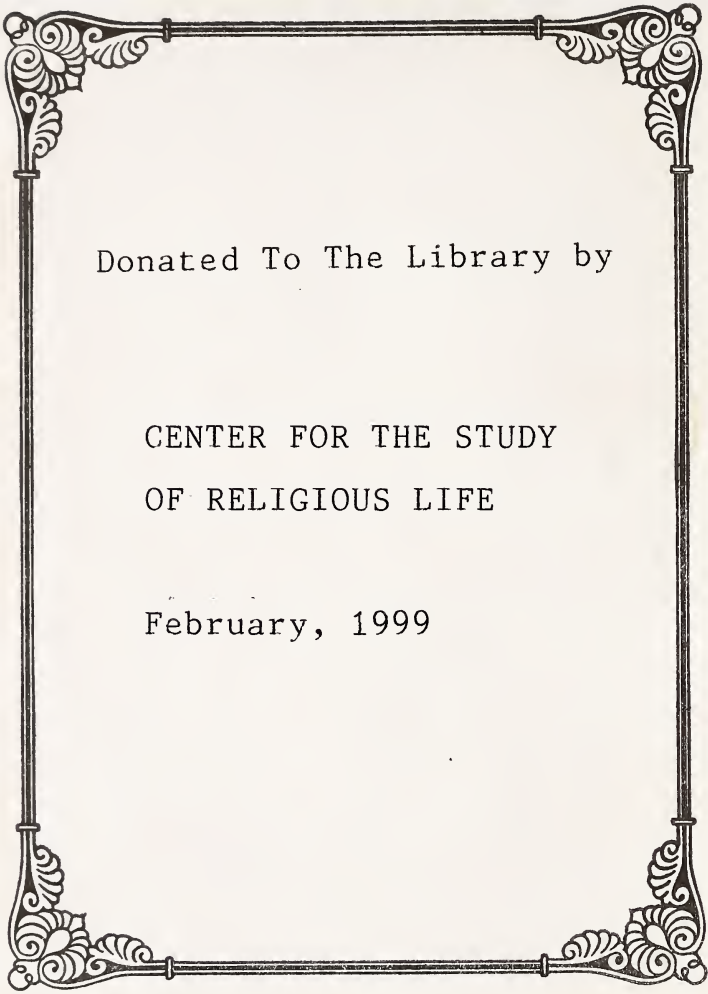


RULE AND CONSTITUTIONS

OF THE

Sisters of the Third Order
of St. Francis

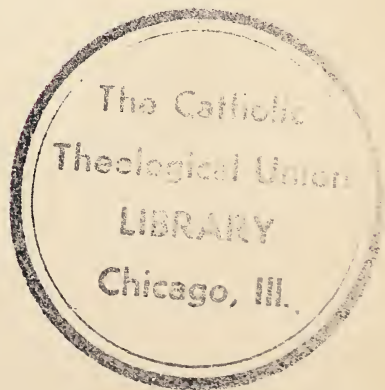


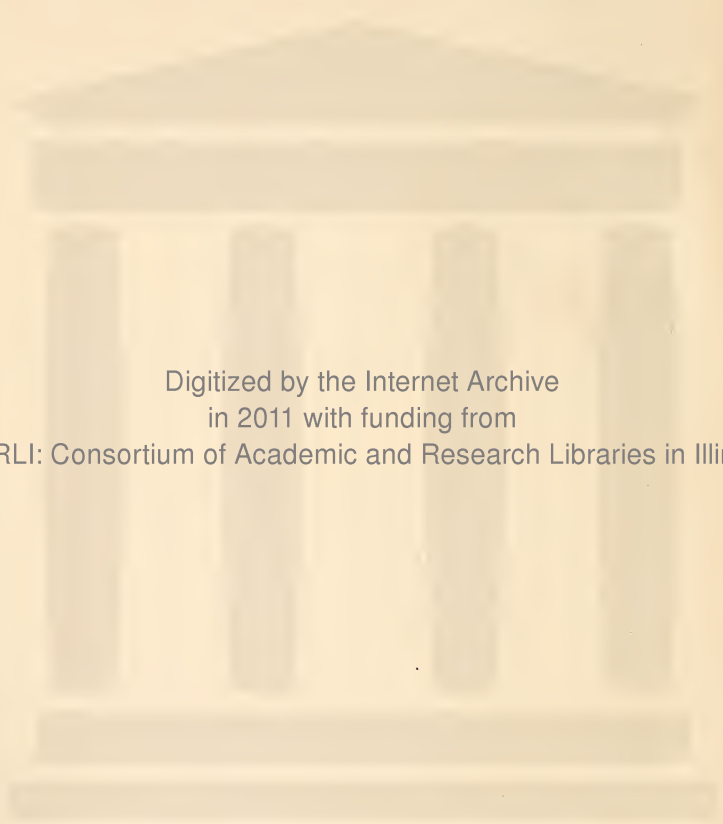
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THE RULE

AND

CONSTITUTIONS, WITH DIRECTORY

AND

BOOK OF CUSTOMS

OF THE

Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis

OF

Mount Hope, New York.

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TEXT OF THE RULE OF LEO X.

AND

DOCUMENT OF AFFILIATION.

TEXT OF THE RULE OF LEO X. GIVEN TO
THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE
THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS, ON
THE TWENTIETH DAY OF
JANUARY, 1521.

To our Beloved Children, the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, who live in community under the three essential vows.

Among the various things committed to Our charge, those render Us especially solicitous, by which the concupiscences of the world and the flesh are restrained, and that tranquil state of innocence and primitive peace, of heavenly origin, is brought back to its primeval condition.

I. For this same reason has Nicholas IV., Our Predecessor, long since confirmed and approved the Third Rule of St. Francis, which he called of Penance, by which the holy confessor, full of the Spirit of God, endeavored to save the faithful of both sexes.

II. But whereas, in the course of time, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, not only married people and other seculars, for whom the Third Rule was composed by Blessed Francis,

but likewise choirs of innumerable virgins, who have moreover taken upon themselves the three essential vows, and others, with Our permission, even the vow of enclosure, and have founded many monasteries, not without manifold fruit and edification to the church militant, have submitted themselves to the aforesaid Third Rule:

III. And because in the said Third Rule there are some things suited to married persons, which are by no means adapted to those serving the Lord in the state of celibacy and virginity under the Third Rule, on account of which the pure affections of chaste minds might become averse to entering this Order: We, according to the Will of the Lord, separating the precious from the vile, do confirm and approve anew, the Third Rule, in the following manner detailed, and transmit the same to you, to be observed by you and your successors; the tenor of which is as follows:

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ADMISSION OF NOVICES.

The Brothers and Sisters who are to be received into this Third Order, must be faithful Catholics, not suspected of heresy, firm in their

obedience to the Roman Church, unmarried, free from debts, sound in body, of a docile mind, of untarnished reputation, and reconciled with their neighbors. And before they are received, they should be diligently examined concerning all these things by him who has the faculty to admit them.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS HAVE TO PROMISE BY THE PROFESSION OF THE THIRD RULE.

After the Brothers and Sisters have worn the habit of probation (which habit should, according to the judgment of the visitor, be of poor material) for a full year, they may be admitted to the profession of the aforesaid Order; provided their conduct has been deemed praiseworthy by the council of the community, wherein they have worn the habit of probation. In this profession they shall promise to keep the commandments of God, to make satisfaction for the transgressions which they may thereafter commit against this Third Rule, whenever they shall be required to do so by their superiors; and to live in obedience, without property, and in chastity.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE FASTS.

The Brothers and Sisters shall abstain from flesh meat on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; except when the feast of our Lord's Nativity falls on one of these days. They shall also fast on every Wednesday and Friday from the feast of All Saints until that of our Lord's Resurrection, and also on all Fridays throughout the year. In like manner they shall fast every day from the feast of St. Martin until that of our Lord's Nativity; adding to this the fast of Lent kept by the universal Church, which they shall, however, begin on Quinquagesima. On the days on which they are not obliged to fast, they shall eat but twice a day. Those, however, who are employed at wearisome or hard work, may eat three times a day from Easter until the month of October; always excepting, however, the fast days. Those who are traveling, or sick, or infirm, are exempt from fasting.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE DIVINE OFFICE AND PRAYER.

The Brothers and Sisters shall observe silence

in Church, especially during Mass and the preaching of the word of God. In other places they shall observe the regulations made by their superiors in regard to silence. Every evening they shall consider within themselves before God what they have done, said, and thought during the day. If they can conveniently do so, they shall hear Mass daily. They should try to get a religious priest to announce to them the word of God, and to direct them in the practice of penance and virtue. Those Brothers and Sisters who know how to recite the canonical hours, shall recite them according to the custom of the holy Roman Church; but those who do not know how to recite them, shall say instead twelve times the *Pater Noster* for Matins, and seven times for each of other hours, adding the *Gloria Patri* at the end of every *Pater Noster*, and reciting, moreover, at the beginning of Prime and Compline, the Creed and the Psalm *Miserere mei, Deus*. Any one not knowing the aforesaid, shall say, as a penance, three times the *Our Father*. Whenever they take dinner or food, they shall give thanks to God. In regard to sacramental confession and holy Communion, they shall observe the decree of Pope Nicholas IV. prescribing that they should confess and communicate three

times a year; or else observe the statutes of their superiors on this subject.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE APPOINTMENT OF SUPERIORS AND THE FILLING OF OFFICES.

Every house shall have its own local superior; if it is a monastery of men, the superior shall be called Local Minister; if it is a convent of women, the superior shall be called Mother. These superiors shall be either elected by their communities, or appointed by the provincial superiors, or by the visitor general; in such a manner, however, that no superior continues in office for life, but only for a definite period of time. These ministers and mothers shall, during their term of office, obey the provincial ministers of the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis, and the visitors deputed by these same ministers, in all things pertaining to this Rule. In regard to the other offices of the house, they shall observe their constitutions.

CHAPTER VI.

OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT.

Since the Brothers and Sisters of this con-

fraternity are called "of Penance," it behooves them to avoid all vanity, both in their clothing and in everything else; and according to the salutary counsel of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, despising certain vain ornaments of this world, they should wear no corporal adornment, but an humble and a necessary covering of the body. They shall also keep entirely aloof from the palaces of princes and from great lords and ladies, where (according to our Lord's testimony), the luxuries of this world are to be found. Nor shall they ever assist at dances, plays, amusements, and other vain theatrical performances. They should also be very reserved in their words and conversations, which are rarely multiplied without sin. Above all they should beware of lying, and, according to our Lord's injunction, from every kind of oath; unless they should have to swear for the preservation of peace, for the purity of the faith, to avert calumny, or to confirm their evidence. Hence they should examine themselves every evening, whether, among other things, they have told a lie or taken an oath; and for every fault of this kind they shall say three times the *Our Father*,

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE VISITATION AND CARE OF THE SICK.

When a Brother or Sister of this Congregation falls sick, the Minister or Mother of the community shall visit him or her daily, either personally or through another; and shall carefully supply him or her with all necessaries from the common fund. They shall also admonish the sick person to accept the penance, and to turn sincerely to God, by setting before him or her the nearness of death, the rigor of God's judgment, and also the greatness of the Divine Mercy.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE VISITATION OF THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS
TO BE HELD BY THE ECCLESIASTICAL
SUPERIORS.

The Provincial Minister of the Friars Minor, or a Visitor deputed by him of the same Order, shall visit every house, but only once a year, in presence of the senior members of the community. Having finished the visitation, he is no longer allowed to enter the workrooms or other interior apartments of the Sisters. Nor shall the Visitor ever remain alone and apart with

any Sister. The local Ministers or Mothers must make known to the Visitor the defects that need correction; and the other Brothers and Sisters are obliged to do the same. And if, in the judgment of the discreet of the house, any person is considered incorrigible, he or she is to be expelled from the congregation as an infectious sheep.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE SUFFRAGES FOR THE DEAD.

After a Brother or Sister has departed this life, the Minister or Mother shall take care that the obsequies be celebrated solemnly. All the Brothers and Sisters of the house wherein the death occurred, must personally assist at the obsequies; and they should not depart until the body has been interred. Every Priest (of the community) is bound to say one Mass, within eight days, for the soul of every deceased member of the community. Those who know the Psalter, shall recite fifty Psalms; and those who do not know it; fifty *Pater Nosters*, adding after each one: *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine*. At the end of every year, or in the course of the same, every Priest shall say three Masses for the deceased members; those who know the

Psalter, shall recite it once, and those who do not, one hundred Pater Nosters, with the addition: *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine.* The Ministers and Mothers shall take care that these offices for the dead and other pious exercises just mentioned are faithfully performed.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE OBLIGATION OF WHAT IS CONTAINED IN THE RULE.

All and everything contained in this Rule is a matter of counsel, to facilitate the salvation of the soul; and nothing is obligatory under pain of sin, mortal or venial, unless one is obliged thereto by some other human or divine law. The Brothers and Sisters are, however, obliged to perform the penances imposed upon them as an obligation by their superiors. They are also obliged to keep the three essential vows: that of Poverty, by having nothing of their own; that of Chastity by not contracting marriage after making this vow, and not committing any sin of the flesh, by every one of which this vow is violated; and that of Obedience, by obeying in all that is necessary for the government of this confraternity. Those Sisters are also bound to observe enclosure, who have expressly vowed

the same; and this We permit to every convent, provided that the hospitality and the charity which they are accustomed to exercise toward the sick, or religious propriety suffer no detriment.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the Fisherman's Ring, the twentieth day of January, 1521, in the eight year of Our Pontificate.

Nos. Fr. Dominicus Reuter de Trenton, N. C.
Artium et Sacræ Theologiæ Doctor Totius
Ordinis Minorum.

S. FRANCISCI CONVENTUALIUM POST EUMDEM
SERAPHICUM PATRIARCHAM MINISTER
GENERALIS CVII.

Cum Sorores Tertii Ordinis S. P. N. Francisci Conventuales quæ nunc Domum matricem cum Novitiatu in loco Mount Hope, Westchester Co., diœcesis Neo-Eboracensis habent ab ordine Nostro et habitum et nomen mutuatae sint; hinc voto Rmi. Ordinarii, necnon et ipsarum Sororum petitioni satisfacere volentes, auctoritate, qua fungimur Ministri Generalis Minor S. Francisci Convent, eas Ordini N. Seraphico affiliamus, affiliasque hisce declaramus eo fine, ut indulgentiis omnibus et privilegiis tum pro se, tum pro suis Ecclesiis et Oratoriis, sive publicis, sive semi-publicis quibus Fratres Ordinis N. et Moniales S. Claræ fruuntur, et ipsæ pariter iuxta Decretum Pii Papæ X. diei 28 Aug. 1903 fruuntur et gaudeant. In quorum, etc.

Datum Romæ ad L. XII, Apostolos, d 8 Decembris,
1906.

(Signed) Fr. Dominicus Reuter, m pr.
MINISTER GENERALIS.

L. S.

Fr. Stephanus Ignudi, m. pr.
Secr. et Assist. Generalis Ord.

Concordat cum originali
in N. Archivio asservato: Romæ 27 Januarii, 1923.
Copy.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE DOCUMENT OF
AFFILIATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS, OF THE
MISSION OF THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN, CONVENTUALS OF
THE THIRD ORDER, TO THE ORDER OF MINOR CONVENTUALS OF ST. FRANCIS.

Since the Sisters of the Third Order of our Seraphic Father, St. Francis, Conventuals, who now have a mother house with a novitiate in Mount Hope, Westchester County, in the Diocese of New York, have obtained both the habit and the name of our Order; hence, we wishing to comply with the request of the Most Reverend Archbishop, also with the petition of the Sisters themselves, by the authority we enjoy as Minister General, of the Conventuals of the Order of St. Francis, affiliate these to the Order of our Seraphic Father, and we hereby declare them affiliated to them, that they may enjoy and rejoice in all these indulgences and privileges, both as concerns themselves as well as their churches and oratories, whether public or semi-public, which the Fathers of our Order and the Nuns of St. Clare enjoy, according to the Decree of Pope Pius X of the twenty-eighth of August, 1903.

Given at Rome, at the Church of the Twelve Apostles, the eighth day of December, 1906.

(Signed) FATHER DOMINIC REUTER,
Minister General.

The original is preserved in the
archives of the Minor Conventuals, at Rome.

THE CONSTITUTIONS.

THE CONSTITUTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

END AND GOVERNMENT OF THE INSTITUTE.

Section 1.

1°. The first and principal end of this sisterhood is the sanctification of its individual members who undertake to live in community, and to observe, not only the ordinary precepts, but also the evangelical counsels, by means of the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity.

2°. Its special end is the exercise of Christian charity towards the sick, the aged of either sex, especially such as are destitute, and the Christian education of children in orphan asylums, parochial schools, and boarding schools.

Section 2.

1°. Directions towards attaining this twofold end are given to the Sisters of this Institute, in the Constitutions that follow, by which the Rule of St. Francis has been adapted to the special end of this Institute.

