

## A. SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

### Presentation

**CF 6.** The Means [to be employed]:

The spiritual perfection of each one [the perfection of oneself];

Perfection in ecclesiastical doctrines [doctrinal proficiency];

Common Life;

The perpetual exercise of obedience, chastity and poverty

The program of living regarding food, clothing and lodging, will be in harmony with the more observant clergy among whom the Missionaries live, for the edification of the faithful, both regarding Christian parsimony and evangelical poverty.

### Introduction

[1] In this *Compendium Rude*, St. Gaspar Bertoni lists the principal Means to be used in the realization of the Apostolic Mission: this might best be seen in the Latin Vulgate translation of **1 Tm 4:16: *Take heed to yourself and to doctrine...***<sup>1</sup>. This needs to be seen in its context in the Latin Vulgate:

*... Till I come, attend unto reading, to exhortation and to doctrine. Neglect not the grace that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood. Meditate upon these things, be wholly in these things: that your profiting may be manifest to all. Take heed to yourself and to doctrine; be earnest in them. For in doing this you shall save yourself and those that hear you...* [cf. 1 Tm 4:11-16]

[2] St. Thomas' Commentary<sup>2</sup> here unfolds thus:

**# 171:** By two means is one suitable then for teaching, i.e. through reading in which one acquires **knowledge** – and by its exercise, in which one is rendered ready. And therefore when the Apostle says, *until I come, attend unto reading*, i.e. of the holy books. **1 M 12:9: *We, though, needed none of these things, having for our comfort the holy books that are in our hands.*** **Jn 5:39: *Search the Scriptures.*** And this is what is meant in **Ex 25:12, f.** where it is said that in the Ark of the Lord there ought always to be carrying rods and four golden rings, which you shall put in the four corners of the ark: and this was as though **to be always ready** for carrying the Ark of the Covenant.

And for the exercise, or practice, there is necessary our exhortation as for acting, and doctrine for knowing. **Jr 3:15: *And I will give you Pastors according to My own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine.***

<sup>1</sup> *Attende tibi et doctrinae ...* [2 Co 4:16]

<sup>2</sup> *S. Thomase Aquinatis, Super Epistulas S. Pauli Lectura.* Vol II. Ed. VIII revisa. Taurini /Roma: Marietti 1953, ## 171-176, pp. 245, f.

**# 172:** Therefore, when he says **Neglect not** the Apostle establishes the reason for the above warning; and

- first, the text places the cause from the **gift** received;
- secondly the Apostle notes the cause from **the expected reward**, when he says:

**Attend to yourself ...**

Then, he establishes the reason;

Secondly, he shows how that which is contained in the reason can be fulfilled, in n. 175: **Meditate on these things.**

**# 173:** Here therefore says, **Neglect not the grace**, as though he meant: **Pay attention**, because whoever receives grace should not be negligent in it, but ought to profit by it. That servant hiding money in the earth, is punished due to his negligence **Mt 25:24: Do not, therefore, neglect the grace**, etc. Understand by this, either the **Episcopal** dignity, or the gift of knowledge, or **prophecy**, or of **miracles**, of which nothing should be neglected. **2 Co 6:1: And we helping do exhort you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain.**

I say **grace which is given to you for prophecy**, i.e. by divine inspiration. For in the early Church where indeed and on account of God elections took place, no one was assumed into the episcopacy unless by divine election, as Ambrose and Nicholas were elected. And the text calls this inspiration a **prophecy**. As a result, the Gloss says, i.e., 'by the election of the saints', because the saints did not elect the one that they did not know was elected by God. Thus the Apostle foresaw how this would take place for the people. **Pr 29:18: When prophecy shall fail**, i.e., such a manner of election, **the people shall be scattered abroad.**

And how? **With imposition of hands of the priesthood.** Another reading has **by the hands of the priests.** And just as was said above, the words **presbyteri**, or **episcopi** are interchangeable, because **sacerdotes** and **presbyteri** were those who received their order with the imposition of hands. **Nb 27:18: take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and put your hand on him.** etc. Also the Lord imposed hands on children, as it is said in **Mt 19:15**. Likewise, the Apostles did on the seven deacons **Ac 6:6**. Therefore, hands are imposed on those to be ordained as a bishop.

**# 174:** But, the question is whether the bishop ought to be ordained by three, and why is this said in the singular number of the **presbyteri**?

