

***STATUTE***  
***for the Aggregated Institute***  
***of "Our Lady of the Annunciation "***

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## Presentation

It is with real joy that, to all the Sisters of the "Our Lady of the Annunciation" Institute, aggregated to the Society of St. Paul, I present the Statute in the new version definitively approved by the "Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life" on March 30, 1990

You are to some extent aware of the reasons which suggested the preparation of this new edition of the Statute: a) the need to bring it into line with the Code of Canon Law promulgated by order of John Paul II in 1983 which had made many changes in the legislation concerning life consecrated through the profession of the evangelical counsels;

b) the widespread desire that the juridical norms should be enriched by a greater number of charismatic and spiritual elements on the lines of what had been done for the Constitutions of the Religious Congregations in the Pauline Family. A first draft was made available to the Superiors of the Circumscriptions in which there are Pauline Institutes and they were invited to examine it themselves, have it examined by the members and make suggestions for eventual corrections. Many suggestions were made to the Central Office. There were carefully weighed by the Statute editorial board



and were accepted to the extent that they helped to improve its form or enrich its content. In this sense it is right to say that the present edition is the fruit of collegial work.

Now it is being placed in your hands. It is my pleasure to quote here the words of the Founder addressed to a group of Annunciationists as he gave them the first Statute: approval "means that the rules, indeed every article of the rules is approved, and is acknowledged to be good, holy and capable of leading to holiness. Approval means that the ' highest authority of the Church, the Pope, acknowledges its spirit, blesses it and exhorts people to enter the Institute. Finally, approval means that whoever observes those rules well can become a saint, is in a state of perfection. And it means additionally that-the Institute is in line with the needs of today. Thus there is the maximum guarantee that its spirit pleases the Church" (MCS pp 257 - 258).

The Statute traces out a path and at the same time guarantees that the path leads to the accomplishment of the will of God ' which is sanctity. It is now your duty to accept it and to make it a reality in your daily life.

Every time we find ourselves dealing with a list of norms we run the risk of taking a legalistic stance, meaning that we limit ourselves to formal

observance. It is necessary to remember that when a rule determines a certain behavior, in the majority of cases it is proposing a far higher objective than whatever may be expressed in the letter of the rule. So we need to be able to discern this objective and make it our business to reach it. Only in this way can it be said that the Statute is truly being made a reality and is being used to the full extent of its riches. This requires that we do not limit ourselves to reading it but that we make it a subject of individual and group meditation.

In the nature of things, a Statute is short and to the point. In spite of all efforts to enrich the current edition with spiritual and charismatic elements, it was not possible to say everything. To understand fully the reality of your vocation as consecrated laity in the Pauline Family you need to complete the content of the Statute with an increasingly deepened knowledge of the writings and the thoughts of the Founder. Only in this way will you be in a position to discover the beauty and the richness of your vocation and to live it with all its requirements.

This is what, with all my heart, I desire for the Institute and for each of its members.

Rev. Renato Perino, Superior General Rome, the Solemnity of SS Peter and Paul, 1990

***Congregation/or the Institutes  
of Consecrated Life and the Societies  
of Apostolic Life***  
**Prot. n. A. 77 -1/89 DECREE**

The Procurator General of the Pious Society of St. Paul, having consulted with the members of the "Jesus Priest," "St. Gabriel the Archangel" and the "Annunciation of Mary Most Holy" Institutes which are aggregated to the Society, at the request of the Superior General asked that the new edition of the Statutes of the above named Institutes be approved.

The Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, having examined what had been presented to them and carefully weighed all relevant matters, approves and confirms the Statute according to the Italian language version conserved in its archives, and as may be otherwise required. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding. Dated at Rome, March 30, 1990

+ Vicentius Fagiolo  
*Secretary* + Jesus  
Torres *Subsecretary*

## Chapter One

### Nature and Purpose

*"To confer on everyone the maximum good. To help everyone with prayer, advice, -word, ministry and example "*

*"I resolved not to miss any opportunity offered me by the Lord for the practice of charity. "(UPS III, 60)*

1. The Institute "Our Lady of the Annunciation" for lay women, is a work of the Society of St. Paul and is aggregated to it. It's characteristic is "secularity" (cf. CDC 312,2; 303; 611,2) "inasmuch as the members profess the evangelical perfection in the world and carry out their apostolate by operating efficaciously in the midst of earthly realities." (Lt 1067)

2. "Following the Holy Spirit's impulse," (PC

1) the members of the Institute

- to imitate more closely the form of life which the Son of God embraced when he came to the world to do the



will of his Father and which he proposed to the disciples who followed him"; (LG 44)

- to "do the apostolate 'efficaciously everywhere'"; (PC 11; cf. CISP 1298) and
- to obtain "the fruits of the Spirit" (cf Gal 5:22) and "to tend to the perfection of charity", (CDC 573,1)

profess, by means of vows recognized by the Church, (cf. CDC 207,1) the Evangelical Counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience, orienting their life according to this *Statute*.

2.1 The Institutes started in 1958 through the work of Fr. James Alberione and were approved by the Holy See on April 8, 1960. Under his guidance they gradually assumed their actual makeup which has them associated to the evangelizing work of the Society of St. Paul. The Institutes are open to the fastest and efficacious means which human intelligence discovers for the greater good of the people and

this is with a view of using them for apostolic purpose.

