



THE RULE
of THE BROTHERS OF THE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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ROME - 2002

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THE NEW EDITION OF THE RULE

Brothers,

I am delighted to present to you a new edition of our Rule. As you know, the current text of the Rule was the result of a long process that culminated in the 41st General Chapter and was approved by the Holy See on January 26th, 1987. This new, limited edition of the text and its approved translations was motivated, first of all, by the minor modifications made in the 42nd and 43rd General Chapters and by a need to make a few minor corrections of the English translation which appear in this edition for the first time. Furthermore, the supply of the 1987 editions in the three official languages of the Institute has been exhausted.

Now we are making only a limited press run keeping in mind, especially, the new Brothers who are joining our Institute. But we are keeping very much in mind Proposition 38 from the 43rd General Chapter, which stated: *That Brother Superior General and his Council appoint an ad hoc Committee to study what implications changes in the Church and in the Institute might have for the present text of the Rule.* There-

fore it will be the next General Chapter which will determine the needed changes for our current text. That will also be the appropriate time to review the translations which some have requested.

It seems to me that this new edition is an opportune time to make a brief reflection on our Rule. It strikes me that there is a kind of harmony between number 5 of *Vita Consecrata* and the Founder's thought taken from Chapter XVI of the Common Rule of 1718. The Pope's text tells us that *consecrated life manifests the organic unity of the commandment of love, in the inseparable link between love of God and love of neighbor*. And the Founder declared, in a text that we have saved as a real treasure in the opening section of our current Rule that *it is necessary that the Brothers take for the foundation and support of their observance of the Rule what Saint Augustine says at the beginning of his Rule: that those who live in community should, before all else, love God and next their neighbor because these are the principal commandments given to us by God...*The Rule, therefore, should be for us an instrument which is at the service of love. Love is its purpose and its end.

Personally, it seems to me that our Rule moves between two coordinates which are marked by its first and last Chapters (1 and 10). On the one hand, the Rule presents to us the objective that we should reach and the spirit that should animate us; on the other hand, we are presented with the secret of our vitality. The objective and the spirit should make a continual reference to the foundational inspiration of Saint John Baptist de La Salle as a way of living out the Gospel, and as the creative fidelity that drives us to incarnate this charism today as we respond to the challenges presented to us by our world. This is a vitality that speaks of life, increase, growth, search, hope, beginning anew...and it is one that invites us to be agents in *the continual challenge to be creative while remaining faithful to the Institute's origins (Rule 149)*.

I ask the Lord to help us bring to life what the Rule presents to us as the ideal of our vocation as Brother. The most important thing is not to

have beautiful documents but to be active witnesses of the values these documents contain. Let us make our own the words that God addressed to the prophet Ezekiel: *O mortal, eat what is offered to you; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel (Ezekiel 3: 1)*. May the Rule, once it has been internalized, be for us the spiritual nourishment that becomes a message of life for all those whom God has entrusted to our care.

Fraternally in De La Salle,



Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría
Superior General

Rome, April 7th, 2002
283rd anniversary of the death
of the Founder



CONGREGATIO
PRO RELIGIOSIS
ET INSTITUTIS SAECULARIBUS

Prot n P 86-1/86

DECREE

In compliance with the provisions of the motu proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae"(II, 6), the Brothers of the Christian Schools have proceeded to the revision of their Constitutions and have presented to the Holy See the text voted by their General Chapter. After a thorough examination of the document to which various modifications were made, the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes has recognized in these texts the faithful expression of the charism of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and of the tradition of his Institute: consecrated to God as lay religious, the Brothers are called to provide a human and Christian education for young people especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to them They endeavour to look upon everything with the eyes of faith, they share in community the experience of God, and they fulfil "together and by association" their service of evangelisation, principally in schools.

By this present decree the Holy See, therefore, accords the approval requested. This act in no way derogates from the requirements of universal law.

The Congregation of Religious and Secular Institutes desires that all the Brothers of the Christian Schools, discovering in the total "Yes" of Mary the sense of their vocation respond with an ardent zeal to the calls of the Lord, of the Church, and of the world, to procure the glory of God.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Rome, 26 January 1987, the 262nd anniversary of the Bull of Approbation of the Institute, and the fiftieth of the translation of the relics of Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

Vincenzo Fagiolo
Sec

Vincenzo Fagiolo
Archbishop, Secretary

F. Jerome Card. Hamer, O.P.
Pref

F. Jerome Card. Hamer, O.P.
Prefect

KEY TO MARGINAL REFERENCES

Holy Scripture

1 Cor.	First Letter to the Corinthians
Heb.	Letter to the Hebrews
Ja.	Letter of St. James
Jn.	Gospel of St. John
Lk.	Gospel of St. Luke
Mt.	Gospel of St. Matthew
Ho.	Hosea
Ph.	Letter to the Philippians
Rm.	Letter to the Romans
1 Tim.	First letter to Timothy

Church documents

AG	Ad gentes - Vatican II - 1965
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi - Paul VI - 1976
GS	Gaudium et Spes-Vatican II - 1965
LG	Lumen Gentium-Vatican II - 1964
PC	Perfectae Caritatis-Vatican II - 1963
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium-Vatican II - 1963
Can.	Code of Canon Law, Article, Paragraph

Institute texts

AD	The Administrator's Directory
B	Bull of Pope Benedict XIII approving the Rules of the Brothers of the Christian Schools - 1725
CL	Cahiers Lasalliens
D	Declaration on the Brother of the Christian Schools in the World today - 1967
Form. V.	Formula of Vows
G	Book of Government - 1977
Med.	De la Salle. Meditations (Edition: Battersby 1964)
MTR.	Meditations for the time of Retreat (Edition: Loes)

- EMP Explanation of the method of Mental Prayer
RC 1718 Règles communes des Frères des Ecoles chrétiennes
(Manuscript copy 1718)
CR 1947 Common Rules and Constitutions 1947
RCV Religious Consecration and Vows - 39th General Chapter

N.B. THE RULE is a single entity: all the articles in the Rule have the same status of law in the Institute.

In the present edition of the Rule the CONSTITUTIONS are printed in ordinary characters and the STATUTES in italics.

THE SPIRIT OF THIS INSTITUTE

That which is of the utmost importance, and to which the greatest attention should be given in an Institute is that all who compose it possess the spirit peculiar to it; that the novices apply themselves to acquire it; and that those who are already members make it their first care to preserve and increase it in themselves; for it is this spirit that should animate all their actions, be the motive of their whole conduct; and those who do not possess it and those who have lost it, should be looked upon as dead members, and they should look upon themselves as such; because they are deprived of the life and grace of their state; and they should be convinced that it will be very difficult for them to preserve the grace of God.

The spirit of this Institute is first, a spirit of faith, which should induce those who compose it not to look upon anything but with the eyes of faith, not to do anything but in view of God, and to attribute all to God, always entering into these sentiments of Job: "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; as it has pleased the Lord, so it is done", and into other similar sentiments so often expressed in Holy Scripture and uttered by the Patriarchs of old.

In order to enter into this spirit and live up to it:

- 1. The Brothers of this Society shall have a most profound respect for the Holy Scriptures; and, in proof thereof, they shall always carry the New Testament about them, and pass no day**

without reading some of it, through a sentiment of faith, respect and veneration for the divine words contained therein, looking upon it as their first and principal rule.

2. The Brothers of this Society shall animate all their actions with sentiments of faith; and, in performing them, they shall always have in view the orders and the will of God, which they shall adore in all things, and by which they shall be careful to regulate their conduct.

For this purpose they shall apply themselves to have great control over their senses and to use them only through necessity, not wishing to use them but according to the order and the will of God.

They shall make it their study to exercise continual watchfulness over themselves, so as not to perform, if possible, a single action from natural impulse, through custom or any human motive; but they shall act so as to perform them all by the guidance of God, through the movement of His Spirit, and with the intention of pleasing Him.

They shall pay as much attention as they can to the holy presence of God, and take care to renew it from time to time; being well convinced that they should think only of Him and of what He ordains, that is, of what concerns their duty and employment.

They shall banish from their minds all vain ideas and thoughts that might withdraw them from these practices, which are very important for them, and without which they can neither acquire nor preserve the spirit of their state.

Secondly, the spirit of their Institute consists in an ardent zeal for the instruction of children, and for bringing them up in the fear of God, inducing them to preserve their innocence if they have not lost it, and inspiring them with a great aversion and horror for sin and whatever might cause them to lose purity.

In order to enter into this spirit, the Brothers of the Society shall strive by prayer, instruction, and by their vigilance and good conduct in school, to procure the salvation of the children confided to their care, bringing them up in piety and in a truly Christian spirit, that is, according to the rules and maxims of the Gospel.

**(Complete text of Chapter 2:
"De l'esprit de cet Institut"-
Règles communes, 1718)**

EPIGRAPH

"It is necessary that the Brothers take for the foundation and support of their observance of the Rule what Saint Augustine says at the beginning of his Rule: that those who live in community should, before all else, love God and next their neighbour because these are the principal commandments given to us by God and because any observance of the Rule is useless if separated from the observance of these two commandments and is quite useless for salvation because it is established in communities only for the purpose of giving the members facility to observe with exactness the commandments of God."

**(From Chapter XVI, "De la Régularité";
Règles communes, 1718)**

PART I

THE VOCATION OF THE BROTHER

CHAPTER 1

THE PURPOSE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE

Rc
B
D 7,1
D 28,1
D 52

1. As he became aware, by God's grace, of the human and spiritual distress of "the children of the artisans and the poor", John Baptist de La Salle devoted himself to forming schoolmasters totally dedicated to teaching and to Christian education. He brought these teachers together in a community and subsequently founded with them the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

D 5-7
PC 2
B
Can. 607,2

2. The Brothers, in fidelity to the call of the Spirit and the charism of their Founder, consecrate themselves to God in order to exercise, by association, their apostolic ministry of education.

The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools has been approved by Pope Benedict XIII in the Bull "In apostolicae dignitatis solio". It is an Institute of pontifical right, composed exclusively of lay religious men.

D 22
D 28

3. The purpose of this Institute is to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the

art. 4-5 - THE PURPOSE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE

D 32
D 44,1
D 51

poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it.

John Baptist de La Salle gave a new meaning to the school by making it accessible to the poor and offering it to all as a sign of the Kingdom and as a means of salvation.

The Christian school, which has always to be given new vitality, is the preferred means of the activity of the Brothers. The Institute is also open to other forms of teaching and education more adapted to the needs of time and place.

D 5-6

4. The Brothers are convinced that the Holy Spirit was manifested in a special way in the life, work and writings of St. John Baptist de La Salle, their Father, and subsequently in the living tradition of the Institute. They draw from these sources the inspiration required by their mission and its fulfilment. For this reason they strive constantly to deepen their knowledge of the Founder and of the history of the Institute.

RC ch. 2
D 22,1
PC 2,2
GS 4,1
MTR 6

5. "The spirit of this Institute is a spirit of faith" which leads the Brothers to look upon everything with the eyes of faith, to do everything in view of God and to attribute all to God.

It is by faith that the Brothers judge all earthly realities in the light of the Gospel.

THE PURPOSE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE - art. 6

It is by faith that the Brothers, “cooperators with Jesus Christ”, consecrate their whole existence to the building up of the kingdom of God through the service of education.

It is by faith that the Brothers are aware of God’s presence in their undertakings, their cares and their joys.

It is by faith that the Brothers learn to see in every happening and in every person, especially in the poor, a sign and a call of the Spirit.

RC ch. 2
D 38,5
Can. 662
Jn 16,13

6. To acquire and live by the spirit of their Institute, the Brothers find endless sustenance in studying, meditating and sharing among themselves the word of God. They have a profound respect for Holy Scripture, especially the Gospel, “their first and principal Rule”.

By a spirit of prayer and an attentiveness to the presence of God, the Brothers remain sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who leads them to an ever deeper appreciation of the realities of faith.

The Brothers nourish and strengthen their faith by biblical and theological studies.

They strive continually to purify their interior motives and to achieve a measure of self-mastery so that

art. 7-9 - THE PURPOSE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE

they may accomplish all their actions by “the guidance of God, by the movement of his Spirit and with the intention of pleasing him”.

**RC ch. 2
MTR 9
GS 39
PC 13
LG 8**

7. The spirit of faith kindles in the Brothers an ardent zeal for those confided to their care in order to open their hearts to receive the salvation revealed in Jesus Christ. This zeal, enlivened by the Holy Spirit, inspires their apostolic prayer and all the activities of their educational ministry. In this way they participate in the gospel mission of the Church. Through the promotion of justice and peace they cooperate in the building up of the kingdom of God.

Commitment to the apostolate is an integral part of the consecration of the Brother to God. The spirit of the Institute implies therefore that all of its members are penetrated with the spirit of zeal in the light of the Founder’s life and teaching. Thus the Brother is enabled to go out to others with the heart of a poor person.

RC ch. 2

8. The most important objective in the initial formation of the Brothers is that they understand and make their own the spirit of the Institute. Growth in this spirit continues during the entire life of the Brothers and extends to every dimension of their lives.

RC ch. 1

9. The members of this Institute are called by the name of Brother. By the fraternal character of their

THE PURPOSE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE - art. 10

community life and their active and selfless presence among those they serve, the Brothers witness to the possibility of creating true brotherhood among people and nations.

**D 25
PC 8
GS 11**

10. Each Brother takes upon himself the responsibility for integrating within his own person these constitutive dimensions of his vocation: consecration to God as a lay religious, apostolic ministry of education, especially of the poor, and community life.

CHAPTER 2

THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

Education and Evangelisation

Can. 675,3
Can. 677,1

11 . John Baptist de La Salle was deeply moved by the way in which “the children of the artisans and the poor” were abandoned and left to themselves. As a practical response to his prayerful consideration of this fact in relation to God’s plan of salvation, he came to discern, in faith, what God wanted the mission of the Institute to be.

In order to respond to this divine plan and also to situations of distress similar to those that the Founder knew, the Institute desires to be present to the world today as part of the Church’s work in spreading the Gospel.

The Institute is concerned above all for the educational needs of the poor as they strive to become aware of their dignity and to live and to be recognised as human beings and children of God. The Institute establishes, renews and diversifies its works according to what the kingdom of God requires.

D 40,2
D 52,1
MTR3

12. As “ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ”, the Brothers participate in the Church’s mission by

consecrating their lives to God in order to bring the Gospel to the educational world .

In their educational activity the Brothers seek to integrate the effort for human advancement with the announcement of God's word. They are convinced that any education that respects the human person is a way to open people to God's grace and so dispose them to accept the faith.

