appearing the way you are interiorly. Let us not go to recreation solely for our own pleasure; there are those who seek nothing else in recreation than their own satisfaction; they seek only the persons and the kind of conversation that please them.

These are the principal faults or defects that can creep into our conduct with respect to recreation. However, we should not be scrupulous about sometimes experiencing a desire for recreation and a pleasure because the time for it has arrived. This often springs from our desire to come close to our confrères and there is no evil in such togetherness.

Recreation is one of the most useful exercises in order to help us to overcome our faults. For instance, it enables us to know and overcome any repugnance we might have towards some of our confreres, our vivaciousness, our stubborn clinging to some ideas, our vanity, etc. someone might say: "I find recreation harmful." I answer: "Why? I'll tell you: it is because you do not want to make efforts to overcome yourself. In recreation, you are on the battlefield. During an instruction or during your meditation you learn what you must do to overcome yourself. At recreation you have the opportunity to put into practice what you have learned in that regard.

Recreation is also most useful because it gives us the opportunity to practice charity. Someone who leads a solitary life has not the particular advantage which we have. No doubt he has the infused virtue of charity, but because he has not the habit of practicing it and of struggling against the

obstacles that are opposed to it, should he leave his solitude and once more come in contact with men, all those obstacles will be keenly felt. Also, God has given us a great abundance of grace, as he sometimes has done for solitaries whom the interests of religion draw out of their solitude. At that time the solitary will have to recognize that he does not possess a charity that is practically strong because has never had the chance to exercise it or to struggle in order to strengthen it.

There is a great advantage in having recreation in common so that we may learn how to converse with men of the world. This we must learn because of our vocation, which is not that of a cloistered religious.

The Rule says: do not deal with theology and with cases of conscience during recreation periods. Does this seem queer? Does that mean we are not interested in theology? We certainly are interested in theology; it is useful and it is necessary. But we prohibit those conversations regarding it during recreation because of the great danger involved. Experience shows that when a question of theology is brought up during conversation, some become excited on both sides; some line up with one, others with the other side. The debaters get overheated; there are interruptions; some lose control over themselves; some want by all means to defend their opinion whether in reality it be good or bad, each one claiming he is right.

When the confreres retire after recreation, some may repeat their claims; some may regret not having used a particular argument; some criticize once more the argument of the adversary. Finally, the debaters are wholly absorbed in this affair and vanity and contention enter in. This is what frequently results from conversations about theology.

In order to have useful conversations about such matters it is necessary that the members in the debate should have made proper preparation for the discussion. The arguments should be proposed in due form. There should be no interruptions; there should be a judge, or rules to conduct the debate in order to shed light on the subject and to moderate and end the argumentation. This is a thing that can be done in class; it should never take place at recreation. Instead of a genuine debate, there are disputes; some get angry and issues often become confused and the discussion throws no light on the subject.

It is because of the bad effects that frequently follow from such disputations that the Rule prohibits theological discussions at recreation. In case we have a difficulty or a troublesome case, let us go and see a confrere in whom

we can have confidence and consult him; but this should not be done during recreation unless there is no other occasion for speaking to him about the matter.

Conversations should be edifying. This does not mean that they should always have God for their subject. But it is necessary that our conversations be modest and devout. Sometimes they may deal with devotional matters, but then let there be no affectation. Let us always speak “devoutly,” by which I mean with modesty, virtually showing that we belong wholly to God. Such a modest tone will be edifying; it will produce a good effect, although we might not always be aware of it because we are in the habit of hearing that kind of conversation. This is an advantage which people in the world do not have.

Let us keep this rule in our conversations. They will be edifying and pleasing. These are the two qualities our conversations should possess which sum up all the others.

Article VII

When possible, we will have fixed hours for the recitation of the Divine Office. As soon as the bell rings, all will stop the work in which they are engaged and each one will then recite the Office in private, with fervor, in spiritual union with all the other confreres.

This will frequently be impossible. We should try nevertheless to have fixed hours for the Breviary. The better our exercises are regulated, the more easily we shall perform them in the spirit with which they should be animated.

Article VIII

If there is anyone who ordinarily is unable to say his Office in the community, he shall always determine fixed hours for saying each part of the Office and always try to say it at that time, unless there is an impediment in the way.

If you have no definite time for the recitation of the Office, it will often happen that you still will have the greater part of it to say. In hot climates you will be overcome by drowsiness and be unable to say it. Be regular, orderly, and have fixed hours for such things. If something prevented you from saying it at the fixed time, say it as soon as you have free moments for doing so conveniently. If,

on a particular day it is not possible to say the Office at a fixed hour – for instance because of travel – it is clear that you do not have to keep too strictly to the fixed hour.

Recitation of the Office is an important part of our ministry. That is why we must do our best to say it properly. All the Saints have great respect for the Divine Office. Father Eudes desired that in the community his members should wear a surplice while reciting it in order to manifest externally the interior spirit of respect which must animate those who recite the Divine Office.

Article IX

We shall say the Office in a place where we shall be least disturbed during its recitation. Hurry, haste, contention, and all other faults which can be committed in that exercise should be carefully avoided. We should recite the Office in a calm, peaceful way, most recollectedly – as much as that is possible – not allowing any interference by the work we are engaged in. Let us act as if we have no other job, wholly given to our Lord, but to praise and adore his Father in union with him and in the name of his whole Church.

There are three ways in which we can say the Office. The first is the affective way, which consists in following the meaning of the words we recite and in letting ourselves be penetrated by affections they naturally suggest. This first method can be followed in two different ways: either we follow the meaning of each verse, seek to relish it and aim at being animated by the affections it suggest (this first way will not last very long and if, after the time of fervor has passed, we want to keep that affection at any cost, we shall be engaged in a very painful contention), or, using a second way to follow this first method, we keep attention on one verse and continue the recitation. We continue to relish that particular verse as long as it inspires us. In order to follow that first method it is not necessary to have made “scientific” studies regarding the natural and the historical meaning of the Psalms, which often is the literal sense.

The second method of saying the Divine Office consists in applying to oneself what one reads. It resembles the first method because it is still affective. But it differs from it because in the second method we apply to ourselves what sacred writer tells us. So, when the Psalm expresses sentiments of repentance because of sins, we let ourselves be penetrated by the kind of sentiment. When

the Psalm expresses confidence in God, we then raise our mind and heart to God with similar sentiments.

Here again, however, we must note that frequently we do not keep the facility of producing sentiments while reciting the Office for a long time; and if we try to keep that method longer, there will be more contention than affection.

When we have lost that sensible affection, but still preserve a facility in doing things methodically, we can – after uniting ourselves to our Lord at the beginning – propose to ourselves some particular intentions, such as honoring the Most Blessed Virgin, asking for graces, etc., for a particular part of the Office. This is a simpler way and it can be joined to the first way.

Finally, the third way or method, which is the simplest one, is to be used when there is no longer sensible devotion and when we have no longer anything else but a view or spirit of faith. Here is what it consists in. At the beginning of the Office we unite ourselves to God; after that we remain calm and let ourselves be moved by the good affections that come to us, but we are not preoccupied with them. The union with God, which we have renewed at the beginning, always lasts provided we do not willfully entertain foreign thoughts. Thus we do not have to worry because diverse thoughts have come before our mind, if we have not paid voluntary attention to them; for thoughts do not destroy union with God.

If we want to say our Office well, let us choose the place where we shall be least disturbed. This does not mean that if we had to go somewhere we could not say our Office on the road. Let us avoid haste in saying the words; let us say the words sedately, but without yielding to excessive anxiety. It is sufficient if we speak to God as we do to persons whom we respect, without worrying about one syllable being said before another.

We must also avoid haste, that is, an eagerness to have it said quickly – “to have it over with.” What is the value of that? Suppose you gain eight or ten minutes in a long Office, you will have said your Breviary badly. “But,” you will say to excuse yourself: “I have so many things to do.” Very well! But when you shall have said your Office you will then take care of them. And if then you find it necessary to shorten those occupations, the good Lord will not ask anything more from you. What he does ask is that you recite your Office well.

So let us not make the intention of saying it fast. Neither should we determine to say it very slowly; nor should we judge another because he says his Office quickly, for he might be more familiar with the words than we are. If we have the habit of saying the Office slowly, then, if we had urgent affairs, we would have to hurry; we should not acquire such a habit, nor try to say the Office too slowly. Let us say it calmly and peacefully. If someone interrupts us while we are saying the Office, let us not treat him harshly. We must remain peaceful, answer calmly and with gentleness; we can then ask such persons to wait a little until we have finished saying our Office.

Let us carefully avoid “contention” or over-exertion. Contention is an organic contraction which comes from an effort of self-will. It is something on the natural plane, and instead of making us pray properly, it is in reality a distraction. It is an impediment in the way of union of the soul with God.

We must give ourselves to our Lord to honor his Father, in union with him and in the name of the whole Church. It is sufficient to make that general intention once; there is no need of repeating it over and over again every time we say part of the Office. Only when we like the idea that we represent the whole Church in union with Jesus Christ shall we do well and relish that pious and consoling truth.

Article X

The hour for going to bed will be arranged according to the hour for rising, so that the missionaries will have seven hours of sleep. A half hour before supper there will be night prayers in common. Three times a week some thoughts will be proposed for meditation, or a subject like that will be read.

In warm climates it may be necessary to take a siesta in the middle of the day. This may be the custom of the country where the missionary is stationed and if so, it should be allowed and the missionary will then take less sleep proportionately during the night. Let us not claim we are exercising austerity by doing away that siesta, if the health of the missionaries requires it and it is customary in the country.

In regard to subjects for meditation, the superior frequently will not have the time to prepare such a subject. Besides that, if he were proposing a subject habitually, he undoubtedly would have less influence on his hearers. A reading

could take the place of the suggestion of a topic by the superior. Nevertheless it is a good thing for the superior to propose a subject for meditation from time to time. The reading of a subject for meditation can in any case serve as spiritual reading. Besides that, when a missionary does not follow what has been proposed point by point, he will be able to adjust his meditation to some striking thoughts which have been expressed.

Finally, there are those who find it difficult to keep their attention fixed during meditation, also some may be in a state of aridity. These will find some thoughts in those readings which they can devoutly consider.

Is it permissible for missionaries to remain in bed less than seven hours? This is not similar to other mortifications. If there is no harm to the health of the missionary, he may do so, but with the permission of his superior.

Article XI

The Superiors, without too much delay, and from the first days of the formation of their communities, will regulate the hours for the various exercises to avoid disorder and laxity. Once the hours have been fixed, the Superior should not change them except for serious reasons and with the approval of his council.

Article XII

Everyone will take care to say the beads privately every day. He will acquit himself of this homage to the Mother of God with as great a devotion as possible.

We must have a particular love for the Rosary. There are three ways of reciting it, as for the Breviary. The first method consists in relishing the meaning of each prayer we recite; for example, with respect to the Hail Mary, we can apply our attention to render to Mary, together with the Angel, the duties we owe her; this we do in the first part of that prayer. In the second part we pray to her together with the Church. But in following the first method we shall soon lose the sensible liking for it which we had at the beginning.

The second method consists in meditating on the various mysteries while reciting the different decades; or we can have particular intentions for each decade.

The third method consists in this: we begin by uniting ourselves to our Lord with the intention of honoring the Blessed Virgin. It is not necessary to repeat that act of union with our Lord every time. A general intention suffices and it is maintained from the time we take our rosary in hand, unless we have withdrawn that intention. This means that we recite the decades with the attitude we ordinarily have during meditation. This third way is the simplest, and it is the way we should follow when we no longer experience a sensible attraction or devotion. Each missionary recites the Rosary privately because it would not be possible for missionaries to assemble regularly for a common recitation of that prayer.

Article XIII

Everyone will read daily a section of the New Testament for half an hour, unless his work in the ministry makes it absolutely impossible for him. That reading should not be done in a spirit of curiosity, nor as we do in studying the Scriptures, but it must be done in a meditative spirit and in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall also try to find some time every day to read other parts of Holy Scripture.

The reading of the New Testament should constitute the nourishment of the missionary. In it he finds first of all the principles which are developed in ascetical theology and in spiritual direction, but reading authors in these sciences does not dispense him from reading the New Testament when he has the time. In it he will find God's Word without admixture of merely human words; this he must meditate upon and choose, in his own way, the principles and the ideas which that reading suggests.

This applies also to sermons. If he is able to develop a sermon as a result of his meditation on Holy Scripture this is to be preferred to borrowing ideas from sermon books, for thereby he will transmit what has penetrated into himself, while expressing it in his own way. These are advantages we do not have when we look for ideas expressed by other men.

However, it is principally for his own spiritual benefit that he must read the whole life of Jesus Christ (in Holy Scripture). This is the spiritual book par

excellence. It contains what is fundamental in all others. It might happen that we sometimes experience less attraction towards it, but we shall draw greater benefit from it as we read simply because it is the pure Word of God, and we can apply it to our needs through meditation, with the help of grace.

That kind of reading must not be done in the way we study Scripture, but we must do it as we would make our meditation. We are permitted to consult a commentary for a moment in order to get the right meaning of a text which we fail to understand, for instance because we do not understand the customs of the Jews, but after that we must return to our meditative reading. It is in that meditative spirit that the Holy Fathers of the Church have read the Scriptures and have explained it.

I hear someone say: "But sometimes I explain it in a way that is not right." There is no great evil in that; you will not teach heresy since you have studied theology. After all, if a passage edifies you it can also edify others. Regarding Holy Scripture, there are two things we must keep in mind: first, the fact that Holy Scripture is inspired, that the sacred authors present inspired truths. In order to have those truths penetrate us as they are meant to do, we must have recourse to meditation and not to study (as is done in the sciences). Secondly, there is the form of expression, a purely human element. This kind of thing was necessary since men upon earth do not enjoy the Beatific Vision of the Holy Trinity. For that reason God's Word had to be translated and expressed in a way that affects the senses of men. The science of Scripture studies this human form of expression; this is its object. But what we need, because of our vocation, is the fundamental source from which we can draw an intimate knowledge; this requires meditation, a reading in the spirit of reflection. It is also useful for us to read the Old Testament. This is necessary because of controversies about it, although it is not the principal purpose of such reading. One great advantage of reading (meditatively) the Old Testament is that we shall find in it many pious stories which we can use in our instruction.

Article XIV

During the afternoon everyone will pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, if a church (or chapel) is nearby. Otherwise he will spend fifteen minutes in recollection and will always begin with the recitation of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

It is not too much to consecrate a quarter of an hour in the afternoon to recollection; this is a thing we need, especially in the midst of an active life. The litanies and the Rosary are a twofold homage we must daily render to Mary. This is a good thing, even if a missionary has not much liking for vocal prayers. These exercises always remind us that we must honor Mary; without those exercises we might forget that for a long time.

Article XV

Besides the common Rule which determines the time for certain exercises, everyone should also take care to regulate the hours of the day in such a way that there will be no moments when he is not occupied. We shall determine a definite time for things to be done in the house and for occupations outside, such as visiting the poor and the sick. This applies also to all the other functions of the sacred ministry ordinarily assigned to us.

It is very important to regulate our time. First of all, because this is a means of saving much time. A man who observes an order of day has time for everything that is required of him. Moreover – and this is the principal reason for it – in hot climates you will lose your time in idling. Hesitating about what you will do next, you will pick up one book, then another, and will spend your time uselessly, which can be very dangerous.

In order to preserve that regularity which we should have as much as possible in our exercise, here is a general rule which we ought to adopt: an exercise we have missed is an exercise we have lost; we cannot make up for it. If the ordinary rules cannot be observed, for instance during an epidemic, we should then establish particular rules for ourselves by which we choose by preference those occupations we consider more important, if it is impossible to observe all the exercises.

Article XVI

Missionaries will go to confession every eight days. They will make a general confession every year during the retreat if they consider it necessary and if the confessor sees no inconvenience in it. Everyone should choose a confessor and a spiritual director of conscience from among the members of the Congregation.

It is a general rule for religious communities to go to confession every eight days. This practice is a great means of preventing falling off, a thing to which our poor nature is inclined.

With respect to the yearly general confession, we are not permitted to make that a strict rule. It is necessary to consult the needs of each individual and the judgment of the confessor, who frequently might recognize inconveniences in it for his penitent.

We should have a spiritual director. Of course, it is possible that a missionary who very carefully fulfills his obligations with respect to his ministry, who is not inclined to falling off, who has no great difficulties of conscience, and who does not pass through extraordinary ways (of spirituality) might not need a spiritual director. However, if having a spiritual director were not a general rule, there might be several who need such a director so as to avoid illusions, and seeing the example of others who consult a spiritual director, these might be prompted to make use of that spiritual means. So it is better to make that a general rule.

It is necessary that the confessor as well as the spiritual director be taken from among the members of the community. If we went to a stranger, which would be rather singular, it could introduce disorder in the house. Since a stranger does not know well the interior life of our communities nor the particular spirit of our rules, he might give advice which is absolutely unsuitable. Also, one of our men who would consult a stranger might often say many things about what is going on in our communities, and thus act contrary to our rules. It might also happen that the missionary might thus become less attached to the house and might lose the devotion he ought to have for our Rule. With respect to cases of conscience, it is perfectly permissible to go to a priest who is a stranger to our community if we think he is more capable of giving a good decision than those who belong to our community.

Article XVII

We shall keep silence in the house outside times of recreation.

Silence is necessary in all religious houses. It has great advantages; it fosters fervor and fidelity to other rules. In the Stations it will not always be possible to keep silence rigorously all the time. We shall then observe silence as well as we are able.

Article XVIII

We shall not go into the room of our confreres without the permission of the Superior of the mission. We must go there only when it is truly necessary, and remain there only as long as it is necessary.

This rule seems severe, especially with respect to missionaries who have reached a certain age and who have already labored a long time for the glory of God. But it is very useful; it prevents loss of time and other disorders. If it is necessary to speak to a confrère, for instance to consult him about a case of conscience, after we have been enlightened we should withdraw. This does not mean that we should scrupulously avoid saying two or three more words; but we should not prolong the conversation.

Article XIX

We shall never introduce strangers into our room, or in any part of the building without permission. Visitors will be received in parlors.

This rule also has for its purpose to prevent the introduction of disorder into a house. Nevertheless, if a missionary had to give daily instruction to a young Black, he could ask for a general permission to receive him in his room. We could also relax that rule if we happened to be in a country in which poor people who came to see us might think that we despise them if we do not permit them to enter into our house, and thereby do harm to souls.

Article XX

Missionaries will not go out without permission. When getting the permission we must say what places we shall visit and what houses we shall enter. Before leaving, we shall pay a visit to the Chapel to recommend ourselves to our Lord and to the Blessed Virgin. When leaving we shall mark our name on a board which must be placed in the porter's room for that purpose; and when we return we shall cross out our name.

This rule will seem strange to a man of the world. But a religious man will find in it an excellent lesson of humility, which is so much more necessary

for a missionary who happens to do much good. Besides that, it will enable the superior to watch over the visitations of the missionaries. It is easy therefore to recognize the necessity of such a rule. This rule can also prevent some missionaries from making too frequent, or unnecessary visits. And, if it was not known where the missionary had gone, how would it be possible to find him when he is wanted for an urgent case?

The missionary must tell the superior what places he will visit, but if after he had left, someone came to get him to visit a sick person who is dying, he can then presume the superior's permission. It would be a good thing, however, to tell the superior about it afterwards. The missionary should also tell the superior before leaving what his reasons are for the visit, but it is not necessary to explain in detail the various things belonging to his ministry. For example, let him say: "I would like to go out to get this particular person to go to confession." If we have many sick persons to visit, it suffices to say: "we are going to visit the sick"; it is ordinarily known in a community who the sick persons are in that particular quarter. So if someone comes to seek the missionary while he is away it will be known where he can be found.

That rule regarding visits exists in all religious communities; it is an occasion for gaining many merits. Humble men find it very easy to submit to such rules; only small and proud minds criticize it.

Article XXI

We shall not take meals nor stay overnight in houses outside the community unless there is a very good reason for it, which we shall explain to the superior. In general, without an urgent necessity, we should not go out, nor stay out during the night.

If while a missionary is away, someone comes to get him for a very urgent sick call, it is clear that what always comes first is the interest of a soul which is in great necessity, and it is then necessary to presume permission.

We should take meals outside our community only for very serious reasons, and the superior is the one to decide whether it is proper or not. When the missionary goes out to say Mass in a place that is at a good distance from the community house and he is invited to take some food there, he is permitted to do so.

Article XXII

We shall never tell strangers what is going on in our community, nor make known its customs and the rules of the Congregation

This is a rule of prudence and of humility; for, on the one hand, the persons to whom we reveal those things might be shocked, as they fail to understand religious rules properly. On the other hand, they might improperly transmit to others what they have heard from us that could do us harm. It is a rule of humility, for the same self-love which almost always tempts us when each one of us talks about himself, also tempts every religious when he is talking about his community. It is proper to follow with respect to our community the rule given to individuals regarding themselves: speak about yourself neither about what is good nor about what is bad.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Rules of Conduct towards Others

Article I

The conduct of our members among themselves must be that of children of the same family, that is, children of Jesus and Mary. We shall regard as done to our Lord himself all that we do to our confreres, and we shall do towards them what we would have done towards Jesus and his Blessed Mother.

This first Article is, as usual, the summary of the whole chapter; and since it speaks only of charity, it follows that all our rules of conduct among ourselves are summed up in the practice of charity. This is not to be wondered at. Our Lord and, after him, St. Paul taught that the whole Law is contained in the one precept of charity. And St. John constantly repeated: "love one another, my little children." And he gave the same reason for it.

Our Lord has also said that his disciples would be recognized by the love they had for one another. How numerous the reasons for practicing charity! We are members of the Church and are destined to teach others the precept of charity. We are specially united with a certain number of confreres who, together with us, form a community.

As members of the Church we have, first of all, one same faith and the same source-principles of faith which must guide us in all our actions. The thing that can be an obstacle to charity is the diversity of beliefs; hence the antagonism of heretics towards the Church and her members. What also hinders charity is when there are diverse root-principles for action; for instance, if each one is acting out of self-interest, or when there is great diversity of aims and interest. These are often opposed to one another and so there is no mutual charity.

The thing that makes us act uncharitably is that we act for self-satisfaction, to satisfy our pride. If, on the contrary, instead of following the suggestions of our corrupt nature, we take for our only source-principle love for God, seeking only to please him and to glorify him, then we shall never harm the interests of our neighbor nor shall we sin against charity.

As members of one same Congregation, we not only have one same source-principle of faith, which must be the source of our actions, but we have

the same special end and purpose, which is that of working for the glory of God in a definite work, and by the use of the same means determined by our Rule.

Also, we all have the same virtue of charity diffused in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and the same precept of our Lord regarding charity: “Love one another as I have loved you.” But having gathered us to live together and work in harmony with one another, he wants us to be particularly united among ourselves.

We have the same enemies to struggle against, the Devil and the world, and for this we have the same weapons and the same means: the grace of our Lord, his Sacraments and our Rules. We have the same Father, the same Lord, the same Sovereign, and the same Mother. Although all Christians have our Lord as their Sovereign and Mary for their Mother, we who are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ constitute in the Church of God a small family, which Jesus and Mary have specially chosen for themselves to work in a special direction to procure their glory. If we are wanting in charity towards one another, we shall not attain that end and purpose, and we shall dishonor those sacred Names.

If we are properly united, if we are subjected to them, we will always do good – and do much good – even in the midst of persecutions. On the contrary, if there is no union, no unity among ourselves, we shall do little good for souls in comparison with the good we could have done. Moreover, everything will go badly in our Congregation; there will be no more obedience, no more Rule. Instead there will be established the reign of one’s own mind, of one’s own will, the reign of disorder.

All those motives show us the importance for us to preserve among us charity and mutual union. That is why we must never cease to pray earnestly that our Lord and the Blessed Mother may grant us that virtue. The union that should reign among us should be a union of spirit and heart.

1. *Union of Spirit.* It comprises three things and, as it were, three degrees: first, not to desire to subject others to our own ideas – especially not to become angry when they do not think the way we do, not to try to impose our opinions on others, for this is a great tyranny. Some might say: “he is wrong; it will do him harm.” To this I answer: if you become angry with him, will that do him less harm? Will it not rather do him more harm? That fault of desiring by all means to impose one’s opinion on another comes from rigidity coupled with self-love.

Second, we might have a certain disposition and a facility to agree with the opinion of others. This does not mean that when we know where the truth lies, we should accept another's erroneous judgment. It merely means that humility and charity should incline us to accept the judgments of our brothers. Humility should prompt us because it makes us distrust our own judgment. Charity should prompt us because it is opposed to self-love which often prompts us to make unsound judgments; it prevents us from recognizing the truth when it is not in conformity with our first (reactions) sentiments. Third, we act as if we agreed with the opinion of another when there is no inconvenience in doing so. But since self-love will always find some inconvenience, we must then try to judge whether the inconvenience is real or not, and be humble and truly animated by charity.

2. *Heartfelt Union.* It consists in intimate mutual affection which we should do our best to entertain. Let us not say: "I cannot love that particular confrère. I feel a certain repugnance, a certain aversion towards him." I answer: you can love him. Repugnances are not an impediment to love; you can love him if you will to love him. You must behave towards him animated by fraternal charity, as you do in charity towards God. Your will adheres wholly to God even when temptations of blasphemy and hatred assail you. Act similarly in relations with your neighbor. Despise those sensitive repugnances; desire all sorts of good things for him. Do all the good you can for him, as you are inclined to do for a friend towards whom you feel drawn. It is true that you are in sense-contact with your confrere and have no such experience of God. And because you have that sense-experience of your confrère, repugnance is aroused in you. You sometimes feel embittered and this makes it difficult to have heartfelt affection for him. So much the better. You will have to struggle more frequently, your merits will be greater, and in fighting against those repugnances you will become more and more pleasing to God.

We must look upon everything we do to our brethren as being done to God. This is not an exaggeration. It is our Lord himself who has said it. What you do to the least of his disciples he considers as done to himself. A fortiori, what is done to one of our confreres, who is in a special manner consecrated to him, he considers as done to himself in a very special way.

I hear the objection: "I feel keenly that he is a wretched man whom I treat either well or badly." To talk that way is to show we are still prompted by our (fallen) nature. We must believe our Lord's words. Moreover we know that our Lord is in our confreres through his grace and we know he has died for them. He is interested in that neighbor. Most of the time when we have a lack of

charity towards our neighbor, we shall do harm to his soul, and this will be an obstacle to the grace of our Lord who acts constantly for the good of that soul.

Article II

We shall carefully avoid inveighing against our confreres. We shall bear with gentleness, patience and charity all the pains they might cause us; we shall never manifest displeasure or coldness towards them. We shall, on the contrary, blame ourselves and try to win the affection of the confrere who causes us pain.

We must act in the spirit and according to the ways of our Lord in relation to us. When we were born, we were impure. Did he reject us? From the time we acquired the use of reason we have offended him. How many times, perhaps, have we not merited hell? In spite of that our Lord has not ceased to treat us with gentleness; he has urged us to enter into ourselves for our own good, and to deliver ourselves to his love. Let us act similarly towards our confreres. After all, let us take into consideration the difference between our Lord and us. We truly offend our Lord every day. But when we consider ourselves, who is able to harm us? Do we not deserve all the evil men could inflict upon us, all the injury and contempt of which we might be the object?

If we are not guilty of the fault of which we are accused, are we not guilty of many other faults which deserve more contempt and more pain? The reason for yielding to our great animosity when we are offended is our self-love. This is where we must apply the remedy, trying to calm the first sentiment and to arrest the first movement of our sensitivity as soon as we notice it; and then let us prevent its being transmitted to movements of expressions of bitterness. Those first movements of our sensitivity will recur later on; it will take a very long time before we get them under perfect control. But they will not prevent us from having true charity, if we try our best to struggle against them.

Among ten thousand persons, we shall scarcely ever find one who, at some time or other, does not yield to hastiness of temper; and the reason is that a hundred thousand pretexts can be found to give in to those movements of vivaciousness. Some will say: "unless I react that way I will always be tormented by others." First of all, this is false most of the time; moreover, once you have the habit of self-control, you will no longer find it difficult to practice that

gentleness. Finally, so much the better for you if they torment you, if you bear it properly for the love of God.

Someone else might say: “it is a sign of weakness when we suffer that sort of thing.” This is an excuse of self-love. We fear to be considered weak, but being afraid of being considered weak is precisely weakness. But, one will answer, “I must let him know that he is wrong.” If you want him to realize it, think what God does when he wants you to become aware of your faults. Show him great love so as to win his affection. But that is not the way you want him to realize his fault; you want to sting him; you want to cause him pain. This goes to show that it is your self-love that is inspiring you in that matter. And another thing that shows it also is that you would not have the same sentiment if you learned that he had committed a grievous sin against God. Then you would have pity on him. But when he has committed a small offense against you, and this might often happen because he failed to show kindness and obligingness, that is, for something which is insignificant.

Remind yourself of the fact that when your neighbor manifests some displeasure towards you or offends you in some way, almost the reason is that you have committed a fault or have manifested a defect in your character; it might be, for example, your great sensitivity and vivaciousness. Then, instead of condemning your confrere or showing him coldness, condemn yourself and humble yourself. Try to atone for your fault or do your best to overcome that fault. Do what you can to regain the affection of that confrère, either directly or indirectly, by your very gentle and charitable behavior towards him. We may do well to remind ourselves here that when we have offended someone, we always find specious reasons for not making reparation for our faults; now the most frequent excuses are merely pretexts born of self-love.

Article III

We shall watch most carefully to avoid entertaining sentiments of envy or jealousy, and as soon as the slightest movement in that direction appears, extinguish it immediately, abasing ourselves profoundly before God because this diabolical sentiment has entered into us. Let us then ask for the grace to be delivered from such sentiments and let us manifest great charity and greater gentleness towards the person who was the object of those sentiments. If it happened that we said a word or did

something that was inspired by that dangerous temptation, let us have the loyalty of accusing ourselves immediately of it to our Superior.

Envy is feeling pain because of the good or the success we see that our neighbor has, while we ourselves do not have it. *Jealousy* is not wanting the neighbor to have the good or the success that we have; we want to be the sole possessors of that advantage. Both those faults are rooted in pride. *Envy* is more painful than *jealousy*, because an envious person does not have the consolation of sharing in the advantage possessed by the object of his envy.

There is greater malice in *jealousy* and it is wholly diabolical, for it is so unnatural to be sad because another has a particular good thing which the envious person also possesses. Both are directly opposed to the charity we owe to our neighbor. They make us desire to destroy all that is good. Inspired by those evil tendencies, we are led to consider everything bad which the other person does. We say evil things about him; we would like to annihilate him in the minds of other men.

All of us have within us the germ of those vices, namely, our pride; but in each one of us it goes in the direction of what each one particularly esteems and loves. Thus, he who particularly esteems preaching will be particularly envious or jealous of those who preach well. One who has high esteem for science, will be envious or jealous of a scientist. He who has a high esteem of virtue, who desires eagerly to attain it, but who is not dead to his pride and who still has some evident defects which humiliate him in the eyes of men, will be envious of a confrere who is considered to be more virtuous and appears more clearly to be virtuous.

Besides that there are characters that are much more inclined to envy and jealousy than others. These are nervous temperaments which are naturally oversensitive, who are also melancholic, self-centered and frequently indulge in self-analysis.

This goes to show that a mere temptation to envy should not frighten us, for it does not depend upon us to experience such feelings. What means then ought we to choose in order not to succumb to such temptations and in order to even profit by them?

First, if we have not yet spoken and acted in virtue of those sentiments, we must as much as possible turn away our thoughts from them without

becoming troubled or tormented on their account. Be content with gently renouncing them as soon as you experience them. Humble yourself before God, and then beg our Lord to free you from them while, however, abandoning yourself to the divine will so as to bear the great pain which those sentiments always cause, so long as he preserves you from the misfortune of yielding to the temptation.

