

THE CONSTITUTIONS

PART I

THE PURPOSE OF THE INSTITUTE AND ITS MEMBERS

1. Christ has revealed to us the love of the Father in his person, and at the same time, the calling of all men. Moved by the Holy Spirit, all Christians are bound by their baptismal calling to tend towards the same ideal of holiness, each in his own state of life. Christians follow Christ in his life of poverty and humility; they shoulder his cross so that they can share in his glory.

2. Right from the very beginning of the Church, many men and women have consecrated themselves to the Lord. They did their best to follow Christ according to the different gifts they had received, by imitating his virginity, his poverty and his obedience even to accepting death on a cross. In this way they shared in a special manner in his work of redeeming and sanctifying. This is what religious life is: a close imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ who prays, who preaches the Kingdom of God, who heals and forgives, who blesses children, who passed among us doing good, always conforming himself closely to the will of the Father who sent him. It is to him that religious must give witness to believers and non-believers. And the force of this witness will depend on the fervour of their consecrated life.

3. With his eyes fixed on this model, the Christ of the Gospels, and at the same time spurred on by the ever-changing circumstances and needs which faced him throughout his life, in 1817, Canon C. G. Van Crombrughe founded a congregation of religious which he was everafter adapting. The religious were at first called the Brothers of Mary and Joseph, and then the Josephites.

4. By following the evangelical counsels and observing their Constitutions, the members of this Institute try their best to conform themselves to the spirit of the gospel, which remains the chief guiding principle of their life. But, perpetuating the spirit of their Founder, they devote themselves in a particular way to rediscovering the sense of family such as Jesus lived it on earth: by his loving obedience to his Father and by proclaiming that God is our Father; by his loving obedience to Mary and Joseph; by his service and his love towards the family that his disciples formed. Josephites are to do everything they can to cultivate among themselves and to spread around

them the attractive spirit of charity. In this way they will draw all hearts towards the One who was the most lovable of men.

5. It is in such a spirit that Josephites share among themselves as brothers the good works and the duties of the religious family in accordance with their abilities and the requirements of the common good. Christian instruction and education of children and young people is the focal point about which the assignments are divided up, and from which, more or less directly, originate the good works of the Institute.

5-1 Apart from the instruction and education of young people, the aim of the Institute includes the whole priestly ministry, especially the apostolate in missionary countries, and in regions which are short of priests.

5-2 The Institute can continue its apostolate even if its own schools are alienated.

6. Regularity in observance and religious discipline both constitute important elements of the founding spirit. Consecration to the Lord and effacement of their own will, whenever they are confronted with the common good of the religious family, together create for Josephites the duty of submitting carefully to the common rule, and provide an effective means of progressing in the way of perfection. Moreover, the organisation of schools on a sure footing, as well as the intellectual, moral and religious education of students, require a team of men in which the division and assignment of work and its level of performance, as well as the exemplary quality of cooperation, teamwork and dedication, are of the highest order.

7. The Institute of the Josephites is a clerical institute of pontifical right. Members who desire it, and who are found suitable, may become priests. Josephite priests and non-priests constitute a single class. However, the Superior General and his Vicar, regional and local superiors, as well as first assistants and novice masters, must be priests.

7-1 The Institute is divided into regions under the authority of regional superiors appointed by the Superior General with the consent of his council, and having the status of major superiors.

7-2 The religious dress of the Josephites is the same as that of the secular clergy of the region.

7-3 The future merger and union of another Institute, or merger and union to

another Institute, as well as the different forms this might take, belong to the competence of the General Chapter.

PART II

COMMUNITY LIFE CONSIDERED AS A RESPONSE TO CHRIST'S CALL

8. In the midst of a world in which they find themselves involved, Josephites are to be witnesses of God. More precisely they are to confront the world with their witness that Christ is the Alpha and the Omega of the whole of human history. This witness will be their life consecrated by the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience; but it will be a witness lived out and given in common. Confrères are to be especially dedicated to a spirit of prayer; they should prefer to draw from the most trustworthy sources of christian spirituality, the primary source being Holy Scripture. They should celebrate the sacred liturgy, and specially the mystery of the Holy Eucharist with their lips and in their hearts in accordance with the mind of the Church. They will work together in the field of education and in the priestly ministry, and in this way they will complement each other as brothers. Only by using these means personally and in community, and by forming one heart and soul, can the Josephites carry out their role of witness, and be able to seek out and love above all things God who has loved them first. This is to advance along the way of sanctification.

CHAPTER I

The Religious Family Around Christ Seeking to Meet God

9. In his Son, the Father wishes to establish a communion of love among men. This communion is a translation into human deeds of the deep and mysterious communion which each person has with the life of the Father in Jesus. The Church, being a union of brothers who share the one life, is the sign that Christ has come, and the proclamation that he will come again. Religious profession creates in the Church communities which, by their brotherly spirit and their common life, desire to develop this ecclesial witness to its fullest, and, along with this, to make real in their lives the mystery of their communion with Christ on whom they are grafted by

baptism and ever more deeply rooted by the eucharist.

10. The Josephites' own vocation and their particular charism is to live out this mystery of the Church and of all religious communities by emphasizing that they constitute a religious family. This religious family is not confined to the particular community they currently belong to, but extends to the whole Congregation.

11. So they live in a community that has to reveal the face of Christ to men. The community has for its foundation the same faith, professed and lived in common, which leads to good works in the community apostolate, and is reinforced every day by the encouragement that religious are to be for one another. The community is united in the same hope and the same love which have God for their object. These virtues are the source of joy and strength as well as of patience, not only whenever one has to cope with personal weakness, but also in dealing with inevitable community imperfection. Since community living based on the theological virtues is what Josephites live out day by day until they die, they bear witness to the modern world that men still have the supernatural power to arrange their lives around the expectation of rising with Christ, and to live up to their baptismal vocation which consists in gradually bringing about here on earth the kingdom of love.

12. Community life presupposes order and discipline, for the basis of any society is the harmony which unifies all its elements, that is to say, the totality of persons and activities which make it up. Since religious life is to be lived in a family spirit around a superior, it has the means of being lived out in the daily round of duties. Such fidelity to a common apostolate is not just a sign, but is even a means of sanctification for the community and for everyone in it.

13. Religious are to live in their religious house. There they live the common life and should not absent themselves without the permission of their superior. Every house should have at least an oratory where the Holy Eucharist is celebrated and reserved in such a way that it is truly the centre of the community.

13-1 At the request of the regional superior, with the permission of his council and the written agreement of the diocesan bishop, the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of his council, is empowered to establish a new religious house.

14. Every member should guard against upsetting the community harmony by giving way to jealousy, or to the tendency to cut himself off; by looking for prestige or for special favours; by his pettiness and lack of cooperation; by his inclination to seek ease and comfort; by being unfair or ungrateful. Rather, all should work towards building up and consolidating a community united in heart and soul:

by the care they take to be present at community exercises in the chapel, in the refectory, at recreation together;

by their special attention to the sick;

by their faithfulness in fulfilling the prescribed masses and prayers for deceased confrères;

by their conscientious performance of their daily duties which the superior should try to assign as fairly as possible;

by their mutual help in every area, and by sharing together their joys and trials;

by living out in community the obligations of the vows, by celebrating the liturgy together, and carrying out the apostolate together.

14-1 With regard to absences from a house, the universal law of the Church is to be followed. In particular, in order to keep their affections concentrated on their religious family, confrères should avoid leaving the house, or having outside appointments without the superior's knowing it.

There should always be a part of the religious house reserved for the confrères.

The spirit of silence remains an essential element in religious life. Furthermore, the silence one might call courteous will ensure that confrères are not disturbed by radios or recordings especially at study times or while they are resting.

In their use of the media, confrères should use necessary discretion and avoid anything that could harm their vocation or endanger the chastity of someone consecrated to God.

