

STATUTES AND RULES / SECRET ARTICLES

STATUTES AND RULES

of the Christian and Charitable schools of the Holy Infant Jesus, established in the cities, towns and villages, to be observed, with the approval and under the authority of the Archbishops, Bishops and parish priests, by the Masters and Mistresses in the parishes where they will be employed, under the leadership of Father Nicolas Barre, Minim.

Introduction

The formation given by Fr. Barre to the first Sisters, as well as their lived experience in communities, in the "little schools" and in the parishes formed the basis of the first draft of the Statutes and Rules. The first edition appeared in 1677, following eleven years of experience. The text of this edition, which can be seen in the archives of the Sisters of Providence in Rouen, has many corrections in Fr. Barre's handwriting.

A new edition, with some minor modifications, was published in 1685 which is the one reproduced here.

It was written for the Brothers as well as the Sisters. The male branch, which was still in existence in 1685, was short lived. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, under the influence and direction of Nicolas Barre, established the Brothers of the Christian Schools to cater for boys.

Statutes: the written laws of a founder which express the special nature and aim of the group in question, and which are generally of a more permanent nature than the Rules.

Rules: a code of regulations or guiding principles to be followed in the living out of the Statutes. They are seen to be the best way of giving concrete expression to the Statutes at a particular time and are subject to regular review, modification or change.

The first chapter gives us an outline of what is basic to the spirit of the Institute; and is the inspiration behind the rules that follow. When reading these rules it would be good to remind ourselves of the spirit in which they were written. The fourth chapter deals directly with rules for the schools.

The "little schools" were initiated by the Church in France in the 16th century, after the Council of Trent. A similar initiative was undertaken by Protestants. Previously it was only men or boys of the upper classes who had access to universities, colleges and most other schools. The primary purpose of the "little schools" was to give instruction to children, young people and adults from among the ordinary people. The aim of this instruction was to form believers, to make known the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ and introduce the mystery of life to be found in God. The three R's and some manual skills were also taught.

Nicolas Barre described the schools as 'Christian' and 'Charitable' and dedicated them to the Infant Jesus.

Christian: because they will continue the work of Jesus Christ whose mission was to "instruct all people and teach them the way to salvation" (SR 1: 1).

Charitable: because the Sisters will endeavour to do all things for the pure love of God (SR 1: 4).

It also means the schools were free in the sense of non fee-paying, being for poor and needy children (SR 1: 15).

Devotion to the Infant Jesus, with an emphasis on the mystery of the Incarnation, was a central element in the French School of Spirituality in the 17th century. Berulle (1575 - 1629), who was one of the main figures in this school, has been called the apostle of the Incarnate Word. His aim was to link faith and theology with everyday life.

Fr. Barre was obviously influenced by this spiritual movement. We find him incorporating some of its characteristics in his work:

- . an ardent zeal which he desires the members of the Institute to have;
- . availability, disinterestedness, pure love and trust in Divine Providence to be lived in a spirit of total self-giving.

Fr. Barre desired to form the Sisters in this spirit. Such a formation, which had often been neglected, was recommended by the Council of Trent.

Chapter 14 was found with the Secret Articles in a folder entitled: "Special Rules for Superiors and Directors". The fact that it was called Chapter 14 probably indicates that it was intended as a supplementary chapter to SR, having been included as an annexe to the 1677 edition. We do not know why it was not published with the 1685 edition.

This could have been due to various factors, which we can only surmise as follows:

- . It was written specifically for Directors and Superiors and therefore may have been available to them as a separate handbook, while not being available to the Sisters in general.
- . A number of difficulties arose in the efforts to implement the structures which Fr. Barre desired for the Institute so that it would be faithful to its founding spirit, so this text may still have been subject to review.
- . The Directors in Rouen were not happy with this type of structure, so the Paris group may have wished to modify it in some way.

Whatever the reasons, it is interesting to see the way in which Fr. Barre sought to set up structures consistent with the aim of the Institute i.e. structures that would enable the Sisters to be totally available for mission.

These structures included:

- . the "Spiritual Director" or "Director General" of the whole Institute;. the "Directors" or "Material Administrators";. the "Lady Associate";
- . the Superior of the Paris House;
- . the Superiors or 'elder Sisters' of the communities.

The Spiritual Director or Director General was responsible for the spiritual direction of the Brothers and Sisters. He also had to see that the Statutes and Rules were really being lived out, in spirit as well as in the least detail.

There was only one such Director for the whole Institute. Fr. Barre was the first and he appointed Fr. Giry to succeed him after his death. Fr. Giry was Director until 1688.

The Directors or Material Administrators

These were people who understood the importance of Fr. Barre's work and who were motivated by the same spirit. They are also referred to in the Secret Articles. There is no reference to these Directors in the Paris foundation.

The Lady Associates

were influential people who supported the schools and looked after the material administration with the Directors. Thus the sisters were free to give themselves to their educational and pastoral activities.

Chapter 1: The Spirit of the Institute

1. The Institute of the Christian, Charitable Schools has its origin in the very heart of God, who so loved the world that He gave His only Son to instruct (a) all people and teach them the way to salvation, so that those who believe in Him may not die but may have eternal life (b).

2. God is supremely great, yet He is happy to reach out humbly towards the little ones. Thus in His plan for His Son, He willed not only that He should become a human being, but also that He should become a little child (c). On His first journey Jesus Christ, the child, wishing to carry out His Father's will and desires, reached out to a child still in its mother's womb in order to enlighten, justify and sanctify him.

He willed that the first drops of His blood be given for children, since the Innocents were the first of His victories over the dominion of the evil one. He placed a child in the centre, the place of honour, among the apostles. He forbade them to prevent the children coming to Him and recommended that it be made easy for them to approach His divine person. He said that whoever scandalised a single child would deserve to be drowned in the depths of the sea (d) and that all those who consider themselves superior to others would never be saved if they did not become like little children. Finally, He said that whoever received a little child in His name would receive Him (e) and that whatever is done to one of the least, the poorest, the most despised, is done to Himself (f). It follows that whoever receives a poor, abandoned child doubly welcomes the person of Jesus Christ. Herein lies the first and most important aim of the Institute.

3. While all the faithful and all true Catholics should practise complete and total obedience to the precepts of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church, the Brothers and Sisters of the Charitable Schools will commit themselves to it in a special way because of their mission (g) which is principally Christian Instruction. They will be under the authority of the Archbishops and Bishops in whose dioceses they live.

4. Honouring and imitating Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself in love to do His Father's will in all things, the Brothers and Sisters will try to do everything for the pure love of God. As the virtue of charity is the bond of all perfection (h), the most desirable of all the virtues, it will also be the bond between the Brothers and between the Sisters of the Charitable Schools. It will be at the heart of their obedience, their disinterestedness, their patience, their modesty, their constancy and their final perseverance in this mission and of all that would lead to the perfection of their state.

5. They will live in community without making vows (i) or being cloistered, under the direction of the Brother or Sister Superior whom they will obey out of pure and holy love. They will resolve to remain united in spirit, heart and mission with all the Sisters and Brothers of these Charitable Schools. No one will be accepted without these holy dispositions (j).

6. Considering the great importance of their mission and the necessity to acquire competence in it, the Brothers and Sisters will often devote time to forming themselves well in all the truths of the catechism and the practice of the virtues, especially gentleness, modesty, humility and total obedience. They will also apply themselves with great care to both reading and writing, so as to be able to instruct competently the children who come to the schools and to teach them all that is necessary for their salvation and Christian perfection.

7. The Houses of the Charitable Schools will be under the protection of the Infant Jesus and of the Blessed Virgin, His most worthy Mother. Their principal feasts (k) will be the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Pentecost, the day of the Descent of the Holy Spirit and the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, whom they will venerate in a special way.

8. On those feast days, they will offer themselves to the most Blessed Trinity and by a renewal of mind and heart, will reaffirm their desire to serve God sincerely, to become worthy of belonging to him and to follow in His footsteps in whatever way He would wish, as mediated (l) by their Superiors.

9. They will have a great devotion to St. Joseph, taking him as their model and his way of life as their rule of life. Firstly, in his mission, which made him responsible for the upbringing of the Incarnate Word; consequently, they will see Him in all the children they instruct.

Secondly, they will remember that just as St. Joseph learned from the example given him by Jesus Christ, so the simplicity and innocence of the children should be a lesson to the Brothers and Sisters in the practice of these same virtues. They will also draw particular inspiration from St. Joseph's life of silence and prayer.

10. The Brothers and Sisters who, because of their mission, are sent to different parts of Christendom (m) to instruct people of their own sex, will have special devotion to St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles and Doctors of the Church and to the Holy Angels (n). In undertaking the Christian education of children, they will be aware of the continual care and protection of their own Guardian Angel and that of each one of the children. Therefore the feasts of the great St. Michael, protector of the Church, and of the Holy Guardian Angels are especially recommended to them.

11. They will also have devotion to St. Francis of Assisi on account of his wonderful poverty and total detachment; to St. Francis of Paola for his amazing and incredible charity and humility; to St. Francis Xavier because of his supernatural and apostolic zeal; to St. Francis de Sales who gave himself completely to the salvation and sanctification of others with the utmost compassion that arises from pure love.