Finally, manifest great charity and the greatest mildness to the one who is the object of those evil sentiments. If you have the misfortune of saying or doing something because of that temptation, exercise the fidelity of accusing yourself of that fault to the superior. This will be an excellent remedy, for the evil comes from your pride. But humbling yourself you cut its root. Moreover, if you have the fidelity of accusing yourself in that way, that will restrain you. Also, the superior will thus be able to prevent the evil consequences that might follow from such actions and words. However, it must be remembered that here there is question only of a counsel; it is not a rule which would make it obligatory to accuse oneself to the superior.

Article IV

Everyone will sincerely rejoice because of the good that is accomplished by his confreres; he will not be too sad because he does not do as much as the confreres. The desires of our heart must always be very pure. We must ardently desire that God be glorified, but we must preserve peacefulness and be very submissive to God's will when we notice that he endows our confreres with greater gifts for the promotion of his glory.

We will faithfully observe this Article of the Rule if we look upon ourselves as being mere instruments in God's hands, or as vessels in the hands of the potter. There are all kinds of instruments and vessels and they have all more or less noble uses. But none of them says to the master "I want to be used for this particular job." The master is absolutely free. And so he makes use of each instrument as he pleases and judges to be most useful. The same must apply to us, who are in God's hands. But since we are rational creatures and children of God as well, we must have a great desire for his glory. But with respect to procuring that glory, we must be wholly abandoned to the divine will, being always satisfied like St. Paul so long as God is glorified, whatever may be the things or the persons he makes use of for that purpose. If we preserve those

sentiments, we will rejoice on account of any good that is done by our confreres, and we shall not be too sad because we are unable to produce as much.

We shall also avoid humble words and humble poses which in reality spring from self-love, as is often the case when we sadly repeat: "I am not good for anything. I can't do anything." Let us be ready and wait peacefully like the laborers mentioned in the Gospel until the Master of the vineyard makes use of us, when he desires it and for the work which is pleasing to him. Whether we do little or much we shall be rewarded if we are ready to do whatever our Lord will demand of us. One year the harvest is very poor. The laborers in the vineyard are paid as well as when the harvest is plentiful, perhaps even better than those who labor in the wheat field, although these may gather a more abundant harvest.

The Rule says that we shall not be too sad, because there is a certain sorrow which a heart that is zealous for the glory of God and full of love for our Lord feels when it is not able to do enough for its good Master. Such a person then lovingly complains about that to God. This sadness or sorrow is full of love towards God and towards the confreres who labor and harvest so much. Moreover that kind of sorrow is peaceful.

It is said in the Rule that we must rejoice sincerely because of the good that is done by God through confreres. This means it is not enough to express joy outwardly; what is needed is interior joy which tries to overcome a selfish quasi-jealous grief. On the other hand, it is not necessary to have a pleasure that is experienced by the senses. It is enough that we will it; for we might often experience sentiments that are opposed to what we will. It is then enough to reject and renounce those sentiments. Whatever belongs to sense-experiences, to sensitivity, in no way can harm our charity, provided we do not consent to those sentiments.

We should have great desires for the glorification of God, but those desires should be very pure; for self-love can mingle with such desires and infect our works. That self-love would then take away at least a great part of our merits, if our zeal does not spring from a supernatural motive. Moreover, when self-love is mingled with our works we meet with difficulties, we shall experience great sadness and we will be discouraged.

Let us not desire to do great things unless God wants it; and we should wait for the manifestation of God's holy will, in order to undertake works of zeal. St. Vincent de Paul, who has done great things, is an admirable example of that

spirit. We notice in his life that he never undertook any work of zeal of his own accord. He waited peacefully until God himself prompted him through events that were guided by his Providence and through the orders of superiors. In the palace of a king there are servants for all kinds of functions. Let us be disposed to keep the lowest rank in God's house. On the other hand, let us be ready to spare no pain, no sacrifice, to accomplish God's will as soon as it becomes known to us.

Article V

No one will reprove his confrere because of the faults he sees him commit, unless this is demanded by the Rule or by his superior.

If everyone were permitted to reprove his confreres, this would introduce the habit of judging one's confreres in the community. This would provide many occasions for wounding charity. Now, it is important that the greatest charity should reign among us. If a confrere were to commit a serious fault, if he were to take a dangerous turn, inform only the superior about it. It belongs to him to do the things which he will judge to be necessary. Moreover, since everyone is not able to make the admonitions properly so that they will be useful, it might happen that they are badly received and great evils would result. In our houses the superior is the only one who is charged with the function of giving an admonition. However, he might sometimes charge another confrere to exercise that function; for instance, he could ask an older Father to watch over a new member of the community to give him all the counsels which his experience might consider useful for the newly-arrived confrère. In the Stations, two missionaries who are sent together give warnings to one another regarding faults that might be committed in their functions.

Article VI

No one will take a hand in the office of another without having been charged with it by the superior, or without having been asked by the one who is charged with that office.

To take a hand in someone else's office could cause him pain and even make him bitter. We should do everything possible to avoid everything that could grieve another or trouble the peace of our confreres.

Article VII

No one will ever speak about the way his confreres exercise their function, unless it be to praise it, in the community house or outside. We should never examine and judge the way confreres fulfill their function, unless we are charged to do it by the superior. Everyone without busying himself with the others will do his best to fulfill his particular function in a holy and perfect manner.

We should not sit in judgment regarding our neighbor. It is our Lord himself who tells us: “do not judge!” and yet this is a rather common fault among devout persons, unless they have reached a high degree of perfection; for then they are in no way inclined to judge their neighbor. These persons do not like to see evil nor do they in general speak about it, as is done, for instance, by seminarians who, in order to foster their fervor, speak constantly about bad priests. We do not see in the lives of saints that they busy themselves with judging their neighbor; they even seem not to notice, or at least not to notice greatly, the bad things that are done around them.

Those judgments we make about our neighbor spring from self-love. But the character of persons has much to do with the desire readily to judge the neighbor. These are persons who are haughty and austere by temperament. We should judge only those who are our subjects and whom we are called to instruct, guide, and correct. And even then we should never do it with bitterness. We should not even judge ourselves with bitterness. Such a judgment would do us harm instead of being useful to us.

We shall often be tempted to pass judgment against our confrère. We must then act as we do with respect to temptations against the holy virtue; we must turn our thoughts away from such judgments as much as possible. Sometimes we cannot help seeing the evil that is committed by a neighbor. Then what ought we do? What would we do if when passing through a street we noticed, without willing it, an indecent behavior? We think as little as possible about it. Seeing such a thing is not a sin.

Let us not talk about the way a confrere does his job, unless we do it to show how well he does it, for instance, for the sake of edification. Preaching and teaching catechism are the things which we are tempted to criticize. We should be watchful about that, for it is very easy to offend against charity when speaking

about those things. Someone might say: "these are public actions; we therefore are permitted to talk freely about them." Well, you should not do it when you experience any sentiment of contempt or jealousy, or when it is an uncharitable thought that makes you judge others. Moreover, if there is question of a confrère, you will fail in obedience, for the Rule forbids it. Also, why say something evil which you have noticed in your confrère? The one to whom you speak either knows him or does not. In the first case, what is the use of mentioning it? This could only arouse uncharitable thoughts about that confrere in both of you. In the second place, why make it known to him and thus perhaps inspire him with evil sentiments towards the confrère?

Should we speak about the good things done by a confrere in the exercise of his functions? This is permissible, but it must be done with caution. It is better not to say anything about that when we foresee bad consequences; for example, this might arouse jealousy in the one to whom we are speaking, and he in turn might be led to say bad things about said confrère.

The judgments we express against our neighbor, unless we have the charge of watching over his conduct, are almost always false. I have examined the judgments which I have heard others make during the last three years. I have not found one that was correct. That is why I no longer believe those judgments, even when they are expressed by wise and devout persons. For it often happens that such persons make judgments without realizing that they are wrong in so doing, and they do this out of zeal!

It is a good rule indeed not to believe those judgments; that is, let us not base our opinion about the person judged on the basis of such judgments. This does not mean that we are not permitted to make it an occasion for correcting our own conduct and also to be on our guard when we happen to be with the person who was the object of said judgment; prudence demands that. But charity also demands that we go beyond taking such precautions. We must refuse to pass judgment on that person basing it on what we were told. We must be so much the more careful not to judge others when we have made a mistake in judging the person before. Such a judgment can leave a bad impression; it can leave traces after it which we will find hard to erase.

Let us be on our guard against judging the neighbor unfavorably; and let us avoid this particularly with respect to those with whom we have a very special kind of union. If the devil were to put such kinds of judgments in our mind, let us be even more careful not to manifest these judgments in the least way to

others. We should not only abstain from revealing them in words, but even by any other sign. We very often excuse the judgments we make concerning our neighbor saying: "I judge and speak only of facts that are publicly known." To this I answer: true, because it is publicly known you are not in justice bound to make reparation to the object of your judgment; but on the other hand, there are other evils. Here is what is often found in such judgments: first, a bad motive which makes you talk about or manifest that fault of the neighbor, for example, vanity, to show that you know what is wrong with him; then you will severely reject a sentiment of bitterness or malevolence in your heart towards him about whom you are talking. Finally, talking that way you manifest and arouse the same sentiment in yourself and in the one to whom you are speaking. Moreover, why talk about that if you have no good reason for doing so? Hence those judgments almost never manifest themselves, except when there is a grave reason for doing it, without however wounding charity.

Article VIII

Generally we must carefully avoid judging confreres in an unfavorable way in any manner; and we shall be even more careful (when the devil puts such judgments in our mind) not to reveal such judgments in the least to people of the world.

Article IX

However, if we noticed a fault in a confrere which could do much harm to himself, to his ministry and to the good of the community, it would then be an obligation in conscience to speak about it to the superior. This should be done in a spirit of charity, of gentleness, of humility, in virtue of pure love for the confrere and of zeal for the good of souls.

When we believe that we have to make such a thing known to the superior, it must be done by simply describing the thing as we know it, and we must do nothing more. We should not go into great details, if the superior does not ask questions after we have told him what we know about the case and what is important. After that the matter is in the superior's hands.

Article X

We shall never entertain in our mind, and still less in our heart, sentiments of contempt and of indifference towards one of our confreres, whatever the reason for them might be. We shall never prefer one confrere to another because of natural advantages, because of the particular talents or other qualities one of the confreres might have in the natural order. But let us esteem all equally. And if we place one in our mind above other, let it be solely because of his virtues and his perfections, with which we shall endeavor to become filled ourselves.

It is a terrible thing to despise one of our confreres. Harsh, proud, haughty men commit such faults. Neither shall we have preferences merely on account of natural qualities we find in some. All members of the Congregation must be equal in our eyes from that standpoint; that is, we should not pay attention to any natural qualities in our esteem and our affection for our confreres. The superior alone is permitted to pay attention to those differences, especially to the abilities of each missionary, but only with respect to distributing jobs and functions. It would be dangerous for us to show great esteem for scholars because of their science, or for other merely natural talents. (Recall the history of St. Francis of Assisi and of Elijah). It would be still worse if we showed preference for them and sought their company because of those natural qualities. Such preferences for natural qualities come from pride and self-love. They tend to destroy charity and union; some will always cling to those talented men and neglect the others.

We must all be united to one another, and be united more strongly only to the superior and gather only around him.

However, if our esteem were directed to a confrere because of his virtues, it would be lawful to seek his company. In this case there would be no inconveniences like those we have described above. The presence and the fervor of a saintly person would only lead us to greater fervor and to fraternal union. If, for instance, a St. Claver appeared among us, we could only draw great benefit from frequently being in his company.

Article XI

We will make even greater efforts to avoid raising ourselves above our confreres for any reason whatsoever; but we will place ourselves always below all. We shall deal with them as with men who deserve to be preferred to us. We shall not seek to shine and to be esteemed as superior to them. We will rather seek sincerely to be forgotten by all, trying at the same time to make them esteem their confreres.

We should never establish or tolerate voluntarily in our mind comparisons of ourselves with the neighbor, for self-love is most subtle and is always victorious. Let us then keep far away from ourselves the desire of rising above our confreres. Let us instead place ourselves below all; this does not mean that we have less scientific knowledge, less talent, etc., that we preach or catechize less well than all; this could be false. Let us start, however, with not considering complacently the good things we find in ourselves in comparison with what we see in others. Then in practice, let us truly treat ourselves as though we were inferior to our confreres. Finally, in spite of all our works and achievements, even if we had labored as much as St. Paul and St. Xavier, we must look upon ourselves as being “useless servants,” to use the words of our Lord. We must recognize that all that might exist in us that is good comes to us from God and from his grace; of ourselves we are nothing. We are incapability, corruption, and sin. If we had been supple and docile instruments in God’s hands, we would have done much more for his glory than we have done. The great rule for acquiring humility is to forget ourselves, to refuse to be occupied with ourselves, unless our Lord, through a special grace gives us a view and a deep-felt sentiment of our abjection, as he has done for several saints, for example, St. Vincent de Paul. Other than an instance when a special grace is given to us, it is very dangerous to indulge in such self-contemplation, to fall back upon one’s own thoughts.

The saints to whom our Lord gave such profound sentiments of humility clearly saw their profound wretchedness, their fundamental corruption and their infidelities to grace; and when they spoke about themselves with contempt, they spoke not only sincerely but in conformity with the truth. As for ourselves, if we do not have that view and that sentiment, we shall let ourselves be seized by the ruses of self-love and the Devil, and if we want to talk humbly about ourselves we shall not do it with sincerity.

It is much more prudent for us to aim at self-forgetfulness. This, however, does not mean we should not think about our sins and humble ourselves on their account before God.

We will not seek to shine nor seek to excel our confreres in the matter of preaching, of teaching Catechism, etc., that is vile pride, and yet it is not rare. We excuse that self-seeking and those desires to shine and to perform brilliant things under the specious pretext of procuring the glory of God. But that is not the means by which God wants us to procure his glory. Let us do our best regarding functions that are given us through obedience, but let us do it according to the potentialities of the talents he has given us and the grace he has deigned to grant us. And if, remaining within the boundaries of our natural talents and the means of our functions, we fail to be noticed by men, let us rejoice, for there is great danger in being noticed and shining before men. In our obscurity, however, God sees our good will, and it is good will that he rewards and not our external works. Our Lord himself made much less noise in the world among the disciples during his life than was done later by his Apostles.

So let us not seek to shine in our functions, nor through our scientific knowledge, nor because of our talents, nor because of our (great) intelligence. Neither must we seek to shine by our holiness, but must sincerely seek to be forgotten by all. This does not mean that we must do certain things or say certain words in order that we might be despised or forgotten; self-love might mingle with it. What we must do is to lose ourselves in the crowd and neither do nor say anything that is brilliant or extraordinary, either for the mind or regarding external actions that express sanctity, so that others will not say, "what a wonderful mind he has and what talents, or how holy he is." So far as it depends on you, may they look upon you as an ordinary good man, a man who has nothing to boast about.

There you have the true means to become humble. You must forget yourself and make others forget you. But let us remember, this is not accomplished in one day, nor is it the effect of one good resolution. Humility is something that is wholly contrary to (the tendencies of our) nature. Our Lord had to bring it upon earth. He has won it for us through his merits, and it is through patience and persevering prayers that we shall succeed in being sincerely and firmly humble.

There are saints who have done extraordinary things to practice humility and lower themselves in the eyes of men, but they did those things prompted by

the Spirit of God. We should not try to imitate them prompted only by our own spirit, by our own will. Let us keep to the middle way, acting as others ordinarily do. This is difficult and is very repugnant to our self-love, which would prefer to make us do great things, even if it demands painful exertion. To be looked upon as men who have no great mind or great talents, or extraordinary virtue, is most difficult for human nature, but it is also the surest way to arrive at true humility.

It does not consist simply in seeking to be forgotten by others. While practicing self-effacement, we must inspire esteem for our confreres. This is the way humility leads to charity; it is the foundation of charity. And humility itself has for its foundation faith, which shows us our nothingness, not even permitting us to be occupied with ourselves if only to insult ourselves, for we do not insult or injure a non-existing thing.

Article XII

The soul of such behavior must be a charity that is pure and sincere. They must prefer their confreres, which the Heart of Mary has given them, to all other men and to themselves, loving in them in a special way our adorable Master and his most Holy Mother.

With respect to our salvation we must prefer ourselves to our neighbor. Outside of that, it is not only permissible, but it is an excellent thing to prefer the neighbor to ourselves, so as to honor the love our Lord has for him; for he died for him on the Cross, and so as to love in him our Lord who lives in his person. This is also the very prudent way, for if we merely want to love him as we love ourselves, it is to be feared that self-love might mislead us and we might love ourselves more than him.

Article XIII

That charity must be cordial. It is not enough to love him only with words, or even in our actions. It must spring from a sincerely affectionate heart. If we are tempted against charity, let us use every means to overcome uncharitableness.

Charity must be cordial. We should not imitate worldlings who exteriorly show great affection towards the neighbor but who, interiorly, harbor a heart-felt hatred. The means to possess that cordial charity is to consider our

Lord (living) in the neighbor. We must not look at our Lord as he is present in the Tabernacle, for there he is wholly separated from sensible appearances. Rather we must see our Lord as intimately united to the person of our neighbor. Hence abstracting from the defects of our neighbor, we must render to that person all the duties taught us by charity. Here are the means to overcome temptations against charity.

1. Interiorly, let us try from the start to calm those movements we experience against our neighbor. After that, let us turn our mind away from uncharitable thoughts. Finally, let us pray for that confrere against whom we feel that opposition. But we must pray for him in a general way, for it would be dangerous for us to fix our attention on the fault in him which is displeasing to us in order to pray that he might get rid of it. This might aggravate our wound.

2. Exteriorly, we must accustom ourselves to stop movements, words, signs, etc. which are contrary to charity. We must say and do things in his regard – if we have enough courage to do so – which are contrary to what we might be tempted to say or do to cause him sorrow. We must manifest attention and affection to him. We often excuse ourselves saying to ourselves, “he is queer, he is so strange, he is so annoying.” We should make him realize where he is off and wrong. That sort of excuse contains two bad things: first, it is not your job to correct your confreres. This belongs to the superior alone and to those whom he might appoint for that task. Secondly, you throw the evil that is within you back on your confrere. If you were more virtuous, you would not be shocked by the so-called defects of your confrere, and suppose he corrected his faults, since the evil is in you. It would then be another thing which would shock and wound you. So begin by curing yourself before seeking to correct your confrere.

Another excuse we make so as to dispense ourselves from showing charity towards a confrère, against whom we feel dislike, is saying that we want to be frank. We want to manifest to him only what we truly feel in our heart in his regard. To this I answer, first of all, that it is possible to feel a strong repugnance towards a person in our sensitivity, but this does not prevent us from loving that person at the bottom of our heart and in our will. Then, of course, there is no duplicity in expressing what is in the noblest and purest part of our being. And secondly, we must work constantly to establish that charity in our heart. Even when it is not yet within, we should not manifest outwardly the opposition and the lack of love that are found inside us. For if we manifest it exteriorly, we shall increase our bitterness and aggravate our interior wound. Another reason is that if we manifest our opposition towards a confrere to another person, this person

may then share our opposition to that confrere – especially if that opposition is based on a real, be it small or great, defect in the confrere – and so the one to whom we reveal our opposition will in turn be harmed by our uncharitable talk.

Oh, how rarely do we find perfect charity. Self-love finds a thousand pretexts, a thousand detours, so as to put obstacles in its way. About that perfect charity, I can say what I have said about the absence of judgments against the neighbor – we rarely meet persons who possess it perfectly.

Article XIV

It will be an affective kind of charity. It is not enough that it be in the heart. It must be manifested in the intimate relations we shall have with all our confreres, through services we shall render to them on every occasion, by the attention and the satisfaction that will accompany such actions and by the gentleness with which we speak or act.

Charity must be manifested. If it is not manifested in any way, it is nonexistent. However, we must manifest it without affectation, for affectation will annoy the one towards whom we use it. By affectation we do away with the very purpose we should have to manifest our charity, namely, to oblige the particular confrere.

We should manifest it through the intimate relations we shall have with our confreres. It should not be an intimacy which comes from a natural attraction, but it must be an intimacy that is gentle, simple and cordial – such as exists between two good confreres who live together. It is shown by the services they render to one another. We must always be ready to please them and to do this even if it causes us inconvenience. We must show obligingness and satisfaction. It is not enough to render services; we must do it well, do it wholeheartedly, although we might experience repugnance in our natural makeup. We must show openness and satisfaction in being able to render service. Otherwise, when we do it manifesting coldness and sadness, we then are not obliging for we cause pain to the one we serve.

We must do things with gentleness, gentleness in the way we treat them, in our words or in our actions, in our attitude, in our whole conduct towards the confrère. The way to have that gentleness is to have a calm and peaceful interior. We must keep dominion over our passions. When we apply ourselves to preserve interior peace, we may experience great interior pains; but when we are with the

neighbor, let us not show anything of that kind, let us keep a smiling face, and let charity prompt us to contribute as much as possible to the pleasure and the satisfaction of our confreres.

Article XV

Our charity must be simple. We must carefully avoid affected manifestations of charity, strained thoughts and intentions to please, affected expressions of desires to please, and above all let us never use words that might make others indulge in vanity. On the contrary, let us speak and act with simplicity – the simplicity of children of God – avoiding all affectation. Let us be guided by heartfelt affections that spring from charity which is pure, the kind of charity that should fill our heart.

We must carefully avoid a fictitious charity which comes only from the imagination and is expressed in vain and complimentary words. When we happen to ruffle such persons, we see how their whole charity evaporates. People of the world make use of such empty expressions with respect to women, but they are unworthy of Christians. Our charity must be simple and mild, but also noble and full of dignity. Let us keep before our eyes the mutual relations of charity that existed between our Lord and his Blessed Mother and imitate them.

Article XVI

It will be a charity that is frank and open. We must act towards all our confreres with frankness and openness of heart, with effusiveness and gaiety. True charity has always a smile on the lips to bring joy and consolation to others.

When we have our mind occupied with business and troubles and our confreres come to us, nothing of our concerns should manifest itself and we should receive them with great openness and affability. We must be joyful with our confreres, bearing a smile on our lips, while avoiding dissipation which would only harm charity.

Article XVII

It must be modest and serious. Let us never make disorderly movements. Let us not push or touch one another, and let our conversation be modest, gentle, serious, perfectly frank and full of gaiety.

We must avoid two dangers: dissipation and rigidity. Ecclesiastical modesty must be manifested in all our conduct, so that a man of the world who saw us engaged together in recreation would be edified. Priests who live in the world often lack that modesty in their mutual relations. They do not think about it, but they would be more edifying if they preserved more seriousness among themselves. For the familiarity with which they treat one another makes laymen who see such things look less upon them as being men of God.

Article XVIII

We will be respectful and humble. We must talk to one another and treat one another with respect and without affectation, avoiding all sorts of familiarity and frivolity. We should behave with one another as with our Lord himself.

We shall not address the others as Joe or Jack, but as Father--- In the missions, if the people call us Father So-and-So, we can call one another the same way. We must have respect for our confreres; it is not the particular respect we must have towards the Bishop, but it is an interior respect which manifests itself exteriorly, according to the quality of each one with whom we happen to have relations. And in order to regulate that exterior manifestation of respect which we owe to everyone, we must follow our sentiment of what is proper in each case.

That respect will make us avoid all familiarity and a want of modesty. There should be intimacy among us, as is suitable among those who are closely united, but it should not be the kind of familiarity which young people in the world manifest in their pleasures. We may laugh; we are permitted to speak in jest among ourselves, but let us never utter a word that might cause pain to a confrere. To follow those rules properly, may it be our Lord whom we love in our confreres. We shall then treat them at the same time with charity, respect and modesty.

Article XIX

It must be a charity that is pure. We should not love our confreres in order that we in turn might be loved and esteemed by them; nor should it be for any purely human motive; nor above all, because of the natural and sensual attraction we feel towards them. If we notice such sentiments in ourselves, let us do all we can to fight against those dangerous maladies of the soul, for they can destroy completely all spirit of charity in our heart; they can uproot all the virtues and cause the loss of all God's graces. These natural inclinations and attractions are an infallible obstacle to our spiritual progress; they bind and shackle, as it were, continually the Holy Spirit in all his divine operations in us, delivering us to our passions; and they tend to destroy the virtue of chastity.

We must love (our neighbor) by a motive of charity and not for a natural motive. Natural motives are the ones that produce "particular friendships" which are a true plague in communities. St. Bernard called them "*amicitias inimicissimas*," most inimical friendships. Of these we spoke in the chapter on chastity. They are true passions which take all energy and power away from the soul. They enervate the soul, lord it over the soul, enslave the soul. In those particular friendships there is one, a rector of a seminary told me most truthfully, who is the "little poodle" of the other. It is he who is most dominated by that passion. He finds it impossible to separate himself from the other.

When we notice such dispositions in our heart, we must quickly start a vigorous struggle against them, for if we wait until they have grown strong, it will be very difficult to get rid of them. Our heart is so permeated, as it were, with those sentiments, that it is impossible to get rid of them. It is like a sponge that has been in the water for a long time; we find it difficult to get all the water out; it continues to be humid.

Persons who have a sensitive heart and a flexible imagination are particularly subject to that kind of affection. When they happen to be devout persons, those affections mingle with their devotion and make them pray constantly for the person they cherish. Then, in their meditations, they experience a very emotional fervor and imagine that they have made a very devout meditation; but all that fervor is nevertheless on the natural level, and serves only to feed their passion.

That is why, when such persons seek direction from me, I forbid them to pray for the object of their affection. "But," they tell me, "he greatly needs that friendship." No matter: stop praying for that person.

Within our communities we shall be less exposed to the danger of having such passionate friendships because of the active life of our missionaries. Nevertheless, we need to be watchful over ourselves. But it is outside our communities that we might more easily yield to them. We have sufficiently spoken about this in the chapter which deals with chastity. Let us merely recall here that St. Teresa of Avila, who lived in a religious community, had allowed herself to become naturally and excessively attached to a person who lived outside the cloister. God enlightened her about the place show would occupy in hell if she followed the guidance of the affection. This does not mean that at that time she had already committed a mortal sin; but if she had not fought that passion which had begun to inspire her, she would have been led to commit grievous sins and she would finally have been cast into hell.

Article XX

Finally, to sum up all the qualities which charity should have, we must state that charity should be holy. We must love one another as the saints in heaven love one another; we must love our confreres in God and love God in them; we must bless and praise God with all our heart for the spiritual good we see in them.

It is important that all the affections of our heart be supernatural because they are rooted in faith. It is true that an affection that is based on a natural motive is not evil. It remains also true, however, that it is dangerous and moreover it has no merit in relation to heaven. Let us love one another as the saints in heaven love one another. Every saint there loves God in other saints and rejoices because of the good God accomplishes in them. The least among the saints is overjoyed at the sight of the glory and blessedness in which God gives the greatest saints a share. Let us act the same way. Let us love our confreres in God, and God in our confreres. Then far from being afflicted because of the natural or the supernatural good possessed by our confreres and which we do not have, let us rejoice on that account and praise and bless God with all our heart for it.

Article XXI

Loving our confreres that way, wholly in God and for God, we will endeavor to make God truly live in them with all his power. That is why the greatest duty which charity imposes on each member of our Congregation is that he constantly desire the sanctification of his confreres, that he pray often for that intention, that he give good example, that he strive to make them tend to perfection by his words and his actions.

When you entered the Congregation you made as it were a contract with it. The Congregation assumes the obligation of providing especially for your spiritual well-being. But you assume the obligation of consecrating yourself to procure the good of the Congregation, that is, to work as much as possible for the good of its members. For that reason we must do the following.

1. Pray for all in general and particularly for those who, we believe, especially need it – but we need not say this to others.
2. We must lead them to devotion through our words. This does not mean that we must preach to them, or that we must constantly try to entertain them with devout conversations. This might produce the contrary effect and one that is just the opposite of what we desired to produce. But we must avoid saying anything that might lessen their fervor, their love of the Rule, their charity towards the confreres, etc. if we think that a counsel given by us would do good to a confrère, we should give it. Let us remember, however, that we have no authority over our confreres.
3. One kind of preaching which is always good and which cannot have any inconveniences, is preaching by good example, preaching by charity and modesty. Let us practice those virtues and we shall efficaciously contribute to the sanctification of our confreres.

Article XXII

Their charity will be directed not only to their confreres individually, but they will have the most tender love and the greatest attachment towards the Congregation, by which they are united in a most holy way in the heart full of love and holiness of their good and most loving

Mother. They will do all they can to increase its spiritual advantages, to preserve the spirit of its Rules, to make it able to procure the greater glory of God in souls, and be a faithful servant of the adorable Master of Holy Church, so that all souls who love him may bless him and rejoice in him because of all the graces he will diffuse through us.

We must be devoted to the Congregation in which we are incorporated for the purpose of laboring for the glory of God.

1. Our Lord has promised that where two or three are gathered in his Name, he would be there with them. Now, we are gathered in his Name. We know therefore that our Lord will help us with his special graces in order that we might have a share in those special graces. It is not enough for us to be together in body. We must be united in heart and spirit, in the Name of our Lord. There are special graces which our Lord has attached to the Congregation and which he has set aside for its members. By your vocation you are called to receive those graces. But if you separate yourself from the Congregation – I do not say physically only, but in your heart – you will thereby shut off the channel of graces which were destined for you.

2. Entering the Congregation you make a sort of contract with it. The Congregation assumes the obligation of taking care of your needs, to make you share in all its advantages. You, on your part, must procure the good of the Congregation as much as you are able.

3. The Congregation has a body which diffuses life and all the influences which animate it to all the members attached to it. But if a member separates himself from the body how then can that member receive those vivifying influences? Now, in order to be “attached” to that moral and religious body, it is not enough that we be physically present to it, if the heart is detached from it.

4. Experience proves that in any kind of Congregation and society, those who are most attached to it and are most filled with its spirit are those who draw the greatest benefits from such societies and are most successful regarding their own perfection.

5. With respect to the good that will be done by the Congregation, it goes without saying that such good will be in proportion to the union that will exist among its members.

We must love our Congregation more than other Congregations. This is the opinion of St. Francis de Sales, although we must have a greater esteem for those that are holier, which do more good, which are more worthy of esteem. With respect to the Congregation, we must have the same sentiments as we have towards ourselves: humility and charity. We must wish for the Congregation the same good as those we should desire for ourselves, superabundant spiritual goods. With respect to temporal advantages, we are permitted to desire them with moderation, insofar as they can procure the glory of God; but let us not have anxiety about that.

Everyone should contribute to the spiritual good of the Congregation. This he will do by his good example, by avoiding dissipation, by observing the Rule and by preserving its spirit integrally.

We must do all this in order that our Congregation might be a faithful servant of our Lord. We should not consider the Congregation as anything other than a servant of which its Master has no need. If it perished a thousand times our Lord would not suffer any harm on that account. We must desire and seek the exaltation of the Church, working with all our might for her expansion, because our divine Master is glorified thereby. But we must not seek our own glory. Let us imitate a faithful servant. He consecrates all his time and labors to procure the glory and the interests of his master; he does not work for himself. He knows only that his master who is good and generous will reward him, but now he thinks only of his master's interests. Nevertheless he has a right to the food that is necessary for him so as to be able to continue to be useful to his master. We similarly must take care of our spiritual needs so as to be able to work properly in the service of God.

Moreover, in the house of a rich person, there are several servants, male and female, who have all sorts of jobs and functions, which are more or less noble; from the one who does the cleaning or the cooking to the one who is the lady-in-waiting to her mistress. If those who have the lower functions are jealous of others there will be great disorder in the house and those who are jealous will deserve to be dismissed.

We, too, must avoid being jealous of other servants, that is, of other Congregations which also serve God in the Church. If those Congregations labor in the same place where we are employed and if they happen to be less honored than we are, let us remain humble. If they are more honored and respected than we are, let us avoid being sad on that account. Let us distrust the specious pretext

that it is because we desire the glory of God. We say to ourselves: "if we were more numerous, if we had more wealth, etc. we could work more efficaciously for God's glory." Under such a pretext we most often cover up a sentiment of self-love which is nothing but a desire for our own glory. If it is God's interest and his glory alone that we seek, let us quietly and peacefully take care of our small function as well as our powers permit and let us leave to God that which he does not ask of us. That does not mean that we cannot expect to feel such pains and have temptations to jealousy and other evil tendencies. But we must fight such things and, while perseveringly struggling with them, let us do our best with the help of God's grace, to curb those evil propensities of our nature.