14-2 The privacy of every confrère must nonetheless be respected and enough latitude allowed him for his particular interests and group activities. Otherwise, community life could become a source of stress and friction whereas it should be a sign of joy and growth in brotherly love.

14-3 So that the input of everyone in building up the religious family and the common apostolate can be given in concrete ways, communities are to meet with the superior at regular intervals, to examine the problems in the life of the school. These community meetings should be governed above all else by fraternal charity, but there should also be complete frankness, willingness to accept responsibility, and loyal commitment to do one's part in the jobs and obligations which arise from any decisions taken.

15. The penitential character of religious observance should not be undervalued or neglected. It has its full effect only when it is lived with a sufficient degree of exactness, and if it corresponds to an inner detachment and a gift of oneself which is humble and full of charity. The rhythm of life in our schools and the obligations which this places on everyone emphasize this duty of regularity. At those periods, and in those houses where there is no school timetable in operation, a daily schedule that is not overloaded should regulate religious discipline.

15-1 The daily timetable and the items that are on it are under the control of the major superiors.

CHAPTER II

Consecration to God in Christ Through the Evangelical Counsels

16. By the vows the religious binds and commits himself to practise the evangelical counsels, and even though these counsels are addressed to every Christian, the religious has received from God a call to bring into existence the *koinonia* of charity which has been revealed to us in the Gospel, and he is to do this within the conditions specifically set up for this mystical communion. Vows are a consecration to God in Christ. They are a strikingly clear sign of the Kingdom of God to come, and already progressively begun on earth. Furthermore, they give freedom from the obstacles that are opposed to fervent charity and to the perfect worship that is to be made to God. In this way they are a means of tending towards perfection in charity and union with God. So it is that by chastity, which concentrates the affections of a religious on his religious family given him by God, and by poverty, through which all the family goods are held in common, and by obedience, which places the religious at the service of God's

plan, Josephites receive God right into the heart of their brotherhood where he gives himself to them in the individual way he gives himself to all men, i.e. by giving them his Son.

16-1 In the Institute, the vows are simple.

§ 1. Chastity

17. For the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven the religious freely commits himself to celibacy, which he must appreciate as a call to grace. By freely choosing and observing perfect continence, he gives witness on earth to the life of those who will rise from the dead. Indeed, celibacy when it is lived with an undivided heart, establishes interpersonal relationships on a spiritual level through the grace of God. These must culminate in love. And while they remain relationships that are fully human, they must not include any of a genital nature. The final purpose is to love all men in Christ. The immediate area of application is the religious family which, at the same time as being an eschatological sign given to the world, is also the surest guarantee of fidelity to the vow of chastity.

17-1 By the vow of chastity the religious commits himself to observe perfect continence in the celibate state.

17-2 Confrères will confidently turn for their support to God's word and his help; they are not to rely on their own strength; they should resort to prayer and to the other sources of grace; they are to do their utmost to curb sensuality. They should not neglect the means which are good for the health of soul and body, and they should avoid everything that could jeopardize their chastity. Everyone, especially the superiors, are to make the perfection of brotherly love their concern. This requires openness of heart with superiors and confrères, and must be accompanied by genuine humility.

§ 2. Poverty

18. Christ, rich as he was, became poor so that we could become rich through his poverty. By the vow of poverty, confrères seek above all, as individuals and as a community, perfect conformity to the life of Christ. He founded his Church to set up on earth the Kingdom of Heaven, and not to acquire temporal power.

He calls religious to poverty so that in their turn they can enrich others. And he prefers to lead them to those brothers of theirs who are in need, and in whom they recognise and serve Christ. Because they have their treasure in heaven religious must be poor in fact as well as in spirit.

18-1

1° *Every professed religious may retain the ownership of his inherited goods and the right to acquire others. All the same, before his first profession, or after he acquires new goods, he is to give up the administration of these goods, and is freely to make arrangements for the use and usufruct of them.*

2° *Before final profession he is to will his goods to whomever he pleases by a deed that is also to be valid in civil law.*

3° *In order to change these arrangements, for a just cause, and in order to perform any act whatever in connection with his temporal goods, every religious needs the permission of the regional superior, or, in emergency, of the local superior.*

4° *By the vow confrères give up the right to dispose of and to use lawfully their material goods without the authorisation of the legitimate superiors.*

5° *What a confrère acquires by his work, or receives as pension, or as mass stipends, or as a subsidy, or as any kind of insurance whatever, is acquired by the Institute and must be handed to the superior of the house.*

18-2 *It is not enough that confrères ask permission from their superior for the use of material goods; they should not keep or use material goods for their intrinsic value; they are to avoid any appearances of worldliness, love of gain, or hoarding. Along with their superiors, they are to be watchful that no differences in the standard of living arise inside the community. They must be sufficiently detached from the goods of this world that they can accept even harsh privations.*

18-3 *With the authorisation of the Superior General, and after mature reflection, confrères may, no sooner than five years after their final profession, give up some or all their goods in a deed which is as far as is possible valid in civil law. But the Superior General will give his authorisation only after exercising great prudence and with the consent of his council.*

19. **It is partly through the religious institutes that the Church is to appear as the Church of the poor. And so the Congregation as a whole, and each of its communities, is to witness to this poverty. Furthermore, the poverty is to be a truly family poverty: the common life will provide genuine fulfilment for the confrères, and will free them from the pride of possession and the inordinate love of material goods.**

19.1 Whereas the furnishings in our places of work and the books, office machines etc. required for our apostolate should be of top quality, all appearance of luxury, excessive comfort and wealth on the part of an individual or a community are strictly forbidden.

19.2 The community is to provide each confrère, in one form or another, and in accordance with the directives of the general council, the necessary money for certain personal expenses, which may be incurred without permission. What is not spent of this allowance will enable confrères to practise the poverty of sharing, either among themselves or among those who have the greatest need of their generosity. Besides this, in their use of this pocket money, confrères are invited to show a greater sense of responsibility and economy in keeping with their vow of poverty. In any event, the use of this money remains under the control of the local superior.

20. Detachment from the goods of this world is to go as far as the complete gift of oneself. Confrères should be able to sacrifice their time and personal preferences to serve the Congregation and the Church. According to the mind of the Founder, the penitential spirit which belongs to the Josephites does not primarily consist in performing acts of mortification. Rather it consists in continually being on guard so as not to annoy, or shock, or hurt, or disedify anyone. This is what the Founder called deference (*politesse de coeur*) which is no different from the love described by St Paul in I Corinthians 13,4 7.

20-1 For religious, one method of actually bringing about the spirit of detachment is to pay for it with their own person, and to use every available means of exercising their call to love. Each confrère must feel personally bound by the law of work.

20-2 In a constantly changing world, religious are to keep turning back to Christ's Gospel, and must allow themselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit, and must not be swept along by life-styles, fashions, theories, and so on, which change with the times. The difficulties, frustrations, and misunderstandings which pile up should often remind them that they are merely servants who, by their sufferings, make up for what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, and who, with overflowing and confident hearts, place themselves in complete dependence on their heavenly Father.

21. "If a man who is rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need, but closed his heart to him, how could the love of God

be living in him?" Confrères must show a real preference for the poor and also for those who suffer from poverty of culture, or of intelligence, or of virtue.

21-1 Through gifts of money and other means, the community must come to the relief of people who are in material and social misery, and who live in the same area or in far-off areas.

21-2 In the areas where confrères work, it may be that they will not come across young people or older persons who are in need. But with the help of the students and of those with whom they are in contact, and whom they have to educate in the charity of sharing, they will look for ways of sharing their wealth with the poor and needy, in the spirit of their foundation.

§ 3. Obedience

22. Following the example of Christ, who came to fulfil the will of his Father and complete his work, religious, by their vow of obedience, consecrate their entire person to God as an offering of themselves. By using their gifts of intelligence and will, and what nature and grace have endowed them with, they are to unite themselves to the saving will of God.