12. To be true to these devotions (o) and to benefit from all the graces that come from them, they will recite the following prayers:

they will begin the day with the prayer: Come, Holy Spirit..., the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed recited aloud, without any additions, by the person appointed. This will be the beginning of their morning meditation;

they will recite the litany of the Holy Infant Jesus every Thursday morning, the litany of the Blessed Virgin on Saturdays and the litany of the Saints as far as the psalm (p): "O God come to my aid" on Sundays only. Thus they unite themselves with the entire Church Triumphant and Church Militant (q).

13. They will also extend their charity to the souls in Purgatory by offering the whole day to God on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for the relief of these suffering souls and every day they will say the psalm: 'Out of the depths...' (r), the Prayer for the Dead, and one Our Father and Hail Mary. They will enter Purgatory in spirit, putting themselves in the place of these poor, yet holy, souls.

14. The spirit of the Institute consists mainly in working effectively and uninterruptedly for their own sanctification and the full development of their inner life (s) through acquiring all the virtues, in the hope of being drawn by God and led by the grace of the Holy Spirit to the instruction of their neighbour, by enlightening their understanding, strengthening their wills and changing their way of life (t).

15. Their principal activity will be to keep schools for poor and needy children and to receive adults whom God will draw to them, since the Christian Instruction which they give implies that there be no favouritism or distinctions. However, there will be one reservation: the Brothers will never be permitted to admit girls to their schools no matter what their age, nor will the Sisters be permitted to admit boys, however young they may be (u). Furthermore, the Brothers and Sisters may not go to private houses (v) to teach reading and writing or to work under any other pretext.

16. Intrinsic marks of the Institute are:

- i) Great union among the Brothers as well as among the Sisters, free from aversions or particular friendships, without being attached to their point of view or their own will;
- ii) Inner submission to the will of their Director and Brother or Sister Superior, since according to the apostle Paul (w), this is what God desires;
- iii) They will be modest, sincere and just in all their actions, thus attracting and inspiring all the worldly people who may see them, to live in a Christian way. Finally, with great concern, gentleness and prudence they will seek to ensure the salvation of the pupils commended to their care by Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom each child belongs.

17. The Brothers and Sisters will always be ready to instruct people, wherever the Superiors may consider it good to send them. Thus they will be imitating the example of Our Lord, who left heaven to come on earth, the abode of sinners and the dying (x). He catechised in the towns and villages as well as in the cities, and His mission was directed especially to the simple and the poor.

Notes

- a) The context in which the word 'instruct' is used explains the meaning it has throughout our documents. It refers to the formation of believers in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ and education in the faith.
- b) Jn 3: 16.
- c) In general, children had been ignored in French society until the beginning of the 17th century. Parents did not show much interest in the children either. The situation was beginning to change during Fr. Barre's time but rural areas still remained largely unaffected. All boys and girls who were at home with their parents, no matter what their age, were still called 'children'.
- d) Mt 18: 6.
- e) Mt 18: 3.
- f) Mt 25: 4.
- g) 'Mission' here refers to the global mission of the Institute.
- h) Col 3: 14.
- i) Women who took vows in the 17th century were automatically cloistered. Fr. Barre wanted his group of women to be totally available for apostolic service.
- j) cf. FS.
- k) The principal feasts to be celebrated were centred on:
 - . the mystery of the Incarnation,
 - . the action of the Holy Spirit in the mission of the Church,
 - . the total gift which Mary made of herself.These were also to be occasions of renewal and conversion. cf. SR 1: 8.
- l) Denotes the pastoral service of authority as well as the sign value manifested by the superior.
- m) Christendom refers to all countries to which Christianity had spread.
- n) As a reaction to Protestantism, the Council of Trent promoted devotion to the Saints. Fr. Barre adds an apostolic dimension to this devotion, encouraging us to apply the spirit with which the saints lived to our own lives.
- o) To live out in daily life what they have contemplated in prayer.
- p) Ps 70.
- q) Emphasis on the whole Church:
 - Church Triumphant - the Saints in heaven,
 - Church Militant - the faithful on earth.
- r) Ps 129.
- s) 2Cor 5: 5.
- t) This refers to the lives of the Sisters and Brothers as well as to their neighbour.
- u) it was forbidden by the Church for boys and girls to attend the same school.
- v) i.e. as governesses or private tutors, who would often have been employed by rich families.
- w) Eph 6: 5....; Col 3: 23...
- x) the world which is dying through failure to live out God's plan.

Chapter 2: Their Spiritual Exercises

1. For all that concerns their spiritual life, the Brothers and Sisters will refer only to the Spiritual Director, Confessor or Superior. However, if the Director or Superior allows them to consult someone else, they may do so provided the Superior is given the name of the Director or Confessor whom they wish to consult (a).
2. They should not undertake any mortification or bodily penance, under any circumstance, without the express permission of the Director General (b), even when they say they have their Confessor's permission. Due to the nature of their work, the Confessor is asked not to give or permit any such penances, except with the agreement of the Director General.
3. Normally, neither the Brothers nor the Sisters will be permitted to go to Confession on a school day (c) as experience has shown it to be an unsuitable time. It should be sufficient that they are free to go on feastdays, Sundays and holydays.
4. If the Confessor and the Superior are not of the same mind with regard to such things as times for bed and meals, visits to Churches, permission for extra prayer, mortification, silence etc., it is the Superior's opinion that takes precedence over the Confessor's. The Confessor's prerogative should not be used to interfere with the order of the house and its regulations. Any such changes must await the approval of the Director General for the whole congregation.
5. Normally, they will receive Holy Communion on Sundays, on all feast days observed in the diocese and every Thursday of the year. However if a holy day of obligation occurs on a Wednesday or a Friday, they will not go to Communion on the Thursday. This rule will also hold if there are two or more feast days in the same week. They are recommended to prepare well and to approach this adorable mystery with the right dispositions, especially with a sense of awe (d). However, having consulted the Confessor or Director, the Superior may decide with individual Sisters and select other days when the sacrament may be received (e).
6. Thanksgiving after Communion will last about half an hour. They will endeavour to make good use of this time which is the most precious in the whole day. As far as possible, they will remain in an attitude of profound and respectful silence, allowing themselves to be penetrated by the mercy and love of the Infinite Majesty who desires to dwell in them, despite their lowness and unworthiness. Throughout the day, they will recall the great gift and wonderful honour they have received, by their deep spirit of recollection made manifest by the unceasing gratitude they have in their hearts for God's overwhelming generosity (f).
7. God's love is the fulness and crown of Christian perfection, the source of all blessings for the congregation and the indissoluble bond uniting the members. Therefore, when they receive Holy Communion on Thursdays, while not forgetting the intentions of the Brothers and Sisters, they will pray that this love of God may be with them always and continue to grow in them.
8. On the eve of Sundays or feast days, the Superiors of both the Sisters and Brothers, will arrange for as many of the members as possible to attend the Solemn Mass in the parish (g), while those responsible for the instruction of the adults will rarely be asked to do so. As many as possible of the Sisters and Brothers who attend will receive Communion on these occasions in the parishes.

9. On days when public processions are organised by the Church in the areas where they work, they will recite the litany of the Saints in their Oratory and as far as possible take part in these processions in silence and with modesty (h) and devotion.

10. The Brothers and Sisters will always keep their Oratory or Chapel clean and suitably decorated. On solemn feasts they will avoid too much show as a great deal of time can be wasted in this, resulting in distraction and dryness of spirit. It only leads to curiosity and vanity rather than to the prayerful contemplation of the mystery or virtues of the Saint whose feast is being celebrated. They should avoid all external show because of their spirit of poverty and simplicity (i). They will not sing the Divine Office in the Chapel nor will High Mass be celebrated there (j).

11. On Sundays and feast days, they will hold catechism classes for adults from one o'clock sharp until two o'clock, which is the time for Vespers in the parish Church. Their respective Superiors will make sure that some Brothers and Sisters are present for Vespers. However, in the country parishes the time will be arranged with the parish priests.

12. There will be a spiritual conference every month, given either by the Director or somebody else selected by the ecclesiastical Directors of the House and every week there will be a catechetical conference. If for some reason these meetings cannot be arranged, the Sisters will still come together monthly and weekly for an alternative meeting among themselves to replace these conferences.

13. The same prayers will be used in all the schools, without any additions or omissions from what has been prescribed. The procedure will be explained later (k). In each school, there will be a card backed with a piece of wood from which these prayers will be read.

14. From the first day of Advent until Christmas Day and from Passion Sunday until Easter Sunday, one Sister in turn, representing the others, will be on retreat each day, in order to prepare with the Church for the Birth and Resurrection of Our Saviour and Master, and similarly between Ascension and Pentecost so as to draw down an abundance of graces from the Holy Spirit on the Church, themselves and the children.

During the three Carnival days and the three Ember days, they will pray with the Church for those about to be ordained, so that they may receive Holy Orders with the right dispositions. In this way greater glory will be given to God, and the Church will be better able to help the people.

The observance of this article will depend on the number of the Sisters and the demands of their mission.

15. The Superior will see to it that the Sisters involved in the instruction of adults will have two days' retreat each month, whether consecutively or on separate days.

16. On the anniversary of her Association (l), each Sister will be given permission for extra devotional exercises, in order to renew the spirit with which on that day she dedicated her life to works which concern the glory of God, love of her neighbour and her own sanctification.

17. There will always be one of the Sisters on retreat. Everyone will have a full day's retreat each month to implore God's blessing on them, on their work, on all the Sisters, on those involved in Christian instruction, on their benefactors and on all the children. In this way, prayer which is the mainstay of the Institute will be continuous, provided the number of Sisters makes this possible (m).