Article XXIII

Their charity will be exercised not only towards the confreres who are still living, but even after they have departed from this world. All the members of the Congregation will say nine Masses for each one of the confreres whose death has been reported to them and as soon as possible. Every year during the octave of the Feast of the Holy heart of Mary and of the Annunciation, they will say two Masses for all the deceased members, one during the octave of our principal Patrons.

That is a duty of charity we have towards our confreres who have sacrificed themselves for the glory of God. Those who have not yet fulfilled that duty after the feast which has been celebrated these last times, should do this now. (This was said about two or three weeks after the feasts of the Annunciation and of St. Joseph). We should not dispense ourselves from that practice under the pretext that those deceased confreres do not need those intercessory prayers because their sacrifices have expiated their sins. No, we should not draw such conclusions, saying that because of those great sacrifices they have no need of our prayers. No doubt their loving sacrifices have served to obtain pardon for their faults, because they kept no attachment to those faults and therefore the pains due to them because of their faults are no longer demanded. Is it not true, however, that even when we make great sacrifices we still retain habits, and natural and unruly affections - though they be venial faults - and that some die with those faulty attachments? The will then is not yet perfectly disposed when such souls appear before God. Hence a purification is still needed in the next world for such souls. This should arouse us and encourage us. It should prompt us to get rid of our affection for anything that is not for God. After that it should console and encourage us, as we consider that with respect to the venial faults we

so easily commit, we have an excellent means of expiating them in this life by the constant exercise of charity to which we are called by our ministry. This chapter deals with the duties of charity which we must fulfill with respect to our confreres. Let us recall the words of St. Paul [Col. 3,14], namely, that charity is the *vinculum perfectionis*, the bond of perfection. For when we observe well our obligation of charity, it makes us practice perfection and exercise all the virtues of self-renunciation and humility; it makes us give support to our neighbor, and love for God is strengthened in us by every act of genuine charity we perform.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Apostolic Zeal

Article I

The missionaries of the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary must always look upon zeal as being the virtue that constitutes the essence of the apostolic spirit that should animate them. They will make it the constant object of their thoughts, the object of the desires of their hearts, and end and purpose of all their exercise of devotion.

Every Congregation in the Church has its particular spirit, according to the end and purpose it has in mind. The Trappists, for example, have the spirit of penance; the Carthusians have the spirit of prayer. We, as well as the other Missionary Congregations, are gathered for the purpose of saving souls, and so we must have an apostolic spirit. Therefore we should not adopt the customs of Carthusians, but those which will form us for the apostolic life. For this the great means is to have our eyes fixed upon our Lord in his ministerial life, and also upon the apostles. They are our models.

Apostolic zeal when pure and genuine is no doubt the most beautiful of all the virtues. We notice that in the process of canonization of St. Francis de Sales. Although he practiced all the virtues to a high degree, the motive for canonizing him that was expressed was his zeal for the salvation of souls. This, moreover, is easy to understand. The apostolic spirit is essentially a spirit of sacrifice. Religion is found in sacrifice; for in what does religion consist? In adoration, love and sacrifice. Now, the first two things, adoration and love, are eminently found in sacrifice that is made out of pure charity and that exists at every moment of one's life – a sacrifice of everything one has for the sake of winning adorers in spirit and in truth for God. This is why apostolic life is truly superior to contemplative life. Moreover, in order to have true apostolic zeal, it is necessary to have overcome all one's defects, for these are so many obstacles to the spirit of sacrifice which is essential to apostolic zeal. This shows that an apostolic spirit demands and presupposes great perfection. It also shows the importance of the novitiate where we must fight against those natural defects, which are so many obstacles to true zeal and to the good which the missionaries are called to produce in souls.

We must make a remark here for the consolation of novices who feel almost no sentiment of zeal, a thing which happens frequently. The reason is that, first of all, the good Lord does not want novices to be employed in works of zeal (with the exception of some catechizing with which some might be charged). So let them be peaceful about that! God's goodness is manifested thereby. For frequently if we experienced great emotions of zeal at a time when we are unable to engage in such works, it might excite our imagination and be harmful to the progress of our souls.

Moreover, we must realize that it is not to be wondered at if we do not experience those lively sentiments now that we are far removed from the battlefield. If, on the contrary, we had to instruct 10,000 Blacks and to sanctify them now, we would quickly feel animated by zeal to work for the salvation of those souls, even though we had only a minimum of sentiments of zeal. Let us wait for God's moment when we will be called to engage in apostolic activities. He then will give us sentiments of zeal. He will then animate us with his grace of zeal to labor for the salvation of souls. Look at what is done for a cannon that is to be fired. It is first packed tight; it is made ready; then a wick is lighted; now everything is ready, but nothing stirs until at a definite moment it is fired. Let us be similarly disposed. Let us prepare ourselves during the novitiate; let us struggle against our defects; let us abandon ourselves to God's guidance and he will personally form us. I have seen novices here who were worrying because they had no feelings of zeal. Later on when they arrived in their mission field, they labored with the greatest zeal and accomplished much good.

Article II

But they must be on their guard against having a false kind of zeal, and one that is not in line with God's design. Let them frequently look at the divine Master; let them consider the sentiments and the dispositions of zeal of the adorable Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls; and let them especially study his ways and see how well they follow them in their apostolic activities.

In the Church there are a good number of men who have zeal, but there are few who have perfect zeal. There is nothing strange about that, for we are full of defects, and all those defects - self-love, vanity, clinging to our own ideas, etc. - mingle with all our works of zeal. This shows us the importance of the novitiate: 1) to struggle against those defects and to acquire the opposite virtues, humility,

etc.; 2) to learn well true principles, which some day must guide us in the exercise of zeal. In spite of that, when we begin to exercise our ministry we shall make mistakes, but fewer than if we had not prepared ourselves for the battle. The same thing applies to the warfare we shall have to wage against the world and the demon as to battles with the sword. A young man who, after receiving lessons in fencing, begins to fence with an adversary will usually make many mistakes. Nevertheless, he will be able to avoid many more, both in offensive and defensive tactics, because he has learned the principles of fencing.

Article III

In their soul, the source and the nourishment of their zeal must be a great love of God, a love that is pure, holy, ardent and deeply engraved in their hearts. They will use the means that are most efficacious so as to establish themselves firmly and perfectly in that love. Love for God must be the virtue that is proper to and characterizes the missionary of the Most Holy Heart of Mary. We see bad priests who are engaged in works of zeal, but whose zeal is not pure, for it does not have the true foundation on which it should rest, namely, love for God. Let us look at our Lord Jesus Christ. What was the source-principle of his ardent zeal? It was his ardent love for his Father. Similarly, that which nourished and animated the zeal of St. Paul was his love of our Lord. We have only to read his Letters to see how ardent his love was for the divine Master; it was this love which fostered and inspired his zeal. Our zeal must be animated the same way and deeply imbedded in our heart; we must have a firm and intimate attachment which prompts us to sanctify ourselves constantly for the interests and the glory of God. That love must be pure; we must love God for himself and not for ourselves. There are men who love God for their own sake, who are occupied only with themselves instead of seeking to procure the glory of God. When our love is pure, we forget ourselves. It must be an intimate love; it should not consist in exterior manifestations. In general we should not cling to particular practices. We must look upon these as accessory means and not be slavishly dependent on them while not having that intimate love that is pure and ardent. Without such a love we never have an authentic zeal, a constant zeal, a zeal that is truly apostolic. It is that kind of love that makes men true apostles.

Article IV

Although affective love is very good and although we should try to preserve it in our heart, we must, nevertheless, more ardently and more particularly strive for a love of generosity and sacrifice, constantly desiring to immolate ourselves for the glory of our adorable Master and living joyfully for love of him in our works, our sufferings and sorrows of any sort. Let us often ask our divine Master to nourish and perfect us in that love which lives only through crosses and sacrifices.

1. "Affective love" consists in a sense-experienced affection towards God so that we are sensitively affected and touched by everything that relates to God. This kind of love prompts us to love holy things and to shun vain amusements and worldly gatherings. It inspires humility and modesty. Hence that love is very good and we should try to foster it in our heart. Our Lord has been a Model in that affective love in his private life. In his active life he has been the Model of the love of generosity and sacrifice, which is particularly necessary for a missionary.

We must make a clear distinction between a "sensible" love, a pure "affective" love, and a love of sacrifice. Sensible love principally affects the senses; so we experience a sense-joy and a sensitive attraction for everything that concerns God. Affective love resides in the heart and consists in an intimate and true affection that is independent of the senses and from the way the senses receive impressions. This is the kind of love that finds expression in the writings of St. Francis de Sales. Finally, there is the love of sacrifice. This love makes us tend to immolate and sacrifice ourselves constantly for the One we love.

2. "Sensible love" is useful for beginners to make them tend Godwards, but it is accompanied by many imperfections. Such persons do not have the virtues in their perfection and firmness, nor have they humility, gentleness, nor the other virtues. The reason is that their virtues consist principally in sentiments; they do not have any profound roots in the depths of their soul. That is why nothing is more false than saying that "piety" consists in sentiment. It is not only useful but necessary for a missionary, before leaving the novitiate, to have lost that sensibility of affection. For a man who is in that condition of sensibility seeks everything that can keep him in that "sensible" recollectedness and peace; he flees from everything that could give him movement and agitation. He is abashed and troubled and might become discouraged when something makes him lose that

"sensible" recollection and peace. Now what can he expect in the missions? There he will have a very active life, meet all sorts of contradictions, and often very few things that could foster a "sensible" devotion.

He then will be tormented; he will shun works of zeal, for instance catechizing, under the pretext of piety and that they are distracting, when in reality this will be motivated only by self-love. He will experience great pains. He will refuse to believe a confrere when he is told by him that solid devotion of God does not consist in that sense-devotion and that he should commit himself wholly to the works of an active ministry entrusted to him by divine Providence, and that recollection and peace of soul which are so greatly recommended for the interior life are not a recollection and a peace of the "sensitive" kind; they consist rather in acting only for God and in controlling our passions. Such a person might think that his adviser is lax in giving such a counsel. But his director in the novitiate must have warned him that he should expect to lose that "sensible" affection and that he will be called to live by faith alone. But it is one thing to hear a truth expressed, to accept it speculatively, and another thing to know it practically. Until then he had not known what it meant to lose that sensible devotion and he might now imagine that losing that sort of devotion was actually losing true piety. Then when an experienced confrere tells him what true piety is, he does not believe him; he has no confidence in him. So he experiences great pain. He thinks only of himself, and there is great danger that he will neglect his ministry. If the good Lord did not sustain those who have totally consecrated themselves to his service, it would have to be greatly feared that such a missionary would yield to discouragement. That is why it is necessary for a missionary who is leaving the novitiate to get rid of his sentimental (sensible) love before going to the missions. That is why there are few exercises in our novitiate that tend to foster "sensible" devotion, as would be, for instance, if the recitation of the Office were in common.

If the missionary has learned by personal experience during his novitiate to lead a life of faith; if that "sensible love" has been replaced by an intimate love which, like faith and hope, reside in the will and not in the senses, he will then be able to walk with freedom. Contradictions, pains, will not trouble him anymore. He will continue to renounce himself, to die to himself, to go counter to self-will. This constitutes genuine love, solid affection for our Lord.

There is the same difference between a man who has this solid love for God and the one who has a "sensible" love, as between a man who is accustomed to a sober and hard life and one who is accustomed to a refined life full of

excessive care, who is soft, flabby, cannot walk, cannot act, etc. When we have true affective love, which consists in tending Godwards with all the powers of our soul, and are attached to him from the bottom of our heart, we should then strive to exercise the love of generosity and sacrifice. This love makes us constantly desire to immolate ourselves for the glory of our adorable Master and to make continual sacrifices for him. It makes us like to undergo pains and sufferings of every kind throughout life.

That kind of love appears and shines brightly in all apostolic men known to us - in St. Paul, St. Xavier, St. Claver, St. Vincent de Paul, and the others. Let us then do our best to obtain that kind of love from God and let us cooperate with his grace so as to be able to practice it. What should we do during the novitiate in order to exercise it? We do not have to make great sacrifices for our bodily well-being, but we shall lovingly exercise that love of sacrifice by bearing and suffering with joy and courage the temptations which will assail us, the disgust, the annoyances, external pains - in a word, the crosses with which our Lord desires to favor us. Let us be pleased because we are tempted, suffer pains or are tormented. Let us not ask to be delivered promptly from them. Let us with a generous heart abandon ourselves to the paternal guidance of our divine Master. These temptations and crosses are so many rungs by which we ascend to God; they are so many knots by which we bind ourselves to him.

Let us, therefore, always have the disposition to sacrifice ourselves for Jesus Christ. Nature will complain, so much the better. In the midst of all and every kind of crosses we must always say by our attitude, so much the better!

The crosses which give us the greatest difficulty during our novitiate are those that come from ourselves; they are interior pains and temptations. It is in them that we must exercise our love of generosity. "But," you will say, "I offend God during those temptations." Well, humble yourself before God because of your faults, and rejoice because of the pain you experience on their account. "But I fear to incur the displeasure of God." Well, sacrifice yourself again regarding that state of fear. Try to serve God to the best of your ability, and abandon yourself to his divine will so as to bear that painful fear. It is during those states of trial that we love God solely for himself. On the contrary, when we love him with a "sensible love" we often love him for ourselves, because of the pleasure which loving him gives us. Let us love with that spirit of sacrifice and we will be capable of doing anything and everything in the ministry of the missions. Nothing will stop us, nothing will upset us, for our divine joy will permeate our works and the pains and privations of every kind.

If, on the contrary, we are still full of love of ourselves, we shall have neither courage in the service of God, nor constancy in laboring for the salvation of souls. Love of the cross that is based on the love of generosity is that which characterizes truly apostolic men, who must constantly have before their eyes and try to imitate our Lord, whose whole life was a life of sacrifice.

Article V

That holy love must inflame us with a great and generous zeal and courage. We must be constantly disposed to make our divine Master live and reign in souls at the cost of our repose, of our health, of our happiness, of all our interests, even if necessary, at the cost of our life.

The love of generosity consists in forgetting oneself so as to think henceforth only of God's interests, to will only his interests, and to act only for them. If we are animated by that love we will not fear anything; we will be disposed to suffer everything in order to make our divine Master live and reign in souls. On the contrary, when we are animated only by "sensible" love, we will soon become disheartened by fatigue or by obstacles. It is one thing to have a zeal with respect to a mission that is at a great distance from us, and to be ready to depart for Guinea and sacrifice oneself for the glory of God, and quite another to preserve that zeal afterwards when we are actually in that place, to keep it in spite of the heat, the fatigue, the disgust, the proximate danger of losing our health. The true missionary looks upon himself as being nothing when there is question of God's glory. His repose, his health, his honor, his life are nothing in his own eyes. We are not concerned when we have crushed an ant, an insect, out of fun. Should we not be much more ready to sacrifice ourselves for God? Do we not belong more to him than an ant might belong to us? So we should not make any fuss about our life when there is question of procuring God's glory. Moreover, can we think of any greater joy than that of sacrificing our life for God? Do our missionaries who were in Guinea have to regret the few years they might have added to their lives if they had remained restfully in France? And would they not have died after these few additional years? Would these added years then have appeared important to them?

Nevertheless the superior must have a different attitude from his subjects. He must take the greatest care of his missionaries, and he must use them only with prudence and discretion. This he owes to his community, to the good of souls, and to the glory of God. Thus, for example, during a plague, if all

missionaries ask to expose themselves to danger, and if it is enough that one should do so, he would not act wisely if he permitted all to expose themselves to danger. But the missionary himself must always be ready to sacrifice all his interests and even his life.

The children of this world do that for a human motive. Would we then not do it for motives that are infinitely more noble and more urgent? A soldier exposes himself to an evident danger of death, even sometimes through fear, but most of the time for the sake of honor. Should we not do it out of love for God? It is necessary, therefore, that we always tend towards that love of generosity and sacrifice, without which there are no apostles. In order that someday we might be able to exercise that spirit of sacrifice in the missions, we must exercise it now in small things, sacrificing at every moment our will, our self-love, etc.; and this we shall do now with so much more merit, because in small things we are not supported by sentiments of vanity: *qui in modico fidelis est, et in majora fidelis est* (he who is faithful in small things, is faithful in greater ones).

Article VI

Our zeal must be constant and persevering in the midst of pains, passions, privations; in the presence of all obstacles and all the resistances of men.

Article VII

Holy love should inflame us; it should fill us with immense desires to glorify God. It should give us a lively and ardent zeal which will make us vigorously use the means which our Lord will put in our hands to win and sanctify souls.

This article flows from the preceding article as naturally as a rivulet flows from a spring. That constancy and perseverance in the midst of pains, of fatigue, of privations and of resistances will be an immediate effect of the love of generosity and of sacrifice. What is there that can oppose constant zeal? Fear, cowardice, and self-love. Character also can exercise a great influence. But when we work constantly at renouncing ourselves so as to sacrifice ourselves, whatever character we might have we will be able to overcome ourselves as well as the various obstacles which prevent us from being constant and persevering.

When we do not have that generous love we always find pretexts for abandoning a work of zeal; we sometime even will bring forward that it is God's will! Of course, the true motive then is self-love, which makes use of any kind of means to attain its purpose. Constancy in zeal is one of the most important qualities. You will not undertake anything for God's glory without meeting difficulties. If you stop at difficulties, you will not do anything. We do indeed start with a vigorous step, but what is hard is persevering amid difficulties and delays. Let us always keep in mind that great and solid works are accomplished slowly. Church history gives us a thousand proofs of that fact.

Article VIII

Nevertheless, we must avoid a zeal which is only a product of the imagination or of natural ardor. True zeal does not come from our nature, but comes from grace alone. Its source is the Heart of Jesus. It is from that source that we must draw it through an intimate union with him. Hence our zeal must be divine and supernatural as was his.

Article IX

That is why, however ardent our zeal might be, it should not disturb our peace of soul. Hence we must carefully avoid restless eagerness, violent haste in our activity, and other defects of that sort which show that our zeal is full of imperfection, or that it comes more from our nature than from him, who alone can give us a zeal that is pure and holy. We must also avoid with great care slowness and the other faults which are the contraries of the first mentioned. Exterior action must be more or less lively, according to what is required by the circumstances. But we must be always interiorly united in a holy and peaceful union with our adorable Master, so that we act only through his divine Spirit and his holy love and peace.

There is a rather common illusion about the true nature of zeal. It consists in representing a zealous man as one who is always on the go, always on the move, always sensitively effervescent, always beside himself. This is the idea many have about St. Francis Xavier, but they are mistaken. For, although he had a heart that was burning with zeal, he also must have had a heart that was very calm. He spent long hours in mental prayer in which he united himself with his

God. The soul of a missionary is sometimes portrayed as a boat forging ahead and whose sails are the spirit of the missionary, in which the Holy Spirit is blowing. But this is not a right way of representing things.

The sails are the will. With respect to the spirit of the missionary, he needs the grace of a pilot to direct his march. True zeal consists in an ardent and pure charity, and therefore it is not in the imagination that we must seek it. The thing that distinguishes true zeal from a zeal which is merely a product of the imagination is that true zeal is accompanied by calmness, gentleness, humility and constancy amid difficulties. Imaginary zeal, on the contrary, brings trouble to the soul and inspires sentiments of greatness and vanity. It makes missionaries compare themselves to the greatest apostolic men, and inspires great imaginary projects. Such men build castles in Spain and seek to attract the esteem of others. They like to talk about themselves. They also yield to bitterness. They sometimes are loud in their exclamations, attacking those whom they consider to be the causes of evil. They become discouraged when things are not successful according to their imaginary plans.

True zeal is peaceful, but it makes missionaries pray for souls which live in sin; it makes them offer themselves to God for them, so as to bear the pains resulting from those crimes. The other kind of zeal is not a sanctifying zeal.

While the truly zealous missionary is always more and more united to God and acts more and more for God, the other (who has imaginary zeal) goes farther and farther away from God because he is occupied only with phantasms of his imagination; he loses peace and has no more liking for mental prayer.

It is necessary, therefore, to strive for a zeal that is holy and supernatural, the kind of zeal that was characteristic of men who were truly apostolic. We must repress the unruly movements of our imagination. Let us no longer build castles in Spain, but let us be disposed to be immolated and sacrificed for the glory of God when he wants it, and peacefully wait for the moments of his choice. There you have the marks of true zeal; and we then have peace of soul. Pure zeal is a product of grace; it is a movement that comes from God. Therefore our action must be in accord with God's action; then it will be strong and at the same time peaceful: *attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponit omnia suaviter* (it reaches from end to end strongly, and disposes all things sweetly).

Hastiness and trouble are signs of an imperfect zeal. And its causes are twofold:

1. Instead of basing themselves on God, of putting their confidence in God alone and acting in dependence on his grace and his Holy Spirit, they are self-reliant. That is why they fear to omit one occasion or one human means. They hasten, they become agitated. So it is necessary for us to practice self-renunciation, to renounce our own spirit, our own will; and we must practice abandonment to God's guidance in our regard.

2. The second cause of imperfection in our zeal is our natural defects. In one person, it is his vivaciousness, his petulance; in another it is harshness, etc. We must strive to overcome those defects. We must not be surprised to see that we are full of such defects; but we must avoid being troubled on that account. What we must do is to put our confidence in God's grace, and struggle constantly against them. Neither must we yield to trouble of mind when we happen to commit a fault, a "spurt." In this there is no great evil provided we continue to struggle against the defect.

If we must most carefully avoid over-activity, hastiness and precipitation, we must equally avoid slowness and the faults opposed to the first-mentioned defects. This slowness comes from a natural defect or from an irregular search for emotional devotion and a sensitive recollectedness. If our faults come from a natural defect, we must fight against it. If they come from the second cause, we must renounce ourselves and refuse to seek that sense-satisfaction which we find in that sort of "devotion." Or, if we erroneously fear to lose our recollectedness and to lose at the same time our holiness, we must try to convince ourselves that true union with God and sanctity do not consist in that emotional (sensible) devotion, but in the union of our will with God's will.

If we desire to avoid giving way to laxity, the means to avoid it are preserving peace of heart and remaining humble. Externally - that is, not only in our behavior that is witnessed by others - but in everything we do for the salvation of souls, our action must be lively; but our interior must be united to God. This does not mean a sensitive (sensible) union, nor does it mean constantly thinking of God. This true and necessary union with God consists in two things: to act solely for God and to preserve purity of intention. Moreover, let us preserve also a facility of going to God, of raising our heart to him; this must be done in all simplicity from time to time, without wishing to feel his presence at all times.

Article X

In order to preserve that peace in our Lord Jesus Christ, we must avoid being embarrassed, uncertain about many things, and mentally afraid. We must act with a great interior freedom, doing what we think is good and useful to procure the greatest glory to the divine Master, and leave it to him to bless and make fruitful whatever we do for that purpose, according to his good pleasure.

Discomfort of the mind, uncertainties, embarrassments, when habitual are very harmful to the missionaries and to the souls committed to their care. That is why we should not neglect anything to get rid of them. For this purpose, we must first of all convince ourselves that all that we do in itself is nothing in the eyes of God, but it is the intention of our heart that he considers and which pleases him; that all that we shall say or do will not produce anything; for all the good that will come to souls will be given by God: "I have planted, Apollo has watered; it is God who has given the increase."

With respect to practice, after briefly raising our heart to God, we must accustom ourselves to decide things promptly. In the second case, when the matter is of little importance, let us act similarly - especially when we are inclined to suffer embarrassment of mind - so as to accustom ourselves to act freely. If the matter is important but not urgent, we can wait and continue to consult God.

Finally, once the thing has been decided we should no longer change the resolution, unless it is clearly seen that a change must be made. Acting that way, you will perhaps make occasional mistakes, but it is even more important that you learn to act freely and not yield to embarrassments of mind. "But," you might say, "my conscience is troubled about that; it reproaches me." No! It is not your conscience which causes your trouble, but it is your spirit and your imagination, and you must not heed those reproaches. Those troubles often come from organic disturbances. You must reject them and despise them; otherwise you will lose your peace of mind and will become almost useless for souls.

I hear another objection "Am I not obliged to choose the safest course?" To this I answer, first of all, that we are not always obliged to take the safer course; and that you must not only consider one particular case, but the whole of your conduct. Now, if you do not accustom yourself to act with freedom and do

not refuse to let yourself be stopped by those embarrassments, you will do great harm to yourself and to the souls you are called to sanctify.

Article XI

Peace gives to zeal a quality which it must always have, namely, a great mildness (sweetness). The ardor with which you should embrace everything that is able to procure God's glory must not prevent you from possessing interior mildness, which must be diffused and appear in all your conduct, a conduct which must be characterized by the mildness and gentleness of our divine Master.

A zeal that is not accompanied by mildness can have very bad results. First, as is evident, we must shun violence which is the opposite of mildness. Secondly, there is a manifestation of the party spirit; we claim we are defending a good cause. We support it warmly, but in reality it is not done purely for God but out of self-love. We do not want to be defeated. Then passion enters and we run the risk of doing harm to religion because of the passionate way we exercise that zeal, and this is deeply felt and rejected even by the enemies of religion. From this comes also the bitterness with which we treat our neighbor. Finally, since the soul is possessed by passion, it often happens that it neglects everything else. And then it might happen that the same man who defends religion with ardent zeal, has himself many defects and commits many sins.

That lack of mildness is very harmful to the good of souls, for every time we show bitterness and give way to our anger, we can expect that whom we have treated in that fashion will be prejudiced against us; they will be on the defensive, and they will never - or almost never - give in. If we wish to do good for souls we must win their hearts, and it is through mildness that we shall win them.

Mildness is an apostolic virtue, and a fault committed through lack of mildness is hard to correct and difficult to make reparation for. A bitter word, an act of violence, once such faults have been committed, are no longer in our power. Therefore, it is very important to acquire the virtue of mildness and gentleness. A lack of mildness may be due to our temperament (character), to our tendency to cling to our own ideas, to our self-love. That is why we must make efforts to overcome that defect of character, if we have such a character, and we must especially accustom ourselves to renounce our self-love, which is our greatest enemy and constantly prompts us to raise ourselves above others and to

be angry towards everything which is an obstacle to that self-aggrandizement. In order to have mildness we must die to ourselves, to all our passions and to all natural desires. Only then shall we be filled with the charity of Jesus Christ; for we then act only in virtue of his divine Spirit who is a spirit of peace and gentleness.

Some might object that our Lord spoke and acted severely against the Pharisees and that we are therefore permitted to treat the enemies of religion in the same manner. To this I answer: first, in order to be permitted to behave in the same way we would have to be in the same circumstances and have to deal with the same kind of persons as were the Pharisees, who were hypocrites, who made a misuse of religion to lord it over the people and prevented them from hearing the Word of God. Secondly, suppose you found that kind of person, even then you should not conclude that you must try to imitate Christ's conduct with respect to the Pharisees, as revealed in his words. In order to have such a privilege you should have an interior life very much like that of Jesus Christ. Like him, you should be very calm in your heart and master of all your interior and exterior movements as well as of your own words.

Article XII

We must remember the words which our Lord has spoken to us through the person of his Apostles: I send you like lambs among wolves. That is why we will exercise the greatest mildness towards those who persecute us, towards those who hate us and who seek to resist and harm us.

Missionaries will be like lambs among wolves - defenseless against their enemies - so long as these only attack their persons and the glory of God is not compromised.

Our Lord sends us like lambs among wolves. Let us pay great attention to that word of our divine Master. A lamb does not bite; it lets itself be devoured. So we must act. All sorts of calumnies will be spread about us. Some will write against us in newspapers. We could answer so as to triumph and humiliate our adversaries, thus turning peoples' aversion away from us and towards our enemies. Let us not do that. We must be like lambs; lambs do not bite.

If the interest of God demanded that we answer our calumniators and justify ourselves, let us do it clearly, with mildness and evangelical charity, saying what is necessary for the defense of the cause of God, to defend the truth, and to

justify ourselves if God's interest demands it, but without attacking our adversaries. The people of the world might despise us, but this should not make us fail either in charity or in mildness. We must follow Christ's example and act upon his words when he tells us: "I send you like lambs among wolves."

Let us exercise great charity towards those who persecute us: first of all in our hearts, by desiring their good; secondly, in our words. Never say anything evil about them, not even among yourselves. This would only serve to embitter our hearts. Thirdly, in our actions; if we have relations with those persons, let us treat them with gentleness, while avoiding affectation. For affectation could have bad effects; it could be wrongly interpreted as hypocrisy.

There are saints who have done extraordinary things in their way of treating those who had done them harm. But unless we are moved by the Spirit of God, we should not do anything that could seem to be affectation. Let us always show mildness and charity. Every time an occasion arises for doing some good to them, let us not miss it, for we shall then do it purely for God; neither shall we have to fear doing it out of self-love and self-complacency. When those persons happen to find that out, they will be touched and may regret the evil they did. On the contrary, the good you do for them so as to be seen by them may often be badly interpreted and it may embitter them even more.

We may often need to use that kind of charity and mildness towards the priests in some missions. Everywhere we shall have to practice patience and gentleness towards lay people. Towards the latter we may sometimes feel that we can act more freely; but let us be in our guard so that we always treat them with great modesty and mildness.

Article XIII

The missionaries will exercise the greatest mildness: 1) towards the most hardened sinners; 2) towards souls that are weak and ill because of the vices and the inclinations that make them earth-minded; 3) towards those who are vulgar and coarse, and towards those who resist them; 4) in general, towards all. They will consider themselves brothers of all sinners, representing them before our Lord Jesus Christ, representing all. Hence they will treat all with whom they are connected with the mildness they deserve.

Everybody needs to be treated with mildness and gentleness. We will, therefore, practice it with respect to all. We shall practice it particularly:

1. Towards sinners. When dealing with sinners, especially when we notice great malice in them, we are inclined to be indignant and to get angry. This is a movement springing from our nature. We sometimes believe that we are moved by a spirit of zeal; we are mistaken, for zeal is patient and gentle, like God's Spirit, which animates true zeal. A behavior that is full of bitterness is that of the Pharisees with respect to the publicans. Such an attitude differs greatly from the attitude of our Lord towards sinners, for instance towards the Samaritan woman, towards the woman who was guilty of adultery, etc.

Where does our indignation and our bitterness come from? It is not because we see that someone has offended God; but it is because our Self has been hurt. Every time your zeal loses self-control and makes you bitter and indignant, you no longer exercise the virtue of zeal; you are led by passion.

2. Towards souls that are weak, that are ill because of their vices and evil inclinations. With these souls you must practice patience. No doubt they will frequently return, showing no improvement in their spirit and conduct. They will make frequent promises, but fail to keep them. Then when we see them remain always the same, we are liable to treat them harshly, but let us be on our guard. If we treat them without gentleness, we will break them and lose them instead of curing them. If, on the contrary, we treat them with patience and mildness, we often may succeed in healing them. If such persons happen to die without being converted, at least we shall not be guilty of any fault in that regard.

Keep in mind that you have received more graces than those poor, spiritually sick people, and graces of the first order in view of your sublime vocation. Let us remember how often we have been unfaithful to those special graces. In spite that God has always suffered us with great patience. After that, should we then be harsh towards such poor souls and break them? Should we not, on the contrary, try to heal them?

3. Towards souls that are coarse. Are we not much more coarse and rude in our relations with our Lord than they are towards us? But in spite of that, our Lord always is full of goodness and gentleness towards us. Let us therefore act similarly towards those souls.