23. Josephites are to make this offering of themselves real by carrying out in a religious spirit the work for which they have been founded. Indeed, in the Institute obedience consists especially in confrères actively collaborating in the common work, unconcerned about special preferences and attachments, with filial respect for their superiors, and respect for the personality of others. And so it is that through their superiors and their common apostolate, their will will eventually coincide with the saving will of God.

23-1 The proper object of the vow of obedience consists in submission to the directors of legitimate superiors in accordance with the Constitutions of the Congregation.

24. In a spirit of renunciation, the religious commits himself by a fidelity which is to last for life, to responding with his very best to every invitation of love which would take him towards God and towards his fellows. At every moment of the day this call of love is presented to him as a fresh task by the Constitutions and the Customary whose purpose it is to spell out more precisely and in its different applications the one commandment; and by the community which already had its own inner dynamism at the time when it

made the religious welcome, and which carries him along by its sustaining drive; and lastly, by the directives of the superiors.

24-1 Not only are religious to have recourse to the superior to ask for an authorisation or a variance which is not attached to the job they do, or which is not of long-standing custom, but they are also to make it a rule of conduct not to ask for authorisations except when they are reasonable and genuinely justifiable.

24.2 Confrères must show respect, affection and submission to their superior. They must back him up with their support and their unselfish, full-hearted cooperation. At the same time, cooperation must be enlightened, for there is such a thing as constructive criticism which is a loyal form of genuine collaboration. However, the final decision always belongs to the superior and requires submission on the part of the confrères.

25. The concept of obedience cannot be separated from that of authority. Those who are in a position of authority must realize that they are not the proprietors of the religious family but its responsible guides. Their function is one of service. The Congregation has confided authority to them for a limited time, and for the common good and the individual welfare of the members. So they must refrain from exerting it out of desire for prestige or power. With eyes fixed on the Institute's purpose, and on the concrete situation, they should seek, by prayer and study, and by consulting the confrères, what God expects of the community and of every religious. It is their job to give leadership to their confrères, and to bring them to the point where they can work together in a spirit of unity for the good of the Institute and of the Church, "to become fully mature with the fulness of Christ". But it is only by using the dedicated help of all the confrères, and their affection for each other, that the superior will be able to lead the community entrusted to him to the salvation of each member and that of the whole Church.

25-1 It is not enough that superiors treat their confrères merely as responsible adults and co-workers; they must also bring them into a true working relationship that is at once personal and responsible, both in the decision making process and in its execution.

25-2 Superiors should be the first to obey. They must be attuned to everything that is being asked of them, not only by the Church and their own community, but also by the call to holiness and the particular form of vocation that each confrère has, for he has his own talents, his qualities, his aspirations and his spirit of dedication. They must show confrères that obedience allows them to respond to

their vocation and to be authentic witnesses of Christ in today's world. Again, they should exercise their authority so as to give human and Christian dimensions to obedience. Lastly, they have to be capable of taking decisions by themselves every time circumstances demand it.

26. Since for the most part Josephite houses are also schools, the majority of religious superiors will have to play an important part in the administration of these very complex organisations. So they must harmonize this responsibility of a non-religious character with the religious character of their authority. On the other hand, confrères must make part of their religious obedience their submission and effective, dedicated participation in whatever is needed for the successful running of the schools. They are to remember that if they were not to take their full share of the common work required of them for it to be fruitful work, then the exactness of their obedience in the purely spiritual domain would be a sham. In effect, the religion of the Incarnate Word cannot seek refuge in a flight from the very obligations which make him incarnate in the world of men.

CHAPTER III

The Mission of Giving Thanks to God Through Christ

27. All who are baptised in the Holy Spirit bear in themselves the priesthood of Christ; but religious profession intensifies the dynamics of the life of grace which move religious to celebrate divine worship for the honour of God and the salvation of men. The Body of the Church has the primary responsibility for this worship. But since the religious community is a living cell joined in a special way to the Church and its mystery, it also has the duty of organising divine worship in community. Because it is a sign which should draw all members of the Church to fulfil the duties of their christian vocation enthusiastically, it must honour God in an exemplary way. The liturgy is the peak point to which the Church's activity tends and is at the same time the spring from which all her strength flows. So then, the personal and collective responsibility of the confrères is to be deeply involved, first in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and then in praying the divine office. At the same time, they should have a lively interest in the liturgical life of the Church, and concert their efforts to arranging in community with the superior the community liturgies, and to giving them the dignity and beauty which divine worship should have. If, in this area, they have to be a sign to

the world, then first of all they should be so for their students, their colleagues on the lay staff, and for everyone who takes part in the celebration.

27-1 Since they are members of a religious family, confrères are to express their supernatural brotherhood especially by liturgical prayer in common. One form particularly recommended is the concelebration of the eucharist.

27-2 The eucharistic celebration in common is the culminating point of the community life of the religious every day. For a community, concelebration is the way to celebrate par excellence; it is the expression of the unity of the community in Christ, and of the community as a religious family, a priestly body, a team of educators. Communities will work out together with the superior what the best occasions are for inviting students, teachers and non-teaching staff to the community celebrations of the eucharist. With everyone attending in a spirit of good will, one would be having a celebration of the complete school community.

27-3 Communities are to recite together Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, preferably in the vernacular and with the care and dignity that are suitable for a liturgical celebration. Clerics, however, are bound to the daily recitation of all the hours according to the approved books, whether this recitation is wholly or partly done in private.

28. Prayer life is built up around sacred liturgy. The community must become a home and centre of the interior life and prayer. It will, no doubt, assemble at set times during the day and throughout the year to express by vocal prayer and occasional celebrations, the community character of the life of prayer. In addition, each religious is committed to tending the spring flowing inside him from which all prayer wells up. He is committed to praying effectively, and by breaking off his external occupations, to setting aside every day a privileged moment, a time of intense mental prayer and intimate contact with the Lord. When he does this he becomes aware not only that he is feeding his own spiritual life, but also that he is helping to give the whole community, and eventually the Church, their sacred character. Without this character they are unthinkable.

29. Since by the nature of their apostolate and its surrounding circumstances, the life of Josephites is taken up with a host of activities, and

their days are very busy, it is extremely important that communities arrange a schedule which has enough time set aside for prayer and religious exercises. If this does not happen, the prayer life of not a few religious runs the risk of being weakened, whereas the Congregation is responsible for the spiritual life of its members. Customaries and community schedules should not fall prey to anaemic formalism, or to the stifling accumulation of vocal prayers. Rather, taking their inspiration from the true nature of prayer, they must guarantee a structure for the day and month and year that is sufficiently spiritual, and must make this obligatory.

29-1 Confrères are to approach the sacrament of Penance frequently.

29-2 Certain celebrations of particular occasions at set seasons of the year are to be organised, for example, during Christian Unity Week, or during Lent. One could also consider celebrating together the sacrament of conversion and penance. Vocal prayer and grace at meals should be adapted to fit in with the mysteries of the liturgical year. It is up to the communities to fix the time and the form of these celebrations and prayers, taking good care to see that they correspond with the current life of the Church.

9-3 Every priest confrère may preside at liturgical celebrations. Other community prayers as well as paraliturgical celebrations of the Word may be presided over by a non-priest confrère.

29-4 Every day confrères are to devote a sufficient time to personal prayer and meditation. More specifically, they are to spend a half-hour in mental prayer every day. Spiritual reading, especially the reading of Holy Scripture, is indispensable food for mental prayer. Devoted attention to the daily liturgy brings them rich and varied nourishment. It must not be forgotten that liturgical life and personal prayer feed each other.

29-5 The annual retreat is to be considered as a return to the one source which is Christ the life of the church. About once a month the community is to meet and to reflect together about Our Lord, and about the hidden realities with which Christ has come to make men's lives on earth fruitful. These meetings may go by the name of conferences, though they may take different forms. Normally, they are to be held on a topic fixed beforehand. A confrère or an outside speaker is to introduce the topic, each person will then reflect on it, and then the community will discuss it together. The date and the topic are to be announced a month beforehand.