2.2 The Society of St. Paul is the "altrice" Congregation (the source of spiritual guidance) (cf. AD 35) of the Pauline Family which is composed of:

- Society of St. Paul
- Daughters of St. Paul
- Pious Disciples of the Divine Master
- Sisters of Jesus Good Shepherd
- Queen of Apostles Sisters (Apostoline)
- Aggregated Institutes: Jesus Priest, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Our Lady of the Annunciation, and the Holy Family
- Association of Pauline Cooperators

3. In their secular situation and in the context of their social commitments, (cf. CISP 1298) Institute members devote themselves, "for an efficacious evangelization" (EN 69) to the spread of the message of salvation principally through the

apostolate and the spirit of the Society of St. Paul and of the Pauline Family, thus bringing to bear on many and various sectors the action and influence of its specific mission.

4. Members of the Institute "should develop all their Christian and evangelical abilities" (EN 70) "so that the divine message of salvation may become known and accepted by all mankind." (AA 3)

5. The Institute has as its "patrons" Jesus the Divine Master, St. Paul the Apostle and Mary of the Annunciation, (cf. CISP 575; 611 and Lk 2:52)

## Chapter Two

### Spiritual Life

*"The Pauline Family has one spirituality: to live the Gospel and its entirety; to live in the Divine Master -who is Way, Truth and Life: to live him as his disciple, St. Paul, understood him "* (UPS III, 187)

6. Through the profession of the Evangelical Counsels "with which Christ is unbreakably united to the Church", (LG 44) the Institute members intend to "respond in an increasingly ardent way to the love of God", (SP 27) actualizing in their life St. Paul's ideal: "For me to live is Christ." (Gal 2:20)

6.1 "So as to communicate to mankind the fullness of the mystery of Christ, the Institute members live and work in the whole Christ (Master, Way, Truth, and Life) as St. Paul lived, and with the attitude of the Virgin, Queen of the Apostles. Through the Word and the Eucharist they are nourished in Him, and in Him their prayer, study, apostolate and consecration find

unity, producing a total living synthesis in love."  
(cf. Doc. Cap. 382)

6.2 This "Christocentric vision of St. Paul reflects the spiritual orientation of the Founder", (cf. CSSP 9) who sees in Christ the Master, Way, Truth, and Life, the One who "is the answer to all the yearnings of the human spirit, and even beyond them." (cf. AG 13) "Devotion to Jesus Master leads to perfect worship of God and the more the Pauline lives it the more he resembles Jesus Christ, the Divine Exemplar." (UPS II, 150)

7. To actualize this reality in their life, the members will first of all take care of their prayer life which is "a simple, easy and obligatory means suited to all." (MRA 58) They will draw from the source of Christian. spirituality: the Word of God, "the supreme rule of the Church's faith" (DV 21) and the Liturgy which "strengthens their powers to preach Christ." (SC 2)

7.1 For this reason everyday they will:

- take part in the *eucharistic celebration*, the sacrifice of Christ and of the Church, of him who is the head and of us who are his people and are made a "living offering" and "one acceptable to the Father" (EC 12) and "the sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord respecting the full dimension of the divine mystery in which Christ, really present, is received, the soul is filled with graces and a pledge of future glory is given." (RH 20)
- devote part of their time to *eucharistic adoration*, becoming more aware in contemplation of the "mystery of Christ of whom they are messengers and witnesses." (AG 26) "Daily eucharistic adoration is a living lymph which influences everything and communicates the Spirit even to the most ordinary things"; (UPS, II, -110)
- pray the *Liturgy of the Hours*, especially Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, "so as to sanctify the entire course of the day"; (SC 83)
- give time to *meditation*, "a most useful means for one's salvation and

necessary for sanctification." (UPS, II, 57) They will especially concentrate on the "mystery of Christ" celebrated in the Liturgy and on the *Bible*, (SC 102) particularly the Gospel so as to learn the secrets of God and taste the Master's word of life; (Jn 1:18; 6:68)

- entrust themselves to *Mary*, Queen of Apostles and Mother of the Church through the *Holy Rosary*, which "the Roman Pontiffs do not cease to recommend as a sort of compendium of the Gospel and thus as a form of piety proper to the Church." (EI 91) "We owe to Mary enlightened and unlimited trust and love, the most cordial, expansive and tender devotion, the most common and constant practice: the *Rosary* and the *Angelus*"; (DFC 264)
- not neglect a *personal verification* or 'examination of conscience, "the soul's watch," which "must be preceded by prayer, followed by sorrow, resolution, and penance, a kind of confession of the soul to the Lord." (DFC 82, 84)

8. To experience the mystery of the Lord in themselves, (Lk 15) the members shall frequently approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

8.1 “This frequent celebration is very useful:

