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# *REFERENCES TO THE CONSTITUTIONS*

Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition



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## ABBREVIATIONS

*Writings of St Emilie and original texts:*

S&DR = Spirit and Development of the Rules

SR = Spirit of the Rules

*Documents of the church:*

PC = Perfectae Caritatis (Vat. II)

LG = Lumen Gentium (Vat. II)

AG = Ad Gentes (Vat. II)

ES = Ecclesiae Sanctae (Pope Paul VI)

ET = Evangelica Testificatio (Pope Paul VI)

RH = Redemptor Hominis (Pope John Paul II)

DM = Dives in Misericordia (Pope John Paul II)

# 160<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF ST EMILIE

## 1856 – 2016

On the occasion of the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of St. Emilie, we decided to reprint the **References to the Constitutions** to encourage all of us to return to these texts which offer us a great amount of wealth. They are like a bottomless pit that can greatly help us deepen and better understand our Constitutions.

It is worth remembering that this collection of "References to the Constitutions" was proposed during the 1981 General Chapter to enlighten the reflections on the Draft Constitutions which had to be submitted for the approval of the Church. *(See further on : Origin of "References to the Constitutions" page 8)*

While reflecting on this new edition, we considered it appropriate to provide an update of the **Teachings of the Church today**. We have placed these teachings of the Church at the beginning of this collection of References because these teachings, which enlighten our mission today, will give a stronger meaning to all that follows. With the help of the Spirit all references may be meditated upon and deepened according to this new evangelical impetus given by the Church.

We chose texts from the Pope's writings of the last three years (2013 -2016) and as for the other references, we organized them according to the theme of the chapters of the Constitutions. These texts concern us all as Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, although some are aimed directly towards Superiors General, Formators, young Sisters, etc. .. or even to Christians in general. **The Church challenges us through the voice of Pope Francis**. The Pope is calling for a 'revival' of the world through Consecrated Life - this shows the importance and the trust he is giving to Religious for the New Evangelization.

**A common thread** runs through the texts: the Church reminds us of the importance of **A CREATIVE FIDELITY FOR OUR TIMES! – a fidelity which evokes for us fundamental demands:**

- > **to center our whole existence on Christ and his Gospel** - the essence of our Consecrated Life,
- > **to keep ablaze the flame of our Charism today**. Let us remember how Emilie, inhabited by the Lord and always in connection with the Church, lived the mission with passion, ready to respond to the needs of her time,
- > **to be true SJA Missionaries in the heart of the world today** to be able to express with passion the tenderness of the Father for all.



In keeping with this **creative fidelity**, the Church strongly urges us to constantly **"watch"**, to **"discern" without ceasing the signs of God** in our times and to **dare to put into practice the evangelical challenges linked to our Charism.**

> The readings which follow offer some challenges. In prayer, alone and together, let us try sincerely discern and live in truth the **CHALLENGES WE HAVE TO FACE** in our Mission.

May St Emilie and St Joseph guide us on our path of fidelity so as to **be credible as consecrated women in the world today.**

Sr Dorothy VELLA-ZARB  
Superior General  
And the General Government

Rome, June 17<sup>th</sup> 2016



## ORIGIN OF REFERENCES TO THE CONSTITUTIONS

*This collection of references accompanies the Constitutions. Its origin goes back to the very first draft of the text that was eventually to become the Constitutions. As the work advanced and the articles began to take shape, a list of quotations gradually developed that, for each article, constituted its source and foundation.*

*These quotations — from Holy Scripture, original texts and Church documents — were collected into a fascicle of several pages and formed part of the dossier given to the members of the General Chapter of 1981. They were meant to enlighten the reflections of the members on the Draft Constitutions, which would receive their final form and be submitted for the approval of the Church.*

*The Chapter Delegates, having seen for themselves the usefulness of those references, judged them necessary for a better understanding of the Constitutions when these were being approved. They unanimously expressed the desire that they accompany the Constitutions. However, they needed to be completed. The General Council undertook this task.*

*The collection comprises:*

- *references to the writings of St Emilie and to original texts,*
- *biblical references,*
- *references to Church documents, Council and post-Council texts, and encyclicals of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II.*

*The chapters of each part correspond to those of the Constitutions. In the first two parts, within each chapter, the numbers refer to the same numbers of the Constitutions. Often, several quotations refer to the same article. This collection is offered to us as an important aid to study. If we accept it as such, it will very soon be found indispensable to our meditative reading of the Constitutions. Furthermore, it will be evident that our texts have a very firm foundation. Then, in the depths of our being, the conviction will be strongly felt that the path traced out by our Constitutions is sure, and that it is truly the way of fidelity for us, Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition.*

*May this collection, therefore, nourish our meditation and personal reading; may it provide matter for community discussions for an ever better understanding of our Rule of life!*

*Christmas, 1982*

*Sr. Adelaide Zantedeschi, Superior General*





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## *The Church today with Pope Francis*







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# THE CONGREGATION

For the various Founders and Foundresses, the Gospel was the absolute rule, whereas every other rule was meant merely to be an expression of the Gospel and a means of living the Gospel to the full. For them, the ideal was Christ; they sought to be interiorly united to him and thus to be able to say with Saint Paul: "For to me to live is Christ" (*Phil 1:21*). Their vows were intended as a concrete expression of this passionate love. (*Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to All Consecrated People on the occasion of the year of Consecrated Life - 2014*)

Each particular Church is the Church incarnate in a certain place, equipped with all the means of salvation bestowed by Christ, but with local features. Its joy in communicating Jesus Christ is expressed both by a concern to preach him to areas in greater need and in constantly going forth to the outskirts of its own territory or towards new sociocultural settings. Wherever the need for the light and the life of the Risen Christ is greatest, it will want to be there. To make this missionary impulse ever more focused, generous and fruitful, I encourage each particular Church to undertake



a resolute process of **discernment, purification and reform.** (Pope Francis, *“Evangelii gaudium”*, No 30 - 2013)

We are witnessing a profound change in the human geography of the Church and so too of religious Institutes. Vocations in Africa and Asia are increasing, which alone account for most of their total number. All this poses a series of challenges: inculturation of the charism, vocational discernment and the selection of candidates, the challenge of interreligious dialog, the search for a more equitable representation in the governmental organizations of the Institutes and, more generally, in the structure of the Church. All cultures are able to be called by the Lord, that he is free to stir up more vocations in one part of the world than in another. What does the Lord wish to say by sending us vocations from the youngest Churches? I don't know. But I ask myself the question. We have to ask it. The Lord's will is somehow in all this. There are Churches who are bearing new fruit. At one time they perhaps were not so fertile, but they are now. This necessitates, of course, rethinking the inculturation of the charism. The charism is one but, as Saint Ignatius used to say, it needs to be lived according to the places, times and persons. The charism is not a bottle of distilled water. It needs to be lived energetically as well as reinterpreted culturally. But in this way there is the danger of making a mistake, you say, of committing errors. It is risky.

Certainly, certainly: we will always make mistakes, no doubt about it. But this should not stop us, because there is the chance of making worse mistakes. In fact we should always ask for forgiveness and look shamefully upon apostolic failures due to a lack of courage. (« WAKE UP THE WORLD » *Conversation of Pope Francis with Superiors General* – 2014 Antonio Spadaro S.J. )

I also hope for a growth in communion between the members of different Institutes. Might this Year be an occasion for us to step out more courageously from the confines of our respective Institutes and to work together, at the local and global levels, on projects involving formation, evangelization, and social action? This would make for a more effective prophetic witness. Communion and the encounter between different charisms and vocations can open up a path of hope. No one contributes to the future in isolation, by his or her efforts alone, but by seeing himself or herself as part of a true communion which is constantly open to encounter, dialogue, attentive listening and mutual assistance. Such a communion inoculates us from the disease of self-absorption. (*Apostolic Letter to all Consecrated People on the occasion of the year of Consecrated Life* - 2014)



The request to review the directive criteria that were promulgated in 1978 by the Congregation for Religious and by the Congregation for Bishops (*Mutuae relationes*) concerning the relations between bishops and religious in the Church has been pending for quite a few years now. The Pope is of the opinion that the time is ripe now because “that document was useful at the time but is now outdated. The charisms of the various Institutes need to be respected and fostered because they are needed in dioceses. The fact is: I know the problems, but I also know that the bishops are not always acquainted with the charisms and works of religious. We bishops need to understand that consecrated persons are not functionaries but gifts that enrich dioceses. The involvement of religious communities in dioceses is important. Dialog between the bishop and religious must be rescued so that, due to a lack of understanding of their charisms, bishops do not view religious simply as useful instruments. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life* – 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.)







## THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF THE APPARITION

“Religious follow the Lord in a special way, in a prophetic way. It is this witness that I expect of you. Religious should be men and women who are able to wake the world up.” [...] You should be real witnesses of a way of doing and acting differently. But in life it is difficult for everything to be clear, precise, outlined neatly. Life is complicated; it consists of grace and sin. He who does not sin is not human. We all make mistakes and we need to recognize our weakness. A religious who recognizes himself as weak and a sinner does not negate the witness that he is called to give, rather he reinforces it, and this is good for everyone. What I expect of you therefore is to give witness. I want this special witness from religious.” («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)

What is the priority of consecrated life? The Pope answered: “Prophecy of the Kingdom, which is a non-negotiable. The emphasis should fall on being prophets, and not in playing at being them. ... religious are men and women who light the way to the future... So, how to be prophets living one’s own particular religious charism?”



For Pope Francis there is a need “to reinforce that which is Institutional in consecrated life and not confuse the Institute with the apostolic work. The former perdures; the latter fades away.” The Pope continues: “The charism perdures, is strong; the work fades away. Sometimes the Institute and the work are confused. The Institute is creative, is always looking for outlets. In this way too the peripheries change and a checklist can be made that is always different.” (« *WAKE UP THE WORLD* » *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadero s.j.*)

Consecrated life is a gift, a gift of God to the Church. It’s true. You speak of prophecy: it’s a gift of prophecy. It is God present, God who wants to make himself present with a gift: He chooses men and women, but it is a gift, a freely given gift. The vocation is also a gift, it is not an enlistment of people who want to take that path. No, it is a gift to the heart of a person; a gift to a Congregation; and that Congregation is also a gift. Not always, however, is this gift appreciated and valued in its identity and in its specificity. This is true. There is a temptation to standardize consecrated people, as if they were all the same thing. In Vatican II, there was a proposal of this kind, to standardize consecrated people. No, it is a gift with a special identity, which comes through the charismatic gift that God gives to a man or a woman to form a religious family. (*Address of Pope Francis to consecrated men and women of the Diocese of Rome, 16 May 2015*)







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# FORMATION

The formation of candidates is fundamental. There are four pillars of formation: spiritual, intellectual, communitarian and apostolic. The ghost to fight against is the image of religious life understood as an escape or hiding place in face of an “external,” difficult and complex world. The four pillars should be integrated right from the first day of entrance into the novice-ship, and should not be arranged sequentially. They must be interactive.” (*«WAKE UP THE WORLD!» Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life - 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)

Today’s culture is much richer and conflictual than that which we experienced in our day, years ago. Our culture was simpler and more ordered. Inculturation today calls for a different attitude. For example: problems are not solved simply by forbidding doing this or that. Dialog as well as confrontation are needed. To avoid problems, in some houses of formation, young people grit their teeth, try not to make mistakes, follow the rules smiling a lot, just waiting for the day when they are told: ‘Good. You have finished formation.’



I summarize by some advice that I once received as a young man: 'If you want to advance, think clearly and speak obscurely.' That was a clear invitation to hypocrisy. We need to avoid that at all costs." («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadero s.j.*)

If the seminary is too large, it ought to be divided into smaller communities with formators who are equipped really to accompany those in their charge. Dialog must be serious, without fear, sincere. It is important to recall that the language of young people in formation today is different from that in the past: we are living through an epochal change. Formation is a work of art, not a police action. We must form their hearts. Otherwise we are creating little monsters. And then these little monsters mold the People of God. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadero s.j.*)

I remember how much effort a Jesuit Brother and I expended when we talked even about simple things of daily life; he was from an area where the Guarini live, a people who have developed a very concrete way of thinking. We need to live courageously and face these challenges when they deal with important subjects as well. In the

end I cannot form a person as a religious without consideration of his or her life, experience, mentality and cultural context. This is the way to proceed. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life 2014 Antonio Spadero s.j.*)

The Pope insisted on the fact that formation should not be oriented only toward personal growth but also in view of its final goal: the People of God. It is important to think about the people to whom these persons will be sent while forming them: "We must always think of the faithful, of the faithful People of God. Persons must be formed who are witness of the resurrection of Jesus. The formator should keep in mind that the person in formation will be called to care for the People of God. We always must think of the People of God in all of this. Just think of religious who have hearts that are as sour as vinegar: they are not made for the people. In the end we must not form administrators, managers, but fathers, brothers, traveling companions. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadero s.j.*)

There is a problem of how to accompany religious men and women. The communities, especially women's, in our local Church often have difficulty finding serious men



and women to accompany them, formators, spiritual fathers and confessors. Either because they do not understand what consecrated life is, or because they want to place themselves in the charism and give interpretations that harm the heart of the nun.... We are speaking of nuns who have difficulties, but men have them too. It is not easy to accompany. It isn't easy to find a confessor, a spiritual father. It's not easy to find a man with rectitude of intentions; in order that this spiritual direction, this confession not be a nice chat among friends but without depth. Or, finding those rigid men, who do not really understand where the problem may be, because they do not understand religious life. In the other diocese that I had, I always advised the nuns who came to ask advice: "Tell me, in your community or in your Congregation, isn't there a wise nun, a nun who lives the charism well, a good nun with experience? Do spiritual direction with her! — "But she's a woman!" — "But it is a charism of lay people!". Spiritual direction is not an exclusive charism of the presbytery: it's a charism of the laity! In early monasticism lay people were the great directors. Now I am reading the doctrine, actually on obedience, of St Silouan, that monk of Mt Athos. He was a carpenter, he worked as a carpenter, then a bursar, but he was not even a deacon; he was a great spiritual director! It is a charism of the laity. When the superiors see that a man or woman in that Congregation or that province has that charism of a

spiritual father, they must try to help them to be formed, to perform this service. It is not easy. A spiritual director is one thing and a confessor is another thing. I go to the confessor, I tell my sins, I feel the flogging; then he forgives me of everything and I go ahead. But I must tell the spiritual director what is happening in my heart. The examination of conscience is not the same for confession and for spiritual direction. For confession, you must search where you have fallen short, whether you have lost patience; if you have been greedy: these things, concrete things, which are sinful. But for spiritual direction, you must examine what has happened in the heart; such as the movement of the spirit, whether I have been desolate, if I have been consoled, if I am tired, why I am sad: these are the things to speak about with a spiritual director. These are the things. The superiors have the responsibility of looking, in the community, in the Congregation, in the province, for those who have this charism, to give this mission and form them, help them with this. To accompany on the path is to go step by step with the consecrated brother or sister. I believe that we are still immature in this respect. We are not mature in this, because spiritual direction comes from discernment. But when you find yourself in front of consecrated men and women who do not know how to discern what is happening in their own heart, who do not know how to discern a decision, it is a lack of spiritual direction. And this can



be done only by a wise man, a wise woman. But also formed! Today you cannot go only with good will: today the world is very complex and human science also helps us, without falling into psychologism, but it helps us to see the path. Form them with readings of the greats, of the great men and women spiritual directors, especially of monasticism. I don't know if you have had contact with the works of early monasticism: how much wisdom and spiritual direction there was there! It is important to form them with this. *(Address of Pope Francis to consecrated men and women of the Diocese of Rome 16 May 2015)*