29-6 Meditative reading of the Bible, and the whole life of prayer should be oriented in such a way that they inspire the whole bearing and conduct of religious, and guide them in the choices they have to make.

29-7 Confrères are to have a special devotion to the Virgin Mother of God, who is the model and support of all consecrated life, and they show this particularly by saying the rosary.

CHAPTER IV

The Mission to Make God Known by Word and Action with Christ

30. The Church has received from her divine founder the mission of preaching the mystery of salvation to all men, and of restoring all things in Jesus Christ. Religious have dedicated their whole life to serving the Lord in his Mystical Body which is the Church. They share in the mission of giving witness to the Good News of divine grace and of bringing Christ to men, so as to build up the Kingdom of God. Furthermore, the Congregation has received from the Church its specific mission of using this association in which the unity of the end and means brings together a wide variety of talents to work in the many forms of education of youth, and to bring young people to maturity of person and Christian perfection.

30-1 Confrères are to take the following directives into consideration.

- they must understand that their undertaking is a mission confided by the Father to unworthy servants; therefore, they are not to pursue any personal success.

- They are to take care of their own life of prayer and of their union with Christ.

- They are to accept their apostolic work with a good heart, and to do it faithfully.

In assigning responsibilities, superiors must take into account as far as possible each man's natural ability and personality.

- They must engage in active and broadly based collaboration with the community and the lay staff, as well as in joint planning within the various department of instruction and education.

- *They are to avoid seeking their personal advantage, and getting involved in competing with the others they work with, or with other institutions.*

- *They must continually remain in touch with the Church's developing awareness of the Gospel, morality and liturgy, and of its own growth.*

- *They must remain in dialogue with the world and with men, so as to have a broader view of cultural development and the needs of the times, and so as to be able to shape men who can take their place in tomorrow's world.*

30-2 *Every religious, as his means and talents permit, has the obligation to dedicate himself to the common apostolate, and should not try to pull away from this, or to withdraw an important part of his collaboration from it in order to free himself to pursue his private interests.*

31. Beyond local and regional boundaries, and with due respect for personal freedom, all Josephites should regard it as a duty in conscience to come to the help of their confrères, even if only temporarily, in a spirit of real co-responsibility and charity, in those areas where the needs of the Institute are the most pressing, and at the request of a major superior.

§1. Education and instruction

32. The apostolic work for which the Congregation of Josephites was founded is the teaching and education of children and young people. Teaching is to be of the highest quality as regards its content and its methods; but it is only a part of education. Total education tries to form the mind and heart, the will and the character; it is concerned with progressive initiation into culture, understanding and practice of the Catholic religion, and with the part that the students will have to play one day in secular and religious society. In short, it pursues the students' happiness. According to a saying of the Founder, this work can only be done if religious make every effort not only to be knowledgeable, but above all else to be holy, and if the students can take them as their models, and if the Christian education which they give is fed at its roots by their own religious life.

32-1 *Education in Josephite schools needs not only teaching religious but also*

religious who contribute to the total programme in other capacities.

32-2 True education seeks to form the human person in keeping with his final end and with the good of the society which he belongs to, and where, as an adult, he will have a role to fulfil. It is such an end that can be called happiness, in the full sense of the word, both for the student and for society.

32-3 The teacher should take into account the progress made in the fields of psychology, pedagogy and methodology, and should guide and help his students to develop their physical, moral and intellectual gifts harmoniously. He should prepare them to take their place in social life, so that afterwards they can find fulfilment in working energetically for the general good. This education has an essentially positive character; it is to be given with enlightened help and encouragement; it should stimulate the students' personal activity. Repressive punishment should seldom be given, and then it should be carefully considered and chosen for its educational value. Lastly, teachers are to take particular care of the less gifted students, so that they too can advance in the direction of this same ideal of education.

32-4 The enthusiasm of a teacher should not be confined to giving his classes, or to the group of students who are enrolled in them. It must extend as far as the very person of the students, and to their general welfare, and should not be limited by considerations of time or distance. That is why, among the Josephites, the former students have such an important place in the apostolate of our schools.

33. Education must be a labour of love. Teachers are to show towards their students a fatherly and pastoral affection that includes the qualities of energy, and prudence and discretion. This complete gift should be inspired by an apostolic spirit. In this way they will become witnesses by their life and teaching, of Jesus Christ who is the one Master.

3-1 A family spirit, which in a religious community gives proof of the gift of the love the Father has made to men in his Son, creates an atmosphere favouring true education. It spreads to the students. and through the teachers reveals the attractive qualities of Christ's personality to them.

34. The apostolate of the Josephites, the centre of which is the school, is not to be confined to students and former students, but should extend equally to students' parents, to colleagues on the lay staff, to service personnel, and

into the surrounding community, outlying as well as close-by.

34-1 Parents and teachers should work closely together, for if they do not, education is impossible. This cooperation should consist in a good-faith exchange of information and regular consultation. Moreover, teachers, and particularly those who are responsible for directing studies in our schools, should help parents in the difficult task of education by their advice and counsel.

34-2 Communities should be looking for the most effective ways of further integrating lay staff into the religious family, and into its spirit, and into the total educational programme.

34-3 Within the Church and within each diocese, the work of education is an apostolate which is in certain respects collegial. Consequently, the Institute's schools and colleges must become harmoniously integrated into this common work in a spirit of service and selflessness; their relations with other schools should give witness to Christian charity.

§ 2. Priestly work

35. Josephites invested with the ministerial priesthood have a share in the obligations and duties proper to the order of the presbyterate. Beginning with preaching the gospel, and drawing their strength and power from the sacrifice of Christ, they reach their goal when the City, completely redeemed, is offered up as a universal sacrifice by the one High Priest. The most obvious field of action for the Josephites is, of course, the school or college itself. By the very nature of things, pastoral activity in schools may take the most varied forms, and may be very deeply rooted in school life, on the one condition that, in the midst of his pedagogical and secular duties, no religious loses sight of the priestly mission that a religious priest has.

35-1 Confrères should take the greatest care over preparing liturgies, especially the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, for the greatest benefit of the students and the whole christian community. They should place all their skill at the service of the liturgy of the Word, and take the greatest care over it. They have the obligation of maintaining student interest in the sacred liturgy.

35-2 If they are responsible for catechesis and religious studies they should take very great care over preparing and giving their classes, remembering that this branch requires a lot of study, a great deal of psychological sensitivity, and a deep life of faith. As far as they can, priests must help in maintaining the quality

and effectiveness of religious instruction given by lay teachers, especially in the primary grades.

35-3 *Communities must promote apostolic works programmes and youth organisations, for these constitute a privileged field of pastoral activity and predispose for the action of grace. Priests who are in charge of these movements must remember that the greater their opportunity for doing good, the greater their responsibilities before God and the faithful.*

35-4 *Since the apostolate in the schools in all its forms manages on numerous occasions to come into contact with adolescents and young people, they should find in their teacher or housemaster a friend and counsellor in whom they can always recognise the priest or brother. Discretion and respect for the mystery of the soul, and for the workings of grace, should be proof against intrusive or overbearing counselling practices. Rather, genuine love of God and of young people will enable the mysterious flow of grace to pass between him and them, through the work of the teachers.*

36. If by their Founder's will Josephites have to be at the service of the Church, and first and foremost the local Church, the priests, since they are to be enthusiastic co-workers with their bishop, must adapt their apostolate to current needs with the greatest of care. The Congregation must apply itself more than ever to helping the bishops because of the growing needs of the faithful.

