

+Ave Cor Mariae

CONSTITUTIONS

OF

THE ECCLESIAL FAMILY OF CONSECRATED LIFE

MILITANT SONS AND DAUGHTERS

OF THE IMMACULATE HEART

OF OUR LADY OF THE EPIPHANY

MILES JESU

Revised Edition
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***...by becoming every day
more humble,
more fervent
and more
zealous for the
salvation of souls.***

-- St. Anthony Mary Claret

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FOUNDING CHARISM

Name, Definition, and Foundation

1. "Militant Sons and Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady of the Epiphany" is an Ecclesial Family of consecrated life [according to canon 605], whose members commit themselves to the evangelical counsels with sacred bonds (cf. can. 573; cf. Const. 26). This Ecclesial Family was founded on 12 January, 1964, in the Cursillos in Christianity Chapel, located in the basement of the rectory of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 909 East Washington, Phoenix, Arizona, USA. Its popular abbreviated name is Miles Jesu.(1)

Supreme Rule

2. Since the final norm of the life of Christian perfection is to follow Christ according to the Gospel, this must be the supreme rule of our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life as expressed in these Constitutions (cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 2a).

3. The only purpose of all the laws given in these Constitutions is to strengthen this Ecclesial Family of consecrated life and render it a more useful and effective instrument at the total service of the Church (can. 734).

4. The essential element in the following of Our Divine Lord is availability, the availability that He had to always do the Will of His Father. "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work". (Jn 4:34) In *Miles Jesu* availability is the cornerstone of our charism. (cf. Const. 14,77,118,120)

5. The Father calls us above all, not to be clerics or laymen, but: a) to the perfect love of Jesus,(2) and as a necessary fruit of this love, b) to the unconditional service of His Church to introduce the Kingdom of the Father in the world. In imitation of Her who said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word," (Lk 1:38) we strive to prepare ourselves in every way, naturally and supernaturally, to be able to fulfill as best as we can whatever mission the Lord may ask of us in obedience. Whenever we die Our Blessed Lord is not

going to ask us if we were clerics or laymen, high or low, but He will ask us as He did St. Peter, "Do you love Me?" (Jn 21:15)

Foundation of the Law

6. The only foundation that gives consistency and strength to these Constitutions is:

- a) The two greatest commandments: love of God and of neighbor. (3)
On these two laws every single law and inspiration, divine and human, depends and is founded. (4)
- b) The approval of the Church which recognizes the said inspiration and foundation of these Constitutions.

This demands from the members of *Miles Jesu*, as a condition to that perfection of the consecrated state, the greatest fidelity and strictest observance of them. (cf. Const. 370).

Vocation

7. Being that our relation with God is the only thing absolutely necessary in life and knowing that "from my mother's womb..". (Ps 22:11) "God chose us in Him (Jesus) before the world began...in love" (Eph 1:3-9) with an open heart we should always be attentive to the voice of Wisdom (cf. Prov 8:32-36), Jesus, who calls us to the supreme perfection of love (Jn 15:9-21) when He commands: "FOLLOW ME" (Jn 1:35-51) because "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE." (Jn 14:6) In imitation of the same One who chooses us (cf. Jn 15:16) and sends us as He Himself was sent to His mission by the Father, we answer: "God, here I am! I am coming to obey your will." (Ps 40:7-9)

8. Then we accept a style of life completely new, an authentic "*conversion of life*," abandoning the laziness of disobedience and rebellion to embrace the strong and brilliant weapons of obedience(5) and make ourselves "*Soldiers of Jesus*," true King and Leader, such as those who being "*children of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*" are in love with what their most holy Virgin Mother loves the most, her Son Jesus.