## CONSECRATION

The joy of the Gospel fills the heart and lives of all who encounter Jesus. With Jesus Christ joy is constantly born anew. (*Pope Francis, « Evangelii gaudium » No 1 - 2013*)

In calling you God says to you: 'You are important to me, I love you, I am counting on you'. Jesus says this to each one of us! Joy is born from that! The joy of the moment in which Jesus looked at me. Understanding and hearing this is the secret of our joy. Feeling loved by God, feeling that for him we are not numbers but people; and we know that it is he who is calling us. (*Pope Francis, "Homely at the Mass for seminarists and novices", Rome July 2013*)

Jesus, at the Last Supper, turns to the Apostles with these words: *You did not choose me, but I chose you* (Jn 15:16). They remind us all, not only those of us who are priests, that vocation is always an initiative of God. It is Christ who called you to follow him in the consecrated life and this means continuously making an "exodus" from yourselves in order to center your life on Christ and on his Gospel, on the will of God, laying aside your own plans, in order to say with St Paul: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who*



*lives in me (Gal 2:20) (Pope Francis, "Address to participants at the Assembly for Superiors General" Rome, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013)*

The Lord calls us to follow him with courage and fidelity; he has made us the great gift of choosing us as his disciples; he invites us to proclaim him with joy as the Risen one, but he asks us to do so by word and by the witness of our lives, in daily life. The Lord is the only God of our lives, and he invites us to strip ourselves of our many idols and to worship him alone". (Pope Francis, "Homely at the Mass, third Easter Sunday", Rome, 14 April 2013 in "Rejoice" No 6)

For me, faith began by meeting with Jesus. A personal meeting that touched my heart and gave a direction and a new meaning to my existence. At the same time, however, a meeting that was made possible by the community of faith in which I lived and thanks to which I found access to the intelligence of the Sacred Scriptures, to the new life that comes from Jesus like gushing water through the Sacraments, to fraternity with everyone and to the service to the poor, which is the real image of the Lord. (Pope Francis "Letter to a journalist Eugenio Scalfari", 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013)

I would not speak, not even for those who believe, about an "absolute" truth, in the sense that absolute is something detached, something lacking any relationship. Now, the truth is a relationship! This is so true that each one of us sees the truth and expresses it, starting from oneself: from one's history and culture, from the situation in which one lives, etc. This does not mean that the truth is variable and subjective. It means that it is given to us only as a way and a life. Was it not Jesus himself who said: "I am the way, the truth, the life"? In other words, the truth is one with love, it requires humbleness and the willingness to be sought, listened to and expressed. (Pope Francis "Letter to a journalist Eugenio Scalfari", 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013)





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## UNION WITH GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

V

The Pope identifies prayer as the source of the fruitfulness of the mission. "Let us cultivate the contemplative dimension, even amid the whirlwind of more urgent and heavy duties. And the more the mission calls you to go out to the margins of existence, let your heart be the more closely united to Christ's heart, full of mercy and love". (Pope Francis *"Homely at the Mass for seminarists and novices"*, Rome 14 April 2013 - in *"Rejoice"* No 6)

The interior pilgrimage begins with prayer. "The first thing for a disciple is to be with the Master, to listen to him and to learn from him. This is always true, and it is true at every moment of our lives. [...] If the warmth of God, of his love, of his tenderness is not in our own hearts, then how can we, who are poor sinners, warm the heart of others ? (Pope Francis, *"Speech to catechists on pilgrimage"* in Rome 27 September 2013 - in *"Rejoice"* No 6)



Being with Jesus shapes a contemplative approach to history which knows how to see and hear the presence of the Spirit everywhere and, in a special way, how to discern the Spirit's presence in order to live in time as God's time. When the insight of faith is lacking, "life itself loses meaning, the faces of brothers and Sisters are obscured and it becomes impossible to recognize the face of God in them, historical events remain ambiguous and deprived of hope" (*Congregation for the Institutes of consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic life in "Rejoice" No 6*)

We learn Christ's way, first, by listening. We are invited to take on a contemplative way in which the Word shines in our lives as men and women : in our thoughts, in prayerful silence, in our fraternities, in our encounters and deaconries, in the places where we live and in which we announce the grace of mercy, in our choices, in our decisions, and in the formative paths pursued in a constant and worthwhile way. (*« Contemplate » No 35 - 2016*)

Pope Francis encourages us : "Jesus wants evangelizers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God's presence../...../ Spirit-filled evangelizers are evangelizers who pray../...../What is needed is the ability

to cultivate an interior space which can give a Christian meaning to commitment and activity. Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the Word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless; we lost energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervour dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer". (*Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation « Evangelii gaudium » No 259; 262 - November 2013*)





## THE SPIRIT ANIMATING THE SISTERS IN THE APOSTOLATE

Prophets receive from God the ability to scrutinize the times in which they live and to interpret events: they are like sentinels who keep watch in the night and sense the coming of the dawn (*cf. Is 21:11-12*). Prophets know God and they know the men and women who are their brothers and sisters. They are able to discern and denounce the evil of sin and injustice. Because they are free, they are beholden to no one but God, and they have no interest other than God. Prophets tend to be on the side of the poor and the powerless, for they know that God himself is on their side.

So I trust that, rather than living in some utopia, you will find ways to create “alternate spaces”, where the Gospel approach of self-giving, fraternity, embracing differences, and love of one another can thrive. Monasteries, communities, centres of spirituality, schools, hospitals, family shelters – all these are places which the charity and creativity born of your charisms have brought into being, and with constant creativity must continue to bring into being. They should increasingly be the leaven for a society



inspired by the Gospel, a “city on a hill”, which testifies to the truth and the power of Jesus’ words. (*Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated People on the occasion of the year of Consecrated Life - 2014*)

“The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast”. (Benedict XVI) In order to enrich the desert, we plant in our interior, fraternal and missionary lives the seeds of care, tenderness, gratitude, gratuitousness, and joy that takes pleasure in the small and simple things, the pleasure of encounter and of service, ‘in developing their gifts, in music and art, in contact with nature, in prayer’. (*Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter ‘Laudato Si’ No 223 and ‘Contemplate’ No 62*)

The Holy Spirit makes us look to the horizon and drive us to the very outskirts of existence in order to proclaim life in Jesus Christ. Let us ask ourselves: do we tend to stay closed in on ourselves, on our group, or do we let the Holy Spirit open us to mission? (*Pope Francis 19 May 2013*)

I am convinced of one thing: the great changes in history were realized when reality was seen not from the centre but rather from the periphery. It is a hermeneutical

question: reality is understood only if it is looked at from the periphery, and not when our viewpoint is equidistant from everything. Truly to understand reality we need to move away from the central position of calmness and peacefulness and direct ourselves to the peripheral areas. Being at the periphery helps to see and to understand better, to analyse reality more correctly, to shun centralism and ideological approaches. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life - 2014 Antonio Spadaro s. j.*)

Consecrated persons are called to practice “open thought”. Interaction with the cultures and values we are messengers to conditions our life to embrace the differences, and to see in them the signs of God. The intelligent and loving wisdom of contemplation trains for a vision that knows how to evaluate, accommodate, and relate everything to Love. (“*Contemplate*” No 55 - 2016)

The pillars of education according to the Pope are: “convey understanding, convey ways of doing things, convey values. Faith is conveyed through these. The educator should be up to being a person who educates, he or she should consider how to proclaim Jesus Christ to a generation that is changing.” He insisted, therefore:



"Education today is a key, key, key mission!" («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life – 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)

In our day, Jesus' command to "go and make disciples" echoes in the changing scenarios and ever new challenges to the Church's mission of evangelization, and all of us are called to take part in this new missionary "going forth". Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel. (*Pope Francis, «Evangelii gaudium» No 20 - 2013*)







## THE COMMUNITY

VII

"A clear sign, which consecrated life is called to give today, is fraternal life. Please, let not the terrorism of gossip exist among you! Throw it out! Let fraternity exist, and if you have something against your brother, say it to his face ... Sometimes it might end in a fist fight-- this is not a problem: this is better than the terrorism of gossip. Today, the prevailing culture is individualistic, centred on subjective rights. It is a culture that corrodes society from its primary cell, which is the family. Consecrated life can help the Church and the whole of society by giving witness of fraternity, by showing that it is possible to live together as brothers in diversity: this is important! Because the community does not first choose us; we find ourselves with persons who are different in character, age, formation, sensibility ... and yet we seek to live as brothers; we do not always succeed, you certainly know this. Very often we make mistakes, because we are all sinners; however, if we acknowledge that we have made a mistake, we ask for forgiveness and forgiveness is offered to us. And this does the Church good: it makes the lymph of fraternity circulate in the Church. And it also does the whole society good."(*Pope Francis to the 54<sup>th</sup> assembly of the Italian Conference of Superior Majors, 7.11.2014 –Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)



"It is true, sometimes we are very cruel. We all experience the temptation to criticize for personal satisfactions or to gain personal advantage. Sometimes the problems in the brotherhood are due to fragile personalities, in which case the help of a professional, a psychologist, should be sought. There is no need to be afraid of this: one need not fear necessarily succumbing to psychologism. But never, never should we act like managers when dealing with conflicts in the brotherhood. We should involve the heart. "Brotherhood is a delicate thing. In the hymn of First Vespers of the Solemnity of Saint Joseph in the Argentine breviary the Saint is asked to take care of the Church with 'ternura de eucaristía,' 'Eucharistic tenderness.' This is how we should treat brothers: with Eucharistic tenderness. We need to caress conflicts. I recall when Paul VI received a child's letter with many drawings. Paul said that the reception of such a letter on a desk covered only with letters that dealt with problems did him a lot of good. Tenderness does us good. Eucharistic tenderness does not mask conflict but rather helps us to confront it like people." («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life- 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)

The Synod on the New Evangelization had asked religious to be witnesses of the humanizing power of the Gospel through a life of brotherhood. Taking a cue from this call, the Pope was asked a few questions about how religious should live

together as brothers: "How can we keep commitments of the mission as well as those of community life? How can we combat the tendency toward individualism? How should we act toward brothers in difficulty or who live or create conflict? How can we combine justice and mercy in difficult cases?"

Religious brotherhood" — continued the Pope — "with all its possible diversity, is an experience of love that goes beyond conflicts. Community conflicts are inevitable: in a certain sense they need to happen, if the community is truly living sincere and honest relationships. That's life. It does not make sense to think of living in a community in which there are brothers who are not experiencing difficulties in their lives. Something is missing from communities where there is no conflict. Reality dictates that there are conflicts in all families and all groups of people. And conflict must be faced head on: it should not be ignored. Covering it over just creates a pressure cooker that will eventually explode. A life without conflicts is not life.

In any case conflict must be approached with spiritual counselling: "We should never act like the priest or Levite in the parable of the good Samaritan, who just walked by. But what should we do? I recall," says the Pope, "the story of a young man, 22 years old, who was suffering from a deep depression. I am not speaking of a religious, but



of a young man who lived with his mom, who was a widow and who did the laundry of wealthy families. This young man no longer went to work and lived in an alcoholic haze. The mom was not able to help him: every morning before leaving she would simply look at him with great tenderness. Today this young man has a position of responsibility: he overcame that problem, because in the end that look of tenderness from his mom shook him up. We have to recapture that tenderness, including maternal tenderness. Think of the tenderness that Saint Francis lived, for example. Tenderness helps to overcome conflicts. If this is insufficient, it might be necessary to change communities. («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life - 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)

I would especially like to say a word to those of you who are young. You are the present, since you are already taking active part in the lives of your Institutes, offering all the freshness and generosity of your “yes”. At the same time you are the future, for soon you will be called to take on roles of leadership in the life, formation, service and mission of your communities. This Year should see you actively engaged in dialogue with the previous generation. In fraternal communion you will be enriched by their experiences and wisdom, while at the same time inspiring them, by your own energy and enthusiasm, to recapture their original idealism. In this way the entire

community can join in finding new ways of living the Gospel and responding more effectively to the need for witness and proclamation. (*Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated People- 2014*)

I wish to address a second thought to the young and the elderly: the recognition of differences increases our appreciation of people, unlike homologation, which places them in the peril of being rejected because I am unable to understand their true significance. Today, the young and old are considered as dross because they do not answer to the logic of production in a functionalist vision of society, they do not respond to any profitable criteria of investment. They are said to be “passive”, unproductive; they are not subjects of production in the market economy. However, we must not forget that the young and the old each holds a great wealth: both are the future of a people. (*Video Message of Pope Francis for the third Festival of Social Doctrine of the Church, Verona, 21-24 November 2013*)

Living the present with passion means becoming “experts in communion”, “witnesses and architects of the ‘plan for unity’ which is the crowning point of human history in God’s design”. In a polarized society, where different cultures experience difficulty in living alongside one another, where the powerless encounter oppression, where inequality abounds, we are called to offer a concrete model of community which,



by acknowledging the dignity of each person and sharing our respective gifts, makes it possible to live as brothers and Sisters. So, **be men and women of communion!** Have the courage to be present in the midst of conflict and tension, as a credible sign of the presence of the Spirit who inspires in human hearts a passion for all to be one (cf Jn 17:21). Live the *mysticism of encounter*, which entails “the ability to hear, to listen to other people; the ability to seek together ways and means”. Live in the light of the loving relationship of the three divine Persons (cf 1 Jn 4:8), the model for all interpersonal relationships.

(Pope Francis, *Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated People* - 2014)







## GOVERNMENT

The *ecclesiality* is one of the constitutive dimensions of the consecrated life. It is a dimension that must be constantly reclaimed and deepened in life. Your vocation is a fundamental charism for the journey of the Church, and it is impossible for a consecrated man or woman not to “think” with the Church. “Thinking” with the Church begot us at Baptism; “thinking” with the Church finds one of its filial expressions in faithfulness to the Magisterium, in communion with the Pastors and the Successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome, a visible sign of unity. Proclaiming and witnessing to the Gospel, for every Christian, are never an isolated act. This is important: for every Christian the proclamation of and witness to the Gospel are never an isolated act of an individual or a group. No evangelizer acts, as Paul VI recalled very well, “in virtue of a... personal inspiration, but in union with the mission of the Church and in her name” (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*, n. 60). And Paul VI proceeded: It is an absurd dichotomy to think of living with Christ without the Church, of following Jesus outside his Church, of loving Jesus without loving the Church (cf. *ibid*, n. 16). Be aware of the responsibility that you have in forming your Institutes in the sound



doctrine of the Church, in love for the Church and in the ecclesial spirit. (*Pope Francis, "Address to participants at the Assembly for Superiors General" Rome, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013*)

An element that I would like to underline in the exercise of authority is *service* : we must never forget that true power, at any level, is service, whose bright summit is upon the Cross. Benedict XVI, with great wisdom, often reminded the Church that although man frequently equates authority with control, dominion, success, for God authority is always synonymous with service, humility, love; it means entering the logic of Jesus who kneels to wash the Apostles' feet (cf. Angelus, 29 January 2012), and says to his disciples: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them.... It shall not be so among you", which is precisely the theme of your meeting, 'it shall not be so among you', "but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave" (Mt 20:25-27). Let us think of the damage done to the People of God by men and women of the Church who are careerists, climbers, who "use" the People, the Church, our brothers and Sisters — those they should be serving — as a springboard for their own ends and personal ambitions. These people do the Church great harm. May you always know how to exercise authority by accompanying, understanding, helping and loving; by embracing every man and every woman, especially people who feel alone, excluded,

barren, on the existential margins of the human heart. Let us keep our gaze fixed on the Cross: there is found any authority in the Church, where the One who is the Lord becomes a servant to the point of the total gift of himself. (*Pope Francis, "Address to participants at the Assembly for Superiors General" Rome, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013*)

A tenacious and contemplative missionary not only learned the language but also the concrete way of thinking of the people. Inculturating the charism, therefore, is fundamental, and this never means relativizing it. We must not make the charism rigid or uniform. When we make our cultures uniform we kill the charism," the Pontiff concluded decisively, indicating the necessity of "introducing persons of various cultures into the central governance of the Orders and Congregations, who express divers ways of living the charism." («WAKE UP THE WORLD!» *Conversation with Pope Francis about Religious Life - 2014 Antonio Spadaro s.j.*)





## UNITY AND FIDELITY

IX

Recounting our history is essential for preserving our identity, for strengthening our unity as a family and our common sense of belonging. More than an exercise in archaeology or the cultivation of mere nostalgia, it calls for following in the footsteps of past generations in order to grasp the high ideals, and the vision and values which inspired them, beginning with the founders and foundresses and the first communities. In this way we come to see how the charism has been lived over the years, the creativity it has sparked, the difficulties it encountered and the concrete ways those difficulties were surmounted. We may also encounter cases of inconsistency, the result of human weakness and even at times a neglect of some essential aspects of the charism. Yet everything proves instructive and, taken as a whole, acts as a summons to conversion. To tell our story is to praise God and to thank him for all his gifts. (*Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to all Consecrated People - 2014*)

This Year calls us *to live the present with passion*. Grateful remembrance of the past leads us, as we listen attentively to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church today, to implement ever more fully the essential aspects of our consecrated life.