Med. 160,3
MTR 1,1
D 48,7

13. By virtue of their mission, the Brothers establish schools and cooperate in creating educational communities inspired by the vision of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

The educational policies of Lasallian institutions are centred on the young, adapted to the times in which they live, and designed to prepare them to take their place in society. These institutions are characterised by the determination to make the means of salvation available to young people through a quality education and by an explicit proclamation of Jesus Christ.

When the Brothers work in the area of adult education, they put the same emphasis on the importance of persons, adapting their methods accordingly.

The Brothers consider their professional work as a ministry. They are attentive to each of their students and especially to those most in need. They make

art. 13a-13d - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

themselves available to all in an attitude of brotherly companionship, helping them to discover, appreciate and assimilate both human and gospel values. The Brothers help young people to grow as persons who are called to realise more and more that they are children of God.

13a. *In these educational communities all, both young and old, are called upon, with due respect for their freedom of conscience, to integrate their faith with their culture and so become available for the service of society and of the Church.*

D 46,3

13b. *In order to encourage their students to take in hand their own formation and so to develop a sense of social responsibility, the Brothers give them an active role in the total life of the educational institution, including leadership positions, and a part to play in its functioning and in its discipline.*

D 45,4
Can. 666

13c. *The Brothers train their students to adopt a critical stance towards contemporary society, particularly as regards the mass media and the many other technological resources that are part of today's world.*

13d. *In order to fulfil their mission, the Brothers, together with those who work with them, undertake a periodic evaluation and revision of their educational programmes. Both groups provide as*

well for their personal and continuing formation.

D 52,1

14. The Brothers are entrusted with their mission by the Institute, a mission especially to the poor. As a community they become increasingly conscious of the reasons for the poverty that surrounds them and so become earnestly involved in the promotion of justice and human dignity through the educational service they provide.

This concern of the Brothers for the poor serves also to motivate their activities when they deal with people in a more favourable social environment, urging these to become more sensitive to unjust situations of which the poor are so often the victims.

D 38,1
Med. 145,3

15. The Brothers make a genuine effort to understand the deeper aspirations of the people in the milieu in which they work by being actually involved in it. Thus they can take advantage of the right moment and use the appropriate language to speak of Jesus Christ to those to whom they bring their message. Reciprocally, they themselves are open to being evangelised.

The Brothers consider that their “principal function” consists in the work of evangelisation and catechesis whereby they contribute to growth in faith of those who have been baptised and to the building up of the ecclesial community. This conviction plays a dominant

art. 15a-15b - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

role in the formation of the Brothers as well as in the choice of the assignments for which they will be prepared.

D 38,2-4

15a. By its organisational structure and the climate that it engenders, the Christian school makes catechesis possible. This catechesis should be lively, centred on the person of the student, in touch with life as it is, based on Scripture and the liturgy, attentive to the teaching of the Church, and concerned with an integral presentation of the Christian message.

In the conviction that it is their mission to bring the baptised to live as true Christians, the Brothers provide opportunities for their students to encounter God more frequently. They lead them along the way as they learn to pray, as they become spiritually enriched, as they receive the sacraments and take advantage of the many opportunities offered to be of service to others.

Catechesis is above all a form of witness. It springs from the depth of a community of faith that brings together Christians within whose hearts dwells the Holy Spirit, the teacher of all truth.

D 38, 3-5

15b. The Brothers also take part in the pastoral programme of the local church, either as catechists themselves or as teachers or leaders

of their fellow Christians who undertake the work of catechesis.

D 39,1
D 41,3

15c. *In countries that are non-Christian or markedly pluralistic, where it is very difficult or impossible to provide catechesis in the schools, the Brothers seek new ways of evangelising. To open young people to life, to a sense of their responsibilities, to knowledge and to love, is already a way of accomplishing God's work since his Kingdom is built both by the activity of the Church and by work in the world.*

A Community Mission

Form V
D 13,3

16. From the beginning of the Institute, the Brothers have fulfilled their mission "together and by association". Each Brother exercises his apostolate as a member of a community by whom he knows he is accepted, supported and entrusted with his mission.

The Brothers are in solidarity with their community, with their District and with the Institute as a whole. In fulfilling their ministry, whatever their individual assignment may be, they are contributing, as a community, to the unique mission of the Institute within the Church.

Can. 671

16a. *The Brothers submit their plans for new*

art. 16b-16d - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

forms of apostolate to the discernment of the community in communion with the superiors and the Brothers of the District, in order to be sure that these initiatives are in conformity with the purpose of the Institute.

16b. *If some Brothers are called upon to work outside the establishments conducted by the Institute, they do so in such a way as to be identified as Brothers wherever they carry out their work.*

16c. *When circumstances prevent the Brothers from responding in a direct way to the purpose of the Institute, they live out their vocation in other apostolic tasks, which are determined by a process of discernment undertaken with their superiors.*

16d. *Advancing age or infirmity can oblige the Brothers to lessen the pace of their active work. Motivated by faith and zeal, they search for new ways to exercise their ministry as a response to a new call from God.*

Accordingly, they are supported by the Brothers of the community and by the superiors as they seek to accomplish some apostolic task within their capacities and in keeping with the purpose of the Institute.

A Shared Mission

D 49,5

17. Ever since the time of their foundation, the Brothers have contributed to the promotion of the Christian laity, especially among those educators who want their professional work to be a form of gospel ministry.

The Brothers gladly associate lay persons with them in their educational mission. They provide, for those who so desire, the means to learn about the Founder and to live according to his spirit.

The Brothers cooperate in forming Christian teachers. They help them to develop their professional competence and also to become increasingly involved in the work of the Church and in the field of education.

D 46,3

17a. *The Brothers' community is ever mindful that its apostolic activity takes place within an educational community in which all the functions, including positions of responsibility, are shared.*

17b. *To achieve the purposes of a school, the Brothers foster a spirit of collaboration and mutual enrichment among all the members of the educational community. They, that is, students, parents, teachers, other religious, priests, former students and friends help one another to fulfil their specific roles.*

art. 17c-18 - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

17c. The Brothers make known to the rest of the educational community the essential elements of the Lasallian tradition. The Brothers offer to those who desire it, a more intensified sharing of Lasallian spirituality, encouraging such persons to make a more specific apostolic commitment. The Brothers join in the formation of faith communities which are witnessing to the truth of what the Brothers profess.

17d. In conformity with the spirit of the Institute, the Brothers cooperate closely with those in the Church or in society who are involved in education, ministry to the young, the cultivation of a sense of justice, the use of mass media, or the integration of young people into social and professional life.

Inculturation

EN 20
AG 10

18. Every culture needs to be evangelised. The Brothers make every effort to get to know, to respect and to assimilate the positive values of the cultural heritage of the people where they are located and whom they are called to serve. With joy and hope the Brothers discover there the signs of the presence of the Spirit. They ensure that the ferment of the gospel renews and enriches this cultural heritage.

This effort at inculturation is equally necessary and applies as well to youth culture as to the rapidly evolving culture of contemporary society.

18a. *Every Lasallian foundation embodies itself together with the local church, in the culture, the language and the life-style of the place where it is located. Such embodiment ought to be accomplished in keeping with the charism proper to the Institute.*

18b. *The Brothers who belong to the country by birth are the ones principally in charge of inculturation into their own social milieu. The Brothers who come from other countries collaborate in this effort in a spirit of fraternal solidarity. In those areas where the latter are still numerous, they encourage their confreres gradually to assume complete charge.*

18c. *With an open mind and yet in a spirit of healthy criticism the Brothers study the various religions, ideologies, and cultural traditions of the areas in which they establish themselves. They will be able in this way to absorb the positive values therein and so to make a valuable contribution to the education of the people around them.*

art. 19-19a - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

The Young Churches

MTR 1
1 Tim 2,4

19. The Institute is particularly conscious of the great design of God who wills that all people should come to the knowledge of the truth. Thus the Institute participates in the missionary activity of the Church whose essential task is to announce the Gospel to everyone and to all cultures.

The concern to bring the Church into being among peoples, either unaware of the Good News of Jesus Christ or as yet little informed about it, as well as the evident shortage of people working for the spread of the gospel in certain areas, constitutes a continual challenge to the Institute to make its contribution through its specific ministry.

D 24
AG40

19a. As a response to this missionary call, the Brothers offer themselves to be sent by the Institute to places where there is a greater need for their services. In such cases it could even happen that a District would need to hand over to others some of its works in order to meet more urgent demands.

In this missionary activity, the Brothers are deeply conscious of the need to cultivate local vocations in order to provide for the growth of the Church and of the Institute.

19b. *True to its founding spirit, the Institute also makes its presence felt in those areas where, humanly speaking, there is little or no possibility for it to develop.*

The work of the Brothers in such places becomes a presence of the Church, a witness to the charity of Christ, and a place for human and inter-religious dialogue and collaboration.

Through a spirit of faith and zeal

Form V
Mt 11,5
Med. 132,2
Med. 166,2

20. The Spirit of God has given to the Church, in the person of St. John Baptist de La Salle, a charism which even today inspires the Brothers and a great number of other educators.

The Brothers live their faith as a gift to be used for their ministry of Christian education. In faith they contemplate God as the one who chooses them to be workers bringing his salvation to the least and to the poorest.

“Together and by association” they labour to accomplish God’s saving work in a profession where “the poor have the gospel preached to them” and where young people grow as human persons and children of God. In faith, the Brothers praise God as they see his kingdom being extended.

art. 21 - THE MISSION OF THE INSTITUTE

RC 1718
ch. 2
D 38,4
D 40,4
Med. 43,3
MTR 9,2

21. As “ministers of God and of the Church”, desirous of “touching hearts”, the Brothers accomplish their mission with the “ardent zeal” that the work of the Lord requires.

Urged on by this zeal, and with the mind of Christ the servant of all, they generously place at the disposal of those whom God has entrusted to them, their time, their talents and their energy.

For this reason, they constantly seek to improve their competence, the quality of their relationships, the witness of their life, and the vigour of their faith.

The entire life of the Brothers is transformed by the presence of the Lord who calls, consecrates, sends, and saves.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSECRATED LIFE

Consecration

RCV 47-49
Form V
Can. 654

22. In response to the call of the Holy Spirit, each Brother, freely, and without any thought of turning back, bases his whole existence on the gospel in order to follow Jesus Christ. Accordingly he consecrates himself entirely to the Holy Trinity to procure the glory of God in the ministry of Christian education.

Religious consecration gives meaning to the specific commitments which it inspires and brings into unity the successive moments in the life of the Brother.

D 17
D 18
Rm 6
Can. 654

23. The call to religious profession is an invitation to the Brothers to deepen the rich meaning of their baptism and to express it by accepting the new demands that are made upon them. They strive more and more to die to sin and to live for God in Jesus Christ. In this way they are for all people witnesses to the transcendence of the Kingdom of God.

The Brothers live out their consecration in a community of the Church. Their community is for all

art. 24-25 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

Christians a special sign of the covenant between God and human beings. Such a community affirms the duty and the possibility of renewing the world in the spirit of the gospel.

B 9°
Can. 654
Can. 673

24. Religious consecration establishes an intimate communion between the person of each Brother and that of Jesus Christ. This consecration is expressed by vows of chastity, poverty, obedience, association for the service of the poor through education, and stability in the Institute.

As religious vowed to the ministry of Christian education, the first apostolate of the Brothers consists in the witness of their consecrated life.

RC ch. 33

25. The Brothers pronounce their vows, at first temporary and then perpetual, according to the following formula:

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, prostrate with the most profound respect before your infinite and adorable majesty, I consecrate myself entirely to you to procure your glory as far as I shall be able and as you will require of me.

For this purpose I, . . . promise to unite myself, and to remain in society, with the Brothers of the Christian Schools who are associated to conduct, together and by association, schools for the service of the poor. I

promise to go wherever I may be sent and to do whatever I may be assigned by the body of the Society or its superiors.

Wherefore, I promise and vow chastity, poverty, obedience, association for the educational service of the poor, and stability in the Institute according to the Bull of Approbation and the Rule of the Institute.

I promise to keep these vows faithfully (for a period of . . . years) all my life.

In testimony thereof, I have signed. Done at... on... in the year of Our Lord...

Signature. . .

Can. 669,1

26. As a sign of their consecration, and as a witness to poverty, the Brothers wear the habit of the Institute determined in accordance with the Institute's own law.

B 18°

26a. *The habit of the Brothers is the robe and white rabat. Practical directions for the wearing of the habit may be given by the Brothers in charge of the Districts, taking local circumstances into account. These directions are submitted to Brother Superior for approval.*

Chastity

Mt 19, 11-12
D 26,1

27. Chastity, rooted in the gospel and lived in celibacy, is an expression of love totally vowed to God. It is a

art. 28-29 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

gift of the Spirit. It frees the Brothers for the service of others and for the kingdom of God.

Chastity disposes the Brothers to live united together in community. It sustains them in their educational work and teaches them how to love each and every person with an unselfish and respectful love. For this reason each Brother shares in some way in the very fatherhood of God.

Can.599

28. In order to follow Jesus Christ, and as an expression of the total gift of themselves to him personally, the Brothers commit themselves by vow to live a celibate life and to renounce, from a new motive, that of the vow, every act, interior or exterior, contrary to chastity.

Consecrated chastity, a mystery of death and resurrection, of sacrifice and of fruitfulness, witnesses to the value of a life in which love places itself at the service of all.

The Brothers choose celibate chastity in a response to a call from God. They live this call progressively, developing humanly by reason of their tender regard for everyone, especially the poor.

29. In order to reinforce their fidelity to the demands of consecrated chastity, the Brothers place their confidence in divine grace and they live in an awareness of God. They recognise in the Virgin Mary,

the mother of Jesus and of all Christians, their model and their support.

30. In community the Brothers maintain a spirit of friendship and brotherhood that gives support to their affective life. They take means to preserve their physical health and emotional stability.

31. The Brothers control their senses and their emotions by a life of voluntary austerity. They act with the necessary prudence and reserve in their contacts with society.

Poverty

Med. 86,1
Mt 8,20
2 Co 8,9
PC 13
D 34,2

32. By their poverty lived according to the gospel, the Brothers become poor in order to follow Christ who was poor and in order to serve better all persons as their brothers and sisters, especially those most in need.

They are convinced that if they were to fill their hearts with the goods of this earth, they would close themselves off from God and become as strangers to the poor.

The spiritual journey of John Baptist de La Salle, their Father, as well as their solidarity with people today and the calls of the Church, motivate the Brothers to cultivate within themselves the disposition of a poor person. By such a conversion, they witness to the

art. 32a-33 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

fact that God is their only wealth.