- to remit the venial sins which, although they do not break the communion of love with God with one's brothers and sisters, because they are not in formal opposition to God, nevertheless they involve some disordered affection against God;
- to continue one's journey of conversion;
- to eradicate the roots of sin and rectify one's disordered inclinations;
- to perfect and increase the life received in Baptism;
- to conform ourselves more intensely to Christ, constantly bearing Christ's mortification in our body, so that his life may become increasingly visible in us;
- to listen more attentively to the voice of the Spirit and follow His guidance more diligently and faithfully with the



help of the priest who takes the place of Christ, the pastor, master, and spiritual doctor;

- to serve more constantly and only for love of God and our brothers and sisters" (RP 37) and lastly,
- to receive the help of a salutary spiritual direction. (OT 8)

9. *Every month* they will take part with eagerness to a *Recollection Day* organized by the Institute, with a spiritual and formative character. They will also send to the Provincial Delegate a *Report* on how their life in the Institute is going. (MCS 38) *Every year* they shall live intensely the period of Spiritual Exercises, considered as a true gift of the Lord, (Mk 6:31) to obtain "the fruits of purification and of total orientation of their life in Christ."(UPS, I, 185)

## Chapter Three

### Profession of the Evangelical Counsels

*"Let us be upright in our thoughts, heart, and life . . . delicacy of conscience, spiritual sensitivity, rectitude before God and people.... Holiness is and always consists in living Jesus Christ as he is prescribed in the Gospel: Way, Truth, and Life" (CISP 264)*

10. With the public profession of the Evangelical Counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, the members become more intimately consecrated to <sup>^</sup>the service of God and of the Church"(PC 5); they are incorporated in their respective Institutes and they become subject to the juridical bonds proper to this *Statute*.

10.1 The profession of the Evangelical Counsels "makes visible for all believers the presence of heavenly goods already in this life and gives a better witness to that new and eternal life won by Christ's redemption, giving a better foretaste of the resurrection to come." (LG 44) And so it involves the person in all her potentialities, making her part of the plan of

salvation following the example of Jesus: "As I did, so you must do." (Jn 13:15)

10.2 The Evangelical Counsels, "freely chosen according to the personal vocation of each one" (LG 46), help a great deal in the growth of charity and as a means of conforming "oneself to the poor and virginal life which Christ chose for himself and which his Virgin Mother embraced." (LG 46) Inserted in the heart of Christ, the members will tend "towards justice, piety, faith and charity" ( 1Tm 6:11) and thus behave always "in a manner worthy of the Lord." (Col 1:10)

11. In professing the Evangelical Counsels the following formula shall be used:

*"I ....., for the honor of God, moved by the firm will to consecrate myself to him more intimately and to follow Christ the Master more closely, before my brothers and sisters here present and in your hands, Father, make vows (for one year, for two years, for all of my life) of chastity, poverty, and obedience according to the Statute of the Institute of Our Lady of the Annunciation. To this Institute I offer myself with all my heart, so that with*

*the grace of the Holy Spirit and through the intercession of the Virgin Mary and of St. Paul the Apostle, I may be able to attain perfect charity in the service of God and of the Church.”*

## **Chastity**

*"Virginity is a great virtue, chosen with heaven in view and so as to attend more freely to heavenly things. The heart of the person consecrated to God does not live in solitude, but rather lives in an immensely superior love, comforted by greater communications with God" (UPS I, 489, 491).*

12. Institute members profess the Evangelical Counsel of chastity which, "accepted as a notable gift of grace"(PC 12) makes "the heart free in a special way," (PC 12) and "implies the obligation of perfect continence in celibacy." (CDC 599)

12.1 Consecrated chastity lived in view of the "Kingdom"

- is a symbol of the love with which Christ loves his Church (Rev 21:9);
- is a gift of the Spirit (Mt 19:11);

- expresses a preferential love for the Lord (Mk 10:30);
- transforms and penetrates the human being in the most intimate way (1 Cor 7:34);
- makes one like the Divine Master and his Virgin Mother (Rm 1:3; Lk 1:27);
- is a sign of true charity and a stimulus to it (Jn 1:39);
- is a special "source of spiritual fecundity in the world." (LG 42)

12.2 St. Paul, the "father, master, exemplar and founder" (AD 2) of the Pauline Family invites members to be "his imitators" (1 Cor 4:16) in a chaste life so as to generate "through the spread of the Gospel" (Phil 4:9; 1 Cor 4:14) new members of the Church.

13. Members will be aware of their personal fragility and will maintain an attitude of serene vigilance in their relations with others, building up from nature and from grace a healthy personal equilibrium.

13.1 For this purpose, each member:

- will in faith, nourish herself with the Eucharist, desirous "that God may act in her to enable her to reach in the Spirit the full maturity of Christ." (DC 7; cf. Jn 6:63)
- will cultivate a filial devotion to Mary in whom she will "find joyous exuberance, most pure and fertile consolation, which will recompense her abundantly for whatever she has left behind." (MRA 228)
- will live in an atmosphere of healthy friendship modeling her life on the life of the Divine Master, who loved everyone to win them to the love of his Father. (PC 12; cf. Mt 4:23)
- will avoid dangers and especially those caused by the mass media (IM 2); she will not count on "her personal strength" (PC 2), keeping in mind the words of the Apostle: "Let everyone who thinks he is standing upright, watch out lest he fall." (1 Cor 10:12)
- will practice a serene personal asceticism: "If one wishes to come after me, one must deny one's very self, take up one's cross, and follow in my steps." (Mk 8:34)