Our founders and foundresses shared in Jesus' own compassion when he saw the crowds who were like sheep without a shepherd. Like Jesus, who compassionately spoke his gracious word, healed the sick, gave bread to the hungry and offered his own life in sacrifice, so our founders and foundresses sought in different ways to be the service of all those to whom the Spirit sent them. They did so by their prayers of intercession, their preaching of the Gospel, their works of catechesis, education, their service to the poor and the infirm... The creativity of charity is boundless; it is able to find countless new ways of bringing the newness of the Gospel to every culture and every corner of society. (*Apostolic letter of Pope Francis to all Consecrated People – 2014*)

The Year of Consecrated Life challenges us to examine our fidelity to the mission entrusted to us. Are our ministries, our works and our presence consonant with what the Spirit asked of our founders and foundresses? Are they suitable for carrying out today, in society and the Church, those same ministries and works? Do we have the same passion for our people, are we close to them to the point of sharing in their joys and sorrows, thus truly understanding their needs and helping to respond to them? [...] I expect that each form of consecrated life will question what it is that God and

people today are asking of them. (*Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to all consecrated People 2014*)

Pope Francis invites us **to embrace the future with hope**. We all know the difficulties which the various forms of consecrated life are currently experiencing: decreasing vocations and aging members, particularly in the Western world; economic problems stemming from the global financial crisis; issues of internationalization and globalization; the threats posed by relativism and a sense of isolation and social irrelevance... But it is precisely amid these uncertainties, which we share with so many of our contemporaries, that we are called to practice the virtue of hope, the fruit of our faith in the Lord of history, who continues to tell us: "Be not afraid... for I am with you" (*Jer 1:8*). This hope is not based on statistics or accomplishments, but on the One in whom we have put our trust (*cf. 2 Tim 1:2*), the One for whom "nothing is impossible" (*Lk 1:37*). This is the hope which does not disappoint; it is the hope which enables consecrated life to keep writing its great history well into the future. It is to that future that we must always look, conscious that the Holy Spirit spurs us on so that he can still do great things with us. (*Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to all Consecrated People - 2014*)





References drawn  
from the writings  
of St Emilie de Vialar  
and from original texts

*il m'y formait, en moi, faisant sentir sa présence  
au milieu même de mes occupations, de telle sorte  
que mon âme s'unissait très intimement à lui. Dieu  
voulant que je conservasse cette union le plus possible  
me dit ces paroles : garde ma présence je t'y rappelle  
— rai lorsque tu t'en éloigneras. J'ai malheureusement*





# THE CONGREGATION

I

1 "Anne Marguerite Adelaide Emilie de Vialar ... felt called at an early age by Providence to found, in her native town, a Congregation that would unite in it all the different works of charity that were to be found scattered in the various existing religious orders, and whose particular spirit would be a deep spiritual life joined to that unalterable sweetness which always inspires charity that is well understood."

*(Draft Report, 1832)*

"I founded, at the end of 1832, at Gaillac in Tarn, my native town, a Congregation of Sisters of charity, under the protection of St Joseph and under the name of the Apparition, the aim of which was the perfection of its members and the accomplishment of different works of charity, for both the care of the sick and the education of children."

*(Report to Pope Gregory XVI, 1839)*





"According to the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph, called "of the Apparition", the Sisters bind themselves by the three simple vows of religion, according to the spirit of the Institute, and by a fourth vow, that of consecrating oneself to the different works of charity, according to the spirit of this same Institute."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 6)*

2 "The Sisters meditate every day of their lives on the immense charity that fills the heart of Jesus Christ. They contemplate often the adorable wounds of the Saviour, reflecting unceasingly on the love of God for men."

*(S&DR, II, 4)*

"I shall ask for a footnote to be inserted in the appropriate article of the official report, to describe the Sisters of charity and add 'of St Joseph of the Apparition'."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 19/7/1843)*

3 "After me, the Sisters will perpetuate the spirit that God gave me, and the impetus of Divine Charity that the Holy Spirit put into our hearts will continue as long as it pleases Divine Providence to make use of us."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*

"This Congregation proposes as its twofold aim: the first is the perfection of the members of which it is composed; the second, — the spiritual and corporal welfare of the neighbour."

*(Constitutions, 1835, I, 4)*

4 "The spirit of this Congregation is to consecrate the Sisters to the exercise of the different works of charity ..."

*(S&DR 11)*

"Watching how we took care of their compatriots, who were covered with wounds, one of them, pointing with his finger to the crucifix on our breasts, said to me one day: 'HE IS GOOD WHO MAKES YOU DO THESE THINGS'. From that moment, I no longer hesitated to sacrifice the rest of my fortune so as to make my Institute capable of responding not only to present needs, but also to the demands of the future."

*(handwritten note of St Emilie, cf Picard, p. 64)*

5 "My vocation is essentially for the missions."

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 21/3/1853)*



"The principal means that the Sisters employ to attain the second aim (the spiritual and corporal welfare of the neighbour) are: the Christian education of children and especially poor children, for whom they run a free school; the care of the sick at home, in hospitals, in prisons and, in general, wherever their services are asked for, not excepting Refuge Homes."

*(Constitutions, 1835, 1.4)*

"I earnestly entreat Your Grace to establish in the town of Toulouse the Novitiate that France needs ... so as to be able to train there those Sisters who are destined to bring relief to those who are the most abandoned."

*(To Archbishop d'Astros, 16/1/1847)*

6 "I have founded ... a Congregation of Sisters of Charity under the protection of St Joseph and under the name of the Apparition."

*(Report to Pope Gregory XVI, 1839)*

"It is a principle with me never to seek anything of myself, but to do that which is in me so that God's will be done in us."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 24/2/1854)*

"The Sisters never look for one employment rather than another, but each one accepts with the same joy that which is entrusted to her and, in order to conform to the spirit of the Congregation, they strive to love those humbler functions by never losing sight of perfect self-abnegation."

*(S&DR and SR 53)*

"The observance of the established rules, and particularly that of silence, in order to strive constantly towards recollectedness, which should be as it were the soul of the Congregation."

*(Constitutions, 1835, 1, 2)*

"The Sisters of St Joseph, having as their principal end the glory of God by their own sanctification and by the performance of works of charity in the missions, will first of all apply themselves to the acquisition of those religious virtues that are conducive to union with God and forgetfulness of self."

"Missionaries, they will endeavour, in accordance with the spirit of their vocation, to reproduce in themselves the life of our Saviour. Zeal, devotedness and self-abnegation will become the soul of their apostolate."



Daughters of St Joseph, they must strive to imitate the humble, hidden virtues, especially those of simplicity and obedience, that characterised their Father and Protector.”

*(Directory, Chapter 1)*

7 “God wishes to distinguish our Institute by establishing it on the basis of a great generosity towards Him, and by moulding our souls to a sublime devotedness, which will consist not only in serving Him in the exercise of charity but also in working even under persecution.”

*(To Sr. Elizabeth de Chamoin, 3/3/1842)*

“The greatness of their mission demands energetic virtues. Thirst for sacrifice should be the habitual disposition of their hearts, so that all their strength and courage, their whole life, may be employed without reserve in the service both of God and of the neighbour.”

“The motto of the Institute is: DEVOTEDNESS UNTO DEATH.”

*(Directory, Chapter 1)*







## THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF THE APPARITION

## II

8 "My life belongs totally to God."

*(To Fr. Montera, 28/7/1843)*

"I do not lack tribulations, and I foresee many battles to be fought and difficulties to be overcome, yet never has my courage been greater nor my confidence in God more complete. I can say with St Paul that the grace of God is sufficient for me, and that it is powerful enough in me to maintain my soul in peace and even in a kind of joy, which makes me truly happy."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> d'Aubilly, 28/2/1845)*

9 "God, wishing that I maintain this union as much as possible, spoke these words to me: REMAIN IN MY PRESENCE. IF YOU STRAY FROM IT, I SHALL RECALL YOU."

*(Account of Interior Life)*





"May your hearts belong to the Lord; may His divine love reign in them."

*(To Marguerite and Euphemie de Vialar, 5/2/1856)*

"God and His greater glory, the service of the neighbour and the ardent desire to be useful to Him: these aims should be so dear to our hearts that we cannot be shaken by any difficulty."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 11/10/1852)*

"Let us second Providence... Happy are those Sisters who will help me to do this."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 18/5/1855)*

10 "Use your strength to make Him known and loved by your pupils. Inspire in them a dominant love for the Lord, let that be your aim. As long as you make those confided to your care experience that love, believe that you have established God's reign in them."

*(To Sr. Therese Sangiorgio, 20/10/1850)*

"How fulfilling for the heart that is given to making another happy and to bringing relief to suffering humanity."

*(To M. de Vialar, 27/7/1853)*

"The Sisters must serve them in a spirit of faith and humility, that is to say, they must always see Christ in the person of the sick and acknowledge themselves unworthy of such a holy task."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 8)*

11 "They daily sustain and increase the feelings of compassion and zeal that they should have for their fellow men."

*(S&DR, II, 4)*

"We shall continue devoting, to the relief of the unfortunate, to the care of the sick and the poor, to the education of children, to all the works of charity, our strength, our wealth, our futures — even our lives, if necessary. This vow of our hearts, the only one permitted us to make today, we shall always keep."

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 30/1/1840)*

12 "Since I know that we must go only where God calls us, I am not preoccupied with this at all. Now that I am receiving new requests, and the moment destined by Divine Providence to establish this good work seems to me to have come, I have as much desire to go there as I used to have indifference, if I may thus express myself."

*(To Fr. Mercier, 16/6/1840)*



"You know that Divine Providence usually manifests his will through circumstances; it is this that always intervenes first in our affairs, and I have had the happiness merely to second it. Besides, it is thus that the Congregation must always live and endure... I have never asked for any post, and all the foundations are the result of a series of circumstances that were wholly providential."

*(To Sr. Gabrielle Cœur de Roy, 1/10/1849)*

"The circumstances that manifest God's will are, for me, the deciding factors; all I do then is obey them."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 20/1/1856)*

13 "A happy event was brought about by Divine Providence in order to spread our Congregation abroad."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 16/12/1855)*

"I am delighted to be called to found a religious house in Tunis. I do not know why the Lord chose me in preference to so many others more perfect than I am; it could only be because, recognising my profound unworthiness, all the glory reverts to Him."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 20/6/1840)*

"I hope that you will have great courage and that the thought of going to work in an infidel land will animate you with a zeal filled with fortitude, to preserve you from all childish fears... Go, my dear Sister, begin a mission most fruitful for souls and for your own in particular."

*(To Sr. Therese Sangiorgio, 9/11/1851)*

14 "Everything must be marked with the seal of the Cross."

*(Picard, p. 230)*

"God wants to treat us as true spouses in making us follow a way that He himself has traced out, that of tribulation and combat."

*(To Sr. Elizabeth de Chamoin, 3/3/1842)*

"Yes, it is the Way of the Cross, which it pleased Divine Providence to make me follow."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*





## FORMATION

### III

15 "As for our spirit, which was recognised as good in principle by him who had received the graces to discern it properly, we cannot deviate from it, and we would prefer to die rather than not keep it such as it pleased Divine Providence to give it to us."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 25/12/1839)*

16 "My vocation was recognised as sure ... My will, my strength, all that is in me must be used in sustaining it, increasing and defending it, and as much as it is in me to extend and perfect it."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*

17 "I continued to love God with a love both tender and dominant ..."

"I gave myself to the inclination He had inspired in me to practise charity towards the neighbour, either by visiting the sick in their homes and caring for their needs or by working for the conversion of sinners and heretics."





"I felt a strong attraction to the foreign missions."

"The Lord inclined me to a spirit of recollectedness and formed me in it, making me feel His presence in the midst of my occupations."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"I made efforts to make it understood that the religious spirit, based on humility and a wide knowledge of religion and the duties it imposes, must be the great and principal ambition of the religious."

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 20/4/1854)*

18 "The thought that I was in the vocation that God willed for me was my sole consolation. Sometimes, the Lord deigned to encourage me with these words: MY DAUGHTER, SUFFER THIS FOR LOVE OF ME; and very often I heard His voice in the depths of my soul asking me if I loved Him. After the twenty-three years that I mentioned, during which I received no appreciable sensible graces, it happened that, in 1843, while I was journeying for the second time to Tunis with a view to establishing a new foundation in the region of Carthage, I made a long and difficult crossing, lacking food and being unable to rest except in a sitting position. It was

during the course of this voyage that it pleased God to grant me to find a great facility in uniting myself to Him in the depths of my heart... At this time I was enduring very great afflictions... It was in these circumstances that God deigned to come back to me with an abundance of precious graces that made me, from that time onwards, enter into the way of love for Him ..."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"We must always remember that God has separated us from the world not to enjoy the comforts that one can have here below but to work and suffer much, after the example of the Divine Master, whose spouses we are."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 17/1/1841)*

19 "Since the mercy of God wishes that this spirit, the one He has given me, be that of our Institute, I am under a strict obligation to communicate it and to perfect it in my Sisters."

*(To Sr. Françoise Pezet, 23/6/1839)*

"I apply myself and will always apply myself to form in every way the subjects who present themselves."

*(To Fr. M. Bourgade, 12/9/1855)*



20 "All that God has established we should not fear."

*(To Fr. Balitrand, 10/7/1841)*

"I desire that your presence in St Affrique draw vocations to us."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 16/6/1854)*

"She made up her mind to come to us only because of the spirit that she found reigning in the Community."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 13/6/1854)*

21 "The choice and the training of new subjects is assuredly one of the most essential points towards which the Superior General should direct her attention. To admit into the bosom of the Congregation postulants who have neither a true vocation nor suitable aptitudes, to admit novices to profession without having sufficiently tested them so as to find out whether or not they have the virtues necessary for the religious life, and then to entrust them with work for which they lack the necessary capacity: to take this course of action would clearly be to 'sow the cockle' in the field of the Lord, with her own hands, and to voluntarily destroy the work of His mercy and assume a dreadful responsibility."