Among those who are ill with spiritual illnesses, and with whom we must use great gentleness, we must place the scrupulous. It frequently happens that scrupulous persons are very badly treated. Some think it is enough to tell them that all their fears are temptations, that we must cut conversation short with them, telling them to walk in obedience. Yes, indeed, obedience is the remedy that is most suitable for them, but it is not sufficient to tell this to them. We must inspire them with confidence. No doubt we come to a categorical conclusion, with the scrupulous, which means we should not foster their scruples nor increase their anxieties, leaving them in doubt concerning thousands of things that have no importance but which torment them as if they were sins. But that does not mean we must be rough with them. If we treat them with harshness and rigidity we run the risk of driving them to despair and we strengthen our own habit of acting rudely towards people who have that kind of illness. That illness consists precisely in a mental fear, and that anxiety and illness grow worse when we do not let them freely open their heart and fail to inspire confidence. On the contrary, if you use gentleness, their malady will subside, or at least will be less severe.

Some might say: "If I treat them in this gentle way, they will come back to me, and such persons will pester me constantly and steal all time." They will take some of your time, I agree. But that time will be well spent, for it will be to render service to a soul that was bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, if you act the other way, you will leave that poor soul more ill than when it was sent to you by our Lord.

Why did you act rudely to the person or neglect to treat that soul properly? It was to satisfy your self-love which likes to converse only with persons who are gentle, easy to deal with, and prompt to obey; and it prefers to be occupied with other less painful affairs, with business that is more pleasing to nature.

We must therefore welcome with great mildness, and listen to poor scrupulous souls with patience; the same applies to persons who are coarse and rude. Do not hurry them, for this upsets them, closes their heart and their mouth. Give them the suitable time that they may find consolation and that you may be able to help them as our Lord desires you to do. Even if it took you and them three quarters of an hour for their weekly confessions when there is scarcely any sin, if the condition and the good of such persons require it, you should give them that much time. Our Lord does not demand anything else from during that time.

Moreover, if you want to go fast, you often will not gain anything for those persons, for they are troubled. They will repeat things or will proceed slowly. A holy priest, however, great his present occupations, treats each person according to the person's need as if he had no other occupation, refrains from making the person feel that he has other business. It is our Lord who entrusts the care of souls to us; we take his place in relation to those souls; therefore we must act towards them as our Lord would do. Our Lord would not treat them rudely. Brusqueness can do much harm. It can make penitents hide mortal sins in confession. I myself have been obliged to make a person go to another confessor when such a thing had happened.

Let us remember this important truth: We are made for the souls which our Lord has entrusted to our care that we might save them; the souls are not made for us. That is why we must look upon ourselves as debtors and servants of those souls, and not be sorry for the time which we "are losing" by taking care of them, for that time belongs to them and must be consecrated to them. So, we must try to remember that principle and guide our conduct by it. When we are dealing with a soul, we must look for a means which will be most useful to it and then use those means. That is why we should not forget that principle; there is a necessary relation between the effect and the cause, between them there is an essential connection. Therefore, if in our relation with a soul, we present opposition or rigidity, if we act harshly and rigidly towards such a soul, we shall produce an effect of opposition in that soul, and this will tend to drive the person away from us. We then neglect a means to do good for that person. This can be confirmed by the experience of every confessor or director of souls.

In spite of your rudeness you might, it is true, convince that soul, because the person knows you are much better instructed than he or she is; nevertheless, you will not inspire practical confidence in your words. If, on the contrary, you establish a cause of union by means of gentleness and unction, you bring about a closer connection between yourself and that soul; you will win that soul; it will have confidence in you and will be inclined to obey your precepts and your counsels.

All this shows us that mildness and gentleness are essentially apostolic virtues. We must, therefore, make every effort to acquire them; but this requires effort – painful effort – for we shall not attain them without perfect renunciation of ourselves.

Article XIV

We must practice in all our conduct that which is expressed in the beautiful apostolic maxim of the great Apostle, who said that he became all things for all men to win them for Jesus Christ. The missionaries will put themselves at the disposal of all, adapting themselves to their characters (temperaments), their taste, their desires, to the views of all, so that by that means they may introduce into all hearts love for the truths of the Gospel and efficacious desires to put those truths into practice. Nevertheless, they will avoid misusing that saying of St. Paul so as to destroy their Rules, lose the spirit that should animate them, and do away with union with our Lord. They must preserve a life that is modest, humble and religious; this they must profess and practice after the example of the divine Master.

In medio stat virtus, virtue follows the middle course. Virtue is a point; if we go to the left or to the right of it, we are no longer within the truth of the virtue. This is what happens often with respect to that maxim of St. Paul that we should become all things to win all to Jesus Christ. Very often that maxim is misrepresented, and then some draw themselves away from God for the purpose of winning others.

That maxim, when properly understood, is of the greatest importance for the missionary; for what has the missionary to do in the mission? He has come to save souls, to win them for Jesus Christ. He is like the channel by which the grace of Jesus Christ will be imparted to those souls; and this grace will unite them to their Savior. But in order to do that, the missionary himself should be united to those souls. He must be able to enter into them; he must, as it were, become one being with them from that standpoint and through that union. It is necessary, therefore for the sake of all the souls he is called to save that he make himself all things to all those souls. Without that he will be able to make beautiful speeches, give good testimony, but there is no union of hearts, and for that reason he will not win them; he will not attract them and they will not surrender.

If we want to put that maxim of St. Paul into practice and become all things to all men, we must first of all put ourselves at the disposal of all, so that when the faithful need our service they will not be afraid of bothering us, but will come and freely ask for our help. This does not mean that for the sake of one

person it is always necessary to neglect things that are more necessary for a great number of the faithful. In all this we must use discretion. But this means that we should never put off, send away, or annoy a person who addresses himself to us, provided that we do not do things for our own interest and out of self-love, for example, because we should like to study, etc.

In that behavior we must follow the example of our Fathers of Bourbon and Mauritius towards the lowly and the great, keeping in mind, however, that according to our vocations we are specially called to serve the lowliest and the poor. Let us put ourselves at the disposal of those souls, not only paying no attention to any repugnance, but let us do it with a joyful spirit and put all our delight in it.

Secondly, we must adapt ourselves to their character. There are men who see things only in a speculative way, and direct souls to the rules laid down in the speculative order without taking the characters of others into consideration. This way of acting is very harmful to souls. We must try to find out what is going on in each soul, what is its way, its way of acting and existing. Then just as we adjust a paper or stocking to make it fit into a boot, so must we fashion and adjust ourselves to their way of being and feeling, so as to bring about their union with us, if we truly desire to do them good.

For instance; with souls that are coarse and rude, we must lower ourselves so as to descend to their level; we must adjust ourselves to their customary way of understanding things, their way of feeling things and according to what touches and impresses them. Bossuet, in spite of all his science and his genius, would not have been able to teach catechism to a poor black woman, if he had not forgotten himself so as to make use of a totally different genre than one to which he was accustomed.

With persons who are lively and ardent in character, we should not use the cold and stiff approach. This would make them feel distant from us and they might even become embittered. On the contrary, with persons who are cold, thoughtful and serious-minded, who are accustomed to act only upon reasoning, we shall have no influence on them if we approach them and want to move them by using vivacious methods.

It is necessary, therefore, to examine the character of persons, their way of acting and feeling, when we want to deal with them, and we must adapt our ways to their character. That does not mean that will be successful in

influencing them, that they will yield to us, that they will be won by us. This is hard to achieve; we need to make use of great tact. Certain persons are tactful by nature. There is also the supernatural tact, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit and which we must pray for in order to do good to souls. Moreover, we must practice self-renunciation and constantly forget ourselves so as to adapt ourselves to different souls with whom we have to deal.

Thirdly, we must adapt ourselves to the tastes and desires of each person. Our Lord is a perfect Model of such conformity. Everyone finds in the Gospel that which is suitable to him, the rich and the poor, the lowly and the great, those who are ignorant and the highly educated. The Prophets and the Apostles did not have those advantages to the same degree. Read St. Paul, for instance, to a young uncivilized Black. Though he may be devout, he will not have great liking for it. Certain things in it he might understand and draw some benefit from them, but he will not like them as well as the words of the Holy Gospel. St. Paul, St. John, having different genres; one suits one person better; the other prefers another, but the Holy Gospel is suitable for everyone.

In our relations with souls we must try to imitate that conformity to the tastes of each one, as we have said about character. This we see in the life of St. Francis Xavier who was playing with a soldier. Especially, we must avoid being harsh with people and acting contrary to their taste. It is preferable to pay no attention to imperfections and sometimes even to sins, when one realizes that at present there is no remedy available for them. Once you have won those souls, you will be their masters and you will then be able to do the good you desire; but you must first win them.

We mentioned the case of St. Francis Xavier playing with a soldier to win him. We win people by taking them by what is the object of their desires. Thus, we might be able to win a learned man by explaining to him the great proofs on which belief on our religion rests. To a man who loves the beauty of virtue, we could show the beauty of Christian morality etc.

The general principle is that we must sacrifice ourselves for all and for everyone in order to win them for Jesus Christ. If we want, to win them, there must be union and this union cannot be established except by our sacrificing our taste, our desires, our views to theirs. So zeal demands a continual renunciation and self-sacrifice of ourselves.

Nevertheless, we must use prudence in the application of that principle lest we ruin our Rules, destroy the spirit that must animate them, and do away with our union with God. Let us take our Lord for our Model; then let us not spare ourselves and we shall not go astray. Like him we must sacrifice ourselves ceaselessly and seek only the glory of God. We must remain constantly united to him. A person who has only a superficial piety, who is perfectly detached from the Self and from creatures often is self-seeking in the exercise of zeal. He wants to attach souls to himself. Then in the way of exercising that zeal, he adopts worldly ways and a worldly spirit. He lets himself show all sorts of imperfections and commits many faults; he grows more and more away from God on the pretext of attracting souls.

Here is a great rule for us if we desire not to get away from the true meaning of the maxim of St. Paul.

First, let us never, for the sake of pleasing or winning men, commit imperfections that are real and interiorly faulty, such as delivering ourselves up to the things world likes, to worldly pleasure, etc. Secondly, regarding external behavior, it is sometimes permitted to do such external things that seem imperfect, as when St. Francis was playing with a soldier. But even such things should be avoided if they are dangerous, either in general or in particular, for oneself, for instance going around in expensive clothing, or behaving as some proud wealthy people might do. Let us wear decent and neat clothing, neater than those you wear in the novitiate if that is useful for the person with whom you happen to have relations; but let there be nothing luxurious about your clothes.

It might happen that in an extraordinary circumstance one might have to appear in rich clothes, as was once done by St. Francis Xavier. But after that let us - also like St. Francis - dress once more in our ordinary poor clothes.

No doubt, St. Paul was not dressed in rich clothes, for he also exercised a lowly trade so as not to be a burden to anyone; and yet in his time people were as vain and prejudiced as in ours. Our Lord who lowered himself so much, who made himself lowly with the lowly – in a word, who became all things to all – always led the life of the poor. He never took on any worldly ways. In his words and actions he was and remained always the Son of God.

Similarly, it is necessary that we be always “men of God.” Let us not imagine that by adopting worldly appearance and manners we will win the men

of the world. No! They might indeed have consideration for us, praise our spirit and our manners, but it is our holiness, together with God's grace, which will be able to draw them to religion. They must see in us men who deserve to be called "men of God," ministers of our Lord. If we want to do good for souls, we must be constantly united to our Lord, ready to renounce ourselves and sacrifice ourselves at every moment for the good of souls. Finally, we must be exteriorly modest, humble and religious.

Article XV

In their zeal they must use both vigor and mildness. They must wage a constant war against sin and vices, pursuing those evils until they are overcome. In this way they must be animated by the virtue and the divine power of their Master; this he will not refuse to give them if they are faithful. At the same time, let them not entertain any fears or apprehensions. Let them dispose all things with sweetness and mildness.

It is possible to be excessively mild and gentle when we have only a natural mildness. We must act energetically, but without passion. In order to combine vigor and mildness we must act to procure God's glory and execute his will. We must act with the help of his Holy Spirit and use the means which we think we must use. And then we must use them vigorously. But while using those means we must be on our guard against acting through passion; we must always keep a free mind which enables us to discern what is demanded by prudence and by a heart that is full of charity towards the neighbor. A man who is a perfect master of his sentiments and emotions (movements) and is full of charity, calculates, examines, foresees the means and obstacles, and acts with vigor of soul and does not let himself be shaken by any human fear.

On the contrary, a zealous man who has no self-mastery and lets himself be propelled by violent emotions, sees some good to be done, some evil that must be prevented, a vice that must be uprooted. He does not stop in order to foresee obstacles. He marches, runs straight to the goal, and breaks everything that stands in his way when he is able to do so. But he stopped by unforeseen obstacles and they overturn his badly planned efforts. He commits many imprudences, attacks persons, acts tactlessly and produces evil instead of good results.

That is not the way to go to work. We must imitate God's way who "reaches from end to end vigorously and disposes all things sweetly." Generally speaking, and as it were, universally, we should never make use of rigorous ways, for severity and harshness are always dangerous. By gentle and mild manners and behavior we will usually achieve what we have undertaken for the glory of God. St. Vincent de Paul said that during his life he had only made use of severity three times in order to correct his subjects and that this means had not been successful.

Article XVI

The vigor with which they must act must be holy, heavenly, and a product of love for God. They will be take care not to base their vigorous action on their character or temperament. When acting vigorously, they should always do it in a spirit of humility and with the awareness of their lowliness in the presence of our Lord. Let them never lose peacefulness, mildness, and union of their souls with God. Let them most carefully avoid all rigor, stubbornness and all other faults which come from natural vigor.

The missionary who in his conduct and activities follows those rules will do wonders. They are sufficient to direct his actions. The missionary's power must have love for God as its foundation. This is very important and we must be very watchful over ourselves so that our vigorous actions be not founded solely on our imagination and on our character. Here are the signs that show zeal comes from character, from a natural source:

First of all, it is accompanied by inflexibility. As a result of original sin, all our natural qualities have become degenerated and defects are mingled with them. Natural mildness brings with a tendency to weakness. Strength of soul is accompanied by stiffness. This energy can be useful when it properly directed, but it can be a source of frightful evils when it is directed only by a purely human and natural principle (of action). It will then incline a man to react violently against anyone who wounds his self-love, whether the intention of the man be something good or something evil. Such was the source of great the evil which Luther caused to the Church.

A second sign is manifested when that vigor or energy is accompanied by self-love, when in our action, we raise our spirit above others, or when we want

to dominate others for our own glory and our own satisfaction. Such also was the character of Luther. Stubbornness comes from self-love coupled with stiffness, and to it is added a spirit of opposition. This spirit of opposition is an infallible means to prevent the success of zeal; and this belongs to the nature of things. If you want to carry a burden away, you do not cast yourself upon it and throw it over; you draw it to yourself and try to carry it along. The same applies to apostolic work zeal; you must carry them along. You should not beat them, wound them and thus estrange them more and more from yourselves. This is what is done when you are moved by the spirit of opposition and bitterness which is mingled with a purely natural zeal.

St. Paul did not act that way. If sometimes he felt it necessary to use severe words, he soon added tender words which won souls for Christ, for they manifested Paul's fatherly affection towards those were the object of his zeal: "Little children, whom I have begotten until Christ be formed in your hearts."

Finally, there is a general sign which shows a zeal has its source in nature. This happens when we are seized with a certain spirit and some imagination which causes trouble of mind. When, on the contrary, our zeal comes from grace, then mildness comes from the heart and it is accompanied by peace.

Against those defects we have mentioned we must oppose humility and the thought and remembrance of our nothingness in order to fight against self-love. We must cultivate gentleness to fight against the spirit of opposition; we must be peaceful in our struggle with natural and passionate craving for activity. Finally, we must practice union with God, which will make us constantly watchful so as to exclude all sentiments that are contrary to the purity and perfection of zeal.

Those who by nature are energetic, lively and easily excited, must try most carefully to overcome their blind impetuosity, for if they follow those movements, they most frequently will be led by their sense-impressions. Now such impressions are blind and there is a danger that such persons will bitterly attack what is good for religion and for the glory of God. They might end by sinfully opposing what is good, whereas at the start they were only the victims of error. That is why such must do all they can do to have dominion over their character; they must bridle it and become its masters. This does not mean that in the meantime they must abstain from all activity lest they should yield to natural impetuosity. But they must study themselves and as much as possible cultivate the habit of acting only within the views God gives them so as not to act blindly

and passionately. They must first consider and find out what God wants of them, what is the way he wants them to act. After that, they must act in accordance with that light, without forestalling God's will or the movement of his grace.

They will never be successful in this spiritual combat without God's help. But God will come to their aid. When God has particular designs regarding a soul which has that kind of character, he sends or permits interior pains so that the person may overcome those defects; or there may be exterior obstacles which stop the person; finally, the faults such persons commit come to cast them down. In this way their violence and blind impetuosity will gradually subside. They humble themselves, have constant recourse to God, and finally learn to be led by the spirit of God and to follow his impulses.

Article XVII

That energy which must come from their ardent love for God must fill them with vigor and with a holy daring for every enterprise, and for sacrificing themselves a thousand times when there is question of the glory of their divine Master. However, they must not blindly deliver themselves to that ardor which nevertheless is so necessary for every true missionary, nor should they discriminately use all the means that seem fit to procure the success of their undertaking. But they must consider things in the presence of our Lord and only under the light of his divine Spirit in order that they may act in all things according to the true and holy prudence with which Christ himself has acted.

A missionary needs to have a holy daring, based on confidence in God, in order to work efficaciously for the glory of God. But that daring must be guided by prudence; otherwise it will spoil everything; it will destroy instead of building up. That is why we must not allow ourselves to be led by an order that carries us away and makes us act blindly. When we feel we are prompted by that kind of order, whether it comes from our imagination or from some other interior cause, we must first of all calm that impetuous emotion. We must try to recollect ourselves before God, put ourselves as much as possible in a peaceful state and then consult the Spirit of God, the Spirit of our Lord, in prayer, so as to be able to act with the holy prudence with which he himself acted. That holy prudence must be like a pilot who directs all the movements of his zeal.

Article XVIII

However, let them be careful to avoid conducting themselves according to worldly wisdom when seemingly willing to follow the rules of the true prudence of Jesus Christ. Let them never seek their own interest, nor even the interest of the Congregation, nor any other human view but God alone and his glory. They will avoid the kind of timidity which wants always to choose what is the surest course for self-love. We must always avoid such incertitude in making decisions, and all the other defects of a man who examines things according to his own reason instead of deciding things under the light of God.

Prudence, considered in itself independently from its relations with grace, consists in using the proper means to attain some end or purpose we have in view, and then making use of these means in the most suitable way so as to attain that end. Let us note that the direct means are not always those that are most fitting to attain the end we have in view, hence, they are not those that must be (always) preferred. I read in the books of the Jews something that helps us to understand the truth which I here propose. Someone asked another person to point out the road that led to Jerusalem. Here is the answer he was given: there are two roads. One is longer and shorter. The other is shorter and longer. The traveler thought that he would arrive sooner by taking the road that was shorter and longer. So he took this road and after a while he found himself stopped by a wall and thus was obliged to take a longer detour in order to enter into the city. On the contrary, the other road, which at first seemed longer, would have led him to the gate of the city without his having to travel so far.

Similarly, it happens that by following impetuosity and natural hastiness we neglect the means which would bring us more surely to our goal. We take other means which we imagine will bring us more directly to the goal, but these often only lead us to difficulties which prevent us from passing beyond. Another fault against prudence is committed when, in our choice of means, we follow a method that is founded on character. Thus, there are persons who have ardent character and who always choose violent means. Others choose gentle ways. Others never want to take any risks; some choose always the middle way. We should not become slaves of a rigid method or system. In each case we should choose the means that is best suited to reach the goal. This is what natural prudence dictates. There are two kinds of prudence: one is good, the other is bad. The bad one is the one St. Paul calls "death"; it is the prudence "of the flesh," the

worldly prudence. It consists in striving for the satisfaction of our concupiscence, it seeks honors, it seeks wealth or pleasure, and it wants to strive for their attainment by every means at our disposal. This prudence is horrible to us because it is directly opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

We must be most watchful over ourselves so as not to be animated by that evil spirit in our actions, for not infrequently it mingles with the behavior of persons who profess to be pious. This happens when our intentions are perfectly pure and we are self-seeking. Here are the ways we shall be able to detect whether that spirit mingles with our activity: there is such an admixture when we act with stiffness or harshness, when we stick to our ideas and act upon them with violence and tenacity, when our soul is agitated, in trouble, when we experience in us a desire to lord it over others.

Finally, Christian prudence – the prudence we should have – is based on God and his grace. We, Christians, should not act by basing ourselves on nature; we should not base ourselves on our natural faculties in order to seek what means we ought to use and then act according to (purely) natural views. All we ought to do must be animated by the spirit of our Lord, remaining in his presence and raising our heart to him, to ask him to give us the lights and the strength we need.

In order to have that kind of prudence and act in virtue of it we must practice perfect self-renunciation so that, on the one hand, we may be able to listen to God who speaks in the depths of our soul and may not be distracted by the noise of our passions; and on the other hand, that we may be docile in using the means and behaving according to the will of the Spirit of God. This, therefore, demands great mortification of our judgment, of self-opinionatedness, of self-will.

If we want to succeed in any kind of scientific endeavor, we must have the spirit that is analogous to the object with which the mind is occupied. Thus, in order to be successful regarding the science of mathematics, we must be mathematically-minded; and the same applies to the other sciences, like metaphysics and the rest. This applies also to the science of God and the science of all that he wills. What is required here is Christian prudence; we need to have the Spirit of God. It is by this spirit that we must act and not by our own spirit.

That (Christian) virtue of prudence is of the greatest importance. In a conference of solitaries at which St. Anthony assisted, the question was asked

what virtue was most useful. The conclusion reached at the conference was: it is discretion, which is another word for the prudence we are here discussing.

We must act with prudence, a Christian prudence, which means we must be guided in our undertakings, in our actions, in the choice and use of means, not by our own reason and judgment but by the lights of the Spirit of God. This does not mean we must neglect our reason. On the other hand, neither does it mean that, after saying a prayer, we must follow the first impression we feel, or imagine we feel, for this will often make us follow our own imagination. What it means is that we must mortify our passions in all our conduct in general and at all times, so that we truly desire and seek only the glory of God and the good pleasure of God. Then in order to make a decision, we must have recourse to God and ask for his lights. After that, we must remain peacefully in his presence, and consider things not with a calculating spirit, but using the lights of our mind as enlightened by grace. This is what we ought to do; these are the means you should use.

God will not fail to give us the light we need. This does not mean we should discard our intelligence; for our intelligence is the instrument God uses to direct and communicate his grace to us. That sort of prudence is not acquired in one day. It is acquired by habitually renouncing ourselves and acting as we have just now explained. We might still make many mistakes, but in general, this will be due to our own fault. We are not sufficiently self-renounced; we are still looking too much for our interests, or we cling too much to our own ideas and do not rely enough upon grace. But let us get accustomed to act the way we have described and gradually we shall acquire that prudence of the children of God. Let us never have our own interest in view, nor even that of the Congregation, nor any other purely human interest, when we undertake a certain work. Let it not be to procure the glory of our Congregation, but to save souls. Let us leave to God the care of the Congregation; let us seek to establish the reign of God.

For the rest, we will receive over and above whatever is necessary for us. Our Lord himself has promised that: *cetera adjicientur vobis* (the other things will be added for you). However, when it is said that we should not seek the interest of the Congregation, this does not mean that we are allowed to do something that would tend to do harm to its rules or the spirit of those rules. On the contrary, we must sacrifice everything, and even a proximate good, which seems to be useful for several souls, in order to preserve our rules and their spirit; for if we lost that, a much greater evil would result than the good we might have left undone and which was only apparent, although it also seemed nearest.

We must avoid timidity. These who follow only human prudence often commit that fault, which is not in conformity with true human prudence – far from it, for it is just the opposite. True prudence consists in taking the means that must lead to the goal we have in mind; but because our degenerated nature inclines us to all sorts of faults and imperfections, we often mistakenly follow mere human prudence.

If the Apostles had listened to the counsels of timidity and to those of purely human prudence, would they ever have undertaken the conquest of the world, for they were poor people and had no human resources? Jesus would not have gone to bring Lazarus back to life if he had followed the counsels of human prudence which advised him not to return to the place where the family of Lazarus was living. If we follow what timidity advises, we shall never do anything great for the glory of God.

Timidity is often mistaken for prudence; this is because prudent men are generally guarded and timid persons are also guarded; but the latter are excessively cautious, though, people call them prudent. The latter is a mistake. Nevertheless, this should remind us that we should be guarded and cautious, while seeing to it that our caution does not degenerate into timidity.

We must also carefully avoid incertitude. Those defects usually come from self-love, which, always seeks repose and tranquility as well as ease and pleasure. We must make decisions not lightly, but following the rules of genuine Christian prudence, as we have explained. Once the decision is made we must follow to the end, without allowing ourselves to be stopped by pains difficulties.

Article XIX

When missionaries, being unable to have recourse to their superiors, have forgotten to undertake some work for the glory of God, they will – according to importance of the work – follow the rules prescribed in Part III, Chapter II, Article XIX. But let them never place any confidence in the measures and means they think they should choose in order to be successful. Their whole confidence must be in our Lord alone, whom they must always keep before their eyes, acting only for love of him and in his love.

Article XX

We shall also carefully avoid another defect of human prudence, or what is inspired by a false zeal; this is using ruses, guile and roundabout ways. Our zeal should be guided by a prudence that is simple, open and frank; we must avoid all sorts of human interventions if we fear they are studied or far-fetched; avoid all stratagems and in general any sort of detour. Our prudence must resemble the prudence of which our Lord has given an example.

Human prudence frequently has recourse to ruses, to guile, to roundabout ways to attain its ends. This is not the way children of God should act. First of all, this is contrary to the example given us by our Lord. Secondly, it is not the proper means to procure the good of souls and the glory of God. If on one occasion we imagine that by such means we have been successful with respect to that which we had desired, we shall lose more than we have gained because of self-love. If we have frequent recourse to such astuteness and detours, people will quickly notice it. This will paralyze our ministry and even give a bad reputation to priests in general, who will be accused of what has come to be called "Jesuitism." Let us act with frankness, simplicity, without guile. We need no other prudence than that of which our divine Master, and his Apostles after him, have given us the example.

Article XXI

It is an important rule of true Christian and holy prudence that we should not try to overcome all kinds of difficulties. We should bow for a while before an obstacle which we foresee cannot be removed; or again, in circumstances that demand that we should act according to God's design and should wait and postpone things, then return later to the work we seemed to have abandoned, if this appears to be in accord with the good pleasure of God.

We must know how to bow and bend before circumstances and refrain from inveighing against obstacles which we foresee we shall not be able to remove. Otherwise, instead of building up we shall destroy or break what has already been built. This is the same as what takes place in nature around us; the tree which does not bend under a violent wind is uprooted and broken. St. Paul

gives us an example of that rule of prudence: when he sees that his ministry is arrested or prevented in one place, he goes elsewhere.

Our Lord himself has given us an example of such behavior, although he could have removed all obstacles which the malice of men had erected. Thus when they wanted to kill him in Judea before the time appointed by his Father for his Passion had come, he went to Galilee. This is also what he told his disciples to do: "If they do not receive you in one town, go to another." Be not ashamed to abandon one undertaking for a while.

There are two things which also must be avoided with respect to obstacles. First, do not become angered and do not brace yourself against those obstacles when they are morally insurmountable. Secondly, do not wholly abandon an undertaking because of the difficulties, which will not always be the same nor always be insurmountable. Let us learn to be constant and not readily abandon an undertaking once we have begun it, after consulting God. If the moment has not yet arrived let us wait with patience. Patience is an apostolic virtue and a very important one.

Article XXII

One of the most efficacious means to have zeal that is prudent and in line with God's will is being perfectly submissive and obedient. All will carefully use that means. Not only will they never perform any work of zeal that is contrary to the Rules and contrary to the will of their superiors; but they will never undertake anything without an order from their superiors, except in urgent cases, or when it is absolutely necessary that they should act of their own accord.

Obedience is of the utmost advantage to the missionary so that he will have a zeal that is prudent. Outside of cases when he has to act on his own because there is urgency, he has merely to consult the superior to find out what he ought to do. First, he should not undertake anything without the superior's permission, beyond the function which has been assigned to him, or those beyond what he performs under obedience. But besides that, it will be useful for him to consult the superior who, as he has a better knowledge of the ensemble of things, is better able to judge than the missionary as to what would be prudent or imprudent to do.

CHAPTER NINE

On Some Principal Virtues Which Are Like the Foundation of Apostolic Zeal

Article I

Apostolic life is nothing else than the life, full of love and holiness, which the Son of God led upon earth to save and sanctify souls and by which he has sacrificed himself to the glory of his Father. This heavenly life is based on the death of the natural man, of his concupiscences and affections. This then is the foundation they will try to establish in their souls, so as to build solidly upon it through apostolic zeal.

The foundation of a missionary's life that is animated by apostolic zeal consists in the love, holiness and the sacrifice of our adorable Model, Jesus Christ our Lord. In order to have an apostolic spirit, in order to acquire that holiness, we must join, as our Lord has done, the sacrifice of ourselves to the sanctification of souls. But in order to have that spirit, in order to acquire that sanctity and love, constancy is necessary. It is not enough to make a good resolution on a particular day. If we want to attain the goal, we have plenty of obstacles to overcome; these offer opposition to the good which the grace of God wants to accomplish in us.

In order to acquire that holiness and zeal, we must work with the help of God to remove those obstacles. The reason why the Blessed Virgin is so holy is the fact that grace had never any obstacle in her.

In order to build the spiritual edifice of our perfection we must lay down a solid foundation. This foundation is nothing else than the death of the natural man, of his concupiscences and affections. Not only must we will to acquire the spirit of our vocation, which is an apostolic spirit, not only must we renounce those evil concupiscences, but we must also rid ourselves of any affection and pleasures, and of all desires that based on natural motive.

If someone wants to follow his natural affections, seek his satisfactions and pleasures inasmuch as they are not contrary to the law of God and permitted to him, let that person remain in or return to the world; let him not embrace the state of a missionary, let him not choose an apostolic life, nor even a priestly life, for the life of a priest must be of renunciation.

If, when we begin the exercise of the sacred ministry, we have not yet acquired the habit of that kind of renunciation, we will find thousands of occasions to let ourselves go according to our natural inclinations, and we shall allow ourselves to be carried away to the great detriment of our souls and of the souls of our neighbor.

That is why, in the novitiate, we must do all we can to accustom ourselves to practice that renunciation, to overcome that small laziness which seems so unimportant to us, that sensitivity of self-love, that attachment to some rather unimportant object. That would not be very important here, but once we are launched into the world, those inclinations will find occasions for developing considerably if they have not been habitually repressed. Those cravings will seek to be satisfied through thousands of objects which are more dangerous. Work here, therefore, with zeal to establish deep in your souls, through constant and generous efforts, that solid foundation, namely, renunciation, so that you may be able to construct on it true apostolic zeal.

Article II

They will never entertain any human and earthly interest, but have interest only in God, in his glory, in the establishment of his reign in souls. This is the one thing they must seek and to which they must tend as directly as possible in all things.

By “motive of any human and earthly interest” is meant here not only riches, but all seeking for that which can give us satisfaction. Men who live in the world and who have a piety for that is ordinary, can still sometimes, seek a certain pleasure in things that are licit. But we should no longer live for ourselves, but for God. We must no longer seek our own interest, our own satisfaction, our glory, our well-being, but we must act solely and directly for God’s interest, for his glory, for the establishment of his reign in souls.

A man of the world apports his cares and his thoughts between God and his family; he is divided, as St. Paul tells us. But we, by our vocation, are separated from all secular occupation; we must think, act and labor only for the service of the divine interests. We must practice renunciation with respect to every natural inclination so as to tend ceaselessly towards God alone. We should never be self-seeking. This goes to show that for the apostolic life, and even for

priestly life, great generosity is required. He who does not have that generosity should therefore not follow such vocation.