18. The Sisters will make a ten-day retreat every year. During this time there will be no school or Instruction classes so that the Sisters may be free to devote their time seriously to their own spiritual progress and reflect on their Christian duties, especially their fidelity to such a noble work, to which God in His great mercy has called them, however unworthy they may be. They will receive Communion every second day during the ten days of the retreat. However, the Director or Confessor may decide otherwise at their own discretion. Sisters will make this retreat annually from the time they enter the Institute.

19. On the first Thursday of each month, the whole community will assemble for half an hour's reading of the Statutes and Rules. This will be continued on the following days until the reading is completed. In this way they will understand them and be able to live them better. They will also grow to love them more and hence be more willing to give themselves to God alone. The conference of that week will be based entirely on the Statutes and Rules.

20. If one of the Sisters notices any way in which these Statutes and Rules are not being observed, she must make it known to the Superior privately. Some days later the Superior will have the fault corrected either publicly or in private according as she judges fit, and depending on whether it was an offence which took place in public or in private.

21. Having completed the reading of the Statutes and Rules in the chapel, the Sisters will kneel down and recite the "I confess" with great recollection asking God to forgive their past faults and to give them the grace to be faithful to these rules in the future.

(All of this will also hold for the Brothers).

Notes

- a) This control may appear excessive to us if it is not placed in context. This way of doing things was also used in the parishes where people had to have the permission of the parish priest to refer to another neighbouring priest. The reason for this was to limit the influence of Jansenistic priests. It is possible also that Fr. Barre wanted the Sisters to refer only, for their spiritual guidance, to people who understood the spirit of the Institute.
- b) cf. SR 14 for the Directors.
- c) The exaggerated fear of sin, promoted by Jansenism led to an abuse of the sacrament of reconciliation by people who were worried about their personal salvation. We notice the priority given to mission in this article.
- d) At that time, receiving Communion twice a week was considered frequent. A sense of unworthiness or fear of committing a sacrilege distanced Christians from it. Fr. Barre, while being influenced by the thinking of the time, was among those who encouraged frequent Communion.
- e) cf. SA 1, note (a).
- f) Eph 1: 3 - 14; 2: 1 - 10.
- g) Solemn Masses were celebrated with great solemnity with the use of incense, singing and solemn blessing. In a High Mass, hymns were sung in Latin or in French and a deacon and sub-deacon were present. In a Low Mass there was no added ceremony.
- h) The word "modesty" occurs several times in these documents and has one or other of the following meanings: simplicity, humility, reserve, sense of decency, avoidance of excesses and of outward show.
- i) cf. FM 11.
- j) This was a custom in monasteries and convents and attracted a large number of the faithful. Fr. Barre is pointing out that he does not wish the Institute to be linked with existing religious orders.
- k) The main aim of the "little schools" is to give children an experience of the Christian life that will make a lasting impression on them and remain with them throughout their lives. Therefore it is important that they learn the prayers by heart and know enough Latin to join in the singing of Vespers in the parish on Sundays. The prayer at school is integrated into their reading and writing lessons. cf. SR 4: 4.
- l) Association: commitment in the Institute.
- m) This article, which emphasises what is already set out in No. 14, did not appear in the 1677 edition.

Chapter 3: The Sisters' Day

1. On awakening, the Sisters will turn their first thoughts to God. They will thank Him for the grace of a new day in which to work in a spirit of repentance for His glory, their neighbour's salvation and their own sanctification. Above all, they will ask Him for the special grace to do His holy will in all things and to live their vocation to the full.
2. On schooldays, they will rise at 5 a.m. They will be given half an hour to dress modestly, tidy their rooms, make their beds and attend to any other details. They will do all this in silence, in a spirit of deep reverence for the presence of God. Thus they will develop a firm habit of recollection and therefore be deserving of this gift (a) as a special grace from God.
3. On other days, they will rise only at 6 a.m. and thus carry out their other exercises an hour later.
4. On schooldays, they will assemble in the chapel for meditation at 5.30 a.m. for half an hour. The subject matter for the meditation will be read in two parts with a fifteen-minute interval between. This will help hold the attention and stimulate fervour, especially in the case of beginners. The reader will read slowly, pausing in the right places to bring out the meaning and so help the Sisters understand clearly what is read and draw greater benefit from it. The previous evening, the Superior will check the reading with the Sister appointed to read the following day. Having prepared it, the reading will come across more clearly and the meditation will be more fruitful.
5. When the hourglass shows that the half hour is up, the Sisters will stay where they are and recite (b) Prime, Terce and Sext (c) of the Office of the Blessed Virgin devoutly, distinctly and with great recollection. The short pause in the middle of each verse, will also apply to other parts of the Office as well as to vocal prayers.
6. They will participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which follows, with great attention and reverence. When they have permission, they will receive Holy Communion at this Mass, always spending half an hour in thanksgiving.
7. They will have breakfast in silence at 7.30 and a quarter of an hour later, the Sisters will leave directly for the schools so as to be there exactly at 8 a.m. They will leave aside every other work, however important or commendable it may seem, so as to be punctual and give the full time allocated to their work for others, which must always take precedence over what is personal. If anyone fails to observe this article faithfully, she will be encouraged to amend her ways. If she persists in her negligence, she will be sent away without any hope of being taken back, since she will have rendered herself unworthy of such a sublime work and thus becoming a source of shame and scandal for the community.
8. Shortly before dinner, the Sisters will go to chapel, where during the space of a 'Miserere' (d) they will make the particular examen (e) and renew their good resolutions. They will then recite None (f).
9. On ordinary days, dinner will be at 11 a.m. The Sisters will be punctual for the grace before meals. They will keep strict silence for at least half an hour in the refectory. During dinner there will be a reading from the Manual of Christian doctrine or some other spiritual book, which will be read slowly and distinctly. Each Sister will read in turn in the refectory in the course of the week.
10. On fast days, dinner will be at 11.30 and on Sundays and big feasts it will be after the Solemn Mass. There will just be two sittings, one after the other and each lasting half an hour, not including the grace before and after meals and the time needed to serve food. A bell will announce each sitting.

11. Immediately after dinner, the Sisters will go to chapel for the Angelus. This will be followed by recreation where the Sisters, leaving aside all mental and physical work, are expected to be cheerful, pleasant and courteous to one another. They will take care to avoid excessive noise, loud laughter, over-excitement or any kind of impolite behaviour. If they wish to sing, they will only sing spiritual songs, which will be permitted at the discretion of the Superior, depending on the circumstances.
12. The Sisters are not permitted to be absent from recreation for any reason, as the observance of the rule of the House, in so far as this is possible is essential for their spiritual progress as well as for the good of their health.
13. The Sisters assigned to teaching in the schools outside the house should leave shortly after 1 p.m. so as to arrive on time to start class punctually at 1.30. If the schools are too far from the House, the Sisters will dine there.
14. These Sisters will return at 4.15 and will not stop on the way no matter what needs or acts of charity arise. They will arrange their time in such a way as to be at home at 4.30, when they will go to the refectory for a snack together.
15. At 4.45 p.m., the Sisters will take time for study in order to deepen their knowledge of Christian Doctrine and to improve their writing and spelling. They will make sure not to add or omit anything from the children's prayers, as already outlined, faithfully observing the statutes in every detail.
16. Vespers and Compline (g) will be recited in chapel at 5.45 p.m. A short spiritual reading will follow and the rest of the time until 6.30 p.m. will be given to meditation or mental prayer.
17. At 6.30 p.m., they will have supper in the refectory in silence, with reading as at dinner. Afterwards they will have recreation in the manner described above.
18. Matins and Lauds (h) of the Office of the Blessed Virgin will begin at 8 p.m. They will be recited devoutly in common. Afterwards, the Sisters will make their examination of conscience followed by a short reading of the meditation.
19. It is essential that the Sisters go to bed at 9.15 p.m. If they fail to do so, they will be deprived of Holy Communion for a week. Should it happen more than once that everyone is not in bed on time, the deprivation already mentioned will be extended on the advice of the Spiritual Director or the Superior.
20. The Superior, or another Sister appointed by her, will go to the sleeping areas to see that the preceding article is properly observed and will reprimand anyone found to be at fault. The Superior will also appoint one of the Sisters to ring a bell at rising time in the morning, but she will not get up earlier than half an hour before the others. This chapter as well as the others following should be adapted to suit the Brothers who teach in the schools.

Notes

- a) The word 'always' is added in the 1677 edition.
- b) We note that the Office must not be sung but simply recited cf. SR 2: 10. The community should not take the conventual or monastic model for prayer. The Office of the Blessed Virgin was the prayer recommended to Christian lay people.
- c) These represent three sections of the Office designated to be said before midday.
- d) The 'Miserere' is Psalm 50, beginning with the words: 'Have mercy.'
- e) The particular examen is a review of one's day, reflecting on where God has been present or how we may have impeded His action.
- f) This section of the Office was designated to be said in the early afternoon.
- g) Evening and night prayer.
- h) Prayer normally said during the night and early morning.