36-1 *It follows from this that the Congregation is prepared to place at the service of the bishops religious priests who so desire it, either as their principal assignment, or for particular assignments compatible with their apostolate inside the schools.*

36-2 *Supplying in parishes at the weekends is one of the most recommended forms of this cooperation. If it demands dedication, since it is in addition to the workload of an often taxing week, it can also be for the priest-teacher an excellent way of establishing a balance in his life.*

36-3 *When they request it, and in particular cases, confrères who are not destined for the priesthood could be promoted to the diaconate so that they can have a greater part in the liturgical life of the Church.*

36-4 *In order to have writings dealing with religious topics or morality published, religious require the authorisation of the regional superior.*

§ 3. Missions

37. The commandment given by Christ to the Church to preach the Gospel to every creature is so fundamental that bishops, as members of the episcopal body which is successor to the Apostles, are asked to send some of their best priests into incompletely evangelized territories, or to areas lacking priests. The entire people of God shares in this missionary responsibility. That is why the Congregation encourages some of its own men to help the Church fulfil this basic task by dedicating themselves to the work of the missions. Its missionaries will be able to bring God to people as yet uninitiated into Christianity only if their preaching and catechesis are accompanied by an understanding of them, and by dialogue with them, and a love of them that nothing can repel; in short, by the irrefutable witness of their lives. Furthermore, they should faithfully help the young churches consolidate and develop, and while continuing to work loyally with them, they should prepare them for the time when the end of their missionary service arrives, i.e. prepare them for possessing their own resources, scant though these may be, of local clergy, religious and lay folk. Work in the missions derives from the very principles of the Institute. This radiates outwards its spirit of the religious family, in order to spread the Kingdom of God. All the same, the Congregation is to use for this ministry only confrères who desire it, or who freely accept the proposal of the competent superior.

37-1 In order to express their common commitment to missionary work, communities are to help freely and generously in the formation of confrères born in mission lands. The Customary is to formulate for the different regions a method for making this plan effective.

37-2 A missionary is not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, or of the scandal of the Cross in his preaching, but, at the same time, he is to demonstrate in his own life, by his gentleness and his humility, how sweet the Lord's yoke is. His constancy, his patience and his charity are to witness to Christ even, if necessary, to the shedding of blood. He should be able, with the Lord's help, to accept joyfully great difficulties and extreme poverty, and he should be devoted to obedience, knowing that it is by obedience that Christ has saved the world.

37-3 To the spirit of sacrifice he should join the spirit of prayer so that the inner man may be renewed day by day. The regional superior will gather the missionaries together for regular meetings to build up their hope and their attachment to their vocation, and to adapt the good work of the apostolate and ministry to changing circumstances.

37-4 Since he must be broad-minded and open hearted in his dealings with men, a missionary is to take on willingly the responsibilities which are laid on him. He must adjust generously to ways and customs, as well as to political changes, and he must persevere patiently and courageously, despite the loneliness, the fatigue and the set-backs.

37-5 By reason of the social situation, non-priests are to help the local people in the field of public works, and consequently should be equipped to do this. But their primary work must remain apostolic.

37-6 Missionaries are not to be concerned with the salvation of souls only. They must dedicate themselves to the total development of the people entrusted to them, a task which consists of promoting every dimension of every man. To build the City of God, even for priests, is to help men to lead a fully human life here on earth, and worthy of those who are called to the freedom of children of God. Only after it is fully human, and worked into the web of history, is Christian love authentic. Faced with discerning the signs of the times, and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel, missionaries should take their full share in building up the young nations in collaboration with the civil authorities.

PART III

GROWTH OF COMMUNITY LIFE

38. Because it is a living cell and a religious family within the Church, the Congregation must be continually enriched with new sons. It is responsible for their formation, both to those who have given themselves to it freely and generously, and to the Church. Just as Our Lord carefully chose his disciples and took a long time preparing them, before he put them in charge of running the Church, and never abandoning them to their own devices, so the Congregation must accept with an equal degree of prudence and love the candidates who present themselves to it, and over a long period, or rather throughout their whole life, lead them to form that perfect man, who is Christ come to full stature, and to apostolic maturity. In a developing world, the Congregation must adapt this education to new circumstances and to new needs, as well as to the particular gifts and to the personal form of the vocation of each of its members. Taking the Church as its example, the Congregation is to base itself on its traditions and its past experience in order to open up new ways which the Holy Spirit, the Church and the signs

of the times point out. This is the only way for it to remain young and to be renewed, for the renewal of an Institute depends above all else on the formation of its members.

CHAPTER I

Entry into the Community

39. To be accepted, candidates must have acquired sufficient maturity and possess a certain level of sociability and regularity, for these are dispositions which are needed for the common life and for the work they will have to do in the Institute. All the same, by reason of the different kinds of work within the scope of the common apostolate, the Congregation can admit a wide variety of talents and abilities. Over everything, candidates must give evidence of generosity and supernatural motivation, without which one cannot speak of a religious vocation.

40. Since maturity of mind and character is of special importance for whoever is preparing to make a commitment, and since this maturity can be latent and relatively slow in appearing, a candidate is to be accepted for the novitiate only after he has shown unmistakable signs. But while waiting to be able to make a prudent judgement on a candidate's suitability, the Congregation should remain in close contact with him, and should help him to finish his preparatory formation, and should introduce him to its life and spirit.

40-1 The postulant is to live either in the scholasticate or in another community, or he may continue to live with his family, but he is to be made to feel welcome as a family member of the Community. During this time he may pursue studies in philosophy or in religious sciences, or university or technical studies, or yet again, he may be brought into the apostolic work of the community, with possibility of doing a residency (stage) of a social nature. A confrère designated for the purpose is to have the particular responsibility for dealing with the postulant. Full advantage of this time should be taken not only to fill out his religious knowledge, but also to introduce him progressively into the spirit of religious life.

40.2 Before the novitiate, a postulancy of at least a month's duration is compulsory, but it is not to exceed two years. The regional superior, with the consent of his council, is empowered to admit to the novitiate a candidate who has the qualities required by common law.

CHAPTER II

The Novitiate

41. Religious life begins with the novitiate. The novitiate must be a period of formation rather than of probation. But it must be a period of discernment, both for the novice and for his superiors. It is to consist of a direct, progressive introduction of the novice into the life of a baptized person, and into religious life and Josephite life. This initiation is to teach him detachment from what has nothing to do with the kingdom of God, as well as teaching him the practice of humility, chastity, poverty, obedience, the common life, the spirit of prayer, habitual union with the Holy Spirit, and what it means to help one another with frank and open charity.

41-1

1° The regional superior, with the consent of his council, has the power to admit someone to the novitiate, to prolong the novitiate, to admit to first vows and to the renewal of vows, and to admit to perpetual profession after having ascertained that the canonical conditions have been fulfilled (c. 643,656,658). He can also refuse to admit candidates to profession. But to refuse to admit a candidate to perpetual vows, confirmation by the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of his council, is required.

2° The regional superior, with the deliberative vote of his council, is competent to allow advancement to the diaconate and to the priesthood, and he is the one who gives his subjects the dimissorial letters. But even here, antecedent confirmation by the Superior General, with the deliberative vote of his council is required.

41-2 In everything dealing with the novitiate and formation, as well as temporary and final profession, the prescriptions of the universal law of the Church are to be faithfully observed.

41-3 The novice must spend at least twelve months in the novitiate house. This time is required for the validity of the novitiate. An absence of more than three months, consecutive or otherwise, of the group of novices from the novitiate house for any reason whatsoever, requires the novice to repeat his year's novitiate. For an absence of a shorter time, the prescriptions of the common law

are to be rigorously observed.

41-4 *The novice master is named by the regional superior with the consent of his council. He is to be a confrère belonging to the Institute, professed in final vows, and a priest. He should be at least thirty years old. He is to be distinguished for his prudence, his charity, his piety and his religious observance. The direction of the canonical formation is reserved to him under the authority of the regional superior.*

41-5 *The novice master can accept help from other competent persons, but they are accountable to him in everything concerning the canonical direction of the novitiate and the formation programme. The same goes for teachers whom the regional superior appoints to assist the novice master in instructing the novices.*

41-6 *The proximate discernment of a vocation is the responsibility of the novice master and his assistants, but the "official discernment" is the responsibility of the regional superior assisted by his council.*

42. The novice is to receive courses in Holy Scripture and religious doctrine, as well as an introduction to the liturgical life and spirituality of the Institute.