2°. These Constitutions have been brought into conformity with the New Code of Canon Law and have been approved by our legitimate

Ecclesiastical Superiors, hence they shall henceforward be regarded as the Constitutions of the Institute to the exclusion of all other constitutions hitherto in force.

Section 3.

Since all religious are subject to the Roman Pontiff as to their highest Superior, and they are bound to obey him, even by virtue of their vow of obedience, our Sisters shall have the greatest veneration and filial love for our Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ. They shall faithfully obey his decrees and ordinances, and pray daily for him and for the exaltation of the Holy Church.

Section 4.

1°. Since the Bishop of the diocese, in which one or more of our houses are situated, is the lawful Ecclesiastical Superior of that house or those houses, the Sisters shall obey his commands and answer sincerely, exactly, and in a spirit of obedience, every question he asks. For as Superior of the house of our Institute, situated in his diocese, he must occasionally obtain a knowledge of the moral and physical condition of every house of the Institute.

2°. In accordance with the common law of the Church:

(a) The Mother General must inform the local Ordinary, at least two months in advance, of the approaching admission of a postulant to the novitiate, of a novice to the profession of temporary vows, and of a Sister with temporary vows to the profession of perpetual vows.

(b) The dismissal of a Sister with temporary vows or perpetual vows is to be effected by the Ordinary of the place in which the religious house is situated.

(c) No changes may be made in the laws of the Institute without the consent of the Ordinaries in whose dioceses its houses exist.

(d) A house cannot be established in another diocese without the consent of the Ordinary of the place where the mother-house is situated, and of the Ordinary of the place where it is desired to make the new foundation.

(e) The permission of the local Ordinary is necessary for the erection of a house of our Institute, to convert to other uses a house already established, to abandon any house of the Institute, for every investment or change of investment of money.

(f) The special *written* permission of the local Ordinary is necessary to build and open a school, a hospital, or any such edifice separated

from the house, for the alienation of property and the incurring of debt to the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) or less.

If the value of the property exceeds the sum of six thousand dollars (\$6,000), or if the debts or obligations to be incurred are above this amount, the authorization of the Holy See must be obtained, otherwise the contract shall be null and void.

In the petition for the permission to contract debts or obligations, the other debts or obligations, with which the institute or house is, up to that date burdened, must be expressed; otherwise the permission obtained is invalid.

(g) The local Ordinary has the right of inquiring into:

1. The economic state of every house of the Institute.

2. The administration of funds and bequests which have been donated or bequeathed to the house for expenditure locally on divine worship or on works of charity.

(h) The local Ordinary appoints the confessors and chaplain to a house of the Institute.

(i) If from a motive of public utility, the local Ordinary prescribes the ringing of bells, the saying of certain prayers or the carrying out of sacred solemnities, all religious are bound to

obey, without prejudice to the constitutions of the Institute.

(j) Every indult lawfully granted by the local Ordinary dispensing from the obligation of the common law of the Church, may be availed of by all religious living in the diocese, without prejudice to the vows and particular constitutions of their institute.

Section 5.

The Superiors and Chapter, conformably to the constitutions and to the universal law, have governing power (*potestas dominativa*) over their subjects.

CHAPTER II.

ADMISSION INTO THE INSTITUTE.

Section 6.

The Mother General with her Councillors (who have in this a decisive vote) has the sole right to receive postulants.

Section 7.

Young ladies from sixteen to thirty years, who are not debarred by any legitimate impediment, who are inspired by a right intention, and

who are fit to bear the burdens of the religious life in our Institute, may be admitted into religion.

Section 8.

When a postulant has been received she must be treated with great kindness and charity. She should be induced to love the religious life and instructed in prayer and the practice of obedience; and no trouble spared to gain her to God. Her faults should be borne with patience, and she should be taught, more by example than by words, how to overcome them.

Section 9.

On the day following her reception, every novice must sign the following declaration: I, N....., do hereby declare that in case I leave or be sent away by the Sisters whose community I now join, I will ask for nothing, except the money and clothes I brought.

Section 10.

The clothes that a postulant brings with her should be placed on a separate self in the wardrobe, and given to no one but the same postulant. The money she brings with her must be returned to her on leaving.

Section 11.

Postulants, who can afford to do so, must pay two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) to defray the expenses of their novitiate, and only poverty can dispense them from this.

Section 12.

Whether a postulant has sufficient cause not to pay the full sum must be decided by the Mother General and her Council.

Section 13.

If a young girl has a vocation and be well disposed otherwise, those in authority should consider the salvation of her soul, and the honor of God, and not refuse to receive her on account of her poverty.

Section 14.

The postulants are not to pass their recreation with the community.

Section 15.

If, by her manner or conduct, a postulant manifest a disobedient or negligent spirit, or show a want of piety or vocation, the Mother General, with the approval of her Council, shall dismiss her in all charity.

Section 16.

The postulant shall pass a probation of at least six months before being allowed to receive the habit. The Mother General can prolong the time prescribed for the postulancy, but not beyond another term of six months.

Section 17.

The postulancy must be made either in the novitiate house, or in another house of the Institute, where discipline prescribed by the Constitutions is faithfully observed, under the special care of an experienced religious.

Section 18.

The postulants, before beginning their novitiate, must make a spiritual retreat of at least eight whole days, and according to the discretion of the confessor, a general confession of their past life.

CHAPTER III.

THE NOVITIATE.

Section 19.

Art. 1. The conditions required for admission into the novitiate.

1°. The following are invalidly admitted to the novitiate.

(a) Those who have belonged to a non-Catholic sect;

(b) Those who have not attained the age requisite for the novitiate;

(c) Those who enter religion under the influence of violence, grave fear, or fraud; also those whom the Superior receives under pressure of the same influence;

(d) Married persons as long as the marriage bond lasts;

(e) Those who are or have been bound by the bonds of religious profession;

(f) Those who are threatened with punishment for the commission of a grave crime of which they have been or can be accused.

2°. The following are validly but unlawfully admitted:

(a) Those who are incapable of paying their debts;

(b) Those who are liable to furnish accounts or are implicated in other secular negotiations from which the Institute may have reason to fear lawsuits and annoyances;

(c) Children, if their assistance is needed to relieve the grave necessity of a father, mother, grandfather or grandmother. Parents,

so long as their services are required for the support and education of their children;

(d) Orientals without the written permission of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church.

Section 20.

The right of admitting to the novitiate, and to the subsequent religious profession, whether temporary or perpetual belongs to the Mother General of the Institute with the vote of the Council.

Section 21.

Every aspirant before being admitted, must present a certificate of her Baptism and Confirmation.

Section 22.

An aspirant who has been in a college or has been a postulant or a novice in another institute, requires testimonial letters, according to the circumstances, from the superior of the college, after consulting the local Ordinary, or the higher superior of the institute.

Besides these testimonials required by law, the general superior can exact others also, if it seem to her necessary or opportune.

Section 23.

No aspirant is to be received until careful investigation has been made regarding her character and conduct.

Section 24.

Those who must, according to law, give testimonial letters may not consign them to the aspirants, but to the religious Superior, and this gratuitously within three months from the date of request. The letters should be enclosed in a sealed envelope, and if the aspirants have been in the college or in a postulancy or novitiate of another institute, the testimonial letters must be signed under oath by the Superior.

Section 25.

1°. If, for grave reasons, those who are to give testimonial letters feel that they cannot comply with the request for them, they must make these reasons known to the Holy See within three months.

2°. If they reply that the aspirant is not sufficiently known to them, the Superior shall make good the defect by making careful inquiries of sources worthy of credence; but if they give no reply, the Superior who made the

request must inform the Holy See that she has received no response to her request.

Section 26.

In their testimonial letters, Superiors, after having made diligent investigation, even by secret inquiries, must give information, the accuracy of which they are under a grave obligation in conscience to control, on the birth, the conduct, the character, the life, the reputation, the condition and the learning of the aspirant. These letters should also state whether her family has need of her help, and, in the case of one who has been in a college, or who has been a postulant or a novice in another institute, the reasons why she was dismissed, or why she left of her own accord, as the case may be.

Section 27.

All those who receive the foregoing information are strictly obliged to keep secret not only the information itself, but also the names of the persons who supplied it.

Section 28.

The Mother General must inform the local Ordinary at least two months in advance of the approaching admission of a postulant to the

novitiate and to the profession of both temporary and perpetual vows.

The local Ordinary, or, if he is absent or otherwise impeded, a priest delegated by him, must, at least thirty days before the admission to the novitiate and to profession, carefully examine the dispositions of the aspirant and this gratuitously; he must inform himself as to whether she has been constrained or beguiled, and if she understands the importance of the step she is about to take; and, if he is fully satisfied regarding her pious intention and freedom of action, then the aspirant may be admitted to the novitiate, or if already a novice, to profession.

Section 29.

Art. 2. The formation of novices.

The novitiate begins with the reception of the habit and lasts for two years.

Section 30.

With permission of the local Ordinary, the novitiate shall be in the house which the Mother General selects, and as far as possible, it shall be separated from that part of the house inhabited by professed religious, so that, without a special cause and the permission of the Superior or of the Mistress, the novices may not

communicate with the professed religious, nor these latter with the novices.

Section 31.

The Mother General shall have in the novitiate house only religious who are exemplary in their zeal for regular observance.

Section 32.

Besides the other conditions enumerated in Article 1 for the validity of the novitiate, it is further required for validity that the novitiate be made;

- 1°. After the aspirant has completed at least her fifteenth year;
- 2°. For an entire and uninterrupted year;
- 3°. In the novitiate house.

Section 33.

The extra year of novitiate prescribed by the Constitutions is not required for the validity of the profession.

Section 34.

The novitiate is interrupted, and must be recommenced and completed;

If the novice is sent away by the Superior and leaves the house, or, without the permission of the Superior, leaves the house with the inten-

tion of not returning, or, finally even with the permission of the Superior and from whatever motive, if she has remained away from the house for more than thirty days, whether continuously or not, although she may return to it.

Section 35.

If the novice, with the permission of her Superior, or constrained by force, has passed more than fifteen days, but not more than thirty days even interruptedly outside the precincts (Septa) of the house under the obedience of the Superior, it is necessary and sufficient for the validity of the novitiate that she supply the number of days so passed outside; if for a period not exceeding fifteen days, the supplementing for this period can be prescribed by the Superior, but it is not necessary for validity.

Section 36.

The Superior must not grant permission to remain outside the precincts of the novitiate, except for a just and grave reason.

Section 37.

The habit prescribed for novices by the Constitutions, must be worn throughout the whole period of novitiate, unless special local circumstances determine otherwise.

Section 38.

1°. The formation of the novices must be entrusted to a Mistress who shall be at least thirty-five years of age and professed for at least ten years from the date of her first profession, and be distinguished for prudence, charity, piety, and fidelity to regular observance.

2°. If it is deemed expedient, on account of the number of novices, or for any other just cause, let there be given to the Mistress of novices, a companion who shall be immediately subject to her in all matters pertaining to the government of the novitiate, and who must be at least thirty years of age, and professed five years from the date of her first profession, and have the other necessary and suitable qualities. Both should be free from all other occupations which could hinder them in the care and government of the novices.

Section 39.

The Mistress of novices and her companion shall be selected for three years by the Mother General with the advice of her Council and they must not within that time be removed from their charge without a just and grave cause; besides, they may be reappointed.

Section 40.

1°. The Mistress of novices alone has the right and the obligation of providing for the formation of the novices; she alone is charged with the direction of the novitiate, so that no one under whatever pretext, may interfere in these matters, except the Mother General and the visitators. As to the general discipline of the house, the Mistress, together with the novices themselves, is subject to the Superior.

2°. The novices are subject to the authority of the Mistress and of the Mother General of the Institute, and they are bound to obey them.

Section 41.

It is a matter of grave obligation for the Mistress of novices to employ all diligence in assiduously forming her novices in the discipline of the religious life, conformably to the Constitutions and to the terms of No. 43.

Section 42.

Every four months she shall give an exact account of the character, ability, and conduct of each novice to the Mother General.

Section 43.

1°. The period of the novitiate under the Mistress must have for object the forming of

the mind of the novice by means of the study of the Rules and Constitutions, by pious meditations and assiduous prayer, by instruction on those matters which pertain to the vows and virtues, by suitable exercises in rooting out the germs of vice, in regulating the motions of the soul, in acquiring virtues.

2°. During the first year of the novitiate, the novices must not be employed in the external charges of the institute, or even in the study of letters, the sciences or arts.

Section 44.

The novices enjoy all the privileges and spiritual favors granted to the Institute, and if they die during the novitiate, they have a right to the same suffrages as are prescribed for the professed members.

Section 45.

During the novitiate a novice may not in any way whatever renounce her property or encumber it. Such renunciation or encumbrance is not only unlawful but also null and void

Section 46.

Before the profession of vows, whether temporary or perpetual, the novice must cede, for the whole period during which she will be

bound by simple vows, the administration of her property to whomsoever she wishes, and dispose freely of its use and usufruct.

Section 47.

If the novice because she possessed no property, omitted to make this cession, and if subsequently, property came into her possession, or if after making this provision, she becomes under whatever title the possessor of other property, she must make provision, according to the regulations of No. 46, for the newly acquired property, even if she has already made simple profession.

Section 48.

Each novice, before making profession of temporary vows shall freely dispose by will of all the property she actually possesses or may subsequently possess.

Section 49.

Nothing can be exacted to defray the expenses of the postulancy or novitiate except the amount required by the Constitutions.

Section 50.

If the aspirant leaves the Institute without making profession, all that she has brought

with her to it and has not consumed by use, shall be returned to her.

Section 51.

The novice can freely leave the Institute, or she may for any just cause be dismissed by the Mother General with her Council, which has in this matter a decisive voice, and the Superior or Council is not bound to make known to her the reason for her dismissal.

Section 52.

When the novitiate is completed, the novice shall be admitted to profession if she is judged suitable, otherwise she shall be sent away; but, if there arises a doubt regarding her suitability, the Mother General can prolong the time of probation, but not beyond six months.

Section 53.

The novice, before pronouncing her vows, shall make a spiritual retreat of at least eight whole days.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION.

Section 54.

For the validity of religious profession the following conditions are required:

1°. That she who makes it must be of legitimate age, namely, for temporary profession, she must have completed her sixteenth year, for perpetual profession her twenty-first year.

2°. That she be admitted to profession by the Mother General with her Council.

3°. That it be preceded by a valid novitiate according to the terms of No. 32.

4°. That the profession be free from violence, grave fear, or fraud.

5°. That it be expressed in formal terms.

6°. That it be received by the Bishop of the diocese in which the novitiate is situated, or by a priest delegated by him.

Section 55.

For the validity of the perpetual profession, it is required besides that it be preceded by a temporary simple profession, according to the prescription of No. 56.

Section 56.

The perpetual vows must be preceded by the profession of simple vows, which the novice, on the completion of her novitiate, shall make in the novitiate house itself.

1°. This profession is valid for one year, and shall be renewed each year for two years.

2°. The Mother General can prolong this period but not beyond a second term of three years, the religious meanwhile renewing the temporary profession.

3°. When a Sister is to be admitted to perpetual profession, the Mother General shall ask the local Superior, and each Sister with perpetual vows in the same house, to give her opinion in writing, as to the fitness of the Sister for her final vows. The Superior shall answer whatever question the Mother General asks, truthfully and sincerely, as her conscience shall dictate.

4°. In addition, the Mother General shall ask the local Superior to give in writing her opinion as to the fitness of those Sisters in the house, who are to renew their temporary vows.

Section 57.

When the period of temporary vows has expired, the religious, according to the terms of No. 98 must either make perpetual profession or return to secular life; but even during the period of temporary profession, she can, if she be not judged worthy to pronounce perpetual vows, be dismissed by the legitimate Superior conformably to No. 109.

Section 58.

The vote of the Council for the first temporary profession is deliberative, *i. e.* the Mother General must act in accordance with it; for the subsequent perpetual profession the vote of Council is merely consultive; in other words, though the Superior is bound to take the vote, she need not conform to it.

Section 59.

In making profession, the rite prescribed by the Constitutions must be observed.

Section 60.

A written declaration of the profession, signed by the person professed, and at least by him in whose presence the profession was made, must be preserved in the archives of the Institute.

Section 61.

1°. When the period for which the vows have been taken has expired, there must be no delay in renewing them.

2°. The Mother General, however, has the power to permit that, for a just cause, the renewal of the temporary vows may be somewhat anticipated, but not by more than a month.

Section 62.

Those who have made profession of temporary vows treated of in No. 56;

1°. Enjoy the same indulgences, privileges and spiritual favors as the professed of perpetual vows; and in the case of death have the right to the same suffrages;

2°. They are equally obliged to the observance of the Rules and Constitutions;

3°. They have neither active nor passive voice, but the time requisite for the enjoyment of an active and passive voice is to be reckoned from the date of the first profession.

By the active voice is meant the right to vote at elections; and by the passive voice the right of being elected to positions of authority in the Institute.

CHAPTER V.

EFFECTS OF PROFESSION.

Section 63.

Religious profession in the Institute whether temporary or perpetual, renders acts contrary to the vows illicit.

