

**CONSTITUTIONS of the
CONGREGATION
founded by
Rev. Fr. GASPAR BERTONI
In the DIOCESE of VERONA
under the Title of which is:**

**APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES in the
SERVICE OF BISHOPS,
UNDER THE PROTECTION of the
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
ESPOUSED TO ST. JOSEPH**

[1881- 1889]

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[Sezano: October 1, 1889]

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[Special Documents]

[A.] LIST OF THE PROPOSALS
Made by the Deputed Commission

1. The observations.
2. The mater of the Schools, according to what is indicated in the Decree of Convocation ¹.
3. As for the Proposal of the Rev. Fr. Mark Bassi, regarding religious discipline, let it be reserved to the Rev. Superior and his Council, who will find in the New Constitutions ², efficacious means to provide for this, taking special and utmost care that charity and silence be observed.
4. Also, the Proposal on the financial state of the House of the Stimate, be recommended to the same Superior, and his Council, for their examination and fitting solution.
5. Proposal of the Rev. Fr. Perazzani: to see among the Decrees made by the previous General Chapter, whatever there may be contrary to the new Constitutions, and what are included by them, and what should actually be reviewed.
6. The proposal of Rev. Fr. Tabarelli: whether our Clerics, subject to the military law, ought to make the year of voluntary enlistment, in so far as this is possible for our strength.
7. Proposal of the same Fr. Tabarelli: to see if there might be introduced the Cause of Beatification of the Venerable Founder.
8. Another: Whether the Congregation would desire that the Superior begin negotiations to have a Cardinal Protector at the opportune time.
9. Proposal of the Rev. Fr. Paul: That our Student House have its own Director ³.
10. Proposal of the rev. Fr. L. Gasperotti: Whether to each Priest there might be granted three free Masses a year.
11. Another: when it is a question of real need of one's family, could it be established that there be allowed a Priest to have the alms of his masses, for one or more months...?
12. The matter of the requests of the dispensation from the Vows, and the dismissal of Fr. Cavinato, and ...⁴
13. The resignation of the Very Rev. Superior.

Modification of the Grade ⁵

There is proposed the following - for Chapter IV, Part IV. Chapter Title: "Concerning the Promotion to the Priestly Office" [only]

Then: n. 4: to be omitted ⁶.

¹ The Schools remained a desire for so many of the Confreres, all these years.

² Readied now after so many previous **General Chapters** had discussed these.

³ Fr. "Gradinati", perhaps.

⁴ The rest is in pencil, and was left incomplete.

⁵ These refer to the Rules discussed in the Chapter, which would be published in 1890.

⁶ This n. 4 of the adapted Rules provides a very broad sweep of Ministries to qualify for the conferral of the **Grade**. It seems to be a "photograph" of the many services a confrere could offer for a number of

Instead of the Vth Part, Chap I, n. 2, that it be modified as follows:
 “All those will attend every General Chapter who have been elected by the Chapters of the individual Houses.

All these will attend every General Chapter:

1. General Councilors
2. Directors of Individual Houses ⁷
3. For the Individual Houses, the two who have been elected by the Chapters of these Houses, by a relative majority of votes. However, no one can be elected, unless he has completed ten years of Profession, and is thirty-five years of age.

N. 7 of the same Chap. I, Vth Part, should be changed, thus⁸ :
 “At the same time, let him admonish the Directors, concerning the House Chapter to be held, which is to be made up of Professed Clerics, who are in that House, of which two-thirds of the capitulars constitute a legitimate Chapter. In it, the Deputies are to be elected according to what is said in N. 12. Moreover, ...⁹

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years, in order to qualify for the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, as it was conferred during these times of the Stigmatine History. **However, the Deputed Commission eliminates it here.** One possible reason is that these proposed Constitutions had been submitted to the **Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Feb. 20, 1889** – and the title **Apostolic Missionary** was considered the prerogative of the Holy See and should not be given by any religious Community. Furthermore, the title of this Chap. IV, of Part IV, had read: *Concerning those to be promoted to the Sacerdotal Office, and to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary in our Sodality.* The underlined part of this title is eliminated by the Deputed Commission, and does not appear in the final copy approved by the General Chapter.[cf. **Fr. Stofella, Historical Introduction to the Booklet of the Original Constitutions, Terza Fase, pp. 30-32**]. At any rate, there was no discussion of the many services included within the **Apostolic Mission** in order to be consider for promotion to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**

⁷ This inclusion was crossed out.

⁸ In Latin.

⁹ Incomplete

[B.] PRINCIPAL DISPOSITIONS
of the IXth General Congregation, February 1880, to be
communicated to the various Houses ¹⁰

1. First of all, it was warmly recommended to the Capitulars to maintain secrecy on all that is said in the General Congregation.
2. It was decided that the Election of the Procurator General is to be the competence of the Superior General alone.
3. The powers of the Superior General were extended to him, until February 1881, when there will be held the General Congregation for the Election of the new Superior General.
4. Regarding the decisive judgment attributed in some cases by the *Appendix to Part XII* of our *Constitutions*, to the General Councilors, a Commission was established, of five members, which is to study the matter and refer back to the next General Congregation.
5. It was asked by some of the Chapters of the various Houses whether the Superior General was to be elected for life, and not for a limited term, as though the *Appendix* had disposed otherwise, and it was answered that both the *Constitutions* of the Founder, as well as the *Appendix*, speak clearly, and that he was elected for a time, only because of special circumstances, that required an exception.
6. In the place of the General Councilor, Rev. Fr. John Rigoni, who resigned, Fr. Mark Bassi was substituted.
7. The Examiners, both for the First and Second Scrutiny, were increased to the number of six. The examiners of the First Scrutiny are: Fr. Richard Tabarelli, fr. Alexis Magagna, Fr. Andrew Sterza, Fr. Melchiade Vivari, Fr. Pio Gurisatti, Fr. Peter Beltrami. The examiners of the Second Scrutiny are; Fr. Francis Benciolini, Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Fr. John Rigoni, Fr. Vincent Vignola, Fr. Louis Morando, Fr. Dominic Vicentini.
8. It was proposed by the Chapter of the House, that there be a review of the Rules of the particular Offices – the Congregation remitted the care of this to the Very Rev. Superior, to be made, either by himself, or by others of his choice, with the revision of the said rules to be submitted, then, to the approbation of the Congregation.
9. It was established that the Novices, in the first year of Novitiate, be absolutely free from the regular course of studies ¹¹.
10. It was proposed that the holy vows be renewed every once in a while, with some solemnity. The Proposal was received with satisfaction by the Chapter, which expressed its desire that this be adopted as the practice to be carried out on the occasion of the holy Annual Retreat, in the manner that would seem the most discreet.

[[Green oval SEAL:
APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES]]

Fr. Dominic Vicentini
Secretary of the IXth General Congregation

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¹⁰ There are two identical copies of the Decisions of this Chapter, that appear on large, unlined, white drawing paper, 16 and three-fourths, by 12, inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, 12 by 8 and one fourth. Fr. Vicentini wrote only on side one, and half of side two.

¹¹ Fr. Vicentini first wrote: ... *from every literary exercise* ... - but crossed it out – these corrections may have caused the 2nd copy of the same “Principal Dispositions” – but, more simply, they may have been intended for separate Stigmatine Communities.

VIVA MARY AND JOSEPH

SEZANO **October 1, 1889**

At the *DERELETTI* – October 4 – 5, 1889.

PART I

Concerning the End of the Sodality of the Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance of Bishops, and the Manner, or the Means, by which it attains this End.

PART II

Concerning the Admission, Probation and Profession of the Novices.

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THE CONSTITUTIONS
Of the SODALITY FOUNDED by the Rev. Fr. GASPAR BERTONI in
the VERONESE DIOCESE
under the Protection of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, ESPOUSED
to St. JOSEPH: The TITLE of which IS
APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES in the SERVICE OF BISHOPS

First Part
Concerning the End which the Sodality of Apostolic Missionaries
for the Assistance of Bishops proposes
for itself, and by what Means it strives to achieve that End.

1. This Sodality is composed of Priests, Clerics and Lay Brothers; it tends to this, that is, that the members at the same time they are striving for Christian Perfection they give aid to Bishops of the Catholic Church for the salvation of their fellow man, through **any works whatsoever of the ecclesiastical ministry and promoting the spiritual works of charity**, excluding however, both the ordinary and perpetual care of souls, as well as of nuns¹².

2. Hence, the Members of this Institute propose for themselves to give as much assistance as possible to the Bishop of the Diocese in which they are living, but maintaining the Institution of the Sodality, either in those areas about which there is no mention in our Constitutions, especially where it is a question of giving the **Spiritual Exercises, or the Sacred Missions, of instructing the faithful by Catechism lessons and sermons: the education of youth, either in the Oratories, and Catechism lessons, even in private, and promoting to the best of their ability their Christian instruction, either in Seminaries, and in our domestic schools, and by assisting their piety and studies**¹³.

3. In all that pertains to the exercise of the Apostolic endeavor, the members will **totally obey the Ordinaries of the places** where the **Missions** may be given, and they will receive beforehand from them, **permission, along with the faculties**, always observing the orders of these same Ordinaries, concerning the places and the times for the carrying out of this work.

¹² This whole text of **The Constitutions of the Congregation 1881-1889** also offers a kind of picture of the understanding of the Founder's central ideas in this time prior to the stormy **XIIth General Chapter**.

Here, this very broad interpretation of the **Apostolic Mission** has been the one in vogue for so much of the Stigmatine History – both preceding the stormy **XIIth General Chapter**, which comes next – and most consistently after it.

¹³ And again, the proposed text is remarkable in its simplicity, and breadth of proposals. These are all placed on the same level of importance in the Apostolic Mission.

If, however, the Lord should call our Members to propagate the faith among the infidels, first, the permission along with the faculties of the Apostolic See, will be humbly sought¹⁴.

4. All of these duties, the Sodality will perform entirely gratuitously, serving God and the Church, receiving nothing in recompense for spiritual ministry, or any pious office, unless something should be offered spontaneously, and as a simple alms.

5. The Members are to be immune from dignities, residences and benefices.

6. So that each one of the members might render himself suitable for obtaining this, our end, he will apply himself, with all his heart, to his own perfection, both through the exercises of virtue, as well as also, should he be a cleric, through the study of the sacred sciences.

7. The Members will lead a common life, bound by one perpetual chain of fraternal charity, and the simple vows, which will so join them that it will make them have one heart and one mind, for loving god, and for serving him holily, in virtue of Obedience, Poverty and Chastity.

8. The manner of living, in regards to what pertains to food, and also in regards to clothing and bed, will be in accord with the more perfect Clerics among whom they live, and for the edification of the faithful, both in Christian parsimony, as well as evangelical Poverty. The Priests will wear the cassock, reaching the ankles, unless a just cause, at times, demands something else. The Coadjutor members will wear black clothing, in so far as this will be possible for them; but, it will be altogether different from the style of seculars.