42-1 *The time spent during the novitiate must be used in the direct formation of the novice as such. Therefore, the introduction to the spirituality and the pedagogy of the Founder must be studied within this context.*

43. The novitiate is also to include an introduction to the work of the Institute and its apostolate. This is to be done in such a way as to favour the two stroke rhythm of the interior life lived in calm and solitude, and the generous gift of self to men. This introduction to the Institute's work is to be done under the responsibility of the novice master.

43-1 *The introduction to apostolic or social work must not cut the novice off from the common life of the novitiate, or at least from the group of novices living with the novice master. The time for a proper residency must be in addition to the twelve months minimum length of the novitiate.*

44. So that the novitiate may have its fully educative character it must be done in an atmosphere that is open and flexible, charitable, friendly and cooperative. This presupposes that, on the one hand, the novice master's

direction combines wisdom and firmness, and on the other hand that community life is of a high standard.

44-1 The novitiate is to have its own routine and daily life, but the novice master should favour and moderate contacts with the community.

44-2 Because of the difficulty which can present itself of assessing young people's maturity, it is allowable to prolong the novitiate provided that altogether it does not exceed two years.

44-3 A novice who is in danger of death can be admitted to vows for an indeterminate period by the regional superior. If he recovers, he reverts to the same status he had before he made his profession.

CHAPTER III

The Scholasticate

45. Commitment through the vows, and especially perpetual vows, is such a serious decision before God, and the Church, and the Congregation, and is so serious for the natural and supernatural happiness of the religious who makes it, that it must be safeguarded with every possible guarantee. Both superiors and candidates should be amenable to working out together the right time to make the commitment, in a spirit of perfect charity and common responsibility.

45-1 In order to be admitted to vows, after a sufficient probationary period and adequate training and education, a novice must exhibit the psychological and emotional maturity necessary for assessing the obligations of consecrated celibacy.

45.2 The formula for vows is as follows: "In honour of the blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, in the presence of the community, and at the hands of the regional superior (or of his deputy), and in Christ Jesus whom I take for my model in life, I... consecrate myself to almighty God by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience for one year/in perpetuity, according to the Constitutions of the Josephites. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

46. The scholasticate is the period of time which runs from the novitiate to the moment of final profession for those who are not going on for the priesthood. For the rest, it runs through to ordination.

4-1 After the novitiate, temporary profession is to be made every year for not less than four years, nor for more than six. However, if it is judged necessary, the period of temporary profession may be prolonged by the regional superior so that the whole period that a religious is in temporary vows does not exceed nine years. Final profession, which can never be made before the age of twenty one, and which must necessarily precede major orders, is to be prepared for by a period of retreat and prayer.

Except in the case of force majeure, before taking final vows, scholastics are to be freed, completely or partially, from their ordinary duties for a month of spiritual renewal characterized by a more intense prayer life, lectures and conferences on the Constitutions, the Founder and the Institute's spirituality, and by religious instruction on the meaning of perpetual commitment. If this month's renewal is clearly unrealizable, they are to make a retreat of at least one full week.

46-2 For serious and just reasons, a confrère in temporary vows can be refused permission to renew his vows, and, especially so, to take his final vows. He is not to be kept in a state of uncertainty until the last moment, and he is to be helped to handle the problems of readjusting to life in the world. In the exceptional case in which a return to the world should lead the confrère to further growth because of the understanding and support he has received from the Congregation, the regional superior, with the consent of his council, could readmit him. After a period of probation followed by at least one year of temporary vows, and more, if the time of the temporary vows to be made up is longer, he could be allowed to take his final vows.

47. The primary purpose of the scholasticate is the ongoing formation of the young religious, and to lead them to that maturity of character, maturity of intellect and maturity of religion that a commitment for life presupposes, and which the accomplishment of our mission in the Church demands. This formation is to be the education of young adults towards personal responsibility. Therefore, it should allow more and more freedom, provided that this freedom is backed up with real Christian affection on the part of formation directors, and is guided by their counsel and by other persuasive methods.

47-1 Scholastics are to be entrusted to a competent religious, of enlightened psychology, who is called the regent of scholastics, and is appointed by the

regional superior. His role is to be filled out by counsellors, freely chosen by each scholastic, both for spiritual direction and for intellectual direction. The routine followed in the scholasticate should especially favour a very full community life. Through their working as a group, the young religious are to encourage each other to live up to the different demands of their vocation with the discreet and perceptive help of their directors.

47-2 Since it is a fact that the spirit of prayer is acquired and perfected slowly, and follows a gradual development in which religious exercises play an important part, during the time of the scholasticate religious exercises are to be given more time and prominence, and are to lead to an ever more personal prayer life.

48. The period of the scholasticate is a time for study. The young religious' longing to use what abilities they have to render the very best service to the Church and the Congregation, should stir up in them the desire to work hard, and a spirit of initiative in their studies. Scholastics are always to remain in touch with the Congregation's problems, and so they are to integrate whatever studies they do outside the religious house into the common search and effort of the Congregation.

48-1 All religious, including those who are not destined for the priesthood, must complete their religious education and formation. The scholasticate is the time for theological and university formation. But it is also the time when, in addition to formation in the religious life, a further formation should be given which provides acquaintance with different life-styles, viewpoints and currents of thought in contemporary society. The regent of scholastics can have an influential role in these areas as counsellor and moderator, indeed as an educator, who will certainly leave his mark on the religious for his whole life.

48-2 The regional superior is to direct the studies of the scholastics.

48-3 The studies in preparation for the priesthood are to be rigorously in conformity with the universal law.

48-4 If it is inadvisable to toss former novices directly into apostolic work, it is certainly necessary to allow them to become gradually more involved in the practice of their future apostolate by letting them have some work experience as teachers and supervisors. This formation is to begin from the principles and rules handed down to us by our Founder. Besides, scholastics must gain first hand experience of attitudes and needs in today's world, and become gradually more involved in this world.

48-5 By providing a formation for each man, which is adapted to his abilities, the Congregation tries to guarantee a fruitful apostolate for its members and for its own future. Again, it should avoid as far as possible the situation of a confrère, who leaves or is dismissed after several years, not being able to re-enter society.

48-6 As far as confrères who are intended for the missions are concerned, they are to follow courses on religious, catechetical and apostolate related problems, so that they are well-versed in the latest methods of the apostolate in missionary countries. If they have not been called to the priesthood, following the novitiate they are to receive an adequate formation in both technical and apostolic skills.

CHAPTER IV

Ongoing Formation

49. Life is progress. This is true of the spiritual life, and it is why Josephites should devote time to forming themselves in doctrine and in spirituality throughout their lives. They are to develop also the theory and the practice of their professional training. Indeed, the world is continually evolving, and if Josephites want to have an impact on it, for this is their sacred mission, they must update themselves constantly, keeping in step with the Church. Since their apostolate is primarily directed towards young people who will shape the future, they are to be particularly careful not to get out of touch with them. Good habits degenerate easily into mere routine. With age, ways of thought and perception which for a long time have proved themselves, become fixed and rigid. Religious must be always studying and following the changing patterns of ideas. Renewal in every area must take place, and one has always to be relearning in a new setting and in an ever-changing light what one has learned before.

49-1 Teachers must be convinced that their formation does not end with their "studies". Knowledge does not stand still, and the one who is not up with what is happening risks losing his influence as a teacher because of his out of date ways of thinking. Day after day, teachers have an absolute duty to complete their religious and secular studies by all means possible, including those which modern technology and the media place at their disposal. They are not to forget that, for a teacher in primary or secondary education, method in teaching is

more important than the knowledge itself. A lively method requires serious and open preparation, however many the years spent in teaching.