I respond: This the Apostle states, therefore, because even though this is applied to many, nevertheless, **one** is the **principal** ordaining prelate and the others are co-assistants. Nonetheless it can be said that then this constitution had not yet been made, as then there were few bishops, who could not be gathered for a ceremony.

Another reading here is **presbyteri**, i.e., those who imposed hands not in so far as they were simply men, but in so far as they were priests. And this imposition signified a conferral of grace, not that the ministers themselves would give the grace, but because they would signify grace given by Christ. Thus, it is of those alone who are ministers of Christ. And therefore, the text says **presbyterii**, or, **presbyteri** because the imposition of the hand, one is that which is conferred by deacons, and another which is done by priests.

**# 175:** Then the text continues: ***Meditate upon these things***, and this shows how there is to be fulfilled that which is said, i.e. that one continuously meditate on those matters which pertain to his office. Heb 13:17: ***...For the prelates watch as being to render an account of your souls. - Meditate upon these things***, i.e., think over them frequently which pertain to the care of your flock; ***be wholly in these things***, i.e., that your whole virtue be committed to this. And why? That your progress might be manifest to all. Mt 5:15: ***Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel... Ph 4:5: ... Let your modesty be known to all*** .

**# 176:** And each should keep all these things on account of the expected reward, on account of which the Apostle adds: ***Some so attend to their doctrine that they neglect the care of themselves; but the Apostle states that first each should attend to himself, and to doctrine afterwards***. Si 30:24: ***Have pity on your own soul, pleasing God***. Thus Jesus began to do and to teach. Continue in these things, exercise them insistently. 2 Tm 4:2: ***...Be instant in season!*** . And the fruit from this will be copious, because doing this, ***and yourself***, and so on. And this is great. Jas 5:20: ***...He must know that he who causes a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death***. Dn 12:3: ***... But they that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that instruct many to justice as stars for all eternity***.

In his legislation on 'ordered charity', that the first goal of our apostolic mission is our own confreres [cf. **CF ## 188, 262**], for an aspect of this ministry, St. Gaspar quotes Si 30:24 in his ***Original Constitutions***:

**283.** The second condition is: that [private **conversations**] be carried on with great moderation and circumspection. Moreover, the manner and the measure are to be taken from the purpose already mentioned, in which two aspects need to be taken into consideration. One of these pertains to God, or, which comes to the same, for one's own growth in charity; and the other pertains to the good of our neighbors. For, unless some fruit is hoped for our neighbors, all such conversation is a waste of time. Furthermore, St. Bernard states [Letter 8]: 'Right order requires that one first strive to satisfy one's own conscience, and then, that of others. Indeed the first level of piety, about which it is written, is this: ***Have pity on your own soul pleasing God [Si 30:24]***. From this first step, ordered charity proceeds by a straight path, for indeed the precept is to love the other in the measure of oneself.'

### [3] Important Paragraphs from Vatican II:

**SC 2:** For it is the liturgy through which, **especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist**, 'the work of our redemption is accomplished' and it is through the liturgy, especially, that the faithful are enabled to express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church. The Church is essentially both human and **divine**, visible but endowed with **invisible** realities, zealous in action and dedicated to **contemplation**, present in the world, but as a **pilgrim**, so constituted that in her the human is **directed toward and subordinated to the divine, the visible to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, the object of our quest** [cf. Heb 13:14]...

**DV 8 b:** ...The Tradition that comes from the apostles makes progress in the Church, with the help of the Holy Spirit. There is a growth in insight into the realities and words that are being passed on. This comes about in various ways. It comes through the **contemplation** and **study** of believers who ponder these things in their hearts [cf. Lk 2:19, 51]. It comes from the infinite sense of spiritual realities which they **experience**. And it comes from the preaching of those who have received, along with their right of succession in the **episcopate, the sure charism of truth [Magisterium]**. Thus, as the centuries go by, the Church is always advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth, until eventually the words of God are fulfilled in her...

**[4] Brief Commentary:**<sup>3</sup> This second paragraph of Article 8 of *Dei Verbum*, treats of the **dynamic nature of Tradition**. This Deposit of Faith begins in the Trinity and is transmitted first to and through the Apostles to the Church of all ages. There is meant to be a **growing** understanding of the words and realities that have been handed down to us. The factors listed are: **contemplation, study** on the part of believers and their **inner understanding** flowing through **spiritual experience** – in the proclamation of the **teaching office**. The Church and its understanding of revelation are moving forward towards the fullness of the Divine Word in the life after death. This development in understanding is deeply rooted in the whole life of the Church.