¹⁴ The emphasis here is on the *obsequium Episcoporum: permission, along with faculties ... first permission will be sought along with the faculties...* While there was not a special vow, there is much insistence.

SECOND PART

Concerning the Admission, Probation and Profession of the Novices,

Chapter I

Vices that deter anyone from entering into this Sodality.

1. The defect of legitimate birth, or one being too old, or too young; and a lack of knowledge. Hence, no one is to be received among the Clerics, if he has not yet completed his fifteenth year, and high school, nor after his twenty-fifth year, unless he has been instructed well with the required knowledge. Moreover, Lay Brothers, unless he has been instructed well with the required knowledge. Moreover, Lay Brothers are not to be received before their twentieth year, without the permission of the sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.
2. The defect of sound judgment and understanding.
3. The state of consummated matrimony.
4. Likewise, if one had been vested in the Habit of an approved order, or Congregation, either our own, or some other.
5. One who is encumbered with another's money, or is under the obligation of answering civil or natural charges.
6. Defect of birth, or of a good reputation.
7. Born of a Jewish father; and generally, all the rest of the impediments which inflict irregularity under Canon Law, for the reception of sacred orders, exclude one from this Sodality, unless a dispensation from the Holy See intervenes.
8. Sickness, or physical incapacity which render one unfit to labor, or carry out religious duties; vices of soul that are corrected only with difficulty, or those of the will, or mind, either obstinacy, or stubbornness, that impede the acquisition of the arts and learning of knowledge; the ineptitude, or inability especially for regular observance of Chastity and Obedience, precludes entrance into this Sodality.

Chapter II

The Qualities of those who are to be admitted

1. In those who are to be admitted for the spiritual ministries, there are required a capable understanding, qualities of good judgment, a sufficient tenacity of memory. Moreover, so that they will be striving for virtue and spiritual perfection, let them be calm, constant and industrious in those things that have a bearing on the divine, let them have zeal for the salvation of souls: besides, let them deeply love this Sodality, and be prepared for the perfect abnegation of their own wills.

2. Moreover, in those who are to serve in temporal matters, there are required that in addition to a good nature, and the zeal for religious perfection, and a right intention of serving God, that they be content with their Grade, and that they be endowed with the age and strength for manual labor, that this way of life demands. They are not to be men of difficult nature, and their number is to be defined by the requirements of the work, so that they might not indulge in laziness.

Chapter III

Concerning the Manner of receiving Youths into the College of Aspirants

1. Among us, youths are received who are aspiring to our Sodality, but on account of a lack of age, or sufficient studies, they cannot yet be admitted among the Novices. After a more or less lengthy probation, both in piety as well as in the study of letters in a College, or place separate from the association of the Members, they are, at length to be admitted to the Habit of the Sodality, only after the completion of the canonical examination. So that caution be employed in their Admission, the following are to be observed:

2. The Superior will take care that the Director of the College of boys, together with the Master of Novices, or the Master of Spiritual Things, and the Prefect of Studies, as well as with some teacher of grammar, will examine the character of the Postulant, his inclination and his intention of persevering in the Sodality, in so far as this is in him, his progress in studies, and his ability of mind, and also his physical appearance.

3. When this examination has been completed, it is to be discerned through secret ballot by all those present, whether this one requesting it, can be admitted. He, however, could not be approved who has not obtained one vote more than half. Moreover, the Director, if the candidate was approved, will show the Report of the above-mentioned Scrutiny, signed by himself and the examiners, to the Superior, who will confirm the acceptance, or reject it, together with his Council.

4. If, however, it should happen that a boy seeking Admission on account of the distance of the places to the College of Aspirants could not easily come, the Superior General could delegate for this above-mentioned Examen, the Director of the nearest House, who, together with his Councilors, will send a report to the Superior of the Scrutiny, carried out according to the norms stated above, signed by himself and by the other examiners. The Superior then will confirm the admission, or reject it, in union with his Councilors.

5. No one can be admitted unless he has attained his twelfth year, and the good reputation of his father, or widowed mother, has been investigated, and the intention of consecrating their son to the perpetual service of the Lord: and besides, to see if the parents thereafter will have the wherewithal to live without the help of this son. There are required Testimonial Letters of the Pastor and the School Teacher, from which it will

appear that the youth at least can be placed in the first class of high school: there are also required a record of his Baptism, and moreover, the legitimacy of his birth and his Confirmation, as well as a report of the Doctor that will attest to the good health of the youth. Lastly, the boy is not to be received unless with this agreement worked out expressly with his parents, that his clothing and garments, both for outside wear, and those belonging to him personally, they will provide for him for all that period of time in which their son will remain in a College of the Sodality.

6. When the youth has been accepted, and has remained among us for a year, he will undergo a special Examination, from which it will appear whether he is suited for our studies, works and also discipline, For this Examination, set by the Superior, are to be present the Director of the House of Novitiate, or of the College, the Prefect of Studies, and the boy's Teachers, and all of these will know that they have been called for this by the Sodality itself, that in conscience, they might, by secret ballot, make a decision concerning the understanding of the boy, and his character, and whether or not the Sodality itself might project a good omen. But, if the majority of the votes do not favor the boy, the Superior, with the consent of his Councilors, will either dismiss him forthwith, or, should there be evident hope of better progress, he could still be retained for another year; until after this other year has passed, and an Examen, and Scrutiny, as noted above, will otherwise reach a decision concerning him.

7. Nevertheless, it will always be an inalienable right for the Superior to admit anyone of these boys, from a just and reasonable cause, when he has favorably passed the prescribed Examen, or examinations, as found in number six.

Chapter IV

Concerning the Manner by which the Postulants are first accepted in our House, and then later, among the Novices.

1. As soon as anyone seeks to enter our Sodality, there are required of him testimonial Letters of the Ordinaries, according to the Decree of January 25, 1848, that begins: *Romani Pontificis*, promulgated by the Sacred Congregation on the Religious State.

2. Then, first it will be necessary to find out whether the Postulant is generally suited for our Institute, and is called by God.

3. Should nothing to the contrary be apparent, but rather, all indications of divine vocation are present, then, he who asks to be admitted, prudently and sedulously is to be proven in the House, in a place separated from the common living. Where for ten or fifteen days, he will live as a guest.

4. During these days, there will be employed three kinds of probation:

a.] that there be shown to him the Constitutions and there will be shown to him the Constitutions and the Statutes, by which he will come to know all those things he will be expected to observe;

b.] that he be exercised in the spiritual actions of meditation and penance, and he will make a General Confession, and lastly, he will receive the Eucharist.

c.] That he give proof of his learning and talent, or of his trade and physical strength.

5. Then, at length, he can be accepted among the Novices; but, only after observing absolutely all that is prescribed by the Decree of January 25, 1848, *Regulari Disciplinae*, of the sacred Congregation on the Religious State.

6. But, the Aspirants who already for some years have been in a College of the Sodality, and in that space of time, they were outstanding for their good conduct, and talent, are excused from that previous Examen [that is described in the third and fourth numbers of this Chapter]. Moreover, no one in the Sodality will be vested, unless he has taken part in the Spiritual exercised for eight or ten days.

Chapter V Concerning the Master of Novices, and their Government

1. The Superior General, with the consent of his Councilors, will establish in which Houses Novitiates are to be set up. But, a new House of Novitiate can never be erected without the permission of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and regulars.

2. The place where the Novices are trained is to be segregated from the common living and conversation of the rest of the Sodality, and it will have as many separated cubicle cells as there are Novices, or there may be a dormitory, ample enough that for each one, beds might easily be set up, and also a cell, or a suitable place be found for the master, and for the Socius, if there is one.

3. The Novice Master is to be elected by the General Chapter, from *among those priests who have completed at least their thirty-fifth year*, and who have already been bound by the vows of the Sodality for ten years. He will remain in Office for five years, and can be re-elected. Should he die before his term of Office is over, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, will choose another for him, until the next General Chapter.

4. If it should be necessary for the Novice Master, for the instruction of a multitude of Novices, a Socius, who has completed his thirtieth year, will be named by the General Chapter, or by the Superior General, with the consent of his Councilors, until the next General Chapter.

5. In addition to the Master and his Socius, the entrance into the place of the Novitiate will be open to no one, excepting, though, the Director of the House of Novitiate, the Superior General and the Visitors delegated by him, to take care of the house of Novitiate.

6. The Novice Master, with utmost effort, will strive for the Religious Instruction of the Novices, and he will omit nothing that could aid them in the observance of the Constitutions. Furthermore, he will show himself to be accessible, meek and full of goodness of heart, so that the young candidates will manifest their minds to him, in all that can assist in the increase of perfection; he will direct and instruct them in the Constitutions that are all to be carried out, but especially those that refer to the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Also, he will be for them an example, so that whatever pertains to the nature of our Institute, and the exercises of piety, they will carry out and perform. Moreover, every week, he will give a Conference on Catechism, and what pertains to our Institute. Even though the care of hearing the Confessions of the Novices, it is also permissible for the local Superior, if he should judge it expedient, either by himself, or any another, appointed by him [from among those Priests approved by the Ordinary], he can hear the Confessions of these same Novices sometimes in the year.
7. Near the end of each quarter of the Novitiate, the Master of Novices will report to the Superior General in writing on the conduct of each Novice.
8. In addition to the Spiritual Exercises, which the Novices will make each year for eight, or ten days, each month, for an entire day, putting aside every conversation, they will dedicate themselves to pious exercises of soul. Twice each day, they will engage in mental and vocal prayer, and each one will do so in the manner prescribed for him by the Master.
9. In those hours when they are free from scheduled exercises, under the vigilance of the Master, the Cleric Novices can moderately dedicate themselves to the study of letters, or the sciences. When Lay Brothers have taken care of the exercises of piety prescribed for them by the Master, they are to be applied by him to corporal ministries, under the leadership of the officials of the house.
10. The training of the Novices will be carried out for two entire years.
11. The Master can sometimes apply the Novices, under his direction, on feast days, and in our houses and Churches, to the instruction of the youth and uneducated people in Christian Doctrine. For this end, he will take care that each one, immediately on his entrance into the Novitiate, will apply himself to learning Christian Doctrine, unless previously, he was sufficiently instructed.
12. After the second year of probation has elapsed, if the Novice shows that he is to strive in all things, for the greater glory of God, and the good of the Sodality, and has shown himself exemplary in the exercise of piety and good works, he will be considered to have completed his Novitiate.
13. In the Admission of the Novice to Profession of Simple Vows, all that is prescribed by the Decree, *Regulari Disciplinae*, of January 25, 1848, promulgated by the Sacred Congregation on the Religious State, will be observed.