14. Members should remember that with consecrated chastity "they do not give the Lord only the fruit but the tree as well; the person who gives her heart to Jesus only will *have perfect charity and this means perfect chastity*" (Fr. Alberione. cf. Doc. Chap. 419)

### **Poverty**

*"The first Beatitude taught us is poverty: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit because theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' If it is the first step toward sanctity, the person who does not take it or who climbs down, is in practice renouncing perfection. "(UPS I, 45}}*

15. Consecrated poverty expresses a sharing in Jesus, the Divine Master's lifestyle, he who "being rich made himself poor so as to enrich us by his poverty," (2 Cor 8:9) and it opens the disciple's heart to supernatural realities. (Mt 6:25)

16. Professing the Evangelical Counsel of poverty, members renounce their right to *use and freely to dispose* (CDC 600) of any personal goods on which a price can be put without the permission of their *lawful* Superior.

17. Although they profess consecrated poverty, members *do not renounce their right to possess temporal goods nor the power to acquire other goods*, although in this latter case they are subject to the permission of their lawful Superior.

18. To ensure perfect conformity in everything to the Evangelical Counsel of poverty, every member binds herself:

- to present at the beginning of each year a budget of foreseeable annual expenses together with the readiness to accept modifications which may be suggested;
- to submit at the end of the year a *balance sheet* of the actual expenses



- with an explanation of any excess over budget;
- to ask the permission of the lawful Superior for foreseeable extraordinary expenses, or to give an account of the latter if this is impossible to do first. It should be carefully noted that this statement has to do only with goods used personally by members; and so all other goods of which members are simply administrators because of ministry or official duties, are ruled out. (cf. CISP 1314)

19. Members should contribute by offerings to the needs of the Institute and should not demand any sort of reimbursement or restitution whatsoever for what they have previously given should they cease to belong to the Institute.

20. Meditating on the life of Jesus, the Divine Master, who "did not have anywhere to lay his head" (Mt 8:20) and on his words:

"Blessed are you poor, because yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk 6:20) and on the example of St. Paul who provided for his needs by his personal work, (Ac 20:34) members will highly esteem poverty and so:

- they will cultivate a simple and sober lifestyle, leaving aside consumerism and adorning themselves with good works.(SRS 28) "The person who deprives himself, becomes rich in grace, in merits, in peace and in glory. Holiness is easier in poverty." (UPS I, 452; cf. 1Tm2:10)
- they will commit themselves through work (cf. AD 128) to exploit their gifts of nature and grace received from God, (cf. 1Tm 6:18) recalling that "we must 'sow\* and 'reap' and if we fail to do this then even what we have will be taken from us" (SRS 30);
- they will be alert to the needs of the poor (Mt 10:42) and in particular of those who do not yet know the

Gospel (Mk 8:2) so as to give a *common witness* ... to the dignity of human beings created by God, redeemed by Christ, sanctified by the Spirit and called in this life to lead a life in conformity with this dignity." (SRS 47)

### **Obedience**

*"Obedience is certainly the way of peace, of merit, of grace, of God's blessings in the apostolate. God blesses only what is in conformity with his will" (UPS I, 521-522).*

21. By the profession of consecrated obedience, members "offer to God the total gift of their will as a personal sacrifice and through this sacrifice they unite themselves to the saving will of God in a more certain and constant way." (PC 14)

22. Obedience as expressed by the Evangelical Counsel professed in the Institute has as its goal the imitation of the

life of Jesus, who, "assuming the condition of a slave" (Ph 2:7) came among people to teach them to do the will of his Father (cf. Jn 4:34) so as to become his adopted children. (Eph 1:5) "Without love, submission is an odorless flower." (UPS I, 526)

23. The profession of the Evangelical Counsel of obedience "obliges members to submit their wills to the lawful Superior because he represents God and when he *commands in conformity -with the Statute.* (PC 14; CDC 601)

24. To make a reality of consecrated obedience and to become "chosen instruments" (Ac 9:15) in the Father's hands while bringing to all His saving plan, members:

- will have a filial devotion toward the Pope "so as more directly to derive (from him) doctrine, spirit and apostolic activity" (cf AD 115); "we

also give this obedience the strength of a vow." (CDC 590,2)

- they will endeavor to obey their lawful Superiors, "being aware that they are (thus) making their contribution to the building up of the body of Christ according to the plan of God" (PC 14);
- they will respect the dispositions of those who exercise the service of authority in the natural, civil and ecclesiastical fields having the correct attitude toward them. "Do not be hypocritical but have an open heart and clear conduct." (Fr. Alberione, cf. Doc. Cap. 473)

25. "To enable the personality of the one consecrated to reach its full development" (PC 14), obedience requires that she live in a dimension of profound interior liberty (GS 17), free of any form of Pharisaic behavior (cf. Mt 23:13) and of superficial judgment

(cf. Lk 6:41-42) and always open to life's needs according to the Spirit, (cf. Gal 5:16ft)

26. To live in an atmosphere of obedience an excellent plan is to "prepare and submit for the approval of the lawful superior a rule of life adapted to the needs of one's state" (Fr. Alberione). This can be done during the Annual Retreat.