The Brothers live simply as persons of ordinary means, having everything in common. They provide for the livelihood of the community through their work. They decide together the guidelines for the best use of their resources.

Ja 2, 15-16

32a. *In their everyday living the Brothers willingly share the lot of the poor. When something useful or necessary is lacking, they experience deep within themselves the meaning of the joy and peace promised in the first Beatitude. From time to time they find ways to deprive themselves voluntarily in order to help those suffering from poverty.*

RCV 97-142

32b. *Aware of the value of their work in relation to poverty, the Brothers develop their natural talents and their professional skills so as to enable others to benefit from them. At the same time, the Brothers do not allow themselves to be so preoccupied with their work that they become possessive about their goods or their talents.*

Can. 600
Can. 668,3

33. By the vow of poverty the Brothers forego the independent use and disposal of goods or objects having monetary value. They retain only the bare ownership of their patrimony as well as the right to inherit.

Whatever a Brother produces by his work, and whatever he receives as a salary, pension or donation, belongs to the Institute.

The demands of religious poverty apply equally to the community and to all the units of the District and of the Institute.

Can. 668
1-2

34. Before their first profession the Brothers hand over to someone of their own choice the administration of their patrimony and its revenue.

Before their perpetual profession the Brothers make a will, valid in civil law, by which they dispose of their personal temporal goods.

In order to change any of the dispositions already made, or to take any action whatever concerning their temporal goods, the Brothers need the permission of the Brother Visitor.

Can. 668,4
PC 13

35. In a spirit of gospel detachment, any Brother having at least five years of perpetual profession may freely renounce his personal goods.

To obtain authorisation to do this, the Brother presents his request to the Brother Visitor who then forwards it to the Superior General.

The act of renunciation will be, as far as possible, valid in civil law.

art. 35a-36 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

35a. *In the use of money and material goods put at their disposal the Brothers are careful to act as faithful stewards. They avoid accumulating things, and show their dependence by rendering an account of the use they have made of what they have been given.*

35b. *As they pool resources that derive from their labour, the Brothers are careful that this does not lead to collective wealth; on the contrary, they share generously with their Brothers, the Districts most in need, and also with the poor.*

35c. *The Brothers generously and with joy devote their time, their physical well-being, their security, their intellectual and spiritual gifts, to all those who may have need of them.*

Obedience

Ph 2,8
Heb 5,8

36. Obedience based on the gospel is a communion with the Holy Spirit who unites the will of the Brothers progressively to that of Christ who became obedient unto death. It is through world events, through young people, the community of the Brothers and the Superiors, through the Body of the Institute and the Church, that the Spirit manifests His purposes.

Inspired by the teaching and example of the Founder,

who submitted himself to the “Body of the Society”, the Brothers live out their obedience by their availability within a community committed to accomplishing the mission of the Institute .

37. The ordinary way in which the Spirit is revealed is through a community working together to discover the needs of the world and of the Church. Each member of the community ought to be heard, since the Spirit speaks and acts in every Brother.

Differences of age, of view-point and formation provide a rich source from which to form policies and come to decisions. It is the responsibility of the Brother Director to make the final decision concerning them.

Obedience sometimes seems difficult and it can go contrary to one’s legitimate personal convictions. The Brothers make known their problems in this regard to the community and to the superiors; if they do not find a satisfactory solution in this way, then through an attitude of faith they accept the decision of the superiors.

38. By the vow of obedience, the Brothers make explicit and concrete their willingness to obey the legitimate Superiors in all they command according to the Rule in those matters that relate either directly or indirectly to the purpose of the Institute. By this vow, the Brothers are likewise obliged to obey the

art. 38a-40 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

Holy Father. They bind themselves in conscience to obey the orders of the Pope or those of the superiors that are given in virtue of the vow.

38a. Since commands in virtue of the vow of obedience are very rarely given, the competent Superior should clearly state his intention to do so by some appropriate formula.

Association for the service of the poor through education

Form V
D 28

39. By the vow of association for the service of the poor through education, the Brothers commit themselves, as the Founder did, to conduct schools or other centres of Christian education that are accessible to the poor. At the same time they strive to develop educational methods that promote above all the social betterment of ordinary classes of people.

39a. The solidarity among the Brothers that results from their vow of association for the service of the poor through education gives support to the apostolic activity of the Institute.

40. The Brothers have always in view the promotion of justice in the light of the gospel and either the direct or indirect service of the poor as the preferred aspect of their ministry of education.

They work directly for the poor by providing an

education for the economically deprived, victims of social injustice, delinquents, and those neglected by the rest of society.

When the Brothers work with students from families that are more or less well off, they teach them their duties and responsibilities with regard to social justice and charity towards everyone.

The Brothers give special attention to their students who have difficulties at school, at home, or problems adjusting to society.

40a. The District and the Regions establish a plan for the development of their apostolic works which will make the direct service of the poor more and more their effective priority.

Such a plan includes ways to recruit or train replacements and so permits Brothers to be released for such service.

40b. Following the example of their Founder, the Brothers, as persons and in community, look upon their intellectual and spiritual development in terms of a progressive conversion to the poor.

40c. By their entire life and their teaching inspired by the social doctrine of the Church, the Brothers prepare their pupils to create more just relationships among the peoples of the world.

They help them to become involved actively in movements for justice and peace.

41. Their preferential option in favour of the poor, continually enlightened by a view of faith, helps the Brothers to recognise the inequalities to which society gives rise. In their desire to make it possible for poor people to live with dignity and to be open to the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Brothers show genuine creativity in responding to these new needs.

Stability in the Institute

B 9°

42. The Brothers consider fidelity to their vocation to be a response to God's fidelity in their regard. Aware that the Founder intended to establish a stable community that would respond to the ever-present need of education for the young, the Brothers make a vow of stability in the Institute.

By this vow they commit themselves to remain in the Institute in order to accomplish its specific mission and to live in fraternal and apostolic communion with their Brothers. They remain faithful to the Institute and to its spirit, to their Brothers, and to those they serve in their ministry.

***42a.** Aware of the difficulties that lie before them, the Brothers nevertheless commit themselves to*

the Institute in all their uniqueness as persons. They are ready to respond to the successive calls of God in the various stages of their lives.

42b. Prayer, filial devotion to St. John Baptist de La Salle, love for the community and dedication to the work of the apostolate help to assure stability and fidelity to the Institute.

Separation from the Institute

43. A Brother may believe that he has just reasons for leaving the Institute. He should, however, through personal prayer and reflection, weigh carefully the reasons for such a decision.

He should also seek the advice of prudent counsellors in order to guard against self-deception or temptations that could lead him astray.

B 10°
Can. 688-692

44. A Brother with temporary or perpetual vows may not leave the Institute of his own accord before being dispensed from his vows by the competent authority: namely the Brother Superior General with the consent of his Council in the case of temporary vows; the Holy See, to which the Brother Superior General will forward the request, together with his own opinion and that of his Council, in the case of a Brother professed with perpetual vows.

art. 45-46 - THE CONSECRATED LIFE

Can. 684-687
Can. 694-704

45. All that concerns the transfer of a Brother to another Institute, exclaustation or dismissal, must conform to Canon Law and to the norms proper to the Institute. (cf. DA 33-44).

Can. 702

46. A Brother who legitimately leaves the Institute, or who is legitimately dismissed from it, cannot demand recompense for any work done in the Institute. Charity and equity demand that the Brothers do not lose sight of their duties with regard to those who have left the Institute.

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITY LIFE

D 7.1
MTR 1,3

47. John Baptist de La Salle was led to found a community of men who were enlightened by God to have a share in his plan of salvation. They associated together to respond to the needs of young people who were poor and far from salvation. Even today, each of the Brothers' communities finds in this historical event a fundamental source of inspiration.

A community of faith

Jn 17,21-22

48. The distinctive character of the Brothers' community is to be a community of faith where the experience of God is shared.

The Brothers find inspiration in this prayer of Christ: "Father, that they all may be one as You and I are one so that the world may believe that You have sent Me".

In their relations with one another, the Brothers make every effort to model their community life on the relations of knowledge and love that constitute the life of the Holy Trinity.

49. The Spirit of love who dwells within each of the Brothers is what creates the unity in their community. Animated by the Spirit, the Brothers build community by the joyful gift of themselves for the service of others.

49a. Each Brother considers himself responsible, in union with all the others, for the life of the community, the power of its witness, and for its pastoral commitment.

49b. For the Brothers, the Rule is a programme of life which every community should strive to translate into practice. The Brothers make it their duty to read it often, both privately and in community. They look upon the Rule as an expression of the will of God.

D 20,9

50. The Brothers' community is a community of prayer. The Brothers pray together. Together they hear the word of God and meditate on it. Together they recognise that they are sinners before God and they participate in the same Eucharist. Together they seek God and it is together that they find him.

50a. The community sees to it that each Brother has sufficient time and the conditions that are needed for reflection and personal prayer

An apostolic community

51. Dedicated as it is to the apostolic ministry of education, the community realises that its mission needs constantly to be discovered. Accordingly, the community reappraises its goals and methods with a view to coming closer to the spirit of the gospel. It does this by reexamining the pastoral effectiveness of its activity.

D 46,3

51a. *The Brothers' community shares in the animation of the institutions in which it is involved. It develops therein an atmosphere of brotherhood rooted in mutual respect and freedom. Its action to promote the gospel aims to bring into being a community of faith in the midst of the educational community.*

51b. *In their educational institutions, even where the Brothers are in the minority, the visibility of their community ought to constitute one aspect of their witness to the gospel.*

52. The community forms an integral part of the pastoral activity of the local church. Within the limits of its resources it cooperates with civic organisations of a social or cultural nature. The community manifests the same concern and open spirit with regard to the institutions for which it is responsible.

The community participates in the missionary effort of the local church and of the Institute.

52a. The community maintains cordial relations with the Brothers on the missions and is generous in responding to their needs. It does all it can to learn about their work and to foster it.

A fraternal community

CL 7
240-241

53. The Brothers are determined with one spirit to be brothers among themselves, brothers to the adults they deal with, and older brothers to the young people confided to their care. In all their relationships they are concerned about persons in their deepest hopes and desires.

54. The community is for the Brothers their home. It is there that they live together. It is there that they experience each day anew the friendship, the esteem, the trust and the respect that they have for one another. They pay special attention to the needs of the young Brothers.

They enjoy sharing their meals, their periods of recreation, and the various services that are called for by a life together. By their active presence and by their sensitivity to one another, the Brothers assure the solidarity of the community.

To ensure its unity the community reinforces the generous gift each Brother makes of himself in the sacrifices necessary for the common good.

The community recognises and welcomes the grace-filled occasions for pardon and reconciliation among its members.

54a. *Community life cannot be maintained without self-denial. The Brothers accept and love one another in their differences as well as in their similarities. They try to be friendly to everyone and a burden to none. In their conversation they stress what is positive and avoid anything that could cause pain.*

54b. *With tact and charity each member of the community knows how to point out to his Brothers whatever it is in their attitude that is the source of difficulty and conflict either for themselves or for the community. In certain cases the community as a whole might be called upon to render this service for one of its members. In such a situation it is the Brother Director who has the ultimate responsibility to safeguard the fraternal unity of the community.*

Can. 666

54c. *The community organises its periods of recreation and vacation. Out of concern for others in their work, prayer or need for rest, the Brothers*

determine and respect appropriate times of silence. They exercise discretion in their use of the means of social communication.

Can. 608
Can. 665,1
Can. 667,1

55. The Brothers' residence should be simple and planned in a way that fosters family spirit, work and prayer. It is established canonically and includes certain areas reserved to the Brothers. They make it a duty to reside there habitually and not to absent themselves except by permission of the Brother Director or the Brother Visitor. For a prolonged absence the canonical prescriptions are to be observed.

Can. 921-
922
Can. 998-
1004
SC 73

56. The community shows affectionate concern for the Brothers who are elderly, sick or discouraged, or undergoing trials, so that all may feel supported by the love of Christ.

The Brothers, in a fraternal and friendly way, are especially attentive to those members of their community who are suffering the trials of illness or whom the Lord is preparing to call to himself.

At the appropriate time, they invite them to ask for the sacraments of the sick. They help them with their prayers and encourage them to unite themselves to the Paschal mystery of Christ and to offer their sufferings for the Institute, the Church and the salvation of the world.

57. The community generously opens itself to others. Such openness, however, respects the requirements of privacy and those of community life.

57a. The community extends a special welcome to close relatives of its members and to Brothers who are travelling. To young men trying to discover their vocation, the community is a particularly suitable place for dialogue and sharing.

Organisation of the life of the community

58. The community provides the time and the means necessary to study how to apply the Rule to the actual circumstances in which it lives. It determines the decisions to be taken in response to questions concerning either the life of the community or its mission.

Exchanging views on these matters gives everyone the opportunity to express his thoughts and so to arrive at a unity of viewpoint and action.

58a. At the beginning of each year and in a spirit of discernment, the Brothers establish or revise their annual community programme.

Everything that forms part of the life of the community is taken into account in making up this

art. 58b - COMMUNITY LIFE

programme: its life of prayer and its apostolic commitments, its brotherhood, its relationships with outsiders and its internal organisation, its provision for continuing formation and its recreational activities.

This community programme takes into account the guidelines and directives already laid down by the District Chapter.

Once the programme is agreed upon and submitted to the Brother Visitor for approval, the Brothers are then committed to it. It serves during the year as the basis for both personal and community evaluation, especially on the occasion of the Brother Visitor's official visit to the community.

58b. *In order to respond in faith to the successive calls from God, an invitation is offered to each Brother to develop a personal programme of his own. Such a programme engages the Brother in a process of ongoing conversion that will give unity and direction to his life.*

In the development and evaluation of this programme, the Brother takes into consideration his own spiritual growth, as well as the needs of the community and the programmes of the District.

If he so desires, a Brother may share his personal programme with the rest of the community.

Can. 627,1

59. As a rule, the entire community constitutes the Council of the Brother Director.

In communities where the number of Brothers, or some other reason, requires it, a Council of fewer members may be constituted by agreement with the Brother Visitor.

In such a case the community delegates a certain number of its members to represent it and deliberate in its name.

D 20,8

59a. *Community meetings constitute a significant occasion for the Brothers to reflect together, in the light of the gospel, on the way they actually live. The Brothers realise that community meetings are necessary for the life of the community and they take part in them willingly. They make use of these opportunities to express their opinions, to put forward suggestions, and to share their experience and their knowledge.*

Can. 627

59b. *There will be occasions when the community will have to deliberate formally before certain important decisions can be made.*

Minutes should be taken of such deliberations and decisions, and should include a special mention of any requests to be forwarded to the Brother Visitor or the Brother Superior.