Chapter 4: Special Rules for the Schools

1. The school should open at 8 a.m. sharp. The pupil whose turn it is to be in charge for the week begins with the prayer: "Blessed be the Holy Trinity.."
"Praised and adored be Jesus", and then she continues: "Let us place ourselves in God's holy presence and adore His divine Majesty. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." She will then say the "Hail Mary", followed by "Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with your grace and enkindle within us the fire of your divine Love. O my good Jesus, O Mary, most Holy Virgin and most worthy Mother of Jesus, Holy and Immaculate in your conception, we ask you most earnestly to intercede for us all. O God, we offer You all our thoughts, words and actions. Purify, bless and accept them we beg you, in the name and through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, for your glory, our salvation and that of our neighbour." One of the pupils says: "Bless us Lord..." and the pupil in charge for the week responds: "We and all Christian people.." and making the Sign of the Cross says: "In the name of the Father..." (a)
2. The Sister will begin the reading lesson immediately by making the Sign of the Cross and saying: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". The pupils answer "Amen".
3. After the reading lesson, the pupil in charge for the day will say the grace before meals and the children will eat in silence. The lesson on the Hours will follow (b).
4. The Sisters will make sure that the Latin is read syllable by syllable, word by word, verse by verse. Above all, they will ensure that the children recite their prescribed prayers correctly (c), not omitting any words and pronouncing them as they are written. To avoid common mistakes, the Sisters will have a spelling book at hand as a reference to check inaccuracies.
5. At 10 a.m. the reading will conclude with the words: "You also, Lord have mercy on us", to which the children reply "Thanks be to God". There will be a short silent pause then to help them get ready for prayer.
6. The pupil in charge for the week will then say "Blessed be the holy.." as above and kneeling down will say "Let us place ourselves in God's holy presence, adore His divine Majesty..." and conclude with "In the name of the Father..."
She will then recite the following acts.
7. Firstly, an act of adoration and love saying: "My God, I adore you and love you with all my heart".
8. Secondly, an act of thanksgiving: "I thank you, my God, for having created and redeemed me, made me a Christian and preserved me until this moment".
9. Thirdly, an offering: "My God, I offer you all my thoughts, words, actions and work. Give me the grace to carry out your holy will and to die rather than offend you".
10. They will then say the "Our Father", "Hail Mary", "I believe", "I confess" and the following act of contrition: "My God, I humbly ask your forgiveness and I am sincerely sorry for having offended you, because you are infinitely good and because sin displeases you. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to amend my life and to confess my sins as soon as possible." With deep sorrow they will say "Through my fault...may the Lord have mercy on us...forgive us our sins". They will continue with the commandments of God and of the Church, the prayer for the dead and the prayer to the Holy Spirit, followed by the blessing as at the beginning of the school day.

11. They will go to Mass at 10 a.m. The Sisters will line up the children in silence two by two and will see that they walk quietly without attracting attention, especially as they enter and leave the Church or Chapel where Mass is celebrated.

12. A prefect (d) will see that the children are ready for the class beginning at 1.30. As in the morning, the prayers will be said followed by the reading etc so as to finish at 3 p.m. Following a short silent pause, they will be asked to say three lessons from the little catechism, one after the other according as they are ready, beginning with the pupil in charge for the week. The rest of the time will rotate between questions and the recital of prayers. The afternoon prayers will be said in French (e).

13. The time will be organised in such a way that everything will be over at 4 p.m. at the latest. They will remember to recite during the morning time "Come Holy Spirit" on Mondays, "Out of the Depths" on Fridays and "Hail Star of the Sea" on Saturdays.

Notes

- a) On reading this Chapter, we may wonder why so much time is given to prayer in the school. The main aim of the "little schools" was the strengthening of the faith, after which came the intellectual formation cf. Introduction to SR.
- b) The lesson on the Hours was the reading of the psalms in Latin so that they would be able to participate in the Office in Church, especially Vespers which was said in the parishes.
- c) These were prayers recommended for all Christians by the Council of Trent.
- d) The French term used here means the pupil who was responsible for ten others.
- e) Prayers were normally said in Latin, the official language of the Church. The use of French in the afternoon may have been an effort to introduce the vernacular.

Chapter 5: Rules of Conduct for the Sisters

1. As has already been said, silence is to be observed from the end of the night recreation until after breakfast on the following morning as well as during all meals.

2. The Sisters who are not involved in mission outside the House will observe the rule of silence between two and three o'clock. At all other times they will speak only with great reserve.

3. The Sisters, including the Superior, will not be allowed to give away anything belonging to the community, whether it pertains to food, maintenance or anything else, since all is the patrimony of the poor (a). It is only the Directors of the House who have the right to dispose of anything. The Sisters will observe this article faithfully, which is considered so important that they must make known to the Spiritual Director, one of the house Directors or the Superior, the names of those who disobey it, otherwise they too will share in the guilt of their companions.

4. The Sisters, including the Superior, are not allowed to get the schoolchildren to work for them or for any other purpose whatsoever. Instead, the Sisters should devote themselves to their schoolwork, their instruction and the community exercises, ensuring that they have sufficient time for recreation, meals and sleep. They are not free to use their time as they wish. Their work is so important that it has the first claim on their time and any other occupation, however worthwhile it may seem, is secondary by comparison. In essence, they must be faithful in the observance of all the Statutes and Rules and to the timetable outlined by them.

5. The Sisters may leave the House only with the Superior's permission and should inform her where they are going. As far as possible, they will not go out alone. The Sister who buys supplies for the House need not be accompanied. When they return home they will report to the Superior, or whoever is replacing her, to let her know they are back and tell her

about where they have been. They will not be allowed to have any meal outside the House without an express permission, except in unforeseen circumstances and in cases of absolute necessity, in which case they will let the Superior know when they return.

6. They will go out only for necessary business and as seldom as possible, avoiding purely social visits, especially weddings, baptisms, parties and other gatherings (b).

7. In the streets, they will not speak to men or anyone else except in case of necessity and then briefly.

8. They will be careful to avoid particular friendships, any form of scheming or intimacies, even among themselves, as this results in exclusiveness and divisions in communities. They are also contrary to the spirit of charity to which they are committed and which should extend to everyone without any discrimination. They will be even more careful in their relations with people outside. Otherwise the deep and total union of their whole heart with God would be compromised.

9. The Sisters will travel only if there is a real necessity. Before setting out on a journey, they will make sure they know the reputation of the public transport company. If they choose this way of travel, they will exercise great modesty and reserve on the journey and in the inns. They will travel only if the Spiritual Director of the House or the Superior expressly asks them to do so (c).

10. When they enter the chapel or any other place where the community assembles, the Sisters will take their places in rank according to the date of their reception into the Institute, except the Superior and the two Assistants, who will always have the first places.

11. They will ensure that their rooms are kept clean and tidy, each one being responsible for her own. This article on general order is important and anyone who fails to comply with it should repent and expect to be reprimanded and given a penance.

12. The Sister in charge of calling the house in the morning and seeing to the regular observance, or who has the responsibility of reporting the faults she has noticed, will be required under obedience to carry out her duty faithfully. If she is seen to fail through cowardice, fear or human respect, she will be severely punished by the Superior.

13. Neither the portress nor any other Sister will ever call loudly to inform one of her companions that she is wanted, but will go directly to the Superior to let her know. The portress, according to the instructions given by the Superior, will inform the Sister in question.

14. A register will be kept of the names of the Sisters noting the date of their reception into the Institute. This will be the order used in arranging the daily and weekly exercises.

15. Each Sister, beginning with the Superior, will take her turn in leading the prayers, beginning on Saturday with Vespers. She will ask for God's blessing in the refectory and read the meditation in a very distinct and steady voice, preparing it beforehand with the Superior or one of the Assistants.

16. None of the Sisters will be allowed to own anything of great or little value or to dispose of anything whatsoever without the knowledge and consent of another. Hence permission is necessary from one of the people in authority. The vice of ownership, independence and self-interest is completely opposed to the grace of their evangelical vocation. In the same

way the Superior refers either to the Spiritual Director or the Administrators.

17. The Sisters will carefully avoid the bad habit of using the over-familiar second person singular (d) or using surnames when speaking to each other. This is contrary not only to Christian behaviour, but also to common politeness. It is very disedifying, distracts one's attention from God and is a hindrance to recollection.

Notes

- a) The Sisters' maintenance depended on gifts given to enable instruction and education to be given to the poor. These gifts were administered by lay administrators. The community was not the owner of anything.
- b) Family, social or religious celebrations were quite numerous. To attend them would mean frequent outings which could hinder the Sisters' mission. Also, as well as the religious aspects of these celebrations, there was often a rather worldly side to them: fancy dress, masks, masquerades etc. The Church in the 17th century often warned against frequent excesses, hence the emphasis on prudence in this article.
- c) Journeys at this time were usually very long. Public transport, drawn by horses or oxen, was quite dangerous, in the carriages as well as in the inns where they would have had to stop. The danger was from attacks by robbers or unsuitable sleeping accommodation...
- d) The use of the second person singular in the French language was considered very impolite, even a way of despising the other. The same was true of the use of surnames. Any disrespectful behaviour towards others was seen as cutting oneself off from God.

Chapter 6: Faults to correct and avoid

1. Those who often miss meditation and Office or who come late for these exercises through laziness or indifference will be given a penance at the discretion of the Superior. If they persist, the penance will be increased as the Director or Superior judges best.

2. The same penalty will apply to those who are careless about their person when coming to chapel or taking part in other exercises.

3. If two or three warnings go unheeded or are ignored, the Superior will report the disobedience so that the Directors of the House may find an effective remedy.

4. Stubborn disobedience and moody silence with regard to the Superior and Sisters will be considered as serious faults. Those who are guilty will do penance by sitting on the refectory floor for their meals for one day and will be deprived of Communion for a week (a). If it happens a third time and lasts for a fairly long period, the Sister in question will be sent away, unless the Directors of the House decide otherwise.