VIVA MARY & JOSEPH

SEZANO

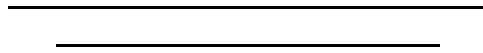
October 1,1889

At the *DERELETTI*

October 4, 5, 1889

IIIrd PART

**Concerning the Practice of Simple Vows, which are emitted in our Sodality,
and concerning the Progress of the Members in Spiritual Perfection**



IIIrd PART

Concerning the Practice of the Simple Vows, which are emitted in our Sodality, and concerning the Progress of the Members in Spiritual Perfection

Chapter I

Concerning the Vows of the Sodality in General, and their Dispensation and Annulment.

- 1.** The three Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, which all the Members emit after a fitting period of training, as is required by Common Law, and the particular Constitutions of our Institute, are only simple, but perpetual.
- 2.** None of these Vows can be dissolved, unless perhaps the Supreme Pontiff concedes this grace; or, through the Superior General, with the consent of his Councilors, one would be dismissed, or expelled from the Sodality, for a legitimate cause. For the dismissal, or expulsion of some one to be decided, there would be required not only serious violations of the vows, or of public discipline, but it is also necessary that the matter be irremediable. Furthermore, in this case, a confirmation of the expulsion will be sought from the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.
- 3.** No one can be dismissed because of an illness that occurred after Profession.

Chapter II

Concerning the Vow of Poverty

- 1.** The simple vow of Poverty, which is emitted by our Members, has a bearing only on the administration of anything whatsoever, but not on its possession; therefore, those who are professed in this Institute, can retain the radical dominion, as it is called, of their goods; but, it is absolutely forbidden them [except in some special case, and with the express permission of the Superior General, and under his absolute judgment], the administration of these goods, their disposal and use. Furthermore, before Profession, they ought also privately to cede the administration, the usufruct and use, to whomsoever they choose, even to their Institute, if they freely wish to do so. To this cession, can be affixed the condition that it be revocable at any time; but the Professed, in conscience cannot use the right of revoking it, unless with the previous consent of the Apostolic See. All of this, likewise, is to be observed if it should be a question of goods that might come to them after Profession, under the title of inheritance.
- 2.** The Members can freely dispose of their dominion, either through a will, or with the permission of the Superior General, through acts among the living; in this last mentioned case, the cession made by them of the administration, usufruct and use will

cease, unless they should choose that this cession, that with the passing of time, has seemed good to them, should remain firm, notwithstanding the cession of the dominion.

3. Moreover, it shall not be forbidden to the Professed to perform those acts of ownership, with the permission of the Superior General, that are prescribed by law.

4. Whatever the Professed have acquired, by their own industry, or because of the Institute, they can neither ascribe to themselves, nor refuse, but all these goods are to be placed among the goods of the Sodality, for common use.

5. The manner of food, clothing and lodging, and all the furnishings of the House, should be such that nothing superfluous be admitted, but nothing that is naturally necessary should be lacking.

6. In our Churches, there shall not be held funerals, nor funeral stipends, nor chaplaincies, nor anniversaries, nor anything similar.

7. Nor will there be in our Churches any box, or basket, or sack for gathering alms. However, alms for Masses can be accepted by our members; however, all these are to be handed over to the Superior, either General or Local, or to those who have been delegated for them.

8. All shall have in common, food, and clothing and books; and whatever is granted for their use, they should not have as their own, and they are to be prepared to return to common use, at an indication of the Superior, or Director, absolutely whatever they are using.

9. To no one is there granted the perpetual use of books, or those that one can freely take with them, wherever they may be transferred.

10. No one is to use anything as his own.

11. No one is to possess privately, in his call, or under his care, and for his free use, anything that pertains to the nourishment of the body that are reduced to food and drink.

12. No one is to keep the door of his room, or chest, locked by key, unless with the Superior's permission.

13. In dress, or in all other clothing, and in all that pertains to one's room, beyond those things that are necessary for actual use of the body, no one shall keep anything about himself, but everything shall be kept in the common wardrobe.

14. No one shall accept anything in compensation for spiritual ministry, or a pious office, as the Sodality performs these gratuitously for its fellow man, according to the statute in Part I of these Constitutions.

15. No one can exchange, accept or dispose of anything that belongs to the House, without the Superior's permission.

16. As each one ought to be content with whatever is distributed from the common goods, so he ought to be prepared to accept the more mean and abject, for his greater abnegation.

Chapter III

Concerning the Vow of Chastity

1. There is to be a cloister for women.

2. No one shall go out of the House, unless with the Director's permission, and with a Companion to be assigned to him.

3. On returning home, if there should be anything to be noted that the Companion did, or, if anything happened, they are both to report to the Director. Moreover, if anything notable took place, or if it was heard, or seen during their journey, likewise, both will report it.

4. No one shall speak with a woman, or hear her Confession, unless with the door open, and that they can be seen, even though not heard, by those present.

5. Moreover, each one is to strive with every effort, for that perfection of Chastity which is befitting those whose duty is Angelic, or who are imitators of Jesus Christ, our Lord, rather they ought to manifest their minds and hearts to Christ, as a chaste virgin espoused to one man, as the Apostle says.

6. Therefore, each one should frequently exercise himself in prayer and meditation, which are prescribed for him by the order of the Constitutions, or the Superior.

7. So that the subjects be aided more efficaciously, and kindly by Superiors, in overcoming all difficulties and dangers, which usually occur in the observance of Chastity, each one will not hide anything of this kind, but he will manifest all temptations and dangers to the Superior, to his Confessor, or to someone else to whom his spiritual care is entrusted.

8. Each one will practice that mortification of the flesh especially through abstinence from food and drink, which will be suitable for him, in the judgment of the Superior or the Confessor.

9. Idleness is always and absolutely to be avoided by each and everyone: manual labor, or some outside exercise of the body, which is the more fitting and useful, is to be demanded by the Superior of each one.

10. Meetings, visits and conversations with women, either personally, or by letter, are to be avoided. Out of necessity, however, or in the hopes of some great fruit, these are still not to be granted, except to members who are already well proven and prudent..
11. Also, every excessive and singular familiarity and human friendship, especially among youths, are to be avoided.
12. Hence, no one without the permission of the Superior, either general or particular, will enter the room of another, and should he have entered, the door will remain open while they are talking.
13. No one shall touch another, even in jest.
14. Every effort shall be given that all properly and frequently have their stains washed by sacred Confession, and that they be refreshed by the Angelic Bread. They shall very often visit Jesus hidden in the Most August Sacrament of the Eucharist; they shall recite frequent ejaculations to the Most Holy Immaculate Mary, and to her Most Chaste Spouse, Joseph.
15. That modesty which appears in the observance and custody of the eyes, especially of the ears, of the tongue and of the other senses, and which is manifest in the rest of the deportment and carriage of the body, is particularly necessary for all, for conserving the probity of morals, and for promoting the edification of others.

Chapter IV

Concerning the Vow of Obedience.

1. The Constitutions of this Sodality do not oblige of themselves, under any sin, either mortal, or venial; and therefore, if anyone, by breaking them, should be guilty before God, this does not flow directly from the Constitutions, but from the precepts of God, or of the Church, or from the vows themselves, or lastly, from circumstances that accompany the violation of the Constitutions, such as bas example, the contempt of holy things, and other such matters.
2. All are to obey the Prelate, even lesser ones, and anyone who is in an Office, and those who have received the faculty of commanding from the Superiors, as though they were obeying Christ.
3. If anyone was denied anything by a Superior, he shall not go to another superior about the same matter, unless he manifests to him what response he received from the other, and what were the reasons it was denied.
4. Let them strive that they obey not merely in deed, but that they conform their minds and wills to the order of the Superior. Let each one speak to the Superiors with

great reverence; he, however, to whom a Superior will speak, or correct, shall listen humbly, and without interruption.

5. No one shall curiously inquire of others about those matters that are to be done concerning administration, or, by conjecturing, enter into conversation about them. But, each one, attending to himself, and his own duties, will expect whatever is established about himself and others, as though from the hand of God.

6. No one will convey the orders, or letters of any extern, to a domestic, or those of a domestic to an extern, without the knowledge of the Director; he, moreover, can read all the letters which are sent or received by our members; however, he cannot read those that are sent to the Holy See, or to the Superior General, or to one of the General Councilors, or those that are received from any of these.

7. No one shall relate to externs what has been done, or is to be done in the house, unless he knows that the Superior would approve of this. He will not give to them the Constitutions, or other books of this nature, or writings in which the institute of the Sodality is contained, unless with the express consent of the Superior General.

8. No one will seek counsel from externs, without the permission of the Superior. When anyone asks leave of the Superior to go anywhere, he must, at the same time, manifest to him whether and for what reason he wishes to go; especially if the Prelate, or someone in charge prefers it; on that very day, he shall report to the same Superior what he has done as he knows that he would will it, and the matter demands.

9. No one of ours will accept, or promise any business, even pious, without the permission of the Superior.

10. No one shall interfere in the office of another; no one shall go into the place set aside for the ministry of another, unless with the permission of the Superior, or the Prefect of that place, in necessary matters.

11. When the care of some matter has been entrusted to someone, and there happens an impediment, in due time, he shall advise some one of the superiors that he may provide.

12. Just as soon as one notices an order, or a sign of the Superior calling, each one, immediately, rivaling on earth the heavenly spirits, brooking no delay, and laying aside whatever they may be engaged in, let them hasten, even fly to do the will of their Lord.

13. Obedience is to be whole and entire in all things [which are not against the Precepts of God, of the Church, or of the Constitutions of this Institute], and it is to be prompt, strong and humble, with a perfect abnegation of the will and one's own judgment.

14. Each one is to have the utmost confidence in the Superior, and he will strive to render an account of one's exterior life, simply and spontaneously, manifesting to the Superior of the Sodality, exterior faults, committed against the Constitutions, as well as against one's progress in virtue, so that he might receive from them, counsels, and consolations, and should there be a need, fitting admonitions.

Chapter V

Concerning Progress in Spiritual Perfection

1. The first assistance is prayer. And so, there is other prayer in addition to the daily and required prayers that are primarily contained in the Divine Office and Mass that can be said, with the assisting divine grace.

[2.] When these have been taken care of, there are Meditation every day, and, in so far as will be possible, in the morning after mass, for the space of one half hour.

3. Then, Spiritual Reading after dinner for the third part of an hour.

[4.] A triple examen, that is when the mind first awakens from sleep, at noon and before retiring.

5. The Spiritual exercises every year for eight or ten days.

6. A Sermon at least twice a month for deepening fervor is to be had in the House, in addition to the other sermons, which are given publicly in our Churches, at which the Members are to be present, unless they are legitimately detained elsewhere.

