

**Missionaries of the Company of Mary**

**MONTFORTIAN**  
**Today**

The Triptych/Fundamental Rule  
Constitutions  
and Statutes

**Rome 2020**

Missionaries of the Company of Mary

# MONTFORTIAN Today

The Triptych/Fundamental Rule  
Constitutions  
and Statutes

Rome 2020





**SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO RELIGIOSIS  
ET INSTITUTIS SAECULARIBUS**

Prot. n. L 15-1/83

**DECREE**

The aim of the Company of Mary (Montfort Missionaries) which has its General Curia in Rome, is to contribute to the establishing of the Reign of Jesus through Mary by its missionary apostolate among both Catholics and non-Catholics.

In accordance with the decrees of the Second Vatican Council and other ecclesiastical norms, the Company has carefully prepared a new text of the Constitutions, which the Superior General, after the vote of the General Chapter, has presented to the Holy See for approbation.

After submitting this text to the Consultors for their examination, and taking into account the favourable vote of the Congress, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular institutes, by this present decree, approves and confirms the French version of the text as modified by the same Congress, on condition that all the (relevant) prescriptions of the Canon Law be observed.

The same Sacred Congregation also approves, as a

legislative text, the 'Fundamental Rule' which precedes the Constitutions and is made up of three writings of the Founder, to the extent that, as far as norms are concerned, priority be given to the Constitutions; but as far as principles are concerned, the rule has priority.

It is the wish of this Sacred Congregation that, through the faithful observance of these texts, the fervent desire of the Founder be realised: "that the Lord may utilise the Montfort Missionaries to create a bodyguard of handpicked men, who will make his temple resound with the praise of his Glory" (PM 30).

Given at Rome on 24<sup>th</sup> March, on the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, in the year 1984.



E. Card. Pironio, Pref.

+ Legation Maya 0.1.2.

lea.



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Rome, 13 June 1994

Prot. n. L 15-1/94

Dear Father Superior General,

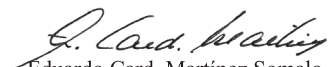
In response to your correspondence of 8 June, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approves by the present letter the new articles of your Constitutions contained in the enclosed document, of which a copy remains in the archives of this Dicastery.

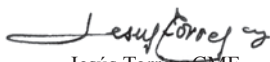
The approbation of these texts entails suppressions in various articles, suppressions equally approved as they are pointed out in your document of last 14 March.

You will note that we have removed from the approved text point c) of article 236. This point did not figure in your preceding document; your predecessors themselves had correctly suppressed in 1984 article 202 b) and Statute 63 indicating the powers of the provincial and local superiors regarding the concession of the faculty for hearing confessions. We have supposed that it was an error of the secretariat.

If you produce a new printed edition of your Constitutions, please have the kindness of sending us two copies

for our archives. I thank you in advance and assure you once more, dear Father, of my devoted sentiments in the Lord.

  
Eduardo Card. Martínez Somalo  
Prefect

  
Jesús Torres, CMF  
Under Secretary

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Reverend Father William J. Considine  
Superior General of the  
Montfort Missionaries

R O M E

Enclosed: Approved Text of the new articles.



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 21 June 2011

Prot. n. 49318/2005

Prot. n. L15<sup>-1</sup>/2011

Reverend Father,

Your correspondence of 22 and 31 May arrived here well and we thank you for them.

First of all, we must congratulate you for your re-election as Superior General of the *Congregation of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary*. This new mandate speaks to you of the gratitude and confidence that your brothers accord you. We rejoice and cordially wish that you continue this service with an ever-greater charity, in the school of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

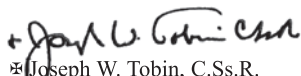
In what concerns the modifications adopted by the Capitular Assembly, this Dicastery is happy to be able to approve them (art. 3, 58, 138, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 149, 150, 155, 156, 157, 165, 169, 171, 172, 173, 177, 178, 181, 185, 186, 197, 198, 207, 213, 215, 225, 237, 238, 239, 250, 264).

However, in what concerns depositions from office (*cf.* C 231), the deposition of an Assistant must be submitted to the consideration of the Apostolic See, to which



decision one is held. It would also be advisable to foresee the case of the demission of the Superior General and of his deposition.

Looking forward, with interest, to receiving knowledge of the periodic Relation of the Congregation, I ask you to believe, Reverend Father, in the assurance of my faithful devotion in Christ.

  
✠ Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop Secretary

  
Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, O.Cist.  
Under Secretary

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FR. SANTINO BREMBILLA  
Superior General  
*Montfort Missionaries*  
Viale dei Monfortani, 65  
00135 **Roma**



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 14 January 2012

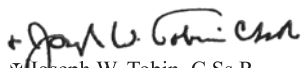
Prot. n. L15<sup>-1</sup>/2011


Father,

Your correspondence of this 6 December arrived here well and has retained our full attention. You submit there for the approbation of this Dicastery the modification of articles 223 and 231 of the Constitutions of the *Montfort Missionaries*.

These dispositions have been examined with care by this Dicastery. In that which concerns article 223, it is proper to add, for what treats the demission of the Superior General, that he presents his request “after having informed the Councilors”. With this reserve then, the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approves the modifications in question.

Benefiting from the occasion to offer you, as well as all the Montfort Missionaries, a holy New Year, I ask you to receive, Father, the assurance of my faithful devotion in Christ the Redeemer.

  
✠ Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop Secretary

  
Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, O.Cist.  
Under Secretary

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Rev. Father SANTINO BREMBILLA  
Superior General  
*Montfort Missionaries*  
Viale dei Monfortani, 65  
00135 **Roma**



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 13 July 2013

Prot. n. L15<sup>-1</sup>/2011

Reverend Father,

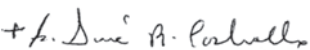
By correspondence of this past 5 June, you made us aware of certain errors and oversights on the occasion of the approbation by this Dicastery of modifications to the Constitutions of the *Montfort Missionaries*.

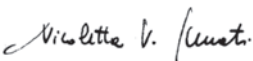
By the present letter we correct our correspondence of 21 June 2011 in what concerns the following dispositions:

- the modifications voted by the General Chapter relative to articles 174, 175, and 176 are approved,
- we take note that article 231 is not suppressed.

Furthermore, in view of the circumstances that you evoke on the subject of the demission presented by the Vicar General and the necessity to see to his replacement, this Dicastery concedes the dispensation from this article 231 and authorizes, by consequence, the Superior General to name a new Councilor with the consent of his Council.

Profiting from this occasion to confide you and all the Montfort Missionaries to the maternal intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I beg you to receive, Reverend Father, the assurance of my faithful devotion in Christ.

  
✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Archbishop Secretary

  
Sr. Nicoletta V. Spezzati, A.S.C.  
Under Secretary



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Rev. Father SANTINO BREMBILLA  
Superior General  
*Montfort Missionaries*  
Viale dei Monfortani, 65  
00135 **Roma**



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA  
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 21 August 2017

Prot. n. L15<sup>-1</sup>/2011

Dear Father,

By correspondence of last 14 June, Rev. Father Balaswamy Kata, Procurator General of the *Congregation of the Montfort Missionaries*, transmitted to us the request for approbation of the modifications to the Constitutions, voted by the required majority during the last General Chapter of the Institute in May 2017.

After having examined with care the modifications in question, this Dicastery accepts them, and by the present letter approves the modification to articles 147, 148, 162, 174 and 231 such as they result from the aforementioned correspondence of 14 June 2017.

Profiting from this occasion to greet you most fraternally,  
we beg you to receive, Father, Peace and Goodness in  
the Lord.

  
✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Archbishop Secretary



Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, O.Cist.  
Under Secretary

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Rev. Father LUIZ AUGUSTO STEFANI  
Superior General  
*Congregation of the Missionaries  
of the Company of Mary*  
Viale dei Monfortani, 65  
00135 **Roma**

## PREFACE

*“The living face of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort today is seen in the aged faces of Europe but also in the accents that come from the Caribbean and Latin America, from Africa and Asia. The living face of Montfort appears sometimes youthful and full of energy and vitality; and at times it is expressed in the experiences and wisdom that come from the passing of time. The living face of Montfort doesn’t know any boundaries; it is not found only in the north or only in the south. The living face of Montfort is **yours** and that of all **your** montfortian confreres around the world”* (Letter of the Capitulants to the Congregation, 20 May 2017).

Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort’s heritage is not solely his writings, his way of preaching missions, or the spirituality that inspires each of us. He has gifted us with a new way of living in the world: without borders. The participants in the 2017 General Chapter have reflected this conviction in the first part of their letter that was sent to each confrere.

Father de Montfort has left us also a proposed “style of living,” one that is based on fraternal relations and that these are the building blocks of a true “Company of Missionaries.” We see it reflected in the Manuscript Rule: *“The missionaries will have to take care to practice at the same time a charity that is affable and spontaneous, seeking the occasion to enliven each other; full of respect, they seek to honor and inspire the other; full of patience, they uphold each other mutually in their weaknesses”* (RM 44,1).



These and other inspiring texts, together with the Constitutions and Statutes, are the compass that orients us on the journey toward those fundamental values of living the montfortian consecrated life as “Missionaries of the Company of Mary.”

The more recent editions of the *Montfortian Today*, especially the editions of 1984 and 1994, responded to the needed updating of how we live our Montfortian life in the Church and world today. One of the inspiring additions has been the inclusion of the “Four Notes” in the montfortian mission that were approved by the General Chapter of 1987 and included in the 1994 edition of the *Montfortian Today: Evangelization, Mary, Availability, Working together* (S 7). Other adaptations have been made with the ultimate goal of keeping us up to date in our journey toward those fundamental values which we carry in our hearts.

The participants of the 2017 General Chapter have invited us to enter into a process of “ongoing conversion” and have summarized this process with the “Six Challenges and Six Alert Points” that, along with the Constitutions and Statutes, will be the inspiring instruments of the *Montfortian Today*.

May we walk always under the banner and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Throne of Wisdom, and Queen of all Hearts.

Rome, 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2019

Solemnity of Saint Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort

Fr. Luiz Augusto Stefani, SMM  
*Superior General*

## ABBREVIATIONS

L	Letters of Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort
LCM	Letter to the members of the Company of Mary
LPM	Letter to the people of Montbernage
PM	Prayer for Missionaries
RM	Rule of the Missionary Priests of the Company of Mary
SM	Secret of Mary
TD	True Devotion to Mary
C	Constitutions
S	Statutes
can(n)	Canon Law
CIVCSVA	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
RFIS	Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis
SCRIS	Sacred Congregation for the Religious and the Secular Institutes



## EDITORIAL NOTE

The present new edition of *Montfortian Today* is the fruit of the discussion and approval of the General Chapters of 2011 and 2017. As you receive a copy of the new edition and begin to read, you will find that some numbers of the Constitutions had been modified by the General Chapter 2011 and 2017 and were approved by the Holy See on 21 June 2011 and 21 August 2017 respectively. The modifications to the Constitutions 223 and 231 were also approved by the Holy See on 14 January 2012 (*ref. Letters of approval by the Holy See*). The Statutes which are under the competence of the General Chapter have also been modified and enhanced with special reference to the documents of the Church. Let us look at some of the modifications that have been taken.

Keeping in mind the future possibility of making some entities *communities attached to the Generalate*, another level has been added to the *Structures* (C 162) and, therefore, now the Company of Mary is constituted of six levels: 1) The Congregation, 2) Provinces, 3) Vice-Provinces, 4) General Delegations, 5) Local Communities attached to the Generalate and 6) Local Communities.

Responding to the call to promote the Internationality, there has been a movement of the confreres as missionaries from one entity to the other. These missionaries, who left

their mother entity to work in another entity, exercise their active and passive vote exclusively in the entity where they work (C 174).

Our Constitutions formerly spoke about the procedure to accept the resignation of an Assistant General without foreseeing the mode of replacement. In this edition you will find included in the same number the procedure to replace an Assistant General if the office falls vacant (C 231).

Some of the present Constitutions show us a clear path with regard to the contracts with the local Ordinaries (C 58), the levels of formation (C 138 ff.), erection or a suppression of a house of an entity (C 171) and how the government of a Vice-Province functions (C 215).

You will also find that some of the Statutes regarding vows, community life and solidarity have been developed keeping in mind some of the Church documents, like the apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996) and the orientations published by CIVCSVA, e.g. *Service of Authority and Obedience* (2008) and *Economy at the Service of the Charism and Mission* (2018).

There is a new method followed in numbering of the Statutes. The present Statutes will have the same number as their Constitutions, but with numbers added according to the points it has. For example, if the Constitutions Number is 55, its Statute will follow as 55.1, to facilitate an easy research for the reader.

The Superior General and his Council are grateful to all who contributed to prepare this new edition of *Montfortian Today* and wish that it bears fruit in the life of all the Missionaries of the Company of Mary.

Fr. Balaswamy Kata, SMM  
*Procurator General*



Part one:

**TRIPTYCH/  
FUNDAMENTAL RULE**





## Prayer for Missionaries

1. *Memento, Domine, congregationis tuae, quam possedisti ab initio.* Remember, Lord this Congregation which you have possessed from all eternity. You have made it your own from the beginning, *ab initio*, when your mind dwelt on it before time began. You made it your own from the beginning, *ab initio*, when you held it in your hand as you created the world out of nothing. You made it your own when you took it to your heart while your dear Son, dying on the cross, bedewed it with his blood, consecrated it by his death and entrusted it to his holy Mother's keeping.

2. Give free rein, then, O Lord, to your merciful intent and raise up men of your right hand whom you revealed through the prophetic insight of some of your greatest servants – Francis of Paola, Vincent Ferrer, Catherine of Sienna and so many others during the last century and even in our day.

3. *Memento.* Ever keep this Congregation in mind, Almighty God, and, by the power of your right arm which has lost nothing of its strength, make it a living reality and lead it to perfection. *Innova signa, immuta mirabilia, sentiamus adjutorium brachii tui:* Great God, who can change lifeless stones into sons of Abraham, say

but one word and it will be enough to send good workers to gather in your harvest, and missionaries worthy of the name to work in your Church.

**4. Memento.** God of all goodness, remember your mercy of times past, and, in that same mercy, be ever mindful of this Congregation. Remember the promises you made to us, time and again, through your prophets and through your divine Son, that you would grant our just petitions.

Remember also the prayers of your servants in past ages. May their longings, their tearful pleadings, and the blood which they shed for your sake be ever in your sight and become a powerful claim on your mercy. But above all, bear in mind your dear Son: *respice in faciem Christi tui*. Look upon the face of your anointed one. The agony he suffered, the shame he endured, the loving complaint he uttered in the Garden of Olives: *quae utilitas in sanguine meo*, "Of what use is my death to you?", his cruel death and the blood he shed, all these cry out to you for mercy, so that, by this Congregation, his kingdom may bring down the empire of your enemies and rise upon its ruins.

**5. Memento.** Be mindful, Lord, of your Congregation, when you come to dispense your justice. *Tempus faciendi, Domine, dissipaverunt legem tuam*: it is time to act, O Lord, they have rejected your law. It is indeed time to fulfil your promise. Your divine commandments are broken, your Gospel is thrown aside, torrents of iniquity flood the

whole earth carrying away even your servants. The whole land is desolate, ungodliness reigns supreme, your sanctuary is desecrated and the abomination of desolation has even contaminated the holy place. God of Justice, God of Vengeance, will you let everything, then, go the same way? Will everything come to the same end as Sodom and Gomorrah? Will you never break your silence? Will you tolerate all this for ever? Is it not true that your will must be done on earth as it is in heaven? Is it not true that your kingdom must come? Did you not give to some souls, dear to you, a vision of the future renewal of the Church? Are not the Jews to be converted to the truth and is this not what the Church is waiting for? All the blessed in heaven cry out for justice to be done: *vindica*, and the faithful on earth join in with them and cry out: *amen, veni, Domine*, amen, come, Lord. All creatures, even the most insensitive, lie groaning under the burden of Babylon's countless sins and plead with you to come and renew all things: *omnis creatura ingemiscit, etc.*, the whole creation is groaning...

6. Lord Jesus, *memento Congregationis tuae*: be mindful of your Congregation. Give your mother this new Company so that you may renew all things through her and bring the era of grace to a close through Mary just as you began it through her. *Da Matri tuae liberos, alioquin moriar*: to this end, increase the number of those who call her Mother and serve her. If this is not to be so, let me die.

*Da Matri tuae*: it is for your Mother's sake that I make this request. It is she who gave you birth and nur-

tured you. Remembering this, how can you refuse me? Remember whose Son you are, and grant my plea. Remember what she means to you and what you mean to her, and fulfil my holy desires.

It is no personal favour that I ask, but something which concerns your glory alone, something you can and, I make bold to say, you must grant since not only are you true God having all power in heaven and on earth, but you are also the most dutiful of sons with an infinite love for your Mother.

7. What, then, am I asking for? *Liberos*, men who are free, priests who are free with the freedom that comes from you, detached from everything, without father, mother, brothers, sisters or relatives and friends as the world and the flesh understand them, without worldly possessions to encumber or distract them, and devoid of all self-interest.

8. *Liberos*: men who are free but still in bondage to your love and your will; men after your own heart who, without taint or impediment of self-love, will carry out your will to the full and, like David of old, lay low all your enemies, with the Cross for their staff and the Rosary for their sling: *in baculo Cruce et in virga Virgine*.

9. *Liberos*: men as free as the clouds that sail high above the earth, filled with the dew of heaven, and moving, without let or hindrance, according to the inspiration of the Spirit. They are included among those whom

the prophet had in mind when he asked: *qui sunt isti qui sicut nubes volant? Ubi erat impetus spiritus illuc gradiebantur*, What men are these who move like clouds in the sky, wherever the Spirit leads them?

**10.** *Liberos*: free men. Men always available, always ready to obey you when those in authority speak. Always with the words of Samuel on their lips: *praesto sum*, here I am; always ready to be on the move and to suffer with you and for you, just as the Apostles were: *eamus et moriamur cum illo*, let us go and die along with him.

**11.** *Liberos*: true children of Mary whom she has conceived and begotten by her love, nurtured and reared, upheld by her and enriched with her graces.

**12.** *Liberos*: true servants of the Blessed Virgin who, like a Dominic of old, will range far and wide, with the holy Gospel issuing from their mouths like a bright and burning flame, and the Rosary in their hands, and bay like your watchdogs, burn like fire and dispel the darkness of the world like a sun. Their inspiration will be their authentic devotion to Mary which will be interior and devoid of all hypocrisy, exterior but not critical, prudent and well-informed, tender without indifference, constant without fickleness, holy without presumption. In this way, they will crush the head of the serpent wherever they go and ensure that the curse you have laid upon it of old will be fulfilled to the letter: *inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, inter semen tuum et semen ipsius et ipsa conteret caput tuum*,

I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed and he shall bruise your head.

**13.** True it is, indeed, great God, as you yourself have foretold, that the devil will lie in wait to attack the heel of this mysterious woman, that is, the little Company of her children who will come towards the end of time. There will be great enmity between the blessed posterity of Mary and the accursed issue of Satan, the only enmity which you have instigated. The children of Belial will wage war against the children of your blessed Mother and afflict them with persecutions which will have no other outcome than to make more manifest, in a striking manner, the power of your grace, their courage and virtue, and the reality of your Mother's authority. It cannot be otherwise since, from the beginning of time, you have appointed this humble Virgin to crush this proud spirit under her heel: *Ipsa conteret caput tuum*.

**14.** *Alioquin moriar*: otherwise, I would be better dead. Would it not be better for me to be dead, Lord, than to see you offended daily so deliberately and with such impunity and, daily, to stand, myself, in ever-increasing danger of being swept away by the ever-swelling flood of iniquity? I would rather die a thousand deaths than endure such a fate. Send me your help from heaven or let me die.

Were it not for the hope that I have that, sooner or later, the interests of your glory will prevail and that you will hear this poor sinner's prayer, as you have heard so many others: *iste pauper clamavit et Dominus exaudivit eum*,

I would make mine the ultimate plea of your prophet: *tolle animam meam*, take away my life. Yet, my trust in you is so great that I am inspired to cry out like another of your prophets: *non moriar sed vivam et narrabo opera Domini*, I will live and proclaim the Lord's mighty works. This I will do until the time comes when I can say with Simeon: *nunc dimittis servum tuum in pace, quia viderunt oculi mei, etc.*, now, O Lord, you let your servant depart in peace because my eyes have seen your salvation.

**15. Memento.** Holy Spirit, be ever mindful that it is you who, with Mary as your faithful spouse, are to bring forth and fashion the children of God. In her and with her, you brought forth the Head of the Church and, in the same way, you will bring all his members into being. Within the Trinity, none of the divine persons is begotten by you. Outside the Trinity, you are the begetter of all the children of God. All the saints who have ever existed or will exist until the end of time, will be the outcome of your love working through Mary.

**16.** The reign especially attributed to God the Father lasted until the Flood and ended in a deluge of water. The reign of Jesus Christ ended in a deluge of blood, but your reign, Spirit of the Father and the Son, is still unended and will come to a close with a deluge of fire, love and justice.

**17.** When will it happen, this fiery deluge of pure love with which you are to set the whole world ablaze and which is to come, so gently yet so forcefully, that



all nations, Moslems, idolaters and even Jews, will be caught up in its flames and be converted? *Non est qui se abscondat a calore ejus. Accendatur*: none can shield himself from the heat it gives, so let its flames rise. Rather let this divine fire which Jesus Christ came to bring on earth be enkindled before the all-consuming fire of your anger comes down and reduces the whole world to ashes. *Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur et renovabis faciem terrae*: when you breathe your Spirit into them, they are restored and the face of the earth is renewed. Send this all-consuming Spirit upon the earth to create priests who burn with this same fire and whose ministry will renew the face of the earth and reform your Church.