5. The Superior will discourage frequent visits to the house or outside, even in the case of the Sisters' families, as this could be harmful to their spiritual progress and to their vocation.

6. They will never discuss the failures of the other Sisters, nor will they talk about their families' social standing, whether high or low, so as to avoid making any distinctions in the House. They will never mock or reproach one another, but like sisters, they will show love and respect for one another. During their examen, morning and evening, they will reflect on the quality of union among them.

7. The Sisters will beware of a purely human and natural kind of friendship, common among people in the world who reserve their esteem and affection only for those who are compatible with them and with whom they share common opinions and interests. No real union exists between such people; it only creates disunity and discord. This kind of spirit creates division and dissension in the community.

8. The Sisters would be very much to blame if, like people in the world, they were to give way to conflict, coldness, spite, natural impulses and resentment. Behaving in this way, they would be neglecting the divine teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, who exhorts them to give up everything, surrender themselves (b) and bless those who curse them (c) etc. These same Sisters are the very people who profess to teach others charity, mortification, patience, penance, pure love and Christian perfection. Therefore, with God's help and their own fidelity, we hope that they will not let themselves fall into these or similar transgressions, under pain of very severe punishment.

Notes

a) Frequent Communion was not usual and besides it was difficult to consider oneself worthy. To be deprived of Communion, in a spirit of penance, was often asked by Confessors.

b) Mt 16: 24.

c) Lk 6: 27.

Chapter 7: The Care of Sick Sisters, Funerals and Prayers for the Dead.

1. The infirmarian will treat the sick with great gentleness and will comply with the wishes of the Superior in their regard. She will put away whatever is left in the infirmary and see that everything is well looked after and kept clean.

2. Those in charge of the sick will keep in mind the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who told us that whatever we do for the least of His members is done to Himself. Thus they will reflect on what they would like to do for the Sacred Person of Jesus Christ Himself, their adorable Master and Spouse, and how they would like to be treated themselves if they were sick.

3. The Sisters who are sick will not only receive help for their material needs but more particularly for their spiritual needs. Care will be taken to provide them with an opportunity for Confession at least once a week and for Communion once a fortnight. The whole Community will be present, praying earnestly with them. This will not be difficult where Mass is celebrated daily; nevertheless they will get permission from the parish priest or one of the vicar generals (a).

4. If a Sister is in danger of death she will be given the opportunity of receiving Communion for the last time as well as the sacrament of the sick. The doctor will be asked to let them know so that the parish priest can come to administer the sacrament.

5. It is very important that they visit the Sisters who are ill, not only to encourage them to raise their minds to God and draw benefit from their illness, but also to bring them relief and consolation. However, they will only visit the sick with the Superior's permission.

6. When one of the Sisters dies, the Community will assemble immediately and chant the Office for the dead in choir in the same way as they recite the daily Office of the Blessed Virgin. Each one in turn will say special prayers for the deceased.

7. Like ordinary people, the Sisters will have a simple funeral at as little cost as possible. If the burial takes place in the morning, a sung Mass will be celebrated at which all the Sisters will receive Communion for the deceased.

8. On the same day, or on the following day, the Sisters will have three Masses said for the repose of the soul of the deceased, in addition to those which the clergy and religious friends of the House will celebrate.

9. For a period of forty days, the Community will include the following in their evening prayer: 'Out of the Depths' (Ps 129),

the collect for a deceased woman, the Our Father and Hail Mary.

10. For the following six weeks, Mass will be celebrated in the House Chapel once a week at which the Community will assist and receive Communion for the deceased Sister's soul. At the end of the year, Mass will be said for her in the same chapel and all will receive Communion for her.

11. When one of the Directors or benefactresses dies, in recognition of their charity in providing for the upkeep of the House, the Office for the Dead will be recited in the House Chapel. Two Masses, at which the Sisters will receive Communion will be offered on two different days of the two following weeks. At evening prayer, during the fortnight that follows, they will say the psalm 'Out of the Depths', with a collect, the Our Father and Hail Mary.

12. The community will also say the above prayers for three days for the souls of the Sisters' parents and will receive Communion once in the House Chapel for the same intention.

Notes

a) Priests in charge of assisting the bishop in the administration of his diocese.

Chapter 8: Responsibilities and Special Duties of the Sisters who give Free, Charitable and Christian Instruction

1. The Sisters will try to be mothers to all the schoolchildren, big and small, since they take their mothers' places. As such, they will love and instruct them with as much impartiality as possible without any favouritism. Because of their God-given motherly love, they will do their best to form them in Christian virtue and good behaviour. When asked to do so by the Directors, they will also teach them handwork, so that by earning their living they will be able to help their parents if they are poor or take work as servant girls (a).

2. In their mission, they will remember the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ: "Freely you have received, freely give" (b) and also the words: "Suffer little children to come to me" (c).

3. They will be most conscientious in instructing the children and explaining the catechism, the holy mysteries and all the other truths necessary to lead a Christian life. They will also teach them to pray with great recollection in God's presence, to assist devoutly at Mass, sermons and other liturgies (d) and to receive the sacraments profitably. Regarding these holy exercises, they will instill in the pupils a great respect and an awesome fear of God's judgement and above all, a great love and trust in God's goodness.

4. They will teach them to make the evening examen and to examine their conscience for Confession. They will see that they learn by heart the prayers that are said each morning and evening at school so that they may continue to say them for the rest of their lives. They will also instruct them on the proper approach to the sacraments and make sure that none of the older pupils leaves the House without having made a general Confession (e). They will advise them too on how to avoid occasions of sin and to keep up the good habits they acquire in the schools, so as to persevere in them until death.

5. They will teach them to observe modesty at all times: rising, retiring, at work, in the way they dress, in their deportment and in their way of speaking and acting. They will instill in them a horror for everything that would be contrary to purity, discouraging conversations with men and any superfluous accessories in dress.

6. They will train them to curb their passions, their inclinations and their self-will. In uprooting their bad habits they will gradually acquire good ones.

7. In their role as mothers, they will be content not only to instruct the little children but also to pray for them as well as for their neighbour.
8. Generally, each Sister will be responsible for not more than seventy or eighty children and there will be only one Sister with each class. Should there be more than one, experience has shown that this can lead to confusion and jealousy and the Sisters become a hindrance to each other.
9. The Sisters will be gentle with the children and as far as possible will avoid harsh and severe punishment (g). On the rare occasion when corporal punishment is necessary, no more than three or four strokes of the rod will be given. Such punishment will be given privately and with great reluctance. They will try to use other means of punishment more in keeping with Christian restraint and gentleness. The Superior will be very exact about the observance of this article.
10. They will be very conscientious about giving the full quota of time to the school. To curtail the time would be equivalent to squandering the goods of the House. If they are unfaithful in this area, they should do penance by accusing themselves on their knees at the refectory door and subsequently making reparation for their negligence, as the Superior sees fit.
11. As has already been said, the Sisters will never take time from their school duties or from the observance of their rule, under the pretext of helping their neighbour in works of charity. If the Superior were to grant such a permission, it should only be for an exceptional case; she should exercise prudence and not allow it to happen often. She will be accountable to one of the Directors for the permission she gives in this situation.
12. On free days the Sisters will make sure they devote some of their time to study. They will also take some fresh air and extra recreation as the Superior considers appropriate; always observing great modesty among themselves and being careful to give edification to others.
13. During their catechism classes with the adults, the Sisters will refrain from asking difficult or subtle questions. They will always hold their book in their hands. These classes will never be held in the Church (h).
14. In a friendly atmosphere which is as important as the instruction itself, the pupils who are preparing for first Communion will be given a talk together every day starting at least two weeks before Lent. Every second day, each one will also be given a short talk in private on the mystery of the Eucharist and how they can best prepare to receive it worthily.
15. After a few weeks' trial the Sisters will use their discretion and zeal in deciding to dismiss the children who are unmanageable, who give bad example and appear to be incorrigible, since the common good comes before that of the individual. However, because charity prompts them to be always open and fair-minded to everyone, it may be possible to re-admit these children after a few months if they show a definite willingness to improve.
16. The Sisters will firmly but graciously refuse to accept whatever is offered to them by the children or their parents as a reward or a gift. The same rule will hold whether for rich or poor, in the town and in the countryside. Moreover, this article expressly forbids them to ask for anything either directly or indirectly.
17. If the Sisters' families or others offer them gifts, they will accept them only on the advice of one or all the Directors of

the House, or the Superior if the Directors are absent, in which case she will inform them at the first opportunity.

18. They will take turns weekly to officiate at the Office, meditation and reading in the refectory as well as doing other duties however menial or humble, such as washing the dishes etc. However, only those who read well will be asked to read in the refectory or to read the meditation, which will be read slowly. Sisters who do not yet read well will be encouraged to improve so that they will be able when their turn comes round.

19. All the Sisters, including the Superior, will take their turns each week to work in the kitchen on feast days and Sundays, so as to give the cook a break and more free time for her spiritual exercises.

20. Every Saturday afternoon, they will sweep and clean the house together. The Superior will allot a charge to each one, so that the work may be carried out more quickly, modestly and with more order.

21. In the cities, towns and other places there will always be two Sisters together and in order to avoid all disedification they will be commended to some lady (i).

22. The two Sisters should rarely be moved at the same time, so that the children and the older girls may not be put off school as has happened quite often.

23. The Sisters will not give any long talks during catechism classes as this would not help the progress either of the children or adults whom they instruct. Such a method would neither help them grow in holiness nor lead to their development. Therefore, they will teach catechism by means of clear questioning, repeating the same questions in different ways and supporting the questions by short moral stories (j), in keeping with the subject matter.