## Chapter Four

### Apostolate

*"Apostolate is the/flower of true love of God and of souls; it is the fruit of an intense interior life. It requires a burning heart which is unable to contain or suppress its interior fire. The apostolate makes us God's loudspeakers" (CISP 800, 809).*

27. Apostolate is essential for the members of the Institute. "(It has to be) an apostolate faithfully exercised not merely in the world but with *worldly means*, using one's profession, activity, talents, workplaces and circumstances corresponding to secular conditions ... and it also calls for new and daring efforts although always in the spirit of the Church and according to her norms" (CISP 1298) and in any case keeping particularly in mind the use of technical methods and organizations for apostolic ends. (cf. AD 20, 54)

Members must always remember that, "while they carry out the apostolate by their action for the evangelization and

sanctification of people" (AA 2) they should join it to their own personal sanctity in the sense that "whoever becomes personally holy contributes to the holiness of the entire Church." (CISP 580)

Because by a particular gift of God they are associated to the Society of St. Paul (Doc. Cap 65 c), members must never forget that their apostolate is true *preaching* (Doc. Cap. 136), that is, "a saving action because it *produces* faith which is the essential basis of the supernatural order, without which it is impossible to please God." (Doc. cap 137; cf.Heb11:6)

28. Apostolate must be carried out:

1. Using all the most efficacious means and in the first place:

- prayer — "the soul of the apostolate" (UPS I, 22)
- sacrifice — "fundamental law of apostolic life" (GD 3)



- good example — "a silent sermon which takes its origin from life and goes on to reform life." (CISP 580)
2. Those who have talents and opportunities should not refuse positions of importance and responsibility: "Everything for the apostolate: nature, grace and vocation." (AD 100)
  3. While carrying out the apostolate members must carefully keep in mind the directives, spirit and methods of the Pauline Family whose purpose is the salvation of souls." (CISP 137)
  4. In their parishes however possible:
    - set up distribution centers (media centers) for books, compact discs, cassettes, videocassettes, movies and other means originated by technical progress;
    - erect radio or TV stations for apostolic purposes;

- bring to the notice of others those radio and TV programs which confer a real spiritual and social advantage; and also which should be avoided (IM 14);
  - in particular take care to celebrate the annual World i/'ay of Social Communications during which "people ought to be instructed on their duties in this sector, invited to pray for this intention and to give for this same purpose offerings which will be scrupulously dedicated to supporting and augmenting the institutions and initiatives promoted by the Church." (IM 18)
5. In every possible way they should promote
- the distribution of Sacred Scripture, "the mirror in

which the pilgrim Church on earth contemplates God" (DV 7), so that all may find in it "firmness of faith, food for the soul and the pure and perennial source of spiritual life" (DV 22);

- diligent reading of the Holy Gospel in families so that "helped and reinforced in their sublime mission" (GS 48) they may be "saved for eternity and also blessed on earth" (MCS 393);
- active participation in the Liturgy, the "summit and source" (SC 10) of Christian life;
- systematic study of the Catechism "which is not to be neglected in evangelization" (EN44);
- the recital of the Holy Rosary in families so that everyone,

"meditating on the meaning Mary has in the mystery of Christ and on her active and exemplary presence in Church Life" (RM 1) may accept the "fullness of saving reality which is the Christ." (Det V 64)

6. "Born of the Host" (cf. AD 15, 19) they should particularly dedicate their spirit and activity to the Most Holy Eucharist, "the heart of life and of apostolate" (Fr. Alberione), "the sacrament of love, the sign of unity and the bond of charity." (SC 47) They should do this, too, to supplicate the Divine Master to "send more workers to his harvests." (Mt 9:38) For this purpose they should promote in their parishes active participation in Holy Mass, Eucharistic Days and community Hours of Adoration for young people because "the call to the way of the

evangelical counsels is born of the  
*interior encounter with the love* of Christ,  
who is redemptive love." (RD 3)

29. Members should remember that "vocation,  
as a manifestation of the unsearchable riches of  
Christ, (cf. Eph 3:8) must be highly esteemed by  
the Church," (RF 5) and so it is a true apostolate  
to make the Institute known that others may  
consecrate themselves to God in it. "•Giving  
vocations to the Church means that we really love  
her." (CISP 590)

30. Because "the Pauline Family aspires to live  
integrally the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Way, Truth,  
and Life in the spirit of St. Paul and under the  
gaze of the Queen of Apostles," (AD 93) and  
because it makes this ideal the reason for its  
apostolate which makes it part "of the very core  
of ecclesial life in our time," (Doc. Cap. 84)  
Institute members should commit themselves to

cooperate with it so that Christ may live in every person according to the spirit of St. Paul. (cf. AD 95)

## Chapter Five

### Stages of Formation

*"To discover the will of God is simple and complicated, bright and dark, painful and pleasant, natural and wonderful at the same time according to circumstances. And so we must not be simplistic, but neither should we get involved in exasperating and tormenting uncertainty. Rather we have to be prudent, to examine ourselves, to pray and seek advice and then make a decision in faith. " (UPS I, 115)*

31. The development and stability of the Institutes depend greatly on a careful selection of candidates and so a period of postulancy is useful. Such a period shall be of six months at least.