The **spiritual experience** of the Church is its believing, praying, liturgy, monuments of Tradition through loving exchange across the centuries of the faith being lived. It is the duty of the Magisterium in this process is to conserve and hand on the word of God in its **integrity**. The law of progress, continuing conversion, are indeed the vocation of the Church – the Word of God is compared to a seed in the Parable of the Sower of the Seed of God's Word [cf. Mk 4:1, ff., par.; cf. Jn 4:36] – the Divine Word is a 'talent' [cf. Mt 25: 14, ff.] bestowed on the Church. The Church is called to be trustworthy' by developing this special 'talent.' The law of life in the Church is one of development of understanding the Divine Word, and an intensified living of it.

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph RATZINGER, 'Chapter II. The transmission of Divine Revelation', in: *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*. Edited by Herbert Vorgrimler. Volume 3. London/NY: Burns & Oates/ Herder & Herder 1968, pp. 186, ff.

**A. Spiritual Progress**  
[cf. CF ## 34; 42;47; 48; 263; 283; 284; 313-314]

**FOURTH PART**  
**THE PROGRESS OF THE CONFRERES**  
**CF, cc. 1-6, ## 47-68**

Presentation

In modern terms, this might be called “**Continuing Education**”, “**On-going Formation**”, “**Life-long**” **Conversion [intellectual, moral, religious, psychological]** and it is a major piece of Fr. Bertoni’s legacy. A careful reading of his **Original Constitutions** might reveal the following types of **Profectus** :

[I] **Living the Constitutions comparable to a portrait** :The dynamic nature of St. Gaspar Bertoni’s **Constitutions** as **a Contemplation toward Hope**, is also indicated by the progressive nature of a **development** indicated for **Spirituality, Doctrine, Membership** and the **Apostolate**. His Constitutions are an effort to make a **portrait** of Jesus Christ in our lives – Fr. Joseph Stofella, CPS, explains this in his commentary on the **Memoriale Privato** [his Spiritual Diary] of St. Gaspar:

**26th FEBRUARY 1809**

[113.] **We must make in ourselves a portrait of Jesus Christ.**

...This entry could very well have been inspired by a text of Fr Da Ponte in a Meditation on the Incarnation<sup>4</sup>:

*...God showed, in the last days, His Holiness and all His Virtues by impressing them on the God-made-man. **He wanted Him to be a visible portrait of them all, so that we may be stimulated by His example to imitate them** while he helps us by His grace to acquire them. In this way nobody can excuse himself from doing it...*

We want to report here a quotation from Fr Surin's Spiritual Letters. Fr. Bertoni read with great interest his *Life* which he will quote also in his writings. That great Jesuit said:

*...What is needed is **the image of Jesus Christ. It is this divine portrait which we have to draw in our hearts...***<sup>5</sup>

In the index of the more *notable matters* the word which refers to this quotation has the French ***portrait***.

This ‘portrait’ is not comparable to an immediate snap-shot – perhaps a better example would be the work of **iconographers** working on a revealed theme – each personality is an individual, in the community context. They artists take a biblical

<sup>4</sup> Fr. DaPonte, I, of Part 2, n. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Surin, *Lettres Spirituelles*. Tome I, Letter 24. Lyon 1843.

passage – meditate, contemplate upon it – do some penance and mortification, in the hopes of ‘experiencing’ the mystery at hand. Here it is the mystery of Jesus Christ, that of **putting on His mind** [cf. Ph 2:5, of **imitating, following after Him**]. This is the work of an entire life-time.

**[II]** Therefore, the living of the **Original Constitutions** is intended one of a **hope-filled work in progress**. This principle of ‘**growth**’ applies to all spirituality, learning, to the juridical levels of membership as well as **gradually** assuming the **more important ministries** [cf. **CF ## 158; 185; 262**], the true office of the **Apostolic Missionaries**.

**CF # 34:** In like manner, every six months there will be a scrutiny of the Novices so that both their perseverance and also their **progress** in the virtues and interior discipline might be the more apparent.