49.2 *For departure or dismissal from the Institute the universal law of the Church is to be observed. Those who leave the Institute lawfully, or who are dismissed, cannot claim anything back from it for any work whatsoever performed for the Institute. However, the Institute will show justice and charity towards the member who leaves.*

PART IV

SHEPHERDS AND TEACHERS WITH A VIEW TO BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

CHAPTER I

Structure and Direction of the Institute

50. The Congregation is a living cell of the Church. It possesses in the General Chapter an organic structure, and in the superiors motor organs. Superiors, who are the shepherds and teachers serving this cell, give it also the cohesiveness and drive that it needs to work with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the building up of the Body of Christ in accordance with the designs of God. First of all the Superior General, and then the other superiors who are his co-workers, are to draw together the bonds of fraternal charity inside their religious family. And at the same time as they perform this formative function, they are to act as intermediaries for the loving obedience which ascends to God.

51. Within the Congregation, authority at the highest level belongs to the Superior General. Below this, authority has different levels and is apportioned throughout the different regions and communities of the Congregation. It breaks down in the following manner:

from the Superior General

through regional and local superiors

through the functions and responsibilities which are given to confrères and

for which they are to take at their level the necessary initiatives down to the co-responsibility in which every man shares for building the community order.

This balance of authority is in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. it respects each man's area of initiative and responsibility without in the least infringing on the power of the superiors, while it allows the latter to intervene directly in cases of failure or incompetence at a lower level.

51-1 The Holy Father is the supreme head of our religious, and they owe him obedience by virtue of their vow of obedience. Because the Institute exists solely as a particular organ of the Universal Church, superiors should take care that confrères know and observe the decrees of the Holy See relating to religious.

51-2 Cooperation with the local bishops requires religious to show dedication and selflessness.

51-3 Since the Institute is a social body, or rather an eschatological family, which aims at the sanctification of all, and is organised around a common work, and waiting for the divine fatherhood to descend on every member through the family structure, the government of the Institute is to be firm and prudent, and, at the same time, to respect the personality and particular gifts of each man.

*51-4 The authority of the whole Institute is exercised in the name of its members in an extraordinary manner by the General Chapter. It is exercised in an ordinary manner by the Superior General assisted by his **council**. both being elected by the Chapter.*

51-5 By its very nature, the General Chapter involves the responsibility of all confrères, and they cannot simply off-load this onto the delegates they choose. Therefore, they must prepare thoroughly for the Chapter by studying the problems and needs of the Congregation in its present situation, and, as a community, come up with some proposed solutions. Besides, it is in the same spirit that they are to welcome the Chapter decisions as the start of a new burst of life for the Congregation.

51-6 The General Chapter is to re-examine the state of the Institute over the period since the preceding Chapter. It is to discuss the wishes expressed by the confrères and communities, and to take decisions on these. It decrees rules which will have the force of law until the following Chapter. It elects a Superior General, the members of his council and the Bursar General.

51-7 The Chapter members must realize that the responsibility entrusted to them is of the greatest importance, since for a good part the maintenance of the supernatural and brotherly spirit in the family of Josephites depends on their decisions. That is why they must lay aside all personal feeling, all self-interest, and have as their aim the glory of God and the general welfare of the Institute.

51-8 In its decisions, the Chapter is to take into account the development of the mind of the Church and the spirit of the times, so that Josephites, who are educators and priests, may give witness as faithfully and articulately as possible to Christ's Gospel.

52. According to the wishes of the Founder of the Congregation, the Superior General must be considered as the father of the religious and of the whole family of Josephites. He should have it near to his heart to maintain close relationships with all the confrères; he should visit every region at least every two years. He may be helped by his councillors. He should remember that his role of father cannot properly be delegated to someone else.

52-1 The existence of the regions makes the role of the Superior General particularly important. He is the chief animator and promoter of spiritual renewal and fraternal charity in the Institute, in the regions and in the communities, and also of the ongoing adaptation of the apostolate to the needs of the Church and the education of youth. With this purpose in mind, he should try, in the course of his extended visits, to enter into the sometimes diverging lives and aspirations and preoccupations of our communities.

53. To a certain degree, the local superior shares this role of father in the local community. He sees to it that the community fulfils its Gospel mission. He helps the confrères by his advice, and his support, and his encouragement, so that they can progress in genuine piety and find happiness in the accomplishment of their tasks. For the most part, it is on him that the fervour, the good spirit and the quality of the apostolic work depend, although each man is responsible for this together with him through his loyal and brotherly cooperation.

54. No matter how the administration of the schools is organised, the apostolate which Josephites have taken on by their religious consecration requires in the authorities a high level of competence, decisiveness and dedication. This situation is imposed on them by their responsibility for the success, the continued growth, the constant adaptation of the enterprise, and

its permanence. Recourse to supernatural sources will help them to bring into existence, in a delicate and necessary balance, an administration which is at once religious and efficient.

55. Suppressed in 1995.

56. The differences that exist between regions where the Congregation is established, can require a certain amount of variation within the one religious family and its regional organisation. This should not loosen ties between members of the Congregation, nor with the Superior General and his council.

56-1 The Customary is to include a regional section setting out the rules particular to that region.

CHAPTER II

Regulations Dealing with the Government of the Institute

I. THE GENERAL CHAPTER

A. Convocation, composition and purpose of the Chapter

57. The authority residing in the body of the Institute is exercised in an extraordinary manner by the General Chapter. This must convene every five years. It elects the Superior General and his council. It deals with the more important business of the Institute, and draws up rules which all must obey.

57-1 One year before the Chapter, a preparatory session is held. This is to be fairly open to confrères.

58. The Superior General, the general councillors and the regional superiors are *ex officio* members of the Chapter with an active and passive vote.

59.

1° The election of the Chapter delegates is to be held in every community; the superior presides. All professed confrères are called to participate in the election. For the election to be valid, two thirds of the professed must be present. Finally professed have a passive vote. Delegates may never be fewer in number than *ex officio* members. They are to be elected according to the

apportionments set by the preceding Chapter.

2° The first business is the election of two tellers and a secretary responsible for recording the proceedings. Then the delegates and their substitutes are elected in accordance with the rules of the General Customary.

3° The proceedings duly signed by the person presiding and by the secretary and the two tellers, are to be brought to the Chapter by the first delegate.

4° At the General Chapter, all finally professed, whether or not they are delegates, have a passive vote.

59.1 Suppressed in 1995.

60. In every election where there is a tied vote in the final ballot allowed by the rules, there is to be a run-off between the two confrères with the most votes. These two do not vote in the run-off. If there is still a tie, the man who is senior in religious life or, if they belong to the same year, the older man is deemed elected.

B. Activities of the Chapter

61. For the validity of the acts of the Chapter, the presence of at least two thirds of the capitulars is required.

62. The Chapter is to discuss the opinions, requests and proposals of the confrères. Most especially, it is to take notice of the report of the outgoing Superior General. It is also to fix the sum above which regional or local superiors may not make extraordinary expenses without having obtained the agreement of the Superior General and the consent of his council. Decisions are to be taken on the basis of an absolute majority of votes in secret balloting. The elected secretary is to write up the minutes of these debates.

63. At an opportune moment, the Chapter proceeds to the election of the Superior General, the Vicar General, and the three other councillors.

64. The Superior General is elected as follows: two ballots of two thirds majority, and then an absolute majority. If two ballots of absolute majority

are indecisive, the volting is to be between the two candidates who have the most votes, or, if there are more than two, the two older men. After the fifth ballot, if there is a tie, the senior in age shall be considered elected.

64-1 The Superior General is elected for five years. He can be re-elected immediately, but only for one other term of six years.

65. Members of the General Council are elected in the same way as the Superior General.

II. THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT

A. The Superior General

66. The Superior General, lawfully elected – he is to be at least 35 years old and 10 years finally professed - governs and administers the Institute which is entrusted to him in accordance with the norms of the universal law of the Church and the Constitutions. He has the right, according to the Constitutions, to assign responsibilities and delegate jobs to be carried out both for the Institute at large or for a region or particular house. He has the right to send confrères from one region or house to another. He has the right to exempt confrères for a time from one or other disciplinary article of the Constitutions.