2.¹⁵ The daily recitation of a third part of the Rosary of the B.V.M., with the customary prayers to St. Joseph, her most chaste Spouse. For these are the principal Patrons of our Sodality, who, therefore, our Members ought to honor with special devotion and love. Therefore, the Priests, **as is our custom, after Lauds and Compline, ought to add a Hail Mary, and a Glory be, with the oration of the Espousals of the B.V.M.**¹⁶ They will observe everyone of their Feasts and in a most special way, the Feast of the Espousals of the B.B.M., with the Novena Prayers, that they will celebrate most solemnly and most devoutly; nor, will they ever cease to excite the faithful to their worship and devotion. Our members will also have most commended to them, a devotion toward the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose Feast every year, they will observe a solemnly as possible, and they will strive to promote the pious exercise, approved by the Church, that relate to It¹⁷.

¹⁵ These numbers are hard to follow here.

¹⁶ This old custom continues privately among some confreres – even though it is not longer present in the Constitutions following the **General Chapter of Renewal, of 1970**.

¹⁷ In this Chapter of 1970, the effort was made to place the Feast of the Sacred Stigmata as more in harmony with the Founder's life-long reference to it, in his devotions at the Stimmate; the title ***Order of the Sacred Stigmata***, noted also by Fr. Marani – and, in the end, the title that the Holy See gave to the Congregation for its approval in 1890 – as the Founder had not given a title to the Congregation, believing **that giving names was the work of parents – in this case, the Holy Spirit and the Official Church** – cf. Fr. Bertoni's **Letter 124**, 2nd Paragraph. In: *Epistolario*, pp. 219, f.

7.¹⁸ Sacramental Confession every eighth day, to be made to the common Confessor, who has already been approved by the Ordinary for the hearing of Confessions.

2.] The other means is never to cease from purging one's vices and defects, and of inserting the contrary virtues; of increasing and perfecting the infused theological and moral virtues; of fulfilling the religious virtues, namely, Obedience, Chastity and Poverty; of denying the inclinations of the flesh, of the senses, of self and worldly love; perfectly observing all the Precepts, both divine as well as ecclesiastic, and of all the duties that pertain to the Priestly state, which the Sodality imposes.

3.] There will be a sedulous custody of religious silence, and for this reason, that outside the times assigned for recreation, no one will speak, unless about necessary matters; especially in Church, in the sacristy, in the refectory, as well as in the Dormitory. Care is to be taken always that they speak in a few and reasonable words, and not in a loud voice.

4.] There is no common rule about penances, except for this one, that each will partake only of that common food, clothing, and all else that pertains to life, that are placed before him, or granted by the Superior, and which suffice for temperance, honesty, decency, poverty, and at the same time, necessity.

5.] Each one will accept those penances which the Confessor or the Superior has imposed on him in the Lord, and also he will desire them, and ask for more penances often, in so far as his strength and grace will suggest; they will be established and moderated for him.

Chapter VI

Concerning the Charity that is to be maintained and promoted among the Members

1. All will consider as the mark and scope of their vocation that saying of Christ, the Lord: *By this, will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.* Therefore, all will strive especially for that union and concord of charity; and with every effort, they will avoid and absolutely abhor whatever is contrary to this, as dissensions and discords.

2. But, if out of human frailty, some dissension, or disturbance among the members should arise, immediately, every care is to be taken that they be reconciled from the heart, and with due satisfaction, they be returned to the good graces of one another.

3. Whosoever is the author of dissension, or division among the Members, or Superiors, is to be corrected, and should be prove incorrigible, he is absolutely to be separated from the House, and even from the Sodality.

¹⁸ This number "7" might follow the numeration began under # "1" above here.

4. Never among the Members should the evil of detraction in an words, or gesture be apparent. But, neither should anyone put it in his mind that he should even feel harshly, or unkindly about his confrere.

5. No one shall presume to castigate, or upbraid, or correct another, unless he has the authority to do so, in virtue of his Office, or has received it from the Superior, although as we are taught by Christ, each one ought to be prepared to assist in the correction of others, with due charity about a grave temptation or danger to a Confrere, he will be bound to manifest it secretly to the Superior, so that he, in his fatherly care, and providence, might provide a suitable remedy for them.

6. Since a diversity of opinions and a frequent contradiction, oppose in no small way, the union of charity, therefore, the dissension of opinions, and contention and disagreement are greatly to be feared, and in so far as it is possible, they are to be avoided by all.

7. There are also to be feared and absolutely to be avoided those private and disordered affections, by which two or three go apart from the rest of the Members, among themselves; for it cannot but happen that these affections, which tend to one side, rather than to another, bring great harm to the common concord of all. However, even though an equal and like charity is to be held for all, the honor in which each one is held stems from his merit and worth.

8. To confirm unity among the Members, uniformity and likeness are to be had in all things, even externals, as in clothing, food and in every facet of living. In the first place, the table is to be so common, that no one is to be excused from it, whether because of age, gravity, superior ship, learning, other than because of sickness.

9. Every day, for an hour after dinner, and for about another after supper, all the members in so far as it is possible, shall come together in the same place, and engage in familiar and friendly conversation. Therefore, in these common recreations, the just relaxation of mind, or the quiet of others is not to be disturbed, or impeded, through untimely harshness, or excessive severity an moodiness; so, through religious modesty, there is to be avoided in both jocose words and deeds, every worldly impudence, so that the harmony and he concert of good works and virtues, be not dissolved in any way.

10. When any one of ours, making a journey, passes through a place where there is a House of the Sodality, he is not to go anywhere else for lodging, but he is to be under the Superior of that place in obedience, just as are the rest who are dwelling in the same place. These, whether they are Professed, or Novices, are to be received by the Superior of the House, and by the other Members, without any acceptance of limitation of persons, but with all signs of benevolence and the hospitality of charity, and should it be required, they are to be supplied with clothing, and anything else they might need for their trip.

11. Not only among the Members of the same House, let there be this custom, that would join in a holy manner, the souls of those dwelling in the same place into one heart and mind, but also to the absent, there is not to be lacking communication by letter, which would serve the same end. Therefore, there ought to be a frequent exchange of letters between superiors and subjects, and with the permission of the Director, the confreres ought to write to each other, so that often they will exchange news about one another, and they will hear what may contribute to edification.

12. Care above and beyond all, is to be given to our sick members, so that they will truly be served, as Christ. Hence, in a most special manner, Superiors and all the rest of the Members, are to see to it that our sick Confreres suffer no neglect. They will give them, with the permission of the doctor, all that they possible can, so that our sick brothers will feel no sadness, but in so far as it is possible, they will be refreshed. If anyone finds himself more than ordinarily indisposed, he will report the matter to the Infirmarian, or to the Prefect of Health, or to the Master of Exterior Discipline. No one will take any medicine, or engage or consult any doctor, unless he is approved by Superiors.

13. Whoever visits the sick, with the Superior's permission, either general, or special, will speak to them with such moderation, that he be not bothersome to them, and he will treat of those things that can console the sick, and edify in the Lord, those who may be present.

14. When they are at the end of life, the last sacraments of the Church will be administered to the Member. A Priest will offer Mass for him, as long as he remains on the threshold of death. All the other Priests of that house will remember him in the Sacrifice of the Mass. The other Members of the same house, will receive Holy Communion for him, or will recite the third part of the Rosary of the B.V.M. for him. When the sick man has died, if he is professed, all the Priests of the entire Sodality, will offer Mass for him, for the forgiveness of his sins: all the others will hear Mass thrice for him, and, as soon as possible, they will receive Holy Communion for him three times, and once, they will offer the entire Rosary for him. If however, the deceased was a Novice, all the Priests of the House of the Novitiate will offer mass for him; all the others of the same House will offer the pious suffrages that we have noted above.

15. Every year, on the 12th day of June, the day on which our Founder, of Ven. Memory, as we piously believe, departed for heaven, all the Priests will offer Mass for the deceased Confreres; in the Church of the S. Stigmata, a Solemn Mass of *Requiem* if [it is permissible by the Liturgy, otherwise, on the first free day thereafter] will be celebrated for these same deceased. They who are not Priests, will receive Holy Communion, and recite a third part of the Rosary of the B.V.M. Likewise, once a month, every Priest of the entire Sodality, will offer the Divine Host for these members who are still retained in the purifying flames. All the others will remember to offer a third part of the Rosary of the B.V. Mary, or make the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, and offer a Holy Communion for them.

VIVA MARY AND JOSEPH

SEZANO, October 1, 1889

At the *DERELETTI*, October 4, 5, 1889

PART IV

**Concerning the Instruction of Students after Novitiate, and of Their
and Others' Promotion**

PART IV

Concerning the Instruction of Students after Novitiate, and of Their and Others' Promotion

Chapter I

Concerning the Education and Probation of Those Who are to receive Clerical Orders

- 1.** In this clerical Sodality, which not only contemplates divine things, but also strives to teach others what has been contemplated, there is required not an ordinary learning, but one that is perfect of whatever pertains to faith and morals: hence, it is required that the Cleric Members apply themselves well to acquiring that knowledge.
- 2.** Therefore, so that they might illumine the minds of those who swell in darkness, and resist raging heresies, or to give explanations for the faith that is in us, or to solve moral difficulties that might arise, and to satisfy all, in both positive and scholastic, speculative and moral theological doctrine, it is required that each one be sufficiently instructed in these matters. Besides, it is required that each one cultivate diligently enough those sciences that are a prerequisite for the learning of theology, or which can assist or embellish it.
- 3.** Cleric Novices, just as soon as they pronounce the simple Vows of our Sodality, are to be assigned in some house, or separate place, which they call a Scholasticate, for their necessary studies.
- 4.** Those who enter the Sodality, already imbued with learning, when their Novitiate has been completed, are to be perfected in it, and assigned to ministries to see whether they exercise them properly, for the benefit of their fellow man.
- 5.** In this time, each one will render himself proven in the discipline of religious life and morals, through various and new experiments and trials, so that his piety, humility and prudence are conspicuous to all, especially to Superiors.

Chapter II

Concerning the Program and Distribution of Studies

- 1.** Our Clerics, on the completion of high school, will be educated for three years in the philosophical branches, and in the study of human letters and languages.
- 2.** After this, they will sedulously apply themselves to theological studies at least for four years, namely: to sacred Scripture, both the Old and New Covenants; Church History, Patristics, Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence, and especially to Dogmatic Theology,

speculative and Moral; not omitting the study of Preaching and Catechetics, as well as Sacred Liturgy and ecclesiastical Chant.

3. Philosophy and Theology are to be taught by the Scholastic method. In both of these studies, they will use the Divine Thomas as their teacher; in Moral Theology, St. Alphonsus Liguori. Our Members are not forbidden to follow those authors who, in Catechetics, and the explanation of Catholic Doctrine, are commonly considered to be the more celebrated, and the more proven.

4. It is most especially to be seen to that which pertains to solid doctrine, that is, the more approved in the Church, that absolutely no diversity of opinions be admitted among our members. In what pertains to those opinions in which even the Doctors differ, or are at variance, it is to be seen to that even in these, our Members agree among themselves, in so far as this is possible. In the first place, it is necessary that if there should be any diversity, it should not so affect the entire body of doctrine so that it would appear that among our members, there was a contrary school of thought: for this usually opens the way for a division of souls.