That seeking of God alone should not be limited to the exercise of the sacred ministry. It must extend to all the moments of our life. A priest, a missionary, should not make this distinction: this is for the service of God; that other thing is for me, for my satisfaction in natural things, when there is nothing evil in those things. This is not the total and absolute devotedness which we promise in our Consecration (to the apostolate).

The weakness of our character, which we shall never overcome, warns us that at every moment we belong to God in a special way, that we are consecrated to his service and must act only for his interests.

Another thing we must keep to mind is that must seek to satisfy the interest of God directly and not indirectly. For instance, we should not say: "I am going to seek to obtain this and that advantage and so, at the same time, I shall be better able to procure the glory of God." But we must say: "I want to seek ONLY the glory of God. If by what I take for the glory of God there comes some advantage to me, I shall receive it from God's hand, but I will equally accept evil or inconveniences that might result from work done for God. St. Paul says that he who serves the altar lives by the altar, but he does not say that he who receives his sustenance from the altar must go to the altar in order to gain his sustenance, but he must go there solely to glorify God.

Article III

They will not seek the good of the Congregation except when it directly serves to procure the glory of God. They will always be ready to sacrifice the interest of the Congregation when that same glory of God will demand it.

When we seek too much the advantages of our Congregation, our seeking with our own advantages is always mingled with it. Why do you so eagerly seek the well-being of that Congregation if not because you are a member of it? Therefore, it is your own satisfaction that you seek. It is true that charity towards your Congregation should be greater than your love for other Congregations because God has united you more closely to it than to others. But you must love your Congregation with a love of charity that is in view of God and not a human and natural love which tends to become a passion. You must

exercise love for your Congregation and be interested in her well-being as you must love yourself. So, for instance, you must take a reasonable care of your health in order to use it for God's glory. We likewise must have a reasonable, a moderate care of the property of the Congregation in order that we might procure the glory of our Lord, but we must carefully avoid anxiety and troublesome concerns about it. With respect to holiness, since it tends directly to God's glory, we cannot sufficiently desire it nor take too much care of it.

Article IV

In all circumstances, they will never place their pleasure and satisfaction in the things of the world. They will not consent to the pleasure which comes from the manifestation of beauty, greatness and riches of such things, not even under the pretext that they are an occasion for glorifying God. This attitude towards the things of this world should manifest itself in all their conduct. They will avoid affection in all that and will be on their guard against self-love.

We should not amuse ourselves in studying rare and strange things that are found in nature in mission countries to which we been sent. We do not go there to study natural history. People of the world will criticize this conduct, but let them judge us the way they want. If we busy ourselves with such things, we shall not use that time for the sanctification of souls. Secondly, this will make us less generous; it will weaken our zeal. Some will object that many good missionaries have been, and still continue to be engaged in such natural and scientific studies in mission countries. This is true. However, there are other examples of missionaries who have greater authority, but who have not seen fit to engage such pursuits. Those who occupy themselves with such things are ordinary missionaries. Those whom we have in mind will be saints as were the Apostles, first of all, as were St. Francis Xavier, and many others. Now when we choose models it is preferable to take the most perfect. This is the way we must act in all things. For example, he who wishes to be successful in the art of painting will not copy a mediocre painter; he will study original paintings of Raphael or other famous painters.

We will manifest that disposition in our conduct with respect to rare things and become acquainted with them. But in all things let us not show affection. If charity prompts to go and see such things, let us do it; for instance, suppose that a master (of slaves) in a colony invites us to see the things he has

assembled in his house, let us then not show a lack of interest in such things, but let us act in accord with the tastes of the one who invited us and show appreciation for his collection of rare things. This is an exercise of politeness. Acting in a contrary way will hurt our neighbor and it would foster our self-love. Our letters will quite naturally reveal our sentiments regarding the things of this world. If we do not seek satisfaction in such things, we shall not write or say much about them, nor describe them at great length. But again, let us not show any affection about that.

In the letters of St. Francis Xavier, we notice that he does not stop to describe things of nature. If he speaks of them, he does so in passing, in a simple, natural way, as the thought of them presents itself to him. But what is always predominant in his letters is his holy zeal for the salvation of souls. This is the way the missionary should be.

Some will object: "I make use of such knowledge and of the study of the things of nature to raise my mind to God, to admire and praise his greatness, his beauty, etc." This is good in itself; but you are missionaries; your vocation, your function is to make Jesus Christ known, to reveal the Redeemer of man. You do not go to the mission to study philosophy. You have enough things to admire in Jesus Christ. Why stop to look at things which are quite great in themselves, but are at the same time very small in comparison with the marvelous things that are found in Jesus Christ? Moreover, let us repeat it again, your mission is that of making Jesus Christ known; it is revealing him who is the Redeemer of man. Surely you have enough to do in order to fulfil that mission without occupying yourself with other things. Your mission is to transmit to the souls of pagans the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and to pour into the hearts of all the love for Jesus Christ. Now, in order to do this, you yourselves must be filled with those things. And if you want to be filled with those sentiments you must make that your only occupation, your only study, the only object of your knowledge and satisfaction.

Article V

They will despise in general all the small satisfactions of their curiosity, even in things that are licit and innocent. They will avoid ever taking pleasure in those things. All their satisfaction, all their complacency of mind must be in things that tend to procure the great glory of God and the salvation of souls.

We have a small mind. If we divide its application between God and human satisfactions we shall give little to God. Let us be more generous and give him everything. We must strive for perfection.

St. Paul must have found in the countries he visited, especially in Greece and in Rome, many extraordinary and beautiful things. Did he amuse himself with them; does he talk about them? Is it possible for us to imagine that he indulged in the pleasure they could give him? No! Well, let us try to imitate him in that renunciation. "That rule," some will say, "is very severe." To this I answer: it would be severe if we made it absolutely obligatory; but we merely propose it as a counsel of perfection, as something that is asked for in virtue of the apostolate.

It might also be said: "Must we then always have a tension of mind?" No, indeed! We need distractions. But it is not necessary for a missionary to go and find them in the things which arouse his curiosity. Our ministry, our relations with human beings, which are a necessary result of our ministry, these will certainly provide distractions which give a healthy relaxation to the mind.

The means of fulfilling our functions, of dealing with men and occupying ourselves even with earthly things, without allowing our hearts to become attached to them, consists in being peacefully united to God, in avoiding contention, and in the desire to labor solely for God's glory. We then hover above earthly things and we are not any more soiled by them than one who travels in a carriage over a muddy road.

Article VI

They will practice perfect renunciation of themselves and of their self-love with respect to spiritual riches, as well as in things that concern material wealth. They will not be self-complacent and will not have great esteem for themselves with respect to their scientific knowledge, their talents and other gifts they have received from God. They will put all their ambition in loving our Lord Jesus Christ with their whole soul, in serving Him with the greatest fidelity and in order to sacrifice themselves constantly for His glory. The rest is vanity and has no value for eternal life.

They must have renounced riches of the mind and become indifferent to them as well as to material wealth. Let them not have esteem for scientific

knowledge, for talents and other gifts of nature. One thing alone they will esteem upon earth: loving God with their whole soul and glorifying him with all their powers. All the rest is vanity, is useless and valueless.

There is a vulgar sort of self-love which we can call stupid because it is even based upon natural reason, and it consists in seeking the esteem of men because of one's riches, clothes, luxurious things. Above that vulgar sort of self-love which there is the one that makes us raise ourselves above others in our mind, because of riches of the mind, such as having scientific knowledge, talent, etc. This sort of self-love is very common, and we can know whether we have that sort of defect when, having suffered some failure with respect to such scientific knowledge or efficiency, we show grief about it; for instance, when we have said something foolish, or when we have seemed to manifest our ignorance.

However, it is possible for us to experience such pains in our sense make-up, although we are not really guilty of self-love. This can happen to persons who have truly practiced spiritual self-renunciation regarding riches of the mind. Also, it is not said that we must renounce those spiritual advantages, for these things are good in themselves; they are gifts of God. God grants such privileges to some people that they may procure his glory and they should use them for that purpose.

Bossuet, for example, would have failed in his mission, if he had not made himself capable of fighting the enemies of religion. The Church shows her esteem for science, for she greatly favored study. But we must renounce ourselves with regard to those gifts; this must not make us esteem ourselves as much superior because of our science, or other advantages. The reason is that this has nothing to do regarding the one business which must constitute the object of all our desires, which is our salvation. Experience and history also prove that God has not always used those who are the most learned to accomplish good things in the Church. St. Vincent de Paul was not a great scientist, and yet can you mention scholars who have accomplished more good than St. Vincent?

Secondly, we should not make use of these talents for human purposes, to satisfy our self-love or our vanity; but we must strive to make use of those gifts solely for the purpose for which they were given, namely, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The possession of talents and of science is dangerous. That is why we should not be envious of them. If God has bestowed them on us, let us use them for him. If he has not given them, let us be satisfied. We must study, our particular vocation demands it. But let it be done without anxiety; peacefully,

let each one content himself with trying to attain the amount of science that is proportionate to the amount of talent and facility which God has given him.

Trying to acquire more, yielding to anxiety because we are not equal to others, is to expose ourselves to going counter to the plan of divine Providence. Our only submission should be to love our Lord Jesus Christ with our whole soul, to serve him with the greatest fidelity and to sacrifice ourselves constantly for his glory. In this there is something solid, something that counts for eternal life; other things have no value for that, hence they must be looked upon as vanities by us.

Article VII

They will practice the greatest detachment with respect to their parents and their friends. They will make a complete sacrifice of them to God before leaving for the missions. This sacrifice will be made for their whole life; towards them they should keep only affection that is pure, supernatural, and wholly subordinated to the Divine will and to what is demanded by the sacrifice of God.

An apostle should not have parents. This is true even of a priest. He must be like Melchizedek – without father, without mother, without genealogy. “But,” some will say, “do natural law and the divine law not demand that we love our parents?” Of course you are permitted to love them, but you should not cling to them with natural affection. Does our Lord not say in one place that in order to be his disciples we must hate our father and mother? And, elsewhere, does he not explain that maxim, saying that we cannot be worthy of him if we do love God more than our father, mother, etc.?

But beyond that order of things which is common to all Christians, the priest must remember that he is marked with a character that placed him in a different order, which consecrates him entirely to worship and to a special service of god, so that he must apply himself completely to it with all the powers of his soul.

Article VIII

They will also make a complete sacrifice of themselves to God. In all things they must be like men who do not belong to themselves, but

belong to our Lord Jesus Christ, their sole Master. They will never perform their actions out of love for themselves. They will try never to yield to self-complacency regarding the good they find in themselves, nor to take pleasure in the good they are doing. They will try to practice a holy indifference in everything that concerns them, occupying themselves with themselves only for as much as their sanctification requires it. They will commit themselves regarding everything that concerns them to the hands of God and the guidance of their superiors.

The most difficult of sacrifices to make, and the one we make last, is the sacrifice of ourselves. And yet it is not the most painful one. What is so difficult in abandoning ourselves wholly to the hands of God? Likewise acting for God is not very painful. It is not as hard for our nature as the sacrifice of an affection towards an object outside ourselves, for example, towards our parents. It is more difficult nevertheless, because it is a sacrifice we have to renew every day of our life. Its object is always present and we are always called to fight it. Now, in order to practice self-sacrifice, here the things we ought to do.

First, let us not do things out of self-love, but do things for God. Secondly, let us never be self-complacent concerning the good things we find in ourselves, or our achievements. We can know we have that sort of self-complacency when we do not experience the same satisfaction when others have achieved certain good things as when we have done them.

Thirdly, we try to maintain an attitude of indifference regarding things that concern ourselves. Nevertheless, we have the obligation of working zealously for our own sanctification. We should examine ourselves to find out what we are still wanting in that respect and what we still have to do; but let us avoid all thoughts of self-love, fight against feelings of disappointment and chagrin which spring from self-love. Let us be peaceful while being also displeased at finding ourselves in such a state of imperfection.

Finally, we must be animated with great confidence in God. We must place all our hope in him, especially when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances. Put yourselves then fully and for everything in God's fatherly hands and under the guidance of our superiors, without ever giving in to anxiety.

Article IX

As a result of that holy indifference, they will not indulge in over-eager, anxious care of their health. Regarding this, they will do only what is demanded by the glory of God and what obedience requires of them; they will take care of their health only to please our Lord and preserve their health so as to be able to serve him.

We have the obligation to preserve our health and must do that solely in order to be able to serve our Lord. Hence, first, we shall not take care of it out of purely natural affection towards ourselves. Secondly, in that case we shall not show over-eagerness or anxiety. Let us use the means which God's glory and obedience demand, and then remain quiet, abandoning ourselves to the Divine Will. On the other hand, the missionary should remember that he must not expose himself uselessly to dangers, nor neglect his health; for this he owes to the service our Lord demands of him.

Article X

In order to observe those rules more carefully and commit themselves more wholeheartedly to them, let them often consider this fundamental truth: he who is wholly empty and devoid of love for the things people of the world esteem and seek so ardently possesses in his soul the riches of God, which give him supreme happiness, just as the worldly man who possesses the goods of this world and greatly loves them is empty and lacks the good things of God.

The good which the world greatly esteems are material, intellectual, or learned things. We are not always permitted to reject these goods, for example, the gift of intelligence, but what we must do is not to be attached to them, not to be complacent in their possession. This is what is meant by poverty of spirit, with which happiness in this world is connected. For when our hearts are free from undue attachment to the things of this world then, first of all, we have a great abundance of grace, and this grace unites us to God who is our ultimate end. Nothing is better able to make us happy than that union.

Secondly, we then enjoy peace. On the contrary, those who are attached to the goods of this world constantly experience trouble of mind. If they are unable to keep some goods, they grieve and are desolate. If they have possessions,

they are afraid of losing them, or they are tormented with the desire of getting more of those goods.

Thirdly, we then have in us the seed and sweet hope of future goods which, as we know, will be so much the more abundant and delightful as we have the more greatly despised worldly goods and have suffered more deprivations. On the contrary, a priest who lives a lukewarm life, who seeks his ease and who does not wish to be deprived of anything, is constantly tormented on the one hand with the desire to seek his own satisfactions, and on that hand by remorse of conscience, because he realizes the spiritual harm he is doing to himself and to the souls he is unable to save because of his unwillingness to make the necessary sacrifices for that purpose. He does not have the pleasures of a worldly man who has cast away as much as possible the thoughts religion, and fails to experience the joy of those who have quit everything to seek God alone.

Article XI

They will try to be deeply convinced of that other maxim that a true apostle is not in this world to enjoy himself but to suffer. From the moment they give themselves to earthly pleasures and satisfactions, they will lose their apostolic vigor.

When St. Paul desired to prove that he was as much an Apostle as Peter, John and James, what did he present as a proof? What did he do? He described in detail what he had suffered. This he pointed out was the distinctive mark of his apostolate, and this we can readily understand. Is it possible to be an apostle without resembling him who sends us? Who has been the first to exercise the ministry to which we have been called? Can we be true apostles without working in his footsteps; without using the means with which he has given us the example?

Again, how has Christ desired to save the world, to fulfill his divine mission in the world? By suffering. So also, if we do not want to suffer, we shall not do good in our ministry. Love for suffering is an essential virtue of the apostolate. It is not the virtue of Protestant ministers. That is, they also do not accomplish much. What is needed is not the energy of passionate enthusiasm, but a constant and peaceful force. Now love of suffering imparts great energy to the soul. It makes a missionary who has that kind of love fear nothing – no pain, no suffering; these are precisely what he likes. Love of crosses places us above

everything. It makes us masters and lords – not through inflation of the heart and pride of mind – but in virtue of a freedom which makes our hearts independent of creatures and dependent on God alone “whom to serve is to reign.”

Sometimes a man of God is obliged to yield to circumstances which slow up the good he intended to accomplish. But it is for God that he is yielding and not for himself; it is not through timidity as is the case of a man who is cowardly and full of self-love. His heart is not shaken; he always remains independent, free and at peace. Such was the disposition of St. Francis Xavier in the midst of pains and contradictions which afflicted his heart. Those sufferings did not prevent him from courageously pursuing his apostolate for the glory of God.

Love of crosses is of the utmost importance, because it is almost impossible to remain in an intermediary state between voluntary privation and illicit yielding to the satisfactions our nature craves. Love of crosses contains all the perfection of renunciation (abnegation); therefore, it is the most solid foundation of Christian and ecclesiastical perfection. If, therefore, we have the spirit of faith, we must strive to attain that love of suffering.

Article XII

That is why they will most carefully avoid the things that please the body. They will have a horror for such sensual satisfactions and will fear them as one fears poison.

We mean by pleasure of the body everything that is sensual, everything that procures the well-being and ease of the body. These are the enjoyment of the body which enervate it. We must particularly be on our guard against them in hot climates, where everything tends to make us seek the satisfactions of the flesh. They are for our souls a true poison. There are subtle poisons we might take and swallow without being aware of their danger. They may even flatter our taste, but sooner or later they will do harm and may lead to the death of the body. The same applies to these kinds of gratifications which can lead to our spiritual ruin. When we yield wholly to them, since they are directly opposed to charity, we then get away from God, we stop making meditation; temptations come and we are unable to resist them.

Article XIII

They will place their treasure, their satisfactions and their joys in their pains, their labors, their crosses, their humiliations and afflictions of every sort. They will look upon those things as being great gifts and great graces from God, which are given to them as holy and salutary rewards granted in this world on account of their fidelity in the service of their divine Master.

People of the world will not understand that language. Those who are not yet wholly devoted to God might accept such a proposition in a moment of fervor, but once the fervor is gone, such a proposal will depress them. This is not the way the saints have understood it. They understood the advantages of crosses, and loved them. First, crosses, contradictions, humiliations are an excellent preventive against self-love, which is always at hand when we have been successful in some enterprise. Secondly, they prompt us to tend always Godwards, whereas we are inclined to forget and to put our confidence in ourselves when all we do is successful.

Thirdly, contradictions and humiliations we meet with or suffer in our undertakings teach us to be prudent. Finally, we must know and remember that since Christ's ascent to Calvary to save the world by his death on the Cross, we cannot save souls without the spirit of sacrifice.

Article XIV

When they have no crosses, no privations and no humiliations, far from being pleased, they will rather fear that they are not true apostles. They will profoundly humble themselves before our Lord, seeing they are not worthy to receive the reward which ordinarily is given to faithful servants upon earth. Besides that, they will be very watchful and will take great precautions against becoming lax, for this can easily happen to those who enjoy that sensual satisfaction and peace.

Article XV

In the midst of privations, pains and afflictions they will try to keep their mind serene, free, open, calm, and preserve gentleness and humble

peacefulness, which are given by the holy love of their divine Master and of their most Holy Mother, whose dispositions were always such in the midst of so many afflictions and oppressions to which their Holy Hearts were always subjected.

When we have sufferings, it is a great imperfection to let all the world know about them. That comes from self-love. We should, on the contrary, keep those things hidden at the bottom of our heart. Let us always have a joyful appearance and manifest contentedness. Not only should we look joyful and contented, but we must be so interiorly, knowing the value and the advantages of crosses which are borne out of love of Jesus and Mary. We should be very glad that we suffer them; as we feel that way interiorly, we shall also appear joyful and contented exteriorly.

Moreover, if we have that love of crosses, our heart will have peace, and on that account our mind will be serene, free, open and calm. In order to enjoy that peace and that freedom in the midst of sufferings, it is not sufficient for us to desire crosses in moments of emotional fervor. When that kind of fervor evaporates and crosses come to us, we shall then quickly feel crushed by them. But a soul that is wholly given to God, is animated by a spirit of sacrifice, and is firmly attached to him, becomes accustomed to suffer joyfully the crosses that are sent to it. It ends by enjoying them, by finding in them great facility for union with God and a much greater and unshakeable peace than that which is the result of an emotional (sensible) devotion.

Article XVI

They will cultivate a great horror of pride, of ambition and vanity, and they will endeavor to keep away from all their conduct their pernicious effects.

Pride is our most troublesome vice, the most tenacious, the most manifold in its various forms, the most difficult to get hold of; it has one hundred different faces. Father Olier said rightly that pride seeks to dethrone God. This is very true, for pride makes us desire to seek our own excellence either in ourselves or in the mind of others; it makes us put ourselves in God's place to receive the honor that is due to him alone. Such is the nature of pride; that is the end towards which it tends, whatever be the degree it has received. What Lucifer desired to do on a great scale, we want it on a minor scale. Haughtiness has three

branches: pride properly so-called, ambition, and vanity. Pride is the disorderly love of our own excellence considered in ourselves. Ambition is love of our own excellence, but considered with respect to our neighbor, with the desire of exercising dominion over him. Vanity is the desire to please men; it places us beneath our neighbors, for it expresses our need of them and often makes us crawl before them and revile ourselves in order to please them. We should have great horror for those vices and do all we can to prevent them from developing in us and influencing our conduct.

Article XVII

They will attach no value to the things the world considers great, sublime or lofty. They will neither desire nor seek such things, either in the order of nature or in the order of grace. They will not let themselves be haughty, desiring to distinguish themselves and surpass those who are ordinary, to create a name for themselves on account of the vastness of their knowledge, the superiority of their mind, the sublimity of their ideas and of their discourses. They will have horror for all those things and most carefully avoid them in their conversations and their conduct, and still more in the exercise of their sacred functions. Let them in all things see only the greater glory of God, and do this with great purity of intention, with great simplicity and perfect humility.

Contempt for the things the world esteems is necessary for a Christian if he wants to be a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is still more necessary for a missionary who is called to represent our Lord. The root-principle of what elevates us in the eyes of the world is pride, which Father Olier defined very well, saying that it is the love of our own excellence. For the esteem of oneself is not that which constitutes the essence of pride. Whoever knows himself, even though he possesses the greatest talents and the noblest virtues, can in no way esteem himself. All the more so is a little missionary able to do this, who is scarcely able to say two notes in succession. But we have within ourselves a love for our own excellence. We want to increase esteem for that excellence in the eyes of men and to be distinguished from what is common in one way or another. This is pride.

Each individual has his own preferred brand of pride according to his particular likes. Some want to be distinguished by what is lowest and most shameful; for instance, someone wants to drink more than others. Some pride themselves on their precious things, their wealth. Others pride themselves

because of the products of their intelligence, their great and elevated ideas, their flowery and precious style. Others, finally, want to be distinguished from others because of their virtue. Some affect to be led on ways that are not ordinary and common. Some claim to have more profound ideas about divine things regarding the direction of souls.

True virtue, on the contrary, makes a man act with simplicity. He does things without fuss, without seeking to do anything out of the ordinary to approach God. He avoids extraordinary things as much as possible, but he does things with great purity, faithfully and constantly practicing self-denial, always remaining in all humility before God, before men and also before his own self.

Persons who by character are inclined to great and high things must struggle much against their self-love, for as a result of the corruption of our human nature, the things that served to raise us Godwards in the state of innocence now tend to lead us to self-complacency. We must be constantly watchful over ourselves to avoid clinging to our tendencies to pride. There is nothing evil in experiencing such movements in ourselves, but we must constantly try to remain humble.

Humility does not consist in saying bad things about ourselves. In general, even that is dangerous. When such a thing escapes from our lips through a sentiment of our own wretchedness, and if we say that unthinkingly, there is no evil in that. But let us not deliberately say bad things about ourselves, for self-love will easily mingle with such seeming self-humiliation. Humility, like pride, is something fundamentally interior. Pride is love of one's own excellence; humility is love of one's own abjection. It consists in recognizing before God how wretched we are, and this makes us avoid seeking the esteem of others, or worrying about what others think of us. It is impossible for us to eradicate self-love entirely from ourselves. What we can and must do is struggle against it, repress its demands, overcome its promptings through humility.

When we feel tempted, for example, to desire the esteem of men because of our talents, our eloquent preaching, our excellent spiritual direction of others, let us not yield to trouble and anxiety on that account, since those sentiments come from our nature, but let us refuse to follow those promptings. Let us humble ourselves before God. Let us ask for his grace and then march on peacefully placing our confidence in him alone.

Article XVIII

Instead of cherishing and desiring that which raises them in the eyes of men, they will, esteem, love and seek only their knowledge of their nothingness, of their weakness, of their uselessness, of their profound wretchedness. Instead of being complacent about that which exalts them, they will try to establish themselves in true humility of heart, loving lowly things and being pleased to suffer the contempt of others. Love for God that is most pure, detached from themselves, and perfect obedience will be the foundation of that so holy and humble life. True zeal for the salvation of souls, a spirit of mental prayer, perfect observance of the rules will result from those dispositions. But if they are inspired by pride, they will become useless or even harmful instruments for the glory of God while, on the contrary, they would become true apostles if they practiced those virtues perfectly.

Humility exercises influence on all that is fundamental in the apostolic spirit. This humility itself has as its foundation the knowledge of ourselves and consists in love of our own abjection. It is in order that it might be the foundation - which is knowledge of ourselves - that the Rule says that we should not esteem, love, or seek anything except the knowledge of our wretchedness, our weakness, or our uselessness.

This is only the foundation. Knowing our wretchedness, we must love our abjection. This is why the rule adds: they will endeavor to establish themselves in great humility of heart. When it is said that it is necessary to love one's abjection, it does not mean we must rejoice because we have defects. What it does mean is that at the sight of our miseries we should not become impatient or upset; but let us remain peaceful, humbling ourselves before God, being pleased because we find it necessary to recognize our poverty before God's infinite goodness, and in all humility ask him to give us the help we need. We should be different from some of the poor who are ashamed of their poverty, who are afraid of confessing they are poor, who prefer to remain hungry and indigent. We must differ also from the proud poor, who angrily demand alms of us when we refuse to give them. Let us ask with humility, then wait peacefully and put all our confidence in God's infinite goodness, knowing that we do not deserve anything.

Humility of heart makes us like things that are considered low grade by the world. A humble soul likes jobs and occupations that are so lowly, where less attention is paid to him because of his low grade.

That is so much important for us, because by our vocation we are destined for service to the poor and because if we shun the kinds of work and seek higher employments, we will abandon those poor people.

Humility of heart also will make us satisfied and contented amid humiliations. We shall often encounter such humiliations in the exercise of our sacred ministry, and they might afflict our hearts. But a humble soul will bear them peacefully and will even find joy and delight in them. Love for God and detachment from ourselves led us to that humble kind of life. This is natural, for pride is merely a disorderly self-love, and those two virtues are the exact opposites of that vice. Obedience also contributes greatly to humility because it submits our mind and our will to the judgment and the will of the superior. That is why the founders of religious Orders have placed the virtue of obedience as the opposite of pride, just as chastity and poverty are opponents of two other concupiscences.

Article XIX

If they have the happiness of sincerely practicing those virtues, they will be peaceful, gentle, humble, serious and charitable in their language, in their actions, in their bearing, in the way they dress and, in general, in their whole conduct and their relations with everybody. They will not demand anything of others for themselves, for they will consider themselves as valueless men and as servants who owe everything to everyone and to whom no one owes anything. They will nevertheless avoid all that might make men despise their ministry, and also avoid anything that might make them lose the apostolic authority they need to have over souls.

If we are dead to ourselves, we will be peaceful, humble and gentle, for what is the cause of our troubles, our agitations, of our violent movements? It is the fact that our (selfish) self is still very much alive. Our sensual feelings have still great influence over our will; our self-love has not yet been downed. A man who is dead to himself no longer has any movement of and by himself. The Holy Spirit is the sole master of his movements and he directs them according to his

good pleasure. This does not mean that he does not feel it when someone injures or beats him. No, our senses can always experience various sensations; but self-will is dead and is in no way disturbed by what is going on in the senses. It does not lose peacefulness in the least. Those sentiments and emotions remain in the sense-order; the judgment of such a person remains free and healthy. He is master of his actions, master of his words.

Why is it that there are many good priests in the world who do not do half of the good they could and desire to do? The reason is that they are not wholly dead to themselves, if people fail to respect them, they are shocked, and they manifest it by rebuffing the offenders. If they deal with people who are ill-mannered and rude, they will act according to their natural disgust towards such persons and they will thus get away from those to whom they were called to do good.

We must look upon ourselves as valueless men and as servants who are everything to others and who should not expect anything from others. We are nothing fundamentally. To that nothingness we have added sin, which makes us deserve the greatest contempt and the greatest sufferings. Therefore, we should not have any claims at all. Moreover, in virtue of our vocation, we are dedicated to the service of poor souls. We must, therefore, look upon ourselves as their servants. We must do all we can for them and never complain if we do not receive any reward for it.

It is our Lord who takes it upon himself to reward us for the small services which we shall have rendered him in work for those souls, although those services are absolutely due to him, for numerous reasons. On the other hand, however, we must take care not to do anything that may make people despise our ministry. It is not by haughty ways and proud expressions, nor by bitterly defending or avenging ourselves that we shall keep our apostolic authority. The best way to preserve that authority is a life that is truly holy; by the perfect renunciation of ourselves, serious modesty and constant mildness.

Sometimes we might be obliged to repel attacks which could debase our ministry. But this should be done only in order to defend the cause of God and not for the sake of our own person. At the same time, let our reproof be done with great moderation. In order to distinguish whether it is for our own interest or the interest of God that we act against such offenders, we must see whether or not we have feelings of bitterness against the offender we are attacking, as well as some unruly eagerness and a troubled mind with respect to that person. When

we have those disorderly sentiments and thoughts, it is a sign that it is for a personal motive rather than for God's interest that we rebuff, or desire to rebuff the offender.

Article XX

They will abhor that spirit of pride which inspires the desire to lord it over confreres, to have greater authority and to receive more consideration than others within the community, or among outsiders. On the contrary, they will become filled with a true spirit of humility, by which they will sincerely desire before God to be looked upon and to be put as the last of all.

Pride in our relations with our neighbor makes us raise ourselves above him, and dominate him; this is ambition. Ambition is a horrible vice which has most baleful consequences. An ambitious man loves high positions, higher talents, or greater authority. He seeks for such things and does all he can to get them. Through such ambition, he is often prompted to do evil things. When he reaches a high position, he often ruins everything and prevents good things because of his pride, the impurity of his intentions, and all the obstacles he puts in the way of grace. If he is unable to get such a position, he is constantly upset. He suffers greatly in being inferior and in having the duty to obey.

His superior is very much embarrassed, for he does not know how to commit functions and authority to those who are more worthy of them, and at the same time preserve peace among all the missionaries. This is, however, what self-love directly leads to. It is a dreadful thing to let oneself become a slave of that vice. In order to avoid that evil, we must first of all remain always in humility before God at the sight of our miseries. Secondly, we should never compare ourselves with others unless we have received a special grace that makes us humble ourselves through comparing ourselves with others.

Thirdly, we must tend, through our prayers and our desire, to establish ourselves in that attitude of humility which makes us sincerely desire before God to be looked upon and put as the last of all. Our self-love prompts us ceaselessly and violently to raise ourselves above others. Hence, in order not to follow that course, we must tend in the opposite direction, that is, strive to abase ourselves below our confreres. This does not mean that when we have superior talents, greater scientific knowledge and greater ability, we must try to become convinced

and say to ourselves that we are more foolish, more ignorant than all others. Humility does not demand that; humility is always essentially truthful. The Blessed Virgin Mary clearly recognized that the Almighty had done great things in her. A man who wishes to be humble will be self-forgetful. He will not stop to consider the advantages he happens to have and, if sometimes he is obliged to make them known, far from raising himself, he will, like Mary, attribute all the glory to the Lord.

Finally, he will avoid all comparison with others; and as he considers all the imperfections, defects, and miseries that are found in himself, he will not be able to prevent himself from being abashed at that sight. This explains the strong words of humility expressed by certain saints, for example, St. Vincent de Paul and St. Francis of Assisi. Their conviction was wholly in conformity with their language. This is easily understood, for saints considered God, his perfections, his goodness in their regard, and, on the other hand, their own nothingness, their imperfections, and their infidelities to so much grace. The holier they themselves were, the more they were horrified at the sight of their faults. As to that grace of considering oneself as the last of all, this is a great grace of God which is far removed from our nature and its natural powers, but if we are faithful we will receive it. Let us constantly ask for it.