24. They will always recap the preceding catechism lesson in order to refresh the children's memories and link the previous lesson with the present one. This recap will not last longer than the time needed to say Psalm 50 twice and will consist of short direct questions to be answered by two or three of the best pupils.

25. On Sundays, and if possible on feast days, public instruction (k) will be given in the schools for older girls and women. On weekdays, the Sister or Sisters appointed will teach reading and writing only to these older girls and women throughout the day, according as they come.

26. The Sisters will conclude their instruction on feast days and Sundays by a little morality play, adapted to the circumstances and rounded off by a short story, to illustrate the instruction.

27. When a new school is opened, the children will learn the little diocesan catechism by heart. Later on, the Sisters can introduce more advanced texts such as Bellarmine's and others (l).

Notes

a) Becoming a servant in the house of another was the normal way in which girls from poorer families earned their living.

b) Mt 10: 8. The fact that the schools were free is emphasised again in Nos 16 & 17 in this chapter. This fact was already made clear in the extended title given to SR.

c) Lk 18: 16.

d) Other liturgies e.g. Vespers in the parish Church.

e) General Confession was relatively common at the time. In offering general absolution for all the sins of one's past life, it helped to ease people's consciences in the Jansenistic age when anxiety and scruples were prevalent.

f) The need for prudence was emphasised because rape was very common at the time. Up to the age of seven, children's sexual and emotional

upbringing was very free, in a way which would be considered immoral today. Formation in prudence and modesty only came later and often in the form of prohibitions. Educators like Fr. Barre were very worried about this situation. cf. ML & RC 19.

g) Corporal punishment was widespread at the time and was often very severe.

h) The Sisters held catechism classes for adults in the public halls, cf. MI 4c, as it was only priests who could preach in the Church.

i) It was very unusual for one or two women to be living alone. Single women usually lived with their families, with servants or in convents. They could retire to convents or lodge there if they were widowed or without children. Women living alone would be regarded as living in sin.

j) Short stories with some moral teaching.

k) Public i.e. open to everyone.

l) During the second half of the 17th century, many bishops wanted to show their desire to promote the reform of the Church. Therefore they published their own catechism for their diocese, which was to be the only handbook used in that area. Bellarmine was an Italian theologian whose catechism was translated into French in 1651.

Chapter 9: Duties of the Superior

1. Every year during the first week of Advent, the Directors of the House will see to the election of the Superior, who, as far as possible, will change annually and will never remain in office for more than three years. In case of necessity, a Superior could be re-elected, but only after a break of at least one year. The Directors will take care always to appoint a Superior who is imbued with the spirit of the Institute.

2. In this way, when a Sister is no longer the Superior, she may well become superior in virtue and in truth. To be true to the spirit of the Institute, all the Sisters should strive to be pleasing to God, genuinely humble and true instruments (a) of the Holy Spirit so as to bring about the sanctification of others in accordance with the plan of God and of His Church.

3. The Directors of the House, whether spiritual or material, will conduct the election and appointment of the Superior.

4. The same will apply to all those with other positions of responsibility: the Assistants, Sacristan and Portress. They will also decide whether, as a general rule, it is necessary to follow the same procedure when changing the caterer, administrator and infirmarian.

5. The Superior's main duty is to observe the Rules and Constitutions herself and see that others observe them. It is only with great prudence that she can give a dispensation; in the case of a serious matter she will refer to the Directors.

6. The Superior will see that silence is faithfully observed, otherwise one cannot expect the Institute to be blessed or the Sisters to advance in perfection. Should this article be ignored frequently, the Directors should change the Superior as soon as possible lest the Institute become lax and fall into decline.

7. If however, the Sisters need to speak in times of silence, the Superior will allow it on condition that they speak in a low voice and in as few words as possible.

8. If there are other schools in the town apart from those held in the House, the Superior, accompanied by one of the Sisters, will visit them once a fortnight. If there are some schools in the suburbs, she must visit them at least once in three months and take the necessary time to see and examine how they are being run and if they are benefiting the people spiritually. She will visit the schools that are farther away once a year.

9. It is the Superior's duty to see that the Sisters are always suitably dressed, as has been explained in previous articles on dress. Normally the Sisters will wear black both in town and in the country. They will dress modestly and simply without trying to look like ladies of the world (b).

10. However, if a person of high social class desires to devote herself to this work, she will be accepted and may dress as befits her social rank for a period of six months only.

11. The Superior will oversee all that concerns the House in general, both inside and outside. She will seek to preserve peace, unity and respect among the Sisters and with the Directors. She will always refer to the Directors before any major decision or undertaking and will seek their advice.

12. She will take great care to see that everyone in the house advances in holiness as well as in the other virtues and good works. In her motherly care she will reach out particularly to the Sisters who are suffering considerably in body or in mind.

13. She will keep in mind that any Sister who has been appointed Superior is no longer being faithful to her vocation if she is not disposed towards whatever is lowly. A difficult and strict judgement awaits those who are in charge because they are responsible for seeing that all members of the community observe all the rules, whether in general or in detail.

14. She will abhor any scheming or worldly behaviour which springs from purely human reasoning and which tries to win people over by dishonest means, since this is to judge everything by appearances. Any Superior having this spirit must be dismissed immediately. Instead, the Superior will seek a Christian way of living, focussed on God and relying fully on Him, her only wish being that He be loved. She will try to base all her undertakings on the maxims of the gospel and in all things to be motivated solely by the pure love of God.

15. She will not tolerate any embracing, attachments or particular friendships among the Sisters. By word and example, she will lead them to true virtue. She will do whatever she can to help them become attached to God alone, whose creation they are and from whom they continually receive natural and supernatural life.

16. She will not make herself an exception by her devotions, her life style or her behaviour.

17. She should have a great affection for all the Sisters, loving them with a mother's love and without any discrimination and without being over attached to anyone. However, she will be careful, lest she mar the regular observance of the rule by being too compassionate.

18. The Superior should be the first to observe the Constitutions and not exempt herself except in cases where she could dispense others. If the exemption has to last for a considerable time, the Spiritual Director will decide whether or not to give the dispensation.

19. She should not absent herself from meditation because of business or other appointments. Otherwise instead of being motivated by love, her words and actions would be guided by her disordered nature. Hence she should make every effort to avoid appointments that would prevent her being present for meditation.

20. She will keep the key of the main door at night. She will follow up the day to day living of the Sisters: their progress or lack of progress in virtue and in the spirit of their vocation and the way in which they live out their mission. She will discuss all this with each of them individually once a month, or more often if necessary. She will encourage them to speak freely to her and will treat what they tell her as confidential, so that nothing of what has been confided to her during her term of office may be known to others even after she ceases to be Superior. If a Superior fails to keep these confidences, she will not be kept in office but will be dismissed immediately after the first act of indiscretion, as it shows she is

unsuitable for the position.

21. In a situation where one Sister complains about another, the Superior will delay judgement and give no decision until she has heard both parties, or some other trustworthy person. Although she should not refuse to listen to reports, nevertheless, she will try to lessen and get rid of this spirit and beware of those who are that way inclined (c).

22. Once every week, the Superior and the two Assistants will meet to discuss all that concerns the House, so that there may be no falling off in whatever may be related to the spiritual life, the running of the schools and the work outside the House. They will invite one of the Directors to attend, who will preside if present. The meeting will begin with "Come Holy Spirit.." and the Hail Mary.

Notes

- a) The word "instrument" indicates the vital link uniting the person and the Holy Spirit. It also refers to someone who makes known the thinking of another.
- b) Ladies of the world: young women from the nobility or from wealthy families.
- c) This article hints at the attitude with which one should carry out one's duty of reporting the failings of others. cf. SR 2: 20; 10: 1, 5; 11: 7.

Chapter 10: The Duties of the Assistants

1. They will keep all the Rules faithfully and will give good example, since they take the place of the Superior in all matters whenever she is absent. They will inform her of any failing in community observance.
2. They will be closely united with the Superior. They will show great respect for her wishes and carry them out faithfully. They will also encourage the Sisters to be faithful to them with love and respect.
3. When the Superior is absent, the Assistants in turn will carry out all her duties. They will let her know what they believe she ought to do to secure the welfare and general good of the House, particularly on the spiritual level and where the good of the schools is concerned.
4. As far as possible, one of the two Assistants will be in charge of the young Sisters. She will explain to them the exercises of the House and the work in the schools (a). During their first six days in the school, she will not allow them to work so that they can observe how the schools function, unless the Directors or the Superior decide otherwise.
5. The two Assistants' main duties will be to see to the Sisters' advance in virtue and in the knowledge required for their mission. They will inform the Superior of any failures, who will see that they are corrected, but with discretion and kindness.

Notes

- a) This Sister was responsible for the formation of candidates in personal prayer, community life and mission.

Chapter 11: Duties of the Sacristan

1. One of the Sisters will be appointed sacristan for a year. She will be in charge of all that concerns the Chapel, including whatever is involved in its decoration.
2. She will keep a list of the vestments, linen and other articles belonging to the sacristy and will account for them to the Superior, in the presence of the two Assistants, twice a year i.e. on the eve of the Feast of St. John the Baptist and

Christmas. On one of these occasions, one or all of the Directors should be present.

3. She will take care that the altar wine does not become bitter or get mixed with anything else. She will make sure there is always water in the sacristy and will renew the supply daily.