66-1 The function of Superior General is incompatible with the function of regional or local superior.

66-2 The Superior General is to supervise the administration of temporal goods with the greatest care.

66-3 He is to devote his time assiduously to the spiritual welfare of the confrères, and to the progress of the Congregation's apostolate.

67. If the Superior General has to abandon his office, his authority devolves upon the Vicar General. He has to convoke the Chapter so that the new Superior General can be elected as quickly as possible, and within the year.

B. The General Council

68. The Council of the Superior General is made up of four members

including the Vicar General.

68-1 The General Council is to meet at least four times a year. It has a two-fold purpose:

1° by its advice and continual support, to help the Superior General to give to the whole Institute and to every region, the religious leadership and general directives for the future;

2° to take, with the Superior General, decisions requiring a deliberative vote.

68-2 There are cases seen by universal law and proper law, when the superior can validly take a decision only after he has obtained the consent of his council by a majority vote, or again, after he has asked the advice of his council, advice which he is not bound to follow. The first case is called a deliberative vote, the second a consultative.

69. A college of consultors, made up of regional and local superiors, and regional and local assistants or their delegates, allows the General Council to be enlarged whenever it has to deal with questions for which this enlargement seems to the Council to be opportune. All or part of this college of consultors should be brought into the General Council every two years.

70. The Vicar General has the status of major superior. He is to be at least 30 years old and 5 years finally professed. He helps the Superior General in the daily running of the Institute by means of his frequent contacts with the regions and the houses, and more particularly with the regional and local superiors. He has the authority of the Superior General in his absence or when he is prevented from exercising his function.

71. Suppressed in 1995.

72. The Secretary General has the duty of placing and keeping, with care, in the archives, all the documents and proceedings which deal with the administration of the Institute. He must also, when asked by the Superior General, and in his name, write the letters and draw up the documents which have to do with the Institute's business.

73. The Procurator General, elected by the General Council, can at the request of the Superior General be represented at the Holy See by a religious of another Institute resident in Rome.

74. If a general councillor has to abandon his office, his substitute is elected by the other councillors, after consultation, written if need be, with the college of consultants.

75. The financial resources which the General Council needs are provided by all the regions.

C. The Bursar General and the administration of temporal goods

76. Among the possessions of the Institute, some are owned and administered by the Institute, some by the regions, and some by particular houses.

77. All buildings and property of the Institute as such, as well as other possessions, money on deposit, savings, stocks etc. belonging to the central funds of the Institute are administered in accordance to the norms of canon law, the Constitutions and civil law by the Bursar General, under the direction of the Superior General and the supervision of the General Council. If he is not a general councillor, the Bursar General can be called to the council for all business that falls within his competency, so that he can furnish necessary documents and useful advice. In this case, he has no voting rights.

78. At the end of every financial year, the Bursar General gives an account of his administration to the Superior General and his council.

79. If the Bursar General has to abandon his office, his substitute is named by the Superior General with the consent of his Council..

III. REGIONS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

80.

1° Determination, creation or suppression of a region is the prerogative of the General Chapter.

2° The regional statutes, which are fixed collegially by the regional superior and his council, and any changes which have to be made to them, require the approval of the Superior General with the deliberative vote of his council.

3° After consulting the members of the respective regions, the Superior

General with the consent of his council appoints the regional superiors who have the status of major superiors.

4° The regional superior governs his region in accordance with the Constitutions and the General Customary of the Institute and the regional statutes. The latter make clear the regional superior's obligation to meet with his council, to visit the houses, and to preside at regional meetings.

5° In particular cases, the regional superior can dispense certain confrères from the observance of any disciplinary article in the Constitutions .

81.

1° Any confrère may be appointed regional superior if he is at least 30 years old and 5 years finally professed.

2° When the term of the regional superior is about to expire, before appointing the new superior, the General Council is to consult the region.

82. In each region, there is to be a regional council in accordance with the norms of the regional statutes.

83. A regional bursar, distinct from the regional superior, and established in accordance with the regional statutes, handles the administration of goods under the direction of the regional superior.

84. Once a year, the regional superior sends the Superior General a financial statement and faithful report on the state of the region.

IV. HOUSES AND THEIR GOVERNMENT

85. The local superior is appointed, after appropriate consultation, by the regional superior, with the consent of his council, for a term of three years. At the end of this term he can be reappointed immediately to the same function for another term of three years.

86. No confrère may be appointed superior of a house unless he has taken final vows for the period of time indicated in the Directory. When the term of a local superior is about to end, the Regional Council will consult the community before appointing the new one.

87. It is for the regional superior, with the deliberative vote of his council, to

decide whether a small community is a *residence* rather than a *house*. The residence is to be under the direction of a *rector* appointed by the regional superior with the consent of his council. It is attached to a house to which members must join themselves for electing delegates to the General Chapter, as well as for community meetings and retreats prescribed by the regional statutes.

88. The regional superior, with the deliberative vote of his council, can judge that the time is right for setting up a house or residence, or for suppressing it, but his decision needs to be confirmed by the Superior General with the deliberative vote of his council, and is subject to the rules of the general law of the Church.

89. The local superior has the responsibility for everything in the spiritual and temporal sectors that is useful to confrères and students. In particular cases, he can dispense certain confrères from the observance of a disciplinary article of the Constitutions.

90. The local assistant is elected for one year by the community from among the members of the house.

91. The prefect of studies (headmaster, principal) is appointed by the regional superior with the consent of his council. He is the second councillor, and in the absence of the superior he is to replace him in matters dealing with students and parents.

92. The local bursar is appointed by the regional superior, with the consent of his council. He is a member of the local council. He takes care of material necessities, directs the work of the confrères who have responsibilities in this same domain, and also the service personnel of the house. If it is not possible to appoint a bursar distinct from the superior, the superior may take on the responsibilities of local bursar. Three times a year, the bursar gives an account of the finances and possessions of the house. At the end of each financial year, he sends the regional superior and his council a financial statement co-signed by the superior and his councillors.

93. The superior, the assistant, the prefect and bursar form the local council. This council meets every month and every time the needs of the house require it. The secretary, elected from among its members, writes up the minutes of the meetings.

94. Once a year, the superior and his councillors, as well as the rector of a

residence, send the regional superior a faithful report on the state of the house.

95. For the validity of alienation, or of any other business in which the patrimonial condition of the Institute can be affected adversely, there is required the written permission of the Superior General, with the consent of his council.

96. To judge whether it is opportune to close a school or a house, the General Council, whose corporate responsibility it is to make the final decision, is to take into account the opinion of the region, and of the local community, after having consulted with the local bishop.

96-1 The goods of a suppressed house are handled by the regional bursar.

EPILOGUE

97. From its beginning, our Congregation has always found in its Constitutions a sure standard and a powerful support. Our venerated Founder was fully convinced that the Josephite Fathers and Brothers would find in the Constitutions which he had composed, the expression of God's plan for them.

May all our confrères keep alive this fundamental attitude towards the Constitutions, which are now renewed and adapted to the directives of the Church, for these Constitutions are the faithful reflection of all the hope and all the confidence in the future which fills the Church and Congregation with life.

That is why the present Constitutions require that they be read and reflected upon regularly, both privately and in community. Only then, with the help of divine grace and the intercession of our patron Saint Joseph, will they contribute effectively to the growth and prosperity of our dear Congregation.

97-1 The Constitutions are a sure guarantee in religious' journey towards perfection. Religious should observe them faithfully. In themselves they do not oblige under pain of sin; but it would be a fault if a religious were to break them out of spite, or with a blameworthy intent, or, indeed, in a way which would be contrary to his vows or the precepts of God or the Church.

97-2 The Superior General and the regional superiors must see to it that the Constitutions are read regularly in community so that the reading of them is completed during the course of every year; and also, that they be commented on item by item in the communities.