Brothers who do not take part in the meetings of

art. 58c-60c - COMMUNITY LIFE

the Council will be duly informed of the topics treated, or scheduled to be treated, and also of any decisions taken

59c. *All the Brothers support the decisions arrived at by the community and approved by the Brother Director. Each Brother takes to heart his responsibility for implementing them.*

60. *The community administers its material goods in the spirit of the gospel and in accordance with the demands of religious poverty.*

60a. *Each community has a financial administration, a budget and accounts separate from those of the educational establishment or establishments of which it has charge. The community renders account of the administration of its temporal goods to the Brother Visitor and the Bursar of the District.*

60b. *The Brothers of the community participate in establishing its budget and in putting it into operation. In this matter they are always careful to maintain a simple lifestyle such as that of people of modest means.*

60c. *With regard to its employees and auxiliary personnel, the community observes both the obligations of social justice and the demands of*

Christian charity.

60d. *In fidelity to the spirit of the Founder and conforming in every respect to the cultural traditions of the locality where it is active, the community is always careful to witness to the spirit of gratuity and gospel detachment in all that concerns gifts from the students or their families.*

The Brother Director

61. As a religious superior, the Brother Director is at the service of his Brothers to help them in their spiritual growth and in accomplishing their vocation as persons and as a community. He offers them the support of his advice and his authority. He himself strives to live and help others live in the spirit of the Rule.

61a. *The responsibility for arranging the personal interview belongs both to the Brother concerned and the Brother Director of the community. This is one of the matters to be determined in establishing the annual programme of the community. Each Brother arranges with the Brother Director when and how these meetings are to take place.*

art. 62-63c - COMMUNITY LIFE

62. As the person principally responsible for the community and its unity, the Brother Director fulfils his responsibilities with simplicity. He supports and stimulates the Brothers in their search for the common good. He listens to them but also keeps them informed. At the appropriate moment he intervenes to endorse decisions on which consensus seems to have been reached or to settle personally questions which cannot remain undecided.

Can. 624

63. The Brother Director is appointed by the Brother Visitor following the procedures established by the District Chapter. His mandate runs for three or for four years and may be renewed once or even twice.

Can. 623

63a. *At his first appointment the Brother Director must have had at least one year of perpetual profession in the Institute.*

63b. *The Brother Director is the usual channel of communication between the community and the District.*

63c. *Where it is considered useful, a Brother sub-Director may be appointed to assist, or if need be, to substitute for the Brother Director of a community. Such an appointment is made in accordance with the norms adopted by the District Chapter.*

Can. 636

63d. *The Brother Director, with the assistance if possible of a community bursar, supervises the maintenance of the movable and immovable property, the administration of material goods and the proper functioning of the common services. He sees to the preservation and classification of the documents for the archives and sends at the proper time the information requested by the District Secretary and the Secretary General.*

A community within the Institute

PC 13

64. Each local community is conscious of its solidarity with the other communities of the District and those of the Institute as a whole. It maintains a cordial relationship with the Brothers of other communities and expresses this by fraternal help whenever this is called for. The community also extends a welcome to members of the Lasallian Family.

64a. *The Brothers participate, personally and as a community, in the life and in the events of the whole District. They translate into action the directives and the guidelines set forth by the District Chapter and those holding positions of responsibility at the District level.*

64b. *The official visit of the Brother Visitor is the principal occasion to evaluate the internal life of*

art. 64c - COMMUNITY LIFE

the community and its apostolic commitments. It is also an opportunity for the community to deepen its relationship with the District and the Institute.

64c. *The community shows a special interest in the circular letters and other documents that are sent out from the District, the Region, or the Centre of the Institute. The Brothers willingly use these for personal reflection, for community exchanges, and in their prayer.*

CHAPTER 5

THE LIFE OF PRAYER

The Prayer Life of the Brother

EMP Acts
Med. 62,2-3
Lk 11,1
Jn 14,23
Rm 8, 15-
16,26

65. Prayer is primarily a gift which the Brothers receive from the Father, the Son and the Spirit. For their part, the Brothers welcome this gift in all the events of their daily life and respond to it in praise, thanksgiving, intercession, or by asking for forgiveness. They never tire of saying, “Lord, teach us to pray”.

D 17,4
Med. 37,2
Med. 95,1
MTR 1,1
MTR 4,1
MTR 5,1
MTR 9,2

66. The Brothers contemplate God’s saving action at work in the world and, in particular, in the midst of those who are confided to them, so as to be among them the “ambassadors of Jesus Christ” and the “communicators of his mysteries”.

It is through Christ, the unique mediator with the Father, that the Brothers present to God their own concerns, those of their students, of the people who are close to them, and indeed, those of the entire world.

D 9-11
Med. 159,1
PC 6,2
Can. 663,3

67. The Brothers find the principal sources for their prayer in Holy Scripture, the liturgy, and the challenges that come to them from their ministry, from the Church and from the world. They read and

meditate on the Word of God every day; they prolong this contact with the Lord in their spiritual reading.

67a. The Brothers arrange their work in such a way as to devote to spiritual reading all the time necessary to deepen their faith. Their personal programme will provide for this.

D 5,1
D 25,2
EMP
ch 2,3
Med. 70,3
Med. 104,2
Med. 179,3

68. Throughout the tasks which fill their day, the Brothers make an effort to remain united with God whose emissaries they are: they welcome him and serve him in other people.

They remain in union with God by frequently remembering his presence, by looking upon events with faith, by concern to bring a great purity of intention into the different aspects of their work and relationships, and by assuring periods of time for silence and more profound recollection.

68a. "Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!" is the usual invocation in the community; the Brothers see in it a reminder of the presence of the Lord who lives in their midst.

D 42,2
Med. 80,2

68b. The Brothers provide for moments of personal prayer during the course of the day, aware that this strengthens their willingness to be of service and enhances the quality of their apostolic action.

Meditation

RC ch. 4
ch 4
EMP
Med. 33,1
Med. 78,1
Med. 129,2
Med. 159,2
Rm 13,14
Can. 663,
1-3
MTR 6,1

69. The Brothers should have a great love for meditation and they should look upon it “as the first and principal of their daily exercises and the one most capable of drawing down God’s blessing on all the others”.

In this prayer they set their minds on God and unite themselves to the person of Jesus Christ in his mysteries, his virtues and his teachings.

Each day they undertake “the ascent to God through meditation”, as apostles responsible for the salvation of those confided to them.

In this way, they hope to receive from the Lord the internal freedom and the spiritual discernment which their ministry requires, and the graces they need to work effectively for building up the kingdom of God.

The Eucharist

D 18,7
D 20,10
1 Co 11,26
Can. 663,2
Can. 897,
899

70. Every aspect of the Brother’s life is energised by the mystery of the Eucharist. As far as possible they participate in the celebration of it every day. There, in communion with the death and resurrection of Christ and listening to the Word of God, the Brothers are a community united in mind and heart in the same Spirit for the same mission.

art. 70a-71a - THE LIFE OF PRAYER

Can. 898

70a. *The community annual programme foresees a certain number of occasions when the Eucharist will be celebrated in a more personalised and festive way. It also provides for a celebration centred around the Eucharist on those days when it is not possible to have Mass.*

Can. 608
Can. 663,2
Can. 898

70b. *The oratory where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved provides the ideal setting for community prayer. There the Brothers also come individually to spend time in adoration.*

The prayer life of the community

D 20,9
Sc 83,2
90,1
Can. 663,3
Can. 1173-
1175

71. **The Brothers meet together at least in the morning and in the evening to celebrate the liturgy of the hours in union with the praise and continual intercession of the Church. They may also organise different forms of prayer by which to express the life of their community.**

71a. *The Brothers ensure the quality of their community prayer by having it well prepared, allowing sufficient time for it, and entrusting it to capable leaders. They share their petitions and their reflections. They give outward expression to their prayer but they also share the deeper reflection which silence makes possible.*

71b. *As members of a local church, the Brothers take part in the life of prayer of their parish, according to their availability and their talents.*

Can. 1247

71c. *The more flexible timetable on Sundays, holidays and during vacation periods always includes sufficient time for community prayer. This is also an opportunity for more prolonged personal prayer and for their religious development.*

71d. *The Brothers want their community to be a praying community open to all who wish to join them for prayer.*

72. Each Brother has the primary responsibility for his personal prayer. Each one and all together are jointly responsible for community prayer.

D 19.2

73. Ordinarily the Brothers give to God at least two hours of each day in meditation, the Eucharist, community vocal prayer, spiritual reading and personal prayer. In this way they nourish their life of faith and strengthen their religious and apostolic commitment.

73a. *At the beginning of each year, when they are setting up or revising the community programme, the Brothers regulate the order, times and rhythm of their prayer in community. Then they live out in practice what they have decided.*

art. 74-75 - THE LIFE OF PRAYER

When they are prevented from taking part in community prayer, they find ways to make up for it.

Asceticism and the spiritual life

D 15,2
D 53,2
Can. 664

74. The Brother's life of prayer, like the other aspects of his life as a consecrated person, will be possible and authentic only if it is rooted in a continual effort of conversion, affecting his relationship with God as well as his relationship with other people.

74a. Self-mastery and renunciation in following the example of Christ leads the Brothers to accept the demands of community life and observance of the Rule, as well as the fatigue that comes from their work, their suffering of soul and body, and the infirmities that come with advancing age.

CL 8,464
CL 15, 83-86

74b. During the days and seasons of penitence, the Brothers unite themselves with the spirit of the Church by exterior and, especially by interior practices of mortification, as recommended by St. John Baptist de La Salle.

RC ch. 16

75. The Brothers find in the daily examination of conscience, in spiritual direction, in the frequent reception of the sacrament of reconciliation and in the time of retreat, particularly the annual retreat,

opportunities to grow strong in charity and to persevere to the end in fidelity.

Can. 664
MTR 13,1
CL 15,75-76

75a. Every day in God's presence the Brothers examine their conscience by reflecting on their lives in the light of the gospel.

Can. 630,1

75b. In order better to discern the will of God in his regard, each Brother is invited to seek an experienced spiritual director, especially in the most decisive moments of his life, as a companion for his spiritual journey.

Can. 630
Can. 634

75c. The Brothers make frequent use of the sacrament of reconciliation. There they meet Christ and learn from him how to be forgiving towards everyone. They willingly take part in penitential celebrations that emphasise the community aspect of this sacrament.

CL 15,79-80
Can. 663,5
Can. 765

75d. Each year the Brothers take part in a spiritual retreat of adequate length in order to renew their union with God and their zeal in the apostolate. Periodically they spend some time in recollection for the same purpose. The Districts and communities determine how these periods for renewal are to be organized.

On these, and all other such occasions, it is for the Brother Visitor or the Brother Director, as the

case may be, to authorise speakers to address the Brothers of the District or their community.

Institute devotions

M 150,3
Can. 663,4

76. The Brothers have a special devotion to Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ and of the Church. They discover the meaning of their own consecration in the total “Yes” that she spoke to God. They learn from her how to be docile towards the Spirit who brings them to the likeness of Christ by faith, hope and love, and so leads them towards the Father from whom all good flows and to whom all apostolic activity is directed.

D 53,3
Med. 150,3
Med. 15 1,3
Can. 663,4

***76a.** Mindful of the recommendations of the Church, and faithful to the traditions of the Institute, the Brothers honour the Virgin Mary each day, whether personally or in community, by the recitation of the rosary or some other practice of devotion to Mary which is in keeping with the guidelines of the Church.*

B 1*

77. The Brothers find a model for their whole life in St. Joseph. He responded in confidence and faith to the fidelity God showed his people; he was a helpmate to Mary; he participated in the work of salvation by providing for the upbringing and education of Jesus; he was faithful to death in his humble role as foster

father. The Brothers invoke him, always remembering that St. John Baptist de La Salle placed his Institute under his protection.

D 53,3

78. The Brothers pay special homage to St. John Baptist de La Salle as their Founder. They immerse themselves in his writings and the lessons to be learned from his life. They make every effort to imitate him in his submission to the will of God, his love for the Church and his devotedness towards people. They entrust to him their fidelity to their own vocation and the future of the Institute.

79. The Brothers also honour the beatified and canonised members of their Institute. Inspired by their example, the Brothers count on their intercession to procure in faith and zeal, day after day, the glory of God as they work for the salvation of those who are entrusted to them

Our deceased Brothers

Med. 185

80. The Brothers remember faithfully their deceased Brothers, especially those whom they have known and loved. The prayers and suffrages they offer for them show that there is a communion between those still on their journey and those already resting in the peace of Christ.

art. 80a-80c - THE LIFE OF PRAYER

80a. *Once a week, each community remembers the deceased Brothers during community prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist*

AD ch. 8

80b. *The Centre of the Institute arranges to have a Mass celebrated every day for the deceased Brothers, relatives, affiliated members and benefactors. Each year during the course of the District Retreat, and in all the communities during the month of November, or on the occasion of the death or anniversary of a deceased confrere, the Brothers offer their participation in the Eucharist for these same intentions.*

80c. *The communities and Districts are careful to provide for every deceased Brother the suffrages which are due to him, according to what is specified in The Administrator's Directory.*

CHAPTER 6

FORMATION

D 14,3
CL 7,325
CL 8,28-29
Can. 661

81. In response to the design of God in his regard, St. John Baptist de La Salle transformed his entire life into a spiritual journey of ever increasing faith. He was concerned to offer to the young men who joined him the best possible spiritual guidance.

Following his example, the Brothers are invited to involve themselves over the course of their entire lives in the process of growing towards human, spiritual and apostolic maturity. They are available and ready to act as intermediaries of the Lord to invite and accompany the young men who wish to join them.

Each vocation arises from the mystery of the unique encounter between God and the person who is called. It is developed and sustained in turn by the pastoral ministry of vocations, initial formation, and continuing formation extending onward to advanced age.

D 13,1

81a. *The effort to unify the elements that constitute the life of the Brother ought to be begun during initial formation and followed through as part of continuing formation. The Rule and the capitular Declaration "The Brother of the Christian Schools*

in the World Today” explain what these elements are, why they are necessary, and how they are to be integrated.

The pastoral ministry of vocations

LG 11, 32, 39 **82.** The Brothers are conscious of the fact that all people are called to holiness. By evangelising young people and educating them in the faith, the Brothers help them to find their vocation in the Church. The Brothers witness by their personal and community life that their vocation has significance as a way of salvation for themselves and for those to whom they are sent. They are happy to promote vocations to their Institute.