32. Potential members of:

- "Our Lady of the Annunciation" are Catholics able to carry out Institute work, having a right intention and a sincere desire to attain perfect charity by following the practice of the Evangelical Counsels and

permanently dedicating their life to the apostolate. (cf. CISP 1298)

***Conditions/or Institute Membership***

33. To be Institute members the following are required:

1. a divine vocation.
2. freedom from constitutional disease and physical defects which could hinder the carrying out of the Institute obligations.
3. paid employment and sufficient income to ensure enough to live, including provision for sickness and old age.
4. time and freedom to dedicate oneself to Institute works.
5. completion of the Novitiate period.

34. The following are *invalidly* admitted to Novitiate:



1. those not between the prescribed ages 18-35.
2. those bound by marriage bond.
3. those currently bound by a sacred bond to some Institute of consecrated life or incorporated in a Society of apostolic life. (cf. CDC 643,1,3)
4. those who have concealed their incorporation in an Institute of consecrated life or in a Society of apostolic life. (cf. CEDC 643,5)
5. those who risk being condemned because of some serious crime of which they have been accused or might be accused, (cf. CDC 1321 & 1718)

3 5. Dispensation from the impediments in Article 34 (nos. 1, 4 & 5) may be granted by the Superior General of the Society of St. Paul, while the dispensation for Article 34 (nos. 2 & 3) is reserved to the Holy See.

## *Novitiate*

36. Institute life begins with the Novitiate (cf. CDC 646) whose purpose is to ensure that the novices

- become aware of their divine vocation.
- get accustomed to the Institute lifestyle and its special apostolate.
- are examined in regards to their suitability and real intentions.

37. The one responsible for the formation of the novices is the Provincial Delegate. He can be aided by a member of the group who is distinguished for prudence, charity, and piety, so as to carry out worthily her delicate educative mission.

38. With the candidates' petition on hand, admission to the Novitiate is reserved to the Provincial Superior of the Society of St. Paul where the Institute is located or to

the Provincial Delegate who has received the faculty for it.

39. The time of Novitiate is calculated from the moment the novices are registered in the *Novitiate Register* and it lasts for two years. For special reasons it may be prolonged by the Provincial Delegate but not for more than one year.

40. The Novitiate is invalidated (it must be started all over again) when the novice:

1. is dismissed by the lawful superior.
2. has left on her own accord.
3. has, without proper reason, broken off relations with the Institute.
4. has for more than three months and without justification neglected novitiate obligations. However, for a just cause the Provincial Delegate may grant a dispensation from the interruption.

41. On her entrance to the Novitiate and after a course of Spiritual Exercises promoted by the Institute, the novice will receive a copy of the *Statutes*, so that, having carefully examined it, she can see if she is in the will of God.

42. During the novitiate the novice

1. every day

- will take part in the *eucharistic celebration*
- will *meditate* on the Word of God and on the Founder's writings.
- will pray the *Liturgy of the Hours* (especially Morning and Evening Prayer) and the *Holy Rosary*.
- will make the *Visit* to the Blessed Sacrament.
- will make an *examination of conscience* to better understand herself and her relationship with God.

2. during the month

- will receive at least twice the *Sacrament of Reconciliation*;
- will study more deeply the documents of the Magisterium;
- will take part in the *Day of Recollection* as a group, allowing time for study;
- will submit to the Provincial Delegate a Report on how his formative journey is going.

43. Novices considered qualified by the Provincial Delegate with his Council will be admitted at the end of the Novitiate by the Provincial Superior to the Temporary Profession of the Evangelical Counsels. They must first write a Letter of Petition and take part in a course of Spiritual Exercises promoted for this purpose by the Institute. However, before profession, novices having their own patrimony must declare in writing

how they intend such patrimony to be used. (cf CDC 668,1)

***Temporary Profession of the  
Evangelical Counsels***

44. For the first three years the Evangelical Counsels are professed annually, then they are made for a two-year period at the end of which they may be made perpetual.

1. For particular reasons the Superior General of the Society of St. Paul may prolong the period of Temporary Profession for another two years.

45. Members who have made temporary profession of the Evangelical Counsels are free to renew their profession or not. If they do not desire to renew them they should convey this in writing to the Provincial Delegate at least two months before their commitment is due to expire.

46. For just reasons they may not be admitted to the renewal of the Evangelical Counsels by the Provincial Superior (cf. art. 59) or to perpetual profession by the Superior General, (cf. art. 54)

## Chapter Six

### Departures and Dismissals

*"We cannot stand by idly. Sometimes ruin can be foreseen and sometimes ~we may be partly responsible for it. . . . Defenses are removed, evil is quietly introduced and one goes to the edge of the cliff. . . . And one ends up by falling into the very thing that one appeared to detest" (UPS, IV 33-34).*

47. An Institute member is *automatically* dismissed:

1. if she has openly abandoned the Catholic faith.
2. if she has contracted matrimony or attempted even a civil marriage, (cf. CDC694)
3. if she has taken no part in Institute life for two consecutive years (apart from health reasons) and has given no justification whatsoever for this to the lawful Superior.