*(Constitutions, 1862, Pt 2, Chapter 1)*

*(Customary, Pt1, Chapter 1)*

24 "The qualities required of postulants to be admitted to the Congregation:

- to have the necessary aptitude for proper formation;
- to have a character that is essentially upright, frank and docile;
- to have piety as well as sound judgment;
- to have a ready indifference to everything that obedience might impose regarding the Rule and Constitutions."

*(Constitutions, 1862, Pt 2, Chapter 2)*

26 "Receive the postulants who are presented to you if they are really called and capable."

*(Sr. Céleste Peyre, 8/9/1853)*

"The canonical examination that precedes the admission of subjects is, therefore, important; its aim is to establish if the aspirant is endowed with the requisite qualifications for admission to the Institute or, should she be lacking in these, if she is still capable of acquiring them; again, if the spirit and the work of the Congregation are suited to her and, finally, if her vocation is grounded on supernatural motives."

*(Customary, Pt 1, Chapter 2)*



"As for us, it is impossible, despite present good conduct, for me to admit her either here or in Rome, considering my well-founded conviction that she does not have the necessary humility for our Congregation."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 24/12/1854)*

28 "During the time that precedes the novitiate, the Superiors must above all apply themselves to getting to know the character and aptitudes of the postulants, and at the same time do everything in their power to make sure that they will enter the Congregation only with spiritual motives and solely in response to a true vocation."

*(Constitutions, 1862, Pt 2, Chapter 3)*

*(Customary, Pt 2, Chapter 2)*

"You would do well to let me know about the character, piety and capability of your postulants or novices for, in order to receive the vows of my Sisters, I need to know them, and this knowledge must come through the intermediary of my Sisters, Mistresses of novices and Superiors."

*(To Sr. Émilienne Naubonnet, 17/7/1855)*

33 "We have the great advantage of being able to form our Sisters in the spirit of charity and of recollectedness. We are in a very quiet spot, far from all contact with the outside world."

*(To Fr. Montera, 28/7/1843)*

"The novices continue to live in the most perfect recollectedness, but they are employed outside in the care of the sick and the instruction of pupils, thus giving them an opportunity to practise charity."

"The Mistress of novices gathers them each day at a fixed hour, and during this time she trains them in the spirit of mental prayer and the observance of the Constitutions according to the spirit of the Institute."

"She requires of them serious study, above all that of religion, and gives them all the instruction and explanations necessary; she can even, with the consent of the Superior, entrust to one of the Sisters the task of giving the novices special lessons, when it is not possible for her to give these herself."

"Finally, she will require of them all kinds of tasks, in particular those that, seeming more humble, are appropriate to test them and make them walk in the way of humility."

*(Additions to Constitutions 1835, 1841)*

"Regarding your Sister ... Keep her as a postulant during the coming year, and in 1856 you will send her to me; it is all the more necessary since, being your sister, it will be difficult for her to acquire the necessary detachment from her family."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 24/12/1854)*



"I shall send my novices to the different houses that are waiting for them. They are full of zeal and have a good spirit."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 8/5/1853)*

34 "Our Sisters will succeed if they have a religious spirit, that is to say, recollection, humility, abnegation, and know how to give in right measure. Let us try more and more to inspire this spirit in them and to form them well before they leave."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 9/9/1841)*

"We are and we want to be, as long as possible, religious; we want to conform ourselves, for as long as it will be permitted us, to the spirit that God has given us, to that of our Constitutions."

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 7/2/1840)*

42 "How much I bless God for the care you take to educate yourself; it is so necessary for the missions; may you persevere in your zeal."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 25/7/1852)*

43 "May you persevere in the vocation in which God has placed you. Let us bless Him that you have been deemed worthy to work so hard in a land where only great-hearted women should work."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 6/2/1851)*

44 "Fortunately I have found the means for forming the Sisters here."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 7/1/1855)*

"It is essential that this time of rest that is given to my Sisters should be used to their spiritual advantage, so that they may educate themselves in the knowledge and obligations of the religious life and in perfecting themselves in the interior spirit."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 29/1/1843)*

46 "What does it matter who sows and who reaps, provided the harvest is abundant."

*(To General Bugeaud, 21/7/1842)*

47 "The novice pronounces her vows, saying: 'Almighty and eternal God, animated by Your grace and fortified by Your love, I make to your Divine Majesty the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, according to the spirit of the Institute of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph, called of the Apparition, and further, I make the vow to consecrate myself to the different works of charity according to the spirit of that same Institute.'"

*(Constitutions, 1835)*





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# CONSECRATION

IV



58 "It is quite freely and solely for the love of God that I am resolved to renounce completely the world and myself in order to make profession of poverty and obedience, of chastity and the charity of Jesus Christ, in the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. These vows will be the joy of my life."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Manner of Receiving Profession)*

## POVERTY

59 "If I had not become poor, I would not have been able to establish the Congregation."

*(Testimony of Sr. Cyprienne)*

60 "Go, and with what you have and will receive do all the good you can."

*(Testimony of Sr. Cyprienne to the Sisters departing for Burma — Picard, p. 241)*



"In 1837 the Sisters entered the hospice anew as nursing Sisters. I asked that, in conformity with the spirit of the Congregation, the most menial and most laborious tasks be confided to them, and it was granted. Cholera broke out a second time..."

"...This redoubling of zeal encouraged them to bring us those sick whose bodies were literally putrefying. We put them in the vestibule of the hospice, and the doctors were complaining because we had taken them even into that place ... Each morning and evening we dressed these unfortunate natives."

*(Report to the Holy Father, 1841)*

"The Sisters bind themselves to lead a poor life, one in common ... so as to detach themselves entirely in mind and heart from all the goods of this world."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Add. 4, Chapter 6)*

61 Rely, as I do, on the support of the Lord; I have not the slightest fear."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 20/3/1840)*

"His help will not be wanting to us in important matters; that should suffice."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> de Lamourie, 20/4/1841)*

"I see day after day the help of the Lord accompanying me everywhere."

*(To Sr. Therese Sangiorgio, 22/1/1845)*

"The liveliness of my confidence increases in proportion to my difficulties."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/6/1848)*

"How great and generous is this Divine Providence!"

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 2/6/1855)*

62 "Since God has done so much for me, what ought I not do for Him!"

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 2/4/1847) Cf. Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 6, Add. 4*

64 "All the Sisters of St Joseph, whatever their rank or seniority in the Congregation, will make profession to live in complete detachment from the goods of this world. They must, in consequence:  
be quite happy not to have in everything only what they need,  
to know, when required, how to bear patiently being deprived of what is necessary  
whenever Providence allows this to happen ..."

*(Constitutions, 1862, Chapter 13, 1) (Cf. Customary, Pt 2, Chapter 1)*



65 I received a good lesson, that of understanding that material advantages should never be desired inordinately, and that we should entrust all our interests to the Lord."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 2/4/1847)*

"... I am less oppressed by poverty, while nevertheless not having anything left over to put aside."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 6/2/1849)*

"Our principal house has always served as a shelter for all the unfortunates and our help was never exhausted, except when the resources of the community were very low ..."

"The needy, both Christian and infidel, come every day to ask for a portion of the food that Providence gives us."

*(Report to the Holy Father, 29/3/1841)*

"In our principal house an infirmary is established for the care of foreigners."

*(Report to the Minister of War, 1842)*

"All the new-born infants abandoned by their parents are brought to us ... Foreigners from many countries, reduced to the most extreme misery, come to us, and they never go away without consolation and assistance ..."

Deserted spouses come to us for help. We give them not only food but shelter, where their good name is protected. The Magistrature, counting on our goodwill, has on several occasions sent us young girls whose state of destitution could lead to their downfall. We have always welcomed those unfortunates, sharing wholeheartedly with them the meagre resources of our community."

*(Report to the Minister of War, 1842)*

"Free schooling for poor children: inspired by the noble idea of free education for the poor, because of the vow that she has made, a Sister of St Joseph will be very careful not to take any payment from poor children or their parents; this would be to fail in fidelity to her promises."

"The Sisters must serve the sick ... with disinterestedness; that is to say, in particular, that they must not receive anything for the care that they give to the sick, and expect only from God the reward for their services."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapters 7 and 8)*



66 "It seems to me that, in spite of the pain I suffered before, it was really only in Toulouse that I received the grace to savour the fruits of the vows that I had made to the Lord. And, just as the holy bishop St Ignatius, who was brought to Rome to be devoured there by the beasts, cried out, in the letters he wrote to the Churches, that it was only then that he had begun to feel he was a Christian; in the same way, dear Sister, remembering the witness that this illustrious saint gave to the faith, I too said to myself that it was only then that I began to feel that I was a religious."

*(To Sr. Mary Petit, 15/7/1849)*

"More than ever I am practising fully the consequences of my vow of poverty; nothing is lacking to anyone, and the sick are better cared for than the rich people of the world. But the anxiety of providing everything, of paying in cash and of having the wherewithal to live on, breaks my heart. No mother has ever had greater worries than I have had. God helps me powerfully, and if I, for my part, do all that I can, I shall yet reach port without shipwreck ..."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 6/2/1848)*

"God always comes to our aid and showers on me so many tokens of His goodness that nothing has ever been lacking to me, nor will ever be lacking in the lap of holy poverty."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 3/1/1856)*

## OBEDIENCE

67 "The will of God is preferable to everything."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 16/6/1854)*

"Man's greatest happiness on earth is to be able to say that in his actions he is doing the will of God."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 21/10/1854)*

68 "That the will of God be accomplished in me always — this must be all my desire."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 11/8/1856)*

"I have towards God the simplicity and the confidence of a child but, enlightened as regards my duties, I am no less active in seconding Him, for if He is committed to sustaining me I am bound likewise to use, in accordance with His will, the faculties and strength with which He has endowed me."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> d'Aubilly, 28/2/1845)*



**THE OBEDIENCE OF ST EMILIE** — after her correspondence with Archbishop de Gualy

*(Consultation, respect, openness)*

"Acting in your name and always in line with your views ... I experience a very lively satisfaction each time that I have the honour of conversing with you."

*(7/9/1839)*

"It grieves my heart to tell you all these things ... but I think I have a duty in conscience because you, better than any other person, being called to judge us and to direct us, must know everything."

*(3/2/1840)*

*(Vowed obedience; reference to the Constitutions)*

"... Someone would like to make me deviate from the obedience I have vowed to you."

*(25/12/1839)*

"In all my decisions I have strived, Your Grace, to interpret your intentions, to follow the course of events, avoiding as far as my conscience showed me whatever was against the letter and, it seems to me, the spirit of our Constitutions."

*(20/3/1840)*

*(Necessary mediation)*

"My opinion and that of others is not sufficient for me; yours is necessary to me; your desires will be for me as the most strict orders from which I shall never depart."

*(10/1/1840)*

*(With initiative, consultation of Sisters, full responsibility)*

"You will see with what determination I was obliged to stand before God ... I had to act as though I had full liberty, and I had to presume your fullest approval."

"Before taking this decision, I called a meeting of all my Sisters in Algeria."

*(1/2/1840)*

*(With the interior disposition of sacrificing oneself to obedience)*

"I am writing to you, Your Grace, to ascertain your express will, perfectly resolved as we are, in the event of my being mistaken ... to go back to France so as not to leave your jurisdiction, and to save, at least, the spirit of our Order."

*(3/2/1840)*



69 "How good God is to those who desire to love Him!"

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 2/4/1847)*

70 "How good the Lord is for those who serve Him!"

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 11/6/1855)*

"With me, you have suffered the lot of uncertainty which it pleases the Lord to inflict on me ... At first I thought of sending you to Rome, but things changed and I had to abandon the project ... Then it seemed necessary to send you to Souza ... but later I learned that the Sister I had in mind to go with you had serious reasons for not going there, at least not yet ... It was again necessary to give up the idea of sending you this help ... I thought that Sr. Elizabeth would have been able to give me one of her Sisters able to speak Greek, but yesterday she wrote saying that she could not do without her. It was then that I realised the need to send you as Superior of the work that we are going to found in Trebizonde, a town on the shores of the Black Sea, three days' journey from Constantinople and five days from the island of Chio ... I believe that the Lord destines you for this mission, for it is through circumstances that the will of God is manifested."

*(To Sr. Gabrielle Cœur de Roy, 21/2/1852)*

71 "Our sole ambition was to make Him known."

*(To the Cardinal Prefect, 1/1842)*

"Therefore I must forestall you and inform you explicitly of my intentions ... I believe this arrangement is good, and that you will submit yourself to it joyfully."

*(To Sr. Françoise Pezet, 23/6/1839)*

"I do not doubt the constant weariness that you will have to endure."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 21/10/1854)*

"I have no doubt that you will have to make big sacrifices in leaving Tunis, but it is a good thing to accept them when it is God who imposes them and circumstances which manifest them to us."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 6/2/1851)*

"If a Sister finds some difficulty in doing what she has been told to do, because of her weakness or infirmities or for any other reason whatever, she may, after having prayed to the Lord, submit her reasons to the Sister Superior, with the interior disposition of sacrificing herself to obedience."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 6)*



72 “By the ‘Vow of Obedience’ they consecrate their entire will to God ... The Sisters should always obey promptly, simply and sincerely.”

*(Constitutions, 1862, Chapter 6)*

*Cf. Directory, Pt 2, Chapter 1, pp. 32–36*

73 “Know and be convinced that the very essence of openness and devotedness towards the Sisters is always the same, and as regards that charity which unites me to them I can say that it only increases and grows more perfect.”

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 15/2/1848)*

“It is all my desire that you reach that perfection to which every religious should tend.”

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 16/7/1854)*

“The health of my Sisters is the greatest wealth of the Congregation; all other riches are of little worth in comparison.”

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 21/10/1854)*

“Honour me always with your trust and friendship; you will find me ready in all circumstances to do all in my power for your welfare.”

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 15/2/1848)*

“You believed, my Lord, that before taking such a serious decision, in my name and that of my Sisters, I had not made sure of their consent. I could not have acted in such a flippant manner, and I have on hand, with regard to this, their written adhesion, which shows how united we are in our common feeling and conviction.”

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 7/2/1840)*

74 “God wills that the works progress in the midst of obstacles, so that the help of Divine Providence will be more necessary. Let us wait for and second Divine Providence in its designs on us. Happy are those Sisters who will help me to do this.”

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 18/5/1855)*

“It is scarcely possible not to see the hand of God in our work, for the more afflictions beset me the more it pleased Him to make it prosper.”

*(To Mr Augustin de Vialar, 21/4/1856)*

“Yes indeed, I have been greatly persecuted by men ... I can all too easily reckon up the help I have received from them. And yet, seven whole years have passed during which, and ever more clearly, I have seen the hand of the Lord coming to my aid.”

“In thanksgiving, I have begun the recitation of the LAUDATE DOMINUM OMNES GENTES every day, after the midday prayers, as a token of my humble gratitude.”

*(To Sr. Eugénie Laurez, 21/2/1854)*



## CHASTITY

75 "I was, as it were, enraptured by God ... the extraordinary favour that God had just accorded me made me make the resolution to belong completely to Him."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

76 "The Lord inclined me to recollection, and developed this in me by making me feel His presence in the midst of my occupations, in such a way that I was intimately united to Him."

"My heart was completely changed, full of love for God and filled with strength ... with zeal."

"From this moment on, for twenty-three years, I continued to love God with a tender and dominant love."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

77 "I made the resolution never to marry ..."