**18.** *Memento Congregationis tuae*: it is to be a Congregation, a gathering, a selection, a picked handful of predestined men to be chosen by you from among those who are in the world: *Ego elegi vos de mundo*, I have chosen you from amidst the world.

You are to select from all these fierce wolves a flock of peaceful sheep; from all these ugly crows, a flight of pure doves and royal eagles; from all these buzzing hornets, a swarm of honey-bees; from all these slow-moving tortoises, a herd of nimble deer; from all these timid hares, a pride of bold lions.

Lord, *congrega nos de nationibus*, gather us in from every nation. Bring us together and unite us and may all the glory be given to your holy and mighty name!

**19.** You revealed the coming of this noble Company to one of your prophets who concealed the secret of this revelation under the cloak of obscure but divinely inspired words:

1. *Pluviam voluntariam segregabis, Deus, haereditati tuae et infirmata est, tu vero perfecisti eam.* - 2. *Animalia tua habitabunt in ea. Parasti in dulcedine tua pauperi, Deus.* - 3. *Dominus dabit verbum evangelizantibus virtute multa.* - 4. *Rex virtutum dilecti dilecti in speciei domus dividere spolia.* - 5. *Si dormiatis inter medios cleros, pennae columbae deargentatae et posteriora dorsi ejus in pallore auri.* - 6. *Deus discernit caelestis reges super eam, nive dealbabuntur in Selmon; mons Dei, mons pinguis.* - 7. *Mons coagulatus, mons pinguis; ut quid suspicamini montes coagulatos.* - 8. *Mons in quo beneplacitum est Deo habitare in eo, etenim Deus habitabit in finem.*

**20.** What is meant, Lord, by this abundant rain that you have stored up for your languishing heritage, if not these holy missionaries, Mary's children, whom you are to gather together and set apart from the rest of men for the good of your Church, at present so weakened and besmirched by the crimes of her children?

**21.** And who are these creatures and these poor folk who will dwell in the heritage you have given them and there feed on the divine sweetness you have prepared for them? They are none other than the poor missionaries, entirely dependent on Providence, who will feast to their heart's content on the spiritual delights you provide for

them. They are none other than those mysterious animals described by Ezechiel who will have the kindly nature of a man – witness their selfless and beneficent love of their neighbour; the face and boldness of a lion – witness their holy anger, their burning and prudent zeal against the devil, the children of Babylon; the strength of an ox – witness their apostolic labours and their self-mortification; the soaring flight of an eagle – witness the height of their contemplation. Such will be the missionaries you have in mind for your Church. They will look kindly on their fellow-men, fearlessly on your enemies, impartially on themselves and, when they look on you, they will be carried away in contemplation.

**22.** These followers of the Apostles will preach with great power and effect. So powerful will their impact be that they will stir the minds and hearts of all who hear them. It is to them that you will give your word: *dabit verbum*; the very words of your own mouth and wisdom: *dabo vobis os et sapientiam cui non poterunt resistere omnes adversarii vestri*, and none of their enemies will be able to withstand them.

**23.** It is among these men so dear to you, that you, Holy Spirit, as the greatest gift that Jesus Christ, the beloved Son, has made to men, will be pleased to dwell since, in all the missions they undertake, their sole aim will be to give glory to you for the spoils they have won from your enemies: *Rex virtutum dilecti dilecti et speciei domus dividere spolia.*

**24.** The silver wings of the dove will be theirs because of their total dependence on Providence and their devotion to Mary; *inter medios cleros pennae columbae argentatae*, they shall be covered with silver like the wings of a dove, by the purity of the doctrine they teach and their irreproachable life; *et posteriora dorsi ejus in pallore auri*, for them the silvered pinions of the dove will be the perfect love they have for their neighbour which enables them to bear with his shortcomings, and their great love for Jesus Christ which enables them to carry his cross.

**25.** You alone, King of heaven and King of Kings, will set these men apart like kings and make them purer than the snows on Zalmon, the mountain of God, where all good things grow in abundance, this strong and compact mountain where God delights to dwell, and dwell forever.

Lord, God of truth, who is symbolised by this mysterious mountain of which so many marvels are told, if not Mary, your beloved spouse, whose beginnings are established on the heights: *Fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis. Mons in vertice montium*, where all other mountains end.

Blessed, a thousandfold blessed, are those priests whom you have chosen with such care to dwell with you on this divine mountain of all delights. There they will become kings for eternity by their contempt of the world and their nearness to God, and purer than snow by their union with Mary, your beautiful, pure and immaculate spouse. They will be enriched by the dew of heaven above and the fat of the earth beneath, and all the bless-

ings of time and eternity which Mary possesses in such abundance will be theirs.

From the summit of this mountain, they will, like Moses of old, address their ardent prayers to heaven, turning them into the weapons which will overcome or convert their enemies.

This is the mountain on which Jesus Christ, who dwells there forever, will teach them in his own words the meaning of the eight beatitudes.

It is on this mountain that they will be transfigured as he was on Mount Thabor; that they will die with him as he died on Calvary, and from it, they will ascend to heaven as he did from the Mount of Olives.

**26.** *Memento Congregationis tuae. Tuae:* Be mindful of this, your Congregation, for it is you alone who must, by your grace, make it a living reality. If man is the first to put his hand to the work, nothing will come of it. If he contributes anything of his own to what you are doing, the entire undertaking will be warped and come down in ruins. *Tuae Congregationis:* your own Congregation. *Opus tuum fac,* it is your work, great God. Make your divine purpose a reality. Muster your chosen men from every corner of your dominions. Call them and gather them together. Mobilise them and make of them an army to fight against your enemies.

**27.** Look, Lord God of hosts, the captains of war are forming companies, each with its full complement of soldiers; and potentates have recruited vast armies. The

ship-owners have whole fleets at their disposal, and the merchants are thronging to the markets and fairs. What a motley assembly of ungodly men! Thieves, drunkards and profligates gather together every day under the flimsiest pretexts in order to oppose you! Blow a whistle, beat a drum, show the blunt point of a sword, promise a withered laurel branch as a reward, offer a piece of gold or silver; in short, a whiff of fame, a worthless reward, a vile beastly pleasure, and, in the twinkling of an eye, along come the thieves, soldiers rally by battalions, and merchants flock together. Gambling dens and market places are crammed full and the whole of land and sea is covered with an innumerable multitude of reprobates. These people, although at variance among themselves for reasons of distance, temperament or personal interest, are nevertheless all unanimously resolved to wage war to the death against you, under the banner and leadership of the devil.

**28.** How is it, then, great God, that although it is so glorious, so satisfying and so profitable to serve you, hardly anyone will support your cause? Scarcely one soldier lines up under your standard. Scarcely anyone fired with zeal for your glory will stand up and cry out, like St. Michael in the midst of his fellow-angels: *Quis ut Deus?* Who is like to God? Let me then raise the cry of alarm: "The House of God is on fire! Souls are perishing in the flames! The sanctuary itself is ablaze! Help! Help! Good people! Help our brother who is being murdered. Help our children who are being massacred. Help our kind father who is being done to death!"

**29.** *Qui Domini est jungatur mihi* (Ex 32:26): if anyone has the Lord's cause at heart, let him stand side by side with me. Let all those worthy priests who are to be found throughout the world, those still in the fight and those who have withdrawn to deserts and secluded places, let them, I say, come and join us. In unity there is strength. With the cross as our standard, let us form a strongly disciplined army drawn up in lines of battle. Let us make a concerted attack on the enemies of God who have already sounded the call to arms: *sonuerunt, frenduerunt, fremuerunt, multiplicati sunt. Dirumpamus vincula eorum et projiciamus a nobis jugum ipsorum. Qui habitat in caelis irridebit eos.* They have sounded the alarm, vented their anger and become a mighty army. Let us break their bonds asunder and throw away their yoke. He who dwells in heaven will laugh them to scorn.

**30.** *Exsurgat Deus et dissipentur inimici ejus!*  
*Exsurge, Domine, quare obdormis? Exsurge.*

Let the Lord arise and let his enemies be scattered. Arise, Lord. Why is it you appear to be like one asleep? Arise in your might, your mercy and your justice and create this bodyguard of hand-picked men who will protect your house, defend your glory and save the souls that are yours. Thus, there will be but one sheepfold and one shepherd, and all will make your temple resound with their praise of your glory: *et in templo ejus omnes dicent gloriam. Amen.*

God alone!

# Rule of the Missionary Priests of the Company of Mary

## The special aim of the Company

1. Only priests who have already completed their seminary training are to be admitted to the Company. Therefore, clerics in minor orders are excluded until such time as they have been ordained priests. However, there is a seminary in Paris where young clerical students who are called to the missions in the Company receive academic and spiritual training to prepare them to become members.

2. The priests who enter must be called by God to preach missions in the steps of the Apostles who were poor, and not be curates, parish priests, teachers in colleges or seminaries, as so many other good priests are, God having called them to this good work.

The members of the Company, therefore, avoid such work as being contrary to their missionary vocation so as to feel free at all times to repeat after Jesus Christ: "The Lord has sent me to preach good news to the poor" (Lk 4:18), or, as the Apostle said: "Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel" (1 Cor 1:17). They look upon the occasions which occur of helping people in these various other ways as a very subtle temptation. Unfortunately, this is the change or deviation which has



occurred in several good communities which were established in recent times by the holy inspiration of their founders for the purpose of preaching missions. The pretext given was that they could thus do more good. Some turned to educational work, others to the training of priests and clerics. If they still give a few missions, these are only incidental and unplanned. In these communities, the majority of the members live a sedentary or even solitary life in their town or country residences. Their motto is: *habitatores quietis* (lovers of the quiet life) whereas the motto of the true missionary is one which enables him to say in all truth like St. Paul: *instabilis sumus* (we have no permanent home of our own) (1 Cor 4:11).

**3.** Priests in poor health or old priests, that is, men over sixty years of age are not admitted since they are not equal to the struggles which missionaries, as valiant champions of Jesus Christ, must wage increasingly against the enemies of our salvation. If, however, a priest of the Company becomes incapable, through age or infirmity, of continuing missionary work, he can retire to a house which the Company has set aside for such cases.

**4.** Lay Brothers are admitted into the Company to take care of temporal affairs provided they are detached, robust and obedient and ready to do all they are told to do.

**5.** Priests and Brothers alike must be without benefices, even simple ones, and without temporal

possessions, even those they may inherit. If they did have any before entering the Company, they must return the benefices to those who presented them. What they inherited must be given to their relatives or to the poor, having first taken the advice of a good counsellor. They thus exchange their paternal inheritance for one which God himself gives them, namely, the inexhaustible inheritance of his divine Providence.

**6.** So, free from every other occupation and unimpeded by the administration of any temporal possessions which might hold them back, they stand ready, like St. Paul, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Francis Xavier and other apostles, to run wherever God may call them. Whether the call be to the city or the country, to a market-town or village, to one diocese or another, near or far, they will always be ready to answer, when obedience calls: "My heart is ready, O God" (Ps 107:2), "Here am I" (Gen 46:2), "Behold I come" (Ps 39:8). Never will they have the heart to say what is being said daily, typically by all those worldly priests, those well-fed beneficed clerics, those pleasure-seeking ecclesiastics and those lovers of ease: "I have bought a field ... I have bought five yoke of oxen ... have me excused ... I cannot come" (Lk 14:18).

**7.** Although they do not confine the grace of God or their own zeal to rural areas alone, as do M. Vincent's missionaries, but go to preach missions regardless of whether they are in the town or country, according to

the will of God as manifested through their Superior, they will nevertheless share in the most tender inclinations of the heart of Jesus, their model who said: "The Lord sent me to preach the good news to the poor" (Lk 4:18). Consequently, they will, in general, prefer rural areas to the towns and the poor to the rich.

**8.** To be accepted as permanent members of the Company, they must first, in the presence of the Superior, make simple vows of poverty and obedience for one year. These vows are renewable annually. Then, if, at the end of an unbroken five-year period spent in the Company, they themselves feel they are truly called by God to belong to the Company and are judged to be so called, they take the two vows of poverty and obedience in perpetuity. These being only simple vows, a dispensation from them in order to leave the Company for legitimate reasons can be obtained from the bishop. On its part, the Company in accordance with the right it reserves to itself can dismiss one of its members, even after final vows, should his behaviour become an occasion of scandal rather than edification in spite of the steps taken to correct him. These two conditions are implicitly contained in this second profession, as is the case with the vows of many other communities.

**9.** The Company never undertakes responsibility for students or boarders, clerical or lay, not even if one of them wishes to make over all his worldly goods to it.

## Detachment or evangelical poverty

**10.** (1) As already stated, they are to have neither inherited possessions nor income from a benefice as this is contrary to apostolic detachment. Their sole resource must be God's providence. God will decide who will provide for them and the manner in which this provision will be made.

**11.** (2) The members of the Company are to have no money or possessions of their own either openly or in secret. The Community will supply all that is necessary in the way of food and clothing, depending on what Providence supplies to the community.

**12.** (3) Within the realm of France, the Company will own two houses and never more than two. The first will be in Paris for the training of clerics in the apostolate. The second will be situated outside Paris, in one of the provinces of the realm. There, the members of the Company who have retired from the fray may rest and end their days in retirement and solitude after having spent the best years of their lives in the conquest of souls.

The Company may accept, as coming from the hands of divine Providence, any other houses which may be donated to them in the various dioceses where God calls them. It will, however, accept only the use of these premises and the missionaries will consider themselves as tenants who have rented a house or as travellers who

lodge at an inn. If no one donates a house, the Company will not ask for one but will be content to lease one, preferably in the country. If, however, some kind person makes over a house to the Company, the latter will by deed convey the ownership of these premises to the bishop of the place, and his successors, and preserve only the use. Consequently, the said bishop and his successors will have every right and all authority to take this house away from the missionaries if, in the course of time, the latter adopt a sedentary way of life and do not fulfil their duties. The bishop and his successors may divert the use of the house to other charitable purposes more beneficial to the people but they may not appropriate the revenues accruing from it.

In this way, the missionaries will not become settled in any one place as communities, even the most regular, normally do. In place of this undesirable stability they will be more solidly founded on God alone provided they always yield themselves without reserve to the care of his Providence. They will not be distracted from their apostolic work by questions of rates and rents and the disputes that seem to follow inevitably on the ownership of houses and land. They then become more aware that they are to consider themselves as strangers and pilgrims and to look upon the houses where they are received simply as hostels which they have to leave when their work is done so as to be always on the move. "I appointed you that you should go and bear fruit ..." (Jn 15:16).

**13.** (4) When they are giving a mission, they may not, as long as it lasts, receive any money as alms from those to whom they are preaching. However, when the mission is ended, they may accept through their Superior whatever has been given out of pure charity or gratitude.

**14.** (5) It is strictly forbidden, either during the mission or afterwards, to ask anyone, directly or indirectly for money, food or anything else whatsoever. They must rely entirely on divine Providence for all things. God would sooner work a miracle than fail to supply the needs of those who trust in him. They are not, however, forbidden to mention in public or in private their state of dependence on Providence and the rules they follow in this matter.

**15.** (6) They will say all their masses *gratis* for all who ask them to do so, following in this the practice of the members of the Society of Jesus; they may undertake to say up to thirty such masses but no more. If, however, anyone wishes to give them a sum of money as a token of thanks or as a stipend, they will arrange for it to be handed to the Director or bursar.

The Director of the mission must, as a general rule, offer his masses only for the benefactors of the missionaries and of the poor. He must not fail to inform the people of this.

**16.** (7) When they go to give a mission, the Director or bursar will, if possible, bring along a sum of money for alms- giving, to help repair the churches and feed

the poor of the localities where they are going. In the case where people, because of their lack of charity or their poverty, fail to provide for the needs of the missionaries, the latter may use part of this money for their upkeep. This self-supporting thrift of theirs, far from contradicting their dependence on Providence, will on the contrary, turn to the advantage of the missionaries and incite the people to contribute towards the repairing of churches and the maintenance of the poor. Moreover, having one common purse "to provide for their own needs and those of the poor," is an example given to us by Jesus Christ himself.

**17.** (8) Should any priest who enters the Company be in possession of money, he must deposit the entire sum into this 'purse of Providence.' If, after he enters, his relatives or friends give him an unsolicited donation or Mass stipend, he must deposit this also in the common purse so that it may be used for the needs of the whole community. This contribution does not entitle him to claim any particular advantage or personal privilege any more than if he had brought nothing with him and had not been asked to contribute anything.

**18.** (9) If, either before or after making his vows, one of the missionaries becomes headstrong and leaves the Company without permission or through formal disobedience, he has no right to ask for even a partial refund or for any compensation for what he may have donated

as alms to the Company which is committed to voluntary poverty. On the other hand, if he did not leave of his own accord but was dismissed for some serious fault other than formal disobedience, account will be taken, at least pro rata, of what he brought with him, expenditure on his upkeep having been deducted.

## Obedience

**19.** (1) They will obey their superiors in a wholehearted and indiscriminating manner, readily and without delay, joyfully and without showing any vexation, blindly without raising any objection, with holiness in mind and for God alone. This is easier said than done, especially when we see how the world, not excluding the world of ecclesiastics, is bent on doing its own will and when we see the disorders brought about by those whose self-will insists on doing only what suits them because such is their good pleasure. Nevertheless, in this Company, as in the Society of Jesus, it is obedience as we have described it which is the foundation and unshakable support of all its holiness and of all the blessings which God confers or will confer through its ministry.

**20.** (2) Their Spiritual Director must always be a member of the Company and they will obey him in matters pertaining to the guidance of their conscience and open their hearts to him in all simplicity and confidence. They should neither undertake nor omit anything impor-



tant without informing him and obtaining his approval and permission.

**21.** (3) They will obey the Superior of the Company in all things, great and small, whether prescribed by the Rule or not, both in matters concerning the allocation of work and the good order of the Company.

**22.** (4) They will obey the bishop of the diocese in which they happen to be, the Vicars-General and other ecclesiastical superiors who represent the bishop, and the parish priest of the locality where they are giving the mission. They will obey them in all things which concern the external organization of the mission such as the place, the time and other such circumstances. These matters, of no great consequence in themselves, take on a very beneficial and important aspect when regulated by obedience.

Should any ecclesiastical superior command something which runs counter to their most important rules or to their vows, they would not be obliged to obey him. If, however, he commands or forbids or even strongly advises them to do things which in themselves are not very important, they will follow his decision without hesitation even though they are not in the habit of either omitting or doing such things. Their obedience in such circumstances will make the action more sanctifying and of greater consequence.

**23.** (5) Each member must faithfully discharge the duties entrusted to him and will not, unless directed to do so

by holy obedience, pry into the work of another in order to find out what he is doing and how he is doing it.

**24.** (6) They will obey the least important of the community's rules with perfect fidelity and consider them all as being as dear to Jesus Christ as the apple of his eye. It is fidelity of this kind which shows that they are led by the Holy Spirit and not by the spirit of the world which, even where virtue is concerned, has no use for anything unless it is showy and has a high-sounding name.

**25.** (7) They will look upon formal or obdurate disobedience to a superior, even in unimportant things, as the greatest offence that can be committed in the Company and as perhaps the only one which merits exclusion from the community, no matter how old or holy the offender may otherwise be.

**26.** (8) They must be so penetrated with love and respect for this divine virtue that they will be ready to sacrifice their bodies, their health, their lives and all else when obedience commands them to do something both good and feasible, however difficult and distasteful it may appear to human nature. Therefore, when they happen to discover any faults, public or private, which they may have committed by surprise or temptation, against this heavenly virtue, they will punish themselves immediately and ask their superior to impose a penance on them.

**27.** (9) They are, however, permitted to state openly

and straightforwardly the reasons they may have for omitting or for not undertaking what is commanded. Once they have done so, they must, if their reasons have not prevailed, obey blindly and promptly without asking the why or wherefore. Their obedience must involve not only their will but also their mind and their understanding and they must believe, in spite of their own personal views, that what the superior has commended or forbidden is absolutely what is best in the eyes of God.

### Prayers and spiritual exercises

**28.** (1) All the year round, they will make every morning a meditation lasting at least half-an-hour.

**29.** (2) Every day they will say all fifteen decades of the Rosary and also the Little Crown of the Blessed Virgin at times best suited to their convenience. The purpose of this heaven-sent devotion is to call down the blessing of God on themselves and on their ministry. They will become aware of this from their own daily experience.

**30.** (3) Normally, they will celebrate Holy Mass daily, having first suitably prepared themselves. After Mass, they will spend at least half-an-hour in thanksgiving. They will consider as a subtle and common temptation anything which might prevent them from devoting this time to thanksgiving. As the saying has it: "How can a man who does no good to himself do any good to others?" (Sir 14:5).

**31.** (4) They will use the Roman Breviary and say it together as far as their work permits. If they have to say it in private, they should do so with exemplary modesty, attention and devotion.

**32.** (5) Every day before their midday meal, they will make their particular examen together. It should last about a quarter of an hour.

**33.** (6) After they have returned from their missions, they will hold at least one day of recollection every month, spending the whole day in prayer and penance.

**34.** (7) Their meals will be taken in silence and will be marked by charity, reserve and sobriety. If they have to speak during meals, it must be quietly and briefly.

**35.** (8) When they have completed their mission schedule and return to enjoy the rest which Divine Wisdom provides for them and counsels them to take, "Come aside and rest a little" (Mk 6:31), they will apply themselves to study in order to perfect themselves more and more in the art of preaching and hearing confessions.

**36.** (9) The Rule does not prescribe any corporal penances. This is left to their own fervour controlled by obedience. They will, however, abstain from meat on Wednesdays and fast on Fridays or Saturdays and, on the evenings of these two days only a light meal is to be served.