In these cases, when proofs have been assembled, the Superior General of the



Society of St. Paul will make a declaration of the fact so that their dismissal may be juridically established.

48. Apart from the causes envisaged in Article 47 of this *Statute* a member may be dismissed by the lawful Institute superior for these other causes as long as they are *grave, external, imputable* and *juridically proven*:

1. habitual negligence in attending to the obligations of one's consecration.
2. repeated violations of the sacred bonds contracted with the profession of the Evangelical Counsels.
3. obstinate disobedience of the lawful dispositions of superiors in grave matters.
4. a grave scandal arising from culpable behavior.
5. obstinacy in supporting or promoting teachings condemned by the Magisterium.

6. public allegiance to ideologies tainted by materialism or atheism, (cf. CDC 696)

49. In addition, a member must be dismissed when:

1. she commits murder.
2. she kidnaps or seizes another person with violence or fraud or seriously injures that person.
3. procures an abortion and obtains the effect: in this case she also incurs the *latae sententiae* excommunication.

50. Before being dismissed, the member has a right to give her point of view which will be attentively examined before decree of dismissal is pronounced.

51. The competent authority for the dismissal of a member in temporary or in perpetual vows is the Superior General of the Society of St. Paul and he has also the

faculty of granting to members "the Indult to leave the Institute." (cf. CDC 688,2)

1. Once the Indult to leave the Institute has been lawfully granted and notified to the member this by right implies dispensation from the vows as also from all the obligations deriving from profession unless the member has refused to allow herself to be notified, (cf. CDC 692)

## Chapter Seven

### Government and Administration

*"Governing is an exercise of charity. Love the Lord and be his representative in your paternal solicitude.... Love the Institute members as you direct them to holiness and to the works of the apostolate. (UPS HI, 241)*

#### **General Government**

52. The Superior General of the Society of St. Paul is also the Superior General of the Institute "Our Lady of the Annunciation."

1. The Vicar General of the Society of St. Paul is also the Vicar General of the abovementioned Institute.
2. The Institute follows the territorial divisions of the Society of St. Paul.

53. The Major Superiors of the Society of St. Paul, "all other things being equal", are also Major Superiors in their Provinces of the abovementioned Institute and with the powers listed in this *Statute*.

54. The Superior General has the faculty of governing the Institutes and especially:

1. of nominating the Delegate General. (art. 55)
2. of nominating the Provincial Delegate, (art. 60)
3. of admitting Institute members to perpetual profession or of prolonging their time of temporary profession. (art.44,1)
4. of dispensing from impediments, (cf. art 34, 1, 4 & 5)
5. of dismissing a professed member. (cf. art. 47, 48, 49)
6. of granting an Indult to leave the Institute.(art. 51, 1)

55. The Superior General may exercise his ordinary power over the Institutes through a Delegate General, a priest of the Society of St. Paul.

56. The Delegate General will present to the Superior General each year a detailed

report on the progress and state of the Institute.

57. The Delegate General will see to it that this *Statute* is observed, that the members receive a spiritual formation and that the apostolate makes progress.

58. The Delegate General will especially
1. in agreement with the Superior General, make decisions concerning initiatives of general character.
  2. check to see if directives given have been observed.
  3. study the /timeliness of setting up new provincial groups.
  4. pay a visit to the Provinces where the Institutes exist.

### ***Provincial Government***

59. The Provincial Superior has the faculty to:

1. admit candidates to the Novitiate. (art. 38)
2. admit to Temporary profession of the Evangelical Counsels the members of the above-mentioned Institute after having heard the judgment of the Provincial Delegate with his Council.
3. dismiss a novice for just cause (art. 40,1).

Before making any decision the Provincial Superior will attentively hear the Provincial Delegate with his Council and the individual in question.

60. On the suggestion of the Provincial Superior and following consultation with the Institute members, the Superior General will appoint a Provincial Delegate for the Institute (cf. art. 54, 2). He will be a priest of the Society of St. Paul and will remain in office for six years with possibility of being renewed.

61. The Provincial Delegate:
  1. will direct the Provincial Institute: with its groups, (cf. art 63)
  2. will promote the observance of this *Statute*.
  3. will be present at the annual Spiritual Exercises (art. 9) to promote the ascetical, spiritual, intellectual and apostolic progress of the members.
  4. will visit the groups at least once a year, to encourage vocational animation and to see to the formation of no vices.
  5. will appoint the Coordinator and Vice-coordinator of the group, (cf. art. 63,1)
  6. will appoint the Coordinator for a zone or area. (cf. art. 63,2)
  7. will send the Superior General and the Provincial Superior an annual report on the progress of the Institute.



62. The Provincial Council of the Institute, consisting of a maximum of six professed members in perpetual vows (or less in proportion to the number of members of the Province), is appointed by the Provincial Delegate with the consent of the out-going Institute Provincial Council and following written consultation with members. The Institute Provincial Council, with a duration of six years, assists the Provincial Delegate in carrying out his duties. In particular, it

1. weighs the qualifications of the candidates for the Institute life and appoints, in agreement with the Provincial Delegate, the Group Coordinator (cf. art. 63,1), the Group Vice-coordinator (cf. art. 63,2) and the zone coordinator.
2. examines the Institute's financial state.
3. proposes to the Superior General extraordinary expenses of the Institute, (cf. art. 67,1)

4. examines particular cases referred in articles 47, 48 and 49.
5. studies solutions to members' special needs.