Progress in formation, in the Stigmatine Life and Mission, its spirituality and its learning, are a major concern of the Founder for the Community . The context for this Constitution may be noted when pondering its location in the **Original Constitutions** :

**c. 3: The Manner in which the Novice is trained  
[Novitiate Formation] - CF ## 33-39**

**CF # 33:** scrutinies every six months [cf. also **CF # 34**]; n. 98: Examen, c. 4, n. 41:  
concerning general, particular laws of **Church** - n. 18: Examen, c. 1, n. 13; nn. 198, 199: Part I, c. 4, n. 5 & E;  
**instructions of the Master**  
**the general, particular statutes of this Institute** - [cf. **CF ## 31; 155**]; n. 18: Examen, c. 1 n. 13; n. 198: Part I, c. 4, n. 5, E; n. 395: Part IV, c. 7, n. 2; n. 428: Part IV, c. 10, n. 6 6; n. 585: Part VI, c. 3, n. 3 3; n. 654: Pars VII, c. 4, n. 12; n. 811: Part IX, c. 6, n. 14, I.  
**draw up a ‘compendium’** - n. 20: Examen, c. 1, n. 13, G; nn. 195, 196: Pars I, c. 4, n. 3, B & C.

As is well known, St. Gaspar does introduce his basic ideal with a **Compendium Rude** [cf. **CF ## 1-8**] – summarizing what is to follow:

**CF # 34:** scrutiny ever six months:  
**perseverance** - n. 193: Part I, c. 4, n. 3; n. 243: Part III, c. 1, n. 1;  
**progress in interior discipline** - [cf. **CF ## 47, ff.**]

Here the legislation asks for a deeper appreciation on the part – their development in the interior discipline of their lives will contribute greatly also in their perseverance in it, if indeed this is their vocation to serve God in living the life of the Congregation. Regarding the various candidates, this law of Progress leads to the ultimate Juridical Promotion, that of serving God in the Congregation as an **Apostolic Missionary** - properly so-called:

**[III] Apostolic, Spiritual Experiments:**

**CF # 42 [ Continuing Spiritual ‘Experiments’ after Novitiate]:** In this time, through varied and new experiments and testing, each will show himself to be formed, so that his piety, humility and prudence will be evident to all, especially to the Superiors.

The six ‘Experiments/Experiences’ of St. Ignatius for the first and on-going formation of candidates for the Company of Jesus are the following [CSJ nn. 6570]:

...The first experience consists in making the **Spiritual Exercises for one month**, or a little less [cf. nn. 277, 279]; that is to say, in the candidate’s examining his conscience, thinking over his whole past life and making a general confession [cf. nn. 98; 200], meditating upon his sins, contemplating [cf. nn. 277; 340; 343; 345; 582] the events and mysteries of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ our Lord, exercising himself in praying vocally and mentally according to the capacity of the persons, according to what will be taught to him in our Lord, and so forth.. [n. 65].

The second experience is to **serve for another month in hospitals**, or one of them. The candidates take their meals, or sleep in it, or in them, or serve for one, or several hours during the day, according to the times, places, and persons. They should help and serve all the sick and the well, in conformity with the directions they receive, in order to lower and humble themselves more, thus giving clear proof of themselves to the effect that they are completely giving up the world with its pomps and vanities, that in everything they may serve their Creator and Lord, crucified for them. [n. 66].

The Third experience is to spend **another month in making a pilgrimage** without money and even in begging from door to door [cf. nn. 82; 331; 569; 610], at appropriate times, for the love of God our Lord, in order to grow accustomed to discomfort in food and lodging. Thus, too, the candidate, though abandoning all the reliance which he could have in money or other created things, may with genuine faith and intense love place his reliance entirely in his Creator and Lord. Or further, these two months may be spent in hospitals, or in some one of them, or the two months may be used in making the pilgrimage according to what seems better to the candidate’s superior [n. 67].

The fourth experience consists in the candidate’s employing himself, after entrance into the house, with complete diligence and care **in various low and humble offices**, while giving a good example of himself in all of them [cf. nn. 83; 282; 365]. [n. 68].

The fifth experience is that of **explaining the Christian Doctrine**, or a part of it, in public to boys and other simple persons, or of teaching it to individuals, in accordance with what the occasion offers and what seems in our Lord more profitable and suitable to the persons.

In a sixth experience the candidate, after having been tested and found edifying, will proceed further by **preaching**, or **hearing confessions**, or by **laboring in both together**, in accordance with the times, places and capacity of all.