Section 64.

All those who have made profession of vows,

whether perpetual or temporary, retain the proprietorship of their property, and the capacity to acquire other property. The prescriptions of No. 47 must, however, be observed.

Section 65.

Whatever a religious acquires by her own industry or in respect of the Institute, belongs to the Institute.

Section 66.

As regards the cession or disposition of property treated of in No. 47, the professed religious can modify the arrangement, not, however, of her own free choice, but with the permission of the Mother General; the modification, however, must not be made, at least for a notable part of the property, in favor of the Institute; in the case of withdrawal from the Institute, this cession and disposition ceases to have effect.

Section 67.

A professed Sister may not abdicate gratuitously dominion over her property by a voluntary deed of conveyance, nor may she alter the will made according to the terms of No. 48, without the consent of the Holy See, or if the case be urgent and time does not admit of recourse to the Holy See, without the permission

of the Mother General, or if recourse cannot be had to her either, without the permission of the local Superior.

Section 68.

The religious profession which is null because of some external impediment is not made valid by subsequent acts, but a convalidation of it must be obtained from the Holy See, or if the nullity has been discovered and the impediment removed, a new profession must be lawfully made.

Section 69.

If the profession be null on account of a purely internal defect of consent, it suffices for convalidation that the consent be given, provided that the consent on the part of the Institute has not been revoked.

Section 70.

If there be serious arguments against validity of the religious profession, and the religious refuse, as a matter of precaution, either to renew the profession or to petition for its convalidation, the matter shall be referred to the Holy See.

CHAPTER VI.

OBLIGATIONS OF RELIGIOUS.

Section 71.

Religious are bound to refrain from occupations and amusements unbecoming their state.

Section 72.

Each and every religious, Superior as well as subject, is bound not only to faithfully and integrally observe the vows of which they have made profession, but also to order their lives in accordance with the Rules and Constitutions of the Institute, and so tend to the perfection of their state.

Section 73.

Superiors must take care that all the religious:

- 1°. Make an annual spiritual retreat;
- 2°. Daily assist at Mass, except legitimately impeded; make the meditation and faithfully perform the other exercises of piety prescribed by the Rules and Constitutions;
- 3°. Approach the Sacrament of Penance at least once a week;
- 4°. Superiors should promote amongst their

subjects, the frequent, even daily, reception of Holy Communion, as laid down in No. 135.

Section 74.

All religious should wear the habit proper to the Institute both inside and outside the house, except, in the judgment of the Mother General, or, in case of urgency, even of the local Superior, a grave cause excuses.

CHAPTER VII.

OBLIGATIONS ARISING FROM THE VOWS.

Section 75.

The vows taken in the Institute are simple vows, whether temporary or perpetual, and hence they render acts contrary to the vows unlawful but not invalid.

Section 76.

Art. 1. The Vow and Virtue of Poverty.

The vow of poverty is a deliberate promise made to God, whereby the professed religious deprives herself of all independent disposition of temporal property, and of objects that have a pecuniary value.

Section 77.

A Sister is forbidden by the vow of poverty,

to possess or use temporal goods, independently of the will of her Superiors.

Section 78.

In accordance with the vow of poverty the religious renounces the right to perform any act of proprietorship not authorized by the superiors. The prescriptions of Nos. 46, 47, 48, 64, 65, 66, 67, 74, 75, 79, 80 and 81 must be observed.

Section 79.

The permission granted by the lawful Superiors for any disposition of property takes away from the act the forbidden characteristic of ownership.

Section 80.

Permission granted by the Superior must not be inspired by fear or obtained by false pretences.

Section 81.

Whatever is acquired by the religious, including the Superior, according to the terms of No. 65, must be incorporated in the goods of the house or of the Institute; and all the money and titles shall be deposited in the common safe.

Section 82.

All must carefully observe the common life, even in matters of food, clothing, and furniture.

Section 83.

The furniture of the religious must be in accordance with the poverty of which they make profession.

DRESS.

Section 84.

The dress worn by the Sisters shall consist of a black serge habit, three and one-half yards wide, with twenty-four plaits. The sleeves should be long enough to cover the hands and fourteen inches wide when finished. They should also wear black undersleeves, a white cord containing three knots, a fifteen decade rosary, and a crucifix.

Section 85.

The veils of the professed Sisters are to be white and black; the first of muslin, the second of merino or delaine. They shall also wear a coif, head-band, and guimpe made of linen.

Section 86.

The dress of the novices should be the same as that of the professed Sisters, except their veil,

which shall be white, and similar in length to the back veils of the professed Sisters, and their cord must be plain. They shall receive a crucifix at the time of profession.

The street dress for both professed Sisters and novices shall consist of a black veil and cloak.

Section 87.

The dress worn by the postulants shall be as follows: (a) A plain black dress. (b) A black cape and a white bonnet. (c) A white collar and cuffs.

FURNITURE OF THE SISTERS' CELLS.

Section 88.

The furniture of the cells shall be plain, neat, and in accordance with the spirit of holy poverty. Each Sister shall be allowed the use of the following articles:

1. A bed consisting of one straw tick or mattress, pillows, a counterpane, and other coverings suitable to the season.

2. A crucifix.

3. Two pictures.

4. A chair.

5. A small desk.

6. A washstand.

7. A wardrobe.

Section 89.

Art. 2. The Vow and Virtue of Chastity.

The vow of chastity not only forbids to marry, but also whatever is contrary to the virtue of chastity.

Section 90.

Those Sisters who have charge of the sick shall be very careful in their behavior, particularly where there is question of persons of the opposite sex.

Section 91.

Particular friendships, and too great attachment of one Sister for another, or of a Sister for an extern, must be avoided.

Section 92.

Art. 3. The Vow and Virtue of Obedience.

The obligation of the vow of obedience is limited to commands referring directly or indirectly to the Constitutions or the vows.

Section 93.

The Sisters are obliged to obey all lawful Superiors in all things which they have a right to command.

Section 94.

In case of doubt as to the lawfulness of the

command or to the authority of the one giving it, the religious is obliged to obey.

Section 95.

Religious must conform to the regulations established by the Superiors or the General Chapter, tending to the reformation of the Institute or of the particular community.

Section 96.

The virtue of obedience shall prompt the religious to keep the Rule and Constitutions exactly, and to follow the instructions given them by their Superiors.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON PASSING TO ANOTHER INSTITUTE.

Section 97.

No religious can, without authorization from the Apostolic See, pass to another institute, even a stricter one. If a case of this kind should arise, the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law (Canons 632 and following) are to be observed.

CONSTITUTIONS
CHAPTER IX.

ON ABANDONING RELIGION.

Section 98.

Those who have made profession of temporary vows may when the term of the vows has expired, freely leave the Institute; likewise the Institute for just and reasonable motives, can exclude the religious from renewing the temporary vows, or from making profession of perpetual vows not, however, because of ill-health, except that it is clearly proved that the religious, before profession, had fraudulently hidden or dissimulated the illness.

Section 99.

The local Ordinary can grant the indult for remaining outside the cloister, either temporarily, that is, the indult of exclaustation, or perpetually, that is the indult of secularization. In case an indult of either kind be granted the prescriptions of Canons 639 and 640 of the Code of Canon Law should be observed.

Section 100.

Whoever leaves the Institute, whether on the expiration of the term of temporary vows, or

by virtue of an indult of secularization, or whoever has been dismissed, cannot seek compensation for services rendered by her in the Institute.

Section 101.

In the case of a religious who has been received without a dowry, and who cannot provide for herself out of her own resources, the Institute should in charity give her what is necessary for her to return safely and becomingly to her home, and provide her for a certain period with the means, to be determined by mutual consent, or in the case of disagreement by the local Ordinary, of an honest livelihood, in accordance with natural equity.

Section 102.

An apostate from religion is one who, having made profession of perpetual vows, unlawfully leaves the religious house, with the intention of not returning, or who, with the intention of withdrawing herself from religious obedience, though she has left the house lawfully, does not return to it.

Section 103.

The perverse intention referred to in No. 102, is legally presumed when the religious, within

a month, has neither returned, nor manifested to her Superior her intention of returning.

Section 104.

A fugitive from religion is one who, without permission from the Superior, deserts the religious house, but with the intention of returning to the Institute.

Section 105.

Neither apostate nor fugitive is freed from the obligation of her rule and vows, and must without delay return to the Institute.

Section 106.

The Superior must seek them with solicitude, and receive them if they return animated by a sincere repentance.

CHAPTER X.

THE DISMISSAL OF RELIGIOUS.

Section 107.

The following religious are *ipso facto* regarded as lawfully dismissed:

- 1°. Religious who have publicly apostatized from the Catholic faith;
- 2°. A religious who will have run away with a person of the opposite sex;

3°. Religious who attempt or contract marriage, even so-called civil marriage.

In these cases it suffices that the Mother General with her Council make a declaration of the fact; but she must take care to preserve in the register of the house the collected evidence of the fact.

Section 108.

Art I. The dismissal of a religious with temporary vows is to be effected by the Ordinary of the place in which the religious house is situated, but the local Ordinary must not exercise this right without the knowledge or against the just opposition of Superiors.

Section 109.

Local Ordinaries can dismiss a religious only on the following conditions, the observance of which constitutes for them a grave obligation in conscience:

1°. Motives for dismissal must be grave.

2°. These motives can be either from the part of the Institute, or from the part of the religious. The absence of the religious spirit, which is the cause of scandal to others is a sufficient motive for dismissal, when a repeated admonition with a salutary penance has pro-

duced no effect; ill-health is not a sufficient motive for dismissal, unless it be proved with certainty that it had been fraudulently hidden or dissimulated before profession.

3°. Although these motives must be really known to the Ordinary who effects the dismissal, it is not necessary, however, that they be proved by a judicial process; but they must always be manifested to the religious, and full liberty to reply given her; and her replies must be faithfully submitted to the Ordinary effecting the dismissal.

4°. The religious has the right to appeal to the Holy See against the decrees of dismissal; and pending the appeal, the dismissal has no juridical effect.

5°. The prescriptions of No. 101 must be observed.

Section 110.

A religious with temporary vows, dismissed according to the terms of Nos. 108 and 109 is by that very fact, freed from all her religious vows.

Section 111.

Art. 2. Dismissal of religious who have made profession of perpetual vows.

1°. For the dismissal of religious with perpetual vows, grave external reasons are re-

quired together with incorrigibility, experience having proved, in the judgment of the Superior, that there is no hope of amendment. The religious has the right of defending herself; and her replies must be faithfully reported in the acts.

2°. The local Ordinary of the place in which the house of the professed Sister is situated, must examine the motives for, and issue the decree of dismissal.

3°. A religious who has made profession of perpetual vows and who has been dismissed from the Institute, remains bound by her religious vows so long as she has not been dispensed from them.

4°. In the case of grave external scandal, or of very serious imminent injury to the community, the religious can be dismissed immediately by the Mother General, with the consent of the Council, or even, if there be danger in delay and time does not admit of recourse to the Mother General, by the local Superior with the consent of her council and the local Ordinary; the religious must immediately put off the religious dress; the local Ordinary, however, or the Mother General, if she be present, must without delay submit the matter to the judgment of the Holy See.

CHAPTER XI.

FASTS, ABSTINENCE, PENANCE AND CORRECTION
OF FAULTS.*Section 112.*

The vigils of the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and St. Francis, and all those appointed as fast days by the Church are to be observed as days of fasting.

Section 113.

On Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays the use of flesh meat is prohibited, also the vigils of St. Francis and St. Clare.

Section 114.

Those Sisters who are occupied in teaching or in the care of the sick, are not obliged to observe the fasts of the Church or of the rule; but instead they should perform two acts of mortification of the senses daily.

Section 115.

On Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday the discipline shall be taken, during which five Our Fathers, five Hail Marys, and five Glorias are to be recited. This exercise shall be performed privately.

Section 116.

At least once a week chapter must be held, at which each Sister shall accuse herself of whatever external faults she has committed against the Rules and Constitutions. For these she will receive a penance, which she must humbly accept and dutifully perform.

CHAPTER XII.

THE OFFICE AND PRAYER IN GENERAL.

Section 117.

All the Sisters excepting the sick, and those whose occupations cannot be postponed, shall be present at the office. Those who fail to attend or who come late, must accuse themselves of it at chapter, where the Superior will reprimand them, and impose the usual penance upon them. Those Sisters who cannot recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin, shall say twelve Our Fathers for Matins, and seven Our Fathers and seven Glorias for each of the Hours. At Prime and also at Complin, they shall first say the Creed and the psalm Miserere.

Section 118.

During the office no one is allowed to speak or do anything else unseemly. No Sister should

be called away without the permission of the Superior, for she alone can distinguish whether the affair is important or not.

Section 119.

Those who are appointed to read the lessons or responses, must prepare themselves beforehand, and should they make a mistake they must be reprimanded for their negligence. On Saturdays, Sundays, Sacred Heart Fridays, Holydays, Easter Monday, and Tuesday, and from Christmas till New Year's Day, Matins and Lauds shall be said privately.

Section 120.

The grace which is to be said by those Sisters who attend the common table at dinner and supper, should not be neglected by any one without grave cause, nor without having permission from the Superior who will grant it only through necessity.

Section 121.

The *De Profundis* is to be said every day after dinner and supper, for the repose of the souls of the deceased Sisters. After dinner shall also be said three *Hail Marys* and the *Salve Regina* for the spirit of charity.

Section 122.

The Sisters shall hear Mass daily, when possible.

Section 123.

On Fridays, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the Sisters shall say five *Our Fathers*, five *Hail Marys*, and five *Glorias*, with extended arms.

Section 124.

Each Sister shall say a chaplet of the rosary daily.

Section 125.

Novenas for the following feasts shall be made by the sisters in common: Feasts of St. Joseph, Annunciation, Easter, St. Anthony, Pentecost, Sacred Heart, St. Clare, Assumption, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, St. Francis, All Saints, All the Saints of the Three Orders of St. Francis, Immaculate Conception, and Christmas. On the last day of the year, each Sister shall draw by lot, a patron, a virtue, and a prayer. A patron shall also be drawn on the first of each month. Devotion to the Infant Jesus shall be practiced on the twenty-fifth of each month.

Section 126.

In regard to vocal prayers, which are not pre-

scribed by the constitutions or the ceremonial, it is forbidden to increase their number. The Superior should even make it a matter of conscience, if she oblige the Sisters to recite more prayers than those called for by the rule. Only in time of great need or trouble may the Superior appoint any special prayer to be said, and that for a definite period only.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONFESSION AND COMMUNION.

Section 127.

Every member of the community shall confess weekly.

Section 128.

To every house of the Institute must be given only one ordinary confessor who shall hear the sacramental confession of the whole community, unless, on account of the great number of religious or for any other just reason, two or more may be found necessary.

Section 129.

If any particular religious, for the peace of her soul and for her greater progress in the spiritual life, request a special confessor or

spiritual director, the local Ordinary shall grant the request without difficulty, watchful, however, lest from this concession abuses arise.

Section 130.

To every community shall be given an extraordinary confessor, who, four times at least in the year, shall go to the religious house, and to whom all the religious should present themselves, at least to receive his blessing.

Section 131.

The Ordinaries of places where religious communities of women exist, shall designate for each house some priests to whom, in particular cases the religious, may easily have recourse for the Sacrament of Penance, without having to apply to the local Ordinary on each occasion. When any religious asks for one of these confessors, no Superior, either personally or through others, either directly or indirectly, may seek to know the reason for the petition, or show opposition to it by word or deed or in any way manifest displeasure at it.

Section 132.

If, notwithstanding the prescriptions of Nos. 129, 130 and 131, any religious for the peace of her conscience have recourse to a confessor ap-

proved by the local Ordinary to hear the confessions of women, this confession, if made in a church or oratory, even in a semi-public oratory, is valid and lawful, every contrary privilege being revoked; nor may the Superior prohibit it, or make any inquiry concerning it, even indirectly; and the religious are under no obligation to inform the Superior on the matter.

Section 133.

All religious women when seriously ill, even if not in danger of death, may, as often as they wish during their serious illness, invite any priest whatever to hear their confession, provided that he be approved to hear the confessions of women, though not designated for religious women; nor can the Superior either directly or indirectly prevent them from doing so.

Section 134.

All religious Superiors are strictly forbidden to induce their subjects, in any way whatever, to make a manifestation of conscience to them. Subjects, however, are not forbidden to open their minds freely and spontaneously to their Superiors; nay more, it is desirable that they approach their Superiors with filial confidence.

Section 135.

Superiors should promote amongst their subjects the frequent, even daily reception of Holy Communion; and liberty must be given to every properly disposed religious to approach frequently, even daily, the most Holy Eucharist. If, however, a religious has since her last sacramental confession, given grave scandal to the community, or committed a serious external fault, the Superior can forbid her to receive Holy Communion until she shall have again approached the Sacrament of Penance.

CHAPTER XIV.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Section 136.

- 5.00 A. M. Rising and silent prayer while dressing.
- 5.20 “ Morning Prayer and Hours in common.
- 6.00 “ Meditation in common.
- 6.30 “ Mass.
- 7.00 “ Breakfast, followed by occupation in each one's allotted sphere.