4. She will be careful to keep the Chapel and the Altar clean and tidy and to put out the liturgical colours according to the season or the feast, beginning with first Vespers.

5. For the Community Mass on Sundays and special feasts, she will light six candles. Four candles will be lit on ordinary feast days and two on ferial days. She will ring the Mass bell.

She will make sure there is holy water in the dormitories and the rooms, at the doors of the chapel and of the schools.

6. As well as lighting the candles in the chapel, she will also light those used in the bedrooms.

7. She will not spend time talking to the priest who comes for Mass or to the server. She will see that none of the other Sisters do so either. Should this rule not be observed, the sacristan must report the matter to the Superior, who should then speak to the Sister in question.

Chapter 12: Duties of the Portress

1. The Sister who is the portress will have charge of the front door and will make sure that it is always properly closed. She will take care that nobody is kept waiting at the door.

2. During the summer, she will lock the entrance door between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the latest. At other times she will lock it at nightfall and give the key to the Superior. If she has to open the door afterwards, she will bring another Sister to the door with her. If it is after dark, they will carry a light.

3. Before morning prayer and meditation, she will collect the key. She will be discreet, prudent and silent. She will be courteous and gentle to everyone both inside and outside. She will speak to people kindly, politely and positively but briefly.

4. She will not speak to anyone of what goes on in the House or of who comes or goes. When she speaks to the Superior she will do so in a low tone so that those nearby may not hear and so that the person asked for does not know she is wanted.

5. She will not accept or deliver any letter, note or anything else without letting the Superior know.

Chapter 13: Duties of the Caterer and Cook

1. The caterer will keep a list of all the furniture and utensils as well as all the linen and other articles connected with the stores or the kitchen. She will see that nothing is lost or wasted and will render an account to the Superior in the presence of the Assistants twice a year, at Christmas and at the time of the feast of St. John the Baptist. On one of these occasions, one or all of the Directors will be present.

2. From time to time, she will consult the Superior regarding the quality and quantity of meat and other food to be

prepared. On fast days, the portions will be greater (a).

3. She will not allow the Sisters to enter the kitchen except when necessary and with the approval of the Superior.
4. She will prepare equal portions according to the weight, size and quality of the food she will have been instructed to serve. She will distribute it equally without favouring anyone in particular.
5. The Sister who serves in the refectory will ring the little bell at meal times and light the candles.
6. The caterer will take away whatever is left over in the refectory and will keep everything carefully so that nothing is wasted.
7. No Sister or anyone in the House will buy or order any food or drink. When something is needed, it will be made known to the Superior who will ask the caterer to get it.
8. The caterer will always keep the refectory, the kitchen and pantry clean and also the drinking glasses. She will see that the refectory is swept once a day.
9. She will serve the drink (b) and put whatever quantities the Superior has decided on the table.
10. She will provide candles for the bedrooms, chapel, refectory, kitchen and elsewhere. She will give them to those entitled to have them and light them, keeping to the number and manner of distribution agreed with the Superior.
11. Unless the Superior has given the charge to another Sister, the caterer will look after the linen which is for common use. She will have it laundered and given out to all the Sisters without favouring anyone in particular.
12. The caterer, unless someone else has been given the responsibility, will collect the soiled linen and send it to be laundered. Every month she will hand out clean white sheets for all the beds.
13. The linen will be marked with the two letters: E.C. and a little cross will be added in the case of the sacristy linen. The letter "E" stands for "Ecoles" (= schools) and "C" for "Charitables" (=charitable). The cross stands for the Lord Jesus Christ, who was nailed to the Cross for the salvation of humankind as well as for each one individually.

Notes

- a) The portions are greater because there is only one meal on fast days.
- b) The drink was kept in casks.

[General Article \(GA\)](#)

In addition to all the Rules set down here, the Brothers and Sisters in humility and obedience and motivated by the holy love of God will also accept the following:

- i) the praiseworthy customs already practised by the Sisters, such as: acknowledging one's faults in the presence of the community twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays; not speaking on the streets of towns or villages, looking neither left nor right.

ii) the observance in the same spirit of any other rules which may be added in the course of time, by the Superiors or the Spiritual Director and Administrators together, whenever this may be necessary for the progress, approval and development of this salutary Institute.

Invocation

Let all that is contained here be written down, prescribed and faithfully practised by the grace of God: in the name and for the glory of the Eternal Father, His only Son -the Holy Infant Jesus and the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, of St. Michael and all the holy Angels, of St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, the holy Apostles and all the Saints of heaven. Amen.

Chapter 14: The Directors

1. The administration of the House will generally be entrusted to three Directors only and there will be no exception to this.
2. The Directors and the Lady Associate, if there is one, will be responsible for the material business of the House, so that the Superior and the other Sisters may not have to lessen their zeal or neglect their work (a).
3. They will provide the money that is needed and the Superior will account for the expenditure in the manner laid down by the Directors (b).
4. They will receive all alms which are given to the community as a result of the beneficial service it offers in a spirit of disinterestedness. If they happen to receive a large sum, they will invest it on behalf of the community, without being guarantors (c).
5. All three Directors of the House will have power and authority over all those involved in the work characteristic of the Institute together with its implementation. For example, it will be their duty to nominate and change the Spiritual Director, the Confessor, the Chaplain or Chaplains, the Lady Associates whether the latter choose to reside in the house or not, the Superior, those with other positions of responsibility and the Sisters who teach in the schools. All however should have the necessary qualities as outlined in several of the preceding articles (d).
6. They will send the above-mentioned Sisters to cities, towns, villages and elsewhere, even to other Communities and houses of the same Institute to participate in the mission there, either on a permanent basis or for whatever length of time they consider necessary.
7. To ensure the continuity of this Institute, they will select and co-opt during their lifetime other people who are well known for their spirit of faith and sense of responsibility, so that there will be someone ready to replace them in case of death or resignation. Thus there will always be three to carry on the administration of the House.
8. Should the three above mentioned Directors forget or neglect to make this provision, the two survivors, or even one as the case may be, should select and appoint the replacements necessary to bring the number up to three.
9. If it should happen that the three Directors die without having chosen successors, the Lady Associate, the Superior and the Sisters of the Community will choose the three Directors. It will have to be decided whether they will select only one who will appoint the other two, whether they will select two who will appoint the third or whether they will select all three.

10. If a difference of opinion should arise between the Directors of the House and the Lady Associate, she should regard it as normal to give in. Even if she shared the views of one of the Directors, the opinion of the other two would carry (e).

11. None of the Sisters who have become old or infirm and unable to serve in the Institute may be sent away, unless they deserve it by not giving the good example the House has the right to expect from them.

12. The acceptance of candidates for reception will be made by the Directors and the Superior, having listened to the opinions of the Sisters individually and as a group. The Sisters will be bound in conscience to tell all the Directors, or any one of them in particular or the Superior, in all honesty and without any reservation, what they think of a candidate in terms of health, moral character and suitability for the Institute.

13. The Directors are strongly encouraged to let it be known and to ensure that in admitting candidates, they are not looking for a dowry, money, boarding fee, trousseau, presents or treats but a genuine vocation and the natural and supernatural gifts that are required for the Institute. In a spirit of abandonment, the candidates will rely on Providence for maintenance and day to day needs, depending on the free and generous charity of people with means.

14. Since detachment is the basis of the Sisters' vocation and they form a true Community, the greatest care must be taken to avoid every form of private and personal ownership, either by giving or receiving anything whatsoever without the Directors' permission. Those who transgress will be punished accordingly and those prone to this deplorable vice of possessiveness will be sent away, remembering the terrible punishment inflicted on Ananias and Saphira by St. Peter (f).

15. The Directors chosen will be people who have been highly recommended from every point of view; committed to the integrity and righteousness of the apostolic, Catholic and Roman faith; openly opposed to taking sides in the Church or being swayed by the latest novelties (g); convinced of the value of evangelical detachment and disregard for possessions. Their charity and zeal should be such that they work effectively for the sanctification of others and the establishment of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in all hearts.

16. While it is the Superior of the House who has the ultimate authority, nevertheless the Directors will have the right to select for each house a very virtuous woman, who will not be easily swayed by the latest novelties or too quick to take sides in matters of religion and piety. She should have a spirit of total disinterestedness, be very charitable and willing to serve the House and each Sister in the Community, being ready to give of herself totally following the example of St. Frances of Rome. The Institute needs someone who is already striving for great holiness, profound humility, charity, meekness, exemplary prudence and discretion, detachment from all temporal goods and a spirit of complete self-sacrifice. The Lady Associate will act only with the consent of the Directors.

17. The Spiritual Director should have all the qualities required of the Superior, the Directors and the Lady Associate.

18. Outstanding charity, genuine virtue and the sincere pursuit of evangelical perfection on the part of the Directors, Lady Associate, Spiritual Director and Sisters will be the surest guarantee that this Institute will keep its supernatural character and not fall into decline. This is what happens so often when more trust is put on endowments and the security of temporal possessions than on the genuine charity and integrity of the members.

19. The Directors will take great care in choosing a Spiritual Director for the Sisters. His appointment will not be permanent. The prerequisites are demanding and not easy to find, as John of the Cross and Francis de Sales have pointed out. While waiting for this man of God to come from the heavens, they will be satisfied with the Confessor. In the

meantime, a priest or religious whom they know, and who has the expertise, will be invited to give a conference now and then.