St. Gaspar speaks of these **Experiments** in a variety of his Constitutions:

[a] In that Formation after Novitiate:

42. In this time, through varied and new experiments and testing, each will show himself to be formed, so that his piety, humility and prudence will be evident to all, especially to the Superiors.

[b] Part V of St. Gaspar's *Original Constitutions* speaks of that period of time just prior to the Priesthood, in preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Order:

**Chapter 1**  
**Those to be promoted to the Priestly Office**

69. They will not wear any clerical garb until after high school has been completed.

70. They will attend class until their twenty-fifth year, and only then receiving Minor Orders.

71. They will apply themselves to the of those doctrines and liberal arts which are cultivated among us, and in which their own native talent is the most inclined, until their thirtieth year. In this time, they will be initiated into Sacred Orders and into the Priesthood.

72. While not omitting any study of those matters in which they are the more proficient and which are the more necessary, gradually they will be exercised in preaching in our own churches, in teaching catechism to children and to the unlettered, in hearing confessions of children and adolescents.

73. Then, they will be assigned to the hearing of confessions of men of all walks of life, and to giving sermons also in the churches of the city where they dwell, in giving retreats and the like.

74. Sometimes they will be given to the Missionaries as their helpers, and at times they will hear the confessions of women.

75. Then they will more often hear the confessions of women, and serve ordinarily in the work of the Missions.

76. Finally, they will accept the task of directing the Missions, and will give themselves over totally to the salvation of souls.

[IV] The Schola Affectus for one more year, prior to anyone's being promoted to the Profession, that of the Grade of *Apostolic Missionary* [cf. CF ## 158, ff., Part IX]:

152. Once their studies have been completed so that should any of their fervor for virtue grown tepid it might be rekindled, the students will be proven still for another year, both in the exercises of devotion and humility [spiritual progress], as well as in the ministries of the Congregation [apostolic progress].

**CSJ n. 516:** The 'Third Probation' is noted primarily in Ignatius' Constitution here, the first Constitution of his Chapter Two ["The Qualities of those to be admitted"] in his Part V, Admission, or Incorporation into the Society". The text reads:

1. Since no one should be admitted into any of the aforementioned categories unless he has been judged fit in our Lord, for admission to Profession those persons will be judged worthy whose life is well-known through long and thorough probations and is approved by the Superior General, to whom a report will be sent by other superiors or others from whom the General desires information<sup>6</sup>.

For this purpose after those who were sent to studies have achieved the diligent and careful formation of the intellect by **learning**, they will find it helpful during the period of the last probation to apply themselves to the **School of the Heart**, by exercising themselves in **spiritual and corporal pursuits** which can engender in them greater humility, abnegation of all sensual love and will and judgment of their own, and also greater knowledge and love of God, our Lord<sup>7</sup>; that when they themselves have made **progress** they can better help others to progress for the glory to God our Lord.

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**[V] Spiritual Practices:** The nourishment of the Spiritual Life is a major contributing factor, of course, to this life-long spiritual development:

**CF ## 47-48:** [The 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter of Fourth Part of the *Original Constitutions* refers to the Spiritual Development of Candidates].

**Chapter I: Concerning the Perfection of Oneself [## 47-48]** - always to be sought [cf. CF # 6; # 159; ## 283; 284 - CSJ nn. 98; 260]

This **Chapter 1** notes some interesting similarities, but also real differences between St. Ignatius and St. Gaspar Bertoni and this will be the case throughout his six chapters, a much abbreviated presentation of **St. Ignatius' 17 chapters in his Part IV:**

47. The first means of achieving **Spiritual Progress** is Prayer.

In addition to the daily, common prayers and those that are obligatory, which are most especially the **Divine Office and Mass**, to be celebrated by divine grace, attentively and devoutly - whenever possible the following prayers are offered:

Every morning **meditation** before Mass for one half hour. Then, **Spiritual Reading** after lunch, for twenty minutes.

The **three-fold examination of conscience**, namely, in the morning as soon as one awakens; at noon; and before retiring at night.

One should listen to **sermons** which are publicly delivered in our churches, as well as at home, for the purpose of exciting devotion.

Everyone should make the **Spiritual Exercises** for eight or ten days each year. Each shall go to Sacramental **Confession** to the regular Confessor once a week.