63. Institute members are constituted in groups each of which is guided by a Coordinator assisted by a Vice-coordinator, both in perpetual vows.

1. These two are appointed to their office by the Provincial Delegate with consent of his Council after having first consulted group members in writing. They remain in office for five years, (cf. art. 61,5)
2. The Group Coordinator in collaboration with the Vice-coordinator promotes the consecrated life of the members of the group, by helping them realize their mission. For that purpose, they should have reciprocal trust, cultivate mutual collaboration and have an adequate formation so that everyone

may live in conformity with this *Statute*.

3. More groups are coordinated by a member in perpetual vows. As zone coordinator, one is nominated by the Provincial Delegate with the consent of his Council, having first consulted the members in writing. One remains in office for five years, (cf art 61,6)

64. The Institute may possess personal property or its own real estate with the object of using them for apostolic goals, but always with respect to Civil Law in the place where the Institute operates, (cf. CDC 1500)

65. In the Province, the Provincial Delegate is the legal representative of the Institute, if the latter is recognized by the competent civil authority and he can execute all the acts of ordinary administration.

66. Competent to decide for acts of extraordinary administration is only the

Superior General of the Society of St. Paul, to whom the Provincial Delegate, with the consent of his Council, submits the proposals.

67. To carry out acts of extraordinary administration the Provincial Delegate, besides having the consent of the Institute Provincial Council, must also have,

1. the Superior General's authorization.
2. the permission of the Holy See for those acts for which such permission is required, (cf. CDC 63 8,3)

68. When an Institute member dies the Provincial Delegate will hasten to inform the Province members, so that they can offer suffrages, and in particular:

1. in each group a Holy Mass shall be celebrated as a suffrage for the deceased member.
2. as soon as they receive the news of the member's death, members of all groups will take part in a eucharistic

celebration and will pray to the Virgin of Suffrage with the Holy Rosary.

3. the Provincial Delegate will arrange for the celebration of Gregorian Masses as soon as possible.

69. Mindful of the words of the Divine Master "He who does the will of God is my brother, sister, and mother," (Mk 3:35) the members should live joyfully their divine vocation codified in this *Statute*. Therefore, they should observe with generous fidelity what is said in this *Statute* to attain the reward reserved to the faithful servants (cf. Mt 25:23) and be always with the Lord. (cf Rev. 22:5)

70. The authentic interpretation of this *Statute* is reserved to the Holy See and any change must be authorized by It. The Superior General of the Society of St. Paul can dispense from the disciplinary norms of this *Statute* with prudence and discretion and

also the Provincial Superior may do so for a just cause and for a limited time.

## ABBREVIATIONS

### Documents of the Second Vatican Council

- AA *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People)
- AG *Ad Gentes* (Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity) DV
- DV *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation)
- GS *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)
- IM *Inter Mirifica* (Decree on the Means of Social Communications).
- LG *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)
- OT *Optatam Totius* (Decree on Training of Priests)
- PC *Perfectae Charitatis* (Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life)
- SC *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy)

### Church Documents

- CDC *Code of Canon Law* (Rome, 1983)
- DC *Dominicae Cенаe*, Letter to the Church, February 24, 1980
- DetV *Dominum et Vivificantem* (Lord and Giver of Life) May 18, 1986
- EC *Eucaristia comunione e commnita* May 22, 1983
- EI *Ecclesiae Imago*, (Direttorio della Sacra Congregazione del Vescovi) February 22, 1972
- EN *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (On Evangelization in the Modern World) December 8, 1975
- GD *Gaudete in Domino* (Esortazione Apostolica, May 9, 1975)
- Lt *Al IV Congresso mondiale degli Istituti Secolari*, August 26, 1988, in *La traccia*, n. 7/8, anno IX, agosto-settembre, 1988
- RD *Redemptionis Donum*, (The Gift of Redemption) March 25, 1984
- RF *Ratio Fundamentalis I.S.* January 6, 1970
- RH *Redemptoris Hominis* (Redeemer of Man) March 4, 1979
- RM *Redemptoris Mater* (The Mother of the Redeemer) March 25, 1987
- RP *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (Reconciliation and Penance) January 25, 1983



SP *Solemms Professio Fidei* (Solemn Profession of Faith) Paul VI, June 30, 1968

SRS *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (On Social Concern) November 30, 1987

**Documents of Venerable James Alberione**

AD *Abudantes Divitiae*, Rome 1985

CISP *Carissimi in San Paolo*, Rome 1971

DFC *Donec formetur Christus in vobis*, Rome 1984

MCS *Meditazioni per consacrare secolari*, Rome 1976

MRA *Maria Regina degli Apostoli*, Rome 1954

UPS *Ut perfectus sit homo Dei*, I-IV 1960-1962

**Other Documents**

CSSP *Constitutions of the Society of St. Paul*, Rome 1983

Doc. Cap. *Chapter Documents General Special General Chapter SSP*, 1971