Can. 233 **83.** The entire people of God has the responsibility for awakening, discerning and developing vocations in the Church. The Brothers share in this work with the rest of the Christian community, especially the parents, priests, religious and lay teachers. They invite in a special way the most committed members of the educational community to join with them in the pastoral ministry of vocations.

Mt 9,37
MTR 15,3 **84.** “Pray that the Master of the harvest send workers into his vineyard”. These words of Christ lead the Brothers to realise that prayer is fundamental in order to initiate and to develop a pastoral ministry for

vocations. The Founder gives this recommendation "Ask God that he will be pleased to make your Institute grow and bear fruit day by day". This stimulates the Brothers to organise prayers for vocations in their communities, in their apostolic centres, among the parents of the students, the teachers, friends, and the young people themselves.

Jn 1,39
Heb 13; 1,2
Can. 673

85. For a pastoral ministry of vocations to become an effective invitation to share the life of the Brothers of the Christian Schools it is necessary:

- that by their very lives the Brothers give testimony to the presence of God among people, to the liberating force of his Spirit, and to the tenderness of his love;
- that in a fraternal and apostolic spirit, the Brothers' communities live the gospel saying: "Come and see". They do this by the sincerity of the welcome they extend;
- that the Institute work effectively for its own renewal by responding to the most urgent needs of young people who are waiting to hear the word of the gospel.

85a. Each community has the first responsibility for awakening vocations and helping them to develop. The annual community programme provides for one or more occasions during the year when the community examines the quality of its

art. 85b-85d - FORMATION

witness to the gospel, and its capacity to stimulate, to welcome and to accompany vocations in their early stages.

85b. *In their schools and in other centres where they exercise their apostolate the Brothers help young people to think about their future and to take steps to prepare for it. They present in a clear way the vocational possibilities to be found in the various ministries, in the life of a Brother, and in other forms of the consecrated life. They do not hesitate to extend an explicit invitation for this purpose. They are aware that every vocation requires human intermediaries to be able to recognize the call of God and to respond to it.*

85c. *In his own District, the Brother Visitor is the principal person responsible for the pastoral ministry of vocations. When he visits the communities, he evaluates with the whole community and with each of the Brothers what are their concerns and what initiatives they have taken in this matter. He appoints one or more Brothers of his District to take charge, on a full time basis if possible, of animating the pastoral ministry of vocations, and especially of vocations to our Institute.*

85d. *Each District organises a Vocation Commission. This group stimulates the initiative*

art. 85e - FORMATION

of the Brothers, supports community action and furnishes vocational information to those who are in charge of religious education. In a desire to be as open as possible, this Commission organises meetings for people interested in the pastoral ministry of vocations.

85e. *The communities, the Districts and the Regions designate personnel and devise the structures that will favour the awakening and development of vocations in a concerted manner and with due follow-up.*

In some countries, the juniorate, organised as a centre for the pastoral ministry of vocations, remains one means of achieving this object. Such a centre offers young people the opportunity to live in a way that suits their age and their mentality, while introducing them to some extent to the Brothers' way of life.

Whatever structure is decided upon, it is the person of the young man that has first importance. The choice of educational methods is made with a view to his development as a person.

Initial formation

D 14, 1-5 **86.** Initial formation begins with a period of preparation before the novitiate and continues until perpetual profession. Its aim is to help the candidates to follow Christ according to the teaching of the gospel and to meet him in their everyday lives. The process of formation introduces them progressively to the spirit of the Institute .

***86a.** Throughout the process of initial formation, the candidate is sustained by the helpful atmosphere of the community, the shared experience of the Brothers' life, the demands of the gospel and the community's regular self-evaluation. At the same time he has the opportunity to participate actively in the formation process.*

D 15, 1-2
Can. 652,3

***86b.** During the various stages of initial formation it is necessary to educate the candidates to accept responsibility for their own formation, to mature emotionally, to make a positive choice for the values expressed in the vows, to begin to experience the service of the poor through education, and to assume a spiritual outlook rooted in the life of faith.*

***86c.** The successive stages of initial formation respect the rhythm proper to each of the*

art. 86d-87b - FORMATION

candidates. The personal interview is essential in helping them to develop their vocation and in evaluating the progress each one is making as he grows to maturity.

D 48,5 **86d.** *Each District ensures that every stage of its initial formation programme is long enough and not curtailed under pressure from more immediate needs.*

87. The formation of candidates is one of the Institute's major preoccupations. In consultation with the Centre of the Institute, each District or Region draws up a coherent plan for all the stages of formation. The plan in its totality comprises a proper balance between spirituality and theoretical studies on the one hand and, on the other, some practical experience of the life and ministry of the Brothers.

D 15,1 **87a.** *Under the authority of the Brother Superior and the Brother Visitors, commissions are set up at different levels to animate and to evaluate periodically the progress of the formation programme.*

87b. *Each District takes particular care in choosing the leaders who will be directly in charge of the formation of the candidates. With the aid of the Region and the Centre of the Institute, the District prepares leaders for this task and establishes*

art. 87c-87d - FORMATION

time-tables for this matter of such high priority. The Brother Superior and his Council are careful to provide qualified formation personnel for the sectors of the Institute that cannot do so for themselves.

Can. 660,1

87c. *The programmes of study for the candidates should be established in accordance with those recognised by the academic and ecclesiastical authorities as the case may be. These studies, which aim to provide the competence necessary for religious educators, help the Brothers to have a better sense of their identity in relation to their vocation. These studies are directed towards the purpose of the Institute and the knowledge of young people and of the world.*

Studies in theology, catechetics and pedagogy are indispensable to help the candidate or the young Brother consolidate the foundations of his faith. They allow him to make a regular evaluation of his progress.

87d. *As far as possible, the initial formation of the Brothers takes place in their native country or region, with their own culture as its starting point. This will help them to express the fundamental elements of the Brothers' vocation in the context where they will be exercising their ministry.*

88. When it accepts a candidate, the Institute commits itself to supplying him with the means needed to achieve his goal in life and to fulfil his vocation, as well as to assist him in the process of his personal growth as a Christian.

The high quality of the community life of the Brothers in charge of formation is a sign of the authentic religious life for which they are preparing the candidates and an effective means for helping them to attain it.

88a. All the Brothers of a District are in some way responsible for the formation of those who seek to share their life. It is above all by the dynamic quality of their witness that they translate this responsibility into action.

88b. Both initial and continuing formation are related to the overall programme of the District, thereby favouring the unity of the Brothers.

The postulancy

Can. 597,2 **89.** The postulancy is that stage in initial formation which precedes and prepares for entry into the novitiate. It has its own organisation, distinct from that of the juniorate and that of the novitiate.

The postulancy offers the candidate the means to

art. 89a-90 - FORMATION

continue to mature as a person and to enrich his faith, so that he can discern how authentic is his vocation to the Brothers' life. It brings to maturity his decision to enter the novitiate by allowing him to experience for the first time the Institute's religious, community and apostolic life.

89a. *On the recommendation of the Commission for Formation, the Brother Visitor and his Council determine the procedure for admission to the postulancy, its minimum duration, and the general norms concerning its operation and the programme of studies.*

89b. *To be admitted to the postulancy the candidate must make an explicit request. There must be assurance as to his physical health, his psychological and emotional balance, his aptitude for apostolic work, the quality of his Christian commitment, a sufficient awareness of the realities of life, and his freedom from any kind of impediment.*

The novitiate

Can. 646

90. The novitiate is a unique and important experience in the process of being initiated into the religious life of the Brother. With great respect for the personal progress of each of the novices, those

in charge of the formation will urge them to enter progressively into the fundamental spiritual outlook of a disciple of Saint John Baptist de La Salle: abandonment to God as a follower of Christ for a community service of evangelisation and education available to all but with a preference for the disadvantaged.

Can. 641-
645

91. To be validly admitted to the novitiate, the candidate must have completed his seventeenth year of age and be free of any canonical impediment.

To be admitted licitly, he must satisfy the other conditions required by canon law.

Admission to the novitiate is the responsibility of the Brother Visitor of the District into which the candidate asks to be received.

Can. 641

91a. *The candidate expresses his reasons for wanting to enter the Institute both in written form and in the course of dialogue with those in charge. This written request is submitted to the Brother Visitor who makes the decision after receiving the advice of his Council.*

91b. *The beginning of the novitiate is marked by a special ceremony during which the candidate receives some symbols of his entry into the Institute such as the religious habit, the Rule, or a Bible.*

art. 91c-91e - FORMATION

This ceremony ought to give special emphasis to the determination on the part of the candidate to follow Christ in the Brother's way of life. It also provides the occasion for the Institute to welcome a new member into its community of brotherhood.

91c. *The novitiate is organised in such a way as to create an atmosphere conducive to spiritual recollection and "the experience of God."*

Ho 2,16
Can. 652

91d. *To achieve the purposes of the novitiate it is necessary that extended periods be devoted to prayer, reflection, the assimilation of what has been taught, some practical introduction into community life, plus a reasonable amount of apostolic work.*

91e. *The novitiate programme, which must have the approval of the Brother Superior General, is based on the needs of the novices and requires their active and continuing participation. It should also help them to get to know themselves better and to understand more fully the contemporary world in order to adjust better to their own culture.*

Thus the novice undertakes to do the following:
1° *to integrate well the unique character of the Brother's vocation into the history of salvation and the service of the Church;*

2° *to begin to experience a more personal*

encounter with the person of Christ;

3° *to train himself in prayer, asceticism and the apostolate on the basis of biblical, liturgical, theological and pastoral sources;*

4° *to get to know the Brother's way of life by learning about the Institute and its mission, by studying the Institute texts and especially by assimilating the fundamental inspiration of Saint John Baptist de La Salle;*

5° *to search for the means to keep this inspiration alive.*

Can. 648,2

91f. *Formation should take into account the Brother's mission. The novices are progressively offered the opportunity to engage in apostolic work adapted to the capacities of each. These apostolic experiences are evaluated regularly with those who guide the novices in their vocation.*

Can. 650

91g. *Personal spiritual direction is a fundamental element in the initiation into the consecrated life. The Director of novices explains the importance of spiritual direction. He has the primary responsibility for it, but this does not prevent the novices from being able freely to approach some other qualified person.*

art. 92-94 - FORMATION

Can. 650
Can. 651

92. The post of Director of novices is normally confided to a Brother who has at least five years of perpetual vows and is completely free to do this work full-time. As far as possible, one or more collaborators are appointed to work with him.

Can. 653,1

92a. *In his work of discernment, the Brother Director of novices may decide that a novice should be dismissed. Whenever he has to make such a decision, he should do so only after discussing it with the novice, seeking the advice of his collaborators, and contacting the Brother Visitor.*

Can. 647,2
Can. 646
Can. 649,1

93. To be valid, the novitiate must be made in a house designated for the purpose and must last for a minimum of twelve months, spread over a period of not more than two years. An absence from the novitiate house, lasting more than three months, continuous or otherwise, renders the novitiate invalid. An absence of more than fifteen days must be made good.

Can. 647,1

93a. *To open or to transfer a novitiate house always requires the written approval of the Brother Superior General with the consent of his Council.*

Can. 647

94. The Brother Superior, again with the consent of his Council, may permit a candidate to make his novitiate validly in another community of the Institute under the authority of a professed Brother explicitly

appointed for that purpose.

The Brother Visitor may authorise the group of novices to live for specific periods of time in another house designated by him.

Making vows

Can. 653,2
Can. 656

95. At the completion of the novitiate, provided the conditions required by canon law have been fulfilled, the novice, if he is judged suitable, is admitted to temporary profession; otherwise he is to be dismissed. If any doubt remains about the suitability of the novice, the Brother Visitor may prolong the time of probation for a further period fixed by him which may not exceed six months.

Can. 653,2
Can. 656,3

95a. *Not later than two months before the end of the novitiate, the novices freely make a request in writing to their own Brother Visitor stating their desire to make their first vows. The Brother Director provides the Brother Visitor with such information as may be useful concerning the external conduct of these novices.*

Can. 656-658
Can. 689

95b. *Vows are made according to the norms of canon law and the following prescriptions:*

1° *Admission to vows is decided by Brother Visitor.*

2° *The request of the candidate is examined by a Chapter of admission, made up solely of finally professed brothers, and whose composition is determined by the District Chapter. When first profession is involved, at least one member of the novitiate staff is invited to take part. When final profession is involved, the Chapter of admission must include the members of the District Council with perpetual vows. The vote of the Chapter is consultative, except in the case of perpetual profession, when it is deliberative.*

3° *The Brother Visitor invites the candidate to come in person to speak to the members of the Chapter of admission so as to inform them more fully of the reasons for his decision. If he prefers, the candidate is free to explain his reasons in a letter addressed to the Brother Visitor or to the members of the Chapter of admission.*

4° *In the case of special difficulties concerning the proceedings of a Chapter of admission to vows, or the non-admission of a candidate, the latter or the Brother Visitor can refer the case to Brother Superior General.*

5° *When perpetual profession is involved:*
- If the majority vote of the Chapter of vows is negative, the Brother Visitor cannot admit the candidate to vows. Either he himself or the candidate can always refer the case to Brother

Superior General.

- The minutes of the Chapter of admission must be sent to the Brother Superior General, together with Brother Visitor's decision for or against the admission. The Brother Superior confirms or sets aside the decision of the Brother Visitor. The ratification of Brother Superior General is indispensable for the validity of perpetual vows.

6° Vows are received in any part of the Institute, by Brother Superior General or his delegate, by the Brother Vicar General or by one of the General Councillors; and in a District, by the Brother Visitor or his delegate

The period of temporary vows

96. The period of temporary vows has for its purpose to maintain a steady growth in commitment to the vocation, to continue the formation begun in the novitiate, to give the Brother his first experience in continuing formation, and to prepare him for perpetual profession.

Canon 659
Can. 660

96a. *The period of temporary vows must be closely supervised by the Brother Visitor and the Commission for Formation. Three stages merit special attention:*

art. 95b-96d - FORMATION

1° *the time immediately after the novitiate when the Brother is preparing to exercise his mission as a teacher and an educator;*

2° *the first years in an active community, when there should be a plan designed either by the District or by the community to guide and accompany the Brother as he tries to become responsible for his own formation;*

3° *the time immediately leading up to perpetual profession.*

96b. *Scholasticates, or other communities suited to the purpose, are established in each District or Region to cater for the particular needs of the student Brothers. These should offer programmes that will ensure a balance between serious secular studies and a development of the religious and theological training received in the novitiate.*

96c. *The community is for the Brother a place where his formation continues. The good example that comes from a community that has a suitable prayer life, a sense of service, and where fraternal dialogue takes place, is a great help to Brothers in the adjustments they must make during their first years in community.*

96d. *In all that concerns their choice of studies*

the Brothers bear in mind the goals set by the District for its pastoral service. Their choice in this matter results from a dialogue with those in charge of the District.