The **manifestation of one's own conscience** is to be made to the Superior, either in Sacramental Confession, or outside it, whenever he sees fit.

The **manifestation of the faults of another**, or of any of his serious temptations that are known outside of Confession, is to be made out of charity.

<sup>6</sup>This segment refers to other Jesuit Constitutions, nn.12, 308, 657, 819.

<sup>7</sup>This segment refers to other Jesuit Constitutions, nn. 16, 71, 119, 514.

[The two concluding numbers of St. Gaspar's *Original Constitutions* (## 313, 314) are directly from **Ignatian** sources. This entire concluding Chapter II of Part XII represents quoting from early rules on the Practice of Manifestation of Conscience, both one's own, and that of ones confreres. It is seen as a means of Spiritual Progress. CF ## 308 and 309, quote the Rule of St. **Benedict**; **CF # 310**, it is the Order of **Preachers**; **CF # 312**, it is the **Franciscan Constitutions** ]:

**313.** St. Ignatius [in his **Constitution n. 63**] states: For the candidate's greater progress in his spiritual life, and especially for his greater lowliness and humility, he should be asked whether he will be willing to have all his errors and defects, and anything else which will be noticed or known about him, manifested to his superiors by anyone who knows them outside of Confession [**CSJ n. 63; Compend. Const. n. 9**].

**314.** St. Ignatius also adds that the future Novice on entering the Society, is to be questioned at the beginning whether he would be content to have all his errors and defects, etc...[In *Examen* c. 4, § 8].

Regarding this **CF# 47**, the first means is **Prayer** [St. Ignatius legislates "one hour" daily in addition to weekly Communion and Confession - and the hour is made up of the Little Office of the BVM; and the three examinations a day - then the rest of the time, for each one's devotions - n. 342] - very little emphasis in this particular Ignatian Constitution on mental prayer:

- In addition to the daily, common prayers [Rosary? - nn. 343, ff. [cf. Footnote n. 2 here in CSJ Latin Text; cf. also CSJ n. **345**], there are also required the following:

- the Divine Office, attentively and devotedly [**Formula CSJ n. 8: ...Socii autem omnes cum Presbyteri esse debeant, ad dicendum officium secundum communem Ecclesiae ritum, sed privatim, and non communiter in choro, teneantur...**]- not in choir: n. 586;

- Mass [every 8 days for Communion - nn. 80; 261; 342, 343; 584]; with divine grace;

- each can also offer these prayers:

- daily:

- Meditation [n. 277]; each morning, for one half hour; [St. Gaspar also adds "Meditation and Prayer as special means to assist in keeping the Vow of Chastity" - CF # 110]; Fr. Bertoni often speaks of **prayer & meditation - in addition to # 47, cf. ## 110; 152**];

- Spiritual Reading [n. 277] after dinner for twenty minutes; during meals - nn. 251, 252; read the Constitutions - n. 826;

- Three-fold Examen, i.e., as soon as the mind awakes from sleep - at noon - and before going to bed - n. 261; two-fold examen, nn. 342, 344;

- Sermons that are given publicly in our churches, as well as those at home [Domestic Exhortations] for the sake of exciting fervor -

- each year: the Spiritual Exercises for eight, or ten days - nn. 65 {for a month}; 98; 261;
- each week: Sacramental Confession to be made to the common Confessor; - every eight days, as Holy Communion -
- Manifestation of Conscience to be made to the Superiors [nn. 93; 97; 551; 764;
- Denuntiation to be made out of charity to the Superior: n. 63; 263; 381; 516.
  - either of one's defects;
  - his temptations that are serious and known outside of Confession.

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**[VI] Ascetical Practices**

48. A further means of Spiritual Progress is the zealous exercise of the following:

Eliminating vices and defects, and developing the contrary virtues;  
 Increasing and perfecting the infused theological and moral virtues;  
 Fulfilling the religious virtues, namely obedience, chastity, poverty;  
 Denying the inclinations of the flesh, of the senses, of self-love, and of this world;  
 The perfect observance of all the precepts, which are divine and civil, as well as those duties which pertain to the priestly state - and what the religious life adds to these, pertaining to the rule, as well as what flows from all the responsibilities of one's own Institute;

Flight from idleness and **the assiduous commitment to all that seems to be a part of the ministry of the Church**, to one's religious duties, or to the observance of discipline and to that obedience which is due to Superiors.