## Contempt of the world

**37.** (1) They will have neither the sentiments of the world in their minds, nor its maxims in their hearts nor its ways in their behaviour.

**38.** (2) Their motto will be: “Do not follow the ways of the world” (Rom 12:2). Consequently, they will avoid, as far as is consistent with charity and obedience, whatever might savour of worldliness such as wearing wigs and skullcaps, muffs and gloves, long-flowing sashes, fancy shoes, expensive materials, glossy hats, or using tobacco in the form of snuff or in any other way, etc.

**39.** (3) They must not condemn out of hand those who, for reasons of propriety or necessity, make use of these things, but to those who try to persuade them to do the same they will reply: “Such is not our custom” (1 Cor 11:16). Since by their ministry they profess publicly opposition to the world of antichrist, they keep as far away from it as possible, even in matters, indifferent in themselves, but which could lead them little by little to conform to it. “The man who despises little things will gradually be brought to his ruin” (Sir 19:1).

**40.** (4) Nevertheless, they must not affect any singularity in their appearance but try, in so far as divine Providence with motherly care makes provision for them, to dress like ordinary ecclesiastics of good standing,

especially those of the seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris, and their collar, hat, cape and other articles of clothing will be of the same style as theirs.

**41.** (5) During their missions, they never go out to dine in private houses except once or twice at the local parish priest's house. When they are not engaged in mission work, they may do so only very rarely and with special permission from the Superior.

**42.** (6) They are not to send or receive letters without first handing them to the Superior who will read them if he thinks it opportune.

**43.** (7) Whenever possible, they travel to their missions on foot, following the example given by Jesus Christ and apostolic men.

If, however, their health is poor or the roads are bad, they may have no qualms about accepting any help which God's providence may provide.

### **Their charity towards their neighbour**

**44.** (1) Their charity to one another will be full of attention and good will, and they will look for opportunities to do one another a good turn. It will be marked by mutual respect which brings them to give precedence to others and by patience which will enable them to bear with one another's faults.

**45.** (2) This queen of all the virtues is the queen and superior who governs the Company with her golden sceptre. She is its life-blood, the bond which holds it together and its guardian; pride, self-conceit and self-seeking being banished from it. "Cross the threshold, life-giving love reigns within."

**46.** (3) Their charity towards everyone, especially towards their enemies, will be joyful and sincere. They will return good for evil and, far from complaining about anyone who has done them a notable injury, or speaking ill of him or taking revenge, they will pray to God for him for a week.

**47.** (4) Be it during the time of their missions or not, the poor are to be the special objects of their care. They must never refuse to help them, materially when possible, and spiritually, even if they say only one Hail Mary.

**48.** (5) After each catechetical instruction, they will provide a meal for all the poor of the parish who have attended the instruction and every morning and evening they will bring one of them in to eat at their table.

**49.** (6) They will strive to implement faithfully the words which express so well the charity of the great Apostle: "*omnibus omnia factus sum*" (1 Cor 9:22), becoming out of love all things to all men, even in indifferent matters, without getting caught up in the ways of the world or in any way becoming slack in the observance of their duty.

## Directives to be followed during their missions

**50.** (1) They will give all their missions in complete dependence on Providence and must not accept any endowment for future missions as do some communities of missionaries founded by the King or by private persons.

There are four main reasons for this:

(i) It is the example which Jesus Christ, the apostles and apostolic men have handed down to us.

(ii) God repays a hundredfold even in this world those who show charity to the missionaries and often (as experience proves) gives them the grace of conversion as a reward for their alms-giving. "Give and it will be given to you" (Lk 6:38).

(iii) This mutual charity brings with it its own recompense in the form of a wonderful unanimity of heart between the faithful and the missionaries. who are preaching to them. Charity begets charity.

(iv) The grace of a mission thus founded on Providence and on complete dependence on the people (a state of affairs most repugnant to proud nature) is, by far, the most effective and powerful means of converting sinners. In endowed missions, the missionaries are set up by their independence on a kind of pedestal and this, while flattering their pride and heaping honour on them, does not win for them the love of their neighbour or the grace of God. Only those who have tried both these ways of giving missions can appreciate how true this is.



**51.** (2) Should some kind person wish to defray alone all the expenses of the mission, they will thank him or her for this generous offer without, however, accepting it. They will simply ask this person to give what he pleases during the time of the mission when they are entirely dependent on the generosity of the faithful. They do this because it is not right that any one person should by a monopoly of giving deprive the missionaries of that total dependence on divine Providence which they have undertaken precisely for the good of the people themselves.

**52.** (3) About two weeks before the mission is due to begin, one or two of the missionaries should go, whenever possible, to give advance notice of it to the people of the locality. This announcement should take the form of an appeal to the people's feelings so that the missionaries may:

(a) persuade them to give up their sinful ways;

(b) prepare the way for Jesus Christ as did the disciples whom Jesus sent two by two to the places where he was to go;

(c) devote themselves to prayer in order to be worthy of the grace of the mission. For this purpose, they urge the people to recite daily at least five of the fifteen decades of the Rosary. In this way, the missionaries on their arrival will find the ground well prepared.

**53.** (4) They must adjust the number of the people to whom they give the mission to the number of missionaries available and not 'bite off more than they

can chew.' Consequently, they should take on only one parish if it is a big one, whereas, if there are several small adjoining parishes, they can preach the mission in all of them simultaneously.

Unless the Superior gives special permission, they must not admit people from parishes which are not included in the mission programme. By this I do not mean such people should be prevented from attending the sermons since the church and the word of God are for everybody. Nevertheless, the missionaries must not hear the confessions of such people, so that the people of the parish which provides for their upkeep may have a stronger spiritual incentive for coming to confession without being able to complain, and rightly so, that people from other parishes are being heard before those to whom the mission is being preached.

**54.** (5) As a rule, they will preach in the morning and evening on weekdays at times best suited to the people they are striving to convert. Under ordinary circumstances, their sermons should not last more than three-quarters of an hour and never more than one hour. On feast days, in addition to the two sermons already mentioned, they will preach again at High Mass and, at about one o'clock, will give a conference for the people's instruction.

**55.** (6) This conference should be an informal instruction in question-and-answer form on the truths of our religion. The missionaries may choose a particular topic and, after a brief expository introduction, one of them

may ask brief and serious questions of a practical nature on the topic under discussion. They may also allow the members of the Congregation to bring up their own problems on this or any other subject, provided that the missionary who gives the conference is prepared to deal with any matter that may arise. This is the boldest method of all and the one which does the most good to the people.

**56.** (7) The purpose of these missions is to renew the spirit of Christianity among the faithful. Therefore, the missionaries will see to it that, as the Pope has commanded, the baptismal vows are renewed with the greatest solemnity. They are not to give absolution or communion to any penitent who has not first renewed his baptismal promises with the rest of the parishioners. Only those who have seen the results of this practice can appreciate its value.

**57.** (8) During the whole of the mission, they must do all they can by the morning readings and by the conferences and sermons, to establish the great devotion of the daily Rosary and they will enrol (they have the faculties for this) as many as possible in the Rosary confraternity.

They will explain the prayers and mysteries of the Rosary either by instruction or by pictures and statues which they have for this purpose. They will give the people the example by having the Rosary recited aloud every day of the mission, saying all fifteen decades in French with the offering of the mysteries at three different times of the day. The first five decades are to be said in the

morning during Mass before the sermon, the second five decades before the catechism class while the children are assembling and the last five in the evening before the last sermon. This is one of the greatest secrets to have come down from heaven. Its heavenly dew refreshes men's hearts and makes God's word operative within them. Everyday experience brings this fact home to them.

**58.** (9) They should see to it that almost everyone makes a general confession. Even if the penitent's past confessions were not invalid, it is always extremely beneficial because of the humility it demands. It is not to be imposed on people who suffer from scruples. These, however, are rarely met with.

**59.** (10) They must not be either too strict or too lax in imposing penances or granting absolution but must hold to the golden mean of wisdom and truth as described in detail in the *Méthode uniforme que les missionnaires doivent garder dans l'administration du sacrement de penitence pour renouveler l'esprit du Christianisme* (Uniform procedure to be followed by missionaries in administering the sacrament of Penance in order to bring about a renewal of the Christian spirit). There is also a little manuscript book of greater length entitled the *Veni-mecum du bon missionnaire* (The Good Missionary's Companion) which they should keep handy.

**60.** (11) The preaching of God's word is the most far-reaching, the most effective and also the most difficult

ministry of all. The missionaries will, therefore, study and pray unceasingly that they may obtain from God the gift of wisdom so necessary to a true preacher for knowing and relishing the truth and getting others to relish it.

It is the easiest thing in the world to be a fashionable preacher. It is a difficult but sublime thing to be able to preach with the inspiration of an apostle, to speak like the wise man, *ex sententia* (with true understanding) (Wis 7:15) or, as Jesus Christ says, *ex abundantia cordis* (from the fullness of one's heart) (Mt 12:34), to have received from God as a reward for one's labours and prayers, a tongue, a mouth and a wisdom which the enemies of truth cannot withstand: "Your reward – a mouth, a tongue and a wisdom which none of your enemies will be able to withstand" (Lk 21:15).

Out of a thousand preachers – I could say ten thousand without telling a lie – there is scarcely one who has this great gift of the Holy Spirit. The majority have only the tongue, mouth and wisdom of men. That is why, even though these preachers quote Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, so few people are enlightened or moved and converted by their words. And this in spite of the fact that all they say is based on sound reasons, is clearly proved, well-arranged and beautifully delivered before a receptive and admiring audience. Their sermons are well-composed and their words most carefully chosen. Their ideas are expressed with great ingenuity, and quotations from Holy Scripture and the Fathers come readily to their lips. Their gestures are well-coor-

dinated and their eloquence is stimulating. Unfortunately nothing of all this rises above the purely human and natural level and so, as a result, produces only what is human and natural.

A well-dissimulated complacency on the part of the preacher in his beautifully composed and elaborate sermon provides the dart with which the proud and cunning Lucifer blinds him. All that the preacher gets for his trouble and efforts is popular admiration which alone occupies the mind of worldly people during the sermon and provides them with a subject of conversation when they meet socially after church.

Since such preachers only beat the air and titillate the ears, we must not be surprised if no one attacks them and if the Father of lies does not utter a word, *in pace sunt quae possidet* (all that he possesses remains undisturbed) (Lk 11:21). Since the fashionable preacher does not strike at the heart, the citadel where the tyrant has locked himself in, the latter is not unduly alarmed by all the hubbub going on outside.

**61.** But let a preacher full of God's word and spirit merely open his mouth and all the powers of hell sound the alarm and do their utmost to defend themselves. A fierce battle ensues between the truth which issues from the mouth of the preacher and the lies which originate in hell; between those listeners whose faith has made them friends of the truth and those whose unbelief has made them the friends of the Father of lies.

A preacher of this calibre can, by a simple, unpretentious statement of the truth, rouse a whole city or province by the conflict he stirs up there. This is a continuation of the tremendous battle which was fought out in heaven between truth, with St. Michael as its champion, and falsehood represented by Lucifer. It is a result of the enmities which God himself has established between the blessed children of his Mother and the accursed issue of the serpent.

Do not then be surprised at the bogus peace which fashionable preachers enjoy nor at the extraordinary persecutions and calumnies directed against the preachers who have received the gift of proclaiming God's eternal word, for of such must one day be all the members of the Company of Mary. "Great is the host of those who bore the tidings" (Ps 67:12).

**62.** (12) The apostolic missionary should, therefore, preach the simple truth, avoiding all pretentiousness and discarding all fables, false statements and dissembling. He must be bold and speak with authority, showing neither fear nor human respect. He must preach with all charity and give offence to none. His intention must be holy and centred on God alone. God's glory must be his sole pre-occupation and he must first practise what he preaches. "Jesus began by doing and then teaching" (Acts 1:1).

**63.** (13) In the pulpit, they must avoid several snares which the devil, under the cloak of zeal, sets for inexperience

rienced preachers and a few others. These are: (1) Self-complacency in what they have said or in the good results they have obtained. (2) Soliciting compliments, directly or indirectly, after they have delivered their sermon. (3) Being envious of others who have larger audiences or who preach with greater feeling, etc. (4) Criticizing another preacher whom they have heard or been told about. (5) Losing one's temper. This is natural enough and one can easily give way to it when the Congregation gives occasion for it during the sermon. (6) Referring directly or indirectly to an individual in the audience, either by looking straight at him or by pointing at him or by saying things which can refer only to him. (7) A barrage of affected or exaggerated condemnations of rich or important people, of public officials or of officers of the law. (8) Censuring and criticizing priests and giving detailed accounts of their sins.

All these excesses are blameworthy because they shock people and can explain why a missionary, however holy or well-intentioned he may be, can nullify to a great extent, if not completely, the effect of the word of God.

**64.** (14) In the pulpit, a good preacher must look upon himself as an innocent man condemned to the pillory. Without any thought of getting his own back, he must suffer the false judgments of an entire Congregation often ill-disposed towards him, the censures of proud scholars and the unfavourable interpretation they put on what he says, the jests, mockery and contempt of the



ungodly and, lastly, the load of calumny which the entire population lays at his door. He must understand that the strength which underlies his zeal comes not only from the forcefulness of his preaching but also from the way he stands unshaken and undisturbed like a rock, weathering all the storms which rage around him.

He must leave to the truth which he preaches and which of its nature provokes hatred, the care of delivering him from false accusations: "The truth will set me free" (Jn 8:32). It will never fail to do so provided we let it take its course.

**65.** (15) Finally, let them remember that it is Jesus Christ who is sending the just as he sent the apostles, "like lambs among wolves" (Lk 10:3). Consequently, they must imitate the lamb's gentleness, patience and charity so that, in this heavenly-inspired way, they may change the wolves into lambs.

### **Their timetable during missions**

**66.** (1) Unless they are indisposed and holy obedience ordains otherwise, they will get up at 4 a.m. all the year round as do the missionaries of the Society of Jesus and the Society of Monsieur Vincent.

**67.** (2) At 4:30 a.m. they will make half an hour's mental prayer unless the Director gives them something

else to do such as celebrating Mass, teaching hymns to the people, reading to them, etc.

**68.** (3) At 6 a.m. or thereabouts, according to the season of the year, they will celebrate Holy Mass one after the other according to the order drawn up by the Director.

**69.** (4) They will take their places in the confessional as soon as they can before or after the sermon and remain there until 11 a.m. precisely.

**70.** (5) In winter, the time for the sermon is normally between seven and eight o'clock: in summer, between six and seven o'clock. The people's convenience must be taken into consideration in fixing these times.

**71.** (6) At 11 a.m. on a signal from the Director they leave their confessional promptly even though there are people waiting. They then make their examen together before their midday meal.

**72.** (7) They take all their meals together and in silence while listening to readings from Holy Scripture or from some sound book of moral cases. For reasons of charity and propriety, the Director may stop the reading towards the end of the meal to enable them to indulge in edifying conversation.

**73.** (8) After grace, they take recreation together

and no one must be absent without special permission. During recreation they may discuss cases of conscience which have come up in the place where they are giving the mission without, however, divulging the names of the people concerned.

**74.** (9) Recreation ends at one o'clock sharp and then they say Vespers and Compline together. After Vespers, they return to the confessional, unless the Director gives them other work to do, and they remain there until about five o'clock, depending on the season of the year. After that, they return to their residence and recite Matins together.

**75.** (10) After Matins, they take their supper and a period of recreation as at midday.

**76.** (11) After one hour's recreation, they say their prayers together, listen to the reading of the subject for mental prayer and then go to bed.

**77.** (12) By about nine o'clock, they should have retired to bed quietly and modestly.

**78.** (13) Outside the times when they are giving missions, their timetable is about the same but with these exceptions: they do not get up until five o'clock and the time allotted during the mission for preaching and hearing confessions is devoted to study, prayer and retreat.

## Rules for catechetical instruction

**79.** (1) The catechist has the most important function of the whole mission, and the one who is appointed catechist by obedience must do all he can to fulfil his function worthily. It is more difficult to find an accomplished catechist than it is to find a perfect preacher.

**80.** (2) He must endeavour to make himself both loved and feared at the same time but in such a way that the oil of love predominates over the vinegar of fear. Consequently, while he inspires a certain fear in the children, as an experienced teacher does, by warnings and punishments which humble them, he must also, like a kind father, encourage them by praising them, by promising and giving them rewards and by showing them affection. He must never strike them either with his hand or with the cane. If a child should prove incorrigible, the catechist should send him to his parents to be given ten or twelve strokes of the whip or cane.

**81.** (3) He must be very firm and not allow the children to talk or play during the catechism lesson. If he lets them off the first time they misbehave, he must warn them the second time; the third time, he gives them a penance and the fourth time he sends them away to receive suitable punishment.

**82.** (4) Children are naturally inclined to laugh a lot

and so the catechist must always try to be very serious and not say anything which might incite them to laugh boisterously. He can, however, and indeed must, enliven the catechism lesson (of its nature a rather dry subject) by adopting a pleasant manner, making little jokes or telling interesting little stories which entertain the children and bring their attention back to the lesson.

**83.** (5) One great principle he should follow is to put a lot of questions to the children while saying very little himself. Afterwards, at the end of the lesson, he or another missionary can give a talk of about fifteen minutes. The topic of this talk will be one of the great truths of our faith so that, after the children's minds have been enlightened by the questions on the catechism, their hearts may be softened and touched by this exhortation.

It is a fact of experience that this is the best of all methods for teaching catechism in a short time and for turning the children's hearts to God.

**84.** (6) As regards the time and circumstances of the catechism class, the following rules are to be observed: The catechist will take his dinner at 11 a.m. prompt. After the midday Angelus, he will go to the church and say the Rosary aloud together with the children as they assemble. When this is done, he will sing two or three verses of a hymn.

**85.** (7) At the first or second instruction, he will get

the children to sit side by side in a set order according to age and in a manner symbolizing the nine choirs of angels in heaven. The children must keep to this order for the whole time of the mission, always sitting in the same place and next to the same companions, each row being named after one of the nine choirs of angels, *Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones*, etc. This method is ideal:

(i) for keeping the children in order and the God of order in the children;

(ii) for making the children attentive and regular in their attendance, each child being obliged to inform the catechist of the absence of the one who sits next to him;

(iii) for shortening the duration of the lesson, since the catechist does not have to write down the children's names or call the register day since he can see at a glance who is missing and who is present.

**86.** (8) After the rosary has been said and the children have taken their places, the catechism class begins. First, the catechist gets the children to make an act of faith in the presence of God and then the acts of hope, charity and contrition, the offering of the catechism class to Jesus, an invocation to the Holy Spirit and a prayer to the Blessed Virgin and the Guardian Angel to ask for their help.

**87.** (9) He then has one child repeat all that was taught in the previous lesson and puts a question which is repeated by several of the children in turn according to the seating arrangement. He can frequently do this

without saying a word - merely indicating the child with his finger or with the pointer. In this way, he can, without any great fatigue to himself, question four or five hundred children in an hour and a half.

**88.** (10) The catechism class should not normally take more than one hour and a half. After the final exhortation, he lets the children out, row by row, if the class is a large one, in an orderly manner without tolerating the shouting and rushing for the door which are so common at the end of catechism classes.

**89.** (11) After the catechism, the poor children who attended are to be brought two by two to the Providence where they will be given their dinner which they will eat in humble silence. During the meal, the catechist will have something read to them or perhaps put some questions to them on the catechism since we have a greater obligation to the poor than to the rich.

**90.** (12) Responsibility for proficiency in the catechism of the children who have been chosen to make their first communion lies with the catechist. Here he must abide by the rules which have been drawn up, i.e.,

- (i) He must give them sound instruction.
- (ii) He must discuss the matter with the children's parents.
- (iii) He must examine them closely on their knowledge of the catechism.
- (iv) They must make sure that the confessor has given

the children absolution. The confessors must give a certain password to those children whom they have absolved warning them not to repeat it to the other children. The purpose of this precaution and many other similar ones is to prevent the children from making bad communions since they are easily led astray by the example of others and by the suggestions of the evil one.

**91.** (13) In general, they are to use only the “*Catéchisme abrégé des missionnaires*” (Abridged Catechism for the use of Missionaries) from which the children can learn in seven short lessons all that is *necessary* for salvation. I say “in general”. because, in the case where the parish priest of the locality has given the children a sound instruction based on another catechism with a different wording, the missionary must use this catechism. He thus avoids confusing the minds of the children who learn more by rote than by reasoning.



## Letter to the members of the Company of Mary

1. “Fear not, little flock, because it has pleased your Father to bestow a kingdom on you” (Lk 12:32).

Fear not, although, humanly speaking, you have every cause for fear. You are only a little flock, so few in numbers that a child can count you. Ranged in opposition against you are nations, worldlings, misers, pleasure-seekers and profligates, all banded together in their thousands ready to fight you with mockery, calumnies, contempt and violence. “They have united with this in mind” (Ps 2:2).

2. You are of little account. They are influential.

You are poor. They are rich.

You have no influence. They have the backing of all who matter.

You are weak. They are men in positions of authority.

But let me repeat: Have no fear, at least, no deliberate fear. Listen to Jesus Christ who tells you: “It is I, do not be afraid. It is I who have chosen you. I am your good shepherd and I know you for my sheep. Do not be surprised if the world hates you, but know that it began by hating me. If you belonged to the world, it would hold you dear as something of its very own but, because you do not belong to the world, you must endure its hatred, calumnies, insults, contempt and outrages.”

3. “I am your protector and your bulwark. I hold you in my hands, little company,” says our Eternal Father (cf.