96e. *To make it possible for the Brothers in temporary vows to share more actively in the life of the Institute, those in charge of the District shall ensure that these Brothers are represented when reflection and decision making take place at District level as in Chapters, Councils and Commissions.*

Perpetual profession

97. The nature and importance of the definitive commitment presuppose that the Brother in preparing for it, has acquired a spiritual maturity, growth in faith, ability to assume personal responsibility for his progress and to internalise the values that motivate him.

97a. *The Brother Visitor and the Commission for Formation organise, if necessary in cooperation with other Districts, suitable programmes for the period that immediately precedes the making of perpetual vows.*

97b. *Once the novitiate is over and by way of preparing for perpetual profession the Brothers*

art. 97c-99 - FORMATION

commit themselves by periods of temporary vows. The duration of these periods may vary from one to three years. The decision is made by those in charge of the District in agreement with the Brother who requests to make the vows.

Can. 607,2
Can. 657,1

97c. *At the end of each period of temporary vows, the Brothers request to renew them unless they are eligible and desire to ask for admission to perpetual vows, or prefer to leave the Institute of their own accord.*

Can 655
Can. 657,2
Can. 658,2

98. The Brothers may be admitted to pronounce their perpetual vows when they have fulfilled the following conditions: they are at least twenty five years of age with at least five years of temporary vows in the Institute; they have lived for three years in a community doing apostolic work.

The period of temporary vows may not exceed eight years. However, if it seems appropriate, the Brother Superior General may permit the Brother to prolong this period but not beyond a ninth year with temporary vows.

Can. 690,1

99. Readmission of a Brother who has lawfully left the Institute is a matter for the Brother Superior General who decides only with the consent of his Council.

A candidate for readmission need not repeat the

novitiate but it belongs to the Brother Superior to determine an appropriate probation prior to temporary profession, and the length of time in vows before making perpetual profession.

Continuing formation

CL 15,6
PC 18

100. By faith the Brother recognises that his life consists in a succession of calls from God to which he continues to respond. This dialogue between God and each Brother permits the Brother to grow continuously in fidelity.

For this reason the Brother is invited to be open each day to the presence of the living God in such a way that he discovers it, and lives it in his mission, his consecration and his community life.

D 4
Can. 659

101. Superiors and communities strive to provide each Brother with the conditions and the means most suitable to develop his spiritual, theological and professional formation.

Can. 661

101a. *Each Brother is invited to develop a personal formation programme. He has the primary responsibility for his own formation; thus he will live out more fully his vocation with his Brothers to the benefit of the educational mission he shares with them.*

art. 101b-101d - FORMATION

The need for continuing formation extends throughout the entire lifetime and to every aspect of the life of the Brother.

101b. *The community is responsible for establishing an effective and ongoing plan for its own formation as a group. The evaluation of this plan forms part of the community's annual programme.*

101c. *The Brothers take advantage of the formation programmes organised by the local church or other institutions. They take special care to maintain their professional competence at a high level.*

101d. *The Brother Visitor and his Council establish a comprehensive plan of continuing formation which caters for the particular needs of specific groups of Brothers within the District. They provide the Brothers who are reaching retiring age with the means to investigate new possibilities and acquire new skills. In this way, these Brothers are helped to continue doing apostolic work in a way that is consistent with their vocation.*

The superior take the necessary means to ensure that competent Brothers are put in charge of continuing formation in the District.

The Brothers in charge periodically evaluate the

programmes and other projects established in the communities of the District. They ascertain as well the extent of active participation of each Brother in the work of renewal.

101e. *Those in charge of a District provide pastoral formation for Brother Directors and for any other Brothers who might eventually be called to fill this office.*

101f. *Regional Lasallian Centres, staffed by well chosen teams, are established on a permanent or short-term basis by those in charge of the Regions to meet the needs of Brothers who have reached a mature age.*

101g. *The Brother Superior General and his Council are careful to promote programmes of continuing formation in the Institute, especially those designed to prepare Brothers for work in formation.*

They ensure that the Brothers from the poorest Districts are enabled to participate regularly in the programmes of renewal established in the Institute.

101h. *The Centre of the Institute organises and promotes research projects on the person of the Founder and his thought, the development over*

art. 101i - FORMATION

the years of the work which he started, and the educational practice and spirituality of the contemporary Institute.

It furnishes financial aid for this research and for the translation and diffusion of the Lasallian message.

101i. *A specific form of this service of the Centre of the Institute is provided by The International Lasallian Centre (CIL) which aims to contribute to the living unity and revitalisation of the Institute in the various cultures of the world. It promotes the spiritual renewal of the Brothers who take part in it and helps to prepare those who will be called upon to fill leadership roles in the Institute.*

PART II

**THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE INSTITUTE**

INTRODUCTION

“A dispute arose among them as to who should be the greatest. He said, Earthly kings lord it over their people. Those who exercise authority over them are called their benefactors. Yet it cannot be that way with you. Let the greater among you be as the youngest, the leader as the one who serves. Who in fact is the greater, he who reclines at the table or he who serves the meal? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? Yet I am in your midst as the one who serves you.” (Luke 22,24-27).

D 53,2
Lk 22,25
Can. 618; 619

102. In imitation of Christ who serves his brothers, and following the example of their Founder, the Brothers consider the exercise of authority as a way of serving the community. Authority has for its purpose to promote communion among all the Brothers, the vitality of the Institute, the efficacy of its mission and interdependence among the various units that compose it. Authority is exercised with a sensitivity to persons and with respect for subsidiarity.

In a spirit of collaboration and fraternal help, the superiors foster a spirit of initiative and a sense of responsibility in each of the Brothers in the areas under their charge.

CHAPTER 7

THE GENERAL CHAPTER

Can. 596,1
Can. 631; 1,2

103. Constituted as an image of the whole Institute, the General Chapter is, since the days of the Founder, the ultimate expression of the communion that exists among all the Brothers. It perpetuates among them the living fidelity to the special charism of the Institute.

Being responsible for the entire Body of the Institute, the Chapter is qualified to undertake in its name a periodical evaluation of the life of the Institute, to provide for its continuing adaptation and renewal, and to set out the main guidelines for future action. In addition, the Chapter elects the Brother Superior and the Brothers Councillors. It has the power to take all suitable legislative and administrative measures that concern the establishments and the members of the Institute.

104. An ordinary General Chapter is held once every seven years. It is normally convoked by the Brother Superior General.

If, because of unusual circumstances, it is not possible to hold an ordinary General Chapter at the end of the seven year period, the Brother Superior

art. 105-106 - THE GENERAL CHAPTER

General shall have recourse to the Holy See for a temporary prolongation of his mandate and that of his Councillors.

105. When circumstances require it, the Brother Superior General or, if the need arises, the Brother Vicar General or, failing this, the General Councillors, may convoke an extraordinary General Chapter, provided the decision to do so is supported by a majority of the Councillors, voting in secret.

Can 631

105a. *About two years before an ordinary General Chapter is to be held, the Brother Superior announces an approximate date for its opening. At the same time, he informs the Institute of the measures being taken to ensure its preparation.*

For this purpose, the Brother Superior and his Council appoint a Preparatory Commission to study and organise the preparation of the Chapter.

This Commission collects all the information deemed opportune from the Brothers generally and from the various administrative units of the Institute, as well as from study groups or specially appointed commissions.

106. The members of the General Chapter are as follows: those who are members by right; those who may possibly be appointed by the Brother Superior and his Council; those, comprising the greater

number, who are the delegates of all the Brothers of the Institute.

The members by right of the General Chapter are: the Superior General, former Superiors General, the General Councillors and the Secretary General.

With the consent of his Council, the Brother Superior may name up to ten supplementary delegates so as to ensure a better representation of the diversity of the Institute.

Can. 631,2
Can. 663

106a. *The number of delegates to be elected, based on the statistics of the Institute on the date of the publication of the Circular of Convocation, is determined as follows:*

1° *The number of delegates is a function of the number of Brothers in the District. It is fixed at one more than the whole quotient of the number of those Brothers by the number N fixed by Brother Superior and his Council.*

2° *Each sub-District or Delegation officially constituted elects one delegate.*

3° *Brother Superior and his Council fix the number (N) in such a way that the total number of elected delegates be not fewer than one percent and not greater than one and a half percent of the number of Brothers in the Institute.*

107. Every Brother with vows in the Institute on the date of publication of the Circular of Convocation is an elector. Every Brother perpetually professed in the Institute on the date of publication of the Circular of Convocation can be elected .

107a. In each District, sub-District or Delegation the Chapter or, failing this, the Brother Visitor, Auxiliary Visitor or Delegate with the consent of his Council, determines the rules of procedure for the election of the allotted delegate or delegates, as well as for that of their substitutes, bearing in mind the following norms:

In order to be elected, a delegate must obtain an absolute majority of the votes validly cast. However, if a third ballot is necessary, a relative majority will suffice.

Substitutes, in the same number as the delegates, are elected by a separate vote.

A full report of the results of the election should be sent without delay to the Brothers of the District and to the General Secretariat.

Any derogation from the preceding norms requires the approval of the Brother Superior and his Council.

108. Approximately one year before the date fixed for the opening of an ordinary General Chapter, the

Brother Superior, after taking the advice of his Council, sends out the Circular of Convocation .

108a. *The Circular of Convocation makes known the names of the members by right, as well as the number of delegates to be elected in each of the Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations.*

Can. 631,2

109. The Brother Superior is by right the presiding officer of the General Chapter.

109a. *At the proper time the General Chapter itself proceeds to elect its own officers. However, the Brother Secretary General is the Secretary of the Chapter.*

Can. 631,3

109b. *The General Chapter is fully responsible for the organisation of its work. This organisation can be greatly facilitated by the suggestions, recommendations, studies, working schedules and draft documents provided by the Preparatory Commission.*

109c. *Brother Superior General and his Council as well as the General Chapter may invite persons to participate in the work of the Chapter as experts or as consultants.*

Can. 631,3

110. All the Brothers of the Institute are invited to participate in the work of preparing for an ordinary

art. 110a-112 - THE GENERAL CHAPTER

General Chapter. Each Brother has the right to send to the Brother Superior or the Secretary General whatever notes or position papers, duly signed, he may judge useful.

Can. 631,3
Can. 633

110a. *The General Chapter takes into account any surveys made among the Brothers, especially those coming from Chapters held at District, Delegation or Regional level, with a view to providing the General Chapter with better information. Account is likewise taken of the duly signed observations sent in by communities or individual Brothers to the General Chapter, the Preparatory Commission, or the General Secretariat of the Institute.*

111. The Brother Superior makes a report to the General Chapter on the manner in which he and the Council have carried out their mandate. This report also includes the activities of the General Services of the Institute.

B 3°
Can. 119,1
Can. 625,1
Can. 631,1
Can. 164 -179

112. The ordinary General Chapter elects the Brother Superior General. It fixes the number of General Councillors, which must not be less than six. It elects first of all the Brother Vicar General, who is the first among the Councillors. It then proceeds to the election of the other members of the Council.

Each of these elections must be determined by an absolute majority of the votes validly cast, no matter

how many ballots may be necessary.

Can. 631,2

112a. *The election of the Brother Superior General may be preceded by a period of consultation, the modalities of which are specified by the General Chapter itself.*

Can. 631,2

112b. *To prepare for the election of the Brother Vicar and the others members of the General Council, the newly elected Brother Superior General gathers all the useful information and makes it known to the capitulants.*

If he judges it opportune, he may suggest that a straw vote be taken within the Chapter and then present to the electors the names of the Brothers whom he judges suitable for the role.

Can. 631,2

113. The Brother Superior and the members of the General Council in office retain their mandate until the election of a new Brother Superior General.

114. Prior to submission to the Holy See for definitive approval, amendments to the Bull of Approbation, as well as proposals to add, modify or suppress articles of the Constitutions, require a majority of two-thirds of the votes validly cast by the General Chapter.

Amendments to the Statutes are effected by an absolute majority of votes, unless otherwise specified.

art. 114a-114c - THE GENERAL CHAPTER

In addition the General Chapter determines the norms to be followed in preparing Directories that will serve as collections of those elements of Institute legislation that are not contained in the Constitutions and the Statutes.

Can. 631,2

114a. *The General Chapter can also make a certain number of decisions without incorporating them into the Statutes. Such decisions shall remain in force as norms or directives until the following ordinary General Chapter, which will evaluate their suitability.*

Can. 631,2

114b. *All capitular decisions must be promulgated by means of an official circular.*

They become effective three months, at the latest, after such promulgation.

Can. 631,2

114c. *The formal act constituting the General Chapter, the act of closure of the Chapter, as well as the acts for the election of the Brother Superior, the Brother Vicar and the other General Councillors, must be submitted to the approbation of the Capitulants and signed by them.*

CHAPTER 8

THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The General Council

Can. 627

115. Responsibility for the central government of the Institute is entrusted by the General Chapter to the Brother Superior General. He is assisted by a permanent Council known as the General Council.

115a. The members of the General Council form a community united around the Brother Superior General who holds the principal office of responsibility in the Institute. They collaborate closely with him by reason of their complementarity as persons, by the way they share their experience and by their willingness to be of service in the areas of responsibility assigned to them.

115b. The choice of General Councillors should take into account the functions of government and, as far as possible, the universality of the Institute and its cultural diversity.

D 5; 1,2
D 6,2

116. Constituted as a community at the Centre of the Institute, the Brother Superior and his Councillors symbolise its unity and work to ensure

art. 116a-117 - THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

the fidelity of the entire body of the Institute to the faith of the Church, to the directives of the Holy See and to the living charism of the Founder.

116a. The Brother Superior and his Councillors have as their mission to foster a spirit of communion and interdependence within the Institute. In their efforts to establish and maintain the structures that are needed for the unity of the Institute and the effectiveness of its activities, they are careful always to give priority to persons.

Can. 592,2

116b. The Central Government takes the means necessary to make the Founder and his thought better known to the Brothers. In like manner, the Central Government strives to communicate a correct understanding of the Rule, the directives of the Church and the normative documents of the Institute. In this way the Brothers are led to accept the ideas contained in these documents and to put them into practice.