**CF # 48:** The second means is the **Ascetical Life**: the zealous practice of the following [cf. also CF #43; 128-137; 156 on Modesty, Moderation]:

- purging vices and defects, and inserting the contrary virtues - **nn. 260; 263; 283; 307** [Proemium to Part IV]; **486**;
- increasing and perfecting the infused theological and moral virtues [nn. 260; 263; 486; 637; 671; 813];
- fulfilling the religious virtues, namely, obedience [n. 284], chastity, poverty [n. 81];
- denying the inclination of the **flesh** [**nn. 296; 297**, the senses, self love [**n. 83**], and love of the **world** **nn. 30; 50; 53; 81; 101; 103; 117; 280; 289; 308; 671**;
- the perfect observance of all the precepts, the divine and human, ecclesiastical and civil;
- the perfect observance of all the duties which pertain to the priestly state - the dominating example of the "more observant clergy" [cf. **Formula n. 8**];
- those duties which religious life super-imposes:
  - either that which pertains to the **rule** - **nn. 134; 136; 746; 547; 602** [do not oblige under sin]; **826** ;
  - or, all the requirements pertaining to **one's own Institute** [**nn. 547; 602**;
- the avoidance of every aspect of laziness [cf. **CF # 113**] - **nn. 253; 378**];
- the assiduous occupation in all matters pertaining to the:

- **ecclesiastical ministry** [**nn. 91; 603; 618; 621; 622; 637-640; 642; 653; 824**] [this Constitution proved to be controversial: that of retaining the good favor of ecclesiastical and civil superiors, through prayer, for the greater service of God and the Church];

- to one's religious duties:

- or to the observance of discipline [**nn. 547**]<sup>8</sup>;

- and all that seems to pertain to the obedience due to

Superiors.

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**[VII] The Role of Superiors in the Spiritual Growth of the Confreres:  
Chapter 9**

**Mutual Concern for the Spiritual Progress of the Confreres**

**263.** Therefore, there should arise that care and diligence which the Superiors of the Congregation ought to maintain **for the spiritual progress** of their sons.

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**Summary**

**[1]** On the 'negative' side, or **ascetically** speaking, St. Gaspar follows the traditional means of developing **spiritual progress**. There is a great need of eliminating vices, and avoiding idleness. These would be true obstacles to spiritual growth in the life of an individual called to ***paint a portrait of Jesus Christ*** in his own life. Accompanying these practices, all members were enjoined to manifest their own consciences to assist the Superior in directing them on their Apostolic Mission – and St. Gaspar's Constitutions, as has been seen, conclude with a citation from the *Examen* of St. Ignatius telling all candidates should be willing to have their faults made known – St. Gaspar changes this to 'novices'. Those candidates in formation must also accept the fact that reports will be written about them.

**[2]** In a most **positive** listing of the **mystical** practices to further spiritual progress in candidates. At the basis of it all, one's prayer life stands in constant need of attention with a view toward intensifying it. There is the appeal to increase the theological and moral virtue and the evangelical counsels.

**[3]** As would be expected of an **Apostolic Missionary** community, the renewed commitment to one's religious duties **and to the apostolic mission** are offered a means to intensify the spiritual life.

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<sup>8</sup> These numbers in **bold print** refer to the Jesuit Constitutions, Part VII, ***On the Missions***. These Constitutions provide the Society with the principles of **Apostolic Missionary discernment** for entire Company of Jesus – for the Superiors and for the individual Jesuits.

[4] This law of progress if followed with an allusion to the *Experiments/Experiences* of St. Ignatius of Loyola. In his original rule, there were six of them: one month's commitment to the full Spiritual exercises; one month's commitment to hospital work; one month's pilgrimage experience; commitment to the lowly duties around the house; explanation of Christian doctrine to the unlettered and children; and those who are already priests should be committed to preaching and hearing confessions.

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### [VIII] The Ministry of *Evangelical Conversations* :

This will be treated more fully in the segment on the Apostolic Missionary growth of the confreres. For now, it suffices to note its purpose: for the **confreres' growth in charity**:

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**283.** The second condition is: that it be carried on with great moderation and circumspection. Moreover, the manner and the measure are to be taken from the purpose already mentioned, in which two aspects need to be taken into consideration. **One of these pertains to God, or, which comes to the same, for one's own growth in charity**: and the other pertains to the good of our neighbors. For, unless some fruit is hoped for our neighbors, all such conversation is a waste of time. Furthermore, St. Bernard states [Letter 8]: 'Right order requires that one first strive to satisfy one's own conscience, and then, that of others. Indeed the first level of piety, about which it is written, is this: ***Have pity on your own soul pleasing God*** [**Si 30:24**]. From this first step, ordered charity proceeds by a straight path, for indeed the precept is to love the other in the measure of oneself.'