Gen 15:1; Is 49:16). I have graven you on my heart and on the palms of my hands in order to cherish and defend you because you have put your trust in me and not in men, in my Providence and not in wealth. I will deliver you from the snares they set for you, from the calumnies they spread about you, from the terrors of the night and from the devil who roams at noonday to seduce you.

I will shelter you under my wings, I will carry you on my shoulders. I will provide your sustenance. I will arm you with my truth and you will find it such a powerful weapon that you will see with your very eyes your enemies falling by the thousands around you: a thousand wicked paupers on your left hand and ten thousand evil rich on your right. You yourselves have nothing to fear from my avenging power. It will not even come near you.

You will trample on the asp and on the basilisk with all its envy and calumny. You will crush underfoot the lion and the dragon of ungodliness with its proud fury. I will hear you when you pray and I will be at your side when you suffer. I will deliver you from all the evils that beset you. All the glory that I have will be yours and will be revealed to you after I have given you length of days and abundant blessings upon earth.

**4.** Dear little Company of Mary, these are the marvellous promises which God has made to you through his prophets. They will be yours provided you put all your trust in him through Mary.

Entirely dependent as you are on the Providence of God, it is for him to support you and to increase your numbers, saying to you, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen 1:28). Do not, therefore, be discouraged because you are few in number. It is for God to be your defender, so do not be afraid of your enemies. It is for God to provide all that is necessary for your bodily needs. Do not, then, be afraid that you will go short of the necessities of life in these hard times which are hard only because people do not have enough trust in God. It is God who will glorify you, and have no fear that anyone will take this glory from you. In a word, fear nothing whatsoever and sleep in peace in your Father's arms.

**5.** But it is not enough to be just unafraid. God wants you to hope for great things from him and to be filled with joy by reason of this hope. Our bountiful Father wants to give you the kingdom of his grace. He has made you his kings and priests by the Christian faith and the priestly ordination he has conferred on you, and your voluntary poverty gives you an additional right to be called kings, for blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:3). Our Lord does not merely promise the kingdom of heaven in the future but states that, because you are poor in spirit, you possess it now. How is this to be explained?

**6.** (1) The blessed in heaven feel no need of the things of this world since they have a superabundance of all

things, spiritual and eternal. God is theirs in his fullness. Likewise, men such as you who profess voluntary poverty feel no need for the things of this world because they neither want nor desire them. If they did, they would not be truly poor in spirit. As the wise man says, "The poor man's riches are proportionate to the desires of his mind and heart" (Sir 38:20). If his heart is contented, he is rich and wants for nothing.

**7. (2)** The poor in spirit are rich in faith and the other virtues. "In this world," says St. Jerome, "the poor are rich in faith and he who is poor with Jesus is rich beyond measure." He is rich in divine consolations. He does not have to live the thorny life of the rich nor share their urge for riches. Like one who reigns in heaven, he has turned away from the enjoyment of earthly consolations in order to enjoy those which God has provided for him in such abundance. He even counts heavenly glory as part of his wealth in spite of not yet being in heaven. One can say that what has the value of gold is gold, and, by analogy, we can say that what is equivalent to heaven is heaven. What is being poor in spirit equivalent to? The kingdom of heaven and heavenly glory.

**8. (3)** The man who is truly poor in spirit possesses God himself in his heart. "What is more glorious for a man than to sell all he has in exchange for Christ Jesus?" says St. Augustine. What a profitable sale and what a good bargain! "Man does not realize its worth" (Job 28:13).

Understand this, dear brothers, no man realizes the value of your evangelical poverty, “The man who embraces the poverty of Christ is always rich because what he possesses more than offsets what he lacks and he is not afraid of being deprived of anything in this world since he has been given the grace of possessing all things by possessing the Lord of all.”

**9.** To increase the rich treasure your poverty brings you and remain in possession of the kingdom you have conquered, there are three things you must put into practice:

(i) You must set a great value on this real and effective poverty to which you have committed yourself and have a real love for it. No one becomes rich more easily or knows the best use to make of these riches, says a holy bishop, than the man who is truly poor in spirit. He knows that wealth only serves to reduce to poverty and misery those whose heart is centred on it, whereas those who give up this wealth through a holy and praiseworthy contempt for it become rich and happy in the truest sense of the word. “Riches make a man poor and miserable if he loves them. If he despises them for Christ’s sake, they make him rich and happy” (Umbertus).

Be careful then and do not look back at the patrimony or benefice you have given up. “No one putting his hand to the plough and looking behind is fit for the kingdom of God (Lk 9:62). Be careful, too, not to glance

enviously around you at the thousand and one benefits, ecclesiastical or otherwise, which you could acquire with as much right as anyone else, for “they arouse the fool’s concupiscence” (Wis 15:5).

**10.** (ii) Feel then for yourselves the effects of poverty, for instance, (1) the labour it entails in the pulpit or the confessional by which you earn your bread at the sweat of your brow; (2) the humiliation and disdain which are usually shown to poor clerics; (3) other humiliations which poverty brings with it: lack of suitable clothing, proper food and accommodation, the fatigue and travelling it imposes.

**11.** (iii) Let all your longing be centred on eternal things. Knock on the door which opens to you the mercy of Jesus Christ who recognizes and hears without fail those who are dressed in the livery of his poverty.

The man truly poor in spirit sees the world as a frightful wilderness and turns his heart from it. He avoids getting involved in worldly affairs, “No man enlisted in God’s army gets involved in other business” (2 Tim 2:4). To his relatives and friends in the world he only ...

In the same way, therefore, that a traveller bent on reaching some royal city, towards which he is directing his swift passage, and who, wholly taken up with this one idea, passes on indifferently without stopping to consider the beauty of the countries through which he is passing,

so the missionary, carefree like St. Francis, walks with great haste towards the heavenly Jerusalem, solely taken up with the charms of the immortal city of peace and glory; he has eyes only for its contemplation; and he can't give the name of pain to what it has cost him to get there, nor the name of pleasure to what could turn him away from it. Like another St. Paul, he doesn't consider visible things but the invisible, because he tells himself, the visible are passing and perishable; death takes them away, just when one thinks to enjoy them; indeed, they are often lost in anguish before death; while invisible goods, those intangible treasures, which are only tasted in the possessing of God, are eternal.

And so, at last, the missionary, sustained and spurred on by this noble hope, which beats high in his breast, can't deceive himself, and persevering in his holy and sublime vocation, he will have the happiness of being able to repeat with confidence when he is dying, those beautiful, those consoling words of Jesus Christ's most zealous missionary: *"Bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi, fidem servavi; in reliquo reposita est mihi corona iustitiae quam reddet mihi Dominus in illa die iustus iudex. Amen"* (2 Tim 4, 7). (I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me on that day. Amen).

Part two:

**THE CONSTITUTIONS  
AND  
GENERAL STATUTES**





## MONTFORTIAN INSPIRATION

- 1.** Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort is the Founder and the spiritual father of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary (Societas Mariae Montfortana). According to the Founder's conception, the Company responds to the will of God and to a need in the Church.
- 2.** By virtue of his own special charism, Montfort perceived and brought to light the plan of salvation: Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God, came into the world through the Blessed Virgin Mary to establish the Kingdom of God and, to carry on his mission, sent out the apostles. In fidelity to this vision of the plan of God, Montfort instituted the Missionaries of the Company of Mary.
- 3.** Indeed, for Montfort, "it is through the most Blessed Virgin Mary that Jesus Christ came into the world, and it is also through her that he will reign in the world" (TD 1).
- 4.** The Founder wished his Company to be in the image of the community of the apostles: the Lord "summoned the men he himself had decided on, who came and joined him. He named twelve as his

companions whom he would send to preach the good news” (Mk 3: 13-14). In the same way, our apostolic community comes into existence through an encounter with the Lord and his call, which are ordinarily transmitted through the signs of the times. Having chosen us, he gathers us together to make us his companions and preachers of his gospel.

**5.** “They left everything, and became his followers...” (Lk 5:11). Montfort fully understood the total availability that Christ demanded of his apostles, so that they might follow him and, at his command, set out as his apostles to proclaim the Good News.

To assure this perfect availability for service to the Kingdom, Montfort wanted his missionaries, priests and brothers alike, to be bound to Christ in a permanent way by their vows in the Company.

**6.** The Company of Mary is a clerical religious Congregation dedicated to the apostolate: as such it is approved by the Church and declared to be of Pontifical right. According to the Founder’s expression, the rule was written for “the missionary priests of the Company of Mary”, but indicates that “lay brothers” are also to be received (RM 4). These brothers are Religious with the same title as the fathers and are full-sharing members of the Company of Mary (cf. RM 5 ff.).

7. In terms of the essentially missionary nature of his Company, Montfort wanted the community, structures, customs and staff organization to be at the service of the mission. In fidelity to the Founder's charism, our Religious and Marian consecration expresses itself in a life that is prophetic, inciting renewal in the Church and in the world.

**What gives our inspiration its basic impact is that we are:**

## **Missionaries of the Company of Mary**

### **I. We are Missionaries**

8. Montfort desired us to be "missionaries" who would continue the mission Christ entrusted to his Church: "That there may be good missionaries in your Church..." (PM 3). "They are called by God to preach missions..."(RM 2).

9. Our mission in the Church consists in revealing the mystery of salvation to those who do not yet know it, and in helping those who have already heard the Good News to rediscover and deepen this mystery by a renewed consciousness of the meaning of their Baptismal commitment.

**10.** The Missionaries of the Company of Mary proclaim Jesus Christ, Incarnate Wisdom, no less by the witness of the life they live than by the word they preach. A demanding world will only believe if words are confirmed by example: “The apostolic missionary...must first practice what he preaches to others: *cœpit Jesus facere et docere*” (Acts 1:1; RM 62).

**11.** Their witness is specially expressed by their Consecration to Jesus Christ, “Eternal and Incarnate Wisdom”, through Mary.

**12.** To communicate the Father’s gifts to all mankind, they become, like Montfort, close to those whom they evangelize, sharing in their life, their sufferings and their hopes. They accept, after the manner of Christ and in Christ, the common destiny of their kindred, even to the cross.

**13.** In the footsteps of the poor apostles, in complete availability to the Holy Spirit, free and detached, totally abandoned to the Providence, they strive to live with the true freedom of the Beatitudes.

**14.** Ever ready to answer the Church’s call to various pressing apostolate of their time and place, and

open to the needs of the world, they endeavour to respond in keeping with their own vocation, not forgetting their Founder's preference for the poor (cf. RM 7).

**15.** To proclaim the mystery of salvation, a matter of the greatest urgency, they will not hesitate to take their place within a local Church or a given human community, in order to work more effectively. However, they refuse to become permanently settled there, because of their special vocation they must remain a constant, challenging influence for the renewal of Christian life.

**16.** Truly poor like the apostles, they place their trust in God alone, and base their life and apostolic work in him.

**17.** This confidence finds expression in a personal and community prayer that like Montfort's own is imbued with contemplation and thanksgiving, in a spirit of solidarity and of poverty.

Their prayer engages them:

- in a daily contemplation, with Mary, of the mystery of Jesus, Incarnate Wisdom, who died and was raised, a mystery which continues on in the life of people today;

- in thanksgiving for the wonders which God never ceases to accomplish for us, today as in the past;
- in humble and constant petition to remain faithful to the call of God in every circumstance.

**18.** In the Company of Mary, all are missionaries, called by God to proclaim the Good News of salvation. By his work, his prayer, his suffering, each one must endeavour to manifest the reality of the Kingdom already present yet still to come, and in the place where the Lord asks him to be, to collaborate effectively in the mission of the Company.

## **II. We are a Company**

**19.** What Montfort wanted in order to accomplish the missionary task was a community, that is to say, a group, a Congregation, a gathering, a picked handful, a Company, a battalion... (cf. PM 18) and not just individuals, scattered or thrown together.

**20.** A united community: “Lord, gather us together and unite us...” (ibid.)

**21.** A community living in charity, which is “its life, the bond and the guardian” (RM 45), where

all support one another and feel responsible for each other.

**22.** It was to be a disciplined community: “a strongly disciplined army drawn up in line of battle” (PM 29).

**23.** A true community, where numbers count less than quality: it is small, poor, without esteem, weak compared to the great of this world; but rich in God and set apart for the good of the Church (cf. LCM 2; 7).

**24.** A poor community, where everything is held in common by the missionaries, who are: without benefice... without temporal possessions, ... unimpeded by any temporal possessions which might hold them back (cf. RM 5-6).

**25.** Totally dependent on the Providence of the Father, who will take it upon himself to clothe, feed, and sustain them (cf. LCM 4).

**26.** A community free with the freedom of God, whose members are “detached from everything... without relatives, as the world understands them... without anything to encumber or distract them” (PM 7).



**27.** They are available... “without any taint of self-will to soil them or hamper them... they move to every quarter according to the breath of the Spirit...” (PM 8-9). They are “men always there, always ready to obey you when those in authority speak...” (PM 10).

**28.** Thus, it is to be a community founded on obedience, “unshakable support of all its holiness and of all the blessings which God confers or will confer through its ministry” (RM 19). The members yield to their Superiors in faith, and cooperate in the obligations and initiatives of the community with an active and responsible obedience.

**29.** They will also show apostolic obedience in their dealings with those in charge of the pastoral apostolate in the places where they are called to work (cf. RM 22).

**30.** A community where “the missionaries study and pray unceasingly that they may obtain the gift of Wisdom, so necessary to a true preacher for knowing and relishing the truth and getting others to relish it” (RM 60), and which allows him “to preach in the manner of the apostles” (ibid.).

**31.** The prayer of the missionaries is profoundly

shaped by their apostolic care, which leads them to make their own the needs of those to whom they are sent, and the necessities of the Church (cf. PM 12; RM 29; LPM 6).

**32.** Since Montfort desired an apostolic community whose members devoted themselves to the Lord forever, the missionaries commit themselves to follow forever the evangelical counsels of poverty, obedience and chastity for the sake of the Kingdom, by vows which bind them to the Company of Mary for the service of God and neighbour (cf. RM 8).

**33.** Within the diversity of their tasks, all the members of the Company are united in a single spirit, living the same inspiring charism.

### **III. We are the Company of Mary**

**34.** Father de Montfort had understood and brought into the light in a special way the unique, permanent, and universal association of Mary with the work of the Saviour up to the time when this work was completed (cf. PM 6). Our Founder expressly placed his Company at the service of Mary so that it would be more profoundly at the service of Christ.

**35.** He continually begged God the Father to form, create and raise up this Company (cf. PM 2-3). He asked Jesus to present it to his Mother (cf. PM 6), so that she may fashion in this Company “true children, conceived and begotten by her charity, reared with her care, upheld in her arms, enriched with her graces” (PM 11).

**36.** Montfort begged the Holy Spirit “to bring forth and fashion children of God”, but with “Mary, his divine and faithful spouse” (PM 15). From the action of the Holy Spirit and the faithful collaboration of Mary there must arise “priests who will burn with fire, through the ministry which will renew the face of the earth and reform your Church” (PM 17).

**37.** The Company is the work of God, but also the work of Mary: “Great men will arise but, in accord with the Almighty’s decree, they will be Mary’s handiwork” (TD 59). “God will raise up great men, full of the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Mary, for whom this Divine Sovereign will bring about marvellous things in the world” (SM 59).

**38.** For the members of the Company must place themselves at the service of Mary that, for her,

they may be “true servants” by their childlike and complete availability (cf. PM 12).

**39.** So, this Marian character of the Company is an essential possession of our Congregation and Mary is not present in the life of the missionaries in some accidental fashion: devotion toward her is an integral part of their spiritual life and apostolate.

**40.** The “perfect Consecration” to Jesus through Mary is the most outstanding mark of the Marian character of our inspiration. From this flows the necessity of remaining continually open to a profound theological reflection on the words and formulas that express its content, so as to clarify the full meaning of this act taking into account the mentality of those to whom we are offering it.

**41.** To highlight the role of Mary in the work of salvation has been recognized as one of the specific tasks of the Montfortian community. The missionaries seek to present the mission of our Lady in such a manner that it is well understood by those to whom they are sent. Thus they promote an ever-deeper penetration into the mystery of salvation in this world.

**42.** Their own spiritual life and apostolate require that they discover the most characteristic prayers of our Marian devotion, breathe new life into them, and create new forms that speak to the spiritual sensibility of various times and places.

**43.** The daily contemplation of the mysteries of the joys, sufferings and glories of Christ and his Mother is a vital support and nourishment in our Montfortian inspiration; this contemplation will find its best expression in the Rosary.

## THE MISSION OF THE COMPANY OF MARY

**44.** The apostolate of the Company of Mary is to be found within the mission of the Church, sent out so that all humankind may come to full stature in Jesus Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel everywhere in the world is an urgent task that is the responsibility of every believer.

**45.** This participation in the mission of the Church, shared by all Christians and, in a particular way, by all missionary Institutes, must be made specific and actual, starting from the Founder's charism and continuing on in the missionary tradition of his successors.

**46.** The origin of the Church's mission lies in this: Christ was sent by the Father "to bring the Good News to the poor" (Lk 4:18).

**47.** In fact just as the Father had sent him, Christ sent the Apostles in his footsteps, to extend the proclamation of this Good News to every nation.

**48.** The Church, founded by Christ on the Apostles

and their successors, in its turn sent out Father de Montfort as “apostolic missionary”, and his Company in the name of the missionary apostolate, to believers and non believers alike, that they might establish the Reign of Jesus through Mary.

**49.** The people of God will always be in need of this apostolic activity in its essential elements; from this stand-point, Montfort’s missionary tradition remains relevant in the Church.

**50.** This Montfortian apostolic tradition finds its roots in the ministry of Montfort himself, who, though he focused on missions in a Christian country, desired to reach out to pagan lands; following him in the apostolate Montfort’s successors continued the ministry in Christian countries, but also realised his project for the mission “to the nations”.

**51.** According to Montfort’s apostolic inspiration, the proclamation of the Gospel by the missionaries must:

**a.** discover its prophetic dynamism from the action of the Holy Spirit;

**b.** be a summons to “renewal” (cf. RM 56) reinforced by their own example of “living in the manner of the apostles” (cf. RM 2; 60);

**c.** express itself:

- by a preference for the deprived, the oppressed, and the exploited (cf. RM 7),
- by attention to “the needs of the Church” (cf. L 5) which indicate urgent apostolic necessities;

**d.** be based upon:

- a complete dependence on Providence, which expresses itself in a particular way in a missionary life lived in dependence on the people to whom they are sent (cf. RM 50),
- a fervent imitation of Mary, and an availability and openness toward her;

**e.** commit itself to the proclamation of salvation through the cross, which is the summit of wisdom and the power of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:1-3), the unsurpassed sign of love and of total gift;

**f.** manifest a love that is passionate for the glory of God, the ultimate goal of all ministry.

**52.** In particular this proclamation requires that the missionaries:

**a.** Analyse the needs of the present day world, most especially within their own immediate environment, and that they discover how to forge modes of apostolic action truly adapted to the social and cultural conditions of the people they evangelise;



- b.** discern the needs of the Church and work together with their brothers and sisters;
- c.** derive their dynamism from their expectation of the Kingdom;
- d.** be in solidarity with all their brothers and sisters in their quest for liberation and kinship.

All this forms an integral part of the missionary activity.

**53.** It follows that the Montfort missionary, after the example of Montfort, must open himself to the signs of the times, striving to scrutinise and interpret them in light of the Gospel. These signs manifest themselves in a variety of ways: through events in the life of the Church and the world; through decisions of Councils and Synods, as well as appeals and directives of the Pope and the bishops. They speak to us in a particular way through the aspirations and orientations of our Provincial and General Chapters.

**54.** The Montfortian missionary apostolate is an undertaking of the entire Company of Mary. Whatever their personal task may be, all the members of the Congregation, priests and brothers alike, ought to consider themselves as an integral part

of a larger community, in which each one has a role to play in fully accomplishing the work of the whole. This conviction must enliven the members of each Province and each community in their apostolate.

**55.** To work as a team is not only an expression of our community life, but also an effective method in the apostolate. Those in responsibility should aim at forming and stimulating real teams in ministry.

**55.1** As members of a missionary community individual projects are to be integrated with those of the community. For the same reason community projects demand the commitment of all in their planning and the responsibility of each one in their implementation thus journeying together for the service of the Montfortian mission.

The coherent following of community projects is ensured by the administration of the entity.

**56.** The Missionaries of the Company of Mary remember that the real fruitfulness of their apostolate is intimately connected with the mandate given them by the Church through their legitimate Superiors.

**57.** The requests made by bishops to our Congregation for a wider participation in the ministry of human salvation ought to correspond to our particular character and be in conformity with these Constitutions. Consequently, the Congregation feels obliged to ask those responsible for detailed pastoral plans, but with due respect for our Montfortian inspiration.

**58.** For every foundation, agreements adapted to the various circumstances and locations, must be established between the Ordinaries and the competent Superiors of the Congregation, in conformity with cann. 678 §3; 681 §2.

**58.1** The agreement with the local Ordinaries should clearly and appropriately indicate, among other considerations, the responsibilities assumed by the Institute and the manner of collaboration with the diocese.

Likewise, concerning missionaries, it should be determined, in addition to their number, their roles, the duration of their commitments, the right of presenting and assigning them to various functions, and, in the case of transfer, their re-signing and replacement.

The contracts should also indicate the frequency and modalities for their evaluation. Moreover,

they should guarantee an authentic community life and growth of each one according to one's gifts and competencies (cf. *Mutuae relationes*, n. 57b).

**58.2** After discussing with the local Ordinary, where pastoral care is entrusted to one member of the Company, the Major Superior, if need be, may have recourse to a contract *ad personam*.