20 The Sisters will not be sent to work outside until they have spent at least one full year without interruption, living in a spirit of obedience and observing the Rules of the House. If for some reason they have to be sent, they must return to the Community as soon as possible.

21. The Directors of all the Communities, or someone delegated by them, will arrange to meet with the Lady Associates and Superiors to discuss the general welfare of the Institute. The time and the procedure must be decided upon.

22. Once a year, the Directors will make it their business to choose three or four Sisters who will give them an account of any infringements of the Rules of Christian Perfection, which they have noticed personally or come to know of, either in the Community in general or in the case of an individual Sister, including the Superior. Should it happen that a Sister tries to hide these imperfections, either through human respect or because of a particular disordered relationship or for any other reason and if she repeats this sort of cover-up, serious thought must be given to her dismissal. She is in fact a hindrance to the general good and to the Sisters' progress in perfection, and this is the reason why inquiries and correction have to be undertaken. Such a Sister is like an instrument of the devil who seeks to create discord and unrest, eventually leading to the destruction of this House of God. However, great discretion must be observed in implementing this article so that whatever one says about another would not be an abuse of her freedom.

23. This investigation must be carried out and opinions given from a purely spiritual motive, in a spirit of charity and out of consideration for the good of each Sister and for the House as a whole. There should be no thought of revenge, antipathy or jealousy.

24. Following this questioning, if a Sister complains and grumbles openly, wishing to know and suspecting those who have given information about her behaviour, she will be deprived of Communion for a fortnight (h), because of her vindictiveness, pride and unwillingness to accept correction. She will take her meals seated on the floor for a week and should she repeat the offence, she will be relegated to the ranks of those to be dismissed.

25. To guard against the spirit of the world and the vanity which, only too often, takes possession of the most virtuous young women, no one will be allowed to ask for any garment, personal requisite or article of clothing which would make them look like ladies of the world. However, the Superior must be attentive to the Sisters' needs and challenge those who spend much time seeking to have what is most modern, out of the ordinary and fashionable as well as those who would tend to be careless and slovenly in this matter. Whoever has charge of the Sisters' clothes must pay great attention to this point, if not she will have to be replaced. The Sisters will always be free to make known their needs to the Superior.

Notes

- a) Fr. Barre's strong desire in setting up all these complex structures for the Institute was to enable the Sisters to be fully committed to mission.
- b) Endowments and gifts would have been the only means available to the Sisters for their upkeep, but Fr. Barre was always strongly opposed to endowments as they would have restricted the Sisters in their mission, confining them to carry out the wishes of the donor.
- c) The Directors would not be responsible for whatever this would imply.
- d) The preceding articles in the other chapters of SR.
- e) This is more a question of different responsibilities than of discrimination.
- f) Acts 5: 1 - 11.
- g) 17th century France was noted for great tensions within the Church and many theological debates took place in which educated people participated fully. Moreover, many Bishops in France, as well as Louis XIV appeared to be at variance with the Holy Father.
- h) cf. note in SR 6: 4 a.

Secret Articles (SA)

Introduction

The original manuscript is kept in the archives of the Sisters of Providence in Rouen. It was found with Chapter 14 of Statutes and Rules in a folder entitled: "Special Rules for Superiors and Directors". It is possible that they were written as an appendix to Statutes and Rules, but the handwriting does not appear to be Fr. Barre's.

Why are these articles called "secret?" One of the meanings given to the word in the 17th century was "what is known to very few people". Therefore they were probably available only to the Superiors and Directors for whom they were written, and not to the Sisters in general.

It is more likely they would have been guidelines for those in charge, to help in the direction of those interested in joining the Institute and in the discernment of vocations. For this reason they would not have been available to the general public.

There is a reference to a "secret council" in the Fundamental Maxims, but it is not clear whether this is a direct reference to the Secret Articles or not.

1. The superior will never oblige a Sister to go to Communion (a), even on days of General Communion (b). She will simply inform the community on the eve that the next day is a Communion day. The fact that a Sister may stay away from Communion sometimes should not give rise to any comment, since she could have several good reasons for so doing. True freedom of conscience is indispensable in any well-regulated community and obviates any semblance or fear of sacrilege. In order to promote this freedom, the Superior is advised to deprive herself sometimes of Communion, following the advise of her Confessor or Director.

2. However, if some Sisters do not receive Communion with the community, the Superior, Confessor or Spiritual Director will try to ensure, gently and kindly, that no disedification is given.

3. The Sisters who are working in rural areas will have a copy of the rules with them. As far as possible they will observe them in the same way as in the community from which they were sent (c), so that they may be blessed with all the graces they need for their ministry. Where this observance is not possible, they will do their best never to omit meditation, the office of the Blessed Virgin, Holy Mass, spiritual reading and examination of conscience; likewise they will always take their meals, stop work and go to bed at the right time in order to sustain their spiritual and bodily strength. A shorter version of the rule will be drawn up for these Sisters.

4. The Sisters do not make vows of obedience, poverty and chastity and must never do so, so that what was originally intended for the good of others may not degenerate into preoccupation with personal perfection (d), by enclosing themselves in a cloister or a monastery, as has happened only too often in the Church. At the same time, they must be as faithful, conscientious and self-disciplined as if they had made solemn profession of the three vows and accept to be sent away if they are unfaithful (e).

5. The Directors of the house will make sure that the young women to be accepted will be as suited as possible to what is asked of them. Consequently, those to be admitted should have good health, the right spirit, the desire and potential to

become prayerful people, be zealous for the salvation of others, have great disinterestedness, total obedience and trust in God's providence. To move away from this spirit is to move away from the Holy Spirit and therefore no longer to deserve being used by Him for the salvation and sanctification of others, which is God's greatest desire and work (f).

The Gospel is explicit about this and to act in any other way would be contrary to its message. "So do not worry; do not say, what are we to eat? what are we to drink? what are we to wear? It is the gentiles who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on His kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well" (g). This explains why those who get so worried about the material things of life lack the special graces necessary to reach and find the kingdom of God and His justice. Moreover, in the first century, it was customary for the faithful who were rich to provide for the needs of others, having been inspired and prompted by God to practise charity in this way (h).

6. There are hundreds of young women in the world who devote their lives to serve (i) as ladies-in-waiting or maid-servants without ever knowing how long they will be kept in employment or what their remuneration will be. They do it solely for human reasons. Would it not be possible for a few hundred of them, out of love for God and with the help of His grace, to serve Jesus Christ in the same way by taking on the salvation and sanctification of others as their main work? It was for this reason alone that Jesus left the bosom of His Father to come down to earth. As long as the members of the Institute remain faithful to their vocation, they can rely on grace and on the merciful and abundant blessings of God.

7. If a rich person wishes to retire with the Sisters, offering to pay her keep, she will not be accepted on any account (j), except in the case of benefactresses who are known to be of good character.

8. It is absolutely essential to hold on to the following principle (k) firmly, never wavering or deflecting from it, that is, that no Director, Lady Associate or Sister will ever be accepted in any of the Communities who does not manifest the above mentioned qualities. Nobody should be accepted because of a dowry (l) or endowment, which is brought or promised for the maintenance of the communities, no matter what the value or advantages may be. Neither should any account be taken of nobility or social standing or references from important people (m).

The Institute is and must always be based solely on integrity and on Jesus Christ without getting mixed up in human affairs.

Adorable Lord and Saviour of all, grant that this may always be true for all that owes its origin to you on this earth, including the Institute with its houses and schools. We ask this in the name of Our Lord. Amen.

Notes

a) In the historical context of the time, this reflects great openness, inner freedom and pastoral concern.

The council of Trent had recommended frequent Communion, that is, once a month or even once a week. Prior to that, from the 10th to the 16th century, the common practice was three or four times a year. Much discussion still continued on the matter. Those against frequent Communion were saying that the human person was unworthy to receive such a sublime sacrament. Fr. Barre was among those who encouraged the frequent reception of the sacrament, as is seen in his conference on the Eucharist: "We must go on taking Jesus as our food in Holy Communion until such time as we become His food, as it were. This means until such time as He takes possession of us, makes His home in us and we belong to Him; thus becoming incarnate in us, He takes the place of our self-centredness and arrogance".

b) There were only certain days of the week, normally Sundays and Thursdays, when all could receive Communion, SR 2: 5; as well as certain feasts and celebration days, SR 2: 18; 3: 6; 7: 7, 10.

c) This could refer to the mother house, where a larger number of Sisters lived while working in the neighbouring parishes.

d) In the 17th century, if women were to make the three vows they would automatically be enclosed. Fr. Barre wanted his Sisters to devote themselves entirely to apostolic service rather than be preoccupied with their own personal sanctification as well as with their own material and spiritual comfort, as was characteristic of cloistered life at the time, PM 1- 6; MIS 1.

In addition the Sisters' life was organised in such a way that they would be totally available for the service of others. Such service would always take precedence over their own needs. SR 3: 7.

e) At the same time, Fr. Barre insisted that it was more important to be motivated by love than merely observing a law, cf. FS and SR 1: 4, 5.

f) FM 3, 4, 5 and FS.

g) Mt 6: 31 - 33.

h) FM 2 refers to people responsible for the maintenance of the communities.

i) Fr. Barre often emphasises the importance of an attitude of service i.e. Christ the Servant, cf. PM 5, 8, 10, 31.

j) There is another warning of the risk of seeing the Institute diverted from its aim by the wealthy.

k) FM 3, 4. The Institute is based completely on abandonment and total detachment.

l) It was customary for a girl to bring a dowry when entering religious life.

m) TS 18.