5. As the school year comes to a close, every student will undergo a special Examination on those matters that have been taught and explained through the year, before the Director of the House the Prefect of Studies, and the ordinary teachers, as well as one or two other examiners, to be designated by the Superior General for this each year. No one is to be promoted to a superior class, who has not received approval, to be given in writing, by the above-mentioned Examiners.

6. The Clerics, after they have completed their four year theological curriculum, will be summoned to a General Examination in the theological disciplines. With this in mind, the Prefect of Studies, together with the teachers, will draw up a list of theses from Sacred Scripture, Ecclesiastical History, but especially from Dogmatic and Moral Theology, that will be approved by the Superior General and his Council. He will give to these candidates this list two or three months before the end of the Fourth Year of theology, so that they might give proof of these matters before the Superior General himself, or some one of the General Councilors, delegated by him for this duty, as well as before the Director, and the Prefect of studies, and all the teachers of the Theology Course, who will all give their opinion of them in writing at the end of the examination, by secret ballot. Moreover, this testimony will be communicated to the Superior General and his Council, and will be kept in the Archives of the House of Studies.

7. When this Examination is over, two or three years are granted to the students for the study of the Fathers, and the more serious studies, to be repeated privately, or for cultivating those studies with special effort and diligence, and for a longer time, or the arts in which they are the more proficient, and in those in which their capability could benefit the most¹⁹.

¹⁹ This principle due to the Stigmatine Founder – cf . **CF ## 40;53** – seems much like the modern Licentiate and even Doctoral studies in theology – for the *more than ordinary knowledge* required of each Confrere in this ideal.

Chapter III

In What Manner is their Progress in Studies to be counseled.

1. For teaching both the philosophical and theological doctrines, those teachers above all others are to be chosen, who stand out above the rest for their probity of life, their excellence of talent, and doctrine. But, in all other teachers, there are to be sought first of all, ability and diligence, so that they might not only be learned, but also assiduous and studious, so that they will be beneficial to the students in all literary exercises.
2. From among the teachers, there is to be chosen by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, a Prefect of Studies, who, under the Director of the House of Studies, will most carefully oversee that right order, or a method be employed in teaching the subjects, and to the utmost of his ability, he will promote the advance of our students in learning.
3. A special care and attention will be had for those who are engaged in study, both so that their health may not suffer, and also there be not lacking those comforts that are necessary. Therefore, the Superior will so take care of their diet, their proper clothing, and their suitable and necessary recreation, that they, being free from concern about these matters, they might the more easily give themselves over to the work of study, being content with religious moderation.
4. In every House, there is to be a common Library, equipped as would be required for the level of studies.
5. Each student will have those books that are necessary for him.
6. It is also to be provided that there be removed from the students, the hindrance of external occupations and work, both as regards duties around the House, as well as other ministries, so that they will have more time for their studies.
7. Hence, to take care of domestic duties, as many lay Brothers are to be assigned, as the needs of the House would demand.
8. Those who are engaged in studies, will look after their probity of morals, and will direct their minds to the divine glory, and the salvation of their fellow men and women: they will often pray to God, who is *the Lord of all Knowledge*, so that they may be endowed with that knowledge that is necessary for them.
9. First of all, harmful studies are to be avoided, then those that are useless or impertinent that impede those that are the most necessary, which have to be learned: in those which necessarily or usefully are to be learned, struggling against the hard work,

negligence and boredom, they will apply themselves strongly and with constancy, by the tenacity of their intention, to the attaining of the knowledge of those matters, for the greater glory of God, and the greater service of the Church.

10. It is for the Superiors to see to it that the love of piety is not diminished by the fervor of studies, nor that the studies suffer any impediment, due to excesses in piety.

11. Chairs of Theology, and sometimes also those of Philosophy, if they are offered, **especially in Seminaries**²⁰, without contradiction, or deception, or opposition, can be accepted gratuitously, with the express permission of the Superior.

12. Degrees in the University can also be accepted, as long as they are obtained without any harm to Poverty, or religious humility. Rather, it is expedient that some from our members, who are found to be more inclined to human letters, and the natural sciences, are to obtain the public faculty of teaching these matters: **and so, if it is possible, they would be able to instruct the youth in letters, for this would be both in accord with our scope**²¹ and in our times, it would be most useful for the service of the Church, and the Christian education of youth.

Chapter IV

Concerning those to be promoted to the Sacerdotal Office²², And to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary in our Society**²³

1. No one is to be initiated in Minor Orders, before he has completed the three year course of philosophy.

2. All will attend school until their twenty-fifth year, so that no one is to be promoted to the Sacred Order of Priesthood, unless he has completed his twenty-fourth year, and the four year course of theology. Then, they will be able to be removed from

²⁰ Seminary work is one of the principal duties of the *Professed* – one of the essential aspects of the *Apostolic Mission* of St. Gaspar Bertoni – cf. **CF ## 67; 164.**

²¹ Once more, an insistence of preparing teachers to become prepared for taking on this essential aspect of the Stigmatine Founder's Apostolic Mission – the instruction of youth and their formation in the spiritual life, is likewise one of the major duties for the *Professed* of the level of *Apostolic Missionary* [cf. **CF ## 163-184**] to which are dedicated more than 20 of the Founder's **Original Constitutions.**

²² This would seem to reflect what St. Gaspar Bertoni meant in the ordinary promotion of students to the Priesthood - **CF # 7.** – the section that follows here and which is underlined, would fulfill that which the Stigmatine Founder meant by the *perfectum opus Sacerdotum, assumentes apostolicam missionem* – this was not any one ministry in the minds of so many of these early Fathers, but would include the *graviora ministeria* [CF # 158] - *the varia et propria suae vocationis [ardua et difficilis] munera* [CF # 185] – also called the *ministeria accomodata* to achieve the *finis* of the Sodality, the salvation of souls. [CF # 262].

²³ The underlined words in this Chapter IV title were eliminated, as may be noted from the “List of the Proposals made by the Deputed Commission” [cf. pp. 3, 4 of these **Notes**]. This list of qualifications found here in n. 4 reflect the mentality of the time what were the *perfectum opus... graviora ministerial ... varia et propria munera* of the Stigmatine Apostolic Mission.

the House of Studies, and gradually exercised in delivering sermons in our Churches, under the direction of Corrector, assigned by the Superior, or the Director. They will also engage in teaching Catechism to children and to the uneducated ²⁴, and with the approval of the ordinary, in hearing the Confessions of children and youths. It is required that they take part in the cases of conscience and in the discussions, as these are held in all of our Houses, in times established by the Superior, or Director. They will never omit the study of Sacred Theology, especially of moral, which ought always to be of the utmost concern to all Priests.

3. Then, they are to be exercised in hearing Confessions of all men whatsoever, and in giving sermons in the Churches of the city, where they are assigned, in giving the Exercises, with the Corrector assigned, as above, in the devout care of the sick, especially the dying, etc.

After they have completed their thirtieth year, with the permission of the ordinary sought beforehand, they can also hear the Confessions of women, and lend their assistance to the Sacred Missions. But, no one is to accept these apostolic expeditions, unless first he has prepared a series of sacred sermons and meditations, suited for the understanding of all believers in Christ, and that they have submitted this series to someone from among the more learned and elderly Members designated for this Office by the Superior General. **This is all the more required of writings that perhaps someone of our members is thinking of having printed.** These cannot be published unless with the express permission of the Superior, and not before these men, to whom the Superior has entrusted this duty, have approved it²⁵.

4. At length, after a Priest member has spent some years in the ecclesiastical ministries, he could be **elevated to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary**. But, no one is to be endowed with this Grade unless he has completed his thirty-fifth year, and ten years of vows in our Sodality.

Moreover, there are required in him besides outstanding piety, love for regular discipline, and zeal for the salvation of souls, that he be endowed with suitable doctrine, i.e., that he has passed with praise his last exams, after having completed the entire curriculum of theology; also, that he be of great merit to the Institute, Either because he was **engaged in giving the Sacred Missions** ²⁶; or, **the Spiritual Exercises** ²⁷; or, for a full three years, he had been the **Director of some House of ours**;

²⁴ The teaching of Christian Doctrine as noted here appears repeatedly in the Stigmatine Founder's Constitutions all the way from Novices teaching it, to listing Catechism among the special duties of the ***Professed as Apostolic Missionaries*** [cf. CF ## 55; 163; 165; 170; 182].

²⁵ These Constitutions seem to be clear in the hope that some of the Stigmatines might indeed become authors of serious spiritual and theological works.

²⁶ There is a certain historical primacy here, as the Founder was inspired to establish the Community from this kind of ***Apostolic Mission***.

²⁷ The whole area of ***Clergy retreats*** was also a privileged form of service of the early Community as part of its ***Apostolic Mission*** – the early Community also banded together by the theological discussions held among priests under Fr. Bertoni's direction..

or, had been **teacher of the sacred disciplines for four years**²⁸; or was **dedicated for many years in instructing the youth**; or, lastly, **he had performed well some other office, or duty for the good of the Sodality**.²⁹

The judgment of this merit is absolutely up to the Superior and the General Councilors, who, by a plurality of secret votes, will promote those to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, who are **endowed with these qualities** we have noted above: they will then announce, by Decree, their promotion to the entire Sodality³⁰.

Chapter V

Concerning those who are not advanced to the Dignity of the Priesthood.

1. There are two groups of these: those who have been initiated into the clerical life and then some impediment occurred, which did not upset domestic discipline, such as sickness, or the like, nor did it interfere with the edification of their fellow men, both in the House, and outside, and these remain in the order, and the office they have received; this will be up to the prudence of the Superior. Men of this category are useful and suited, and they serve the Lord, and assist others in attaining the common scope.

2. Then, there are others who do not receive Clerical Orders, but they assist around the House, and the Priests in household chores. These men must be properly imbued with Christian Doctrine, and they are to engage in some art, or dedicate themselves to some work, and they will serve the Lord in simplicity of heart, giving good example in the virtues to their fellow man and woman.

Therefore, if anyone of them has some education, he will not continue this, nor will anyone instruct him without the permission of the Superior General.

4. Their duties are: Custodian Porter, Gardener, Cook, Wardrobe-keeper, Launderer, Landscaper, Wine-maker, Builder, Mason, Scribe, Tailor, Carpenter, etc. They are to be subject to the Director and to the Economus, or to some one of the Priests to whom they are assigned by the Director. Moreover, to each one of them, several offices may be committed, according to the nature of things, or necessity, in the judgment of the Superior, or Director.

5. Nevertheless, since God has given command to each one concerning his neighbor, not only the Priests, by counsel and exhortation, about the students, too, when

²⁸ As has been noted, serving in Seminaries was much revered by the early Community's **Apostolic Mission**

²⁹ There is noted, then, the very broad sweep of ministries considered central to the understanding of Fr. Bertoni's concept of **Apostolic Mission** in the interpretation of so many of the early Fathers.