**59.** Conscious of the fact that the apostolate is the entire Church's mission, the members of the Company strive to work in collaboration with the laity and, where necessary, to inspire them and set up training for them.

**60.** Many of the laity have expressed the need for spiritual nourishment. Some have searched and already found it in different sources.

On their part, Montfort missionaries will strive to present, with appropriate means, the spirituality of their Founder to those whom it might interest.

**60.1** Saint John Paul II invited us to make this treasure of our Montfortian spirituality, "bearing fruit" everywhere in the world (cf. John Paul II, Letter to the Montfortian Family, 21 June 1997, n. 6), particularly by continuing our Marian apostolate in the spirit of our Founder, with the

necessary changes of language (ibid. n. 4), rereading and interpreting his writings in the light of the Vatican Council II (cf. John Paul II, Letter to the Montfortian Family, 8 December 2003, n. 1). We are careful to present the Marian thought of our “theologian of class” in its Trinitarian roots and Christocentric character (ibid.).

In fidelity to our heritage, we will always see to underlining its missionary character.

**61.** In order that both of these may best respond to the demands of their apostolic vocation, when the case arises they may be “associates” of the Company of Mary, through various structures set up to receive and support them according to the inspiration of Montfort and the many ways which he himself opened.

The associations “Mary, Queen of All Hearts” for both laity and priests are approved by the Church and are recognised as proper to the Company of Mary.

**61.1** The Montfortian Associates, recognised as such, are the members of the Association “Mary Queen of all Hearts”. Montfort Missionaries foster, accompany and orient other associations or movements that take their inspiration from the spirituality of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, after an attentive discernment and the opinion of the respective Superiors.

The members of the Company strive to give these diverse associations or movements a systematic formation in Montfortian spirituality, following the provisions of the Episcopal Conferences.

They are especially to be careful to cultivate in these associations an ecclesial sense: the sense of belonging to the local and universal Church.

**62.** In its missionary activity, the Company is more concerned with the spirit that animates its works than with the projects themselves. As a consequence, the Company remains open to diverse forms of apostolate that respond to the Church's urgent needs and our Montfortian inspiration, safeguarding the C 57.

**63.** According to their functions and abilities, all the members of the Company are under obligation to proclaim the Good News. The ways of accomplishing this are many and varied. Those charged with certain tasks less directly apostolic, which prove to be necessary to the life of the Company, make a genuine contribution to the evangelising mission of the community: they render this work possible and provide a most important spiritual support.

**63.1** In relation to those tasks of the Company which are strictly speaking missionary, some

members are called to devote themselves to different activities, for example:

**63.2 a)** the work of vocations for future Montfortians; those who dedicate themselves to this work, including those in the formation houses, render an indispensable service to the Church and the Congregation.

**63.3 b)** the dissemination of the spiritual heritage of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort: it is our duty to make it known, not only by preaching, but also by all the means of social communication. To promote the flowering of the evangelical life and its implantation in the human milieu in which it is to be lived, we must look for appropriate means of expressing this spirituality, striving to adapt it to all circumstances and cultures.

**63.4 c)** Parishes: the Company of Mary has always been reticent to recognise parish ministry as congruent with our missionary activity because of the danger of becoming settled.

Nevertheless, for about a century parishes have become a relatively important part of the Montfortian apostolate. Initially they were established in those missions “ad gentes” to respond to the needs of those countries where the Church was not yet sufficiently rooted. In many cases

today, they are a reality in many Provinces, by reason of the needs of the entity and those of the Church.

It is left to the judgement of the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, to accept them after drawing up an appropriate contract and presenting the request to the Superior General.

A periodic evaluation of these commitments must be made (cf. C 64).

**63.5** The value of these tasks must be regarded positively, conscious of the reasons which allow us to assume them in fidelity to Montfortian inspiration.

The meaning and content of Montfortian inspiration can be expressed in two different and complementary ways:

**a)** in the principals: this is the fundamental rule (Decree of SCRIS, 24 March 1984);

**b)** in practice of the apostolate, the four distinctive elements of Montfortian mission are:

- Evangelisation
- Mary
- Availability
- Acting together.



**64.** Periodically it is necessary to make a critical appraisal of our various activities, to effect a discernment between those things that unfold in the line of authentic Montfortian tradition and those which deviate from it.

**64.1** The principal criteria to be used in the discernment mean our activities must be:

- responsive to the urgent needs of the church;
- in line with Montfort's inspiration;
- submitted to the discernment of the community;
- according to the possibilities of the individual, of the community or of the entity which undertakes the task.

**64.2** The Major Superiors must sincerely question themselves before God to determine if it is possible to extend the activity of the Congregation for the expansion of the Kingdom of God among the nations. Whether they can leave certain ministries to others in order to use their strength in places where the needs are more urgent.

It pertains to the General Chapter to set out the apostolic priorities of the Company of Mary according to the needs of the church and the mission of the Company.

**64.3** It is strongly desired that, to the extent

possible, the Major Superiors encourage those who wish to realise their missionary aspirations in other entities of the Congregation, in consultation with the General Administration, in agreement with the receiving entity.

**64.4** Wherever they labour, the missionaries strive to adapt their apostolic life to the conditions of the place, and to promote local cultural values.

**65.** It was the will of our Founder that we have only one apostolic community and only one common aim to be implemented through the diversity and complementarity of functions.

**66.** Nothing can take the place of the contribution made by our Brothers to the missionary endeavour. The witness of their evangelical life, their professional skills, and participation in more direct pastoral ministry are a most effective contribution to the material and spiritual building up of the local Churches.

**66.1** The missionaries should be very careful to promote and support Religious and Priestly vocations.

**66.2** To properly discharge their task of evangelisation and development, the missionaries must

cooperate, with respect for the local hierarchy and in obedience to their directives, not only with other religious Institutes, priests and laity, but also with those social organisations dedicated to human progress, on both the national and international levels.

**66.3** The entities strive to provide an invaluable service to their missionaries by obtaining for them the assistance of experts, both religious and lay, not only to deepen their spiritual and pastoral formation, but also to assist them in establishing the necessary pastoral structures.

**67.** Montfort missionaries should receive a preparation appropriate to the work they will undertake and to the demands of our times. Likewise, they must have the opportunity of periodically updating their spiritual and apostolic formation.

## APOSTOLIC RELIGIOUS LIFE

**68.** Knowing that we are loved gives meaning to our existence. Loved by God, we have been created to return that love: “God chose us in him before the world began, to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he likewise predestined us through Christ Jesus to be his adopted sons” (Eph 1:4-5).

This is the common vocation of all humankind, without exception.

**69.** To us who have heard the Lord’s call to leave everything and follow him, it has been both demanded and given that we testify that the love of God suffices to fill our hearts with joy and hope. By our entire life we strive to bear witness to the truth and fullness of the love of God: “We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us” (1 Jn 4:16).

**70.** “The commandment we have from him is this: whoever loves God must also love his brother” (1 Jn 4:21). Our Religious Life is an expression of our love for God, and it proves it is genuine by service to our neighbour.

## I. An Apostolic Community of Brothers

**71.** The Company Montfort had in mind was not a monastic community but an apostolic community. Consequently all its vital structures must be closely bound with the apostolate.

**72.** Within the Church we form a community in which all are brothers; all bear one another's burdens, all live in the fellowship of the same charism. We are gathered together in Christ, and even with our differences of origin, background, culture, and temperament, by our life together as brothers we put into effect what the Kingdom of Christ inaugurated on earth: the union of all through faith in Christ Jesus.

Thus, our community life is at the service of our apostolic mission: it announces and proclaims the presence of him who makes us one, Christ our Lord. "This is how all will know you for my disciples: your love for one another" (Jn 13:35).

**72.1** The local superior is to facilitate the adoption of a community project, where the mission of each one is well defined, as well as the means for realising a community life in which each confrere can grow.

**73.** Our community is our family home. In the pursuit of the same ideal, we share our joys and sorrows, a real simplicity marking our relationships with one another. There is a special attitude of deference and respect for the superior who, in the name of the Lord, is the centre of the community's unity.

If, for reasons of apostolic work or some necessity, we sometimes find ourselves living alone, this is no reason for becoming isolated. On our part, we should maintain a bond with the community, and the community ought to reach out in care to us.

**73.1** Charity is "the queen and the Superior of the Company" (RM 44). It confers a sense of proportion in all things, for example, in the regulations of our community. It is the fundamental norm governing our actions and our relations.

**74. a.** Our communities must live in a house legitimately constituted under the authority of a superior designated according to the norm of law (can. 608). One part of the house will always be reserved exclusively for the confreres (can. 667, §1).

**b.** Our residences are necessary not merely to provide shelter, but rather that each one, in whatever circumstance, may return and find himself at home. Each of us must be able to count on a place where

he can come to relax from the fatigue of work, where he can rest in prayer, recollection, study, and the companionship of brothers. The elderly will always find their place here, and the sick are surrounded with special consideration.

**c.** The Major Superior, with the consent of his Council, may permit a confrere to live outside the community for valid reasons, but not for more than a year, except for the purpose of caring for poor health, for study, or to undertake an apostolate in the name of the Institute (can. 665, §1).

**75.** In the use of social communication media, necessary discretion is to be observed, as can. 666 requires.

**76.** According to the recommendation of our Founder, we dress “like ordinary ecclesiastics of good standing” of the country. When we wear the cassock, the cord and beads, they constitute our distinctive signs.

**76.1** All confreres are to be made welcome in our communities and none is to be looked upon as a stranger. The rules of the community must facilitate friendly contacts between confreres and must favour anything which will make them feel more welcome.

Those who enjoy this hospitality must make an effort during their stay to take part in the daily life of the community where they are staying as guests.

Our communities should be open to the people and the problems of the neighbourhood where they are established.

**76.2** An apostolic community is formed, functions and produces results through the cooperation of all its members. Since, with the superior, all are responsible for the common good in view of our mission, each must feel involved in the fraternal community meetings which are held to plan and implement the directions and decisions which govern our life and activities. The community meetings, which are vital to our common life as Montfortians, must periodically bring together all who belong to the community.

**76.3** An atmosphere of relaxed freedom will enable each to express his opinion and point of view, and find acceptance, understanding and respect from his confreres.

The superior, in particular, must see to it that each of his brothers receives help and support. He is to promote and coordinate their various efforts, and, in the final resort, to decide what is required for the good of the confreres and the community in the missionary thrust which characterises us.



## II. Consecration in an Apostolic Community

**77.** In order to live “as free men”, “in the manner of the apostles”, we consecrate ourselves to the Lord by vows for the service of the Kingdom. These vows – poverty, obedience, chastity – help us to live and to radiate the love of Christ, especially in three spheres where all people, and we are not exceptions, seek to attain maturity and full personal development:

- the control of material possessions,
- the realisation of the plan of one’s life,
- the affective life.

**78.** Material goods are gifts from God that are necessary but, among us, no one calls what he possesses his own. Among us, all is shared in common, and ought to serve the needs of our neighbour.

**79.** In following Christ we commit ourselves freely and radically to travel the path on which he leads us. Thus we are able to attain the fullness of our freedom as human beings and children of God.

**80.** By consecrating ourselves to God alone, we agree to receive from him brothers and sisters who

will challenge us to love with a love that is genuine and personal.

**81.** To respond to the call of the Saviour it is not enough to make a decision once for all. Each day we must live out the gift of God by our continuing commitment to it.

## Poverty

**82.** Called to follow Christ and “to preach missions in the steps of the Apostles who were poor” (RM 2), we take upon ourselves to live an apostolic poverty.

**83.** Montfort desired that we be poor, first of all, before God. We must wait upon him for everything, like the poor of Yahweh, of whom Mary is the perfect example, and we must commit ourselves completely to his work of salvation.

As regards material possessions, this fundamental spiritual attitude makes itself concrete by an expression that is at the same time:

- personal: we own nothing that might divide us one from the other, nothing to divert us from our mission;
- communal: we must not become permanently settled in anyone place, but remain missionaries ready for every call.

**84.** Apostolic poverty is very exacting, because it means a life dependent on Providence and on people. It refuses to put its trust in money or in the power that money can give. Such poverty demands a detachment that commits us to imitate Christ, even to his own radical self-emptying.

**85.** By relying on God alone, we witness to the world that the Lord is the source of all good and it is he who gives ultimate meaning to our lives. In our community where all is in common, poverty is a sign of the coming of the Kingdom.

**86.** Our consecration to Christ through Mary is a school of availability, where we learn to place ourselves side by side with the very poor. Thus we enter into the very movement that brought Wisdom to unite himself to our human condition by his Incarnation.

**86.1** Solidarity with the poor leads us to adopt a simple and sober style of life. Like the poor, we must earn our living whether it is by our ministry, studies or other forms of apostolic activity. We must make use of material things with moderation appropriate for our state. Another important aspect of our poverty resides in the use of our time. This must be invested above

all in our apostolic commitment as well as for our spiritual life.

**86.2** Since we have taken our stand by the side of the poor, our actual sharing with them takes on a particular urgency because of the sub-standard economic conditions in which the greater part of humanity suffers. This real sharing must go as far as a solidarity with and sharing in the lot of the poor, since efforts for justice and the sharing in the transformation of the world clearly appear as a constitutive dimension of the proclamation of the Gospel (cf. *Vita consecrata*, n. 90).

**86.3** Sent to preach the Gospel to the poor (cf. Lk 4:16-19; Mk 2:7), we inevitably find ourselves in countries and communities that suffer from poverty in all its forms. Our missionary activity, in a manner that conforms to our choice of life, should lead us to cooperate with organisations who, on the local, national and international levels, strive to promote solidarity and charity, denounce injustices perpetrated against the sons and daughters of God, engage in the promotion of justice and peace and liberate human beings from every sort of enslavements (cf. *Vita consecrata*, n. 82-89).

**87.** By the vow of poverty we commit ourselves

neither to dispose of nor to use any material possession without the permission of the Superiors. We are called to live by sharing, and, both as individuals and as a community, to use moderately the goods at our disposition.

**87.1** Voluntary poverty, in the footsteps of Christ and of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, may be lived in ways that are at the same time respectful of our Constitutions and adapted to diverse circumstances.

**87.2** The world in which we live, without doubt, makes coherent living of the vow of poverty even more difficult. The unceasing solicitations of consumerism, ease of exaggerated purchasing, contradict the wisdom of the Gospel; our way of life therefore, should be going against the tide.

**88.** We retain the radical ownership of the goods of our patrimony.

**a.** Before making his temporary vows, the prospective member must make over to a person of his choice the administration, use of, and revenue from his possessions.

**b.** The religious may not dispose of what he owns. He may, however, acquire further possessions.

When this is the case, he must make over the administration, use and revenue to the person of his choice.

**c.** If the Montfortian religious owns property or funds, he will, at the occasion of his final vows, draw up a will that is valid before the civil law; should he acquire goods by patrimony at some future date, at that time he must draw up such a will.

**d.** A codicil to a will or a change in the administration of one's personal estate may be made with the permission of the Superior General, who may delegate the Major Superior to grant this authorisation.

**89.** The only ways in which a Montfortian may acquire a patrimony or increase it are:

- by a transaction between living members of his family up to the fourth degree,
- by receiving a legacy on the death of another person, whoever he or she may be.

**90.** For a perpetually professed member to renounce his patrimony, in whole or in part, the authorisation of the Superior General is required. (can. 668 §4).

**90.1** The Superior General may delegate to Provincial Superiors, with the consent of their Council and for valid reasons, the power to grant their respective subjects the permission to modify their last will and testament, or provisions concerning the administration of their property. For acts of proprietorship which may be required by civil law or particular circumstances, the authorisation of the provincial suffices in urgent cases, or in matters of little importance, the authorisation of the Local Superior.

**91.** Whatever a religious may acquire over and above his patrimony, by whatever title, belongs to the Congregation. The fruit of our work, pensions, allocations, insurance and gifts we receive, in a word, all that we can acquire, comes to the community.

**91.1** This leads us to detach ourselves from all that passes through our hands, placing it at the service, not only of those who live in the same community but also of those, near or far, who stand in need.

**91.2** Our state of dependence in the use of material possessions, including money, can be shown in a variety of ways, according to circumstances. In all cases, the religious must

give an account of expenses incurred as agreed with the superior concerned.

**91.3** Among our various entities, we are called to place in common our material resources. It is for those in charge to plan this sharing to make precise its modalities and to help implement it in a spirit of mutual aid.

**91.4** Creating solidarity requires confidence between entities in need and entities with sufficient resources. Confidence is present where there is transparency and responsibility. “Transparency is critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of the mission.” (CIVCSVA, Guidelines for the Administration of the Assets, 2014, 2.1)

**91.5** The General Administration evaluates, with a global view in mind, the priorities of the requests for financial aid or the utilisation of available resources (cf. General Chapter 2005, 36).

**91.6** According to the spirit underlying the rule which our Founder left us, the poor hold a privileged place. Our Company, as a body, must be seen to take its stand on the side of the poor.

**91.7** Our communities must pay particular attention to the requirements of social justice when dealing with their employees.



## Obedience

**92.** In union with Christ, we place our entire life at the disposal of the Father whose will it is to save all people: “I came that they might have life and have it to the full” (Jn 10: 10). With Christ we make the will of the Father the sole reason for our existence: “Doing the will of him who sent me and bringing his work to completion is my food” (Jn 4: 34).

Through obedience we desire to go to the farthest limit in communion with the Father’s will, even to the sacrifice of the cross, after the example of Mary, “the servant of the Lord” (Lk 1:38; Jn 19:25-27).

**92.1** Our consecration to Jesus through Mary, placing us in a total dependence on the Lord and his holy Mother, favours our fidelity to the vow of obedience. It leads us to a real detachment from our individual projects, thus leading us to live in complete dependence on the will of the Lord.

**93.** The plan of the Father is accomplished by the Church gathered in Christ by the Spirit. It is from the Church that our apostolic community receives its mission.

**93.1** The vow of obedience makes us focus on the “mission” given to us by the Lord “rather

than on our own desires or aspirations” (*Vita consecrata*, n. 92).

**94.** The vow of obedience places us within the Company of Mary. More profoundly, it expresses our availability to all the calls of the Lord, calls that we can honestly discern through our life, daily events and the needs of the Church, the people of God. It is in reflection with the Montfortian community that we can come to the knowledge of what the Lord wants of us.

**94.1** “Fraternal life is the privileged place to discern and welcome the will of God, and to advance together in a union of mind and heart. Obedience that derives from charity unites the members” of the Company “in the same witness and the same mission, although in a diversity of gifts and with respect for each individual. Through fraternal life, animated by the Spirit, each one takes up with the others a precious dialogue to discover the will of the Father; all recognise in the one who is responsible the expression of the fatherhood of God, as well as the exercise of authority received from God, placed at the service of discernment and communion” (*Vita consecrata*, n. 92).

**95.** Obedience enables us to bring to bear all the

powers of our intelligence and will, all the gifts of grace and nature that we possess, in the certainty that we are working to build up the Body of Christ in accordance with the plan of God.

**96.** Obedience lived fully to the end seems like madness to the world, but it is a sign of love and the source of effectiveness in the apostolate. By the crucifying sacrifice it entails, it brings us back to what is essential and binds us, by all the power of our will, to what we have chosen as the goal of our lives: the Kingdom of God.

**97.** Among us no one should lord it over his brother. We are all servants of the Lord and servants of one another. All have received the Holy Spirit, but we believe in faith that the Lord has given to some among us, the responsibility to animate and direct the community in his name.

**97.1** Although all in the community are called to seek what is pleasing to God and to obey him, some are called to exercise, in a temporary way, the particular task of being the sign of unity and the guide in the search for, and the personal and communal carrying out of the will of God (cf. The CIVCSVA, Service of Authority and Obedience, n. 1).

**98.** The authority of Superiors comes from the mission they have received from Christ. Superiors exercise their authority in a spirit of service to their brothers, in such a way as to express the love that the Lord has for them. Consequently Superiors have the duty of enkindling the fidelity of their community in its mission in the Church.

**98.1** By his mission and his service, the Superior has the responsibility to be on the watch to build a fraternal community in Christ, to guarantee his community (or entity) the time and quality of its prayer, and to promote the dignity of the person, giving attention to each member and to his path of growth, giving to each the gift of his esteem and his own positive concern, nourishing all with a sincere affection, guarding with discretion the confidences he receives (cf. CIVCSVA, *The Service of Authority and Obedience*, n. 14).

**99.** Remembering in faith that they have been placed by God to serve their brothers in community, Superiors know how to enter into dialogue, how to listen, how to welcome initiatives and encourage collaboration. In a word, they must know how to animate and lead the community.

**99.1** The Superior is a man who listens, creates a climate of confidence, recognises and promotes the capacities, attentive to the sensibilities of each confrere. Convinced that fraternity demands participation and therefore information, he undertakes a sincere and free dialogue sharing the feelings, perspectives and projects in a climate where each one sees his identity recognised and his relational capacities deepened (cf. CIVCSVA, *The Service of Authority and Obedience*, n. 20).

**99.2** In the service of fraternal life, the Superior invites the confreres to confront diversities in a spirit of communion and to go beyond the tensions within the community. In order to do this,

- he recalls that, in the spirit of the Gospel, the conflict of ideas never ought to become a conflict of persons, that the plurality of perspectives fosters the deepening of the questions;
- he fosters communication so that the free exchange of ideas clarifies the positions and lets the positive contribution of each one emerge;
- he helps to free oneself from ego-centrism and ethno-centrism, which tend to place on others the causes of evil, in order to arrive at a mutual understanding;
- he understands that the ideal is not a community free from conflicts, but a community which

accepts to confront its own tensions in order to resolve them in a positive manner, seeking solutions which ignore none of the values that must be taken into account (cf. CIVCSVA, *The Service of Authority and Obedience*, n. 25).