**284.** And so, among the very first principles: it is required that this conversation should not be excessive, because in no way could such a practice **not impede one's own spiritual growth**. Moreover, according to the doctrine of **St. Thomas** [II-II, q. 187, a. 2] this undertaking will be excessive for these three reasons:

1. if it be carried on without the Superior's permission;
2. if it impedes one's own spiritual exercises, and works of divine worship, which each religious is obligated to fulfill according to his rule;
3. if it should so occupy and distract the religious soul that it in some way would render it secular.

However, anyone who would be faithful to the religious state regarding the first two situations here would also maintain right reason toward God, and can **hope in the divine assistance**, so that he would not fail in the third, but would observe right order. Moreover, **to inform the Superior, regarding his own weakness and condition**, in so far as this will be possible, is an excellent counsel, and supremely necessary in our Congregation, so that the Superior would not assign anyone to those tasks in which he would become entangled, or burdened with so many activities toward his neighbor that he could not sustain these without spiritual harm to himself.

The main goal is each one's spiritual development so that every one will be a more effective ***Apostolic Missionary***, for the greater service of God and the Church.

[IX] **Insistence on Recreation: for Spirituality, Balance in Study** [cf. CF ## 59; 128; 132; 250; 256] – a sign of **religious moderation**: with this *arduous and difficult* vocation [cf. CF # 185], St. Gaspar gave much attention to legislation on Recreation: the goal: **a relaxation of spirit, and a celebration of intelligence.**

**[a] Religious Moderation in Study [CF # 59]**

**CF # 59.** A special and careful program is to be set up for those who are dedicated to studies, both so that their health may experience no harm, and also so that their **necessary comfort** might not be lacking. As a result, the Superior should be vigilant so that they might have decent food and clothing, as well as the necessary **recreation**. He is to see to it that the students might be free from all concern and solicitude about these matters, so that they might the more easily bear the burden of their studies, and be content in **religious moderation**.

**[b] Rules for Modesty: in Words and Gestures [CF # 128]**

**CF # 128.** In the third place, the confreres will **moderate** all that pertains to the movements and actions of the body, and this so that they will be performed decently and uprightly, both in what is done seriously, as well as what is done for the sake of recreation.

**[c] Rules for Modesty: for just repose and in jokes [CF # 132]**

**CF # 132.** Each one should take part in the usual and proper common recreations. In these, no one should manifest inopportune harshness and excessive severity and a morose visage. This would inhibit the proper recreation and rest of others. So, through religious modesty, there is avoided both in words and deeds in jest, every worldly impertinence, so that in no manner would the harmony of good works and virtues be broken.

**[d] Extended daily Time Commitment [CF # 250]**

**CF # 250.** Every day, for an hour after lunch, and another hour after supper, or a half hour, if one abstains from supper, all the confreres will come together in the same place, if this is possible, and converse in a familiar and friendly manner.

**[e] A Spiritual Pleasantry is sought [CF # 256]**

**CF # 256.** That which **St. Thomas Aquinas** counsels [II-II, q.168, a. 2] is to be heeded: 'be careful so that religious gravity might not be totally destroyed.' He cites a similar admonition from St. Ambrose [Book I, *Offic.*, c. 20]: 'Let us take care so that while we might intend to rest the mind, we dissolve all harmony, as a concert of good works.' To this responds the elegant insight of St. Basil [*Const. Mon.*, c. 13]: 'In conversation, all base witticisms, and all scurrilous, biting banter, and the like, are to be altogether avoided.' And further on, he adds: 'If, at times, we make use of these, for the sake of alleviating somewhat the cause of sadness in speaking, we are brought to joviality, this whole enterprise must be totally such that our speech be full of **spiritual**

**pleasantry and seasoned with evangelical salt**, which is the more interior. All our conversation must breathe outwardly of the **pleasing odor of wisdom**, and might delight the listener in a two-fold manner, both by **a relaxation of spirit, and a celebration of intelligence.**

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