³⁰ It needs to be noted that this # 4, *Modification for the Grade*, [cf. pp. 3,4 of this present translation] was not admitted into the printed edition of these Constitutions of the following year [cf. separate translation, *CONSTITUTIONS 1890*]- due to the intervention of the Holy See - as will be seen at the *Appendix* of this present translation of the *CONST. 1881-1889*, in the *Phase III of the Constitutions*, by Fr. Joseph Stofella. There does not, however, seem to have been any difficulty from the Capitulars regarding the broad sweep of Apostolic services that would qualify one for the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**.

permission has been granted to them, and even the Collaborator Brothers, each one in accord with his virtue and the circumstances, will strive with all his heart, to lead his fellow ma to virtue, even in those **Private Conversations** which occur.

VIVA MARY and JOSEPH

SEZANO, October 1, 1889

At the *DERELETTI*, October 4, 5, 1889

PART V

Concerning the Government of the Sodality

PART V**Concerning the Government of the Sodality****Chapter I****Concerning the General Chapter**

1. Ordinarily, the General Chapter will be held every fifth year, for the Election of the Superior General, who has completed his term of Office, and of the Major Officials, as well as for treating of those matters of greater moment that refer to the Sodality as a whole. Outside of this order, the Chapter will be convoked if perhaps the death of the Superior General has occurred before he has completed his term of Office, or if some necessity should compel the Superior and his Councilors to convoke it sooner, for the good of the Sodality.
2. All those are to be summoned who have received the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, and they ought to attend the Chapter, if they are able to do so, without any difficulty, that is, those who are not sick, or in failing health, and if they cannot lay aside without grave inconvenience. All these have the right of active and passive voice in the Chapter.
3. The right of convoking a General Chapter, and of presiding over it, pertains to the Superior General. When it is a question of electing a new Superior General, to take the place of a previous one who has passed away, the announcement that the Sodality is to be convoked will be made by the First of the General Councilors.
4. If the Superior himself presides over the general Chapter, he has two votes whenever a ballot is needed, except in elections to the various Offices, in which he enjoys the right of only one vote.
5. The place for holding the Chapter is our Primary House of the sacred stigmata, in Verona, i.e., where it is prayed and hoped that the remains of our Founder rest in peace, and that they spring forth from their place, permeating us with the ardor of his ecclesiastical and religious spirit, such as he employed while he lived among men, as he was held in the general opinion of all. Nevertheless, if the Capitulars cannot easily go there, another place is to be chosen.
6. The manner of convoking the Sodality is this: as soon as possible, those who are to be summoned, are to be called, and the reason for the Chapter will be given, the time and the place where it will be held, that will ordinarily be the month of September, when the **Fest of the Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis** falls. The enjoinder is to be given that everywhere Masses are to be celebrated, and prayers offered, for the happy outcome of business.

7. He will at the same time advise the Directors to convoke the Chapters of the Houses, which are made up of those who are in sacred orders, and two thirds of these constitute a legitimate Chapter, in which there will be deliberated matters to be proposed to the General Chapter, that would be useful for the House itself, or for the entire Sodality. All that is proposed, signed by the Capitulars, will be sent to the General Chapter.

8. In the convocation, such an interval of time is to be allowed, so that all who have been convoked can come with ease.

9. When the established day has arrived, it is permissible for the Chapter to begin, even though some of those who have been called are absent. At the beginning of every General Chapter, the Capitulars and all who are in the House, are to gather in Church. After the Hymn, *Veni, Creator*, they will all go to the Tomb of the Founder, of Ven. Memory, and they will recite the Psalm, *De Profundis*, for the deceased members. At the end of each session, there will be added the prayers, *Agimus tibi gratias*, in the Chapter, and again, the Psalm, *De Profundis* for these same deceased.

10. Then the Capitulars will proceed to the place of the meeting, and they will sit in this order: the President of the Chapter, the General Councilors, and the rest who have been endowed with the **Grade**, keeping the order of their Promotion.

11. Then, it will be decided by majority vote of those who are present, that they constitute a full and legitimate Chapter, provided, however, that there are at least two thirds of all those summoned, who are present.

12. When the Chapter has been thus proclaimed by a relative majority of secret votes, the Secretary of the Chapter is to be elected. The two eldest, together with the President of the Chapter, will inspect the ballots of this Election. It will be the duty of the Secretary to put in writing the **Acts of the Chapter**, and to affix to them the **Seal of the Sodality**.

13. When these matters have been taken care of, if the Chapter has been convoked for the election of the Superior General, the first business of all, will be this Election of the Superior General and his Council, and in the order constituted in the Chapter that follows. However, when it was convoked to take care of other business, the President will expose the most urgent reasons why the Chapter was convoked, and thus, the treatment of affairs will have its beginning.

14. First, therefore, are to be chosen by a relative majority of votes, three Members who, together with the President of the Chapter, and the Secretary will decide what Proposals are to be rejected, which are to be referred to the Superior General, and which ones are to be proposed to the General Chapter, from all that was proposed to be treated by the Chapters of the Houses, or by the general Councilors, or, by the individual capitulars, or lastly, by other members, and which were shown in writing to the Secretary of the Chapter.

15. These three Deputies, whom we have mentioned above, with the Superior General and the Secretary of the Chapter, will examine first what the individual Houses have sent in to be discussed; then, what the General Councilors have submitted; and lastly, that which other Members have sent in, in the order of age. From all of these, they will draw up a List of Matters to be proposed to the Chapter, and to be discussed under individual headings.

16. It is required that serious matters be proposed on one day, and be treated on another day; this is so that should its authors be Capitulars, they might briefly and clearly give the reasons for it. At the request of a third part of those having a vote, an end to the discussion is to be imposed, and the Chapter will then proceed to a decision by vote.

17. The Chapter can also, if necessity so demands, propose those articles to be added to the Constitutions, or to be changed, that the majority feel should be. But, should these articles be accepted by that reason of votes, they will have no binding force, unless the consent of the Holy See is had.

18. If the multitude of business, or its quality, should so demand, deputations can be instituted by the Chapter, so that it might judge about these matters, or about the Definitors to be elected.

19. Whether, and how many Definitors are to be elected, is to be established by more than half of the votes, and those who receive more than half of the votes, will have that power that the Chapter judges it will give to them, and they will give their opinion in those matters, especially committed to them by the Chapter.

20. The Secretary of the Chapter will have a Book in which are to be contained those Decrees that have been confirmed, and he will read all of it at once, in the full assembly before the dissolution of the Chapter, and he will then have this signed by himself, and by all the Capitulars in order, and will affix to it the **Seal of the Sodality**. All the **Acts of the Chapter** are to be sent to the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, that they be ratified.

21. The Chapter is not to be dissolved only on the judgment of the Superior General, without the consent of the Chapter itself. Moreover, after the Decrees have been ratified by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, they will be sent to all the Houses.

22. Before the Chapter is finished, four General Councilors and among these, the Procurator General, and the Monitor of the Superior, are to be elected, by a majority of votes in a secret ballot, if the term of their Office has expired.

23. In like manner, there will be elected the examiners for Admission to Novitiate and to Profession in our Sodality in accord with the Decree, *Regulari Disciplinae*, published on January 25, 1848, by the S. Congregation on the Religious State. They will remain in their Office up until the future General Chapter that will ordinarily be convoked. Lastly,

if his term of Office has been completed, the Master of Novices will be elected with a relative plurality of votes.

24. When all this has been taken care of, all will repair to the Church for the recitation of the *Te, Deum*, with the three orations, the first to the Most Holy trinity, the second of the Espousals of the B.V.M., and the third of Thanksgiving. For these prayers, all in the house ought to be present, and, at the end, the *De Profundis* shall be recited for the deceased of the Sodality.

Chapter II

Concerning the Election of the Superior General.

1. In order that one be able to be elected the Superior General, it is required that he has already received the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, that he be outstanding to the Members for the holiness of his life, for his love of the Sodality, for his dexterity and prudence in carrying out business.

2. There is a two-fold reason that could occur making it necessary to elect the Superior General, that is, either on account of the completion of his term of office, or on account of his death.

3. If it should be the former case, the Superior himself, at least two months before his term of office has expired, will indicate to the entire Sodality, the day on which his administration ends, and he will determine another day for the celebration of the General Chapter for the Election of his successor, and also indicating the Masses and customary prayers for obtaining light from above. Moreover, the time for the beginning of the Chapter of Election of the Superior, ought not to exceed the space of one month from the end of his term of Office.

4. From the day that his term expires, until the election of his successor, the Superior will continue in the government and administration of the Sodality, and the first Councilor will enjoy that same authority as at the death of the Superior General, until his successor has actually been constituted in his office.

5. The manner to be maintained in electing the superior is this: when the Chapter has been constituted, and the secretary elected, as has been described in a previous Chapter, the Assistant of the Election is chosen, who, together with the President of the Chapter, and the secretary will help the Secretary in collecting the votes, and in writing the Acts.

6. When the first order of business has been concluded, they will recess the next day, so that they might pray for celestial light to God, and better consider the one in the entire Sodality, who seems to be best suited for this responsibility.

7. On the day of the Election, the Mass of the Holy Spirit will be celebrated; afterwards, those who have the right of voting, will proceed to the place of the Chapter,

where alternately, in a low voice, they will recite together the Hymn, *Veni, Creator*, with its oration: *O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful...*; meanwhile, all the rest of the Sodality will be praying in Church.

8. When this has been taken care of, all the Members being present in the Chapter, will write on a paper, the name of the one in whose favor they wish to cast their vote, and they will place the ballot folded by them, in an urn that has been prepared, in this order, that first he advance who is the President, and then, all the rest, observing the order of the time they received the **Grade**.

9. Afterwards, the Secretary will take out the ballots, and will number them aloud, and if the number of papers concurs with the number of the Electors, one by one, on receiving them, he will hand them to the President, who once he has seen them, and shown them to both Assistants, he will give them to the Secretary to be read.

10. After the announcement of the votes, their numbers will be added up; if several have been nominated, the one who has more than half the votes, will be the Superior General.

11. If, however, in the first ballot, no one has received more than half the votes, in the very same manner, a second and a third ballot will be attempted.

12. If, then, in three such attempts, and no one has received an absolute plurality of votes, then a ballot will be attempted only between those who in the last one, had received some votes.

13. At last, when a sufficient number of votes has been obtained for the Election of the Superior, the President, if he himself has not been elected, will indicate publicly that one has received more than half the votes, and has been elected, and forthwith, he will draw up the Decree in this manner:

Since, in the full and legitimate Chapter, having added up the number of all the votes, more than half of them has named and elected Rev. Fr. N.N., I, N.N., by the authority of the entire Sodality, declare that the above mentioned Rev. Fr. N.N. has been elected the Superior of the whole Sodality of the Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance of Bishops. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. At Verona, or elsewhere, etc.