"Sensible grace flooded my soul and enlightened me on the advantages of virginity, on which I had never reflected. My heart was seized with an intense love for this

virtue and, a few days later, while in church, after Holy Communion, I promised God to keep it all my life and I committed myself to this by vow."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

*Cf. Constitutions, 1862, Chapter 13, 2*

78 "Love our Lord more and more and expect from Him a very great reward if you work only to please Him. This reward is nothing else but the possession of Himself, which He will make you feel so keenly that you will be, as it were, inebriated with joy and sweetness."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 15/2/1848)*

"... that which is even more dear to me than the sweetness with which Jesus Christ inundates me: my vocation and its consequences and its service of the neighbour."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 17/9/1843)*

"This work [the mission to Burma] dilates my soul and what you fear, with good reason, from their isolation from me should not make you apprehensive. I am choosing truly privileged souls, of a happy character, of perfect devotedness and of solid piety."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 3/5/1847)*



79 "One must begin young to mortify oneself."

*(To Sr. Bathilde, novice)*

"I was inspired by grace to discontinue all titivation in dress and, to obey Him, I refrained from wearing jewellery and other luxurious articles, the Lord making me feel that I ought to avoid pleasing men. However, no one noticed any singularity in me and, while no longer giving myself to the pleasures of the world, I continued to appear in public in order to accompany my father."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"One would not believe how fervent and mortified my companions and I were! The food we ate was coarse, not what most of us were used to. It was necessary to slacken this fervour, for the life that we led required a less rigorous style."

*(To Sr. Cyprienne Bonneville)*

"You see that moral sufferings are not lacking to me and God is my sole source of consolation. Almost unknown in the town, I look around me and find no answering glance. Never have I had such recourse to prayer, and the liveliness of my trust increases in proportion to my afflictions."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/6/1848)*

80 "I pay visits to those who have done me so much harm."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 2/5/1845)*

"I would have liked to wait until tomorrow to write to you, since I do not have much time to do it today, but, fearing to cause you pain, I am sending you these few lines."

*(To Sr. Mary Petit, 15/2/1855)*

"You cannot doubt my affection; no one in the world has a stronger or more sincere love."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 4/2/1848)*

"Our dear Sister Eugenie is dead ... I neglected nothing to try to cure her. No one but she could have failed to notice how poor we were."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 6/12/1848)*

"I have suffered from my own ill, but I have suffered much more from yours."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 6/2/1851)*

"It seems to me that if I were alone I would not suffer anything, but it is not thus, so what is strictly necessary for others must be comfortable also."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/6/1848)*



"Although for twenty years my existence in my father's household was so painful that only the consideration of fulfilling God's plan for me could give me the strength to stay, nevertheless it was only by doing great violence to my feelings that I decided to leave him, knowing the distress I would cause him."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"The voice of the Heavenly Father made itself heard anew and more clearly in my heart. I had to obey Him. Still, I shall not forget, on that account, my duties as a loving and devoted daughter."

*(To her father, Baron de Vialar, Picard, p. 256)*

81 "The Lord gives support when it is needed."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 20/1/1853)*

"Pray much that I shall obtain the crown that was prepared for me, and that to the end I shall be strong enough to maintain the work according to the plan of God."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/2/1850)*







# UNION WITH GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

V

## RECOLLECTEDNESS

1. "Recollectedness being the spirit proper to the Congregation, all the Sisters who compose it should work to acquire it. It should be the soul of their actions and inspire all their conduct."
2. "To enter into and live the spirit of recollectedness, the Sisters frequently recall the holy presence of God, and observe with the most scrupulous attention the following rule."





**SILENCE**

3. "The Sisters will keep silence among themselves during the whole day, outside the time of recreation. They will interrupt it only when necessary, and then they must speak only in a low voice."

*(S&DR)*

82 "From this moment, God made Himself my director and in this way the guide of my actions ..."

"I knew in such a clear and convincing way what the Lord was asking of me, I had not a shadow of doubt. I might compare the help He deigned to give me to the gentle guidance of a mother who constantly instructs and guides her child."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"... grace inspired most of my actions ... I made it [the vow of recollectedness], promising God to remain in His presence as much as I could."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

83 "I felt drawn to prayer, and several times a day I would retire to my room to pray; animated by this grace, I always did so with attention and fervour. This piety which it pleased God to foster in me made me avoid all the obstacles that might prevent me from hearing Mass each day."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

*Cf. S&DR 16–17; SR 17–18*

84 "I also seized every opportunity to go to Church in the evening; and as my father did not at all like to see me going to Church twice a day I would slip out unknown to him to spend a few moments there."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"I obtained permission from his Lordship to have the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel, and since the Sisters were busy almost all day with their duties, and our neighbourhood was entirely Muslim Arab, I was the only one available to adore our Lord in the Eucharist and I spent as much time as possible there."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

85 "I made my Confession regularly once every eight days, with simplicity and great attention."

*(Account of Interior Life)*



86 "At first I felt an inclination towards bodily mortification, and the Lord inspired me to practise a kind of fast. This type of penance was succeeded after a few weeks by a sort of sacrifice by which, at every moment, I immolated my will to the Lord, and with this in view I did violence to myself so as to accomplish what I believed to be pleasing to Him."

*(Account of Interior Life)*

"His grace would not allow that my mind be occupied with useless thoughts or too drawn to vanity by excessive preoccupation with self. The Lord was even severe with me, punishing my lack of vigilance over my thoughts. During this time I learned to understand well what detachment He demands of me."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/10/1843)*

"Believe that the enemy of all good pursues me; he makes use of human errors to hinder good."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 3/3/1852)*

"I kiss the Cross whenever I catch a glimpse of it."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 14/11/1845)*

"May His will be done in me and may He be my stronghold, so that I shall never displease Him."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/1/1853)*

87 "No Sister will omit to say the Rosary daily and to perform a quarter-hour of particular examen; she will join the community for the other exercises."

*(S&DR 18)*

"The principal exercises are performed in common."

*(S&DR 111)*

*Cf. Directory, Pt 3, Chapter 2 (p. 45, Vocal Prayers)*

88 "The Sisters of this Congregation should love mental prayer particularly, regarding it as the best means of passing the day in a holy way. They will devote a half-hour to it each morning."

*(S&DR and SR 14–15)*

"My day passed more or less in a state of union with the Lord, and the following night likewise I spent several hours engaged in my cherished contemplation, which I dare to believe was also dear to our Lord, who as usual played the greater part by favouring me with His love."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/10/1843)*



"The Lord helped me with his precious grace with greater intensity than ever during my night prayer."

(To Fr. Bourgade, 5/8/1851)

*Cf. Directory Pt 3, Chapter 1 — Mental Prayer, pp. 37–44*

"You know that I have laid down that spiritual reading be done ... one half-hour prescribed by the Rule."

(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 3/2/1856)

*Cf. Directory, Pt 3, Chapter 6 — Spiritual Reading, pp. 63–65*

89 (St Emilie sees everything in the light of God)  
"God is present everywhere."

(To Sr. Mary Petit, 21/4/1855)

"I obey circumstances that manifest to me the will of God; you should do the same."

(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 4/2/1856)

"If the business affair that I would like to carry out is good, I shall be at ease for the material welfare of the Congregation; if it is bad, I shall surrender myself doubly into the hands of the Lord. May His holy will be done in me, even in spite of all my repugnances."

(To Sr. Bourgade, 25/3/1846)

"I can, with the same grace that helps me from on high, make continual sacrifices to God."

(To Fr. Bourgade, 10/7/1843)

"God inspired me with the desire to suffer for His sake the pain we are sometimes caused by those who govern us."

(Account of Interior Life)

"If only I could show each of my Sisters the paternal and maternal care that the Lord has lavished on me, not miraculous, but so striking that the invisible seemed visible, as it were, through His favours."

(To Sr. Mary Petit, 15/7/1849)

"No Sister will omit to perform daily a quarter-hour of particular examen."

(S&DR 18)

*Cf. Directory, Pt 3, Chapter V, pp. 50–62*

*The particular examen*



90 "I have always noticed that graces are particularly abundant during the retreats."

*(To Fr. Montera, 28/7/1843)*

"Every year the Sisters make, in common, a retreat of eight days."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 2.24)*

91 "No Sister will omit to say the Rosary every day."

*(S&DR 18)*

"I was sea-sick all day on Monday and, since my strength was so weakened, I spent the rest of my time at sea without being able to give myself to contemplation; but the grace of the Lord seemed to help me powerfully, demanding of me the usual morning and evening prayers, the Rosary (which I omitted only on one day), and frequent prayers or petitions to God."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/10/1843)*

92 "The Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph having been placed under the special protection of the saint, his feast will be celebrated each year in all the houses of the Congregation."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 3)*

93 "More and more the Lord is with me."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/11/1845)*

"My mind is always at peace, even when my heart is oppressed ... my sleepless nights are most often spent with the Lord."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 2/4/1847)*

"I can only thank my Heavenly Spouse for having chosen me to carry His cross; it is sweet when one has the hope of being loved by Him."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 17/9/1843)*

"Pray without ceasing for me so that He will forgive my lack of gratitude for His immense goodness. Alas, if many others had been favoured with so many graces they would, indeed, have loved the God of Mercy more than I do. The recent graces I received were immense."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 25/3/1846)*





## THE SPIRIT ANIMATING THE SISTERS IN THE APOSTOLATE

VI

### WORKS OF CHARITY

4. "The aim of this Congregation being to consecrate the Sisters to the performance of works of charity, they will work to acquire this divine virtue by meditating often on the immense charity with which the Heart of Jesus Christ is filled; they will strive to imitate His zeal for the salvation of souls and His great mercy towards the neighbour. They will contemplate often the adorable wounds of the Saviour, so that, reflecting unceasingly on the love of God for men, they will daily sustain and increase in their hearts those sentiments of compassion and zeal that should animate them for their fellow men."

(S&DR)





94 “The Lord causes to burn within me the same fire that He enkindled long ago, and I rejoice in this grace, for if God did not breathe into me the spirit of zeal my heart would cease to be quickened, and then I would not be able to do anything. May He, in His goodness, grant that as long as I live this divine fire may not be extinguished ...”

*(To Fr. Balitrand, 21/8/1844)*

“Let us always have in our hearts the desire to work for the greater glory of God.”

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 18/2/1842)*

“How happy I am when I see my Sisters animated by a true spirit of compassion. I do not know how to express the suffering that I feel when it is otherwise.”

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 19/7/1853)*

“I am resolved, I and my Sisters, to suffer everything rather than abandon the post that God confided to me.”

*(Report to the Holy See, 29/3/1841)*

95 “Since then, there is nothing I detest more than lying.”

*(Account of Interior Life)*

“The Lord is always the very soul of my conduct, and He maintains in me this spirit of simplicity which belongs to uprightness.”

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 20/4/1854)*

“They will train their pupils in simplicity ...”

*(Conduct of Christian Schools, p. 100)*

“May this primitive spirit, so foreign to ambition, be perpetuated.”

*(To Fr. Balitrand, 15/12/1838)*



96 "My Sisters have been and will always remain daughters of devotedness and sacrifice."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*

"We must in everything submit to the events that God permits."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> de Lamourie, 20/4/1841)*

"We should not ourselves decide to abandon a mission post that God has confided to us. It is for Him to permit us to be driven from it if it is His will that we should not remain."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 25/5/1841)*

97 "Our position is very uncertain; we must rely entirely on the special care that the Lord takes of our order, to be able to continue calmly, as we do, to carry out our vocation."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 20/3/1840)*

"The Lord, who protects us all the better because He tries us, holds our work in His hands."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 13/7/1844)*

"Fatigue and labour are very sweet when, willed and blessed by God, He makes use of them for His greater glory and the good of the neighbour."

*(To Mr de Vialar, 29/8/1843)*

98 "I recommend to you above all to see that the spirit of union and charity reigns in the house. I have often said to my Sisters that, instead of eleven or twelve houses, I would prefer to have only one than not to see the spirit of charity reigning in the others. These sentiments are uppermost in my soul, and I shall never tolerate a spirit that would be contrary to it."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 29/1/1843)*

99 "May my Sisters work as much as possible for the glory of the Lord and the good of the neighbour."

*(To Mr de Vialar, 29/8/1843)*



"It is admirable that this little Congregation ... should have inspired such a universal confidence that friends and enemies of religion, natives and foreigners, Catholics and non-Catholics, all praise it, protect it, and manifest for it a sincere affection."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 19/2/1839)*

"We have always responded with readiness to every appeal made to our charity."

*(Report to the Minister of War, 1842)*

"Compassion must never be allowed to slacken."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> Callamand, 20/8/1843)*

"The particular spirit of this Congregation is to carry out works of charity in infidel countries."

*(Add. to Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 4)*







## THE COMMUNITY

VII

100 "Do not lose sight of the aim for which we are united."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Lauez, 11/10/1852)*

"The essential thing is that we be united."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/8/1843)*

101 "Our Congregation, founded on and established by so many crosses, must live on after me and continue to be the special object of God's protection. It will endure for a long time to come to work for His glory. My guarantee of this is the admirable correspondence of my Sisters."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*

"All my Sisters are one with me."

*(To Fr. Mercier, 11/6/1840)*

"If I did not have Sisters who were staunch in their upright spirit and attachment to me, I would have been threatened with the same fate as many foundresses, cast aside by the intrigues of one Sister."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 6/2/1848)*





102 "In this Congregation a true community spirit is maintained and practised,  
and the principal exercises are performed in common."

"... in the Congregation one assumes a charge only so that one can give a greater  
example of a life that is poor and in common."

*(S&DR 5 & 6)*

"The Sisters strive on every occasion to prefer their companions to themselves."

*(S&DR 50)*

*(SR 47)*

"They avoid everything that could wound charity."

*(S&DR 63)*

"I rejoice at the good being done through the ministry of your community; let all  
work for the glory of the Lord."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 11/5/1854)*

103 "Always support each other by the greatest union."

*(To the Sisters of Algeria, 26/3/1842)*

"The Sisters maintain towards each other a true spirit of gentleness in their words and  
their actions, and avoid everything that might show bad humour or impatience."

*(S&DR 48)*

*(SR 45)*

104 "I am always ready to give Sisters who can do good ... I rejoice in the good  
done."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Naubonnet, 17/7/1855)*

"It is a foundation that is very important for the salvation of souls and the glory of God  
... There are 40,000 souls, and no Sisters have ever been established there."

*(Sr. Gabrielle Cœur de Roy, 21/2/1852)*

"Our works make progress and do good."

*(To Sr. Virginie Cazallière, 19/10/1855)*



"What great merit you gain for heaven by all your efforts to help the Congregation, which was established only for the glory of God and the good of our fellow men."

*(To Sr. Mary Petit, 15/2/1855)*

"May God preserve me from building houses and making money at the expense of the health of the Sisters and their spiritual welfare, which suffer from a prolonged absence from the community."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 28/11/1855)*

105 "I could tell you an infinite number of very pleasant things about the different places where we have houses. Our Congregation is esteemed for the simplicity that characterises it."

*(To Sr. Virginie Cazallière, 19/10/1855)*

"You know well that I repel with all my strength whatever could establish inequality among the Sisters, and that I have even suppressed in our Statutes the division of our Sisters into two classes, so that nothing in the future could lead to a pronounced inferiority among the Sisters."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 9/12/1854)*

"As for the Sisters, no matter what office they hold in the house they do not take any other rank save that of seniority."

*(Constitutions, 1835, Chapter 2 / 26)*

"The Rules are observed, and silence, the principal amongst them, is well observed."