Article XXI

They will look upon ambition which makes them seek superiorships as an abominable crime. All, on the contrary, must consider themselves unworthy of being placed over their confreres to govern them. They will consider themselves unfit, that they are far from possessing the qualities that are required for that office. If, unfortunately, someone yields to pride and ambition and solicits such a post, he should occupy the last place everywhere until he has acquired a sincere humility. In the way they will act towards such individuals, the superiors will not so much have in mind the evil they want to forestall, but only the spiritual advantages of their confreres. In this they must act with the greatest mildness and charity.

Entertaining the desire for the office of superior is all that is required to make a person unworthy of that office. That is why in certain communities it is sufficient for a religious to have solicited the superiorship to be forever excluded from that office. We do not have that rule. We are speaking of one who has really

sought that office, using various means to obtain it. It does not mean one who simply would like to have such a position. So if a confrere is really guilty of that manifest ambition and uses those means to get it, our rule tells us that he should occupy the last place until he has acquired true, sincere humility. That humiliation will make him enter into himself, recognize his fault, and he might be willing to correct his ways. Later on, if he were recognized as worthy of receiving superiorship, and had become humble, there would be no sufficient reason for excluding him since he has truly repented and made up for his past offense.

With respect to the pain one sometimes suffers when someone else is chosen to be a superior, we should not worry about that. Those reactions are quite natural. All that is required is not to give consent to them. There are persons who, following such sense-reactions, experience violent temptations. What they should do is to struggle against them, while peacefully continuing to fulfill their ordinary obligations.

If someone, by intrigue or similar means, has been successful in getting the post of superior, it would be necessary to obey him. This would no longer be the right time to humiliate him; we should in all humility submit ourselves to him. It is before such a thing happens and when it becomes known that someone is canvassing for such an office, that means must be taken to prevent him from being successful; for example, we can write to the provincial superior to warn him about what is going on.

When such an ambitious person has been unsuccessful, the superior must correct him, as we have explained above, giving him a lower function; but let this be done with great gentleness. It is already a strong punishment for him to have been humiliated in not getting the job he wanted. But let the superior administer that correction in an unobtrusive way, as much as that is possible. Instead of making him his assistant, for example, he will give him one of the lowest functions. But he will not give said confrere a reproof in the presence of others so as to ruffle him. Nevertheless, that humiliation might occasion temptations. The superior will continue to treat him with mildness, and what the offender will suffer will do him good.

Article XXII

We should never be displeased in being given a lower function, under the pretext that we would be able to exercise a more considerable one and that in the latter we would be more useful. We must be on our guard against all thoughts which tend to satisfy our self-love and raise ourselves in the eyes of men.

If everyone were ashamed of the particular function he is engaged in, the superior would not know what to do, for he needs someone for all the regular functions. Suppose there are no Brothers nor any other persons who could instruct retarded children, and every missionary were to say, "I like another job and in that I would do much better," the superior would feel obliged to leave undone that function he considers important, since he asks you to undertake it.

"But," someone might say, "I would be much more usefully employed in something else." That is an illusion! You will never be more usefully employed than then when you are doing God's will. Obedience is the surest way for you to accomplish God's will. When St. Paul was in prison for two years he could have said: "Why does God not let me do things that are much more useful?" No! It is self-love which suggests those pretexts; those who are filled with it often are not aware of it and may imagine that they are acting for the highest motives. They resemble a sick man, a delirious man, who wants to get up and work at his job; he does not realize that he is ill.

Article XXIII

We shall be on our guard against feeling ashamed in the presence of people of the world because we have a lower function in our sacred ministry. We must then act with the same humility as inside our community.

It is foolish, even from the human standpoint, to be ashamed of having to exercise a low function and to manifest one's displeasure when performing it, for people of the world do not consider such functions as teaching catechism to children something that is degrading; it does not enter their mind that such functions are high or low. If a clergyman manifests his displeasure in having to exercise such low functions, or manifests indifference in such tasks, then people might say that his superiors do not sufficiently take account of his talents. But

instead of entertaining such thoughts which are purely human, let us remind ourselves that such an attitude can have only evil effects. It will cause embarrassment to the superior. It will make the ambitious confrere neglect his own function, and therefore all the good that could result from the latter is at least partly lost. Moreover, such conduct will be a source of disedification.

Article XXIV

Those who happen to be successful in their functions must be most watchful lest they yield to pride and entertain the evil sentiments which pride inspires. In their success let them constantly abase themselves before God; let them fear to lose their own salvation while working for the salvation of others. Let them persistently ask for the gift of humility. Let them humble themselves even before their confreres and rejoice when they suffer humiliations; or if they happen to be neglected in matters that might be a source of pride for them. Nevertheless; they must in all simplicity make use of the talents God has given them for his greater glory, while remaining in a sincere and profound humility.

When we are successful in our functions, we meet with great dangers: we may be tempted to a vain complacency in ourselves, in enjoying the esteem of men. Success is very dangerous, especially at the beginning. So, if there are then great humiliations, we must look upon them as great graces of God. If we are faithful to these graces we shall be freed at least from a great part of the danger of that vain self-complacency. At the beginning we must work hard and struggle not to yield to those movements of self-love. The means to remain humble in the midst of success are: first, to remind ourselves of our lowliness and our miseries before God and to entertain fear of losing our own salvation in trying to save others. It is this fear which made St. Paul humble himself externally, even before his confreres. This does not mean that we must do humiliating things before others or say bad things about ourselves. But we must always seek to occupy the last place, making others forget us. This is a general rule at all times. So let us not talk about ourselves without necessity, and not directly or indirectly lead the conversation to what we are doing. Let us rejoice when we are humbled, when others seem to pay little attention to us, although we have rendered great services, or when people pay no attention to what is excellent in us and noble in our conduct.

Confreres should avoid giving occasion for temptation to vanity to a confrere because of their praises and expressions of their esteem for him. Thirdly, they must forget themselves as much as possible; let them think as little as possible about their achievements, refrain from comparing themselves with others unless it is in virtue of a profound sentiment of humility. When some work has been done, for instance a sermon has been preached, a lesson has been given, let them forget about it, except for the sake of knowing what faults have been committed and in order to avoid such faults in the future.

These are the means we should use to avoid vainglory on the occasion of the exercise of our sacred ministry. One thing we must also avoid. There are some persons who under the pretext of not committing faults of vanity refuse to exercise certain functions, or on purpose do things badly. This could be vanity rather than avoiding that fault. The evil, we should remember, is not in the thing we do, but it is in what we do as inspired by our evil nature. It is our interior we must try to cure. The things we do are indifferent in themselves. God has given us some qualities, we have received talents, we may have acquired science; all these we must use for the greater glory of God. We must use those talents and do those things in a simple way, avoiding over-eagerness; we must do them in a humble manner avoiding self-congratulation.

Article XXV

When we have failed in an enterprise or have been criticized for a work we have performed, let us not yield to sadness or discouragement, for these are connected with self-love. Let us avoid false humility, which debases the heart and leads to discouragement. Shun affectation, trying to cover up our shame by insincere expressions of humility. On the contrary, we must humble ourselves before God in our interior. Let us rejoice in his presence because he gives us an occasion for loving our own abjection, and then let us try to restore peace in our soul and to forget gradually what caused our humiliation.

When we happen to fail, our self-love is annoyed; we suffer interior pain. We exaggerate, we magnify the humiliation we have undergone, and so we increase the evil. We then sometimes imagine that it is the harm that has been inflicted on us which is the cause of that pain. But that which shows clearly that this is an illusion is that fact that we do not experience the same pain when one of our confreres has experienced the same failures, has been unsuccessful in an

action of his ministry, precisely where we have failed. That sadness we experience comes from our own self-love. That is why we must be on our guard against such a reaction and against the discouragement that follows it.

We must also be on our guard against a false humility which abases us and produces dejection. True humility is love of our own abjection. It keeps us in our true condition, our true worth, and it does not make us sad; it does not make us dejected. It does not disparage us; on the contrary, it enlarges the soul and makes it tend Godwards; it finds its strength in God. In him it finds all its support, in him is all its hope.

We must also avoid all the ruses which self-love employs to cover up the shame we experience. There are especially two or three kinds of ruses, or artifices. There are some persons who, after suffering a humiliation, then assume an air that is more proud, more haughty, more self-assertive, so as not to let others think that they consider themselves to have been humiliated. Others, on the contrary, exteriorly humble themselves profoundly before the persons who know their failure, in order that they might at least be esteemed for their virtues.

Lastly, there are those who try to make others forget the thing that was the cause of their humiliation, and they try to shine with something else, by some other talent, by another function.

All these are detestable ruses of self-love. What then ought we to do after suffering a humiliation? Let us profoundly humble ourselves before God, rejoicing because he has given us an occasion for detaching ourselves from ourselves, for overcoming our vanity and thus to cherish our own abjection. Secondly, before men, let us act as before, without becoming proudly self-assertive and defiant, or without exhibiting a false humility; let us not disparage ourselves. Thirdly, let us remain peaceful, not trying to remove the pain we feel, but joyfully offering it up to God. Nevertheless, let us gradually forget the thing that caused that humiliation, but without great efforts, and let us avoid trouble or anxiety of mind.

Article XXVI

In order more easily to overcome all those evil inclinations to pride and other vices that spring from it and acquire true humility, a humility that is profound, let them also use the external practices of humility which are generally recommended and used by all the saints.

The exterior practices of humility of which the saints have given us examples are excellent means to acquire the virtue of humility. Let us keep in mind, however, that here there is no question of extraordinary actions which sometimes have been performed by some of the saints. Such things should be done only if they are truly inspired by the Holy Spirit. If they were done only by self-will and according to our own judgment, we would inevitably do them out of self-love. What we should imitate is what the saints generally did: not to make people be occupied with us, as much as possible; not to say good nor bad things about ourselves (this is one of the maxims of solitude: novitiate of the Sulpicians, and it adds “nor in any other way”), readily to do things which the world considers low and “vulgar,” to talk familiarly with poor people without putting on airs as if we belonged to a higher class, having nothing that looks rich, acting with simplicity towards all, etc.

Article XXVII

Everyone should look upon himself as being the least among the brethren, loving to be treated as such by everybody; choosing what is lowest and vilest and always letting others have what is best. Let us take great care not to grieve or feel offended when indifference has been shown to us. On our part, let us never show indifference to others, but always show respect to our confreres; in all this let there be no affectation.

We must learn to look upon ourselves as the last of all. This seems difficult, but it is not really, when we keep in mind how much there is in us that is despicable and sinful, and when we preserve an attitude of humility at the sight of those defects; let us be on our guard against comparing ourselves with others. Such comparisons are very dangerous. We must, in general, abstain from doing that sort of thing.

Not only must we consider ourselves as the last of all, but also desire to be looked upon that way by everybody, and to be treated accordingly. To like that sort of thing does not mean experiencing a pleasant feeling in our senses. This is not possible without a special grace which has been given to some saints. But we can be contented in our interior, in our will. If we are animated by such sentiments of humility, we will always choose for ourselves what is lowest and vilest; we shall let others have what is best and especially that which is highest, most honorable.

When we have been offended we shall not grieve about it. This does not mean that we shall not experience being slapped or wounded; this is an inevitable sense-experience. But we will not voluntarily entertain a feeling of sadness. We shall not consider ourselves as having been offended, nor shall we keep a grudge against the offender, or against one who has shown us indifference. It is more difficult to bear indifference than an injury, because it more deeply wounds our desire to be and to be considered a “somebody.” This does not mean that we must show the same respect towards all.

On our part, let us never show indifference towards anyone, but show to all esteem and respect. Of course, we should not treat all the same way; there is one way of showing respect to a bishop and another to show respect to a confrère. But we can show respect to our equals without affectation. Worldlings do not treat equally an equal whom they despise and one they highly esteem. Let us treat every confrere as a person we esteem and of whom we have a high opinion; this will be so much easier for us when we consider ourselves as the last of all, for it is when we consider ourselves below another person that we are inclined to treat such a person with great respect.

Article XXVIII

In order to grow in humility, they will joyfully undertake the lowest kinds of jobs of the service of their confreres, such as working in the kitchen, washing dishes, cleaning stairs and corridors, cleaning clothes and other even more lowly occupations. All this they will do even in the presence of strangers, without shame or vanity, but in quiet humility.

When that Rule was written we had no Brothers. Today Brothers exercise many of the functions which missionaries would exercise if we had no such helpers. We should not be afraid of exercising functions which people of the world consider “beneath them.” However, if in a particular place the faithful got a bad impression from missionaries doing such jobs, these then should not be done publicly by them, namely, if this would harm their ministry. But within our houses there is no such inconvenience; hence we should gladly exercise that kind of function as often as we are able to do service to our confreres.

In general, in our conduct let us look upon ourselves as poor people, and let us not fear to do things which people in the world consider humiliating, under the pretext that this might be harmful to our ministry. St. Francis Xavier

did not want to give jobs to the novices which would lower them in the eyes of men, but he nevertheless wanted those who felt able to do it, to go begging in the city with a double sack on their shoulder, collecting things for the poor and then bringing what they had received to the hospital. Father Peter Claver did many things of that kind and yet his ministry was most fruitful.

St. Francis Regis carried straw mattresses on his back in the streets of the city and this he did in his native country, although he belonged to a prominent family. Therefore, do not be afraid of doing harm to souls if you humble yourselves in the eyes of men. Nevertheless, in this use discretion. It is not always prudent to imitate all such actions which were done by the saints; also let us not do extraordinary things without the permission of our superior.

Article XXIX

They will consider vanity as something disgraceful for a missionary and an apostle of Jesus Christ. They will cast far away from them all sentiments of self-complacency, all desires for being highly esteemed and sought after. They will never do anything to please others or to win the consideration of others. But they will act with a pure intention, with holy simplicity in everything. They will desire to please God alone. This is the only complacency they must try to attract to themselves and to their actions.

Vanity is a product of self-love, which makes us look at ourselves and our actions with self-complacency and desire to be esteemed and loved by others. It differs from ambition which is another offshoot of self-love, because ambition makes us raise ourselves above others, while vanity, on the contrary, makes us put ourselves below others and depend on them to give us the pleasure of their esteem and their approbation. Vanity, therefore, is in reality a contemptible lowering of our soul that is unworthy of a Christian and so much the more of a missionary and an apostle of Jesus Christ, who must represent him before men, guide them and therefore have influence and authority over them.

We have all an inclination to vanity, but some are more strongly inclined to it than others, namely, persons who have a weak character, great sensitivity and lively imagination, who are easily moved and fickle. This is why many women are vain. It is true that there are women who are very proud and even some who are ambitious, but generally, it is vanity which is predominant in

them. Persons who are vain fall back upon their own thoughts and this is the first act of vanity. Their imagination makes them see castles in Spain. They are self-complacent, complacent in their desires; ordinarily these are small things. Then ambition becomes sometimes mingled with their vanity; they imagine that they have great authority and are respected by all. But their ambition has not the same violent characteristic as that of persons who, by their pride combined with a certain strength of soul, are strongly moved to ambition. Ambitious persons have a worse kind of pride that is more detestable than that of persons who are vain. Generally, ambitious persons have a strong and generous character which can make them do great things. This has made some say that ambition is a good disposition for becoming a saint!

That is false, for what is evil never is able to dispose a person to become virtuous. All that we are allowed to say is that strength of character, which is usually found in ambitious persons, makes these have one obstacle less to overcome in their struggle to attain perfection.

With respect to vanity, let us note that it attacks beginners more strongly, those, namely, who appear before the public for the first time. Afterwards, with greater maturity as they grow older, their imagination is less flexible, becoming accustomed to speak and act in public; there is a lessening of sense-emotionalism and especially greater and continual activity considerably weaken the impressions public actions produce on their minds. And so, after a certain time those persons are no longer so much troubled by temptations to vanity, if they faithfully struggle against them.

Those who feel those sentiments of vanity coming up in themselves should not conclude from this that they are not called to a public ministry and to the apostolate, because if they want to be faithful to grace, they will be able to overcome that evil tendency; they will receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and become excellent missionaries.

There are others who remain vain all their life; the reason is that they lazily refrain from struggling against it. Such, for instance, are preachers who act in the pulpit and do their utmost to please people of the world through their outward appearance; they artfully arrange their hair, their handkerchiefs, their surplices, etc. Such preaching is displeasing to God. These will never curb their vanity as long as they use those affected mannerisms and vulgarities; at the utmost, that show of vanity on the part of the preacher will make less and less impression of the audience because they will have become accustomed to it. But

the vanity of such men will remain. On the contrary, a soul which desires to consecrate itself wholly to God and seeks only God's glory and the salvation of souls, if at the beginning it felt those impressions (to vanity) will faithfully renounce them. It will acquire humility. Those impressions gradually diminish in power, and finally such a person is no longer bothered with them.

Article XXX

They will most carefully avoid a worldly spirit, the way people of the world see and consider things. They will carefully watch over themselves so as not to imitate them in anything, in their conduct, their words, their actions and their manners. They will not become slaves of their customs, but they will plan their conduct, their manners, their customs according to the divine Master and according to his precepts. In this way, they will be for the people of the world living models of the practice of the Gospel, whose spirit will animate them in all their conduct.

Devout persons who live in the world are obliged, more or less, to adopt the ways of the world, because they united with persons of the world in a society whose relations are purely human. But religious have no obligation at all to adopt such manners of the world, for they have by their vocation only the obligation of having religious relations with the world. With respect to the missionaries, they are sent into the world to teach men how to go to God, and not to learn the manners of the world.

Missionaries in all their relations with people of the world must appear to them as men of God, and they must be strangers to the spirit of the world. Priests who are active in the world in a worldly way can indeed sometimes please the world, if they adopt worldly ways that please worldlings; but such priests do not inspire confidence for the things men need regarding the direction of their souls.

It happens even frequently that priests who mingle with worldly groups displease the world. That comes from the fact that they manifest faults which come out more clearly than when they are committed by lay people, faults which are unbearable in a priest. This often happens with priests who feel they cannot dominate in any other way, and yet realize that it pertains to their character and their authority to exercise authority over the simple faithful, so they try to

dominate by taking on haughty and brusque attitudes, which make people of the world dislike them.

The place of a priest in the world, therefore, is not that of joining in their pleasures and customs. A priest must appear in the world only for the exercise of his ministry, as one sent by our Lord. No doubt, we must know the world well in order to direct the people of the world properly, but this does not mean we must adopt the spirit of the world and its manners. We are sent to form men in the school of Jesus Christ and not in order to form ourselves according to the spirit of the world. With respect to St. Paul's maxim that we must "become all things to all men" (I Cor. 9, 22), it has been explained above. It consists in self-renunciation in all things so as to put ourselves within the reach of those with whom we have relations, while always preserving the spirit of God. In all our actions we must always try to imitate Jesus Christ, to represent him to men, so that seeing us they may learn also to imitate him.

Article XXXI

They also will never let themselves be dominated by the criticism and the judgments of men of the world. They are the ones to judge the world and to teach the world what its proper conduct ought to be. But the world has nothing to teach them. They should not submit to its doctrines nor to its false judgments, which are full of malice and are opposed to the holy maxims of their divine Master.

We are called to judge the world and are not to be judged by the world. It would be unworthy of a minister and a representative of Jesus Christ to let oneself be influenced and dominated by the criticisms and the judgments of worldlings. We are the successors of the Apostles who have changed the world; they were far from adopting the spirit of the world and following its teachings. Hence it is not necessary for us to conform ourselves to the world in order to exercise a fruitful ministry for the world. The Apostles had many more difficulties than we have. Timid, vain souls are those that fear the world. They are slaves of their imagination and become slaves of the world.

We are called to rule over the world in order to convert the world and bring it to Jesus Christ. To accomplish this we must become imitators of Jesus Christ; we must become filled with his Spirit. It is not by taking on haughty airs that we shall win the respect of men. But we will certainly gain that respect when

we are humble and modest and at the same time wholly independent and without any desire to gain the esteem of the world. The world's true politeness is in reality but an imitation, or rather, an exterior monkey-like exhibition of Christian humility and charity; worldlings do not hesitate to wound and violate such virtues every time circumstances do not prevent it. That is why a man who is truly humble and charitable will necessarily win esteem, although he does not seek it.

If we let ourselves be influenced by the judgments of the world, we shall be unable to remain faithful to sound principles of Christian conduct and will be prevented from doing good. Must we nevertheless, rigorously accept the maxim of some devout men that we must do exactly the opposite of what is done by the world? No! It is a pious thought, but there would be an exaggeration in rigorously putting it into practice. It would be right to say that we should do the opposite of what the spirit of the world inspires, for the worldly spirit always tends towards what is evil.

When men of the world make reproaches to us or accuse us, we should not say that they are always wrong. On the contrary, there is always something true, something well-founded in their accusations, for instance, we have been too rigorous, too stubborn, imprudent, etc. It is necessary, therefore, to enter into ourselves to examine that in which we are wrong, and then humble ourselves and make the resolution of correcting our behavior. Secondly, we should show great gentleness and profound regret towards all the critics. As regards our practice, we must pay no attention to advice or reproaches which would make us get away from the true rules of interior life and of Christian conduct.

Sometimes, however, we are obliged to yield a little; we can put off a good work we planned to do. Moreover, we can expect to be blamed not only by worldly people, but by religious persons – even by ecclesiastics. Men do not all have the same judgments about things. Sometimes the critics will not know exactly what reasons made us choose a certain conduct, what circumstances influenced us in making a certain decision. We should not be intimidated by such judgments, even of pious men, otherwise we shall not undertake anything.

On the other hand, we should not act imprudently and thoughtlessly. We must consult God, wisely examining the case and then act according to what we believe to be most pleasing to God. When observations are made to you, listen to them, be not soft so as to yield immediately, nor stubborn in not following sound advice. If for the sake of a greater good you have to yield for

some time, do it. Deal tactfully and gently with everyone, yielding to them in everything which is not prohibited by conscience. Be reserved and gentle in your manners, while acting energetically.

Article XXXII

In order to avoid as much as possible occasions for vanity with respect to our missionaries, it is expressly forbidden to flatter superiors, confreres, or subjects. Charity, mildness and respect, which must be practiced toward all, should never make us do anything that will hurt humility.

When someone is praised, although he considers himself unworthy of it, a dangerous impression is left in him; the danger is still greater when he is one who is inclined to believe the praise. In a community where charity reigns, some might be inclined to give praises to a confrère, but this is a charity that is misunderstood. That is why our rule explicitly forbids it. What we must do is manifest a general esteem for every one of our brethren which we owe to all, but we should not manifest a particular esteem that is based on individual qualities possessed by one or another. This would be tempting a person, flattering him, arousing natural passions. We are inclined to that sort of thing, for example, when a missionary returns from the mission where he has been successful; but we must be on our guard against inspiring sentiments of vanity in him; and if we thought he would indulge in such sentiments, it is better to refrain from talking about his success.

On the other hand, if we should not give direct praise, we should refrain from saying humiliating things which we do not believe in, for in this case the one to whom we say such things will guess our intention, and temptation to self-love will be so much more dangerous for him. Neither must we desire to humiliate someone under the pretext of correcting him. This is not our business, but the business of the superior, if he considers it expedient.

This rule of not praising confreres must be observed in relation to the superior as well as to other confreres. Refrain from addressing personal praises to him – you might make a demon of him. Give him a particular esteem, not as a man because he has this or that quality, but because he represents our Lord Jesus Christ. If because you show him this kind of esteem, he yields to pride, he is an imbecile.

The superior, on his part, must avoid praising an inferior; such praise would be more dangerous coming from a superior. If, however, he notices that a confrere is discouraged, the superior can make him see the truth, show him the good things that he is doing, tell him what can give him courage, but he should never say something that is false. He should use prudence in judging what praises he can use, without tempting the subject to vanity for the sake of encouraging him. Making another vain is not a means we should use to encourage him. To do that sort of thing would have bad results and would not produce anything that is solid. A person who would thus be encouraged by wrong means would yield again to discouragement. Spiritual considerations are much more solid.

Article XXXIII

Sincere and profound humility should animate them regarding the Congregation and its particular members. They will have the greatest esteem for their Rules, for the spirit they contain, and the greatest affection for the (spiritual) body to which God has been pleased to unite them for his glory and their sanctification. But they should avoid complacency when their Congregation happens to be highly honored. Let them not be afflicted when their religious Society is humiliated before men. Let them be sincerely happy when other religious Societies are esteemed and respected. Let them rejoice at the sight of the good things other Congregations are accomplishing in the Church of God. On their part, let them only do their very best so that their own Congregation may also be a faithful servant of the Church, and be animated by the same zeal to procure the exaltation of the Church and the greater glory of Jesus Christ, her divine Bridegroom.

We have already spoken elsewhere about what is recommended in that article. It will be when we meet other communities, other missionaries, other religious, that we shall need to exercise humility with respect to them as well as regarding ourselves, so that we can truly rejoice at the sight of the success of another Congregation or community, and not yield to sadness when we notice our inferiority.

We must have great esteem for our Rules, because they are the means for sanctification God has deigned to give us. Let us love our Congregation, for God has been pleased to make us members of it for his glory; but in loving it, we must avoid all the defects which creep into our love for ourselves.

Article XXXIV

When they are humiliated and their communities calumniated, they should remain quiet and silent before God, being content with serving him faithfully and lovingly without wishing to be honored and esteemed by men. However, if the calumnies were harmful to their ministry or were obstacles to giving glory to God, they should try to destroy those calumnies. But everything should be done, keeping within the boundaries of humility, that is, full of gentleness and modesty, sparing, if possible, the calumniators and treating them with respect.

Article XXXV

They will also take great care to overcome the defects of their character and attitudes. They will do all they can to avoid causing suffering or offending those with whom they come in contact. This they should do so that men will not have anything to reproach them with in their ministry; they will behave properly in the eyes of God, and in such a way that men, seeing them as being true servants of God, filled with the perfections and the virtues of their divine Master, and exempt from the defects and weakness that are so common in other men, will bless and glorify their heavenly Father and will draw benefit from all that for their own sanctification.

Article XXXVI

They will carefully avoid everything that is faulty in their way of acting. They will be easy to approach, open, inspiring confidence in those who seek their help. They will be polite towards all while always avoiding a purely worldly politeness. Theirs must be an evangelical politeness, most simple and charitable.

Article XXXVII

Let them also most carefully avoid acquiring peculiar habits, idiosyncrasies, adopting favorite expressions and often repeating them, talking in peculiar ways, making strange gestures, taking droll postures, things which invite ridicule and which might do harm to our sacred ministry. Everything in their words and manners must be serious, wise, and in harmony with God whose holiness must be reflected in all their behavior, in all their actions, and in all their life.

Natural defects of character are not sins, but they are consequences of sin. They are also occasions for sin; they are like instruments by which our concupiscences lead us to sin. It is for that reason that we must struggle against them; another reason is that those defects of character and manias shock people of the world more than sins do; hence they keep people away from us and are impediments in the way of a successful ministry. We need authority over men in order to lead them to God. Hence there should not be anything in our conduct, nor in our behavior and manners that should lessen the respect and the confidence which they must have in God's ministers and the representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TEN

About Preaching

We have recalled what is fundamental in the apostolic spirit. Let us now see how it is exercised. What is said in this chapter is applicable not only to preaching but to catechizing, that is, it deals with instruction and exhortation that must be given to peoples.

Article I

Missionaries will look upon preaching as the most important ministry of their apostolate. They will endeavor to fulfill that function as true apostles.

Preaching is the most important ministry of the apostolate. St. Paul said: "I was not sent to baptize, but to evangelize." To bring the Gospel to men, to make our Lord known, this your mission- as it was that of the Apostles – whether we are sent to pagan countries or to countries where we shall find baptized persons with scarcely any knowledge of religion. These are the poor people to whom we must go. In order to lead them to God it is not enough to speak to them coldly, telling them what truths they must believe and what they must practice. This would not produce any more effect than distributing Bibles, as Protestant ministers do. We must do all that we can to penetrate into their minds and hearts with the things we announce to them. It is not sufficient to announce the Good News; we must announce it the way it was done by the Apostles. We will announce it that way if we are animated by true zeal.

Words without zeal, whether in preaching or teaching, are like a body without a soul. Zeal without preaching is like a soul without a body. We need all three things in order to imitate the Apostles. Then our words will produce much fruit.

Many defects are mingled with our preaching because our zeal is not perfect. By what follows in this chapter, we shall examine those defects that we may endeavor to get rid of them and be able to preach in a way that is fruitful and truly apostolic.

Article II

They will take as models for their preaching our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Apostles.

We must not be preoccupied with the “form” of our preaching. It is our interior that must be afire with true zeal. Form, the structure, etc. of our discourse will then come to us without strenuous efforts on our part. A sermon that is most carefully constructed and most in accord with the rules of rhetoric will not produce any effect in hearts if it is not animated by apostolic zeal. On the contrary, give me a man who has only ordinary talents, but who is afire with apostolic zeal; his preaching will be alive and he will do wonders!

There are those who study Bossuet, or Bourdaloue, or Fenelon, in order to imitate their style. They do their best to speak like them, but most of the time their efforts are futile. Every man has his own form that is natural to him and this he should use, correcting the defects which might be found in it. As to ourselves, we must not aim at having a brilliant style or brilliant ideas, neither must we aim at shining before our hearers and acquiring the reputation of being great preachers.

We should be simple and tend directly to obtain the conversion of hearts. For that purpose, we should at all times use the way of saying things and of developing points which our knowledge of the dispositions of our listeners and our apostolic zeal inspire. For that purpose we must be deeply penetrated by the truths we desire to inculcate in others, and our heart must be afire with love for God. Let us not seek to be called great preachers. Those who have the greatest reputation in that respect are not always the ones who do the greatest good for souls. They make a lot of noise, confound the impious, attract a certain amount of respect for religion, and thus have a certain value for countries like our own. But this is not the kind of men we need for the missions to which we are called. Therefore, let us not take for our models a Bossuet, a Bourdaloue, a Massillon. What we need is to be simple and devout.

Let us take no other models than our Lord and the holy Apostles. Regarding the way of expressing ourselves and the exterior form, if we have apostolic zeal, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will teach us how to adapt ourselves: the needs, the dispositions and to the conditions of the persons we are

called to evangelize, like St. Paul, who, though always simple, spoke differently at the Areopagus, in Athens and to the last of the slaves in Rome.

Let us then take care of what is fundamental; the form will come to us and be given us according to the need we have of it. Now, that fundamental we find in our Lord and the Apostles. These must be our only models. Consider the way the saints have exercised their zeal through preaching; this is a good thing. Nevertheless we must not try to imitate the form of their discourse. Each one of us has his individual way and this we should use, but see how they themselves have imitated our Lord and the holy Apostles. I repeat, our Lord and the Apostles are our models and they are the models the Saints have proposed to themselves. Let them then be also our models!

Article III

They will carefully, and in a great spirit of devotion and mental prayer, study the interior and exterior dispositions of our Lord and the holy Apostles in their preaching and in their way of preaching. They will try to have the same genre and the same dispositions. And all this should be done in a great spirit of piety and fervor.

It is in order to study those great models that the reading of the New Testament is prescribed in the novitiate and is to be done twice a day. But if we want to profit well thereby, we must do this meditatively, in a spirit of mental prayer, of recollection. We must then attentively consider the interior and exterior dispositions of our Lord and of the Apostles. By “exterior dispositions” we do not understand a form of style, of language, which were used by the Apostles. That sort of form comes from man, from human nature. Each one has his own way. It would be a loss of time to try to imitate St. Paul’s way. By exterior dispositions we do not mean that. What we mean by it is what were the means he and the other Apostles used to insinuate, inculcate, infuse the truths they wanted to teach. This practical way differed, was adapted to the condition and attitude of each hearer or reader. Thus St. Paul speaks differently to the Areopagus and to Philemon, to Romans and to Hebrews. St. Paul differed greatly from preachers who compose a sermon in their study-room without knowing who their hearers will be, and then they give the same sermon in a variety of places and to diverse audiences. They can, of course, say things that are morally exact and practical, but they do not deliver those things in a practical way by

adapting what they say to the needs and the different conditions and attitudes of their hearers.