14. If the President himself was elected, the Secretary will publish the votes, and will draw up the Decree and he will sign it, and affix to it the **Seal of the Sodality**.

15. After the publication of the Decree, no one is permitted to attempt another Election, but immediately, all will come forward to manifest their reverence to the elected Superior, following the leadership of the President, with the Secretary, and the Assistant, in the order described above, unless someone of them has been elected, and kneeling down, they will kiss his hand. The Superior, however, who has been elected,

cannot refuse either the election, nor the reverence shown him, being mindful in whose name he ought to permit it.

16. When this reverence has been paid, the ballots will be burned in the very place of the Chapter, and all will immediately repair to the Church for the recitation of the *Te, Deum* with the Prayer of Thanksgiving. The Secretary, in the Name of the entire Sodality, will inform by letter all the Houses, that as soon as possible, the Superior will be known to all the Members.

17. After this, the Major Officials are to be elected, the examiners for admission to Novitiate and Profession, and the Master of Novices, as was stated in a previous Chapter. Then, if in the same Chapter, grave matters are to be treated, this should be done as expeditiously as possible. In the meantime, however, it is not permitted for the elected Superior to change the officials of the Houses, until after the adjournment of the Chapter. The Superior will bring the Chapter to a close, with the consent of the Capitulars, with the prayers outlined in the previous Chapter.

18. If, however, the Election is held on account of the death of the Superior General, this procedure is to be maintained. The first of the Councilors, as soon as possible after the death of the Superior General, will inform by letter all the Directors of the Houses, and at the same time, he will convoke the General Chapter, which will be held not before one month, nor after four months from the time that the Superior General died. Lastly, all these things will be done, which were described in the same Chapter concerning the celebration of a General Chapter, and for the election of the Superior.

Chapter III

Concerning the Internal Regime of the Sodality

1. Over the entire Sodality, is the Superior General, elected by the General Chapter, to whom are added four Councilors, who will assist him in governing the Sodality.

2. The Superior General can choose any House of the Sodality for his residence. All that pertains to the Offices, personnel, movable and immovable possessions, and both spiritual and temporal matters, are subject to his administration. Therefore, it is up to the Superior to assign each one, and oversee all that pertains to the bodily and spiritual well-being. It is also his prerogative to accept **Sacred Missions, or the other more serious forms of preaching**³¹. He can do all this, either through himself, or his delegate.

3. At least once a year, he will visit, either by himself, or through another, all the houses of the Sodality, and he will have a concern for the progress of our members in spiritual matters; he will have special care that regular discipline be kept, the observance of Poverty, as well as the preservation of common life. He will see to it whether our

³¹ There are other “serious forms of preaching” along with the Sacred Missions [cf. the Jesuit ideal of *Praedicare in Paupertate*]. .

members, and especially the teachers, observe all that has been sanctioned by our Constitutions concerning studies. He will make sure that there are none who are being detained in some ministries who would be more suited to other kinds. He will also visit, either himself, or through a delegate, the buildings and the stable goods, and he will see whether they need restoration, or care. He will see to it that whatever is necessary to keep these in good repair, will be taken care of just as soon as is possible.

4. For the handling of business, the Superior General will be assisted by the help of a capable Secretary, whom he himself will choose.

5. In matters of greater moment, such as for the Admission and Profession of the Novices, for the decree of ability for casting a vote in General Chapters, for the granting of the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, as well as for the Election of the Directors of the Houses, and the other officials, as well as of the teachers of theological doctrine, for temporary interpretations of the Constitutions for particular cases, for the foundation of a new House, for the dismissal of some Member who has pronounced Vows, and lastly, when it is a question of the contracts of buying and selling of movable and immovable precious objects, the Superior must seek the deliberative vote of his Councilors, having observed the rights of the Ordinaries, and their Apostolic good pleasure, in accord with the prescripts of the S. Canons, in so far as this will be necessary. Moreover, at least once a month, the Superior will summon his Councilors, and together, with them he will take care of those matters which seem to be required for the greater good, and the ncrease of the Sodality

6. Whenever it would be necessary to bring a matter to a vote in the General Chapter, so also in his Council, the Superior will enjoy two votes, except in Elections.

7. In the more serious matters, and in those with lasting effects, the Superior and his Council can make no decision, but there is required the decisive vote of the greater part of the Members in a General Chapter. Such matters would be to establish, or change statutes, or to declare on doubts which might exist concerning our statutes, saving the right of approbation of the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, that is to be sought; likewise, to dissolve, or to alienate houses that were once established, but with the permission of the Holy See.

8. The Superior will remain in his Office for ten years, and he can be re-elected; but, in this case, he cannot exercise his power, unless he is approved by the Holy See. At the death of the Superior, the first Councilor takes his place, and in the manner and time noted in the previous chapter. He will be able to effect no change in discipline, nor in administration in that time that he will rule the Sodality and he will enjoy only one vote in carrying out all business.

9. If it should happen, and may God avert it, that the Superior should neglect his duties in a most grave manner, then, he who had been elected Monitor from among the rest of the Councilors, will admonish the Superior efficaciously concerning his Office;

but, if this does not suffice, then the Councilors will inform the S. Congregation of Bishops and Regulars about this matter, so that she in her wisdom, might provide.

Chapter IV

Concerning the General Councilors, the Procurator General and the Monitor.

1. To the Superior General will be added four Councilors, by the Sodality assembled in Chapter, by a relative plurality of votes, to be elected individually from among those who have the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**. The first elected is he who is to take the place of the Superior, if he should die, as is found in the Chapter on the Superior, n. 8; then, the Procurator General; then, the third and fourth. Lastly, among these four, there is elected by secret vote, the Monitor of the Superior General.
2. The Election of all these will take place a every General Chapter convoked by law, every fifth year; so that they are always to be elected every time there is an election of a new Superior General, even if they have not yet completed their term of Office.
3. So that the Office entrusted to them might suffer no detriment, they cannot usually reside outside of the House in which the Superior General resides.
4. The Councilors are to be present at all deliberations, that are described in the previous chapter, n. 5. Concerning all these matters, together with the Superior General, they will decide by secret ballot, which will have the force of a deliberation; so that the business which had been proposed for deliberation, cannot be handled any differently by the Superior than that which had been decided by the majority of votes, saving always the right of the Ordinaries and the permission from the Holy See, in so far as this is required.
5. The Procurator General oversees the material, or economical state of the entire Sodality. And he executes purchases, and buildings and other matters of this nature; but, he cannot enter into juridical suits without the consent of the holy See. Moreover, it is up to the procurator to find out what is necessary for the individual Houses, that they might be supplied. Moreover, every year he will render an account of the patrimonial state of the entire Sodality to the Superior General, and to the rest of the Councilors, that it might be reviewed, and at the same time, he will render an account of the entire administration of the goods of the Sodality.
6. He who has been named from among the Councilors as the Monitor of the Superior General, when he notices anything of some moment in the same Superior, both as regards his person, or his office, he will admonish him about these matters, with due modesty and humility, and should the seriousness of the matter so demand, with the consent of his other Councilors, he will treat with him with greater efficacy, in so far as it was pointed out in an earlier chapter, n. 9.
7. The Superior will distribute the other offices to the Councilors, in so far as necessity will demand. It would be required that one of them be entrusted with the care

of all that pertains in general to the Novitiate, and the other, with whatever pertains to scholastic matters.

8. Should any one of the Councilors die before the new Chapter, another will be elected within a month to take the place of the deceased, by the Superior and the rest of the General Councilors, by secret ballot; this one will remain in office until the very next General Chapter.

Chapter V

Concerning the Individual Houses

1. When, by singular favor of God, a House has been opened, before all else, the Superior General will obtain the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese where the House to be opened stands.

2. No House will be founded unless there be assigned to it sufficient revenue to take care of the food and the lodging of the members. Every House of ours is to have the ownership of stable goods, property, income, as well as movable goods, which were applied or donated to it from its first foundation, or which afterwards, came to it by accession from anyone at all, whether an extern, or a 'Domestic' [that is a Member], with the consent of the Superior. The House itself will administer these goods in the manner that is to be indicate to it by the Superior General.

3. The number of members in erecting new Houses is not to be less than six. Moreover, the Superior of every House is elected by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, and he will have the name of Director. A Director may also be elected from among those who do not have the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, as long as they have completed five years in the Priesthood and Profession.

4. To the Director are to be added by the Superior General and his Council, an Economus, a Master of Spiritual Things, and a Master of Exterior Discipline, and in the House engaged in studies, a Prefect of Studies. All of these will make up the Council of the Director. If the times, places and remaining factors so move, in the assignment of the duties of the Houses, some are to be omitted, especially on account of the small number of members, and the Superior General, but with the consent of his Councilors, will have all authority concerning this. However, never can offices of Director and Economus be conferred on one and he same member.

5. In the administration of the House, all spiritual, scholastic and material business pertains to the Director. But, in those matters that seem to be of greater moment, his Council will be called by him; nor is anything else to be decided, unless its consent is had. However, the Director may not buy, nor sell immovable goods, or precious movable goods, not construct buildings, nor tear down those already built; nor, can he handle new matters of great moment, unless with the consent of his Council, and also with the consent of the superior General. He cannot accept **the most important courses**

of the Sacred Missions, or other kinds of preaching, either for himself, or for others, or initiate any functions whatsoever, or pious works of beneficence, which would imply an almost perpetual responsibility in our Houses, without either the special, or general permission of the Superior General.

6. In the administration of the House, the Director will so conduct himself in all aspects of it, that at any moment in the time of his administration, he could render to God and to the Superior General, an account of it. He is to exercise most diligent care that religious discipline and the observance of the Vows suffer no harm, but rather, that they increase with the passing of time. Each year, he shall render a report to the Superior General, on the state of the community, and the patrimonial state of the House, which he, and the Economus, and the remaining Councilors will sign in their own hand.

7. The Director will remain in office for three years. For a just cause, he can be removed by the Superior before his term is over. When the three year term is over, the Superior General could confirm him for another three years, but with the consent of the majority of his Councilors. The remaining official of the Houses are elected, or confirmed, every three years.

8. The Economus, in the absence of the Director, takes hi place, and his principal duty is to administer the material goods, to have the care of the Coadjutor Brothers. Hence, the Economus will opportunely provide to take care of, and diligently to distribute, whatever is necessary for the food, clothing and other matters of this type. He, moreover, is to be always prepared to render an account to his Director, as many times as he will be asked.

9. The Master of Spiritual Things, will take care of all the spiritual maters of the House, both those that pertain to the Members, as well as those others which do not pertain to the Sodality, and, should it be necessary, he will admonish the Director about these matters. He will ordinarily deliver the Sermons for exciting the fervor of the members, and will direct the functions in the domestic Chapel.