**100.** In our communities, the members expect their Superiors to recognise them as persons who have their own spheres of competence and responsibility. The Superiors, in turn, have the right to expect that each member will face up to his responsibilities and be faithful to his commitments. Both members and Superiors must have the common good and fidelity to the Institute's mission at heart, and make them the object of their common quest and discernment.

**100.1** Even if the final decision is of the Superior, he should arrive at it by consultation, placing the highest value on the contribution of all the brothers. The community is what the members make of it: thus it is essential to stimulate and elicit the contribution of all the confreres, so that each might feel the duty to exercise his own gift of charity, competence and creativity. All human resources ought to be strengthened and converge in the community project, by motivating and respecting them (cf. CIVCSVA, *The Service of Authority and Obedience*, n. 20).

**101.** By the vow of obedience we consecrate our will to God for a better imitation of Christ; to implement our apostolic ideal more effectively this vow commits us to submit to the orders of our legitimate Superiors according to the Constitutions.

The Superiors who have the right to lay down precepts in the name of the vow of obedience are: the Supreme Pontiff, the Superior General, Provincial Superiors, Local Superiors and those who have been expressly delegated, each one in the realm where he has authority. These precepts must be given in writing or before two witnesses.

**102.** Members of the Company are always permitted to appeal the decision of a Superior to a higher Superior. Except in cases provided for by law, the appeal is not 'in suspensivo', but only 'in devolutivo' thus, those who make an appeal must conform with the decision until such time as the higher Superior might overturn it.

**103.** The Holy Spirit, who is not restricted to any particular instrument, speaks to us through the rule, the community, Superiors, the duties of our state in life and events that require us to undertake necessary initiatives.

**104.** In the search for the will of God, all express their aspirations and points of view. This search undertaken as a community must, when the necessity arises, be brought to a conclusion by the decisions and precepts of the Superiors.

**105.** Aware that we are contributing to the realisation of the plan of God, we accept, in faith and love, the decisions that are taken. We assume our place, exercising our activities with true responsibility; we allow ourselves to be inspired by the wisdom of the cross, which teaches us to be faithful even to the point of real sacrifice.

## Chastity

**106.** The vow of chastity hands us over undivided to Christ and to “the mission”: it makes us open and available for apostolic service in the measure that it binds us to the Lord. Chastity liberates because it unites.

**107.** In the Kingdom which is to come, there will be neither marrying nor being given in marriage, but all will be children of the resurrection (cf. Lk 20:35-36). Between the children of God there will be no other bonds but those forged by fraternal love.



In the present time, our community strives to reveal clearly, here and now, what we shall all be together, forever in the Kingdom of God.

**108.** The decisive motive for our chastity, the only one that gives it meaning, is the Kingdom. “The time is short” (1 Cor 7:29) the proclamation of the Kingdom by words and deeds becomes more and more urgent. Those to whom it has been given to understand this renounce the desire to establish a family, for the sake of another kind of fecundity. They consecrate their entire capacity for loving to the Lord Jesus alone, and all their energies to proclaiming his Gospel.

**109.** United with Christ, free and available for our brothers and sisters, we come to share Christ’s preference for the poorest and most disinherited. Chastity means loving Christ and others even to the gift of our very self.

**110.** By the vow of chastity we consecrate our whole person to God alone and place ourselves under the obligation of perfect chastity in celibacy. We do this freely and definitively, out of love, to commit ourselves all the more to the service of God and humankind.

**111.** If this gift of ourselves to Christ and to our brothers and sisters is to flower and flourish, it requires welcoming communities where it is good to live together as brothers, in an atmosphere of cordial and joyful simplicity. Our witness will be there for all to see if it expresses the joy and friendship lived out in our communities.

**112.** Our chastity needs prudence as a safeguard, but it grows strong most of all through our relationship with the Lord, who offers us his friendship: “I call you friends, since I have made known to you all that I heard from my Father” (Jn 15:15).

**113.** We remain faithful to our commitment by remaining in communion with the disposition of Mary, the servant of the Lord, who never withdrew her pledge: “Let it be done to me as you say” (Lk 1:38).

**114.** The perfection of chastity called forth by consecrated celibacy does not come into being all at once; it is the fruit of a long and difficult conquest, an appropriate discipline and mortification, and exacting decisions made once again. Without presuming on our own strength, we remain prudent and vigilant, willingly employing the natural means which aid in mastering the self.

**114.1** In order to live the choice of consecrated celibacy, we must be able to share our eventual difficulties in all simplicity and confidence. In this area, a sincere and attentive ear helps more than suspicions and mistrust. The help of being accompanied by a spiritual guide is a path of wisdom not only just in times of crisis. If one allows oneself to be accompanied, with trust and hope, it permits him to enter into the core of the crisis with truthfulness and can transform it into a new opportunity for growth and renewed commitment to set out again in the steps of Christ.

**114.2** “The contribution of the psychological sciences has generally been shown to be a considerable help to formators, as they are responsible for vocational discernment” (The Gift of Priestly Vocation, RFIS, n. 192).

**115.** To remain faithful to the commitment of our celibacy we have two privileged means: union with Christ and Mary in prayer and the sacraments, which make us certain of the grace of the Lord.

### III. Apostolic Prayer of Montfort Missionaries

**116.** The Company of Mary is essentially missionary, and the Montfortians' life of prayer must necessarily be apostolic. It seems important to emphasise two points:

- a. The Montfort missionaries must be convinced that a spiritual life that is intense and deeply rooted is a necessity for them.
- b. The prayer of the Montfortians must be intimately linked with their apostolate.

**117.** After the example of the Lord who taught us to pray, and of their founder, each day the members of the Company set aside a suitable time for free, selfless and loving contact with God. Each day throughout the year they will make at least one half-hour of meditation (RM 28).

**118.** In prayer we gather up our entire life and offer it to the Father, thanking him for all the gifts we have received, most especially for the love that the Father has poured forth into our hearts by his Spirit.

**119.** Our prayer becomes one with that of Jesus, who prayed for all those gathered in his name: "O Father most holy, protect them with your name

which you have given me that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn 17:11). "As you, Father, are in me, and I in you, I pray that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (Jn 17:21).

**120.** In union with Mary, who has gone before us in the service of the Lord, we offer him our intelligence and our will, all that we are and all we possess. With her we give thanks to God and turn our eyes toward the world in its need for salvation. Following Montfort's example, it is through Mary, with her and in her that we will become the missionaries that the contemporary world needs.

**121.** Each of us offers thanks for the love with which he has been loved. Each one entreats the Lord for those who are dear to him. However we also reach beyond to pray together for the building up of our community. In our common prayer we witness to one another the faith that we live by, we commit ourselves to loving each other as brothers, we mutually pardon one another for our faults. In our prayer together we announce to all that the Lord is alive and that we have encountered him in faith.

**122.** Our prayer is closely bound to our apostolic work: at all times we give thanks to God for those whom memory calls to mind, remembering before the Lord the examples of faith, love and human kindness which our eyes have had the joy of contemplating.

**123.** Our prayer must be unceasing, in the rhythm of our apostolic life. It is insistent and persevering even to the point of importunity, like a struggle with God for the salvation of our brothers and sisters. Thus, prayer becomes an effective instrument in our apostolate; even more it is an essential element of our apostolate itself.

**124.** Baptised in the death of Christ, we are alive for God and dead to sin. By frequent recourse to the sacrament of reconciliation, we renew within ourselves the life of the risen Christ that we must bring to others.

**125.** The centre of our community and apostolic life is the celebration of the Eucharist, as far as possible a daily celebration. We love to celebrate it among ourselves and with the people of God. Each time the Eucharist gathers us together, we are united with Christ and his Church in the joyful and certain hope of his return.

Each community will also seek other ways of expressing its faith before Christ in the Eucharist.

Our own trials join us with the sufferings and injustices endured by our brothers and sisters, and only the sacrifice of the cross gives these a meaning in faith.

We beg the Spirit to create in us an attitude that is profoundly that of a son, which will lead us through every suffering and trial to cry out: “Our Father... may your will be done...”

**126.** Within the universal Church, the Montfortian family has its own special way of gathering around the Lord because of its spirituality.

**126.1** Each community meets for prayer, finding its own proper pace and in a way that is in keeping with time at its disposal, the persons resident in the community and the type of work they have to do.

**127.** In fidelity to the Church, we take up the prayers and spiritual exercises that she recommends to us: daily meditation and examination of conscience, spiritual reading, and above all, where possible, the community recitation of Lauds and Vespers as morning and evening prayer. The obligation of the Liturgy of the Hours remains

firm for those who are clerics (can. 276, §§2 and 3). Each year we will also make a retreat for a suitable time.

**127.1** We are sensitive to the new forms of prayer and spiritual sharing that are springing up, in response to the needs and hopes of the people of God, in various cultures and mentalities.

**128.** We will be faithful in performing the prescribed suffrages for our deceased confreres.

**128.1** For the suffrages for our deceased:

- three Masses are celebrated in each Province and by the General Curia for each deceased confrere;
- additional Masses may be requested by the competent authority in the different entities.

**128.2** The Necrology is a mirror of the living history of the Company, an occasion for us to remember and to give thanks, which can reinforce in each one the sense of belonging to the Congregation through our communion with those who have gone before us. We will honour the tradition of reading the Necrology in each community every day, at the time and in the manner which is suitable.



**129.** Faithful to our charism, we also hold to certain prayers which bear the specific stamp of our Montfortian inspiration, for example the Little Crown and the Rosary, whose mysteries we contemplate each day, according to the demand our Founder addressed to his missionaries: “Every day they recite the entire holy Rosary” (RM 29).

**129.1** We need to be ready, when appropriate, to adapt the language and content of our times, to serve its spiritual aspirations, using the riches of the Bible and the Liturgy, and the daily events of personal and community life. Saint John Paul II invites us to bring a creative fidelity when renewing the manner of praying the Rosary by being solidly rooted in the Word of God and its contemplative aspect (cf. John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, nn. 27-35). Thus the Rosary will be for us and for the people to whom we offer it “a marvellous prayer of simplicity and depth” (ibid. 2).

**130.** Our dedication to Christ and the mission finds its full expression in the Montfortian Consecration. We renew it privately each day, and as a community on the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and the Annunciation, which is the principal feast of the Congregation.

**130.1** The first Monday of every month should be set aside for an inter-Montfortian day of spiritual encounter. On this day, the members and associates of the Montfortian Institutes will pray for vocations and for the living and deceased of the entire Montfortian family; all will offer the mass for these intentions.

**130.2** Faithful to fraternal demands, we should make a point of praying to our Father for those who have worked with us and have left the Montfortian family.



## FORMATION TO MONTFORTIAN LIFE

### Pastoral plan for Vocations

**131.** The pastoral plan for vocations is a concerted action by the entire people of God in order to foster all the vocations that the Holy Spirit calls into being.

The Montfortian community ought to participate in this work within the local Churches. To help coordinate and ensure greater effectiveness in this plan, the Provinces may delegate some of their members to this purpose.

**132.** Our Montfortian inspiration belongs to the Church and is a richness of the Christian community. Therefore, each member and each community, by the very fact that they belong to the Company of Mary, must concern themselves with awakening and nurturing Montfortian vocations.

**133.** Each missionary and each community must discharge this responsibility by ceaseless and bold prayer, as Montfort did, and by the witness of their lives and their missionary work.

## Montfortian Formation

**134.** For candidates who have become conscious of the call of God, formation must allow them to attain a human and spiritual maturity that will enable them to make a free and responsible choice.

Throughout their formation candidates to the Montfortian life ought to be imbued with the spirit of the Company of Mary, in accord with the elements of Montfortian inspiration. Thus, even their personality ought to develop with a certain style of living “like the apostles”, “in the footsteps of the poor apostles” (cf. RM 2; 60).

**135.** The candidates must prepare themselves to be missionaries, men who are “free” and ready for any undertaking, witnesses to the Gospel, who know what it is to work and collaborate as a team (cf. PM 7; 10; 12).

**135.1** Contact with the world of the young and of adults is to be favoured so that the specific problems may be understood and the apostolic spirit stimulated. This opening will be brought about through conferences, courses and various apostolic activities.

Such contacts will become all the more fruitful as they are reflected upon in a review of life and work.

**136.** Formation in the missionary spirit takes its inspiration from the attitude of Mary, the model of apostolic life, who was totally dedicated to the person and work of her Son in the service of the mystery of Redemption.

The Montfortian Consecration, which the aspirant solemnly pronounces on the occasion of his first profession and his perpetual profession, must be lived out as a commitment of his entire life to the service of Christ through Mary.

**137.** Montfort's charism, in its apostolic and Marian dimension, is the concrete source of inspiration for the young people who have heard the call of Christ and have undertaken to follow him. Therefore, throughout the entire period of formation, provision must be made for an initiation into the life and writings of our Founder.

This initiation includes an intellectual and spiritual deepening of all the aspects of the message of our Father, with particular insistence on the place of Mary and on an education to missionary prayer, like Montfort's own.

**137.1** The level of formation established by the Constitutions is quite demanding. It asks for a deep and real experience of the spiritual

journey that our Founder lived and taught. Therein lies the necessary effort that will permit the candidates to become authentic sons of Father de Montfort.

**137.2** Because of the special place of Mary in the spirituality of the Company, care must be taken that every Montfortian candidate follows solid courses in Mariology.

**137.3** Personal experiences with the living Montfortian reality is an important element of formation. Therefore, contact of the youth with the missionary teams of the entity is encouraged and, to the extent where it is practical, this will include the lived experiences of other entities.

**137.4** The Montfort missionary is sent into the world; for this reason the formation of young men must be open to different experiences of the human community where they grow up, so that they will be of their own time and country.

**137.5** In the same open spirit, the bringing together of competent people, priests and lay, for formation must be assured. It is indispensable that every Montfortian Brother receives serious professional and social formation.

## Stages of Formation

**138.** Taking into account the directives of the Church, the Superior General, with the Superiors of the entities, will organize the structures and the essential stages of formation leading to a Montfortian commitment.

This formation should include:

- a.** a period of probation for those who have not previously lived in a Montfortian community;
- b.** an intense period of initiation (novitiate), allowing the candidate to reflect on his own vocation, and experience life in the Congregation;
- c.** a period of temporary profession that aims at moving on to perpetual profession.

**138.1** In order to guarantee the continuity between the different stages and structures of Montfortian formation, each entity takes care of the ordinary task of vocation animation and accompaniment of the pre-novices. After the stage of pre-noviciate it directs them toward international structures where the formative stages of novitiate and the period of temporary vows will be offered.

**138.2** This openness to the internationality and this experience of life beyond one's frontiers during this period of formation ought to foster all the values of the culture of origin.



**138.3** The Superior General will see to the preparation of formators as well as to their nomination to the functions foreseen. It falls to them to approve the programme of formation and studies and to verify their effective application, in accordance with the *Ratio Formationis*.

**138.4** The essential needs of formation in the Congregation require responsibility, solidarity and availability on the part of all the entities because it is a matter of a common mission, necessary for the good of the entire Congregation and even of the universal Church.

**139.** The formation programme in the novitiate includes a serious introduction to:

- the reading of Holy Scripture, as a source of the spiritual life;
- liturgy, prayer and meditation;
- Montfortian Spirituality;
- apostolic Religious Life;
- the history of the Company of Mary;
- the study of the Constitutions and Statutes.

**140.** For admission to the novitiate, it is necessary to take into account the conditions and impediments formulated in universal law.

**140.1** Before admitting candidates to the novi-

tiate, Superiors must take care that they have the necessary information on the human and Christian qualities of the candidates, of the motivation which drives them and their *'curriculum vitae'*.

**141.** The Superior General for General Delegations, the Superior of the Delegation if this power is delegated by the Superior General, the Provincial Superior in his Province, the Superior of the Vice-Province in his Vice-Province, each with the consent of his Council, admits the candidate to the period of probation and to the novitiate, and also, with the report of the director of formation, admits the candidate to temporary vows.

**142.** In order to be valid the novitiate must be made in a house of the Congregation designated for this purpose, established as such by a decree of the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

**143.** It belongs to the Superior General with the consent of his Council the authority:

- a.** to set up a novitiate for the formation of novices coming from different entities;
- b.** to transfer the novitiate, permanently or temporarily, to another house of the Congregation, after having notified the Ordinary of that place;

**c.** to authorise a novice, in a particular case and as an exception, to make his novitiate in a house of the Congregation different from the one designated for this purpose, under the guidance of a religious who assumes the role of Director of novices (can. 647, §2).

**144.** To respond in a better way to certain exigencies that may arise in the formation of novices, the Superior General:

**a.** may authorise the novitiate community to live for certain periods of time in another residence of the Congregation;

**b.** recognising the important role that community living plays in the novices' formation, when the number of novices is not large enough to constitute a real community by itself, will establish the novitiate in a community of the Institute that would be able to foster the formation of this small group of novices.

**145.** With regard to the novitiate of a Province, the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council and after consultation with the Superior General and his Council, is to appoint the novice Director. Whereas for the other novitiates, it is for the Superior General with the consent of his Council to make this appointment.

The director of novices must have ten years of religious profession, and be esteemed for his spiritual and Montfortian qualities.

**146. a.** In order for the novitiate to be valid, it must include twelve months spent in the community of the novitiate (can. 648, §1).

**b.** In the case of the insertion of periods of apostolic experiences (cf. can. 648, §2), the total duration of the novitiate is not to exceed two years.

**c.** However, at the completion of the normal duration of the novitiate, if there is a doubt about a novice's suitability, the time of probation may be extended by the competent Superior (cf. C 141), but not by more than six months (can. 653, §2).

**d.** Except for the periods of apostolic experiences, an absence that lasts more than three months, either continuous or interrupted, renders the novitiate invalid; an absence of more than fifteen days must be made up.

The Superiors, mentioned in C 141, with the advice of the director of novices, will determine the manner in which to make up the period of less than three months spent outside the novitiate, and may permit the first profession to be anticipated but not by more than fifteen days.

**147.** At an opportune time each candidate petitions the competent Superior in writing either to make or to renew his temporary profession; for admission to final profession the candidate directs his request to the Superior General.

**148.** Each petition by the candidate must be accompanied by a report from the director of formation. The renewal of vows must be made on the day on which they expire.

**148.1** Candidates for temporary profession and for perpetual vows must prepare for this by the Montfortian Month, or at least by a retreat. Before the profession, they solemnly make the Montfortian Consecration.

**149.** For the validity of temporary profession (can. 656) it is required that:

- a) the person who is about to make profession will have completed at least the eighteenth year of his age;
- b) that the subject be admitted by the competent Superior, after obtaining the consent of his Council in accord with the Constitutions;
- c) the profession has been preceded by a valid novitiate;

- d) the profession be expressed and made without grave fear or fraud, and in complete freedom;
- e) the profession be expressed in formal wording;
- f) the profession is received by the Superior General himself or by his representative (cf. C 150).

**150.** Religious professions, both temporary and perpetual, are received by the Superior General.

Unless there is a contrary decision by the Superior General, the following from among those present at the ceremony shall be considered delegated by law and in this order to receive the profession: an Assistant General, the Major Superior, the Superior of the Delegation, the Local Superior, the Director of novices, and the one who comes first in order of profession.

**151.** The formula of profession adopted for the entire Company is the following:

*In the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort,  
before you, my brothers,  
and into your hands,  
Reverend Father Superior General  
(Or Father... representing the Superior General),  
I, NN,  
vow to Almighty God,*

*for His glory alone  
and for the service of the Church,  
for one year (for three years, forever),  
poverty, obedience, and chastity,  
according to the Constitutions  
of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary.*

This formula may be preceded and followed by personal expressions, depending on the circumstances of persons and communities. The Major Superior must approve these additions to the formula of profession in advance.

**152.** The profession is attested to by a document entered into the register of professions, signed by at least the professed and the one before whom he made the profession.

Immediately following the first profession, the Provincial Superior must forward to the Superior General the personal file of the newly professed.

**153.** The novice who is in danger of death may be allowed by the competent Superior according to the C 141, or the Director of novices, to profess his vows. This profession has juridical value only if death follows.

**154.** The period of temporary vows will normally last for three years; the Provinces may, however, determine a longer period, not to exceed six years (cf. can. 655).

Nevertheless if it seems opportune, the period of temporary profession may be extended by the competent Superior for up to nine years (can. 657, §2).

Temporary profession is always made for a determined period, to be evaluated yearly or monthly, after which the religious, who freely requests it and is judged suitable, will be admitted to renewal of profession or to perpetual profession (can. 657, §1).

Temporary vows are normally taken for one year. The competent Superior, after consulting his Council, can authorise a longer period.

**155.** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, approves the programme of formation and studies (*ratio institutionis et ratio studiorum*).

**155.1** Since formation is allied to cultures, the mentalities and situations of each entity, the means best adapted and the most practical applications should be considered to assure this formation.



**155.2** Candidates should strive to acquire authentic openness to the universality of the Church and its most urgent needs, as well as being ready to adapt to the diverse mentalities and cultures of peoples.

**155.3** During the period of temporary profession, formation must be systematic, spiritual and apostolic, doctrinal and practical, backed up if possible by diplomas. Work which could interfere with studies should be avoided.

**155.4** The mission of the Brothers, according to the mind of the Founder who saw in them direct collaborators for evangelisation, requires an adequate formation: human, cultural, spiritual, pastoral and professional, if needed.

**156.** After presentation of the candidate by the Provincial Superior, or the Superior of a Vice-Province or by the Superior responsible for a territory dependent on the Superior General, in all cases with the consultation of their respective Councils, it belongs to the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to admit him to perpetual profession.

**157.** It belongs to the competent Superior (cf. C 141), with the consent of his Council, to accept

candidates for the ministries of lector and acolyte; the Major Superior has the power to confer these ministries.