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 30/5/1851)*

"The observance of the Rules is in full force, above all that of silence."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 6/12/1849)*

"Charity ought all the more to dominate in the hearts of the Sisters of St Joseph since they form a great family, the members of which are of different origin, character and education. What St Paul says of the true Christian spirit that existed among the early Christians ought to apply in a very special manner to the Institute: 'where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither barbarian nor Scythian, neither bond nor free, but where Christ is all, and in all.'"

*(Directory, p. 90)*

*Cf. Directory, Pt 5, Chapter 2, pp. 86–96*

*On Community life and charity*



106 "Care is taken that the sick Sisters have a Sister infirmarian who is very charitable and who sees with love and tenderness to all their needs, both spiritual and corporal."  
(S&DR 68)

"The aged or infirm Sisters perform, to the extent that they are able, easy and light tasks. However, their principal occupation is prayer. It is they who must draw down divine blessings on the Institute."

(Customary, Pt 1, Chapter 6, p. 117)

"The Sisters accept illness as a gift from the hand of God and edify their Sisters by their humility and patience."  
(S&DR 67)

107 "The spirit of our houses is that of gentleness. I cannot recall that I have ever said a word with the intention of humiliating my Sisters."  
(To the Holy Father, 29/3/1841)

"I enter so well into the situation of my Sisters that I fully share their joys as well as their troubles."

(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 10/9/1852)

"I suffer extreme pain from the little charity of certain Sisters. The injury done to others hurts me more than if it were done to me."

(To Fr. Bourgade, 20/6/1846)

108 "The health and life of my Sisters is as precious to me as my own, and the thought of separation rends my soul; I have need of the consolations that the faith gives in order to sustain and conserve the strength that I need."  
(To Sr. Françoise Pezet, 11/9/1841)

"It pains me to have to announce to you the death of a Sister novice whom we had sent to Burma. She had such a holy death that we can hope for her the vision of God from this very moment that I am writing to you, but not having this certainty we should pray for her ... She made her vows a few hours before her death ... Her body was placed beside that of our dear Sister Sophie. The latter is regarded in the country as a saint, and the faithful go to pray at her tomb."

(To Sr. Françoise Pezet, 29/09/1851)

109 "God wishes that this good spirit, this spirit of union, of obedience, of simplicity, always reign in this house and in all those of the Congregation. All my wishes are that this primitive spirit, so foreign to ambition and discord, be always kept. I feel this to be so important that, at my death, all the wishes I could have for the prosperity of our Order should be bound up in these two things: to banish ambition and disunity from the hearts and minds of our Sisters."

(To Fr. Balitrand, 15/12/1838)





# GOVERNMENT

110 "I had the opportunity of showing you, a few days ago, my entire submission to the will of the Church of Rome regarding the future of my Congregation, and it is already some months since I placed my dearest interests in your hands."

*(To the Cardinal Prefect of the SCR, 1842)*

"I am resolved above all to submit myself to the judgment of the Holy See."

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 28/5/1842)*

"I am attached to the Holy See as much by my sentiments as by my faith, and my greatest happiness is to be more particularly the object of its interest and care."

*(To Sr. Céleste Peyre, 1/11/1852)*





"I said to Cardinal ... that is was really only a great annoyance to be sent away from a country by the government, but that this harm did not strike to the heart, whereas such an action coming from the Church would be quite another matter for us."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 22/3/1842)*

"May the benevolent support of the Church of Rome make you strong and unshakeable in the Institute, which has become the object of its benevolent protection."

*(To the Sisters of Algeria, 12/3/1842)*

111 "Before God I examined the path I had to take, and it was not necessary for me to reflect very long to understand that I could very well renounce and joyfully surrender into your hands the responsibility that I bear, but for as long as it is confided to me I owe it to God, to you, Your Grace, and to each one of my Sisters, to make it respected."

*(To Archbishop de Gualy, 25/12/1839)*

"By the strength of my vocation and by self-sacrifice I have maintained proper order, and each one of my Sisters is where she should be. But things are made extremely difficult for me, and I have need of the help of heaven to continue to remain victorious."

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 30/3/1851)*

*(Fidelity to the will of God for the Institute)*

112

113

"My chief concern will be the glory of God and the establishment of a work to spread it."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/2/1850)*

114

"As much as I can I work in the interests of my Congregation."

*(To Sr. Therese Sangiorgio, 19/5/1856)*

"If I have not made any great progress in the way of perfection, neither have I ever looked back to retrace my steps. The Lord does not leave me, in spite of my little zeal; He is always the soul of my conduct."

*(To Fr. Privilegio, 20/4/1854)*

"I shall pursue my task right to the very end."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 17/9/1843)*

"Yes, I hope I shall never be in the least unfaithful, with the help of grace; even if I have to fight till death, I shall fight."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 6/6/1840)*



"I shall embark, because of the right motive which makes me want to go to my Sisters, fearing neither stormy seas, which have been the cause of numerous shipwrecks, nor the dangers of an overland journey to Constantine at a time when the Arabs are in rebellion."

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 25/12/1838)*

*(Fidelity to the Will of God for each one of her members)*

"Your affection for me and above all your devotedness towards the Congregation fill me with consolation ... I have found a place where you could render great service by instructing the pupils, and where you would satisfy your attraction to the care of the sick."

*(To Sr. Therese Sangiorgio, 9/11/1851)*

"The welfare of your soul is as precious to me as to you yourself; I shall do all that I can so that you may sanctify yourself ... What can I say to you to show you how much I want to support you?"

*(To Sr. Mary Petit, 21/4/1855)*

"I appreciate above all your religious spirit."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 4/2/1848)*

"More and more I owe you proofs of friendship, not only for your good und devoted service but above all for the spirit of sacrifice that animates you and that I know well how to appreciate."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 15/2/1848)*

"I made this observation to her gently, and she took it very well ... Besides, these are small things; the essential is that there be unity and that the Rule be observed; this is what I aim at, leaving the rest to the will of God that He may remedy things as soon as it pleases Him."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 21/8/1843)*

*(Co-responsibility and Participation)*

"Let me have your own ideas, dear Sister Mary, you who have been called to lay the foundations of this house of education, a future model for all the others."

*(To Sr. Mary Petit, 31/7/1855)*

"I realised that you would be the right one to take charge of this establishment, and I am sending you there, confident that you will do good."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 14/8/1856)*



"My Sisters are not in the least embarrassed when they have to go and speak in the interests of the poor, either to the local administration or to the government."

*(To M<sup>me</sup> d'Aubilly, 21/4/1836)*

"I hope that in making progress in the way of humility ... you will regard it as a matter of complete indifference whether to exercise authority or to submit to the authority of another. I even think that it is easier to save one's soul in the way of obedience. From afar as from near, I keep for you the friendship that I have pledged and that I owe to you."

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 15/2/1848)*

"I hope to resume my correspondence with greater regularity, and the distant houses will always be those for which I have a greater predilection ... Do not omit to write, you or your Sisters, with every post. I am very anxious to get frequent news from you."

*(To Sr. Gabrielle Cœur de Roy, 11/4/1853)*







## UNITY AND FIDELITY

IX

183 "To please the Lord, give Him glory, is that not the greatest good?"

*(To Sr. Célestine Mougin, 2/1850)*

"Go and work in the vineyard of the Lord! May the blessing of the Divine Master go with you! Goodbye, till we meet in heaven!"

*(To the Sisters departing for Aleppo)*

184 "To second Providence, to act always according to His will; I know of no other line of conduct for religious."

*(To Fr. Bourgade, 25/5/1841)*





"It is always Divine Providence that intervenes first in our affairs, and I have had the happiness merely to second it."

*(To Sr. Gabrielle Cœur de Roy, 1/10/1849)*

185 "The Lord causes to burn within me the same fire that He enkindled long ago, and I rejoice in this grace, for if God did not breathe into me the spirit of zeal my heart would cease to be quickened, and then I would not be able to do anything."

*(To Fr. Balitrand, 21/8/1844)*

186 "Do not lose sight of the aim for which we are united: God and His greater glory, the service of the neighbour and the ardent desire to be of use to him."

*(To Sr. Eugenie Laurez, 11/10/1852)*

187 "We shall continue devoting, to the relief of the unfortunate, to the care of the sick and the poor, to the education of children, to all the works of charity, our strength, our wealth, our future — even our life, if necessary."

*(To Bishop Dupuch, 30/1/1840)*

188 "I recommend to you above all to see that the spirit of union and charity reigns in the house. I have often said to my Sisters, during my stay in Algeria, that instead of eleven or twelve houses I would prefer to have only one than not to see the spirit of charity reign in the others. These sentiments are uppermost in my soul, and I shall never tolerate a spirit that would be contrary to it ... Bind everything in unity."

*(To Sr. Pauline Gineste, 29/1/1843)*

189 "We are more than ever in the hands of the Church; our interests are hers."

*(To Sr. Honorine Piques, 9/3/1842)*

"God wishes that this good spirit, this spirit of union, of obedience, of simplicity, always reign in this house and in all those of the Congregation."

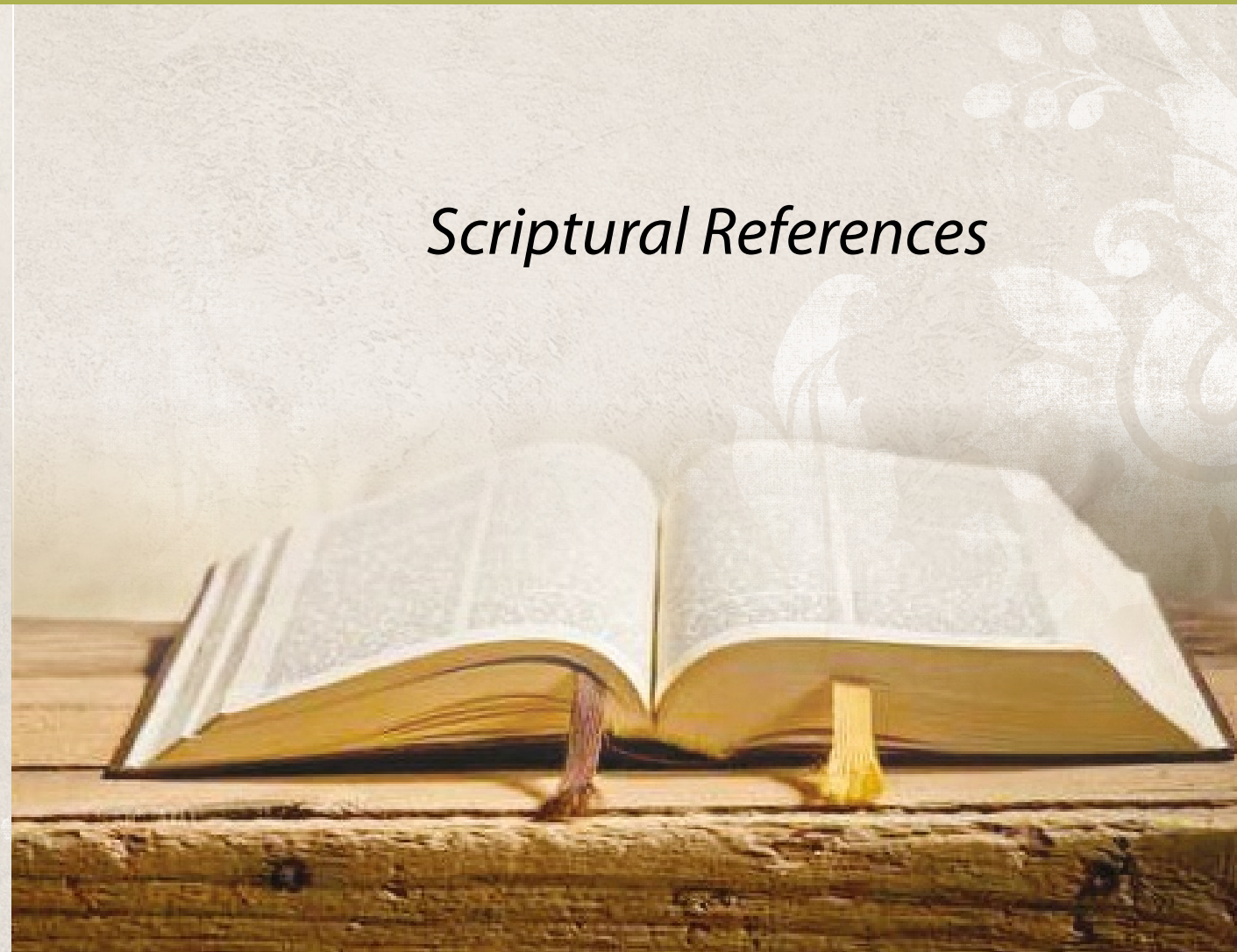
*(To Fr. Balitrand, 15/12/1838)*





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## *Scriptural References*







# THE CONGREGATION

I

2 "We ourselves saw, and we testify, that the Father sent His Son as saviour of the world."

*(1 Jn 4:14)*

"We ourselves have known and put our faith in God's love towards ourselves. God is love."

*(1 Jn 4:16)*

"Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ."

"Before the world was made, He chose us in Christ, to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in His presence, determining that we should become His adopted sons, through Jesus Christ, for His own kind purposes, to make us praise the glory of His grace, His free gift to us in the beloved, in whom, through his blood, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. Such is the richness of the grace that He has showered on us in all wisdom and insight. He has let us know the mystery of His purpose, the hidden plan He so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act



upon when the times had run their course to the end; that He would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth."

*(Eph 1:3–10)*

"Yes, God so loved the world that He gave His only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost, but may have eternal life."

*(Jn 3:16)*

3 "The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for He has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour."

*(Is 60:1–2) (Lk 4:18–19)*

"You must have heard about ... Jesus of Nazareth and how He began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil."

*(Ac 10:37–38)*

"He gave up his life for us; and we, too, ought to give up our lives for our brothers."

*(1 Jn 3:16)*

"Be holy in all you do, since it is the Holy One who has called you."

*(1 P 1:15)*

4 "Because the love of Christ overwhelms us."

*(2 Cor 5:14)*

"Whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask for in my name I will do."

*(Jn 14:12–13)*

"Not that we are qualified in ourselves to claim anything as our own work: all our qualifications come from God."

*(2 Cor 3:5)*

"The Good News is the power of God saving all who have faith."

*(Rom 1:16)*

"I will love Unloved. I will say to No-People-of-Mine 'You are my people' ... They will be called 'The sons of the living God'."

*(Hosea 2:1 & 25)*



5 “Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.”  
*(Mk 16:15)*

“I have made you a light for the nations, so that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth.”  
*(Is 49:6) (Ac 13:47)*

6 “The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.’”  
*(Mt 1, 20–24)*

“When peaceful silence lay over all, and night had run the half of her swift course, down from the heavens, from the royal throne, leapt your all-powerful Word.”  
*(Christmas Liturgy — Ws 18:14–15)*

7 “Jesus had always loved those who were his in the world, but now he showed how perfect his love was.”  
*(Jn 13:1)*

“Unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.”

*(Jn 12:24)*





## THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF THE APPARITION

## II

8 "He now went up into the hills and summoned those he wanted. So they came to him and he appointed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to preach."

*(Mk 3:13–14)*

9 "Remain in my love."

*(Jn 15:9)*

"My Father goes on working, and so do I ... I can do nothing by myself; I can only judge as I am told to judge, and my judging is just, because my aim is to do not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me ..."

*(Jn 5:17 & 30)*

"The works my Father has given me to carry out, these same works of mine testify that the Father has sent me."