10. The Prefect of Studies is over the studies of our members, and he will direct them according to our Constitutions.

11. The Master of Exterior Discipline will oversee, with vigilance, the external discipline of the students, and their right order; and he will also see to it that cleanliness, that pertains to health and good example, be the responsibility of all, both concerning themselves, as well as all other matters pertaining to the House, and with the assent of the Director. To him, in a particular way, pertains the care of the sick members; both he, and the remaining Superiors of the House, ought to deal with these sick members with utmost kindness and concern. For this, there is to be assigned to him among the Coadjutor members, an Infirmarian, who is outstanding in his aptitude for this task, and his charity toward the ill. He will also be in attendance with the Infirmarian, and the visiting doctor, and he will sedulously provide the prescribed medicine.

12. In addition, to these officials, it might be expedient for the Director, with the consent of his Council, to assign others, as helpers, if the number of the members of his House would demand, or advise this being done. These would be the sacristan, and the prefect of health. The duty of the former would be to care for the sacred worship in our public Church of the House, of directing our Church custodians, of collecting Mass stipends. The latter would have the care of the sick, and would assist the Master of Exterior Discipline and take his place.

F I N I S



FORMULA OF SIMPLE VOWS

Which are pronounced in the Sodality of Apostolic Missionaries

For the Assistance of Bishops

I, N.N., ALTHOUGH MOST UNWORTHY, NEVERTHELESS TRUSTING IN THE DIVINE GOODNESS AND MERCY, IN THE PRESENCE OF ALMIGHTY GOD, OF THE BLESSED AND EVER IMMACULATE VIRGIN MARY, OF SAINT JOSEPH, HER MOST HOLY SPOUSE, AND OF THE ENTIRE HEAVENLY COURT, DO VOW AND PROMISE TO ALMIGHTY GOD, AND TO YOU, THE SUPERIOR OF OUR SODALITY [or, to you, representing the Superior], AND TO YOUR SUCCESSORS [or, His], PERPETUAL POVERTY, CHASTITY AND OBEDIENCE, ACCORDING TO WHAT IS CONTAINED IN OUR CONSTITUTIONS



HISTORICAL APPENDIX**Fr. Joseph Stofella's Note on these Constitutions**³²**Second Phase of the Historical Changes in the Constitutions**

When Fr. Marani died , July 1, 1871, what had not been done for Papal Approbation had to be attempted to save the very life of the Congregation. As long as the Founder was living, his personal authority took the place of the Constitutions; even the personal authority of Fr. Marani, a laborer from the very first hour, and the *alter ego* of the Founder, had been able to supply and make up in practice for the lacunae in the Constitutions; but then this authority does not appear to have been transferred to their successors. Henceforth, the General Chapters intervene for the completion and revision of the Constitutions.

The first of the series of General Chapters was held in Verona on July 3, 1871, in the Massalongo Home, where Fr. Marani died, and which had been his residence every since he had been forced to vacate the Motherhouse, because of its confiscation. All the priests of the Congregation attended, except for three who could not absent themselves from the Juniorate at Villazzano, Trent; but even these were shown the report of the meetings, and ratified very willingly in writing the measures approved by the Chapter. *Realizing the extraordinary circumstances in which the Institute found itself, the capitulars decided to elect a provisional Superior..., and meanwhile Frs. Rigoni, Lenotti and Peter Vignola were given the task of drawing up a rule which would determine the manner and the limits of power of the Superior General concerning those points about which the Founder had left nothing in writing. Fr. Lenotti was elected Provisional Superior*³³.

The Chapter drew to a close and the Commission began its research. Besides the Constitutions of the Founder, it took as sources the Pontifical Decrees, and, adhering to their spirit, the Constitutions and rules of the Society of Jesus. When the Second Chapter convened on September 11, the Commission presented its work as ***Appendix to the Twelfth Part of the Constitutions of the Rev. Fr. Berton***³⁴.

All the priests of the Congregation, sixteen in number, were present at the Chapter. The above-mentioned work, writes Fr. Rigoni, was examined minutely; everything was calmly pondered and freely discussed, chapter by chapter, paragraph by paragraph, number by number. The majority vote decided what was to be re-touched, changed, or deleted; nothing was adopted but what the majority wanted, or rather, almost the totality of the voters. The voting, in fact, was either unanimous, or almost so. Thus, for example, the adoption of the **Common Rules**, taken from the *Regulae Communes* of

³² Cf. *Costituzioni del Ven. Servo di Dio, D. Gaspare Bertoni. Fondatore dei Preti delle sacre Stimmate di N.S.G.C.*, Verona: A.M.B. 1951, pp. 27-33, *Seconda fase - Terza fase - Quarta fase*. English translation was done by the later Very Rev. Fr. Gilbert Fini, CSS Superior General, and Fr. Charles J. Grady, CSS.

³³ Cf. Fiorio, *Cronaca*, pp. 130, f.

³⁴ This appears as a separate text in this Series, ***Appendix 1871***.

the Society of Jesus, was unanimous, and these Rules were meant to be observed faithfully and read publicly at meals.

In substance, this was the Work, together with **the Constitutions of the Founder**, printed in 1888, since subsequent General Chapters [III, IX and X] had not deleted, or substantially modified it very much. However, it was published as a distinct part and arranged in five *Appendices*. Three of these were placed – in different type - between the Parts of the Constitutions, and two at the end.

Third Phase of the Historical Changes in the Constitutions

In 1888, the Superior General, Fr. Peter Vignola, and his Council, sent Fr. Tabarelli to Rome with all the documents necessary for the approbation of the Institute. Among these, naturally, in the first place, were *The Constitutions of the Founder with the Modifications suggested by Experience*, namely the original text and the added *Appendices*, [the **Work** mentioned above]. They were perhaps not submitted with any great hope of obtaining an immediate approbation, since the work was frankly somewhat of a hodgepodge, but of getting concrete directions on how to obtain it as soon as possible.

*On the advice of Bishop Sepiacci, the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and regulars, Fr. Tabarelli accompanied the documents with a brief, to insure an easier understanding if our rules and customs, and to bolster certain points which concerned the regime of the Institute, and were greatly insisted on by our Fathers. These points chiefly regarded the Superior General's duration in Office for life; his absolute power in governing the Institute, with the aid of the Councilors who would act only in an advisory capacity; the Councilors' duration in office for the life-term of the Superior General; and the convocation of the General Chapter, not to be held at stated times, but left to the judgment of the Superior General*³⁵. Even on these points, however, they professed themselves ready to accept as law even the simple recommendations of this sacred Congregation.

The study of the matter was entrusted to the Consultor, Fr. John Mary Camilleri, an Augustinian, who, on the basis of the documentation accompanying it, made the most flattering recommendation of the Institute and cast a favorable vote for its approbation, but proposed certain substantial modifications in the Constitutions. He forwarded his opinion to the sacred Congregation on October 12th of the same year.

This Sacred Congregation deliberated on the observations and added others of its own, twenty-three *Animadversiones*, on February 20, 1889. It noted that the name was missing *by which the Institute desires to be endowed*, and imposed a radical fusing of Constitutions and Appendices into one sole compendious and organic body systematically arranged, with the following corrections to be made:

³⁵ Fiorio, *Cronaca*, p. 191.

that the Superior General's term in office be from six to ten years;
 that the General Councilors have a deliberative vote in matters of greater importance;
 that there is no solemn vows, and so forth.

Number 14 is characteristic. This number imposes the total suppression of citations from authors and of texts from the Doctors of the Church³⁶, in order not to make the work appear as a treatise on Ascetics. This was another huge cut from the text of the Founder and – for one who cannot find escape in equivocation – from the expression of his spirit. But, strictly juridical terms are needed to assure and determine the formulation of the 'minimum' required of a member of an Institute, and which, moreover, must serve as the juridical basis for the solution of controversies which might arise among the members of the Institute, or among them and the Institute itself. It is self-evident that Holy Church in approving a text does not intend to circumscribe its spirit, but rather afford it a focal point from whence the spirit itself draws all its prerogatives.

Number 23 of the *Animadversiones* concludes saying that there are still more matters that need emending, in the expressions, sentences and things of this sort; but it would take up this business anew when the matter would be re-submitted for examination. Also the Approbation of the Institute was deferred until another time.

As soon as the copy of the *Animadversiones* reached Verona, the work of revising and recasting the Constitutions, in accordance with the recommendations made, began at once, so that the **XIth General Chapter**, which convened at the Motherhouse on September 12, 1889, could study and modify them and finally judge them ready to be submitted anew to the examination of Rome.

The name chosen for the Institute was the one which the founder had established as its **End**, and which Fr. Marani had adopted as its official title: **Apostolic Missionaries in the Service of Bishops**. It decreed that the Superior General's term of Office be for ten years; that the General Chapter convene periodically every five years; that certain matters of greater importance would require the deliberative vote of the Councilors. All in all, it abided by the suggestions made, without jeopardizing, as far as it was possible, the ideas and the wording of the Ven. Founder.

The Fourth Phase of the Historical Changes in the Constitutions

This time in Rome, the work was given for examination to Monsignor Albert Battandier, who forwarded his judgment to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and regulars on June 12, 1890. He discarded the name **Apostolic Missionaries** from the outset, since it was an honorary title, the bestowal of which was a prerogative reserved to the sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide. Instead, he suggested **retaking the name Priests of the Sacred Stigmata**, which the Sacred Congregation later completed – recalling the Decree of Praise – **of the Sacred Stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ**. As

³⁶ The large majority of these derive from Fr. Bertoni's copyng many paragraphs from Suarez' *De Religione Societatis Iesu*

a natural consequence of this, **there could not be a class of members in the Institute called *Apostolic Missionaries*, a dignity which the Superior General was to confer on certain professed priests for reasons of prestige and age, and which would automatically make them members of the General Chapters.**

As an alternative, Mons. Battandier proposed that members of the general Chapters be chosen by the elective system. Then, he listed a good number of objections, corrections and deletions to be made, as well as modifications and proposals, all summarized by the sacred Congregation, in 16 *Animadversiones* the last of which again noted that *there are still many other items to be emended, regarding expressions, and phrases...*

This time, however, the sacred Congregation seconded the vote of its Consultor, *deferring the approval of the Constitutions to another time*, but deciding to *grant the approval of the Institute*. In fact, on **September 15, 1890**, the Sacred Congregation published the **Decree of Approbation of the Institute**.

The **XIIth General Chapter** which would convene at the Motherhouse a few days later, on September 24th, received this news with joy, and at once corrected the Constitutions according to the *Animadversiones*, from Rome. It decreed that the new revised edition of the Constitutions be printed and that the Superior General promulgate it *in the name of the entire chapter*; it also ordained that it be *sent to all Directors and Superiors of Houses, whose duty it would be to make them known and observed by all their subjects*. Having done this, the Chapter thought it best, for the time being, not to make any immediate presentation of the revised Constitutions to the Holy See for approbation.

Thus, the **Fifth Phase** would wait nearly 20 years for the next step to be taken under Fr. John B. Tomasi, Superior General, in 1911.