It belongs to the Major Superior to accord dimissorial letters to perpetually professed members for the reception of the diaconate and presbyterate, according to the norms of universal law.

## **On-going Formation**

**158.** In each Province care will be taken to ensure additional formation for all members at regular intervals. Efforts must be made to establish adequate means for this, both on the professional pastoral level, and on the level of spiritual renewal.

**158.1** Ongoing formation is part of the vocation to the Religious Life. Together with initial formation, it constitutes a unique journey of faith. Like every human person, the Montfort Missionary is always on a spiritual journey, progressing and evolving within the psychological, cultural and social situations proper to different conditions of age, experience and health.

**158.2** Each entity is attentive to this requirement of ongoing formation. A programme of ongoing formation will be prepared in each entity in line with our *Ratio Formationis*.

**158.3** The Superior of the entity communicates regularly to the Superior General (at least every two years) what has been done concerning ongoing formation. The Extraordinary General Council can be an occasion for this mutual sharing of information.

**158.4** In order to pursue specific courses in colleges, permission is asked of the Major Superior who, in order to give it, takes the advice of his Council.

## GOVERNMENT

**159.** The Montfortian community is to be seen as a community of missionaries that takes its place, through its own inspiration and apostolate, in the life and activities of the ecclesial community.

**160.** The Congregation in its entirety, as in each of the groups that constitute it, strives to live as the family of God, vivified and emboldened by the Spirit of Jesus.

**161.** In reference

- to the teaching of Christ that the Father loves us just as we are, and calls us to a continual growth in love;
- to the manner in which Jesus himself acted with his apostles;
- to the New Testament tradition relating to the life of the first Christian communities;

the following are some fundamental principles to which the life and structures of the Company, and its diverse communities, must strive to respond:

**a.** the mutual acceptance of each and every one in the diversity of his personality, with his richness and deficiencies;

**b.** a constant effort to ensure the maximum participation of all in the progress of the Institute, the Provinces, and the communities, in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity;

**c.** the concern to exercise authority, at whatever level, without being autocratic, but as a service to individuals and communities, following the example of Jesus himself, who made his apostolic group into a family where all see themselves first of all as brothers and sons of the same Father (cf. Mk 9:33-37; Mt 18:1-5; 20:27 ff; 23:8).

**161.1** Taking into consideration both the Montfortian mission in the Church and the person of the missionary, the following directives should guide us:

### **Individuals and Apostolic Community**

**161.2** The individual and the community are complementary; if the rights of the individual are to be recognised and respected, this can only be realised and flourish by involving him actively in the pursuit of the common good. This presupposes an attempt to balance the personal aspirations of the missionary with the apostolic objectives of the community.

## Subsidiarity

**161.3** The principle of subsidiarity applies, in so far as each person, or group, has the possibility of freely exercising his own responsibilities, while being able to count on the understanding and effective support of both higher authorities and of all confreres, in order to accomplish the mission entrusted to him.

**161.4** Respect for the responsibility of intermediate structures and individuals, places authority in its true role as a service of animation and direction. This mission of service is the basis of and determines the rights and responsibilities of authority.

## Co-responsibility

**161.5** Community is based on the communion of all members and the effective sharing of responsibilities. This co-responsibility presupposes:

- reciprocal information,
- participation of all in striving for the common missionary good of the Congregation.

## Unity in diversity

**161.6** To take flesh in this world, our Montfortian life, like any other life, requires structures. Faithful to Montfort's spirit, "always ready to

undertake new ventures”, we must have a variety of flexible structures which take into account both:

- a) unity of intention and inspiration,
- b) diversity in implementation.

## **Style of government**

**161.7** The Superior’s role is one of service to the Congregation, assisting one and all to be faithful to vocation and mission in the Church and the world.

To govern the Company of Mary is to make it become what it should be; this is inseparably bound to animation and administration and must be faithful to present day realities as well as to the intentions of the Founder.

**161.8** Good administration takes into account the principles of subsidiarity and co-responsibility. It promotes a mutual sharing between all levels, higher and lower, which permits us to analyse situations, to specify objectives, to plan and organise the means of action toward decision and concrete implementation.

Above all good religious administration springs from an interior attitude. It is necessary to be conscious of this in order to grasp its role and applications in Religious Life.

## Structures

**162.** The Company of Mary is made up of the following structures:

- a) The Congregation;
- b) Provinces;
- c) Vice-Provinces;
- d) Delegations;
- e) Local Communities attached to the Generalate;
- f) Local Communities.

The entities of the Congregation are the Provinces, the Vice-Provinces and the Delegations.

**163. a)** The Congregation as such is the entirety of the Company of Mary, abstracting from all divisions into provincial entities. The Superior General, assisted by his Council, is the sole immediate ordinary authority of the Congregation as such. Everything that does not depend on the Provinces or Vice-Provinces depends, as a consequence, on the competence of the Congregation as such and is dependent directly on the Superior General and his Council.

**164. b)** A Province is the grouping of several houses under a Major Superior who has ordinary powers and is assisted by a Council.



**165. c)** A Vice-Province is also a grouping of several houses under a Major Superior who has ordinary powers and is assisted by a Council. The conditions for personnel and resources are less stringent than for a Province.

**166. d)** A Delegation is the grouping of several houses under a Superior who has delegated powers.

The Delegation may be established on a territorial basis or on a basis of personnel. In either case, it is dependent on another entity to which it is attached: to a Province or to the Congregation as such.

In the official act of establishment, the rights and duties of all parties will be clearly stipulated.

**167. e)** The Local Community is the basic cell of the Congregation, where the confreres are gathered together in the name of the Lord.

The community builds up gradually by organising its own life on the principle of co-responsibility, and according to the directives of the Chapters.

Every Montfortian belongs to, or is attached to, a community.

**168.** Following the preceding definitions, a Province and Vice-Province are autonomous while a Delegation is attached to a Province or to the Congregation as such.

**169.** It pertains to the Superior General, after consultation with the Extraordinary General Council, and with the consent of his Council, to erect, modify or suppress a Province, a Vice-Province or a structure attached to the Congregation as such, keeping in mind the concrete situations of personnel, organisation and 'hope for the future.'

It pertains to the Superior General, after consultation with the Extraordinary General Council, to apportion the goods of a Province in the case of suppression or division.

**169.1** The change in the juridical status of the entities is evaluated and approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council according to the predicted criteria in the S 169.2.

**169.2** The indicative criteria towards changing the Statute of the entities are the following:

- the number of members in the entity,
- the capacity to live and transmit the Montfortian heritage,

- the presence of new candidates and the conditions to ensure formation,
- missionary openness within the entity and at the level of the Congregation,
- a path toward a co-responsibility which allows the capacity to govern the entity,
- a possibility for growth in financial autonomy.

**170.** To erect, modify or suppress a delegation that is dependent on a Province, the Provincial, at the request of the Provincial Chapter, makes the presentation to the Superior General and his Council. In this case the Superior General takes advice from the Extraordinary General Council.

**171.** To erect or suppress a religious house, the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, presents the request to the Superior General, who will obtain the consent of his Council.

For the erection of a house it is necessary to have the written consent of the Ordinary of the place; for the suppression of a house, it is sufficient to have consulted the Ordinary.

To transfer the seat of the Generalate, the Extraordinary General Council must be consulted. In such a case, the Holy See will be informed.

**172.** When the question arises of a Province making new foundations outside its own territory, or outside areas where it is already at work, it is necessary to have the authorisation of the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after consultation with the Extraordinary General Council.

## **Juridical Dependence and Voting Rights**

**173.** When a candidate takes his vows, according to the Montfortian Constitutions, he becomes a member of the Congregation, with the rights and duties this entails.

**a)** Each Montfortian belongs juridically to the Province or Vice-Province or General Delegation in which he made profession.

**b)** A permanent transfer of a member from one entity to another is made by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after appropriate consultations.

**c)** A member of one entity may be sent to work in another entity; for the duration of his stay, the one who is sent depends on the Superior of that entity and exercise his rights and obligations in that same entity, unless stipulated otherwise in the agreement.

**174. a)** Each Montfortian has passive and active voting rights in the entity to which he belongs juridically. For those who belong to the Congregation as such, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, regulates questions of active and passive voting rights after consultation with the Extraordinary General Council.

Expatriate missionaries exercise their passive and active voice exclusively in the entity in which they work, except if otherwise indicated.

**b)** Montfortians in perpetual vows have active and passive voting rights when Chapters are to be held, more particularly in the election of delegates. The Chapters may grant active voting rights to those in temporary commitment and will then decide the procedure to be followed.

**174.1** Juridical dependence to an entity and the rights and duties that flow from it are regulated by the Constitutions (cf. C 173). General Assistants, the Bursar General and the Secretary General, by reason of their responsibilities and of a tradition in the Company, have neither active nor passive voting rights in provincial functions for the duration of their mandate. Montfortian Ordinaries (bishops, vicars apostolic, prefects apostolic and bishops emeritus) have active voting rights for the consultations in their Entity.

**175.** Those who have requested a transfer to another Institute, permission to leave the Congregation, or exclaustation, lose active and passive voting rights.

**176.** The Superior General, after consulting his Council, may, for just reasons, resolve practical difficulties and problems that arise from the application of these Statutes.

If a doubt should arise about the practical interpretation of a certain text of the Constitutions, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, can give an immediate solution while awaiting the official interpretation of the Holy See.

## **Separation of a member from the Institute**

**177.** The Montfortian novice is free to leave the Congregation. In order to dismiss a novice, it is necessary to have the authorisation of the Superior who admitted him, after consulting his Council.

The temporary professed Montfortian may freely leave the Institute when the period of his vows has expired. Likewise, for just reasons the competent Superior, in accord with the norms of the universal law of the Church, may refuse to allow someone to renew his temporary profession or make his perpetual profession.

**178.** For serious reasons the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, may authorise, by indult, a religious in temporary vows to leave the Institute. Such an indult carries with it by law a dispensation from vows (can. 692).

**178.1** When a member leaves the Congregation at the expiration of temporary vows, the Superior General is to be informed with the appropriate explanations. In the case of a request to leave, as complete a file as possible is also forwarded.

**179.** One who has legitimately left the community at the end of his novitiate, or at the expiration of his temporary vows, may be readmitted by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, without the obligation to restart his novitiate. It is for the Superior General to determine the period of probation necessary before making temporary vows and the length of time of vows before perpetual profession, in accord with cann. 655 and 657 (690).

**180.** Dispensation from perpetual vows is reserved to the Holy See.

**181.** After a definitive commitment, a member may separate from the Company

- by *transfer* to another Institute;
- by *exclaustration*, which is a temporary separation;
- by an indult of *exit* from the Congregation;
- by all cases of *dismissal* foreseen by universal law.

All requests for such permission or dispensation are to be presented to the competent authority, following the norms demanded by common law.

For the dismissal of a religious, the norms of universal law are to be followed.

**182.** Although religious who leave the Institute cannot demand anything, in strict justice, for the services they have rendered, nevertheless we shall remain attentive to the requirements of charity, keeping in mind the spiritual, moral, social and economic welfare of those who have left the Congregation.

**182.1** We must take note of the Statutes of entities, the Holy See and particular circumstances. Those goods, which the religious may have entrusted to the administration of the Congregation, are to be returned to him.





## GOVERNMENT AT ITS VARIOUS LEVELS

**183.** For the designation of Superiors – outside of the election of the Superior General regulated by CC 222-224 – the procedure is dictated by the proper law, general or provincial.

In the case of election, the competent Major Superior must confirm the candidate elected.

In the case of nomination, a suitable consultation is to take place before the relevant Major Superior makes the appointment (cf. can. 625, §3).

**184.** At all levels of government, the responsible Superior continues in charge until the date appointed for his successor to enter into office.

**185.** When the Constitutions or the Statutes require the consent of a Council, the Superior may only act in conformity with the consent of this Council. However, should he judge it necessary, he could choose not to act.

When the Constitutions or the Statutes demand consultation, the Superior may only act after having consulted the Council but he is not bound to comply with the advice expressed.

**186.** When a Superior must have recourse to his Council, he will convoke the Council if it is a question of consent. In other cases, if there is need, he may consult the Council in writing or by other forms of communication.

**187.** For the validity of a Council, unless otherwise stipulated, it is necessary to have the participation of the absolute majority of the members of this Council.

## **I. Local Government**

### **Local Superior**

**188.** There are diverse types of communities, but their bond with the Congregation is always shown by the relation with a Superior.

The Superior serves the unity of the community from the standpoint of its missionary dimension, and by being attentive to the welfare of those in the community. He also takes care to assure the link between the community and the Province.

**189.** In each Province the Provincial Chapter determines the manner of designating the Local Superior, with due regard for the prescriptions of C 183.

**190.** The Local Superior must be chosen from among Montfortian priests having at least three years of perpetual profession.

**191.** The Provincial Superior receives the profession of faith of the Local Superior.

**192.** The length of the Local Superior's mandate is not to exceed three years. This mandate may be renewed according to the norms of the Provincial Chapter.

**192.1** The Local Superior may grant priests the faculty to hear the confession of the religious in his house (cf. can. 969, §2).

## **Local Council**

**193.** The local Council is designated according to the norms of the Provincial Chapter.

**194.** As far as possible, a bursar distinct from the Local Superior (cf. can. 636, §1) will be appointed, according to the norms of the Provincial Chapter, for the administration of the temporal goods (cf. C 252).

## II. Government of a Province

### Provincial Superior

**195.** The Provincial Superior has the ordinary powers of a Major Superior within his Province.

**196.** His mission is:

- a.** to animate and direct the Province so that it will be able to fulfil its mission; to this end, he will convene his ordinary and extraordinary Council and make use of their assistance, according to universal law and the Constitutions (cf. can. 627, §1 and 2);
- b.** to enable individuals to fulfil themselves and flourish as Religious;
- c.** to be a bond of unity among the communities of the Province and to attend to the coordination of the different activities. He must also guarantee the link between the Province and the Congregation.

**197.** It falls to him by law:

- a.** to organise his ordinary and extraordinary Council, or the council of the superiors, according to the norms of universal law and of the Constitutions;
- b.** to set up the institutions that will be useful for good government in the Province;

- c.** to organise and preside over Provincial Chapters;
- d.** to make visitations himself or through his delegate at least every three years;
- e.** to be present at all the important events in the life of the Province.

**198.** In addition to what has already been said elsewhere, it belongs to the Provincial Superior:

- a.** to lay down acts of jurisdiction for the government and internal discipline;
- b.** to grant priests the faculty to hear the confessions of his religious (cf. can. 969, §2);
- c.** to approve the programmes and particular regulations of the Province;
- d.** to dispense, for a time and for a just cause, from certain points of discipline in the Constitutions;
- e.** to dispense, in individual cases and for a just cause, totally or partially from the obligation of the Divine Office, or to commute it;
- f.** to give permission for a member to publish a work;
- g.** to establish or change the location of the provincial house, after having consulted the extraordinary provincial Council, or the council of the superiors, or if the latter is not feasible, the confreres of the Province.

**199.** The choice in the manner of designating the Provincial Superior rests with each of the Provincial Chapters, with due regard for the prescriptions of C 183.

**199.1** For the designation of the Provincial Superior and for the renewal of his mandate, according to the modalities foreseen by the Statutes of each Province, a consultation with the Superior General is foreseen for the good functioning of the two levels of major instance in the Congregation.

**199.2** At the stage of the preparatory consultation for the election of the Provincial Superior, it is important that – in addition to the criteria of the Province – we know and take into account the criteria of the Congregation, in agreement with the Superior General.

**200.** For the conditions necessary to take up this office, and the requisite qualifications to become Provincial, the norms of universal law apply, but the person must be a priest and have at least ten years of perpetual profession in the Company of Mary.

**201.** The Superior General or his delegate will receive the profession of faith of the Provincial Superior.

**202.** The length of the Provincial Superior's mandate and the possibilities for his re-appointment are determined by the Provincial Chapter. The Chapter will also provide for the case of the office falling vacant through the death or resignation of the Provincial.

**202.1** For better collaboration between different levels of the Congregation, (Extraordinary General Council, General Chapter), the mandates of the Superiors of the entities will normally finish in the year that follows the election of the Superior General.

**202.2** The resignation of a Provincial Superior, presented with reasons justifying it, only becomes effective when accepted by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council.

## **Provincial Council**

**203.** The Provincial Council is a team, co-responsible but not collegial, which assists the Provincial Superior in the government of the Province.

The Council has, as its mission, to promote the apostolic Religious Life of the Province, to implement within the Province the general orientations of the Congregation, and to examine and resolve various specific problems.



**204.** The provincial Council is organised according to the norms of universal law (can. 627) and proper law (C 185-187), and by the norms determined by the Provincial Chapter.

**204.1** The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, chooses the Vicar Provincial and determines the order in which the Councillors will replace the Superior should he be absent or impeded.

**205.** In addition to what has been said elsewhere, it belongs to the Provincial Superior, after consultation with his Council, and normally after dialogue with the interested parties:

- to give the religious the obedience, transferring them from one house to another;
- to entrust them with an apostolic task;
- to authorise long journeys.

**206.** With the consent of his Council, the Provincial may:

- accept a new pastoral commitment involving a contract;
- make regulations and ordinances for the Province in accordance with the Constitutions and Statutes.

**207.** The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, may, for just reasons, resolve practical difficulties and problems that arise in the application of the provincial Statutes.

**208.** In all cases where the Constitutions or Statutes call for the Provincial Chapter to specify a given procedure, the Provincial Superior, with the consent of the Council, has the duty and the right to do so, if the competent Chapter has not acted on it.

**208.1** The meeting of the community superiors is a consultative gathering whose aim is to assist the Provincial Superior and his Council in decisions of greater importance.

**208.2** Each provincial government is encouraged to establish commissions and technical structures for the better service of individuals and the common good. These commissions or structures are always consultative.

## **Provincial Bursar**

**209.** The Provincial Bursar, who should be distinct from the Major Superior, is appointed by the Provincial Superior, after consultation with his Council, for the administration of the material goods (cf. C 252).

## Provincial Chapter

**210.** The Provincial Chapter is a collegial assembly which, in keeping with the spirit of the Congregation, strives to promote apostolic Religious Life in concrete situations, and which gives the orientations and directives necessary for the life of the Province in accordance with the spirit of the Company.

**211.** The Provincial Superior and the members of his Council, participate by right in the Provincial Chapter. The other ex-officio members and the delegates are designated according to the norms of the previous Provincial Chapter. If the Chapter has not done this, or if the Chapter has charged the Provincial Superior to do so, with the consent of his Council, he will designate the delegated members (cf. C 208).

The Chapter itself may invite observers and experts.

**211.1** The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, may invite some members, without the right to vote, to the Provincial Chapter.

**212.** Normally the Provincial Chapter meets at times fixed by the Chapter itself and at least once every six years in preparation for the General Chapter.

**212.1** In addition to the preparatory session for the General Chapter, it is ordinarily foreseen - as advised by the competent authority - a session of the Chapter for the application of the norms and orientations, approved by the General Chapter.

**213.** An extraordinary Provincial Chapter may be convened by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council; likewise, the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, may request it of the Superior General who must obtain the consent of his Council.

**213.1** The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, will determine the date of the Provincial Chapter. In preparation for the General Chapter, the Provincial Chapters will ordinarily meet in the twelve months preceding the Chapter. In other cases, the Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, may fix the date of the Chapter within a period of six months before or after the anticipated date.

**213.2** It is for the Provincial Chapter to elect delegates, who with the Provincial Superior will represent the Province at the General Chapter.

The Chapter also designates substitutes in case delegates are legitimately impeded from attend-

ing the General Chapter. If the Provincial is impeded the Vicar Provincial will replace him by right. In the special case where the Vicar has been delegated already, the first substitute will take his (the Vicar's) place as delegate to the General Chapter.

**214.** The Acts of a Provincial Chapter must be approved by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council.

It is for the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to interpret the decisions of the Provincial Chapters and to derogate them if necessary.

**214.1** The fact of offering the Acts and Statutes of the Province for the approbation of the Superior General and his Council, and the approbation itself, are concrete affirmation of the link which unites each entity to the Congregation as a whole.

### **III. Government of a Vice-Province**

**215.** Just like the Superior of a Province, the Superior of a Vice-Province has the ordinary powers of a Major Superior in his Vice-Province; his mission is to animate and govern his entity with the same

faculties foreseen in the Constitutions 196-198, 200-201 and 203-207.

**a)** The Superior of a Vice-Province regularly convokes assemblies of the confreres, in order to consult on the more important questions in the life of the entity.

**b)** The Superior of a Vice-Province and his Councilors (who should number at least two) are appointed by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council and after consulting the confreres.

**c)** The term of office of a Superior of a Vice-Province is three years, and it can be renewed up to a maximum of twelve years.

**d)** Regarding the Bursar of a Vice-Province, the norm laid down by no. 209 of the Constitutions is to be observed.

**215.1** According to its proper Statutes, the Vice-Province undertakes the election of delegates to the General Chapter.

## **IV. Government of a Delegation**

### **Superior of a Delegation**

**216.** The Superior of a Delegation is designated from among the missionaries who are priests, with

at least four years of perpetual profession, and according to the manner determined by the Provincial Chapter, or according to a agreement with the General Curia, with due regard for the prescriptions of C 183. The competent Major Superior receives the profession of faith of the Superior.

**217.** The length of a Superior's mandate and the possibilities for his re-appointment are determined by the Chapter of the Province, if the delegation depends on a Province, by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, if the Delegation is attached to the Congregation as such.

**218.** The powers of the Superior of a Delegation are delegated by the Superior General – or the Provincial, as may be the case – with the consent of his Council.