*(Jn 17:30 & 36)*



10 "The Father himself loves you."

The conversation with Nicodemus

(Jn 16:27)

(Jn 3)

The conversation with the Samaritan woman

(Jn 4)

Jesus and the adulterous woman

(Jn 8)

11 "I tell you solemnly, insofar as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

(Mt 25:40)

"I tell you solemnly, insofar as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me."

(Mt 25:45)

12 "While they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that accompanied it."

(Mk 16:20)

13 "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you."

(Jn 20:21)

14 "I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

(Ph 3:8)

"We know that by turning everything to their good, God cooperates with all those who love Him, with all those that He has called according to his purpose."

(Rm 8:28)

"For it is not ourselves that we are preaching, but Christ Jesus as the Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. It is the same God that said 'Let there be light shining out of darkness', who has shone in our minds to radiate the light of the knowledge of God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ."

(2 Cor 4:5-6)





## FORMATION

III

**15** “You too, in him, have heard the message of the truth and the Good News of your salvation, and have believed it; and you too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise.”

*(Ep 1:13)*

“Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution, so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God’s way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth.”

*(Ep 4:23–24)*

**16** “God has called you and He will not fail you.”

*(1 Th 5:24)*

“Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.”

*(Gal 5:25)*



17 “Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling, and opens the door, I will come in to share his meal, side by side with him.”

*(Rev 3:20)*

“Yahweh, make your ways known to me, and teach me your paths.”

*(Ps 25:4)*

“You must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves.”

*(Jm 1:22)*

18 “Can you drink the cup that I must drink, or be baptised with the baptism with which I must be baptised?” They replied ‘We can.’”

*(Mk 10:38b-39)*

“I know that you have patience, and have suffered for my name without growing tired. Nevertheless, I have this complaint to make: you have less love now than you used to ... Repent, and do as you used to at first.”

*(Rev 2:3-5)*

“I myself will pasture my sheep, I myself will show them where to rest — it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.”

*(Ezk 34:15-16)*

19 “We urge you ... to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learned from us, and as you are already living it.”

*(1 Th 4:1)*

“Accept the strength, my dear son, that comes from the grace of Christ Jesus.”

*(2 Tm 2:1)*

“I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you.”

*(2 Tm 1:6)*

“He must grow greater, I must grow smaller.”

*(Jn 3:30)*



20 “You to whom I said ‘You are my servant, I have chosen you, not rejected you’. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; stop being anxious and watchful, for I am your God. I give you strength, I bring you help, I uphold you with my victorious right hand.”

*(Is 41:9–10)*

“Do not be afraid of the sufferings that are coming to you ... Even if you have to die, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life for your prize.”

*(Rev 2:10)*

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again?”

*(Mt 5:13)*







# CONSECRATION

## IV

58 "Consecrate them in the truth, your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I consecrate myself, so that they too may be consecrated in truth."

*(Jn 17:17-19)*

### POVERTY

59 "Bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him."

*(Lk 5:11)*

60 "Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was: he was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty."

*(2 Cor 8:9)*

61 "Do not worry, do not say 'What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?' It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your



heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given you as well."

*(Mt 6:31-33)*

62 "None of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions."

*(Lk 14:33)*

64 "The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common."

*(Ac 4:32)*

"We who are strong have a duty to put up with the qualms of the weak without thinking of ourselves. Each of us should think of his neighbours and help them to become stronger Christians. Christ did not think of himself."

*(Rm 15:1-3)*

"Throughout great trials by suffering, their constant cheerfulness and their intense poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity."

*(2 Co 8:2)*

65 "If a man who was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need, but closed his heart to him, how should the love for God be living in him?"

"My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active."

*(1 Jn 3:17-18)*

66 "Then he began to speak. This is what he taught them: how happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

*(Mt 5:2-3)*

## OBEDIENCE

67 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: 'Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?' I answered: 'Here I am, send me.'"

*(Is 6:8)*

"Although he was the Son, he learned to obey through suffering."

*(Heb 5:8)*



68 "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to complete his work."  
(Jn 4:34)

69 "The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything to him."  
(Jn 3:35)

"I tell you most solemnly, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing; and whatever the Father does the Son does too. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything He does himself."  
(Jn 5:19–20a)

"The Father and I are one."  
(Jn 10:30)

70 "He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority."  
(Lk 2:51)

71 "May He who helps us when we refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Jesus Christ, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."  
(Rm 15:5–6)

72 "God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will."  
(He 10:7)

73 "You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you."  
(Jn 13:13–15)

74 "The world must be brought to know that I love the Father and that I am doing exactly what the Father told me."  
(Jn 14:31)



## CHASTITY

75 "No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me."  
(Jn 6:44)

"Yahweh called me before I was born, from my mother's womb He pronounced my name. He hid me in the shadow of His hand and concealed me in His quiver. He said to me 'You are my servant, in whom I shall be glorified.'"

(Is 49:1b-3)

76 "If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him."

(Jn 14:23)

"I exult for joy in Yahweh, my soul rejoices in my God, for He has clothed me in the garments of salvation, He has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord Yahweh make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations."

(Is 61:10-11)

77 "We are to love, then, because he loved us first ... Anyone who loves God must also love his brother."

(1 Jn 4:19-21)

"I will betroth you to myself for ever, betroth you with integrity and justice, with tenderness and love; I will betroth you to myself with faithfulness, and you will come to know Yahweh."

(Ho 2:21-22)

78 "Happy and gentle ... happy and merciful ... happy the pure in heart, they shall see God. Happy the peacemakers."

(Mt 5:4-9)

"Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also."

(Mt 6:21)

79 "We can be sure that we are in God only when the one who claims to be living in Him is living the same kind of life as Christ lived."

(1 Jn 2:5b-6)

"Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ."

(Ph 1:27)



80 "My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more. Never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception, so that you can always recognise what is the best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God."

*(Ph 1:9–11)*

81 "See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch that he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready."

*(Lk 12:35–39)*

"The spirit and the bride say 'Come'. Let everyone who listens answer 'Come'. Then let all who are thirsty come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free. Amen; come, Lord Jesus."

*(Rev 22:17 & 20b)*







## UNION WITH GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

V

82 "Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me."

*(Jn 15:4)*

"I am not alone: the one who sent me is with me. He who sent me is with me, and has not left me to myself, for I always do what pleases Him."

*(Jn 8:16 & 29)*

83 "When your words came, I devoured them: your word was my delight and the joy of my heart, for I was called by your name."

*(Jer 15:16)*

"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me."

*(Jn 6:56–57)*



84 “Think of God’s mercy and worship Him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God.”

(Rm 12:1)

85 “Now he has reconciled you, by his death and in that mortal body. Now you are able to appear before him holy, pure and blameless.”

(Col 1:22)

86 “We pray continually that our God will make you worthy of His call, and by his power fulfil all your desires for goodness and complete all that you have been doing through faith; because in this way the name of our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in you and you in him.”

(2 Th 1:11–12)

87 “Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God.”

(Col 3:16)

88 “The hour will come — in fact, it is here already — when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.”

(Jn 4:23a & 24)

89 “Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord Yahweh has opened my ears.”

(Is 50:4b–5)

“Let dawn bring proof of your love, for one who relies on you; let it show the right road, to one who lifts up his soul to you. Teach me to obey you, since you are my God; may your good spirit guide me on to level ground.”

(Ps 143:8 & 10)

90 “After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.”

(Mt 14:23)

“Now it was about this time that he went out into the hills to pray; and he spent the whole night in prayer to God.”

(Lk 6:12)



91 "As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart."  
"Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother."

(Lk 2:19)

(Jn 19:25)

"From the Mount of Olives ... they went back to Jerusalem. All these joined in continuous prayer, together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus."

(Ac 1:12 & 14)

92 "Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary; of her was born Jesus who is called Christ."

(Mt 1:16)

93 "What great nation is there that has its gods so near as Yahweh our God is near to us whenever we call to him"

(Dt 4:7)

"God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what He means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God."

(Rm 8:27)

"Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."

(Mt 28:20)







## THE SPIRIT ANIMATING THE SISTERS IN THE APOSTOLATE

"Here is my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved the favourite of my soul. I will endow him with my spirit, and he will proclaim the true faith to the nations. He will not brawl or shout, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. He will not break the crushed reed, nor put out the smouldering wick, till he has led the truth to victory: in his name the nations will put their hope."

*(Is 42:1–4) (Mt 12:18–21)*

"They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

*(Jn 19:37) (Zc 12:10)*

"Now the will of Him who sent me is that I should lose nothing of all that He has given to me."

*(Jn 6:39)*

"I did not come to call the virtuous, but sinners."

*(Mk 2:17)*



"As he stepped ashore he saw a large crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length."

*(Mk 6:34)*

"At sunset all those who had friends suffering from diseases of one kind or another brought them to him, and laying his hands on each he cured them."

*(Lk 4:40)*

94 "The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us."

*(Rom 5:5)*

"For our God is a consuming fire."

*(He 12:29)*

"Not that I do boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty that has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! ... I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I can."

*(1 Co 9:16 & 19)*

"I am perfectly willing to spend what I have, and to be expended, in the interests of your souls."

*(2 Co 12:15a)*

95 "Never admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain."

*(1 Co 15:58)*

"We were unassuming. Like a mother feeding and looking after her own children, we felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives as well."

*(1 Th 2:7-8)*

"Whether from dishonest motives or in sincerity, Christ is proclaimed; and that makes me happy."

*(Ph 1:18)*

96 "May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope."

*(Rm 15:13)*



97 "It is when I am weak that I am strong."

(2 Co 12:10b)

"In the world you will have trouble, but be brave; I have conquered the world."

(Jn 16:33b)

98 "Let us love one another, since love comes from God ... Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love."

(1 Jn 4:7-8)

99 "May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us. As you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. That the world will realise ... that I have loved them as much as you loved me."

(Jn 17:21 & 23b)







## THE COMMUNITY

100 “Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.”

*(1 Co 12:12–13)*

101 “These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.”

*(Ac 2:42)*

“I will make an everlasting covenant with them; I will not cease in my efforts for their good, and I will put respect for me into their hearts, so that they turn from me no more.”

*(Jr 32:40)*

“What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. You cannot belong to Christ Jesus unless you crucify all self-indulgent passions and desires.”

*(Gal 5:22 & 24)*



102 "If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus."

(Ph 2:1-5)

103 "Whatever your work is, put your heart into it as if it were for the Lord and not for men ... It is Christ the Lord that you are serving."

(Col 3:23)

"Bear with one another, forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same."

(Col 3:13)

104 "I implore you to lead a life worthy of your vocation. Bear with one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience."

(Eph 4:1-2)

"I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them."

(Mt 18:19-20)

105 "What is good has been explained to you, man; this is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God."

(Mi 6:8)

"Try, then, to imitate God, as children of his that He loves, and follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up in our place as a fragrant offering and a sacrifice to God."

(Eph 5:1-2)

"You are the light of the world ... Your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven."

(Mt 5:14-16)



**106** “May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of Him.”

*(Eph 1:17)*

“Out of his infinite glory may He give you the power through His Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, you will have strength ...”

*(Eph 3:16–17)*

**107** “Be the shepherds of the flock of God that is entrusted to you: watch over it, not simply as a duty but gladly, because God wants it; not for sordid money, but because you are eager to do it. Never be a dictator over any group that is put in your charge, but be an example that the whole flock can follow.”

*(1 P 5:2–3)*

“We appeal to you, my brothers, to be considerate to those who are working amongst you and are above you in the Lord as your teachers. Have the greatest respect and affection for them because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.”

*(1 Th 5:12–13)*

**108** “He raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.”

*(Eph 2:6)*

“We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him.”

*(1 Th 4:14)*

**109** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a gentle Father and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows, so that we can offer others, in their sorrows, the consolation that we have received from God ourselves.”

*(2 Co 1:3–4)*

“After that I saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted aloud: ‘Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”

*(Rev 7:9–10)*





# GOVERNMENT

110 “Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her.”

(Eph 5:25)

“Anyone who listens to you listens to me.”

(Lk 10:16)

111 “You know that among the pagans the rulers lord it over them, and their great men make their authority felt. This is not to happen among you. No; anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave, just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

(Mt 20:25–28)

“... otherwise you will only be grieving the Holy Spirit of God who has marked you with His seal for you to be set free when the day comes.”

(Eph 4:30)



"Be awake ... stay firm in the faith."

(1 Co 16:13)

112 "Give your servant a heart to understand."

(1 K 3:9)

"Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together."

(Eph 4:3)

"If you have hope, this will make you cheerful. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying."

(Rm 12:12)

113 "May the Lord be generous in increasing your love and make you love another."

(1 Th 3:12)

"Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited."

(1 Co 13:4)

"Do not forget: thin sowing means thin reaping; the more you sow, the more you reap. Each one should give what he has decided in his own mind, not grudgingly or because he is made to, for God loves a cheerful giver."

(2 Co 9:6-7)

114 "As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand 'I do not need you', nor can the head say to the feet 'I do not need you' ... Now you together are Christ's body, but each of you is a different part of it."

(1 Co 12:20-21 & 27)

"Each one of you has received a special grace, so, like good stewards responsible for all these different graces of God, put yourselves at the service of others ... so that in everything God may receive the glory, through Jesus Christ."

(1 P 4:10-11)

115 "... Bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God."

(2 Tm 1:8)

"In each generation wisdom passes into holy souls, she makes them friends of God and prophets."

(Ws 7:27)





## UNITY AND FIDELITY

IX

183 “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.”

*(Ac 1:8)*

“I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations ... to the distant lands that have never heard of me or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory to the nations.”

*(Is 66:18–19)*

184 “God has saved us and called us to be holy — not because of anything we ourselves have done but for His own purpose and by His own grace.”

*(2 Tm 1:9)*

“I live not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me.”

*(Gal 2:20)*



185 "Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ."

(Rm 8:35)

"What we have seen and heard we are telling you, so that you too may be in union with us, as we are in union with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

(1 Jn 1:3)

"I have formed you and have appointed you as covenant to the people ... I will say to the prisoners 'Come out', to those who are in darkness — 'Show yourselves.'"

(Is 49:8-9)

186 "I shall not call you servants anymore, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learned from my father. You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last."

(Jn 15:15-16)

187 "...as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... And over all these virtues put on love, which binds all together in perfect unity."

(Col 3:12 & 14)

"There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done but always to the same Lord: working in all sorts of different ways in different people it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the spirit ... is given to each person is for a good purpose."

(1 Co 12:4-7)

188 "My love is with you all in Christ Jesus."

(1 Co 16:24)

189 "Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments."

(Rm 13:10)

"This Law that I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach. No, the Word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance."

(Dt 30:11 & 14)





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## *References to the documents of the Church*





# THE CONGREGATION

I

## **LG, 39**

“Christ ... loved the Church as his Bride, so as to sanctify her (*cf Eph 5: 25-26*). This holiness of the Church is constantly shown forth ... It is expressed in many ways by the individuals who, each in his own state of life, tend to the perfection of love.”

## **ET, 1**

“The evangelical witness of the religious life clearly manifests to men the primacy of the love of God; it does this with a force for which we must give thanks to the Holy Spirit.”

## **AG, 23**

“The Holy Spirit, who shares his gifts as he wills for the common good, implants in the hearts of individuals a missionary vocation and at the same time raises up Institutes in the Church that take on the duty of evangelisation, which pertains to the whole Church, and make it as it were their own special task.”



**LG, 42**

“The first and most necessary gift is charity ... Since Jesus, the Son of God, showed his love by laying down his life for us, no one has greater love than he who lays down his life for him and for his brothers (*cf* 1 Jn 3: 16; Jn 15: 13).