We should read the New Testament in a spirit of mental prayer, and each person according to his individual state or manner of meditating. This is the way to let those inspired words penetrate our mind and heart. We thus appropriate the truths contained in the sacred words and make them, as it were, part of our being. After that, we must do our best to infuse them into the minds and hearts of men, according to their particular condition and needs.

This method will be much more fruitful and useful than studying commentaries. This study is useful and good for speculative science, but it does not nourish the heart; it does not give us the practical, substantial food; it leaves us empty and dry regarding the edification of our neighbor.

Someone might say: "I do not have to apply myself so much to what St. Paul says in order to explain the Ten Commandments in the simplest way to poor Blacks, who will have great difficulty in understanding the most simple truths." Of course, we do not need St. Paul in order to explain the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. But what we do need is to be filled with the spirit of St. Paul in order to give an élan, impart an eagerness to souls, and this we shall not impart by dry explanations, however clear these might be. If we want our preaching to be fruitful, we need to have an apostolic spirit, and one excellent means to acquire this spirit is to let ourselves be deeply penetrated by the writings of the Apostles and the Evangelists in mental, meditative prayer.

Article IV

In their preaching they will aim at inspiring hatred and horror for sin, as we have mentioned elsewhere, to convert and change souls, to inspire them with love for God, to instruct them in the holy virtues of religion to teach them how to serve God, and to walk in the way of perfection, thus ensuring their salvation.

We must have a purpose in mind when preaching; we should not preach for the pleasure it gives us. Our general intention must be the glory of God and the salvation of souls. With this intention in mind we should aim at the various ends mentioned in this article.

We must inspire hatred for sin; but we must keep in mind that if we want to produce something that is solid, we must first establish souls in a solid faith. The principle advocated by some that we must first make them men and then Christians is false. You will never be successful in making men practice even what is demanded by the natural law of morality without first making them Christians. Experience gives proofs of that; and today's philanthropists have felt obliged to admit that the Christian religion alone can raise the moral standard of men and improve their moral conduct. This explains the meagre success of the efforts of Protestant ministers. They have failed to establish people in the faith and have left men in their corruption. That is why we see St. Francis Xavier and the other apostolic men begin always with establishing the faith. This does not mean that they neglected to procure temporal advantages to people as much as possible, to make life more pleasant and less savage though this is particularly difficult to do for nomads and savages; with such people it is difficult to firmly establish religion among them.

Article V

To attain that end, they must aim in their discourses at enlightening the minds to make them have a perfect grasp of divine things, and to awaken in their hearts a hatred of that which is hateful in the eyes of God; and they must inspire love for the things they should love, so that they will shun sins and embrace what is good with fervor and courage. They must not be satisfied with impressing the imagination of the hearers by emphatic words and the ingenious methods their mind might invent. But they must penetrate into the minds and hearts of their hearers, and season their discourses with the salt of grace, imprinting on them the divine light which God will certainly make available, if they are faithful to him.

A preacher must imitate the conduct of the Holy Spirit in his guidance of souls as much as possible. The Holy Spirit will enlighten the soul, striking it with a ray of light; then through an action of his grace, he touches the heart of the person. He must convince the person and touch his heart. Conviction is not enough; the heart must also be won. Likewise, it is not sufficient to touch the heart. If there has been no conviction, that devout sentiment which has touched the heart will soon disappear; nothing of it will remain. It is necessary, therefore, to convince the intellect and carry away the will. We must say things clearly to enlighten the mind, but such things should not be said coldly; otherwise the

hearers will not be touched nor will the wills be carried away. If we wish to touch hearts, we ourselves must be full of love for God. If you have love for God in your heart, that love will manifest itself in your conduct. If you speak about the Incarnation of the Word and of the mysteries of the Savior, that love will be revealed in your words, without you yourselves perceiving it.

It is necessary, however, that this love be in the heart; this cannot be feigned. It is the heart that speaks to the heart. If your heart is not touched, all your efforts to make it appear so will produce nothing, or little to affect the heart of your hearers.

Be not content with talking to the imagination, for if we seek only to impress the imagination, all that will result will be to arouse the passions for a few moments, but nothing solid will remain. The Spirit of God does not arouse passions. On the contrary, he pacifies them. He strives to establish peace in the soul.

Let us follow the example of our Lord. He never spoke to the imagination. He spoke in a very simple and clear way, and never said too much. But he spoke with unction and strength in everything he said. Let us keep well in mind the truth that mind speaks to mind, imagination to imagination and heart to heart. We must, therefore, speak clearly so as to enlighten the mind; we ourselves must be profoundly penetrated by the truths we want to inculcate in others, and be animated with a strong desire to communicate to the mind and the heart of others those convictions and those sentiments that we ourselves have. With that, and helped by prayer, we shall enlighten others, and we shall touch and carry away their souls. Our discourses must be seasoned with grace; unction here has the function of salt. To have this unction we must ask for it and strive to be fervent. How can a man who is spiritually cold transmit to others affections he himself does not have? Finally, we must make use of words taken from Scripture and develop what they teach with unction, which will spring from interior fervor.

Article VI

They will often read and meditate upon the Holy Gospel and the Epistles of the Apostles, especially those of St. Paul, in order to acquire a perfect knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his holy mysteries, in order to be filled with the great and admirable truths which he came to teach us, and to get from them the light, the unction and the strength

with which he himself and his holy Apostles taught and preached those heavenly truths.

An excellent means to acquire that light, that strength, that unction which we need to preach so as to produce fruit, is often to read the Holy Gospel and the Letters of the Holy Apostles. But it is not enough for us to read them. We must read them in a meditative way, in the spirit of mental prayer, with devotion, keeping those words in our heart, digesting them in our souls, so to speak. If we do that, they become as it were part of our substance, and on occasion we shall express them quite naturally and not simply from memory and as mere quotations.

While reading those scriptural texts it is not necessary to experience a pleasurable sensation, to relish them; it is sufficient that we have a great desire to have those words sink deeply in us and that we be deeply affected by them. As our knowledge of our Lord and of his Mysteries increases, we shall also increase our knowledge of the hearts of men and be able to influence them. From that reading we shall also develop a meditative spirit, and obtain the unction and the power to touch and carry souls away.

Article VII

The foundation, the soul of their evangelical preaching, should not be a dry spirit like that of a student or scientist, but, as is seen in the great models proposed to them, a true interior spirit, great love of God, an ardent zeal to establish his reign in all men, and a fervent desire for the sanctification and salvation of souls. If they have that burning love in their interior and are filled with the Spirit of God, they will appear in the pulpit as true apostles and will produce wonderful effects.

There are great preachers who in their rooms study with great application of mind, make beautiful plans, seek for beautiful ideas, consult a great number of books, gather a lot of material, and construct discourses in which art and erudition seem happily joined. They preach beautiful sermons, but they do it as lawyers make beautiful speeches for the defense. As a result of that, highly educated men agree that the particular subject of the discourse was well treated and perfectly developed. But this is not the way St. Paul preached.

No doubt it is necessary to go deeply into the subject and treat it properly as it deserves. But in order to do this, it is necessary to possess intimately

in ourselves the truths we desire to inculcate in others; we must be deeply penetrated by them and not be preoccupied with words. The thing that must preoccupy us is the salvation of souls. This should be the principle that acts as the propelling force in our desire to preach. Only one desire must animate us: to make souls truly know God and truly love him; this we should desire with all our heart. Animated by that great love of God, we shall abandon ourselves to the spirit of zeal, and our words will produce great fruits in souls. Let us then not seek to show our erudition and express sublime thoughts. How could our poor Blacks understand that sort of thing; they are so simple and so crude. To speak properly, we must be delivered to the Spirit of God. In order to touch the hearts of our hearers, we must be full of love for God.

Article VIII

Their preaching must be holy. They must always preach the word of God, not their own word. They will not try to make use of the skills of human eloquence in order to produce good results. But they will speak as men inspired by divine grace; they will try to impress the sentiments they themselves experience, trying to impart them to the souls of their hearers, fervently following the impression of that grace.

The first quality of preaching is holiness. It consists in announcing the pure word of God and not one's own word. A sermon which is only a purely human word is totally ineffective. And this is easily understood. It is grace alone which can act upon souls. We must be the channels for that grace which tends to sanctify men. That is why God has given us the character and the grace of the priesthood. But if, instead of remaining as docile instruments to receive and transmit the impressions given by the Holy Spirit, we transmit only the products of our own ideas and of our human endeavor, God will not ordinarily make use of our words to transmit his grace.

Effects must be of the same nature as their cause. If our words are wholly natural, they will be unable to produce a supernatural effect. Moreover, history confirms that fact. Who are those who have done the greatest amount of good for souls, who have been instrumental in bringing about the most numerous conversions? They are the saints, whose sermons were most simple and far removed from the rules of rhetoric. Such were St. Francis of Assisi and St. Vincent Ferrer. Their sermons are not mentioned as models. Nevertheless, those

that are presented to us as perfect models are far from having produced the same effects and the same amount of good as what has been achieved by those Saints.

Someone might answer: "If that is so, I shall not have to make any preparation at all for announcing the word of God to those poor people to whom I am sent. I have merely to explain what I already know from the Catechism and my study of Theology." I answer: that is wrong. You must prepare what you will have to say to them, but you must do it in a spirit of mental prayer, remaining humbly before God to receive his lights and draw down his grace. If you merely explain the truths of religion as you explain a thesis of theology, this will produce on them at best the same effect as you get through your efforts to master a thesis of theology. This will happen when you have studied only in a purely human way; your heart remains cold; you have not made one step forward towards God.

You should not conclude from this that you must neglect all preparation, but it is not necessary to try to apply all the rules of rhetoric. True rhetoric is in the depths of our soul and we shall use its rules without being aware of them. You have or have not the talent of an orator. If you do not have it, studying all the rules will not make you one. If you have such a talent, you have merely to act according to your way and be animated by true zeal and you will be successful in carrying souls along.

A studied endeavor to use the rules of rhetoric cools the soul of him who engages in that sort of work. If we wish to influence souls, we must speak from the abundance of our heart, from what is deep in our interior; if you have that abundance there, if you have the spirit of fervor and of love for God, you speak so as to influence souls for that spiritual good. What we speak, said St. Paul, is not learned words of human wisdom, but the doctrine of the Spirit.

In order to bring about the salvation of souls merely human means are nothing. We must imitate our Lord. Now, our Lord put all human means aside. He could have chosen as his Apostles orators and scholarly men like Cicero. He preferred to choose poor fishermen of Galilee. If there is an eloquence that can produce some fruit, it is the eloquence whose source is the Holy Spirit. If we eagerly seek eloquence, we shall lose the interior fervor that can lead to an eloquence that comes from the Spirit of God, an eloquence which gives light, unction, power. We find and rightly admire the eloquence of several writers of the New Testament, but these writers lived among poor despised people who were not at all interested in literature.

Where did those writers get that eloquence, if not from the Spirit of God who acted in prophets and raised them above nature? The Spirit of God still produces similar effects, although not always to so perfect a degree, in preachers who abandon themselves to him and are docile to his inspirations. If you are fervent, if you have an ardent zeal, full of love for God, you will sigh and be deeply moved seeing the wretchedness of the peoples among whom you will live. You will think of them constantly, night and day; sometimes you will feel exhausted. You will beg God to enlighten you and move them; you will seek for the means to cure them of their blindness, and without any doubt, you will find thousands of means to procure the good of those poor souls.

There you have the zeal that is animated by the Spirit of God and makes preaching fruitful, which makes a man who has poor talent be a hundred times more successful than a great genius who bases himself upon his natural means, or composes a sermon by purely intellectual efforts without sympathy for the wretchedness of his hearers, or has no pure and ardent desire for their salvation. With few exceptions, the saints who have brought about the greatest amount of good by their preaching have been men of ordinary talents; and saints who had great minds have spoken with simplicity. The thing that stands out in their discourses is their zeal, not the elegance of their style nor their efforts to observe the rules of the art of rhetoric. Look at the letters of Francis Xavier and the Epistle of St. Paul.

Let us be filled, therefore, with the Spirit of God and we have in our preaching what constitutes its true soul and gives it a solid foundation. Otherwise we shall accomplish nothing. Moreover, it is in line with our vocation not to seek eagerly for human eloquence. If this is what we are seeking, we would abandon our poor Blacks and go to preach to the rich. We shall then lose sight of the purpose for which we have gone to the missions.

Let us seek only the eloquence that comes from God, and for that purpose let us become animated with great zeal and with a tender love for the souls of the poor. Let us be to them what mothers are to their children. Let us also pray and send our prayers of supplication, asking the Spirit of God to grant us all that we need to procure the sanctity of those people. This is the secret of (true) preachers; let it be ours. And like them we shall see abundant fruit produced in souls.

Article IX

Their preaching must be pure, exempt from all purely human motives, from all self-interest and from any desire for self-satisfaction. Everything in that great action must be above the natural, and heavenly.

It is not easy to preach in a way that is wholly pure. We must at least try to establish ourselves in solid virtue if we want to preach without too much danger for ourselves. Let us try to have no mere human motive in our preaching. Otherwise, what we shall preach will be our self. We must preach solely for the purpose of saving souls and to procure the glory of God. Moreover, even humanly speaking, if we want to be successful, we must have only one thing in view. If our spirit is divided because it pursues diverse objects, there will be no power in our discourse, our words will not be free; our hearers will remain cold.

Article X

They will preach with sentiments of profound humility, restraining all self-love, all vanity and any kind of self-complacency, or complacency in what they say, hence they will be very watchful before, during and after their preaching, so that the Enemy will not find anything in it that pleases him in an action that is so important and holy; they must also avoid most carefully trying to please hearers, and to preach themselves instead of preaching Jesus Christ.

When we begin to speak in public, we are also assailed by sentiments of vanity. This should not astonish us, what we must do is absolutely renounce all sentiments of self-love. We must also refuse to go back to what we have said which might make us foolishly self-complacent. We must endeavor to acquire a genuine humility. For if preachers yield to vanity, they will produce little fruit in souls in comparison with what they could have produced otherwise. Moreover, the spiritual benefits for themselves will be nothing. Their only recompense will be their vain satisfaction because of the praises they receive. "They have received their reward;" this applies here also. And at the hour of their death, what shall it profit them to have won the whole universe if they lose their soul; and they are running a great risk of suffering such a loss if they do not struggle against their self-love. For that purpose, we must fight from the very start, for self-love, once it has opened the door, certainly grows and spreads.

Before the sermon, let us in advance, renounce all sentiments of self-love that might arise. During the preaching, let us remain peaceful and humble in God's presence. After the sermon, let us avoid any consideration of what we have said well if it leads to self-praise, to vain self-complacency.

Someone might say: "The preacher should rule over his audience. We should not talk so much about his having to speak with humility. Such humble sentiments prevent him from rising to the height from which he must address his hearers." The answer to that is: It is false. Humility will not prevent anything that is good. The preacher must distinguish his own person from what makes him a representative of God. He must always preserve sentiments of a most profound humility at the sight of his nothingness, his faults and his sins. But, as representing God, he must preach the pure word of God with the authority that belongs to that word, then he will be master of the hearts of his hearers in virtue of the grace that always accompanies the word that is preached purely; it will help him to make himself and souls submit to the dominion of Jesus Christ. For that purpose the preacher must forget himself and give himself wholly to Jesus Christ in all his actions, so as to act only for Christ's interests and in the Holy Spirit.

Article XI

Their preaching must be fervent; all their words and all their actions in the pulpit must be an expression of ardent zeal which animates them for the sanctification of their hearers.

If Christ's life dwells and acts in us, it will manifest itself in all our actions. We shall be afire with the desire to transmit that life to souls. That desire also gives power to our words. If, on the contrary, we do not have that life of Jesus Christ in us, all that we do and say will be purely human and cold to the hearts of our hearers. It is easy to recognize a preacher in the pulpit who preaches his self. For it is impossible for such a self-seeker not to reveal these sentiments in his words and gestures. If, on the contrary, we are animated with the sole desire to save and sanctify souls, all our words and actions will express the zeal that comes from our interior.

Article XII

In their preaching, they must express, in all simplicity, the ideas they want to communicate, their loving sentiments, properly ordering and

interconnecting the various parts of their discourse; they must use a simple style. Simplicity must characterize their conduct and gestures in the pulpit. In everything, they must act as apostolic men. They should have a profound feeling of the truths they want to communicate, and they must transmit what in meditation they have learned from our Lord, without paying too much attention to form or to the way of expressing them; let there be no search for fine phrases and sublime thoughts.

Simplicity is an essential quality of a good sermon. This is true not only when we are addressing Blacks, but also when we are preaching in civilized countries. If one who preaches in a cathedral spoke with simplicity, he would do much more good. This is natural. If you want to transmit a certain truth of which you are convinced, what other means will you use than to express it in a simple and clear way? If you want to transmit some sentiment, you will not do it in a roundabout way by amusing your audience with labored expressions and far-fetched words, but you will go straight to the heart of the matter and to the heart of the hearers. This means you must be simple; otherwise your words will stick in the minds of your hearers and will not pass into their hearts.

Finally, you want to persuade them, carry them away. This demands that you give strong and appealing reasons. Now the reasons which will move your audience are only those which are most simple and most natural. These will make an impression. Only such words and ways make a discourse forceful and eloquent.

Those who always want to say something new arouse the curiosity of the mind and flatter it for a moment - and that is all. In matters of doctrine, that which is new has no solidity. All that is strong, solid, convincing, has already been said, and is found on a beaten track. So, if you are looking for new things or new reasons, you will not find any that are more convincing, which better carry souls away. What you say might be something original which, at its best, if it is spiritual, pleases the mind of the hearers, but it will not make sinners cry out: "we must do penance."

That is why apostolic men, like Father Eudes, say that what a preacher has to do is to say ordinary ("common") things in a non-ordinary ("uncommon") way, for "common" things are those that have been said hundreds of times; and with respect to Catholic doctrine, as we have seen, they are the things that will always be the most useful to convince souls and lead them to sanctification. We must say them, however, in a way that is not "common." This means we must

say them from our own deep inner convictions, being thoroughly penetrated by them, and then we must transmit them as we feel them. When we transmit it that way we will truly impress our hearers. We shall not need study regarding the manner of expressing those truths. Being full of them and animated with an ardent desire to communicate them to others, we ordinarily shall not find it very difficult to express what we feel in the proper words.

Let us not be too attached to words. It is preferable to have the eloquence of ideas than that of words. The prophets and the Apostles had that eloquence of thought. Full of the truths with which God had intimately penetrated them, they expressed them according to his inspirations and with the sentiments with which they were animated. This was the reason for their powerful influence and their unction. We must be simple in our words.

Let us merely try to express the thoughts and sentiments we have had in our minds and hearts the way we have had them. Let us be simple in our thoughts, for when we get away from simplicity, most of the time we become ridiculous. There is also the danger that we shall yield to vanity, and that those far-fetched thoughts will go no further than the minds of our hearers and they will not move our hearts.

Let us also be simple in our expressions of love; let us not indulge in saccharine words, but let us say what our heart truly feels. Let us be simple in the order and interconnections of the parts of our discourse. Of course we need order in our sermon, but we must avoid affection in that matter and not slavishly follow rules of rhetoricians regarding the proportions of various parts and their continuity, the sizes of paragraphs, etc. that sort of thing is all right for an academic discourse, which is given only to be heard, examined and praised. This is not what we are after in our preaching. We must move souls, and the way to do it is not to be bothered at every step by numerous minute rules. Moreover, most of our hearers will pay no attention at all as to whether we follow those rules or not. Most of the time they will not even remember how we divided our discourse.

As regards yourselves, if your mind is preoccupied with all those rules, your heart will remain dry, and after all it is your heart that should speak in your sermons. If you are deeply penetrated with a truth, with a sentiment, with the desire to communicate it to others, your spirit will seize it and will naturally put a certain order into your expressions of those ideas and sentiments, without studiously dividing and subdividing your discourse. Then you will present the

truth in a natural and vigorous way and it will penetrate into the hearts of your hearers.

Article XIII

Nevertheless, they should in no way be negligent in those things. They must avoid all defects of which they become aware and even pay some attention to their style and gestures so as not to interfere with the effect their words should produce on their hearers. Their thoughts must have solidity; they must be clear and unhampered, enabling their hearers to understand their words properly and to profit by them.

Negligence is a fault. We must carefully avoid it. Some will say: "I cannot do anything without God. It is God who does everything. That is why I will not make any preparation. When the moment for preaching comes, I will say what God suggests to me." This sort of language might be all right in cases where someone is unexpectedly asked to preach and cannot make any preparation for it. God will ordinarily help him in such circumstances. But we should not conclude then that from that time on we need to make no preparation for our sermons. If we do not prepare sermons, we shall become slothful and repetitious, the style will be neglected, the hearers will be annoyed and the preacher, seeing his lack of success, often will end with being disgusted.

That negligence will come to those who have a false idea of what confidence in God means. I call it a false confidence, for on the one hand, we must have a great confidence in God and be persuaded that of and by ourselves we can do nothing; at the same time, we must be persuaded that God wants us to work. He wants to use our organs and our mind to transmit and explain to the neighbor the truths and the sentiments he has communicated to us. He wants us to make efforts, to do those things properly. To sum up, he demands our cooperation.

We must be on our guard against two excesses. One consists in not being willing to do anything under the specious pretext that we must expect everything from God. The other is that of putting all our confidence in ourselves, in our own endeavors, or relying too much on our own powers, and not counting enough on God's action, for without his help we do nothing. In that case the preacher engages in an anxious and meticulous activity. Like St. Paul, we must remember that we must plant and we must water, but it belongs to God's grace

to give fruitfulness and to make our activities useful. Let us do the best we can. God does not expect us to do wonders, but he wants us to do our best, peacefully and without haste and anxiety.

So, first of all, let us avoid the defects we come to notice in our preaching. Besides that, we must give attention to the style and even to our gestures, so as to transmit properly to our hearers the truths we firmly believe. Our words should be clear, strong and unencumbered, so that the hearers will understand and appreciate them. Regarding affections, let us avoid generalities, but let us say things keeping in mind the characters and the dispositions of our hearers. The same things apply to our preaching on moral matters.

Let us also have a certain order in our discourse. Order is necessary, because the mind naturally likes order; even those who are not able to follow well the particular divisions in the discourse chosen by the preachers, will relish more a well-ordered sermon. If we want to have good order and clarity of thought, we must meditate profoundly on the subject of our discourse. Let us not think that clarity of expression will do harm to the effectiveness of our sermon. On the contrary, if we are clear in our expressions, the sentiments we desire to express will directly go to the hearts of our hearers precisely because they are well understood.

On the contrary, if our expressions and style are obscure, the minds of our hearers will be embarrassed, and while their intellect is trying to figure out what we mean, almost nothing will reach their hearts. We must give solid reasons for what we declare; this does not mean we should give a series of reasons and arguments as when we are defending a theological thesis, but we must give one or two strong reasons that will make an impression and convince the audience.

Article XIV

Their preaching must be powerful and bounteous. They must strongly inveigh against sin, cast fear into the hearts of hardened sinners. But this demands that they themselves do not fear those to whom they speak. They should not threaten them in a cowardly fashion. They must speak with all the energy given to them by our Lord to make known to them . . . (1845) their sins and their vices so as to bring about a change of conduct. Preachers must, nevertheless, be careful that the power with which they denounce sinfulness does not degenerate into bitterness, and

what they say against sin should not take the form of invectives nor point to particular persons.

The preacher represents our Lord Jesus Christ. He must rule over men in virtue of the authority of his (priestly) character and the divine word he preaches to them. Let him not have any human respect. It is his mission to cast fear into the hearts of hardened sinners. How will he be able to do so if he is afraid and if his conduct and his words show fear for men? A missionary may sometimes see fit not to deal with certain truths which are good in themselves, when there is danger that speaking of those truths may compromise all the good that can be produced by a mission. But he should never omit them if it is only a question of being compromised himself. If shepherds refrained from saying certain things about truths for such a motive, they would get the habit of shutting their mouths whenever they were afraid of displeasing their hearers.

There are frequent occasions when a timid man easily mistakes the interest of God's glory when in reality it is his own interest he is safeguarding. In order to avoid such a fault, we must in advance exercise self-renunciation. A man who is dead to himself enjoys interior freedom; he is fearless. He more easily distinguishes what is demanded by God's interest and the interest of religion from what concerns his own person.

The first rule, a general rule of conduct is with respect to those who are dealt with individually; these must be handled with great mildness. But when we speak to a crowd, we can speak with great force and strongly attack vice. However, people must see that the preacher is not animated by bitterness, by irritation, but by love which he has for the souls of his hearers.

A second rule is that we should never attack an individual from the pulpit. In our countries, a preacher would produce great evil if he were to attack particular persons. In uncivilized countries the harm might perhaps not be as great, because those simple people consider themselves so far below us and are more docile. In spite of that, we should never do such a thing, for such attacks against individuals, such invectives, instead of converting those to whom they are addressed will only embitter them and turn them against us, and it may be difficult to win them afterwards. If someone has committed a great fault and is causing scandal, go to visit him privately and try to bring him back. In countries in which we shall plant the faith, if we can establish the ancient discipline of the Church with respect to very grievous sins, then if the individual refuses to heed our particular admonition, we can denounce him publicly in the church, that is,

at the gathering of the faithful, according to the method and order indicated by our Lord for fraternal correction.

Thirdly, in our countries, a pastor cannot always inveigh against customary disorder, against pernicious customs which result in great evils, such as dances in certain localities. This he would then omit so as not to close hearts forever and lose the means to bring people back to God. But in the countries to which we shall go, among those poor people, especially among those in which we shall plant the faith, it is probable that we shall not have to fear the same inconveniences. Then we could and should, following the authority our Lord will give us, fight energetically against abuses and pernicious customs which are causing the loss of a great number of souls. Furthermore, we should have recourse to all the measures which a prudent zeal might suggest, to dry up the source of the evil by trying to eliminate and weaken the causes and destroy the occasions, etc. But this is the only way in countries where it is impossible to speak freely against those disorders.

Articles XV

Their preaching must be noble and high-principled. They must keep in mind who is sending them, represent him with dignity, speak “as having power.” They will try to overcome the fear and the trouble experienced by timid men when they have to appear in the pulpit. They will consider such sentiments as unworthy of an apostolic man. They must try in general to avoid all the defects which, in a preacher of the Word of God, show weakness and would prevent them from exercising all the authority and influence that belong to a true apostle of Jesus Christ. However, let them not speak or act with haughtiness, which is derived from pride.

An apostolic man must act with authority in the pulpit because he is the representative of our Lord Jesus Christ, and because he is charged with publishing the word of God, he is sent to guide men, to be their shepherd, their judge, their physician. He must speak “as having power,” as having come in Christ’s Name, and having Christ’s power’s in his hands. Therefore he should not be dominated by the people he has to guide; he has not to take counsel from those he has to direct, nor should he be afraid of those in whom he must instill a salutary fear.

Why entertain fear when you ascend the pulpit? If you came to flatter your audience, to please your hearers, to submit to their censure, fear would be natural; but that is not the purpose of your mission. You have come to announce the word of God, the judgments of God and his adorable will. To fear, to tremble that way, would be to represent Jesus Christ in an undignified manner; it would be putting a very great obstacle in the way of letting the word affect the people. It would be a pernicious demonstration of self-love to lower oneself below one's hearers; finally, it would be foolish for those of us who will go to preach to poor uncivilized people.

We must fight strenuously against the self-love that inspires that kind of fear, that kind of timidity. Therefore, in that respect we must humble ourselves profoundly before God interiorly, and remain in an attitude of great indifference concerning what people may think about us. Let our soul be at peace, and let us reject self-considerations when such thoughts come to us. We must be occupied with God, with the souls we desire to save and with the subject we desire to deal with. Some have found it useful to look calmly at their audience from the moment that they are ready to speak. A more important way to overcome that timidity is not to avoid occasions of experiencing that feeling, but rather to seek for such occasions. Gradually, by doing this, that evil fear will be overcome.

Thus, a priest who is timid and is called to speak to the people will prefer to speak to them from the foot of the altar so as to have to pass ostentatiously through the ranks. If he wants to get rid of that timidity, let him, on the contrary, expose himself to experience that false shame and timidity. Let him do the same on other occasions so as to fight that troublesome anxiety. He should not go to the other extreme, however, and display haughtiness or speak in a manner that suggests pride in order to overcome timidity, for this will annoy the hearers and make a bad impression on them. There is no sense in making people suffer because of our own defect and in order to acquire courage.

Article XVI

In order to make their preaching perfect and be able to produce the desired effect on souls, they will not be satisfied with properly expressing their thoughts and sentiments. They will try to transmit to them the impression they themselves have received from God by their action, their gestures, their facial expression and by the whole attitude of their body.

All these things are so many powerful means God gives to apostolic preachers to procure the salvation of men.

The preachers who have produced the greatest amount of good in the Church, such as St. Vincent Ferrer, Father Eudes, etc., have given sermons in which we find nothing that is very extraordinary. Hence, when Father Eudes was invited to preach in the city of Caen, after he had acquired a reputation through the missions he had given in country places, his friends desired to dissuade him from accepting the invitation because they were afraid it might hurt his reputation. Father Eudes was a man who felt unable to refuse requests of that sort. He accepted and the effect of his preaching was even greater there than in the villages. Why was that?

[Note: The discourses of our Lord Himself are most simple as to their form. And regarding the fundamentals he expressed, hearers often failed to understand them well. In spite of that, crowds followed our Lord, eager to hear him. Soldiers sent to arrest him came back saying that no man had ever spoken like that man. After the parable of the seven demons who return into the soul from which they had been expelled, a poor woman exclaimed: "Blessed be the womb that bore you." It is because in the physiognomy, the gestures, the whole exterior of our Lord, there was something attractive, something over-powering. It is true that the power of the word acted upon the hearers, but great effects were produced also by our Lord's human faculties.]

The reason those apostolic men (like Ferrer and Eudes) reproduced so great an effect is that they were filled with grace and love for God, and this was expressed in their countenance, their gestures, their attitude, and by means of these they transmitted the impression made on them by God. Grace spoke in them not only by words, but by their whole exterior. This is the way we too should produce the same effects. It is natural for man to express outwardly not only through words, but by his gestures and facial expressions, the lively sentiments he experiences, communicating them by those means to other men. Let us make use of these means to communicate to souls the sentiments, convictions and impressions which divine grace has imparted to us.

God desires to use our words and also our gestures to communicate to others the sentiment and the convictions he gives us. Let us therefore put those two faculties into the service of God for the benefit of our brethren. At the beginning we are perhaps a little ill at ease in our gestures. But let us be courageous; let us make effort. We shall gradually put them in the right shape.

Such things will become natural to us, and they will then be very useful. For it is necessary for us to make an impression on the senses of men in order to impress them by our words. What is seen makes a greater impression than that we hear. Gestures and physiognomy produce a vivid impression on spectators, when they are properly used. That is why we should make efforts to acquire that kind of language which is so expressive. That is why St Francis of Assisi said rightly; “let us go and preach,” and then went out through the city not saying anything. He went to preach to the eyes through his modesty.

Article XVII

The action that accompanies our words should not be something that is produced by studied attention. But it must always spring from a greater and profound sentiment that is impressed on our souls by divine grace, so that our action will be always in perfect relation to our words and in accord with the sentiments we wish to produce in the hearers.

We should not plan our gestures meticulously, calculating beforehand how high we shall raise this or that arm, etc. If we have such artificially planned gestures, our minds will be occupied with them and our heart will be dried up; it will then be almost impossible to be simple and natural. When we say we must apply ourselves to making gestures, it means that we should not be afraid of using them, nor remain immobile for fear of making them the wrong way. What we should do is to deliver ourselves to the inspiration of zeal and try to express by our whole exterior our interior sentiments. If we make gestures badly at the beginning, let us make them anyhow; we shall make better ones later on.