The Superior of a Delegation attached to the General Curia is a member of the General Chapter by right.

For other delegations, the Provincial Chapters will fix the modalities of representation at Provincial Chapters.

**218.1** The delegation of powers will be according to the directives of the universal law (cf. cann. 132-133) and the requirements of the entity.

## Council of a Delegation

**219.** The Council of a Delegation is made up of at least two members designated according to the norms given by the Provincial Chapter if the delegation is attached to a Province, or named by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council and after consultation with the members of the Delegation, if it is attached to the Congregation as such.

## V. General Government

### Superior General

**220.** The Superior General, as the successor of our Founder, is the highest ordinary authority in the Congregation. He has authority over Provinces, communities and individuals, according to the Constitutions. Thus, it belongs to him, with the General Council, to govern the Congregation entrusted to his care according to universal and proper law.

**221.** It rests with the Superior General, in addition to what has been said elsewhere:

**a.** to lay down acts of jurisdiction for the government and internal discipline, always maintaining the



dependence vis-a-vis the ordinary of the place, in accordance with universal law;

**b.** to grant, not only to his subjects who are priests, but also to priests of the secular clergy or of another Institute, the faculty to hear the confessions of his own subjects (cf. can 969, §2);

**c.** at least every six years, to visit, either himself or through a delegate, the Provinces and communities of the Company;

**d.** to dispense, for a time and for a just cause, from certain points of discipline in the Constitutions and Statutes, whether individuals, houses, or Provinces of the Company;

**e.** to allow priests, for reasons of infirmity, to celebrate daily the votive mass of the Blessed Virgin or the Mass for the dead.

**222.** It belongs to the General Chapter to elect the Superior General from among Montfortians who are priests, have passive voting rights, and at least ten years of perpetual profession in the Company of Mary. It is part of the function of the Chapter's steering committee to propose, as the voting proceeds, a suitable interval between ballots.

For the first five ballots, two-thirds of the votes are required for election.

On the sixth ballot, an absolute majority is required; on the seventh ballot only the two candidates who received the most votes are eligible; in cases of equal votes, the eldest by profession is elected, or the eldest in age if they have the same date of profession.

**223.** The length of the mandate is six years.

If the Superior General has the intention to lay down his responsibility, having obtained the consent of the Councillors, he must present his request to the Holy See and comply with its decision.

If, for grave reasons, it is necessary to remove the Superior General, the Vicar General, having obtained the consent of the Councillors, will present the case to the Holy See and comply with the provisions of the instance.

If the office falls vacant the Vicar assumes the government of the Congregation “ad interim” and, in accord with the other members of the General Council, convokes a General Chapter for the election of a new Superior General and a new Council. The election must take place within the twelve months that follow the vacancy.

**224.** The Superior General is always eligible for re-election.

For a first re-election, he must obtain two-thirds of the votes on the first or second ballot.

For a second re-election or subsequent re-elections, he must obtain two thirds of the votes on the very first ballot.

If the candidate does not obtain two-thirds of the votes by the second ballot, in the case of a first re-election, or on the very first ballot in the other cases, he loses his passive voice.

When the candidate for re-election has obtained votes on the ballots for which he did have passive voting rights, the voting procedure must begin again.

**224.1** Since the beginnings of the foundation, the Superior General of the Company of Mary has been expressly seen by the Institute of the Daughters of Wisdom and the Company of Mary as the legitimate successor of the Founder, Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort. With the Superior General of the Daughters of Wisdom, he has been called to assist the Congregation to remain faithful:

- to the charism of Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort, a gift of God to the Church and the world;
- to the spiritual heritage handed down by the Founder and Blessed Marie Louise of Jesus;
- to the tradition of the Institute of the Daughters of Wisdom.

**224.2** The three Congregations of the Montfortian Family, the Daughters of Wisdom, the Brothers of Saint Gabriel and the Missionaries of the Company of Mary, live the charism of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort. In the Montfortian Family, the members share and collaborate in the deepening and the transmission of the spirituality according to the specificity of each Institute that recognises the role of the Blessed Marie Louise Trichet and Father Gabriel Deshayes in their history.

The members of the three Congregations are invited to work unitedly on common projects inspired by the charism; to celebrate particular events and feasts with those who live this same spirit in order to transmit and increase this gift given by God to the Church.

In a general way, the governing teams, at the different levels, gather in a family spirit to exchange on the life of their respective Institutes, to elaborate together projects for formation, mission and the future.

## **General Council**

**225.** The General Council is a team, co-responsible but not collegial, which assists the Superior General in the government of the Company.

Apart from those cases prescribed by universal law, our own proper law determines those cases for which the consent or the consultation of the Council is required for these acts to be valid, according to can. 127 (cf. can. 627, §2).

The Council has as its mission:

- a.** to spur on the Congregation in its fidelity to the spirit of the Founder;
- b.** to foster and, when necessary, to defend the apostolic mission of individuals, communities and Provinces, etc., even against civil or ecclesiastical authorities;
- c.** to promote unity within the Congregation;
- d.** to constitute, within the Congregation, the court of appeal for each Montfortian, community, Province, etc.

**225.1** The Superior General and his Council together, but not with collegiality, bear the responsibility of the functions of general concern, according to the norms of universal law and particular law.

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, divides the various tasks.

The Superior General with his Council may call upon other persons as needs dictate.

**225.2** The Superior General or his representa-

tive has the right to attend, in the manner he judges best, the Chapters, assemblies and important events in the life of the Congregation.

**225.3** He must be informed, as soon as possible, of all the important undertakings of the entities, and receive each year a general report of apostolic activities, events and the state of the personnel. The minutes of the Council meetings and assemblies of the entities must be sent to the General Administration as soon as possible.

**225.4** The General Council acts with collegiality in the matter of a dismissal, according to the terms of can. 699, §1.

**226.** In addition to powers declared elsewhere, it belongs to the Superior General, with the consent of his Council:

- a.** to convene meetings, after having listened to the Provincial Superiors;
- b.** to appoint to general offices and to undertake proceedings for other appointments required by the Provincial Chapters.

**227.** There are four General Assistants. They are elected by the General Chapter.

**228.** After an orientation vote, the elected Superior General may himself propose candidates for the office of Assistant.

- On the first three ballots they must obtain two-thirds of the votes.
- On the fourth ballot the absolute majority suffices.
- On the fifth ballot the relative majority suffices.

**229.** The designation of the Vicar General will be made according to the prescriptions of the Statutes (S 229.1).

**229.1** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, shall choose the Vicar General and fix the order in which the Assistants will replace the Superior General or the Vicar General should they be absent or unavailable.

The Superior General and the members of his Council reside in Rome.

**230.** The General Assistants are elected for a term of six years. They are always eligible for re-election.

**231.** It is for the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to accept the resignation of a General Assistant.

If, for grave reasons, it is necessary to remove one of the General Councillors, the Superior General,

after obtaining the consent of his Council, presents the case to the Holy See and abides by the dispositions of this instance.

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council and after the consultation of the Superiors of all the entities, has the right to replace a General Assistant till the next General Chapter, should the office fall vacant.

**232.** The General Procurator, General Bursar and General Secretary are named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

The same can be said of the prefect of missions and prefect of studies, and those responsible for other functions. Their mandate terminates with that of the Superior General; it is renewable.

**232.1** The General Secretary has the mission to draw up the minutes of the meetings of the General Council; he is equally responsible for the organisation of the secretariat which has charge of the administrative aspects of the General Curia and the official information of the Congregation.

**232.2** In its mission of coordination among diverse entities (for example: coordination of inter-entity projects, sharing of missionary or formation experiences, international projects of the Congregation) and the implementing of the



orientations or decisions of the General Chapter, the General Council, if it judges opportune, may be helped by one or several confreres. It belongs to the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to name this (these) confrere(s), and to define his (their) role and mandate.

**232.3** The necessity of regular information among the entities and with the General Administration calls for appropriate means of communication, including the use of modern technology. This information will cover the official acts between a community and the entity it belongs to, between an entity and the General Administration and vice-versa. It is to be seen that the information be easily accessible in what concerns the diverse aspects of the life of the Congregation: first professions, perpetual professions, ordinations, deaths, nominations, foundations, experiences of life and apostolate, indeed, all of which would appear of general interest for the whole Congregation.

**232.4** A permanent secretariat is necessary.

## **Extraordinary General Council**

**233.** The Extraordinary General Council has as its aim to ensure and promote the unity of the Congregation and to develop solidarity between the

Provinces. This provides a wide field for the practice of co-responsibility. The Extraordinary General Council lends its assistance to the Superior General and to the Ordinary General Council.

**234.** The Superior General, assisted by his Council, presides over its meetings.

The following are members by right of the Extraordinary General Council:

- the General Procurator, General Bursar and prefect of missions, when these offices are not held by General Assistants,
- the Provincial Superiors and Vice-Provinceals, or a delegate designated by the Provincial or Vice-Provincial Council,
- the Superior General with the consent of his Council may invite the Superiors of Delegations.

**235.** The function of the Extraordinary General Council concerns the following points:

- interchange of information among its members;
- verification, in a spirit of collaboration, of the implementation of the Chapter directives and if necessary, making concrete these orientations;
- promoting contacts between the Provinces on the grass roots level;

- coordinating initiatives and work in areas where it would be beneficial for them to be handled at the level of several Provinces or the Company;
- clarification of possible disagreements between Provinces;
- studying attitudes to be adopted to certain situations within the universal Church or a local Church.

In general, the Extraordinary General Council will concentrate on questions that concern the Congregation as a whole, and not on the internal problems of any one Province, which the Province itself can settle.

**235.1** The Superior General with the consent of his Council prepares the agenda from those matters presented by the General Council, the entities and from reciprocal information; the Extraordinary General Council may add other topics.

**235.2** In the Extraordinary General Council the following have the right to vote: the Superior General and his Assistants, the General Bursar, the Secretary General and the Superiors of the entities.

**235.3** It belongs to the Superior General with the consent of his Council to convene periodic meetings of the Extraordinary General Council.

## General Chapter

**236.** Supreme extraordinary authority in the Congregation, the General Chapter is a collegial assembly which, in fidelity to our Montfortian inspiration and the service of the Church,

- fosters the participation of all in the pursuit of the common good;
- strives to promote a dynamic unity within the Congregation;
- gives the orientations and necessary norms for the Apostolic Religious Life of the group, norms to which all must submit (can. 631, §1).

**237.** The General Chapter is constituted as follows: Members by right are:

- the Superior General, who is the president of the chapter,
- the General Assistants,
- the General Bursar,
- the General Secretary,
- the Provincial Superiors,
- the Vice-Provincial Superiors,
- the Superiors of the Delegations attached to the General Curia.

Delegated members are those elected according to the directives of the General Chapters. The number

of delegated members will always at least equal to the number of those who attend by right.

**238.** Each entity elects one or many delegates according to a proportional criteria fixed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

**238.1** Taking into consideration the availability of the number, the Superior General with the consent of his Council and in consultation with the Extraordinary General Council, determines the number of delegates to the Chapter and the proportional criteria to be used according to the criteria laid down in the S 169.2.

**238.2** In preparation for the General Chapter, the viability and the future capability of the entities will be evaluated by the Superior General after consultation with the Extraordinary General Council and with the consent of his Council.

**239.** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, may of his own volition, or at the request of the Extraordinary General Council, name a few Brothers as delegates to the General Chapter.

**239.1** The Superior General may invite members of the Congregation as consulters, without voting rights, to the General Chapter. The General Chapter itself may invite observers and experts.

**239.2** The Chapter establishes its own agenda and the organisms and procedures needed for its functioning. It selects a steering committee, of which the Superior General is president.

Moderators, when required, shall conduct the plenary sessions in turns according to the rules of procedure of the Chapter.

A secretariat, under the responsibility of a secretary elected by the Chapter, sees to the editing of the minutes and prepares the voting ballots.

Two members of the Chapter are elected as tellers and are responsible for voting procedures.

The Chapter will set up workshops as the needs dictate.

**240.** When voting, two-thirds of the votes are required to amend the Constitutions and general Statutes; otherwise the absolute majority of votes suffices, except in specific cases where the absolute majority of the capitulants present demands a two-thirds vote. Further, the approbation of the Holy See is required in order to amend the Constitutions.

**241.** The General Chapter is held:

- ordinarily, every six years;
- extraordinarily, according to the decisions of the Extraordinary General Council;

– in the event of the office of Superior General falling vacant, according to the norms of the C 223.

**242.** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, convenes the General Chapter and determines its location and date.

In the case of an Ordinary General Chapter, he makes the arrangements with latitude of six months before or after the end of the six years falls due.

**242.1** The Superior General with his Council is responsible for the preparation of the work of the General Chapter, utilising as needed various commissions and the advice of experts.

**243.** The decision to close the Chapter will be taken by secret ballot.

It belongs to the Superior General to promulgate the Acts of the General Chapter.

## FINANCES

**244.** The personal and collective witness to poverty, as well as the complete dependence on Providence which Montfort asks of all his missionaries, require a very characteristic life-style in the evangelical use of good.

**245.** Our existence in society, the supply of the goods we have (work, gifts, etc.), the primary missionary aim of our Company (care of the missionaries, works, expansion, service in the Church) call for the co-responsibility of all in the administration of what we possess.

This co-responsibility requires:

- the collaboration of everyone in the acquisition of these goods;
- a deep spirit of poverty in their use;
- an administration exercised with faithfulness and competence, both from the strictly financial point of view and with respect to justice and charity.

### **Administration of the goods of the Company**

**246.** The Congregation and the Provinces have the right to acquire, possess and administer the material



goods necessary for the needs of their works, though they are not allowed to amass unjustified reserves.

The Province, however, leaves to the houses the use, the 'usufruct' and the ordinary maintenance of these same goods.

The Congregation and the Provinces have the right to alienate goods. The houses are not allowed to do so in the case of real estate.

**247.** The construction and renovation of buildings are the charge of the Province, with the exception of what is in the charge of the Congregation as such.

**248.** In order to safeguard ecclesiastical goods and those of the Company, account must be taken of the civil laws in force in the various places where the Company is present and works.

**249.** As the material goods of the Company are ecclesiastical goods their administration is governed by universal law or by the proper law of the Institute. Consequently, any administrative act is to be done within the limits of an office or by mandate granted by the competent authority.

**250.** The possessions of the Institute may not be

alienated, mortgaged, offered as a bond or on long-term lease without the written permission of the Superior General with the consent of his Council. For the same acts with respect to the goods of the General Curia, the Superior General must obtain the consent of the Extraordinary General Council.

**251.** Superiors, bursars and all other administrators cannot either validly or licitly incur debts or obligations or draw up contracts on behalf of the Congregation except within the limits of their office, and in conformity with universal law and the Constitutions and Statutes. Except by virtue of his office, no one is allowed to incur debts and obligations, or to draw up contracts, on behalf of the Congregation unless he does so by order from the Superior General who has given in writing, after having obtained the consent of his Council by secret ballot. If these conditions are not fulfilled, the act is not only illicit but also invalid.

**252.** Consequently, the Congregation, the Province, the Vice-Province and the houses are responsible only for the debts, obligations and contracts made in their name, in accordance with the tenor of universal law and of our Constitutions and Statutes, by virtue of an office or mandate. As regards all other

obligations, those who have undertaken them invalidly or illicitly are responsible for them, morally, juridically and financially before the Church, the Congregation and the civil authorities.

**253.** No court action can be taken without a lawful written authorisation.

**254.** The General Bursar will administer the material goods of the Congregation under the responsibility and guidance of the Superior General and his Council.

The provincial bursar will administer the material goods of the Province under the responsibility and guidance of the Local Superior and his Council.

The local bursar will administer the material goods of the community under the responsibility and guidance of the Local Superior and his Council.

**255.** The confreres who administer goods, whether those of the Company or of a diocese, of a mission or of any other activity, are to take stock regularly and keep completely separate accounts for each category.

Superiors will see that those in charge fulfil this obligation faithfully.

**256.** Without an authorisation of the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council, no Montfortian can accept responsibility of administering other people's goods, for example, acting as executor of a will, guardian or administrator of secular undertaking entailing a rendering of accounts.

**257.** The norms governing the financial transactions of the Congregation such as:

- alienation, selling and other business of a financial nature,
- investment of capital,
- loans and debts,
- amount of dues from the Province,

fall within the competence of the General Chapter.

**258. a)** *Financial capacity* is the faculty to perform an administrative act of a financial nature exceeding the amount budgeted for without having to resort to a higher authority. It does not include the faculty to borrow.

**b)** *Borrowing capacity* is the faculty to incur debts by borrowing without having to resort to a higher authority.

**259.** The financial capacity and the borrowing

capacity of the various authorities are determined by the norms laid down by each General Chapter.

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council and after having consulted the Extraordinary General Council, approves or modifies the financial capacity of the Superior General and that of the Superior General and his Council.

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, approves or modifies, according to circumstances, the financial capacities and the borrowing capacities proposed by the Provinces.

The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, approves and modifies the financial capacities and the borrowing capacities of the local communities.

**260. a)** All should act within the limits of their respective financial or borrowing capacity.

**b)** Before performing an administrative act exceeding either of these capacities it is necessary to resort to a higher authority, and, if need be, to the Holy See.

**261.** The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, may authorise members of the Congrega-

tion to exceed their borrowing capacity within the limits of the amount approved by the Holy See.

**262.** Each community (local, provincial...) must submit periodically to the competent higher authority:

- the extraordinary budget which exceeds its financial capacity, for authorisation,
- the ordinary and extraordinary accounts and budgets,
- the amount of the loans and debts,
- what falls outside the budget,
- the balances,
- the statements of accounts.

**263.** Each General Chapter receives the accounts of the out-going General Council.

The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, approves each year the report on the financial administration presented by the Provincial Council and by other entities directly dependent on the General Council.

The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council, approves each year the report on the financial administration of all the authorities depending on him.

## **Contributions towards common expenses**

**263.1** The General Administration is entitled to a contribution from each entity towards the up-keep and the running of the Curia and the General government.

### **Per Capita**

**263.2** To underline the participation of each Montfortian in the common expenses, the principle of a per capita contribution will be maintained, that is, by every religious in final vows without exception. The amount of this contribution is fixed by the General Chapter. The number of those contributing is established on December 31.

**263.3** The entity where the confrere works takes charge of the per capita, unless otherwise specified in the mission contracts.

### **Solidarity**

**263.4** The Superior General with the consent of his Council and after consulting the Extraordinary General Council can ask certain entities, according to their financial situation, an annual fixed contribution towards the expenses of the General Administration.

**263.5** In case of extraordinary expenses, the Superior General can ask an extraordinary contribution.

**263.6** To emphasise the unity and solidarity of the whole Congregation, a Solidarity Fund is set up which makes possible mutual aid between the Provinces and Delegations, and covers the expenses entailed by activities which concern the whole Congregation (General Chapter, Extraordinary General Council, various other meetings, non-provincial foundation, etc.).

The Extraordinary General Council will lay down norms concerning contributions to and the functioning of the Solidarity fund.

**263.7** In the case of a loan to an entity, the amount lent will be repaid in accordance with the terms agreed.

In the case of a grant, it is necessary to obtain the consent of the Extraordinary General Council, after all its members have been informed by their respective finance committees.

**263.8** The General Administration, given its global vision of the Company, discerns the relative priorities among the requests for financing or the utilisation of available resources (General Chapter 2005, n. 36)

**263.9** Ordinarily, the formation costs are borne by the entity itself and, if the situation demands, it could ask for the support from the General Administration for the novitiate and the scholasticate.



## **Financing of the Entities**

**263.10** The administration of each entity has the right to receive financial support from each community and work of the entity, according to the norms of its Statutes.

In case of necessity the administration of the entity can, during the course of the year, ask for additional subsidies from the communities under its jurisdiction.

All the Religious communities, including the parishes and other institutions, must submit a financial report to the administration of the entity.

**263.11** Contributions between entities, for example, personnel on loan, will be fixed by an agreement between the entities concerned according to the indications of the Superior General, who, on his part, consults his Council.

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- C 156 Admission to the perpetual profession.
- C 169 Erection, modification, suppression of a Province, Vice-Province, or a structure attached to the Congregation as such.
- C 171 Erection and suppression of a house.
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- C 174 Active and passive voice of those depending directly on the General Administration.



- C 176 Provisionally to make practical interpretations of the Constitutions.
- C 178 Authorise one in temporal vows to leave the Congregation (can. 692).
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- C 223 Role of the Vicar General, if the Superior General has the intension of resigning himself
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- C 238 Establish the proportional criteria for the number of delegates to the General Chapter.
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- C 242 Convene a General Chapter
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- S 263.4 Annual contribution (solidarity) towards the expenses of the General Administration.

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- C 176 Resolve practical difficulties related to the Statutes.

- C 231 Consult Superiors of all the entities to replace an Assistant General.
- S 199.1 For the designation of a Provincial Superior and the renewal of his mandate
- S 263.11 The contribution between the entities.

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- C 141 Admission of a candidate to the probation period, to the novitiate and to make temporary vows (cf. 149b).
- C 145 Nomination of novice master.
- C 155 Program of formation, of studies.
- C 156 Presentation to the perpetual vows.
- C 157 Accept to the ministries.
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- C 207 Resolve practical difficulties regarding Provincial Statutes.
- C 208 Supplement to the Provincial Chapter to specify a procedure.
- C 211 Mode of designation of delegates to the Provincial Chapter if the Chapter has not done it.
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- C 154 Temporary Profession for a period of more than a year.
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- C 170 Erection, modification, suppression of a delegation depending on a Province.
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- C 172 Foundation by a Province outside of its territory.
- C 174 Active and passive voice of those who depend directly on the General Curia
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