“...all however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the cross amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks.”

**LG, 47**

“Let everyone who has been called to the profession of the counsels take earnest care to persevere and excel still more in the life in which God has called him, for the increase of the holiness of the Church, to the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity.”







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## THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF THE APPARITION

## II

### AG, 23

“Although the obligation of spreading the faith falls individually on every disciple of Christ, still the Lord Christ has always called from the number of his disciples those whom he has chosen to be with him, so that he might send them to preach to the nations.”

### AG, 24

“When God calls, a man must reply without taking counsel with flesh and blood (*cf Gal 1:16*), and give himself fully to the work of the Gospel. However, such an answer can only be given with the encouragement and help of the Holy Spirit. The one who is sent enters upon the life and mission of him ‘who emptied himself, taking the nature of a slave’ (*Ph 2:7*). He must therefore be prepared to remain faithful to his vocation for life, to renounce himself and everything that up to this he possessed as his own, and ‘to make himself all things to all men.’” (*1 Co 9:22*)



**LG, 46**

"Let religious see well to it that the Church truly show forth Christ through them with ever-increasing clarity to believers and unbelievers alike — Christ in contemplation on the mountain, or proclaiming the kingdom of God to the multitudes, or healing the sick and maimed and converting sinners to a good life, or blessing children and doing good to all men, always in obedience to the will of the Father who sent him."

**DM, 4**

"All the subtleties of love become manifest in the Lord's mercy towards those who are his own." "The primacy and superiority of love vis-à-vis justice — this is a mark of the whole of revelation — are revealed precisely through mercy."

**DM, 3**

"Making the Father present as love and mercy is, in Christ's own consciousness, the fundamental touchstone of his mission."







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# FORMATION

## III

### PC, 2b

"It is for the good of the Church that Institutes have their own proper characters and functions. Therefore the spirit and aims of each founder should be faithfully accepted and retained, as indeed should each Institute's sound traditions, for all of these constitute the patrimony of an Institute."

### ET, 10

"Must not the members of each community who are seeking God before all else combine contemplation with apostolic love? By the former they cling to God in mind and heart; by the latter they strive to associate themselves with the work of redemption and to spread the kingdom of God." (cf PC 5)

### AG, 23

"Those people who are endowed with the proper natural temperament, have the necessary qualities and outlook, and are ready to undertake missionary work, have a special vocation ... Having been sent by legitimate authority they go forth in faith and obedience to those who are far from Christ, as ministers of the Gospel, set aside for the work to which they have been called."



**AG, 26**

"Those who are sent ... should be nourished by 'words of faith and with good doctrine', which they will draw mainly from sacred Scripture while they are studying the mystery of Christ, whose preachers and witnesses they will be." (1 Tm 4:6)

**AG, 24**

"Preachers of the Gospel should be renewed in spirit day by day, lest they should neglect the grace that is in them." (1 Tm 4:14)

**AG, 24**

"Superiors should gather the missionaries together from time to time, so that they might be strengthened in the hope of their calling and renewed in the apostolic ministry."

**PC, 18**

"All through their lives, religious should assiduously endeavour to perfect their spiritual, doctrinal and technical culture. Superiors, as far as they are able, should provide for them the opportunity, assistance and time for this."

**AG, 25**

"The future missionary must be prepared for such an important task by a special spiritual and moral formation. He must be prompt to take the initiative, constant in carrying out an undertaking, persevering in difficulties, patient and strong of heart in bearing loneliness, exhaustion and fruitless labour. He must approach Man with an open mind and heart, he must willingly accept the duties entrusted to him; and generously accommodate himself to the different customs and the changing circumstances of other peoples. In harmony and mutual love he will cooperate with his brethren and with all who dedicate themselves to this work, so that together with the faithful, and imitating the apostolic community, they might be of one heart and soul." (cf Ac 2:42; 4:32)

"These interior dispositions should be diligently developed and fostered during the time of formation; they should be elevated and nourished by the spiritual life. With a living faith and an inexhaustible hope, the missionary should be a man of prayer; he should burn with a spirit of power, of love and of self-control. (Cf 2 Tm 1:7) Let him learn to be content with the circumstances in which he finds himself (Ph 4:11); let him carry about with him the death of Jesus, in a spirit of sacrifice, that the life of Jesus might work on those to whom he has been sent (cf 2 Co 4:10); let him willingly give all out of zeal for others; let him spend himself for souls (cf 2 Co 12:15) so that by the daily exercise of his duty he might grow in the love of God and of his neighbour."



**AG, 18**

"Right from the planting of the Church the religious life should be carefully fostered, because not only does it provide valuable and absolutely necessary help for missionary activity ... but it also clearly shows and signifies the intimate nature of the Christian vocation."

**PC, 24**

"Religious Institutes have the right to publicise themselves in order to foster vocations ... However, religious should remember that the example of their own lives is the best commendation of their Institutes, and is an invitation to others to take on the religious life."

**PC, 18**

"The up-to-date renewal of Institutes depends very much on the training of the members."

"It is also the task of Superiors to see to it that directors, spiritual masters and professors are chosen to best advantage and are carefully trained."







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# CONSECRATION

## IV

### PC, 8

"In the Church there are very many Institutes, clerical and lay, engaged in different kinds of apostolic work and endowed with gifts that vary according to the grace that is given to them ... In these Institutes apostolic and charitable activity is of the very nature of religious life, as their holy ministry and work of charity, entrusted to them by the Church, and to be performed in its name."

"For this reason, the entire religious life of the members should be imbued with an apostolic spirit, and all their apostolic activity with a religious spirit. In order therefore that the members may first answer their call to follow Christ and serve Christ himself in his members, their apostolic activity must have its source in intimate union with him. It is thus that their very love for God and their neighbour is fostered."

### PC, 5

"The members of each Institute should recall, first of all, that when they made profession of the evangelical counsels they were responding to a divine call, to



the end that, not merely being dead to sin (*cf Rm 6:11*) but renouncing the world also, they might live for God alone. They have dedicated their whole lives to this service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in their baptismal consecration and is a fuller expression of it."

**LG, 43**

Cf Profession and the evangelical counsels in the Church

**LG, 44**

Cf The nature and importance of the religious state in the Church.

"The bonds by which he pledges himself to the practice of the counsels show forth the unbreakable bond of union that exists between Christ and his bride the Church. The more stable and firm are these bonds, then, the more perfect will be the Christian's religious consecration."

**PC, 2a**

"Since the final norm of the religious life is the following of Christ as it is put before us in the Gospel, this must be taken by all Institutes as the supreme role."

**POVERTY**

PC 13 Poverty

ET 16 Consecrated poverty

17 The cry of the poor

18 Poverty and justice

19 Use of the world's goods

20 Life of work

21 Fraternal sharing

22 Evangelical exigency

30 A witness to give

ES 23

Norms for the application of Decree PC

24



## OBEDIENCE

PC 14 Obedience

ET 24 Evangelical fraternity and sacrifice

25 Authority and obedience

26 In the needs of daily life

27 Freedom and obedience

28 Conscience and obedience

29 The Cross — proof of the greatest love

## CHASTITY

PC 12 Chastity

ET 13 Consecrated chastity

14 Source of spiritual fruitfulness

15 A gift of God







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## UNION WITH GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

V

### PC, 6

“Those who make profession of the evangelical counsels should seek and love above all else God who has first loved us (*cf 1 Jn 4:10*). In all circumstances they should take care to foster a life hidden with Christ in God (*cf Col 3:3*), which is the source and stimulus of love of the neighbour, for the salvation of the world and the building-up of the Church.”

“For this reason, members of Institutes should assiduously cultivate the spirit of prayer and prayer itself, drawing on the authentic sources of Christian spirituality. In the first place, let them have the sacred scripture at hand daily, so that they might learn ‘the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus’ (*Ph 3:8*) by reading and meditating on the divine scriptures. They should perform the sacred liturgy, especially the holy mystery of the Eucharist, with their hearts and their lips, according to the mind of the Church, and they should nourish their spiritual lives from this richest of sources.”



**RH, 20**

"It is certain that the Church of the new Advent, the Church that is continually preparing for the new coming of the Lord, must be the Church of the Eucharist and of Penance. Only when viewed in this spiritual aspect of her life and activity is she seen to be the Church of the divine mission, the Church *in statu missionis*."

**ET, 47**

"At the moment of your religious profession you were offered to God by the Church, in close union with the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Day after day this offering of yourselves must become a reality, concretely and continuously renewed. Communion in the body and blood of Christ is the primary source of this renewal; by it may your will to love truly, and even to the sacrifice of your lives, be unceasingly confirmed."

**ET, 48**

"Your communities, since they are united in Christ's name, naturally have as their centre the Eucharist, 'the sacrament of love, the sign of unity and the bond of charity'. It is therefore normal that these communities should be visibly united around an oratory, in which the presence of the Holy Eucharist expresses and at the same time makes real that which must be the principal mission of every religious family ..."

**ET, 44**

"The Holy Spirit also gives you the grace to discover the image of the Lord in the hearts of men, and teaches you to love them as brothers and Sisters. Again, he helps you to see the manifestations of his love in events. If we are humbly attentive to men and things, the spirit of Jesus enlightens us and enriches us with his wisdom, provided that we are imbued with the spirit of prayer."

**DM, 15**

"... can the Church forget the prayer that is a cry for the mercy of God ... The more the human conscience succumbs to secularisation, loses its sense of the very meaning of the word 'mercy', moves away from God and distances itself from the mystery of mercy, the more the Church has the right and the duty to appeal to the God of mercy 'with loud cries' ... not only in her own name but also in the name of all men and women of our time ..."

"These 'loud cries' should be the mark of the Church of our times."





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## THE SPIRIT ANIMATING THE SISTERS IN THE APOSTOLATE

VI

### DM, 1

"It is God, who is rich in mercy, whom Jesus Christ has revealed to us as Father: it is His very Son who, in himself, has manifested Him and made Him known to us."

### DM, 14

"The basis of the Church's mission ... is none other than drawing from the wells of the Saviour. (*Is 12:3*). Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (*Mt 5:7*)

"The Church sees in these words a call to action... the way of conversion and of reform of life... Man attains to the merciful love of God, his mercy, to the extent that he himself is interiorly transformed in the spirit of that love towards his neighbour."



**DM, 6**

"The true and proper meaning of mercy does not consist only in looking, however penetratingly and compassionately, at moral, physical or material evil; mercy is manifested in its true and proper aspect when it restores to value, promotes and draws good from all the forms of evil existing in the world and in man. Understood in this way, mercy constitutes the fundamental content of the messianic message of Christ and the constitutive power of his mission."

**DM, 14**

"Mercy that is truly Christian is also, in a certain sense, the most perfect incarnation of 'equality' between people ... of justice ... of 'patient and kind' love ... of the love that is more powerful than sin."

"It is a question of a merciful love that, in its essence, is a creative love ... In reality the one who gives is always also a beneficiary ... He too can easily find himself in the position of the one who receives, who obtains a benefit, who experiences merciful love; he too can find himself the object of mercy ..."

"In this sense Christ crucified is for us the loftiest model, inspiration and encouragement ... We are able with all humility to show mercy to others, knowing that Christ accepts it as if it were shown to himself."

**DM, 6**

"The genuine face of mercy has to be ever revealed anew."

**RH, 11**

"We must all share in this mission and concentrate all our forces on it, since it is more necessary than ever for modern mankind ... join in the great mission of revealing Christ to the world, helping each person to find himself in Christ, and helping the contemporary generations of our brothers and sisters, the peoples, nations, states, mankind, developing countries and countries of opulence — in short, helping everyone to get to know 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' (*Eph 3:8*), since these riches are for every individual and are everybody's property."





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# THE COMMUNITY

**AG, 27**

“Since ... the missionary task cannot be accomplished by lone individuals, a common vocation has gathered these individuals into Institutes where, having combined their strength, they are properly trained and will carry out this work in the name of the Church.”

**PC, 15**

Community life

**ES, 25 (Norms for the application of Decree P. C.)**

“In Institutes dedicated to apostolic activities, community life must be encouraged by all possible means, and in ways suitable to the vocation of each Institute. It is of the greatest importance that the members should establish a fraternal life in common, as a family united in Christ.”



**AG, 30**

"In order that the goal might be attained and results obtained in working for the mission, all missionary workers must be of 'one heart and one soul' (*Ac 4:32*)."

**ET, 18**

"How then will the cry of the poor find an echo in your lives? That cry must, first of all, bar you from whatever would be a compromise with any form of social injustice. It obliges you also to awaken consciences to the drama of misery and to the demands of social justice made by the Gospel and the Church. It leads some of you to join the poor in their situation and to share their bitter cares ..."

"It enjoins on you a use of goods limited to what is required for the fulfilment of the functions to which you are called. It is necessary that in your daily lives you should give proof, even externally, of authentic poverty."

**ET, 46**

"The interior man is aware that times of silence are demanded by love of God. As a rule he needs a certain solitude so that he may hear God 'speaking to his heart' (*Hos 2:16*). It must be stressed that a silence that is a mere absence of noise and words, in which the soul cannot renew its vigour, would obviously lack any spiritual value.

It could even be harmful to fraternal charity, if at that moment it was essential to have contact with others. On the contrary, the search for intimacy with God involves the truly vital need of a silence embracing the whole being, both for those who must find God in the midst of noise and confusion and for contemplatives. Faith, hope and a love for God that is open to the gifts of the Spirit, and also a brotherly love that is open to the mystery of others, carry with them an imperative need for silence."

**LG, 41**

"In a special way also, those who are weighed down by poverty, infirmity, sickness and other hardships should realise that they are united to Christ, who suffers for the salvation of the world; let those feel the same who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, those whom the Lord declared blessed in the Gospel ..."

**DM, 9**

"No one has experienced, to the same degree as the mother of the Crucified One ... the mystery of the Cross ... No one has received into his heart ... that mystery, that truly divine dimension of the redemption effected on Calvary by means of the death of the Son, together with the sacrifice of her maternal heart, together with her definitive 'fiat'."





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# GOVERNMENT

## PC, 2c

"All Institutes should share in the life of the Church. They should make their own and should foster to the best of their ability, in a manner consonant with their own natures, its initiatives and undertakings."

## d

"Institutes should see to it that their members have a proper understanding of men, of the conditions of the times and of the needs of the Church, this to the end that, making wise judgments about the contemporary world in the light of faith, and burning with apostolic zeal, they may be able to help men more effectively."

## e

"Even the best-contrived adaptations to the needs of our time will be of no avail unless they are animated by a spiritual renewal, which must always be assigned primary importance even in the active ministry."



**LG, 41**

"The forms and tasks of life are many but holiness is one — that sanctity which is cultivated by all who act under God's Spirit ... Each one, according to his own gifts and duties, must steadfastly advance along the way of living faith, which arouses hope and works through love."

**PC, 14**

"Superiors will have to render an account of the souls committed to their care (*He 13:17*). They should be docile to God's will in performing the task laid upon them and should exercise authority in a spirit of service of the brethren, thus giving expression to God's love for them ..."

"Superiors should therefore listen to their subjects willingly and promote cooperation between them for the good of the Institute and of the Church, retaining, however, their own authority to decide and to prescribe what is to be done."

"Chapters and Councils should faithfully discharge the role committed to them in government and, each of them in its own way, should give expression to the

involvement and the concern of all the members of the community for the good of the whole."

**PC, 6**

"Let them more and more live and think with the Church, and let them dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to its mission."