- 11.55 A. M. Particular Examen in common.
 12.00 M. Dinner.
 1.30 P. M. Vespers and Complin followed
 by Visit to the Blessed Sacra-
 ment and to the Blessed Virgin,
 —then occupation.
 5.00 “ Matins and Lauds.
 5.30 “ Meditation in common.
 6.00 “ Supper and half an hour free
 time.
 7.00 “ Recreation in common.
 8.15 “ Spiritual Reading.
 8.30 “ Evening Prayers, including Gen-
 eral Examen of conscience.
 9.30 “ Lights out. Repose.

Section 137.

Every Sister should endeavor to devote some time daily to the reading of a spiritual book.

CHAPTER XV.

SILENCE.

Section 138.

The Sisters whilst employed in their respective duties shall observe silence as much as possible.

Section 139.

All are required to keep strict silence during the time in which recreation is not permitted, unless necessity obliges them to speak and all unnecessary bustle and noise shall be avoided.

Section 140.

Silence shall be strictly observed in the chapel, sacristy, dormitories, and corridors; but particularly in the choir and at table. Any Sister who breaks silence at meal time should be corrected, and if it occur often she should be punished by being sent out of the refectory.

Section 141.

The silence prescribed after evening recreation shall be kept most strictly, and any Sister who violates this rule should receive a penance.

Section 142.

Every month the Sisters shall make a retreat of one day, and once a year of six entire days.

CHAPTER XVI.

RECREATION DAYS.

Section 143.

Sundays, Thursdays, feasts of obligation, the

feasts of Sts. Francis, Clare, Anthony of Padua, Elizabeth of Hungary, Bonaventure, Peter of Alcantara, Coletta, Margaret of Cortona, Portiuncula, Stigmata of St. Francis, and various others should be observed as recreation days, but in such a manner that none of the spiritual exercises nor works of mercy be neglected.

CHAPTER XVII.

REFECTION AND RECREATION.

Section 144.

When the signal for meals is given, the Sisters shall hasten to be present at the table. All shall meet in the refectory except those who are occupied in duties which require attention at that special time, and who have received permission from the Superior.

Section 145.

After grace has been said, the Sisters shall quietly take their places according to their rank. While food is being given to the body, the soul should be nourished by listening to the reading of a spiritual book (usually the life of some saint).

Section 146.

On days when duties prevent the Sisters

from attending the common recreation at noon, the New Testament shall be read at dinner, followed by recreation. For reading a Sister should be appointed daily.

Section 147.

Each Sister in turn shall serve at table for a week, at the end of which time another Sister shall relieve her.

Section 148.

On silence days a Sister may request anything she needs at table, by a sign or in a low voice.

Section 149.

After all have finished eating, the Superior should give a signal for all to rise and say grace. Those who have no occupation after dinner shall go to the place where recreation is held, during which time they will entertain themselves by spiritual, or at least indifferent subjects, as topics of a pleasant nature should be introduced, that the Sisters may derive the benefit which recreation is intended to produce. It must be borne in mind that recreation is a common exercise therefore, all must assemble at it with the same punctuality as at any other exercise of the community. Those Sisters who

are employed in the kitchen or refectory shall try to have their work finished so as to be at recreation in time.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GENERAL CHAPTER.

Section 150.

A General Chapter shall be held every three years at which the election of the Mother General, the General Councillors, and the General Bursar, shall take place, and at which the various other affairs of the community shall be transacted. At this Chapter the Ordinary of the place where the election is held or his delegate, shall preside.

Section 151.

The formal announcement and convocation of the General Chapter shall be made by the Mother General or her legal representative, with the consent of the local Ordinary, four weeks before her term of office expires. During this interval three *Hail Marys* and the *Memorare* shall be said in common in every house of the Institute, to implore God's grace and blessing on the coming election.

Section 152.

The following Sisters shall have a place and vote in the General Chapter:

- (a) The Mother General and the Mother Assistant.
- (b) Each General Councillor.
- (c) The Bursar General.
- (d) Each Local Superior.
- (e) The Novice Mistress.
- (f) The Delegates from the houses of the Institute.

Section 153.

Art. 1. The Election of Delegates.

When the Superior of each house receives the proclamation of the General Chapter from the Mother General or her representative, she shall on the following Sunday assemble those Sisters who have the right of voting to elect their delegates.

Section 154.

Those who have not made perpetual vows have no right to vote, nor to be voted for. All the Sisters having the right to vote, must be invited to the election, for if even one were not called upon, she could make the election of the other Sisters invalid.

Section 155.

1°. A community composed of eight Sisters with perpetual vows, including the Superior, and not less than four Sisters with perpetual vows, not including the Superior, shall elect one delegate. Smaller communities shall combine with the community located nearest to them, and elect the delegates in that convent which is the senior as to its foundation.

2°. Communities in which there are more than eight Sisters with perpetual vows, shall elect two delegates.

Section 156.

The election of delegates takes place in the following manner: The Superior of the house, although she herself cannot vote, presides at the election, opening it with the prayer *Veni Sancte Spiritus* and the Litany of the Saints, in order that God's blessing may guide the election. Then on a slip of paper each Sister shall write the name of the one, whom before God, she believes herself obliged to elect, and folds the ballot. Then the assistant of the Superior, or if she have no assistant, the oldest Sister shall collect and count the ballots. If one ballot be missing, the remainder must be burned in

presence of the electors and the election resumed. If the number of ballots be complete, the same Sister as before opens them and reads the names aloud. Meanwhile the Superior writes on a sheet of paper, in presence of the other Sisters the names that are on the ballots. If at the first ballot no one has received an absolute majority, a second ballot shall be taken up. If this also fails a third ballot shall follow, and if in the third ballot no one has received an absolute majority, the relative majority will be sufficient for completing the election, and if this fails seniority of profession shall decide. Should it happen, however, that two or more were professed on the same day, then the senior by age shall be regarded as elected. If there are two delegates to be elected, the election shall proceed in the same manner as the election of the first. In the mother-house the election of delegates shall be conducted in the same manner as in the mission houses. At this election of delegates the Mother General, the Mother Assistant, the Mistress of Novices, the General Councillors, and the Bursar General shall not have the right of voting.

Section 157.

The delegates from the mission houses shall

accompany the local Superiors to the house in which the General Chapter is to be held.

Section 158.

All Sisters who have a right to vote at the General Chapter shall be in the house in which the Chapter is to be held, on the eve of the election.

Section 159.

1°. On the day of election the members of the entire community shall hear Mass and offer their Holy Communions to obtain the guidance of heaven.

2°. All must abstain from seeking votes, either directly or indirectly, for themselves or for others.

Section 160.

Art. 2. The Election of the Mother General.

No one is eligible for the office of Mother General who has not spent, at least, ten years in the Institute (to be reckoned from the date of her first profession), who has not been born of legitimate marriage, and who has not completed her fortieth year.

Section 161.

1°. At least two tellers who must be members of the Chapter, shall be appointed by secret

vote, immediately before the election. These tellers must take an oath that they will faithfully fulfill their duty, and keep the proceedings secret, even after the election.

2°. It shall be the duty of the tellers to see to it, that each elector votes secretly, singly, and according to the order of precedence. They shall collect the votes, and, in the presence of the Ordinary or his delegate, count them according to the customs proper to the Chapter, to see whether the number of the ballots corresponds to that of the electors, after which they shall examine the ballots and announce the number of votes which each candidate has received.

3°. If the number of votes cast exceeds that of the voters the election is null and void, and a new vote must be taken.

Section 162.

A member of the Chapter shall be chosen to act as secretary. It shall be her duty to take down accurately in writing the minutes of the election. These minutes shall be signed by this same secretary, by the presiding officer, and by the tellers, and shall be carefully preserved in the archives of the Chapter.

Section 163.

A vote is invalid, unless it shall be (1°) given

freely. Hence if a voter is influenced by grave fear or deceit directly or indirectly, to elect a certain person, her vote is null and void; (2°) secret, certain, absolute, and determined.

Section 164.

No one can validly vote for herself.

Section 165.

If any of the electors are present in the house in which the election takes place, but cannot be present because of sickness, their written votes should be obtained by the tellers.

Section 166.

The electors are strictly bound in conscience to vote for that Sister whom, before God, they believe to be truly capable, and worthy of filling the office for which she is elected.

Section 167.

At the appointed hour the Sisters who are entitled to vote shall assemble in the Chapel or community room. When all are present the local Ordinary or his representative will say the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* and a *Hail Mary*, in which the members of the Chapter shall join, after which all shall be seated.

Section 168.

The election of the Mother General proceeds as follows:

Each Sister shall write on a slip of paper, the name of the one whom she wishes to elect. Having folded the ballot, she hands it to the tellers, who shall proceed as laid down in 161, 2° and 3°.

A majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast shall be necessary to elect the Mother General in the first, second, and third scrutiny. Hence if at the first scrutiny no Sister shall have obtained the required number of votes, the electors shall proceed to a second and even third scrutiny if that be necessary.

Should it happen that, as a result of the third scrutiny no Sister shall have obtained a majority of two-thirds of the votes, the electors shall proceed to the fourth scrutiny, and in this case, they shall be obliged to vote for one or other of the two Sisters who shall have received the largest number of votes in the third scrutiny. In this case also a relative majority decides.

It may happen that after the fourth scrutiny, each of the two Sisters above mentioned, has obtained the same number of votes, then the vote of the presiding officer shall decide the

majority, or if he be unwilling to change the equilibrium by his vote, the senior by reason of first profession shall be regarded as elected, or if both were professed at the same time, the senior by reason of rank in the community shall be regarded as elected.

Section 169.

The local Ordinary has full power to confirm or nullify the result of the election as his conscience dictates. He may even appoint a Sister as Mother General.

Section 170.

The ballots must be burned after each scrutiny, or at least after each session, if several scrutines were taken in one session.

Section 171.

The Mother General shall be elected for three years and at the expiration of this time, she may be elected for a second triennium. After the second term she may not be re-elected until she shall have been at least three years out of office of Mother General.

Section 172.

Immediately after the election of the Mother General, four general Councillors shall be elected.

Section 173.

Art. 3. Election of General Councillors.

Only those Sisters may be elected as councillors who have made the perpetual vows, possess good religious principles, a sound judgment, and have a sufficient knowledge of the different offices of the Institute, for only such are capable, in every respect, of affording the Mother efficient assistance, both in word and deed, in the management of the Institute.

Section 174.

The Councillors shall be elected in the same manner as the Mother General. If at the first ballot no one has received an absolute majority, a second ballot shall be taken up. If this also fails, a third ballot shall follow, and if in the third ballot no one has received an absolute majority, the relative majority will be sufficient for completing the election and if this fails seniority of profession shall decide. Should it happen, however, that two or more were professed on the same day, then the senior by age shall be regarded as elected.

Section 175.

The Mother General shall select one of the newly-elected Councillors as her assistant in

governing the Institute; and she proclaims her as such to the community.

Section 176.

The last Councillor elected shall be secretary general.

Section 177.

After the election the Sisters who took part in it are obliged to observe strict silence concerning everything that took place at it.

Section 178.

If one of the Councillors die, the other members of the Council shall privately elect by a relative majority of votes a substitute, until the next election.

Section 179.

If the Mother General during her term of administration die, (or in any way become wholly incapable of ever fulfilling the duties of her office), then the Councillors shall either individually or conjointly, within one month, write to the local Ordinary, humbly requesting him to appoint a Sister as Superior, until the next election. As soon as the local Ordinary's appointment has been received the Mother Assistant shall send a copy of it to each house of the Institute.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OFFICE OF THE MOTHER GENERAL AND THE
GENERAL COUNCILLORS.*Section 180.*

1°. The office of the Mother General is to govern the entire Institute. Her authority extends to each community and to the property of all the houses.

2°. She may not make any change in the constitutions without the consent of the Council and of all professed Sisters who have made perpetual vows. Moreover the prescription of No. 4, 2° (c) must be strictly observed.

Section 181.

She may govern the mother-house personally, or if she deems it necessary, through an assistant, as local Superior.

Section 182.

The Mother General and every local Superior of a house in which are at least six professed religious, shall have their councillors whose consent or counsel they must seek, according to the terms of the constitutions and the Sacred Canons.

Section 183.

As soon as the Mother General has entered upon her office, she shall, within a month make a retreat of three days to implore the assistance and blessing of God. At a convenient time she shall assemble her Councillors, and with the aid of their advice, first appoint the novice mistress and her assistant; then the local Superiors of the mission houses, and their Councillors, and announce these appointments at a convenient time.

Section 184.

The Mother General, shall, every month, assemble her Councillors for consultation. If, in the meantime, an urgent necessity require the decision of the Councillors, she shall, in this particular instance, hold an extra meeting. At each general consultation the *Veni Sancti Spiritus* and a *Hail Mary* shall be said, after which the General Secretary shall read the minutes of the last meeting, and the General Treasurer shall give an account of the financial state of the house to the Councillors.

Section 185.

The Mother General or her Assistant shall

preside at each meeting of the Council. After she has proposed a certain subject for consultation and has explained the circumstances, without however, expressing her own views, each Councillor shall candidly and conscientiously give her opinion regarding it. In deciding a matter requiring the decision of the Council, if the voices be unequal, the majority decides; but if they be equally divided, the Mother General decides. If they cannot decide at the first consultation, the Mother shall appoint another day on which they are to assemble and give their decision. If, after consultation, the Mother General cannot conscientiously sanction the decision, she must refer the matter to the local Ordinary. The Council has a decisive voice in the following cases:

(a) When a mission house is to be founded or resigned.

(b) When a postulant is to be received or invested; and when a novice is to be professed or dismissed. The prescriptions of No. 4 must be observed.

(c) When the Mistress of novices or a local Superior is to be deposed. But if the Mother General find it necessary to depose a local superior without delay, she is not obliged to wait for the consent of the Councillors, but she must

preside at each meeting of the Council. After she has proposed a certain subject for consultation and has explained the circumstances, without however, expressing her own views, each Councillor shall candidly and conscientiously give her opinion regarding it. In deciding a matter requiring the decision of the Council, if the voices be unequal, the majority decides; but if they be equally divided, the Mother General decides. If they cannot decide at the first consultation, the Mother shall appoint another day on which they are to assemble and give their decision. If, after consultation, the Mother General cannot conscientiously sanction the decision, she must refer the matter to the local Ordinary. The Council has a decisive voice in the following cases:

can authorized the Mother General to give
 er to make one visit a year, during day-
 arents or parent if living, or if both
 of a brother or sister.
 or dismissed. The prescriptions of No. 4 must
 be observed.

(c) When the Mistress of novices or a local Superior is to be deposed. But if the Mother General find it necessary to depose a local superior without delay, she is not obliged to wait for the consent of the Councillors, but she must

inform them immediately, also stating the reasons for her action.

(d) When there is question of extraordinary purchases or sales, and in unusual expenditures which exceed one hundred dollars without prejudice to what is laid down in No. 4 (b).

Section 186.

The members of the Council must observe strict silence regarding all that has been entrusted to them. If the results are to be made known, it is the right of the Mother General to do so.

Section 187.

The Councillors should aid the Mother General in every thing, offering their assistance, especially in difficult matters. They shall promptly obey and execute her commands, rejoicing to be able to lighten her heavy burden.

Section 188.

They must, however, guard against assuming more authority in the house than the constitutions or the Mother General gives them. They have no power over any of the Sisters, but if they notice that any abuse or serious faults exist in any of the houses they shall inform the Mother General of the matter.

Section 189.

When a Sister has been appointed to any office she should not be changed inside of three years without a weighty reason. The prescription of No. 4 (c) must be observed.

CHAPTER XX.

OFFICE OF THE MOTHER ASSISTANT.

Section 190.

The Assistant of the Mother General bears the title of "Mother Assistant" and should be addressed so by all.

Section 191.

In the case of absence or incapacity of the Mother General, the Assistant will take her place, governing the Institute according to her directions, and presiding at all the consultations.

Section 192.

Not only is it the duty of the Mother Assistant to aid the Mother General, in word and deed, in the government of the Institute, but also respectfully and charitably, to admonish her if she disregard a point of rule, tolerate abuse and frequent transgressions, or if she frequently dispenses from the constitutions.

Section 193.

She shall also defend the Mother General against groundless complaints of Sisters, and by word and example strive to preserve and promote among the Sisters, not only a good understanding, but also a holy friendship and mutual esteem between the Mother General and her subjects. The Assistants of every house have the same obligations towards their local Superior, so that observance of the Holy Rule and Constitutions be constantly maintained.

CHAPTER XXI.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL.

Section 194.

It is the duty of the Secretary General to keep carefully all documents and acts that concern the history and administration of the Institute.

Section 195.

By order, and in the name of the Superior General, the Secretary General is to write letters and all the acts that regard the business of the Institute.

Section 196.

The Secretary General shall, likewise, write all the verbal proceedings and transactions of

the General Council of which she is a member, and in which she has a vote as well as the other Councillors. The Superior should sign these transactions.