Can. 578

117. In their style of government, the Brother Superior and his Councillors have recourse to the prophetic dynamism which is still alive in the spiritual heritage that has come down from the Founder.

By being open to the Spirit, and by a process of discernment, they determine how to provide for the spiritual renewal of the Brothers, what is needed in various situations and how to respond to new

apostolic needs.

They keep in touch with all parts of the Institute. They make a wise choice of those they appoint to positions of leadership and they encourage creative initiative. The Superior and his Councillors are men of hope and they share this conviction with all the Brothers throughout the entire Institute.

They never hesitate to bring to the attention of the Brothers those things that they think ought to be changed, but always in a spirit of fidelity to the charism of the Founder and the mission of the Institute, of which they are the guarantors.

Can. 592,1
Can. 704

117a. *At the beginning of their mandate, the Brother Superior and his Councillors draw up a comprehensive programme which enables them to respond to what they discern to be the call of the Spirit or the needs of youth, and also to the decisions taken by the General Chapter.*

This programme will distinguish between those responsibilities that are to be shared by the entire General Council and the specific duties to be assigned to each Councillor.

117b. *During the period between two ordinary General Chapters, the Brother Superior and his Council will meet at least once with the representatives from the Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations of each Region.*

The Brother Superior General

B 11°
Can. 622-
626
Can. 629
Can. 164-
179

118. The Brother Superior General is elected by the General Chapter and he exercises authority over the whole Institute according to the prescriptions of canon law and of the Institute's own legislation.

At the time of his election, he must have at least ten years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

His mandate goes from one ordinary General Chapter to the next. He can be reelected.

He and his Council usually reside in the Generalate.

He can be deposed for the reasons set forth in article eleven of the Bull of Approbation of the Institute.

Can. 118

118a. *It is within the authority of the Superior General:*

1° *to convoke the ordinary General Chapter and, if the need arises, an extraordinary General Chapter;*

2° *to appoint Brothers to office in accordance with canon law and the legislation of the Institute;*

3° *within the limits permitted by law, to delegate some of his powers to Brothers of his choice;*

4° *as the first representative of the Institute and acting in its name, to establish relationships with the ecclesiastical hierarchy as well as with any other authority or institution;*

5° on requests that truly merit consideration from those in charge at various levels, and with the advice of his Council, to permit on a temporary basis departures from the disciplinary legislation proper to the Institute

118b. When the Brother Superior is ill or prevented from performing his duties, he can transfer his powers temporarily to the Brother Vicar General. He shall even be obliged to do this if the General Council, by secret vote and by an absolute majority, require him to do so.

118c. If, outside the time a General Chapter is in session, the Brother Superior decides that he should resign, he shall make his intentions known and the reasons for it in a letter addressed to the members of the General Council. After discussing the matter in the absence of the Brother Superior, the Council shall decide by an absolute majority of the votes cast in a secret ballot whether or not to accept the resignation. If the vote is in the affirmative, the Brother Vicar General shall replace the Brother Superior who has resigned.

118d. The possible deposition of the Brother Superior is a matter for the Holy See, following a vote of the General Council (cf. 122b).

The Brother Vicar General

119. The Brother Vicar General is the first collaborator of the Brother Superior General. He replaces him in the ordinary administration of the Institute when the Brother Superior is absent or prevented from exercising his office.

He is elected normally in the course of an ordinary General Chapter. Exceptionally, his election can occur during an extraordinary General Chapter, or even at a meeting of the General Council in accordance with the norms set forth in the Statutes (cf. 122b).

At the time of his election he must have at least ten years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

His mandate continues until the following ordinary General Chapter. He can be reelected.

***119a.** On the death or resignation or deposition of the Brother Superior General in office, the Brother Vicar General succeeds him with full rights and fills the office of Superior General with the title until the following ordinary General Chapter.*

***119b.** If the post of Vicar General becomes vacant outside the time when a General Chapter is in session, the General Council shall proceed first to the election of a new Councillor if there be need. Once the Council is at full strength it elects, by a*

majority of two-thirds, one of its own members to be the new Vicar General (cf. 122b).

The General Councillors

Can. 625-
629

120. The mission of the General Councillors is to assist the Superior General in the government and animation of the Institute. They share with him and under his authority all the tasks of central government.

Their election normally takes place in the course of an ordinary General Chapter which will have previously determined the number of Councillors required by the Institute's needs, taking into account art. 112.

In exceptional cases the Councillors may be elected during an extraordinary General Chapter or even at a meeting of the General Council according to the provisions of the Statutes (cf. 122b).

At the time of their election, the Councillors must have at least ten years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

Their mandate continues until the following ordinary General Chapter. They can be reelected.

120a. During the period between General Chapters, a Councillor may offer his resignation; he may also be invited to do so by the Brother

art. 120b-120c - THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Superior. In either eventuality, the General Council shall first of all prudently evaluate the reasons given by the persons concerned. The final decision is made by a secret ballot in the absence of the Councillor concerned. The vote required is an absolute majority for a Councillor who wishes to resign and a two-thirds majority in the case of a Councillor who is asked to resign (cf. 122b).

120b. In the case of a vacancy in the General Council, the Council, on the proposal of the Brother Superior, proceeds to the election of a new Councillor by a secret ballot, a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast being required. It is, however, left to the Brother Superior and his Council to decide whether or not to fill the vacancy in cases where the number of Councillors remains within the limits set forth by the General Chapter (cf. 122b).

120c. 1° In the period between two ordinary General Chapters, the Brother Superior General may add one or two new members to the General Council.

2° The first step in this process is for the General Council to decide by vote whether it is opportune to increase the number of its members. If the vote is positive, the Brother Superior then presents the name or names of candidates and the Council

proceeds to the election.

3° *Each vote taken in this procedure is by secret ballot and requires a two-thirds majority (cf. 122b).*

Meetings of the General Council

Can. 127
Can. 627

121. Meetings of the General Council are convoked and presided over by the Brother Superior General or, in his absence, by the Brother Vicar General .

The frequency and arrangement of the Council's meetings as well as the specific nature of the vote required in certain cases, are regulated according to the norms of canon law and the legislation of the Institute.

Can. 127
Can. 627

122. In order to perform certain acts validly, the Brother Superior must obtain in advance either the advice or the consent of the General Council; he himself does not vote.

When the consent of the Council is required, at least an absolute majority of those voting is necessary. If such a vote is positive, the Brother Superior is not held to it. He cannot, however, act contrary to a negative majority vote.

When it is the advice of the Council that is required, the Brother Superior is left free to make his own decision, whatever the result of the vote.

art. 122a - THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

In all these cases, there must be a quorum of at least half of the total members of the General Council. If the matter is urgent and such a quorum cannot be met, it falls to the president of the meeting to complete the quorum by admitting to the discussions and the vote one or two heads of the General Services.

Can. 627
Can. 638,3
Can. 1292

122a. Apart from the instances prescribed by law, both universal as well as particular, the consent of the General Council is required in the following cases:

1° The convocation of an extraordinary General Chapter or the adoption, because of urgent circumstances and for a limited period, of certain measures which ordinarily require the decision of the General Chapter,

2° Every measure for the general or particular application of canonical legislation or the faculties granted by the Holy See, whenever the text of the law or the act of concession requires it;

3° All alienation of material goods when the sums involved exceed the limits fixed by law and also the alienation of any object considered valuable, because of its artistic or historic worth;

4° Any act of lending or borrowing entered into with persons outside the Institute, when the amount or the conditions involved exceed the powers granted by the Brother Superior to the

Brother Visitor and the District Council.

5° *The possible designation of ten Brother Capitulants.*

Apart from these cases, it is only the advice of the Council that is required.

122b. *Unless circumstances make it impossible, all the Councillors in office ought to take part in the deliberations and votes provided for in articles 118d, 119, 119b. 120, 120a, 120b, and 120c above. These votes must be taken by a secret ballot and require a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, taking into account the two cases referred to in article 120a.*

122c. *Brothers other than Councillors may, because of their office or special competence, participate in certain meetings of the General Council at the invitation of the presiding officer. These Brothers have only a consultative role and do not take part in the voting.*

The General Services of the Institute

123. *The Brother Superior and his Council are assisted in the work of government by a certain number of General Services. These are of two kinds:*

art. 123a - THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Some are of an administrative nature and deal with all that concerns communication, the organisation of the work of the offices of central government, the management of temporal goods, juridical questions, and relations with the Holy See.

The others deal with missionary, educational and pastoral objectives and with formation in the Institute.

123a. The Brother Secretary General, the Brother Bursar General and others in charge of General Services receive their obedience, which is renewable, for a definite time, from the Brother Superior after consultation with his Council.

They exercise their responsibilities in conjunction with the General Council and are called upon by the Council whenever the matter dealt with is within their competence.

A suitable description of their responsibilities appears in The Administrator's Directory.

CHAPTER 9

THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

The District

Can. 581
Can. 621

124. The District, as the ordinary expression of the communion existing among its communities and the Brothers who compose it, is more than a structure of government. It manifests and fosters the fraternal union which enables all, communities and Brothers alike, to assist each other in sharing their common responsibility for their life and their apostolic work.

For this reason, the first mission of those in charge of the District is to promote unity among the Brothers and the communities as well as their active participation in District concerns, thereby ensuring the value and the effectiveness of their witness within the local church.

The District is also called to establish and to maintain relationships with other Districts or Delegations and to strengthen those which unite it with the Centre of the Institute.

Can. 581
Can. 621

125. A District is established by the Brother Superior with the consent of his Council, after consultation with the Brothers who will be affected by this decision.

art. 125a-125c - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

125a. *The establishment of a District presupposes a certain number of bonds among the communities that are called upon to compose it. To serve as a guarantee, there must also be a well-founded hope that the District will have at its disposal in the near future sufficient resources in personnel and material goods to be able to provide for the animation of the communities, for the formation of the Brothers, and for the development of the activities of which the District has charge.*

125b. *For geographical, political or other reasons, a District may organise one or more administrative sectors. The relative autonomy of these units will be determined by the District Chapter and approved by the Brother Superior with the advice of his Council.*

125c. *A sub-District may be established whenever an administrative unit has a sufficient number of communities and Brothers, whether in a particular socio-cultural area, or in an area that is far from the centre of the District. Its statutes provide for the maintenance of union with the District; they are conferred by the Brother Superior General on the advice of his Council. The sub-District is placed under the responsibility of an Auxiliary Visitor assisted by a Council. Their respective areas of responsibility are defined by the District Chapter.*

125d. *The initial formation of the Brothers remains one of the major preoccupations of a District, and it endeavours to make its own provision for it. If this is not possible, the District collaborates with other Districts in staffing common formation centres.*

Can. 581
Can. 585

125e. *If a District can no longer meet the conditions mentioned in article 125a, discussions should be initiated between the District and the Region to which it belongs. Brother Superior and his Council then take whatever measures are necessary, ensuring always that everything is done with respect for the persons involved.*

The Delegation

126. A Delegation is a group of communities which for reasons of a practical or provisional nature, cannot form either a District or a sub-District. It remains directly dependent on the Brother Superior General.

126a. *In exceptional circumstances, the Brother Superior General may establish a Delegation with the advice of his Council and after consulting the communities concerned. It is his responsibility also to approve the statutes of Delegation and to appoint those who will be in charge.*

126b. *The Brother Superior General can appoint as canonical superior of the Delegation a Brother having at least five years perpetual profession in the Institute. This Brother has the title of Delegate.*

126c. *In addition to this Brother Delegate, the Brother Superior General appoints one of the Brothers belonging to the Delegation, and proposed by them, to be the Brother President. The President, with the assistance of his Council, is responsible for dealing on the spot with the routine business of the Delegation.*

The Region

127. The Region is not understood first of all as a structure of government but as a means of coordination and collaboration between certain sectors of the Institute which choose to join together. Nevertheless, the statutes of each Region can confer on the Regional Coordinator a role of decision and authority in certain matters or in certain cases.

Unity of heart and mind among the Brothers of the Region is established and maintained by communicating and actively sharing with one another. A Region is established as an expression of the willingness of the units that compose it to cooperate with one another and so benefit by the added vitality that comes from acting together.

art. 127a-127d - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

Every District, every sub-District and every Delegation forms part of a Region. The Brother Superior and his Council ensure that no sector of the Institute remains isolated and without the benefit that comes from collaboration.

127a. The composition of the Region is determined by an agreement between, the Brother Superior and his Council on the one hand and the Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations concerned, on the other.

127b. Regions may exist in many different forms characterised by flexibility in their organisation and their functioning.

Once appropriate means have been taken to consult the Brothers, it is for the Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations concerned to study and define the arrangements by which they are constituted as a Region. Then they submit their plans to the Brother Superior and his Council. Should the need arise, the latter help with the solution of any difficulties which may occur.

127c. The Brother Visitors and those in charge of the Delegations within a particular Region form a Conference. Together they determine its statutes.

127d. 1° Each Region designates its Regional

art. 127e - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

Coordinator and specifies his mandate and responsibilities in its statutes.

2° If the statutes of a Region confer upon its Coordinator powers of decision and authority in certain areas, his appointment has to be approved by the Brother Superior General and his Council.

3° But if his role is limited to the work of coordinating, his appointment comes from the Conference of Visitors and those in charge of the Delegations. The Brother Superior and his Council are duly informed.

127e. The Regional Coordinator fosters communication among the Brother Visitors of the Region and supports them in their mission. He ensures that the Region remains in contact with the Brother Superior General. He follows up the application of decisions and programmes adopted for the Region as a whole. He also encourages cooperation and interdependence within the Region and between it and other Regions of the Institute.

The details of the Brother Regional Coordinator's functions are specified in each Region by the Conference of Brother Visitors or possibly by a Regional Assembly with the approval of the Brother Superior. This approval requires the consent of the General Council whenever the

art. 127f-127h - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

Statutes of the Region confer on the Regional Coordinator the power to make decisions and to exert authority in certain domains or in certain cases.

127f. *The Brother Superior and his Council set up a schedule of meetings that will bring together all the Brother Regional Coordinators.*

127g. *In addition to participating in the activities of a given Region, the Districts, sub- Districts and Delegations are encouraged to cooperate with other parts of the Institute.*

127h. *Sending Brothers to the Young Churches or to sectors that are lacking in vocations, together with the sharing of material or spiritual resources, constitutes a most significant form that Regional cooperation can take. Formal agreements between Districts that send Brothers and those that receive them specify the details of this type of collaboration.*

The Regions also make it possible for Brothers with particular aptitudes to be made available temporarily to give assistance where needed

The District Chapter

Can. 632

128. As an assembly of a pastoral and administrative nature, the District Chapter manifests the profound unity existing among the Brothers and permits their active participation, either directly or through their delegates, in the structures of reflection and decision in the District.