Article XVIII

They must prepare their preaching and even their catechizing with great care, every time that is possible. Everyone must prepare himself according to the way that suits him best. Either by writing everything that he will preach and learning it word for word, or by writing only the divisions and subdivisions and principal points of the subdivisions which he will develop. Or again, preparing all this purely in his mind, without writing anything down. Each one should make use of one of those three methods that will enable him to do his best. But no one, except in a case of necessity, should ascend the pulpit without having made a preparation

for his preaching, lest he get the habit of negligence and presumption, and his preaching be deficient.

Although none of our words can produce (the proper) effect without grace, it would be wrong to expect everything from grace and to make no preparation for our preaching. God demands our cooperation. He has endowed us with faculties; he wants us to use them and thus cooperate with grace. What could tempt us to discard preparation is that at a particular time we were suddenly obliged to preach and we were successful, although we had been unable to make preparation for it. But let us be on our guard against yielding to such a temptation. It is very dangerous to get the habit of preaching, or even of teaching catechism without preparation.

That way of acting has numerous drawbacks. Our sermon becomes cloudy, obscure. Two things are required if we want to be clear: we must have a clear concept of the truths we desire to announce to others; and we must express them in a way that will be at the level of understanding of our hearers. Now, in order to have those clear ideas and that adequate expression, preparation is a necessity. Ordinarily, those who only recently began to preach do not have clear ideas, ideas that are definite and certain, unless they have pondered those truths. This, secondly, requires study so as to choose the precise words, the right kinds of sentences, the figures of speech, the comparisons which will best make those truths enter into the minds and the hearts of the hearers. Beforehand, we must imagine what way God himself would make known those truths to them, how he would represent those things to their minds, and then do it that way. To imagine such things we need time, consideration and study; we need a serious preparation.

Then if we make no preparation, our mind becomes sluggish and slothful. We will utter a lot of words, but say few things which go to the fundamentals of the subject. We are then afraid of stopping too soon, so we go looking for details, for accidental developments, so as to cover the time we consider necessary to use for the sermon. And so, it happens that a preacher talks at greater length when he is unprepared than when he has made a proper preparation. Also, we shall continuously say the same things over and over, running in a circle of repeated expressions. And if towards the end we suddenly feel moved, we insist on prolonging our discourse. So the preacher who is unprepared is more inclined to lengthiness than one who has prepared well. Because of all these effects, the preacher annoys his audience, the faithful become

disgusted; some will no longer come for instructions or to listen to such a preacher's sermons again.

Also, there is great danger for the preacher becoming presumptuous and vainglorious. Generally, when recently-ordained priests start preaching without preparation, it is through presumption. When priests have preached ten or twenty times, being full of all those subjects and having become accustomed to develop all those ideas, they then think they no longer need to prepare their sermons. However, even then it will be useful to make a certain amount of preparation for them.

Unprepared sermons, if this becomes a habit, are generally impractical. We shall indeed say things about moral conducts which are true and which people ought to observe, but it is through preparation that we shall make practical applications for our hearers.

All this is also applicable to our catechetical instructions. Particularly in our catechetical teaching everything must be practical (to make the catechumens practice and live by what they are taught). We must make preparation for catechesis as for sermons, although our method of preparation will be different from the preparation of a sermon.

That, then, is what we ought to do whenever it is possible. But if we are taken by surprise, if God's glory and the sanctification of souls demands that we preach without having the time to prepare for our sermon, for instance, the missionary who was to give the retreat became ill and we had to take his place and preach the retreat or the sermon, let us not refuse; let us speak; let us not fear that we shall not preach well. We shall be lacking in confidence in God and in devotion to souls if we refuse to preach in such circumstances for fear of not preaching well. Outside of those cases, as we have said, we should always make a preparation for our preaching.

Now, there are different methods of making a preparation. Each one must choose the one that is most suitable for him. The first method consists in writing everything down and then memorizing it all, word for word. Beginners should write everything down. As to learning the sermon by heart, we should then do it if we find it impossible to talk otherwise. Unless there is an absolute necessity to learn it that way, it is preferable not to repeat the written sermon word for word, for that method has very great disadvantages. It generally makes the preacher a slave of words. I have seen men of great talent, who had great

means at their disposal, but who had to cut their conferences short (in relation to subjects for mental prayer) because they were unable to rely on their memory. On that account, there are those who come to imagine that they are unable to preach when it has been impossible for them to make any preparation for it, and the faithful are then deprived of the grace of hearing the Word of God. We could write the sermon, but content ourselves with trying to remember the divisions, subdivisions and remembering the principal points which we wish to develop. For this purpose we can read our sermon two or three times before preaching it.

The second method consists in writing down only the divisions, subdivisions, and the principal points to be developed. It is a better method than the first one, but generally is not suitable for beginners.

The third one consists in doing all this in one's own mind, without writing anything at all. In general, this method should not be used before we have acquired a great experience in preaching. It has the advantage that we can prepare our sermon without the use of books when we are traveling, when we go from place to place. But let us not choose one method or another simply because one is in itself better than the others; we should choose the method that suits us best and which we like best.

Article XIX

In order to go deeply into their subject and be filled with it they can use one of these three methods. The first: to read devout authors concerning the matter of their preaching, those who are able to enlighten the mind of the preacher and touch his heart. They will mediate on the truths which they have read about, so as to make them sink in and penetrate into them; after that, they will prepare what they intend to preach according to their ordinary method. The second: to mediate on the subject of the sermon without having recourse to a book, arranging the material, making the necessary divisions and adjusting the contents of their sermon to the needs of the people, without having recourse to outside help. To facilitate that work, let them choose one or several texts of the Holy Scripture as the subject of their meditation, in order to draw from it the development of their sermon. Third method: to prepare all the divisions and subdivisions of the sermon, and before going to preach, to meditate on that subject for some time, in a spirit of mental prayer. This last method of preparation should be permitted only when the

preacher is certain that he may acquit himself well of that function, and that he will not commit the faults to which one exposes oneself when using this third method.

The three ways (of preparing sermon) tally pretty well with the three methods that have been given in the preceding article. Thus, beginners will do well to make use of the first way given in this Article XIX. But let them read devout authors to nourish their heart, while finding light in their mind. A work of a devout author could be a meditation book. If necessary, they could take notes while reading it and then meditate on them; afterwards they could write their sermon.

In general, it would not be useful to read a sermonaire a short time before their preparation, for the preacher might be too slavishly attached to the form of the author he had read, and also to the divisions and even the developments of that same author. It is much better for everyone to adopt his own preferred form, which is the expression of his own way of conceiving things and feeling them. Regarding divisions, they are sometimes found in the very text of the discourse; and it is one of the rules of the art of oratory that a text should have such divisions, but we should not slavishly cling to that rule, provided we have a regular direction which helps us to classify our ideas and avoid obscurities in our developments. Once our divisions have been made, we should classify in our mind the matters that relate to each division; we then return to the whole text to see whether everything has been properly classified. Finally, we write, or compose the sermon.

There are persons who find it impossible to do those things; they must then act otherwise. We should not scrupulously stick to those minute rules. The second method has the advantage of making us construct our sermons, basing ourselves on what is fundamental in us, and this is preferable. For we then have the advantage of speaking naturally.

The third way is suitable only for those who have preached for a long time and who are accustomed to develop all the subjects of doctrine and morality of the Christian religion. To make use of that method we must feel certain that this will suffice for the preacher. For there is danger of exposing the preacher to commit various faults, such as yielding to sloth, to vanity, to presumption, to repeating or rehashing things. This method clearly is not to be used by beginners.

Article XX

In preparing their discourse, they should not be satisfied with considering truths in an abstract way and in themselves, but should also consider them in relation to needs, in relation to the vices and to the characters of the people to whom they preach; they must talk accordingly and reach them at their level of understanding.

When we merely aim at composing a sermon that is well written and that can well express the truths of religion and show their beauty, we then imagine that we prepare it well when we conceive truth in an abstract way and merely in themselves. But when there is question of preaching an apostolic sermon, in which we aim principally at carrying along our hearers, at moving and touching hearts, we must speak in a practical way, a way adapted to their condition and to their dispositions. That demands that we know the ways and character of the people to whom we preach, their way of conceiving things, their leanings, their vices, their habits, their customs, etc. When we know those things, we shall speak so as to enter into their minds; we shall apply the truths to their needs; we shall touch them on their weak point and the people will appreciate it.

We have to speak to simple folk; we must speak with simplicity. This does not prevent us from announcing the word of God in a way that will arouse in them esteem and great admiration for the beauty of religion. Simplicity is not something that is opposed to nobility and dignity.

Hence, the general characteristic of our discourses must be simplicity. Besides this, in every locality there are customs, there are particular kinds of sins, there are different characters, and so we must vary our discourses according to the different kinds of audiences to which we must preach. We must stress the truths of which they have the greatest needs. We must explain and develop the same truth in different ways according to the different characters and dispositions of the audiences. In order to penetrate so many minds, which differ so greatly among themselves, we must have recourse to divine lights; thus enlightened, we must make use of a certain natural tact to adapt ourselves to those to whom we speak, so as to insinuate ourselves in their minds.

Article XXI

Their preaching must always be prepared in a spirit of mental prayer, in interior recollection and in great peace of soul before God. It is in this spirit they must read the author they are consulting, either by meditating on that subject or by arranging their divisions and their developments, or again, by considering the needs of the people. This can be done either by memorizing what they have written, or by ascertaining things themselves.

The first condition necessary for constructing our sermon is to hold ourselves in a state of peace and calm. This is something evident even in natural reason, for when we run right and left, hurriedly consulting various authors, it stands to reason that we shall not achieve anything that is worthwhile. We need calm and we must enter deeply into the subject of the sermon in the presence of God. We will then be in a state to judge things in a sane manner. This does not mean that we must try to think of God while doing that work, as when we are making a meditation. This is not possible; we must only remain in the attitude of mental prayer – the kind we must preserve throughout the day - studying recollectedly, possessing our soul, in a word, working peacefully before God. This we should do either during our reading of an author we are consulting, or while meditating on the subject of our sermon, or arranging its material and making divisions, etc.,

Article XXII

With respect to the immediate preparation, they should place themselves before God with the proper dispositions and suitable sentiments so as to receive grace, in order that their words, accompanied by that grace, be no mere simple human words, but become wholly divine words. Finally, they will review the subject of their sermon, imagining they are already preaching at the pulpit. After that, feeling assured about the things with which they will begin, they will remain quietly before God, contemplating its subject, without occupying their minds with details, they should remain in that condition at least for half an hour, if that is possible. Then, as they ascend the pulpit, as if coming from the bosom of God himself, they will abundantly diffuse the fire that fills them, and

will diffuse among all souls the divine grace which they have drawn down from God.

After placing themselves in the presence of God as one does when beginning meditation, they pass the subject of their sermon in review. Those who feel it necessary to learn their sermon by heart, then do so. Others read the written sermon two or three times; then they imagine themselves already standing in the pulpit and they repeat the sermon as if they were addressing the audience. After feeling certain that they truly possess the beginning of the sermon, the text, and the rest of the first part so that they have no longer to worry about that part, they remain peacefully before God, reflecting upon the subject of the sermon, without entering into details. This prayerful meditation (mental prayer) should last half an hour, when possible. After that, full of spiritual fire, animated by the grace they have received, they ascend the pulpit and deliver the sermon to the faithful.

Article XXIII

As they ascend the pulpit, let them preserve a profound recollection and abandon themselves to our Lord in a spirit of sacrifice and with the desire of giving their life for the sanctification of the faithful to whom they will now speak, and with respect to the truths they will announce to them. They will then kneel down, full of these thoughts and desires. Let them not remain on their knees too long, so as not to make the people wait. After that, when the people are all quiet, they will still remain in silent recollection for a very short time. Next they will make the sign of the cross with great devotion and with the same desires to sanctify themselves for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls. Then they will begin their preaching calmly, seriously and devoutly.

The rules given in this article are those that are ordinarily followed by men of God. Regarding the modesty of the preacher as he arrives in the pulpit and makes the sign of the cross before starting to preach, this makes a strong impression on the faithful, who all then have their eyes fixed on him, this helps the preacher himself to raise his soul to God. Before starting to preach, he still waits for a short moment, during that time some preachers raise their eyes heavenward, or towards the Most Blessed Sacrament, or look at the people. Others cast their eyes down; everyone does as he sees fit.

During the preaching, we must avoid two expressions. The first is to speak coldly; this often happens when the preacher recites what he has learned by heart and is a slave of his memory. Then there is the opposite defect: to let ourselves be carried away by our imagination. To avoid this, we must have “possession of ourselves,” that is, have self-control. And in order to have such control the preacher should accustom himself to act calmly at all times. A man who lets himself be led by (heart) imagination resembles a horse which has taken the bit between its teeth. On the contrary, he who knows how to control and guide his imagination resembles the man who can direct a priceless horse. Such a one arrives where he wants to go, and at the right time, the imagination is a wonderful and excellent instrument which can produce admirable effects. But we must learn how to make proper use of it. We must not let it enslave us. If we let ourselves be moved hither and thither by an uncontrolled imagination, we shall generally do foolish things. Preachers must be serious and masters of themselves. This self-possession and restraint do not make a preacher phlegmatic; it does not prevent him from giving a fiery sermon that is full of spiritual ardor and movement with suitable calm and restraint.

Article XXIV

After delivering the sermon, they will remain recollected and preserve the good sentiments which arose in them during that holy action. They will try to benefit from them for the good of their souls. They will reject all thoughts and sentiments of vanity that come up in them and no longer occupy their mind with what they have just done, except humbly to recognize their faults before God and determine to correct such defects in the future. Finally, they will recommend themselves to the Blessed Virgin as well as the souls to whom they have preached.

In the beginning, we must always fear self-consideration inspired by self-love and sentiments of vanity. Later on, if we have done our best not to yield to such sentiments, we shall experience such sentiments to a lesser degree. We must try to refrain from occupying ourselves with ourselves as much as possible. We will think of the action we have performed only to recognize humbly before God the faults we have committed so as to be able to correct them. Once that self-examination is no longer necessary to avoid similar faults in the future, we should think no more about our sermon. It is also necessary to remark that in the early stages of preaching, we have illusions regarding the way we have preached. We might then be inclined to make a false judgement about what we have done

improperly, imagining that we have made a bad impression on our hearers. We must forget ourselves, recommending ourselves to the Blessed Virgin as well as the faithful to whom we have preached.

Article XXV

The superiors must see to it with great care that all preaching is done according to the rules of a true apostolate. They must eliminate the preachers who preach animated by pride and vanity, as well as those who preach in too human a way, who seek too much for elevated thoughts, are too enamored of a precious style, and pay too much attention to arrangements in their discourses. They must begin by warning those who commit such faults. If that warning does not suffice to make such preachers correct their ways, they must forbid them to preach for some time, and give them other functions. If, after that, those missionaries are found to be incorrigible, they must prohibit them to exercise any more ministry of the word.

What good thing will be produced by letting a missionary lose himself, or at least do great harm to himself, and at the same time cause the loss of souls which have been committed to his care? For there is a twofold result from a labored, affected, vainglorious, and too “human” preaching. We can sin seriously by self-love in our sermons, making use of God’s word to establish our own glory, and doing this constantly when we preach frequently. This is certainly a way to perdition. Moreover, such sermons generally do little good, make little impression on people. In the meantime, poor sinners wallow in sin. If, on the contrary, another missionary had been charged with preaching the word of God, many might have been awakened from their lethargy and have been converted.

Finally, such a (vainglorious) preacher does harm to the religious community to which he belongs, for by his bad example, he introduces in it a bad spirit. It is necessary, therefore, to prevent him from preaching, unless he corrects his ways. For what is the use of letting such a man preach in that manner when he produces no good by his preaching, but, on the contrary, produces evil? It is much better to give him another function.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Of Confession and Other Sacred Functions

Article I

The Missionaries of the Holy Heart of Mary will devote themselves as much as possible to the administration of the Sacrament of Penance, and they will make it one of the principal occupations of their zeal.

Preaching is the characteristic of the evangelical apostolate. By preaching we act upon crowds. But the good one does through preaching is not as solid as what is done through the Sacrament of Confession. Confession completes and perfects what has been done through preaching. In the confessional you learn to know the needs and the qualities of each soul; you enter into details so as to be able to apply suitable remedies. You have no similar advantage when you are preaching. The ministry of preaching is a brilliant ministry and on that account it is dangerous with respect to self-love. What confessors do in the confessional is more hidden; it is less liable to inspire pride. The ministry of preaching is a more pleasant one because through it we act upon crowds. In one hour we can touch a thousand persons. In the confessional we make great efforts to arouse some good sentiments in a small number of souls, spending a lot of time in the process. Moreover, if we say something that is imprudent in the confessional, we shall be publicly accused; penitents will often explain incorrectly what we have said, and we shall not be permitted to explain things to the public.

In the confessional, our human nature is often mortified in many ways, but it is precisely this which should make us love it, in view of the good we are able to do through that Sacrament. In order to hear confessions properly we should know the way to lead and direct souls. For this it is not enough to know theology; we must know the human heart. That is why it is necessary already now (my dear novices) for you to apply yourselves to leading an interior life, to learning to know yourself. The most spiritual men are the best confessors. And experience shows that the most learned theologians are not the best confessors. The reason is that if we want to direct souls properly, it is not sufficient to know the principles of theology. Confessors must know how to apply those principles in each circumstance.

Article II

They shall always be ready to receive anyone in the holy tribunal with equal charity, and there shall never be a preference of persons.

It is a very important thing and yet it is one that is often neglected, namely, that no preference should be shown with respect to persons. Such preference is sometimes shown towards wealthy persons. This would be essentially contrary to our vocation. Nevertheless, it is necessary to keep in mind that even in the exercise of spiritual functions we must show honor to people in authority so as to give good example to others, both on account of the influence such persons have on the rest of men and because it can turn to the advantage of religion. Thus, in an uncivilized country, one lets a person who has a position of authority pass before another person, a master before his slave. No one would object to that.

If, in exterior affairs, we preferred a slave to his master, it might have very bad results. We can conceive that this sort of thing could be done by some missionaries, for instance, like Father Claver; it is our opinion that any practice of that kind that is inspired by zeal could be permitted. But such examples as the case of Father Claver should not prompt us to the same. We might easily be victims of illusions and we could do much harm. We must be prudent and guarded.

Outside the case of a person endowed with authority in a particular country, we should not differentiate between a rich and a poor person; but if a poor person, as often happens, gave first place to a wealthy person, it would not be necessary for us to prevent that; for instance, it would not be right for a confessor to leave the confessional and let a poor man who had given up his place to a rich man come first to confess his sins. It would also be wrong to make a wealthy person come before a poor person, who would thus be forced to give up his place to the wealthy person. The same thing applies to making a person give up his place and rank to an influential person, as was mentioned above.

One might, nevertheless, sometimes make one person pass before others when there is a serious reason for doing so, for instance, if we notice that one poor person has still to walk four leagues to return home and that it is getting late, or that she has a lot of work to do at home.

There is also favoritism and preference of persons in the way we treat people, favoring persons who walk in the way of perfection and, on the contrary, neglecting and treating with indifference or even with rudeness those who are cowardly or indolent, and who drag their feet, spiritually speaking. Of course, we must take care of those who truly tend to perfection, but we must show the same charity, the same gentleness towards the others, in spite of their carelessness, or their frequently repeated falls.

We might also be more inclined to treat with more particular attention those whose character we like. With such persons we have always plenty to say and plenty of time to spend; we then always find excellent advice to give, and words full of unction to express to them. Let us be on our guard. Such words are inspired by nature and not by grace. Let us remember that if we can do much good in the confessional, we can also do many foolish things. Let us be cautious. Let us give the penitents the counsels their condition demands, but let us not say anything to give satisfaction to natural desires.

Article III

As soon as the missionaries are called to the confessional, they should go there immediately and not make penitents wait, without a serious reason.

We must look upon ourselves as servants of souls and act in consequence of that principle. In countries where faith is strong, there are priests who, far from acting that way, act like bosses. Penitents have to bow to their wills, to their fancies. When penitents come at a time the confessor does not like to hear their confession, such confessors immediately send the penitents away or make them wait for several hours and sometimes after waiting for a very long time penitents feel obliged to leave and then return at another time.

Such priests forget that they are called to be servants of souls, that they must imitate our divine Master, who has said about himself: "I have not come to be ministered to, but to minister." We must arrange our time and do it so as to lose as little of it as possible. But if, in spite of that, a person comes to bother you, and asks for you, go immediately to see the person. If you send people away who are asking for you, you are doing much that is evil; there will be displeasure, chagrin, sometimes despair. It will make persons give up going to confession; it will leave very bad impressions on souls and inspire very bad sentiments. This

might not always produce as much evil among Blacks as in our countries, because those poor people look upon themselves as so greatly below us missionaries, so that they do not dare to grumble, nor to judge us, nor to complain. But such treatment can always produce bad effects. We must deal gently with them - with everybody – be charitable towards all and practice self-renunciation. We do not make a great lady wait. Shall we, on the contrary, refuse to stir to help a poor woman whose time is precious? If we refused to help her, would we act as servants of souls? What we would do then would show favoritism towards some and neglect with respect to others.

Article IV

They will most carefully avoid manifesting in any way displeasure, annoyance, or disgust towards their penitents, either in their presence or in their absence, however painful their ministry towards some persons may be. On the contrary, they should receive with the greatest gentleness those who cause them the greatest trouble and chagrin.

This is a common fault. When penitents are disagreeable, confessors manifest annoyance and the pains such persons cause them by harsh words in their presence, or by criticism and complaint in their absence. We must be very careful not to commit that kind of fault. First of all, we must treat them with great mildness. Under the pretext that scrupulous persons must be led by obedience, some treat them with haughtiness; they seem to lead them holding a rod in their hand. On that account such confessors only trouble the scrupulous even more and sometimes wholly discourage them. Also, under the pretext that vices must be cured by applying contrary remedies, some make use of harsh words and words of contempt to humiliate proud penitents. This serves only to make these more stubborn and sometimes makes them stay away from confession forever.

I had a penitent who insulted me in the Sacred Tribunal and reproached me for things that were very injurious to the priesthood. If I had become angry with him, he would not have returned to the confessional; he might have ended very badly. But I spoke in another tone. I sought to show him that even if I were guilty of the things with which he had reproached me and though I was a wretched man, I did not deserve to be reproached for the thing of which he had accused me. Now that man has changed his attitude in my regard.

Those who have preached missions testify to the fact that in parishes there are many souls who no longer go to confession because they have been rebuffed by their pastors. How great will be the evil we shall be guilty of in mission countries if we act that way, where sometimes we are the only priests to whom those poor people can have recourse. When a sinner accuses himself of a grievous fault, it often happens that a confessor signifies by some movement or word how horrified he is because of so great a crime. Let us not express such feelings in any way, for this only closes the mouth of those poor penitents.

Very frequently we should try to inspire confidence by telling them we have heard worse things than that, that we realize how weak we all are, and that it does not surprise us to learn that some of our brothers have fallen into such grave faults. It is only after having reassured them so that they will tell us their other sins, that we can then return to those grievous faults to inspire them with horror for them and prompt them to avoid them in the future, with God's help.

Secondly, we should never tell others what troubles and pains penitents cause us – such as scrupulous penitents – the great amount of time some take to tell their sins; for if we know this only by what we have heard in the confessional itself, what right have we of manifesting such things? Moreover, we might thereby become known as indiscreet, keep all penitents away from us, and not only from ourselves, but from the tribunal of reconciliation.

Also, far from manifesting our displeasure because we have to hear the confessions of scrupulous and annoying persons, we should not be displeased about that. A priest, a missionary, must be dead to himself. He must live only for God. He must live and act only for God's glory. Let us not consider our self, nor what kind of person our penitent is. Let us look on ourselves as representing God. Let us act as such and not as men. And let us look at our penitent as a soul redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ and entrusted to our care by Jesus Christ himself. With that in mind, we shall not pay attention to a penitent's clothes, his poverty or wealth, his looks, or his natural defects so as to be embittered by such things. We will not show preferences, but will treat every penitent with a most tender charity and refrain from rebuffing him.

The priests who are most devout have not all been able to get rid of such human motives. One priest told me: "I can't understand why you are willing to hear that person – how you accept her to go to confession with you! That person will pester you, give you a lot of trouble and then will compromise your reputation." This is not the way a man of God ought to talk. If that kind of

person bothers and plagues us, so much the better for us. We should feel very happy to be able to suffer something in the service of our Lord. And with respect to penitents “compromising our reputation,” we will, helped by God’s grace, take the necessary precautions so that penitents have no seeming reasons for giving a bad reputation to a confessor.

Article V

Let them be filled with a great spirit of faith as they enter the confessional, and before entering let them always kneel down and fervently invoke God’s help, asking him to grant them the grace of knowing the condition of the penitent, and pray also for the penitents themselves.

After praying for divine grace, the confessor must now listen to the penitent, without being presently preoccupied with principles of theology. We should know those principles before entering the confessional; but once we are there, we must be occupied solely with the interior condition of the penitent. The principles we have learned will then guide us of their own accord. But let us know these principles before hearing confessions.

There are confessors who, through scrupulosity, always worry about making wrong decisions. We must listen peacefully and examine well the condition of the penitent. According to the interior dispositions of two penitents we might absolve one and not absolve another, although both had committed the same grievous sin.

Ordinarily, it is not the professors of theology who best solve cases of conscience, unless they have had a long practice of hearing confessions outside (the seminary). It is preferable for a penitent to address himself to a pastor who has such a long experience. In the sacred tribunal do not use theological language, but pay attention only to your penitent. Speak to him in a practical way, applying the remedies that are most suitable for the various evils which need to be eliminated. For this purpose you must have the spirit of a guide; this spirit of direction you will find in God, in the practice of mental prayer (meditation), or recollection and of an interior life.

You must keep to the golden mean between lengthiness and excessive briefness. As we have said, avoid all rudeness, but also take care not to give an occasion for vanity to your penitent when trying to encourage him or her.

Let us not forget that the principle thing to consider regarding refusing absolution is not the grievousness of the sin considered in itself and in the exterior action, but the dispositions of the penitent. We must also be distrustful of our own lights and not judge the case precipitately. Most of the time, what penitents need is encouragement. Most sinners let themselves go to the commission of sins through discouragement. There are even several who hide that discouragement and give themselves a haughty air.

Article VI

During the whole time the confessors are in the sacred tribunal they will remain recollected and try to preserve the most profound humility, seeing how great is the ministry they are exercising. They will also try to entertain sentiments of self-distrust and of distrust of their own lights. They will seek to discern things, give counsels, and utter words of consolation only in great union with their adorable Master and in virtue of the lights of his divine Spirit. All this should be done (peacefully) without intentness of mind.

If we want to act prudently we must act humbly. When we act hastily, following self-opinionatedness and with exaggerated confidence in ourselves, we shall often be obliged to retract later on what we have said. Let us act calmly, sedately. Our answers must be calmly expressed, characterized by moderation. It can be advantageous to use the imagination in our preaching in the pulpit, but this should not be done in the confessional. We must be distrustful of ourselves and try to decide everything in the spirit and the lights given us by our Lord.

We should also avoid curiosity in the confessional; for instance, if we are hearing the confession of a devout person, let us not ask useless questions for such a penitent's spiritual direction. A confessor should not be self-seeking; he is not in the confessional to satisfy his own curiosity, or to seek edification from a penitent. He is there to procure the good of penitents.

Ask as few questions as possible and when you question a penitent, do not say things which might make him think you admire, or at least notice good things in him. If a penitent badly interprets something you have told him and if on that account you get the reputation of saying foolish things, be careful not to seek to exculpate yourself, for you are bound to observe confessional secrecy. It would be preferable to suffer such humiliation, and even to die than to break the

seal of confession. Once you have left the confessional think no more of what you have heard unless it be necessary; let this be your habitual way of acting. When you do not have that habit, you will often feel very awkward when later on you are merely in the presence of your penitents. And that awkwardness could manifest itself in your behavior; this then might make the penitent stay away from your confessional. When, after a person has left the confessional, he asks you some advice regarding what he had said in confession, ask the penitent to repeat what he had said, and speak then only of what the penitent now has said.

Article VII

During confession, you will help ignorant people, questioning them according to their needs and teaching them how to make a confession properly, but all this must be done with the greatest gentleness.

We must help penitents and question them when they are unable to make their confession properly. We must also teach children in catechism classes the proper way of making their confession. There are penitents who are long-winded in confessing their sins. This is either through ignorance, or out of fear that the confessor will not properly know their sins. Let us not be rude with such persons. This would trouble them, make them anxious and often it would not correct their ways of confessing their sins. Also, it is preferable to let them confess that way than make them become scrupulous. In general we must tolerate what we are unable to correct. We must try to be most gentle and mild in the confessional; otherwise there is a great danger that sacrilegious confessions will be made.

We must carry penitents along not by force, but by insinuations, by peaceful suggestions. Did not St. Francis de Sales say that we can catch more flies with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred barrels of vinegar? It is preferable sometimes to leave certain people with their imperfections than to spoil everything, wishing to eradicate those imperfections by the use of force. This can happen particularly with persons who have still a remnant of goodwill towards God, but who blind themselves regarding their frequently coarse defects, although they are not committing grievous sins.

When we see that our efforts to correct them have been fruitless, and we fear that they might become spiritually worse, we can treat them more lightly, always avoiding lying to them – of course, this is never permitted. It is true, one

hears it said, that such imperfection is due to the person's temperament, etc. But the great difficulty with such persons is to determine how often we should permit them to receive Holy Communion. Here are a few rules and counsels regarding frequent Communion. If you are dealing with a person who lives in the world, regularly makes a meditation, and makes great efforts to belong totally to God, let her receive Holy Communion every week. There are persons who, at the beginning of emotional fervor, progress wonderfully and greatly desire to receive Communion. A confessor who has no experience might permit such a person to receive Holy Communion two, three, or four times a week, and afterwards he will feel he has been caught; when that emotional fervor has evaporated, the defects of such a person will reappear, and such persons will become discouraged, because they ordinarily have not yet a sufficiently vigorous virtue. Therefore, we should not permit persons who are still in their first emotional fervor to receive Holy Communion more than once a week, twice when there is a Feast during the week, and if they desire to receive Holy Communion.

Three very important rules for the confessional are the following: First, always try to refrain from becoming impatient, however crude or rude penitents may be, however weak they are, however frequently they fall back into sin. Secondly, never show astonishment when a great sin is confessed by a penitent. Listen with a serene and kind attitude. Thirdly, never show that you are in a hurry whatever business you are occupied with at a particular time. For this will make the penitent close up; he becomes afraid in confessing his sins and sometimes will say things at greater length, and too often he may then be insincere. If a penitent manifests that he is afraid of bothering you, do not send him away on that account; tell him it is true that you have a particular job at that time for God's glory, for the salvation of a soul, but that it is the good Lord who has sent him and that the other will wait; that you are glad you are able to help the present penitent, that you do not prefer one thing more than another, provided you work for God's glory and according to God's will; that therefore he should not think he is inconveniencing you. Father de Brandt, who has many and varied occupations is an example of that kind of conduct. He never seemed to have anything else to do than occupy himself with the person with whom he was presently dealing.

Another observation, which is also important, concerns persons who are called "pious." Confessors sometimes treat them rudely, insult and ill-treat them because they have defects. And often while doing that, the confessor does not point out to them the means to correct such faults. That is not the proper way to

act. This is not the way St. Francis de Sales acted, who has heard the confessions of very many women, of whom, in all possibility, a good number had defects. Towards them, as towards anybody else, we must act with very great mildness. Instead of telling them that all their Communions, their rosaries, their Little Offices are useless, teach them how to direct their pious exercises towards struggling against their faults, to make use of those exercises so as to correct their ways.

Article VIII

With respect to moral questions, they will be neither too severe nor lax. As much as possible, all will profess the same principles in their teaching and will have a uniform conduct in the sacred tribunal, as well as in every other sacred ministry.

(Thus ends the commentary on the Rule for PART ONE and PART TWO. There is no commentary for PART THREE, which deals with the government of the Congregation, nor for PART FOUR, which deals with the Rules for the Novitiate and for sending men to the Missions.)