CHAPTER XXII.

OFFICE OF BURSAR.

Section 197.

1°. There shall be elected a Bursar General for the administration of the property of the Institute. She shall be elected in the same manner as the General Councillors. Each house shall have a bursar who shall be appointed by the Mother General with her council.

2°. The Bursars shall manage their office under the direction of their respective Superiors.

Section 198.

A Superior may not herself discharge the office of Bursar General; she may, however, act as local Bursar, if necessity requires it.

Section 199.

The Bursars shall carefully keep an account of the finances, noting without delay each article with date of its purchase, price, and delivery, so that no mistake may occur. They must also

see that their books are always in order, so that they may, at any time, be shown to the Mother General, or to the local Ordinary.

Section 200.

Every six months the Bursar General is to exhibit the books to the Mother General, and render an account of her administration. These books are examined by the Mother General and her Council, and if they are found to agree, when compared to all that is in the treasury and in the bank, they are to be approved and to be signed by them.

Section 201.

The local Bursar should show books to the local Superior once a month to be signed and approved.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE OFFICE OF THE LOCAL SUPERIOR AND
HER ASSISTANTS.

Section 202.

The local Superior bears the title of Sister Superior. Her authority extends to all the members and also to the administration of the property of the house over which she is placed. She should conform herself to the rules and regula-

tions of the Mother General. That which the Mother is for all houses, the local Superior should be for her particular house. She should lead the Sisters in the way of perfection, with motherly love, prudence, and justice, according to the Rules and Constitutions. No one shall be appointed local Superior who has not lived six years in the community as a professed Sister.

Section 203.

The local Superiors are not to hold office for more than three years; on the expiration of this term they can be reappointed to the same office for another three years, with the permission of the Ordinary.

Section 204.

The Superior shall live in her own house, and she shall not absent herself from it except in accordance with the terms of the Constitutions.

Section 205.

Every Superior should promote among her subjects the knowledge and the execution of the decrees of the Holy See which concern religious.

Section 206.

The local Superior shall take care:

1°. To have read publicly at least once a year, on fixed days, the Constitutions of the In-

stitute, as well as the decrees ordered by the Holy See to be read publicly;

2°. To have given at least twice in the month an instruction on Christian Doctrine, adapted to the capacity of the hearers, to the domestic servants, and a pious exhortation to all the members of the house.

Section 207.

She appoints the Sisters to the different occupations and should not allow them to interfere in anything else. She should leave the Sisters the power which the Constitutions give to their office. She should not change the Sisters often in their employments, as this only leads to confusion.

Section 208.

She has no authority to incur an expense of more than twenty-five dollars, (food and clothing excepted) without the approval of the Mother General.

Section 209.

She has the power of correcting the Sisters, both in and out of Chapter.

Section 210.

It belongs to the Mother General alone to appoint the teachers to the different schools, but

the local Superior has the right to assign those Sisters to take charge of the classes most suitable to each.

Section 211.

The local Superior shall visit the schools at least twice a year. She should strictly observe the discipline, cleanliness, and progress of the children, also the adherence to the proper system of teaching. She should allow the Sisters to make little presents to the children.

Section 212.

If a teacher be careless she must admonish her, or impose a penance, if necessary. If this fails to have the desired effect, the Superior must refer the matter to the Mother General.

Section 213.

Should a young girl apply to the local Superior for admission into the convent, the latter shall notify the Mother General, stating also all particulars, and then act as advised. If there be any postulants in a Mission House, they must follow in every detail, the rule which the postulants observe in the mother-house. The pre-ceptions of No. 17 shall also be observed.

Section 214.

For a better administration of the temporal

affairs of the community, the Superior shall keep, either personally or through her assistant, the following books:

(a) A catalogue of the library.

(b) She shall keep an inventory of the school or institution that is connected with the convent. In it she shall record the number of the children; the names and residence of those who enter and leave; the names of the First Communicants, and of those who are Confirmed; the school system, the school books, salary of teachers, and all other important events of the school and convent.

Section 215.

She shall also inspect each branch of the institution weekly to see that it receives the proper care, and that order and cleanliness be maintained.

Section 216.

If there are six Sisters in the community, the Superior is to have two Councillors, who in word and deed will aid her in the government of the convent. The Superior should place great confidence in her Councillors, and show them due respect, especially in the presence of others. (No. 182.) In all important affairs of the house the Superior should ask their advice,

and each Councillor is obliged in conscience, frankly and respectfully to state her opinion, no matter what the views of the Superior may be.

Section 217.

A Councillor has only those rights the Constitutions and Mother General give her. She should always be kind and affable towards her Sisters, and very respectful toward her Superior, especially in the presence of others. She should observe a strict silence in regard to everything the Superior communicates to her as secret, and she should not show displeasure if the advice she gave the Superior is not carried out.

Section 218.

By virtue of her office she is obliged to inform the Superior of any grave fault or irregularities which she may notice.

Section 219.

In case the Superior is sick or absent, the first assistant, or if she be prevented, the second, and if there be no assistant, the oldest professed Sister takes the place of the Superior, unless the Mother has appointed another Sister to do so.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RANK OF THE SISTERS.

Section 220.

1°. The Mother General shall take the first place in the choir, refectory, and at meetings of the community. In her absence the place which she usually occupies shall be left vacant.

2°. The Mother Assistant shall take the first place after the Mother General.

3°. The General Councillors shall take their places after the Mother Assistant, according to the date of their first profession.

4°. The Bursar General shall follow the Councillors, and in the mission houses the local Bursar shall follow the local Councillors.

5°. The local Superior shall occupy the first place in the mission house assigned to her, except when the Mother General is present.

6°. The Councillors of the local Superior shall take the places next after her according to the date of their first profession.

7°. All the other Sisters take rank according to the order of their first profession.

8°. Postulants who enter at the same time rank according to age.

CHAPTER XXV.

FOUNDATIONS.

Section 221.

When a new mission house is accepted, the Mother General should have a written contract drawn up and signed first by the Pastor of the parish; next by the Councillors; and lastly she should affix her own signature to it, so that if difficulty arise, the conditions on which the house was accepted may be made known. This contract should include a free residence, and a yearly stipend, which is laid down in No. 4, (d), (e), and (f) must also be observed.

Section 222.

The Mother General should see that there are, at least, four Sisters in each house, as otherwise the spirit of the Institute and the common life cannot well be maintained. She should, therefore, never found a new mission if the other houses cannot easily spare the Sisters necessary for it.

Section 223.

Possessions are the common property of the Institute. The Mother General should be careful that all deeds and legal titles are kept in

order, and according to the laws of the country. She must see in particular that no unnecessary expenditures be made for buildings; that every new structure as well as the furniture of the rooms, be without elegance or ornament, and strictly in conformity with holy poverty; that they, however, be suitable for the purpose according to the express wish of our Holy Founder. Not only should the cells of the Sisters be furnished in a simple manner, but also the parlors and rooms for strangers.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE VISITATION.

Section 224.

At least once a year the Mother General or her representative, shall visit each mission house, to ascertain its moral and physical condition.

Section 225.

The visitatrix has the right and obligation of interrogating the religious whom she deems it well to hear and of informing herself on those matters that pertain to the visitation; all the religious are under the obligation of replying according to the truth, and it is not lawful for

superiors to divert them in any way from this obligation, or otherwise impede the scope of the visitation.

Section 226.

In order that the visitation be productive of good it is necessary that the Superior, as well as the Sisters, invoke the Holy Ghost to obtain His Divine assistance. At the appointed time the Mother General or her representative shall assemble the community and open the visitation by reciting a short prayer.

Section 227.

She shall call each Sister to her, so that all may have an opportunity of manifesting their personal wants, and informing her if abuses have crept in. Each one, however, should mention only what she knows to be true, without exaggerating, lessening or concealing any point through human respect.

Section 228.

She shall see that order and cleanliness prevail in the house, visit the cells, remove what is superfluous, and have necessaries supplied.

Section 229.

She shall particularly examine:

(a) Whether the Constitutions be read as prescribed and be observed conscientiously.

(b) Whether harmony, charity, and peace reign among the Sisters.

(c) Whether frequent dispensation from the rule be granted without sufficient reason.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ENCLOSURE.

Section 230.

The infirmary, the Sisters' cells, and dormitories shall be subject to the law of enclosure, also the refectory and community room wherever local conditions will permit.

Section 231.

Those of the opposite sex are to be excluded from the portion of the house subject to the law of enclosure, with the exception of the following persons:

1°. The local Ordinary visiting the convent, or other visitators delegated by him, but only for the purpose of inspection, and on condition that they be accompanied by one cleric of mature age.

2°. The confessor or his substitute can, with the due precautions, enter the enclosure to administer the Sacraments to the sick or to assist the dying.

3°. The Superior, after taking the due precautions can permit the doctor, the surgeon, and others whose work is necessary to enter the enclosure, having previously obtained at least the habitual approval of the local Ordinary; but if urgent necessity does not allow time to seek this approval, she may presume the permission.

4°. Others also for just and reasonable causes, may be admitted by the Superior, after she has taken due precautions.

Section 232.

Even to places outside the enclosure reserved for extern or intern pupils, or for work proper to the Institute, persons of the other sex must not be admitted except for a just reason, and with the permission of the superior.

Section 233.

All undue intercourse with outsiders, which lead to the relaxation of discipline and the weakening of the religious spirit, should be discouraged by the Superior.

Section 234.

Since visits to the parlor lead to the relaxation of discipline and the weakening of the religious spirit, the Sisters should avoid them as

much as possible, and they shall go to the parlor only with the permission of the Superior.

Section 235.

Visits of friends and relatives are forbidden during the seasons of Advent and Lent, except, when for just reasons the Superior in her prudent judgment permits them.

Section 236.

The Sisters shall not receive permission to make visits except for weighty reasons.

Section 237.

Religious Superiors must take care that the prescriptions of the constitutions be faithfully observed with regard to subjects leaving the religious house, or their receiving visits from, or paying visits to externs.

Section 238.

It is not lawful for Superiors to permit their subjects to remain outside a house of their own Institute, except for a just and grave cause, and for as brief a period as possible, according to the Constitutions; but for an absence of more than six months, unless for motives of study, the permission of the Apostolic See is always required.

Section 239.

The Superiors and local Ordinaries shall attentively see that the religious, except in the case of necessity, do not go out singly from the house.

Section 240.

All religious can freely write letters, exempt from all control, to the Holy See and the Apostolic Delegate, to the Mother General and the General Councillors, to the Superior of their house, should she be absent, to the local Ordinary to whom they are subject; and from all those persons the religious can also receive letters which nobody has the right to open.

Section 241.

Letters written by the Sisters or sent to them, are to pass through the hands of the Superior, who has the right of opening and reading them. Superiors, however, should make use of this right with moderation, prudence, and charity, and should observe strict secrecy with regard to the contents of any letter that they may happen to read.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE PORTRESS.

Section 242.

The portress shall discharge the duties of her office with religious modesty, affability, and punctuality. She shall guard against all unnecessary conversation with strangers and all that could lessen in her the spirit of recollection.

Section 243.

Should a visitor wish to speak to the Superior or any other Sister who at that time is engaged in the choir or at table, she shall politely ask the visitor to be so kind as to wait until the end of that exercise. But if the matter to be treated of, is important and admits of no delay, she shall first inform the Superior, and abide by her instructions.

Section 244.

Without permission of the Superior she shall execute no commission from externs to Sisters, nor from these to outsiders.

Section 245.

The portress shall not communicate to the other Sisters knowledge of anything that hap-

pens at the door. It is also the duty of the portress to convey to the Superior all letters (except those marked *solis*) coming through the mail. She must never give to a Sister, for whom letters have been received, any that have come for her, nor should she tell the Sister that such letters have been received. However, letters written by the Mother General or by the General Councillors to any Sister, or vice versa, are not to be read by the local Superior. Such letters should bear the Latin word (*solis*) written on the envelope, so that the portress may convey it to the Sister to whom it is addressed.

Section 246.

The portress should be very careful not to make known to the local Superior that a letter of this kind has been received by any Sister, nor has the Superior any right to read such letters, even if an opportunity presents itself.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PRINCIPAL OCCUPATIONS OF THE SISTERS.

Section 247.

In accordance with No. 1, 2°;

1. They may be teachers for the girls and

little boys of parochial schools, boarding schools, and orphan asylums.

2. They may have private schools near the convents.

3. They should prefer parochial schools to academies.

4. They may also have charge of orphan asylums.

5. They may have hospitals for the sick and aged of both sexes, particularly for the poorer classes.

THE SCHOOLS.

Section 248.

Art. 1. The Mother General shall be careful to appoint as teachers only those Sisters who are really capable, that the pupils may advance both spiritually and temporally.

Section 249.

She may not take charge of more schools than she can supply with the necessary number of teachers, and these Sisters should employ as much time in study as possible, that they may become proficient in the art of teaching.

Section 250.

The Sisters shall be very careful to have the children practice all the necessary branches,

and shall give special attention to the correction of written exercises. They shall be impartial towards their pupils, never punish too severely, and pray daily for their salvation.

Section 251.

The Sisters shall use in school those books which the pastor may direct. If the Sisters have any complaints against the pastor, the Mother General shall examine into the matter, and if the Council deem it necessary, or advisable, make it known to the local Ordinary, but she may not do anything of her own accord.

Section 252.

The Mother General is at liberty to take away any of the Sisters from the occupation of teaching, but this should not be done frequently during the school year, as it greatly retards the progress of the pupils.

THE HOSPITALS.

Section 253.

Art. 2. As it is one of the objects of the Institute to take charge of hospitals and to care for the sick, the Superior is obliged in conscience to do everything possible to have this work of charity performed in a proper spirit.

She shall see that cleanliness prevails in the wards of the sick; that the linens be changed regularly, so that all who visit the hospitals may be edified.

Section 254.

The wards and rooms of the men must be separated from those of the women, and the apartments of both must be entirely separated from those used by the community.

Section 255.

The Superior shall go through the wards daily, to see how the sick are. Should anything prevent her from doing this, or should the number of sick be too great, she shall arrange so as to fulfill this sacred duty at least twice a week.

Section 256.

She shall set a good example to the Sisters in taking care of the sick, encouraging self-sacrifice and zeal to such a degree as even to expose their lives (when an occasion may require it) for those poor suffering members of Christ. Those Sisters, who, through carelessness, may be guilty of negligence in attending the sick, should be reprimanded.

Section 257.

The Superior shall see that all regulations regarding the sick, are carefully observed; and should any of the inmates persist in transgressing these rules, they shall be dismissed. If any of the sick desire the presence of a priest, or be in danger of death, the Sister in charge must hasten to prepare that person for the reception of the last Sacraments; and if she be unable to do this, she should appoint another Sister to perform this duty, and notify the priest at once.

Section 258.

An elderly Sister shall always have charge of the men, but never remain with them, unless obliged by duty to do so. Useless conversations with the sick are strictly forbidden, and the Superior should insist upon the exact observance of this rule.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SACRISTAN.

Section 259.

The sacristan shall entertain a great esteem for her charge, all the duties of which ought to remind her of her Spouse. She shall work with

devotion and recollection, frequently renewing her intention of honoring the most Holy Sacrament.

Section 260.

In passing before the most Holy Sacrament she should never neglect to genuflect reverently.

Section 261.

If the sacristan has an assistant, she should treat her with great charity and respect, asking help of her when necessary.

Section 262.

She should comport herself most respectfully towards the Chaplain, and avoid all unnecessary conversation with him. In the chapel and sacristy she shall speak only when necessary, and then only in a low tone of voice.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SUFFRAGES.

Section 263.

In order to show charity towards the deceased Sisters the entire rosary shall be said, and in addition, each house shall have five Masses said for the repose of each departed

Sister. During eight days the Sisters shall offer all their prayers and good works for the same intention. The prescriptions of Nos. 44 and 62, 1° shall be observed.

Section 264.

On the second day of December, on which day the Third Order of St. Francis solemnly commemorates all its members, each house shall have a Mass said for the deceased Sisters of the whole Institute. The Sisters shall offer Holy Mass and Communion for the same intention.

Section 265.

On the occasion of the annual retreat a low Mass shall be celebrated for the deceased Sisters during each retreat.

Section 266.

In case of the death of a member of the community the obsequies shall be celebrated in the Community Chapel, by the Chaplain (if the house has one) otherwise by the Parish Priest in the parish church. After the obsequies, the body shall be borne to the nearest cemetery of the community for interment.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PENALTIES.

Section 267.

A religious who becomes an *apostate* from religion:

1°. By that very fact incurs an excommunication, absolution from which is reserved to the Ordinary of the place in which she is staying;

2°. She remains deprived of all privileges of the community and therefore of the suffrages;

3°. She is excluded from all ecclesiastical acts;

4°. Even though she returns she lacks forever active and passive voice, and in addition she should be punished by the Superiors by other punishments, according to the gravity of her crime. Canon 2385.

Section 268.

A religious who is a *fugitive* from religion, is:

1°. By that very fact deprived of whatever office she has held in the community;

2°. When she returns, she should be punished by the Mother General, in proportion to the seriousness of her crime. Canon 2386.