The District Chapter is convoked by the Brother Visitor. It evaluates the life of the District in all its aspects. It takes into account the local situation and it establishes a schedule of precise programmes for renewal, adaptation or growth to be implemented in the near future. The process of evaluation and of establishing new programmes is carried out according to the guidelines set by the Church and by the Institute.

Everything set down concerning the District Chapter applies equally to sub-Districts, and Delegations, according to the arrangements determined in their statutes.

129. The District Chapter is normally held when the Brother Visitor is about to complete his term of office. It must also be held following a General Chapter in order to apply its decisions. If the circumstances warrant it, the Chapter to follow a General Chapter can be considered as the final step of a District Chapter which began prior to the General Chapter.

129a. *The District Chapter is presided over by the Brother Visitor. The Chapter itself elects its other officers.*

129b. *With the advice of his Council, Brother Visitor may decide to convoke an extraordinary Chapter. He must do so if this is requested by more than half the members of the preceding Chapter.*

130. When deciding on the procedure for the election of delegates, the District Chapter or, in default of a Chapter decision, Brother Visitor and his Council, ensure that there is a balanced representation of Brothers according to age-groups, competence, functions and geographical areas.

The following norms are to be observed:

1° Members by right are the Brothers Visitors, Titular and Auxiliary; members of the District Council; such Brothers as are designated by the preceding Chapter.

2° At least two-thirds of the members of the Chapter are elected.

3° Every Brother in the District has the right to elect and be elected.

4° The Brother Visitor and his Council can decide to invite all the Brothers to participate in the District Chapter. Only elected members have the right to vote.

130a. *The Chapter welcomes questions put to it by Brothers from the District; it desires to associate them all in its preparation; it encourages the widest possible participation.*

131. The resolutions taken by the District Chapter must always conform to the directives given by the General Chapter. These resolutions are forwarded to the Brother Superior General and his Council for approval.

Once approved they become effective in the District, and have normative force for all those to whom they apply. They are communicated to the Brothers of the District.

The Brother Visitor

Can. 618
Can. 619
Can. 620
Can. 624
Can. 628
Can. 832

132. The Brother Visitor is the guarantor of the unity and vitality of the District. He is the one primarily responsible for the District and is its principal animator. He exercises his authority as a major superior in accordance with the norms of canon law, the legislation of the Institute and the directives given by the District Chapter.

Brother Visitor is at the service of his Brothers, ready to listen to them and remaining in contact with them. He is careful to help each Brother to develop his vocation. He promotes close cooperation between

the Brothers in order to help them carry out their mission more effectively in all its aspects.

The Brother Visitor assigns the Brothers to their communities and provides for the different posts of responsibility according to the norms established by the District Chapter. He visits the communities and ensures that the District remains in contact with the Region and the Centre of the Institute.

He admits candidates to the Novitiate and also, subject to the prescriptions contained in 95b, to the making of vows. It falls within his competence to grant the authorisations specified in canon law including the publication of writings on matters of religion or morality.

132a. He visits the communities, at least once a year. On these occasions he assesses with the Brothers the quality of their community life and of their apostolic activities as well as those aspects which have significance for their spiritual lives. If the need arises he encourages the Brothers to redefine their specific objectives, referring for this purpose to the annual programme of the community previously established and approved. In the course of his visit he receives each Brother individually.

132b. The Brother Visitor communicates to the Brothers the documents he receives from the

Centre of the Institute. He does what he can to ensure that the message of these documents is well understood and to facilitate their application.

Once a year, the Brother Visitor submits to the Brother Superior a succinct but adequately documented report on the situation in the District.

132c. *The Brother Visitor organises gatherings of Brothers and lay persons to deal with matters that concern religious life, the apostolate and professional activities. These assemblies provide the opportunity for an exchange of ideas and experiences as well as for concrete plans of action.*

132d. *The Brother Visitor ensures that the requirements of canon law and civil law are complied with in what concerns the goods of the District and the patrimonial goods of the Brothers. The same applies to social justice as it affects the personnel employed by the communities. He authorises building works and repairs and other expenditure within the limits approved by the Brother Superior General.*

132e. *The Brother Visitor encourages programmes designed to foster vocations. He follows with great attention the progress of the Brothers in initial formation, providing them with*

art. 132f-134 - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

the help of a group of Brothers specially prepared for the task. He ensures that the Brothers of all age-groups have the required facilities for their own development and for taking part in programmes for continuing formation. He supports the Brother Directors in their role as leaders.

132f. *The transfer of a Brother from one District to another is effected with his personal consent following an agreement between the Brother Visitors involved and with the advice of their respective Councils. Care is taken to inform the Secretary General of the Institute.*

Can. 623

133. The Brother Visitor is appointed by the Brother Superior General with the advice of his Council. For this purpose, the District sends the Brother Superior, the results of the vote taken to determine the list of candidates for the office. At the time of his appointment, the Brother Visitor must have at least five years of perpetual profession in the Institute.

Can. 624

134. The Brother Visitor is appointed for three years, or four, according to what has been decided by the District Chapter.

The total duration of the successive terms of office of a Brother Visitor in the same District may not exceed nine years.

art. 134a-137 - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

134a. *The District Chapter establishes the procedure to be followed for presenting to the Brother Superior three names of those Brothers judged suitable for the office of Visitor. This procedure however respects the principle on the one hand that all the Brothers of the District be consulted, and on the other hand that the Brother Superior retain the freedom to choose.*

B 2°
Can. 609
Can. 616

135. To open a community, the Brother Visitor must obtain the prior written consent of the Brother Superior and of the Bishop of the Diocese.

The closure of a community is under the jurisdiction of the Brother Superior, the Bishop of the place having been previously consulted.

The District Council

Can. 627

136. The mission of the District Council is to promote the unity of the District and to assist the Brother Visitor in the exercise of his duties. Together they make plans for the progress of the District and they study how to face the problems that arise. Each year, the Brother Visitor undertakes, with his Council, a fraternal evaluation of his own work and of the state of the District.

137. The District Chapter determines the number of

the District Councillors as well as the length of their period in office. It also establishes the procedure for their election or appointment.

The minimum number of Councillors is six. At least two-thirds of them are elected. The Brother Visitor can appoint one or more Councillors of his choice to ensure a better representation of the Brothers.

The titular Brother Visitor is, by right, the President of the District Council. Auxiliary Visitors are members by right.

137a. Substitute members are elected. These can take part in all meetings of the District Council, but they have the right to vote only when they are taking the place of an absent Councillor.

137b. The District Council is convoked and presided over by the titular Visitor or his delegate. He calls a meeting of the Council as often as circumstances require it and at least every three months.

The Council also meets when requested to by at least half of its members.

All the members of the Council should be notified, as well as any substitutes, should the situation require it.

The Brother Visitor can invite consultants to the meetings but these do not have the right to vote.

art. 137c-138 - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

137c. *The agenda for the Council meetings is prepared under the direction of Brother Visitor or his delegate, and is then communicated in good time to the Councillors and the substitutes. Any Brother of the District may submit a topic to the Council. The agenda must include topics proposed by the Council members themselves. Due discretion being observed, the Brothers of the District are informed of the work of the Council and the decisions taken.*

The minutes of the Council meetings are kept in a special register, which also includes the final decisions of the Brother Superior.

Can. 127
Can. 627

138. In order to perform certain acts validly, the Brother Visitor must obtain, in advance, either the advice of his Council or its consent.

When it is the consent of the Council that is required, the Brother Visitor may not act contrary to a negative majority vote.

When it is the advice of the Council that is required, the Brother Visitor remains free to make his own decision, whatever the result of the vote.

The quorum required for a meeting of the District Council is a half of the total number of its members. The Brother Visitor does not take part in the voting, but he makes the final decision.

art. 138a-138c - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

Can. 656,3
Can. 703

138a. *The following acts require the consent of the District Council:*

1° *admission to final profession;*

2° *the dismissal of a Brother with vows who is living in the District, whether he belongs to it or not, in cases of urgency foreseen in canon law;*

3° *the transfer of goods from one house to another within the District;*

4° *the disposition of goods of a house which has been closed;*

5° *determining the powers given to Brother Directors and Bursars in economic matters,*

6° *any other extraordinary administrative measures which involve the District's finances.*

Can. 641

138b. *The following acts require the advice of the District Council:*

1° *the admission of candidates to the novitiate;*

2° *the appointment of the Bursar or of others in charge of the general services of the District;*

3° *the convocation of the District Chapter.*

Can. 609
Can. 1292,2

138c. *The following acts require the advice of the District Council prior to presentation to the Brother Superior General for ratification:*

art. 138d - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

1° all plans for opening or closing a community; assuming responsibility for a pastoral work of education or the withdrawal from or closure of such a work already existing;

2° all alienation of goods when the limit imposed by the Holy See is exceeded;

3° all borrowing or lending outside the District when the amount or conditions imposed go beyond the limits fixed by the General Council;

4° every agreement or contract made with the authorities of the local church, or with other public or private bodies, which might involve the joint responsibility of the District and the Institute;

5° any request for the use of powers placed at the discretion of the Brother Superior General and his Council by the Holy See.

138d.

1° Apart from cases where the Rule indicates expressly that the vote of the District Council is deliberative, this vote is only consultative.

2° What is said of the District Council applies also, all things considered, to Sub-District and Delegation Councils.

Administration of temporal goods

Can. 634 -
640

139. The Institute, the Districts and similar groupings legitimately constituted, and the communities are non-profit making entities. They have the right to acquire, possess, administer and dispose of material goods in view of their specific mission. In such cases they act within the authorised limits and under their own responsibility, conforming to canon law and the legislation of the Institute, and taking into account the requirements of civil law.

The Brothers appointed to administer the goods of the Institute do so as depositaries of the goods of the Church.

Those in charge at all levels see that the resources are shared equitably, in such a way that the sectors which are better off, come to the aid of their Brothers less favourably placed, so as to minimise as far as possible the differences which might exist in the living conditions of communities within the same sector.

Can. 636
Can. 1280

140. In each District, a Bursar, distinct from the Brother Visitor, but acting under his authority, is responsible for the administration of material goods. He has the assistance of an Economic Council .

Can. 636,2

140a. *In conformity with the guidelines established by the District Chapter, the Bursar, with the help of his Council, prepares the annual budget which*

art. 140b-140c - THE DISTRICT AND THE REGION

he then submits to the Brother Visitor and his Council. The Economic Council, for its part, controls the manner in which the budget is followed and studies ways of solving the difficulties that arise.

Can. 636,2

140b. *The Bursar furnishes an annual report on the financial condition of the District to the Brother Visitor and the District Council. This report is sent by the Brother Visitor to the Brother Bursar General.*

140c. *The various Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations jointly contribute towards the costs of the central administration of the Institute. They ensure that it can balance its budget so as to be able to meet its other expenses.*

The amount to be contributed by each District is calculated by a system established by the General Chapter and applied each year by the General Council according to what is proposed by the International Economic Council.

CONCLUSION

THE VITALITY OF THE INSTITUTE

CHAPTER 10

THE VITALITY OF THE INSTITUTE

RC ch. 1
Ch. 1
MTR 9
MTR 15

141. The words of St. John Baptist de La Salle are still true: “The need for this Institute is very great”. The young, the poor, the world and the Church still need the ministry of the Brothers.

Despite the difficulties which they meet, the Brothers know, in faith, that God does not abandon “his work” but that “it pleases him, to make it bear fruit day by day”.

MTR 15,3
1 Cor.
3,8-15

142. The life and development of the Institute depend primarily on the mystery of and the power of grace. By the gift of freedom, however, the Lord has willed to place the destiny of the Institute into the hands of the Brothers who are committed to work together so that it will prosper and remain faithful to its mission. It is above all to Jesus Christ, to his gospel and to his Spirit that the Brothers are faithful.

Med. 6
MTR 9
Can. 662
Can. 758

143. The vitality of the Institute depends on the quality and the fidelity of each of its members. Each Brother develops his talents and places them at the service of the Institute which the Founder saw as the “work of God.”

144. In their human frailty the Brothers and the entire Institute live the grace of the mystery of Easter and Pentecost.

As they contemplate the history of salvation unfolding in their own lives, they find in the gospel journey of the Founder a call to conversion, constancy in adversity, and the strength to begin anew.

145. Each Brother, regardless of his age, has a role to play in the vitality of the Institute. The fidelity of the Brothers is achieved by their daily response to different situations, by getting to know more fully persons and the milieu in which they live and work, and by their determination to find new strength in frequent prayer.

146. The spiritual gifts which the Church has received in St. John Baptist de La Salle go far beyond the confines of the Institute which he founded.

The Institute sees the existence of the various Lasallian movements as a grace from God renewing its own vitality. The Institute can associate with itself lay people who want to lead the life of perfection that the Gospel demands, by living according to the spirit of the Institute and by participating in its mission.

The Institute helps them achieve their proper autonomy. At the same time it creates appropriate ties with them and evaluates the authenticity of their

Lasallian character.

RC ch. 16
D 6-7
PC 2
Can. 662

147. The Rule defines the meaning of the Brothers' life. It translates into modern terms and reaffirms what St. John Baptist de La Salle intended in his Rule. By their religious profession the Brothers undertake to observe it joyfully, as a personal response by which they continually renew the gift of themselves.

The Brothers make a serious effort to understand the deeper meaning of their Rule. They study it and meditate on it in order to grasp its richness and its spirit, which they can make practical in their daily lives. They are convinced that when they are faithful to the Rule, they are following Jesus Christ and serving him.

148. The Brothers' involvement in the pastoral ministry of vocations is a sign of vitality and a gage of the future of the Institute.

D 5-7
D 53

149. The Brothers bear witness to their love for St. John Baptist de La Salle as their Founder. They imitate him in his abandonment to God, his loyalty to the Church, his creative apostolic spirit, and his definitive commitment to the evangelisation of young people.

The life of an Institute is a continual challenge to be creative while remaining faithful to its origins. It can sometimes call for difficult commitments, as John

art. 149 - THE VITALITY OF THE INSTITUTE

Baptist de La Salle discovered at various points in his life. Today, as in the past, he challenges the Brothers, not only as the one who established the Institute but as the Founder who continues to inspire and to sustain it.

Filled with the spirit which he left them as their legacy, the Brothers grow in the living tradition of the Institute. In communion with those who have gone before them they continue to respond with ardent zeal to the appeals of the Lord, the Church and the world, in order to procure the glory of God.

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