Section 269.

A religious who violates the law of community life in a notable manner, is to be seriously admonished, and, if amendment does not follow, she is to be punished even by depriving her of active and passive voice, and if she is a Superior, also of her office. Canon 2389.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FORMULA OF PROFESSION.

I, Sister N. N., promise Almighty God, Mary, His Immaculate Mother, Our Holy Father, St. Francis, all the Saints, and you, Most Reverend Archbishop (or Right Reverend Bishop), to keep the Commandments of God as long as I live; to give satisfaction for all the transgressions I may have committed against our Rules; to obey our Holy Father, the Pope, and His legitimate successors; and I vow to live in Obedience, Poverty, and Chastity (for one year, or for life), according to the Rules and commands of my Superiors.



THE DIRECTORY.

THE DIRECTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOW OF POVERTY.

Section 1.

By the vow of religious poverty the religious renounces within the limits fixed by the Church, all free and independent disposition of temporal goods; and they oblige themselves to live a poor life of perfect equality in the community, from which they receive, without any personal distinction, whatever is necessary for their temporal support.

Section 2.

By virtue of the vow of poverty then, no Sister is allowed, without lawful permission from her Superior, to dispose in any manner of temporal goods; that is, of such goods as are estimated according to pecuniary value. Hence she cannot take such for her own use, nor lend, borrow, exchange, sell or donate them to others; nor can she make use of them longer than allowed, nor turn them to another use than that permitted to her, nor hide them from the Su-

perior. She would also violate this vow of poverty, if she should intentionally destroy any such thing, or allow it to perish through culpable negligence, if confided to her care; again, if she refuse to accept anything that is justly due to her; as for instance, wages for work done by her. In like manner she sins, if, when transferred from one house to another, she takes along anything beyond what is allowed. She sins, in fine, if she distributes at her own discretion, donations, given her as alms for poor people not specified by the donors; because all donations and presents, become, by the very fact of being accepted by a religious, the property of her convent, and must be handed over to the Superior.

Section 3.

The Superior is bound, either personally or through the officials of the community, to provide the individual members thereof with all necessaries; though she is not allowed to make superfluous expenditures, either for herself or for others, and hence she cannot permit any kind of luxury. She must provide for all alike, without making any distinction, unless there be a grave reason for doing so. In this consists what is called common life, which is the

bulwark of religious poverty. In order to preserve this intact, she shall willingly and cheerfully grant to the Sisters whatever is necessary to them, that they may never have occasion to violate poverty by procuring things elsewhere.

Section 4.

The vow of poverty extends only to temporal goods, and to these only within the limits prescribed by the Church. Spiritual goods, therefore, do not fall under this vow. Hence a Sister may, without the Superior's permission, dispose of sacred relics not cased in precious reliquaries, and of manuscript notes which she has made for herself.

Section 5.

The sin committed by violating the vow of poverty is either mortal or venial, according to the value of what is independently used, and the greater or lesser damage resulting therefrom. According to the teaching of theologians, a religious commits a mortal sin against this vow, by independently retaining or disposing of such an amount of temporal property as would render her guilty of mortal sin against the seventh commandment, if she stole that amount. But if such a disposition or retaining of property involve no violation of the seventh

commandment, it is only a venial sin against the vow; unless there be question of something very important or of great value. Thus, if a Sister would, for instance, receive a large sum of money to be distributed among the poor, and she should distribute it without the Superior's permission, she would commit a mortal sin against the vow of poverty.

Section 6.

Religious should strive not only to keep the vow of poverty conscientiously, they should also endeavor perfectly to practice the virtue of poverty, in imitation of Jesus Christ. Hence they should willingly bear the inconveniences of poverty for the love of God; nay, they should even rejoice if now and then they are in want of something which seems necessary to them.

Section 7.

“They shall serve God as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, in all poverty and humility. It is the excellence of this sublime poverty, which ennobles you, beloved Sisters and heirs of the heavenly kingdom, by making you poor in temporal comforts, to enrich you with heavenly virtues. This should be your treasure and inheritance, and your guide into the land of the living, which you will enter by contemn-

ing all things for the love of Jesus Christ, and by avoiding all concern for anything earthly whatsoever.” (Words of St. Francis.)

The Sisters should, therefore, preserve themselves free from all temporal anxieties; animated on the one hand with unbounded confidence in the Providence of their Heavenly Father Who will always provide His poor faithful children with all necessaries; but on the other, in imitation of their Holy Father Francis, they should not be ashamed to collect alms, both for their own support and for the support of those committed to their care. “Nor should they be ashamed of their poverty, because the Son of God, Himself, was poor in this world for our sakes.” (St. Francis.)

Section 8.

From all this it is evident that on the one hand, the Sisters may practice many virtues by their life of poverty; but that on the other, they may also fail in many ways, if not, perhaps against the vow, surely against the virtue of poverty. This is the case, for instance, if they entertain an inordinate attachment to anything given them for their use; if they get impatient or irritated when they do not always receive immediately what they ask for, or when it is

not of the very best; or if they murmur interiorly or complain to others on this account.

Section 9.

Poverty is one of the principal foundation pillars of the religious life. Hence every Superior should carefully watch over the observance of the Constitutions regarding poverty.

CHAPTER II.

THE VOW OF CHASTITY.

Section 10.

The second impediment to the acquisition of perfection is sensuality, especially the concupiscence of the flesh. Now, the virtue of chastity has for its object the perfect subjection of this concupiscence of the flesh, in order to serve God in purity of heart and body.

Section 11.

A religious will avoid, not only what involves a proximate occasion of sinning against this virtue, or what entails grave scandal, but also such dangers, in which a fall into sin is not so probable, and will always conduct herself carefully and cautiously. Hence she will not, needlessly, devote herself to the reading of worldly

or profane literature, fearing lest she should thus grow cold in her love for God; and lest worldly and sentimental love, which is so closely connected with carnal love, should thereby be nourished in her heart. She will, moreover, avoid all ostentation and vanity in dress, all affectation and mannerism in her exterior deportment; and in conformity with the penitential garb which she wears, she will endeavor to edify all by her grave, sedate, and modest behavior. All the more will she carefully shun all affectionate endearments, even towards children, and all particular friendships. Without the permission of the Superior, the Sisters shall not even go into one another's cell, unless there be an urgent reason for doing so.

Section 12.

It is the virtue of chastity that adorns the soul with an extraordinary supernatural splendor, that renders her equal to, nay, exalts her even above the angels, and secures to her a special reward in heaven. Hence a religious should especially employ all the means necessary to preserve untarnished this splendid ornament of her soul. Besides shunning the above mentioned dangers, these means consist especially

in fervent and persevering prayer, particularly in time of temptation; in a childlike devotion to the most Blessed Virgin Mary; in the frequent and worthy reception of Holy Communion; in avoiding idleness, luxury, and intemperance in eating and drinking; in bodily mortification and vigilance over the senses.

Section 13.

Because anything contrary to this virtue, more than anything else, impairs, degrades, and renders contemptible a religious institute, the Superiors shall be extremely vigilant concerning all that might expose this virtue to danger.

CHAPTER III.

THE VOW OF OBEDIENCE.

Section 14.

The third impediment to the acquisition of perfection is the pride of life, or the inordinate attachment to one's own will, and the endeavor to carry it out in all things. The virtue of obedience combats this self-will, inclining the soul to subject herself, for God's sake, to all her lawful Superiors and to follow their injunctions, as long as they are not evidently

against any commandment of God. For all lawful Superiors, even if they be personally imperfect and faulty, are, as such, God's representatives, and their injunctions are God's injunctions. By this vow a religious sacrifices to God her free will and her personal self, promising Him to be always ready to follow the prescriptions of the Rule of the religious institute, and to obey the commands given by her lawful Superiors in conformity with this Rule. Because by the vow of obedience the religious sacrifices the very best part of herself, this vow is the most excellent of the three religious vows; and since every society is founded on obedience, this vow is also the foundation of this Institute.

Section 15.

They must obey all their lawful Superiors in whatever they command conformably to the Rule and Constitutions. For it is the office of the Superiors to watch over the observance of the Rules and to guard them; but they are not empowered to go beyond the Rule, and to oblige their subjects to anything which is in nowise contained in the Rule and Constitutions, or which would evidently involve a transgression of some other binding law. It is said, evidently,

for it it be only doubtful, the command of the Superior is obligatory.

Section 16.

A Superior's command is binding under pain of mortal sin only, when in a matter of importance, she interposes her whole authority, or threatens with a severe penance those who should violate that command. Thus, for instance, if she should say: "I command you under formal obedience," or "by virtue of obedience," or use any similar expression. It is said "in a matter of importance"; for if the matter is in every respect trivial, there can be no obligation to obey under pain of mortal sin. But even in this latter case, it would be a mortal sin if one should disobey out of formal contempt for the Superior's authority. Since, however, the prosperous continuance of the Institute, depends especially on obedience, faults against it, even if not committed through contempt, especially if they be notorious, shall be punished with severe penances.

Section 17.

Yet a religious who is earnestly striving after perfection, will not be content with merely obeying as far as bound to do so by the vow, but she will, moreover, try to acquire also the

virtue of obedience as perfectly as possible. She will obey readily and cheerfully; if called away by obedience, she will promptly quit the work in which she has been engaged, to obey the call; she will execute all without delay, exactly as enjoined upon her; she will not inquire why this or that has been commanded, but will obey blindly, with perfect submission of her judgment to that of her Superior, and without reserving to herself even a trace of her own will; she will obey even when the work commanded is difficult of execution, nay, even if it seems almost impossible; obedience affords her the strength to surmount all difficulties.

Section 18.

Obedience presupposes love and reverence for Superiors. The Sisters' love for the Most Reverend Archbishop shall be like the love of children for their father, and their love for their Superior, like that of children for their mother; that is they shall be childlike and candid toward them. They shall, moreover, represent to themselves in all their Superiors, Jesus Christ Whose place they hold. Hence they shall speak of them always with respect, and never make their faults the subject of their conversation or recreation.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE SISTERS SHOULD CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN AND OUT OF THE CONVENT.

Section 19.

The bell must be punctually rung by the Sister in charge thereof. All are required to be present, if possible, at the community exercises. The Superior must see that the Sisters are punctual in attending these exercises, for if they be not attended, the religious spirit is lost. Therefore, the Superior should be the first to give good example in this regard.

Section 20.

When sent out on business, the Sisters should observe the strictest decorum, neither looking around or talking on the streets without necessity. They are not allowed to eat or drink out of their own house without permission.

Section 21.

Sisters who are sent out to visit the sick, must not separate. They should go directly where they are sent. If they have or receive money, they should be mindful of holy poverty, and careful not to spend any unnecessarily. Should circumstances, however, require it, they

may do so; but after returning they must immediately inform the Superior.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE VIRTUES NECESSARY FOR THE ERECTION OF
THE EDIFICE OF PERFECTION IN GENERAL.

Section 22.

Of these virtues there are principally twelve. Four of them constitute the foundation and essence of the supernatural life, and of the whole edifice of perfection. They are: Faith, Hope, Love of God, and Love of One's Neighbor. Four others remove the obstacles opposed to the completion of this edifice. These are: Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and Meekness combined with Humility. Finally, the last four supply the means to acquire the virtues mentioned before, in their perfection. These are: Mortification, Silence combined with Recollection, Prayer, and Self-denial or Love of the Cross.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RELIGIOUS VIRTUES.

Section 23.

The virtues which as religious, the Sisters of

this Institute should especially possess, are the following five: Child-like Simplicity, Sisterly Charity, Cheerfulness and Joy in the Lord, Seclusion from the World, and Exactitude in following the prescribed Order of the Day. These are for them the most effectual means to erect the edifice of perfection, and to preserve, practice, and increase those twelve virtues which have been mentioned in the preceding article as fundamental.

CHILDLIKE SIMPLICITY.

Section 24.

Nothing is more opposed to the idea of a Sister of the Order of St. Francis than deceitfulness, cunning, duplicity, hypocrisy, and the crafty prudence of the world. Hence all should earnestly strive to acquire that child-like simplicity which our Divine Saviour declares a necessary condition to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words, they should endeavor to be unpretentious, guileless, sincere, and candid toward all, especially toward their Superiors; and moreover, try to imbue all those confided to their care with this same simple, candid disposition of good children.

SISTERLY CHARITY.

Section 25.

Charity is the fulfillment of the law. This it is which makes a paradise of a religious community; for, where charity reigns, the good odor of heaven is inhaled.

Section 26.

Since the Sisters have all one and the same end in view, namely, to please God, the same bond of charity should also unite them among themselves; and they should all be of one heart and one soul. But this must be a true and holy charity, which does not arise from merely natural motives, but is founded on God's Holy Will. Of this charity the Apostle, St. Paul says: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeking not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Section 27.

The Sisters, therefore, should endeavor kindly to assist one another in every possible manner, and should embrace every opportunity

of doing so. They should also avoid whatever could disturb this mutual charity and perfect harmony. Hence they should suppress every antipathy, and all rash judgments as quickly as possible, and conduct themselves respectfully and cordially toward one another. They should never manifest the least harshness, irritation or coldness.

Section 28.

When it happens, now and then, that they disagree in their opinions, they may, indeed, give the reasons for their different views; but never on that account begin to quarrel and dispute among themselves; they should on the contrary, show deference for the opinions of others, and rather be silent than violate charity in the least.

Section 29.

When transferred to another convent, or stopping over in one while on a journey, they shall take care not to extol one convent at the expense of another, or make known certain defects that may exist in one of them. They shall likewise be on their guard against speaking uncharitably, especially of the faults of their Sisters; because the precept of charity is thereby easily violated. No Sister is worthy of

the name of a religious if she does not patiently and charitably bear the imperfections and eccentricities of her Sisters, being mindful of her own faults. "Bear ye one another's burdens; and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ."

Section 30.

No one is allowed to hinder another in the discharge of her official duties, or to correct or interfere with her therein; nor shall any one upbraid another with her faults or the penances imposed upon her.

Section 31.

All special, confidential familiarity, all particular friendship with any Sister, and all conspicuous preference for any, must be carefully shunned, because that cordial charity which should unite all the Sisters, is thereby destroyed. The Superior should be most watchful in this point, and endeavor by suitable means, to eradicate such friendships.

Section 32.

When a Sister not actually a member of the community, comes to any convent, either on a visit, on business, or stopping over on a journey, she should be received with the greatest charity, and liberally supplied with all she may need.

The Superior shall most carefully see to this point.

Section 33.

If a Sister has really offended another, she shall at once, or as soon as possible, humble herself before the one she has offended, and ask her pardon; in any case she shall do this before retiring to rest at night. On the other hand, the Sister who was offended shall receive her kindly, without reproaching or correcting her, or even making any further mention of the occurrence.

Section 34.

In order that fervor and exact observance of the Rule and Constitutions may be preserved and increased among the Sisters, they should sincerely wish to be frankly corrected, not only by the Superior in her official capacity, but also by their Sisters; hence they shall prudently, humbly, and charitably draw one another's attention to their defects, and mutually admonish each other to correct them.

Section 35.

If a Sister has thus privately admonished another Sister concerning a fault that is as yet secret, and the admonition has borne the de-

sired fruit of amendment, she is in conscience bound to observe strict silence in regard to the whole matter; nor is she allowed to make known the fault committed by that Sister, either to the Superior or to others; since the law of charity strictly commands us to preserve our neighbor's good name.

Section 36.

Every Sister shall also observe secrecy in regard to whatever should naturally be kept secret; as also whenever anything has been communicated to her as secret; or in confidential intercourse; unless its revelation becomes really necessary for the common good, or for the good of an individual. But even, in this case, the secret may be revealed only to such as have a right to know it, and can supply a remedy. In case a fault committed by a Sister has been reported by another to the local Superior, and the correction administered by the latter has produced the desired effect; neither the Sister that reported it, nor the local Superior, is allowed to inform the Mother Superior thereof, if there are no further evil consequences of that fault to be feared. Since suspicions, quarrels, vexations, and dissensions generally arise from the abuse of confidence,

and from a violation of secrecy, the Sisters must be very conscientious in regard to this matter, and in important, doubtful cases consult their confessor.

Section 37.

The Sisters should try to speak well of one another. To speak of others as they would wish to be spoken of, and never utter in the absence of a Sister, what they would not say in her presence. If they ever hear a Sister speak ill of others, they should be careful neither to encourage her lack of charity, nor to appear pleased with her language, otherwise they partake of her guilt. They should be careful never to mention to any Sister that another has spoken ill of her; for tale-bearing of this kind sometimes occasions disputes and aversions which last a long time. Oh! how frightful the account which tale-bearers must render to God!

Section 38.

The sowers of discord are objects of abomination in His sight. Six things there are that the Lord hateth, and the seventh His soul despiseth. The seventh is the man that soweth discord among brethern. They should endeavor, also to avoid as much as possible all disputes. Sometimes trifles give occasion to arguments,

that end in altercations and injurious language. If they love charity they should endeavor to be affable and meek to all. Meekness is the characteristic virtue of the Lamb; it is the beloved virtue of Jesus Christ, Who, through a love of meekness, took the appellation of Lamb. In their conversation and intercourse with others, the Sisters should try to be agreeable not only to their Superiors and to those who are in office, but to all, and particularly to those Sisters who have offended them, or oppose their wishes, or are displeasing by roughness of manner. The most perfect souls are not free from all defects. All are subject to faults; and notwithstanding her manifold imperfections, each Sister expects to be treated with charity and compassion. Therefore, each should according to the advice of the Apostle, compassionate the defects of others. Bear ye one another's burdens. It is by the manner in which one Sister bears the burdens of others, that it is known whether she loves with true charity, which, because it is supernatural, should be stronger than natural affection.

Section 39.

In observing charity the Sisters should not neglect the practice of politeness, which is

called the garment of charity. Although politeness, which is ranked among the little virtues, because it is supposed that religious supernaturalize it by their motive, is a purely human virtue, yet, it is essential to the harmony of society. It is, perhaps, because religious regard it too much as a human virtue, that they frequently seem to forget to practice it among themselves. Nevertheless, politeness is nowhere out of place. It is a desire to please those with whom we are obliged to live, and to conduct ourselves in such a manner that we may give satisfaction to everybody; to our Superiors by our respect; to equals by our esteem; to inferiors by our kindness. It consists in saying to each one what is suitable, and may please that person. "With honor preventing one another," says the Apostle; these marks of honor are what we understand by politeness. We all like one who treats us with respect, and we feel obliged to make a similar return. Therefore, in a community, where Christian supernatural politeness reigns, the Sisters will never hear in conversation, the least rude word, trite remarks, interruptions, boisterous laughter, etc.; nor will they observe in dress any negligence or want of neatness; nor any unseemly haste in going to and fro; nor any

brusque impatience or hurry which makes the Sisters forget that they must salute one another, at least interiorly, because of the dignity of their vocation. Charity, whatever the nature of its acts, has more need than all the other virtues to be practised with a good grace. Gentleness is its flower; amiability its perfume. Every act of charity, done with an ill grace, is almost valueless. A service rendered ungraciously, in a manner which shows that a Sister regrets being disturbed or troubled, only produces half its effect, and lacking that which should be its charm, it is hardly counted by God and men. But to perform every act of charity with affability, condescension, politeness, and cheerfulness, requires a strong habit of self-control. The Sisters, should, therefore, watch over themselves, struggle courageously against their inclinations to selfishness, sensuality, and pride. No virtue brings its own reward in this world more than charity, and the Holy Spirit desires that all should think of this, for in praising people of the Old Law, He nearly always says: "They were beloved of God and men."

CHEERFULNESS AND JOY IN THE LORD.

Section 40.

According to the Holy Scripture, we should

serve the Lord with joy. Hence it is unbecoming a Sister, to be dejected or melancholy; since it causes her Sisters to feel uncomfortable in her presence, and brings religious life into discredit. Certain days and hours are, therefore, set aside for recreation that is for the purpose of refreshing the mind, and thus rendering it better qualified to serve God. If this recreation is taken in the spirit of obedience and with a pure intention, it serves to foster mutual charity, and produces other good results. Hence no Sister is allowed to remain away from the common recreation, or to leave it without permission.

SECLUSION FROM THE WORLD.

Section 41.

The religious life owes its origin principally to the desire of escaping from the dangers of worldly intercourse. Hence a genuine religious loves seclusion most dearly. Hence she also punctually observes the prescriptions of the rule concerning letter writing, enclosure, and visits to the parlor.

THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

Section 42.

As God observes the most beautiful order in

all His works, so religious should follow a suitable order in the discharge of all their duties. Hence religious are called "Regulars," because they live according to a "*Regula*" or Rule; that is according to a fixed order. It is especially required for community life, to have and to observe an order of the day well adapted to circumstances.

Section 43.

The Superior is bound strictly to follow the order prescribing the various exercises of the day; and she may not postpone any exercise without a grave reason. This is a matter of great importance; since the Sisters' well-regulated community life depends upon it and by its neglect everything will get into confusion.

Section 44.

The Sister shall be most exact in performing the prescribed exercises. They shall obey the first sound of the bell calling them to an exercise. In this punctuality the Superior shall set a good example to all the rest. No one is allowed to absent herself from any common exercise, without a just cause and the Superior's permission; and, if, for some urgent reason one has been prevented from attending a common act, and from previously obtaining the Superior's per-

mission, she shall afterwards explain to the Superior the reason of her absence.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE DUTIES AND QUALITIES OF SUPERIORS IN GENERAL.

Section 45.

In order that those who fill an office may be worthy representatives of God, they should be well qualified for their positions, and faithfully discharge the duties of their various offices. Hence, only such should be appointed to offices, as have the necessary qualifications for the same.

Section 46.

Regarding her duties, every Superior should be to her subjects what a good mother is to her children; that is, she should love her subjects with true, sincere, and well-regulated charity, direct them with prudence, carefully watch over them, edify them in all things by her good example, and fervently pray for them.

Section 47.

In the first place, then, considering herself as mother of her subjects, the Superior should

bear towards them the greatest charity; and this maternal charity should possess the following qualities:

(a) It should be universal; that is, it should embrace all, the perfect and imperfect, the cultured and the illiterate, all are her children. She must exclude all partiality, all one-sided regard to character, nationality and the like. She should never show preference for any Sister, no matter how virtuous she may be; nor allow herself to be influenced in favor of any one by flattery or endearments, which she should on the contrary, positively decline and resent.

(b) It should be tender; she should compassionate the Sisters on account of their weaknesses, patiently endure the characteristic eccentricities of certain individuals, encourage the despondent, and console the sorrowful.

(c) It should be benevolent; she should give them all that their wants require, as far as circumstances permit; and cheerfully grant them whatever is not against the Rule and approved customs, provided it does not entail a relaxation of religious discipline. Her charity should be especially benevolent towards the sick; she shall anxiously inquire into their maladies and the manner of their being cared for; visit them

often, daily, if possible; send for the physician and confessor as often as they wish to see them, and beware of embittering their lot by upbraiding them in any manner.

(d) Her charity should be obliging; that is, it should anticipate their wants; hence she should from time to time call to her the Sisters individually, and confidentially ask them as to how they are getting on, whether they are in want or need of anything, cheerfully affording them advice and assistance. By acting thus, she will gain their confidence and induce them to be perfectly candid towards her.

(e) It should be kind and gentle; she should not treat the Sisters rudely or repulsively; but, on the contrary, readily receive them at all times, listen to them with a pleasant countenance, tell them what she wants them to do, rather by way of a request than a command, and correct those who have failed with cordial, rather than with bitter or passionate words. To the Superior alone belong the right to reprimand, but this should never be done in the presence of an extern, unless the fault was committed in the presence of that person.

(f) Finally, it should be a well-regulated charity: the Superior should always prefer the spiritual to the temporal welfare of her subjects,

and regard more the general welfare of the Institute, than that of the single houses or individual Sisters. Hence a good Superior will above all see to it that her Sisters are well instructed in religion and in the science of the saints, and well grounded in virtue. She will therefore both exhort them herself to fidelity in the observance of the Rule, and to the practice of virtue, and request the confessor or other priests to instruct and exhort them by means of conferences. Well-ordered charity requires also, that, though ever so kind and benevolent, she preserves the dignity of her office and firmness of character in executing whatever refers to God's glory and regular observance; and far from being blindly indulgent or giving way to conniving laxity, she should, when necessary, employ severity, and impose penances proportionate to the gravity of the fault.

Section 48.

To this charity should be joined prudence; in order to employ the proper means to attain the object of her good intentions. "Take away prudence, and every virtue becomes a vice." (St. Bernard). Hence a Superior should speak little and strictly keep the secrets committed to

her; especially confidential communications regarding faults or family affairs. She should observe the same in regard to information received through the letters of her subjects, and all other things, the revelation of which might be disagreeable to the persons concerned. She should, moreover, speak only well of her predecessor in office, and not allow others to make disparaging remarks in her regard. She should do nothing without mature reflection; and in every important affair, as, for instance, the filling of vacant offices, she should first seek counsel from God in prayer, as well as from intelligent and prudent persons, and her consultors, as the rule prescribes: "Do nothing without counsel, and thou shalt not repent when thou hast done." (Ecclus. xxxii, 24.) And when anything has been determined upon after mature reflection, she should not delay its execution; but lest her plans be crossed, she should be mute on the subject in the meantime.

Special prudence is required in correcting and punishing delinquent subjects. Let the Superior not be too hasty in this matter, and let her consider well that minds are frequently not disposed to receive correction, in the moment they commit a fault. Hence, unless there is danger of scandal if the correction be

delayed, she should postpone it to another time, waiting for an occasion when it will be more easily received; and even then, instead of upbraiding the delinquent with her fault at once, perhaps under an excitement of passion she should first commend her for her good qualities. When any subject is accused to her of a fault, she should beware of credulously accepting the report as an undoubted fact; and before passing judgment in the case or casting it up to the accused, she should ask the latter about it, and sift the matter in all its bearings. If she discovers that the information was false, she should instruct the informer; nay, punish her, in case the accusation proceeded from some vile motive of passion. Thus even her imperfect subjects will realize, that they have a true friend in their Superior, and preserve toward her love and esteem; whilst love, esteem, and reverence are lost, when corrections and punishments are hastily and passionately administered.

Section 49.

Superiors should be watchful over everything confided to their care, remembering that they are responsible for all. As a general must see to it that order and discipline reign in his army,

so a religious Superior must, above all things, see to it that her subjects faithfully observe the vows and rules, that charity and harmony reign among them, and that every one fulfills the duties of her office. She should not make many regulations; but be all the more exacting in regard to the observance of those she has made. She should abolish abuses, especially particular friendships, that have crept in, and prevent such as threaten to creep in. She should also be watchful over the temporalities of the convent; and hence insist upon it that an exact inventory of them is kept, and that the account books are always in such order, that they may be shown at any time to the ecclesiastical authorities, and to such as have a right to inspect them. In like manner, she must take care that all documents are drawn up in legal form, and securely kept in the archives. Therefore a Superior should also have sufficient knowledge in regard to financial matters, of bookkeeping, and of business transactions required in her office. This vigilance should not, however, degenerate into an odious espionage, nor encourage vile tale-bearing; nor should it be pedantic, so that those who can well fill an office under her, would feel too much restrained by her in the discharge of their duties, and she herself

being so busy with many small matters, would find no time for attending graver ones.

Section 50.

Finally a Superior should set a good example to her subjects; for “words move, but example draws.” Her words and exhortations will be of real benefit only, if she herself does exactly that to which she exhorts them, and omits what she warns them against. Hence she should keep every rule, even the smallest; as also the regulations of the Bishop and her higher Superiors, especially those of the Sovereign Pontiff. Thus, for instance, she should never omit to have publicly read once a year on a fixed day, the prescribed decrees. She should endeavor to be the first at all the common exercises; and whilst she should be indulgent toward the Sisters in regard to making exceptions, when there is sufficient cause, she should allow this to herself only rarely, and for most weighty reasons. Every Superior should apply to herself the words of the Apostle: “Be thou an example to the faithful” (that is to the Sisters) “in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity.” (1 Tim. iv. 12.)

Section 51.

It is evident then from what has been said,

that the office of a Superior is difficult, and that her responsibility is great. Yet, a Superior, who has been appointed to her office by obedience, and hence by God's Holy Will, may certainly rely upon God's assistance. Hence she should accept the office courageously and with confidence in God. If she does what she can, and fervently implores God to supply her deficiency, her administration will be blessed; and she will receive a great reward for the many works of charity, which she either performs or induces others to perform. She should however, also pray very much for her subjects, especially for such as are afflicted with violent temptations or bodily pains for she should be convinced that all her vigilance and care in their regard will be useless, unless the Lord protects the house by His grace, and blesses her efforts for the welfare of the Sisters.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADVICE TO SISTERS WHO ARE TEACHING.

Section 52.

Since education is the want of the age, those Sisters employed in this good work should rejoice, for it is the most excellent of all zealous

labors. Education forms men, moulds generations, decides the fate of individuals in time and eternity, the fate of families and of kingdoms. Good education gives worthy priests to the sanctuary, legislators, and just magistrates to the state; it supplies good children to families, and forms those who are fitted to be the heads of households; it gives protectors to religion and saints to heaven. There may be other works of zeal more striking to the eye than the instruction of children and the education of youth; but there is none more solid, more fruitful, or more worthy of the esteem of God and men.

Section 53.

A Sister as a religious teacher, should be especially distinguished by genuine Christian charity for her pupils; for this will enable her more than all else, to educate the hearts of the children. For the work of educating children demands great sacrifices which are the effect of love; and to mould the hearts of her pupils, she must first gain them by love. The children must know and feel that their teacher seeks only their true welfare, then only will they obey her in all things. This charity should be patient and compassionate; for no good is effected by

violent passion and by exasperating and abusive language. On the contrary, the pupils are thereby scandalized and rendered stubborn; whereas by patience and compassion they are edified and made pliable. This charity should be furthermore, universal and impartial. The teacher must instruct all with equal affection, whether they be of rich or poor parents, diligent or slothful, well-mannered or uncouth; nay, as the latter needs more attention and patience, she should devote more to them. The teacher should be maternally vigilant; that is, she should, like a good mother carefully watch over the conduct and morality of her pupils while at school, remembering that she is, as it were, their visible guardian angel, and as such accountable to God. Hence the Superior or principal shall see to it that the children are never left alone, without supervision; not even on the play-grounds. This tender charity, however, should not degenerate into a sentimental affection. She should beware of having any favorites among her children; in consequence of which she would not only spoil those very children, but scandalize the whole class, and become to them an object of contempt. She should at all times be mindful of God's holy presence, and of the sublime dignity of a reli-

gious. In correcting and punishing her pupils she should imitate a good mother, avoiding both extreme laxity and extreme severity; endeavoring to combine prudence with impartiality, justice, and equity.

Section 54.

Every Sister shall prepare conscientiously the lessons which she is to give, that she may be able to impart them in a solid, clear, intelligent, and interesting manner. Moreover, during school time, she should avoid all unnecessary conversation with externs and sister-companions.

Section 55.

Finally, it is the good example given by the teacher, which more than all else, draws down God's richest blessing and gains the children's hearts. And justly so; for if the children are to be brought up in the fear and love of God, they must, above all, see in their teacher a model of prayer, obedience, humility, and every virtue. She is called by God to set before them a shining light by the splendor of her virtues; that they may learn to know their Heavenly Father, lovingly serve Him, and arrive at His and their home in Heaven. Hence it is by no means the religious habit that qualifies a Sister for the

office of a Christian educator; nor even the facility of imparting instruction; but true, solid virtue. For words instruct, indeed, but example moves and draws people, and especially children, to a virtuous life. A Sister, therefore, who has been selected to teach, should join prayer to study, conscientiously observe her holy rule and vows and excel in humility, charity, and obedience.

CHAPTER IX.

ADVICE TO THE SISTERS WHO ARE ENGAGED IN NURSING.

Section 56.

The Sisters in charge of this excellent work of mercy should take pains to perform their work in the right spirit, remembering that in caring for the sick they are rendering a service to the Saviour Himself.

Section 57.

Since then the care of the sick is of such importance the Sisters should exercise themselves in lively faith, charity, patience, prudence, and the greatest circumspection; so much the more because this work is liable to many dangers both of soul and body. All familiarity with the patients, with the doctors, and with outsiders

in general, is to be avoided, and in their ministrations they should avoid all useless conversation. When their attendance is required at surgical operations, they must lend their services with the greatest circumspection and modesty, as it behooves virgins consecrated to God.

Section 58.

In bodily dangers, such as the care of contagious diseases, the Sisters should show themselves courageous and brave, placing their trust in God, but at the same time observing the necessary precautions prescribed for such cases.

Section 59.

Mindful of their vocation, the Sisters will provide with every becoming solicitude and charity, not only for the corporal needs of their patients, but also as far as they can for their spiritual needs, consoling and encouraging them, and directing their thoughts to God. They should prudently advise Catholics in danger of death to receive the Sacraments, call the confessor, and at the hour of death, they should kindly assist those in agony.

Section 60.

It is the duty of the Sisters to see that the

rules of the hospitals are strictly observed by patients as well as visitors.

In order that the Sisters may devote themselves to this calling—so difficult and so excellent—according to the mind and spirit of our Seraphic Father, St. Francis, they should impress deeply upon their minds the lectures and instructions which are given on this subject, and thus become daily more proficient in caring for the sick, for the greater glory of God, and the welfare of His creatures.

CHAPTER X.

ORPHAN ASYLUMS.

Section 61.

The charity which animates the Divine Friend of children, especially toward poor orphans, is so tender, that He calls Himself "Father of the Orphans" in Holy Scripture. He moreover, imposes it as a duty upon all to treat the orphans especially with tender charity: "Be merciful to the fatherless, as a father." (Eccles. iv. 10.) In fine, He solemnly assures us: "Whoever shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me." (Matth. xviii. 5.)

Section 62.

The Sisters shall, therefore, take upon themselves the care of these poor little ones with the greatest charity, and be mothers to them, if holy obedience confides them to their care; for in that case, God Himself consigns them to their keeping. They shall care for them as a tender, affectionate mother, both in regard to their spiritual and corporal welfare, for whatever they do for an orphan, they do for God Himself. Mindful, therefore, of the duty imposed upon them by their holy vocation, and of the great reward promised them by our Divine Lord, they shall earnestly and zealously labor to bring them up in such a manner, that they may become staunch Catholics and good citizens.

CHAPTER XI.

MANUAL LABOR.

Section 63.

Mindful of God's command, that one should eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, the Sisters shall by all means shun idleness, as the source of all vices, and hence they shall constantly keep themselves engaged at work, fol-

lowing therein the example of Jesus Christ and the saints, and especially the teaching and example of St. Francis of Assisi.

Section 64.

They shall especially apply themselves to the work which has been assigned to them, with diligence and a pure intention and they shall have predilection for such work as is mean and least conspicuous.

Section 65.

No Sister shall interfere with the affairs of another, unless she has charge of her. But everyone should rather endeavor to perform well what duty and obedience require of her; while she should be always ready to help a Sister, whenever charity may require it.

CHAPTER XII.

CIVILITY AND RELIGIOUS DECORUM AND ADVICE FOR NOVICES.

Section 66.

As sincere charity according to the Apostle, "is kind and patient, seeking not her own, but bearing and enduring all things" (1 Cor. xiii.), it is, of course, necessary that religious souls

should not undervalue the principles and practice of that forbearance, civility, and simple politeness, which are requisite in all societies, and may be justly termed the exterior of charity. It consequently follows that the members of all religious orders, particularly those devoted to the instruction of youth, and obliged to give children not only a Christian, but also a polite education, should be habituated to act in every respect, according to the rules of civility and religious decorum. If, when residing in the world, they were initiated in the principles of politeness, and accustomed to act conformably thereto, they should continue the same line of conduct after their entrance into the convent, as it is by no means contrary to the spirit of religion. This is manifest from the examples of St. Paul and St. Anthony, who so politely ceded to each other the honor of breaking the bread. Religious, must however, purify and elevate their motives, acting from a principle of virtue in the same manner as they formerly did to avoid being considered impolite or uncultured. They should let the deference with which they heretofore treated others, perhaps through mere compliment, spring now from sincere esteem for the persons with whom they are associated, and also from

unfeigned respect of their exalted dignity and sacred character as Spouse of Jesus Christ. They should beware, however, of that affected air and deportment, which denotes a worldly spirit or vain complacency in self; and abstain from those multiplied compliments which border on flattery, and cannot fail to be troublesome and irksome among persons desirous of living together in the unaffected simplicity of sincere charity. As for those who enter the convent uninstructed in the rules of civility or politeness, they must endeavor in the novitiate, to acquire whatever knowledge may be necessary on that head, as well as on every other requisite for the religious life. They must, therefore, take care to speak politely, gently, and always in terms of entreaty when it is necessary to ask for anything, never failing to return thanks for whatever has been given them. When spoken to by any one of the elder Sisters who may be standing, they should rise; and if they speak to any one in the choir or elsewhere, who is sitting or kneeling, they should stoop or kneel, so as to spare her the trouble of rising. They should never speak from a distance, or make signs to call another, particularly an elder, that being allowable only from superiors to inferiors. At recreation they

may take indifferently any unoccupied place, but novices should politely cede to the professed the place near the mistress, as being the most honorable; however, if refused, the novices may take them themselves through condescension. Whenever they meet the professed Sisters, they should salute them, and if it be the superior, assistant or mistress of novices, they should stop until she passes. When they are in the infirmary or elsewhere, and a religious of the community enters, they should rise, give her their place, and sit below her. There are many other things relating to civility and politeness, best learned by custom, and naturally springing from that respect which religious persons mutually owe to one another, and which should never be lessened by familiar intercourse.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OBLIGATION OF THE RULE.

Section 67.

All that is contained in the Rule and Constitutions is only a counsel, and not a command binding under pain of sin; hence the violation thereof is not a sin; unless something else is

involved which constitutes a sin. For this reason those prescriptions which determine the vows more specifically are binding under pain of sin, since by their violation the vows themselves are violated. For the same reason all those prescriptions are binding under pain of sin, that give expression to some command coming from divine or lawful human authority, as it is clearly expressed in this chapter of the holy Rule, and also in the Constitutions, in which the obligation of striving after perfection is explained.

Section 68.

In order that no religious, however, may take occasion to think little of regular observance, from the fact that the prescriptions of the Rule and Constitutions do not bind under pain of sin, the following points should be well considered:

(a) The Rule and Constitutions are indeed mere counsels, but such counsels as are given in the most important matter; namely, in the attainment of holiness; given, furthermore, to such as are bound to strive after perfection and holiness; given, in fine, by men enlightened by God, in consequence of serious reflection joined to fervent prayer. Of many rules of religious orders, it is certain that they were written

under special illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and this is especially true of the Rule of St. Francis.

(b) If an Order is observant, that is if the rule is observed therein by all, it is in a flourishing condition, the result of which is, that an earnest striving after holiness animates all its members; that discipline, charity, and harmony reign therein, and that all labor zealously for the attainment of the end for which it was instituted. If, on the contrary, the observance of the rule is slackened, the Order becomes lax, and disorder and confusion result. Then there can be no further question of great efficiency on the part of the Order. It is no longer an honor to the Church, a subject of edification to the faithful, or of consolation to its members. Hence regular observance is one of the most precious treasures of an Order. Those religious, therefore, who are zealous for regular observance in their Order, perform an excellent and meritorious work; and for all Superiors this is a duty, because they are bound to care for the welfare of the Order.

(c) Now, though it is true that a rule or constitution does not, as such, bind under pain of sin, yet to violate it is to act against an earnest counsel in the most important matter:

hence it is always hazardous. But if one has no reasonable cause for thus acting against a rule, it is a sin; for, to act rightly and without sinning, man must be guided by his reason. Now, we cannot easily imagine that there can be a reasonable cause to deviate from and violate a rule which, like the rule of a religious order, is composed of prescriptions for a holy life, written after so much reflection and under God's special guidance. And if the violation of rule does not take place for a reasonable cause, it proceeds from some inordinate passion: from sensuality, love of ease, sloth, or the like. Now, it is always a sin to act from some inordinate passion. All the more evidently would it be a sin, if one should violate the rule from a motive of contempt for the same; especially if it were done with full deliberation. Moreover, to violate a particular point of the rule constantly for a long time, cannot take place without a certain contempt; hence this cannot take place without sin. Granted, that in the latter case this contempt is not express and formal, it is nevertheless implied in the manner of acting, hence it is surely a venial sin thus to violate a rule.

(d) Finally, apart from these considerations, it is a grievous sin for a Sister habitually to

transgress a rule, if she fully realizes that, on account of her influence on the other Sisters, who are witnesses of her habitual transgressions she will be the cause of considerable relaxation of regular observance, and that the Order itself would thus become relaxed; for, to cause so great a damage, cannot be but a grievous sin. In like manner, a Sister who clearly foresees that by her constant violation of the rule, she is bringing about her dismissal from the Order, cannot but be constantly living in the state of mortal sin.

(e) The principles laid down in the above paragraphs are based on the teachings of theologians in general, and on that of St. Thomas Aquinas in particular. All this makes it clear to us why the saintly founders of religious Orders, and all holy religious, especially all fervent Superiors lay so much stress on the exact observance of the Rule, and why they exempt from it so rarely and only for the most weighty reasons. The words addressed by Jesus Christ Himself to our Holy Father Francis on this subject, are especially noteworthy. "It is My Will that this Rule" (of the First Order) "should be observed literally, literally, literally—without gloss, without gloss, without gloss." (That is, without modifying explanations sug-

gested by worldly wisdom.) “Hence those who will refuse to observe this rule, shall be excluded from this brotherhood as disobedient, stubborn, and rebellious spirits; I shall then call others to fill their places, who will be faithful members of this Order.”

Section 69.

The Sisters shall, therefore, attach the greatest importance to the observance of the Rule and Constitutions, and to every point thereof; the Superiors, shall, moreover, carefully watch over this observance, and not allow any transgression to pass without correcting and punishing the same. In case a Sister has a reason for not observing a point of the Rule, she shall apply to the Superior for an exemption therefrom; but the Superior shall not grant such an exemption, except for a weighty reason, and then only for particular cases or for a short time.

Section 70.

In order to observe the Rule the Sisters must know it. For this reason every Sister shall have for her own use a copy of the Rule and Constitutions, and often make her spiritual reading therefrom, to become more and more familiar with both its letter and spirit.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE RELATIVE GRAVITY OF FAULTS AGAINST
THE RULE.

Section 71.

Since not all transgressions of the Rule exercise an equally disturbing influence on the order and welfare of a religious community, they are not all equally reprehensible; hence it has been judged proper to give a list of faults against the Rule, that may more easily occur, and to divide them according to the amount of evil influence they generally exercise on the good order of the community, into three classes: *slight*, *grievous*, and *very grievous faults*.

Section 72.

It must, however, be observed that the expression *slight* and *grievous* do not refer to the gravity of the sin that may be connected with the transgression of the Rule: for in regard to this gravity, the principles laid down above have to be applied.

Section 73.

1. *Slight faults* against the rule, are, for instance, the following:

To come late sometimes to the common exercises.

To speak in the sacristy, or in the corridors without necessity; or in a loud voice, when necessary.

To walk about too fast and without proper decorum.

To take anything, even with the Superior's permission, from a Sister's cell, or from the sacristy, kitchen or refectory, without informing the one who has the use or charge thereof.

To expose one's self to the view of seculars without necessity.

To neglect to mend a garment slightly torn.

To walk to and fro in one's room during the time of sleep.

To omit to accuse one's self to the Superior, when one has lost or broken something, even if it happened without one's fault.

To have one's room in disorder, or not to keep it clean.

Section 74.

2. *Grievous faults* against the rule are the following:

To remain in bed in the morning, without notifying the Superior.

To make known a fault of which a Sister

has accused herself in chapter, or for which she has been corrected by the Superior.

To complain publicly of the food, clothing or the like.

To inquire why a Sister has received a penance from the Superior.

To inquire curiously into the Superior's actions or designs.

To interfere in the affairs of others, so as to annoy or to disturb them.

To visit places when out, for which one has not to receive the Superior's permission.

To speak to a novice or postulant without necessity or lawful permission.

To give a ridiculous name to a Sister.

To reprimand a Sister, without being officially authorized to do so.

To read letters or other writings of a Sister, without her permission, even though they be of no importance.

To inform a Sister that the Superior has received a letter addressed to her.

To keep the light burning in the evening after the last sign, without the Superior's permission.

To discharge the duties of one's office somewhat negligently.

Section 75.

3. *Very grievous faults* against the Rule are the following:

To resist the command of the Superior publicly.

To complain publicly of the Superior's manner of acting.

To speak contemptuously of any point of the Rule.

To violate poverty in a point determined by the Constitutions.

To read letters addressed to the Superior.

To hurt a Sister's feeling by rude and insulting language.

To give something, as, for example, eatables, to outside persons, without the Superior's permission.

To speak during the time of the great silence, without the Superior's permission.

To defend one's self obstinately before the Superior.

To go into the cell of another Sister without the Superior's permission.

To communicate to outside persons something which has happened in one of our convents, that would be a scandal to them; or that would cause serious damage to that convent or

to a Sister; or that would hinder the success of an enterprise for the good of the community. This would be, indeed, one of the most grievous faults; and should any Sister be found guilty thereof, the Superior shall not omit to impose a severe penance upon her.

CHAPTER XV.

FINAL EXHORTATION.

Section 76.

Let all the Sisters observe this holy Rule and these Constitutions punctually and faithfully in the spirit of St. Francis, their Holy Father; and let them persevere in this observance until death. Then they will surely receive the reward promised by our dear Lord in these words: "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Apoc. ii. 10.) Let them also impress deeply upon their hearts these golden words of St. Francis: "O dearest Sisters! O ever blessed children! Harken to the words of your Father. We have, indeed, promised great things, but far greater things are promised to us. Let us keep the former, and sigh after the latter. The pleasure of sin is

of short duration; the punishment thereof is eternal. Our sufferings here upon earth are trifling, but the glorious reward in the next world is infinite. All, however, will receive according to their deserts. Hence, my dear children, let us do good while we have time."

"Peace and mercy upon all who will follow this Rule." (Gal. vi. 16.) Amen.

THE BOOK OF CUSTOMS.

THE BOOK OF CUSTOMS.*

Section 84.

The facing on the habit should be twelve inches deep.

The hem on the sleeves should be three inches deep.

The black undersleeves should be made like a plain coat sleeve.

Section 85.

The black veil should be of a length in keeping with the Franciscan habit which calls for a veil of medium length.

The white veil for the professed Sisters should be from thirty-three inches to thirty-seven inches according to the height. The facing of the coif and guimpe should be two and one-fourth inches deep, and the hem on headband should be two and one-half inches deep.

The skirt should be black, at least twelve inches from the bottom of skirt. The shoes should be laced.

*The numbers under this head refer to the corresponding numbers in the Constitutions.

Section 113.

The rule of abstinence remains unchanged except whenever a Holyday, and the feast of St. Francis and St. Clare fall on Wednesday or Saturday, the use of flesh meat is not prohibited. During Advent and Lent flesh meat is allowed once a day on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Section 136.

1°. Every Sister who has not obtained permission to remain in bed, shall rise promptly at the first sound of the bell. Should a Sister have become ill during the night, she should inform the Superior of this fact, through another Sister, or she, herself, should inform the Superior.

2°. From the closing of school in June to the opening of school in September, also on either Saturday or Sunday, the rising bell may be delayed a half hour; occasionally an hour, if local conditions permit.

3°. On Saturdays the night prayers may be said at eight o'clock.

4°. On recreation days, spiritual reading is to begin at 8.20 P. M.

5°. On Sundays and Holydays supper may be taken at 5.30.

EXERCISES OF PIETY.

Devotions for the following months:

March: The Litany of St. Joseph is to be said daily.

May: The Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

June: The Litany of the Sacred Heart.

October: A decade of the Rosary with invocation, is to be said in common.

November: Five *Paters*, five *Aves* and the *De Profundis* are to be said for the poor souls in Purgatory.

NOVENAS.

Feast of St. Joseph.

Prayer: Seven *Paters* and *Aves*. (Commencing March 10th.)

Feast of the Annunciation.

Prayer: Three *Aves*, with the aspiration:—O Mary, conceived without sin, etc. (Commencing March 16th).

Feast of Easter.

Prayer: Decade of the Rosary—First Glorious Mystery.

Feast of Pentecost.

Prayer: Seven *Paters*, *Aves*, and *Glorias*.

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Prayer: Five *Paters*, *Aves*, and Aspiration: Jesus meek and humble of Heart, etc.

Feast of St. Anthony.

Prayer: Three *Aves* and Invocation to St. Anthony. (Commencing June 4th.)

Feast of St. Clare.

Prayer: Three *Aves* and Invocation to St. Clare. (Commencing August 3d.)

Feast of the Assumption.

Prayer: Decade of Rosary—Fourth Glorious Mystery. (Commencing August 6th.)

Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

Prayer: Three *Aves* and *Memorare*. (Commencing August 30th.)

Feast of Our Holy Father, St. Francis.

Prayer: Five *Paters*, *Aves* and *Glorias*. (Commencing September 25th.)

Feast of All Saints.

Prayer: Litany of the Saints. (Commencing October 23d.)

Feast of All Franciscan Saints.

Prayer: Three *Aves*. (Commencing November 20th.)

Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Prayer: The Rosary of the Immaculate Conception. (Commencing November 29th.)

Feast of Christmas.

Prayer: Novena for the Twenty-fifth of any month. (Commencing December 16th.)

PRAYER WHEN THE CLOCK STRIKES.

Blessed be the hour when Our Lord was born for us. Hail Mary, etc

1st hour. We recommend ourselves to the Holy Trinity. Glory be to the Father, etc. Praise be to Jesus and Mary, etc.

2nd hour. Our holy Guardian Angel.

3rd hour. Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

4th hour. Four Evangelists.

5th hour. Five Wounds.

6th hour. St. Francis and all the saints of the Order.

7th hour. Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin.

8th hour. Our Patron Saints.

9th hour. Nine Choirs of Angels.

10th hour. Ten Thousand Martyrs.

11th hour. Eleven Thousand Virgins.

12th hour. Twelve Apostles.

After visit, add one *Pater*, *Ave* and *Gloria* for benefactors.

It is a pious custom to salute and answer each other by the following aspiration:

Praise be to Jesus and Mary.

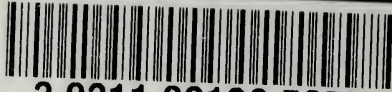
Now and forever.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL UNION



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Sisters of St. Francis
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The rule and constitutions
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