9. We make ours the definition of a son of the Heart of Mary, written by St. Claret, inspired mainly in the words of St. Paul (cf. Rm 8:35-39) and in many others from SCRIPTURE and certainly also from St. Ignatius of Loyola(6) and St. Francis of Assisi(7), and which is an authentic picture of his life: "A Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is one who is on fire with love of God, who spreads this fire wherever he goes, and who ardently desires and procures by all possible means to inflame the whole world with the fire of divine love. Nothing daunts him; he takes pleasure in

privations, pursues all labors, embraces all sacrifices, cheerfully welcomes all calumnies, and rejoices in every torment. His only thoughts are how he can follow and imitate Jesus Christ in all his labors and sufferings, and how he can always and only look for the greatest glory of God and the salvation of souls.” (8)

10. In the measure of our work we should strive to fulfill in the most perfect way possible our personal, family, social or professional duties. We do not know when God will finally reign supremely over the whole world, but we must help with the smallness of our intensive and enthusiastic work and the greatness of our prayer to submit every power, authority and nation to His Divine Power, the Power of Christ the King.(9) “By uniting their forces, let the laity so remedy the institutions and conditions of the world when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be conformed to the norms of justice, favoring rather than hindering the practice of virtue. By so doing they will impregnate culture and human works with a moral value. In this way the field of the world is better prepared for the seed of the Divine Word and the doors of the Church are opened more widely through which the message of peace may enter the world.” (Lumen Gentium, 36; cf. Const. 168)

11. If we can take upon ourselves so great an enterprise, it is because the love of the most beautiful Virgin Mother(10) encourages, comforts and warms our small hearts in the hearth of Her Heart and in the ardent desire to make Her wonders known.(11)

Purpose

12. The purpose of *Miles Jesu* is to instill Catholic ideals and goals in the world to further the Kingdom of Christ, making Him the Center of all human life (cf. can. 577), for:

- * The greatest glory of God. *Caritas Christi urget nos.*(12)
- * The manifestation (Epiphany) of His love and majesty.
- * The fulfillment of the reign of Christ on this earth, that all world rulers will acknowledge Christ as the Supreme Ruler and Chief, making the

Gospel the theoretical and practical foundation of all Law.

- * The salvation of men and the world, in time and in eternity, natural and supernatural.

Means

13. The principal means by which *Miles Jesu* carries out its purpose are:
The first and absolutely necessary condition to fulfill the purpose of *Miles Jesu* is the sanctification of its members by the perfect following of Jesus Christ,(13)

making this sanctification available to the laity in the highest degree with the practice of the evangelical counsels of obedience, chastity and poverty.

14. **The unconditional service of the Vicar of Christ** in whatever capacity the Church may need and the promotion of loyalty to the Holy Father by every possible means, *Sentire cum Ecclesia, Sentire cum Petro* (cf. Const. 3, 41, 90, 101, 110, 226, 227, 248, 302, 324).

15. **Witness of life.** “Especially by the witness of their life, resplendent in faith, hope and charity they must manifest Christ to others. It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are so closely associated that these may be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the Glory of the Creator and Redeemer.” (Lumen Gentium, 31)

16. **Zeal for vocations.** A *Miles Jesu* has a feeble love of God and neighbor if he does not have a burning zeal to promote more vocations, soldiers for the Church in *Miles Jesu*. The most important work is to produce leaders, apostles, and it takes priority over any other apostolate, so that *Miles Jesu* may fulfill its mission in the world. The first act of Our Lord in His public life was to choose the Apostles (cf. Jn 1:35-51).

17. **To save one soul is worth more than the whole of creation.**(14) **To inspire the vocation of an apostle is to save many souls. The Church in *Miles Jesu* needs leaders, captains at the orders of Christ the King to counteract the summons that Satan makes so efficiently throughout the world to the leaders of evil in the culture of temporal and eternal death.**(15)

18. **To animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit holding jobs in the secular world by lay members.** “By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. They live in the world, that is, they are engaged in each and every work and business of the earth and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life which, as it were, constitute their very existence. They are called by God that, being led by the spirit of the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties.” (Lumen Gentium, 31)(16)

19. **Unity of action.** “In the present circumstances it is supremely necessary that wherever the laity are at work the apostolate under its collective and organized form should be strengthened. In actual fact only a well-knit combination of efforts can completely attain all the aims of the modern apostolate and give its fruits good protection.” (Apostolicam Actuositatem, 18) As the enemies of God are so well organized and united, His friends should be even better organized and united. “The children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.” (Lk 16:8; cf. Const. 10)

20. **The Catholic formation of youth** in general and in particular by establishing Houses of Christian Formation for young men and young women separately where they may acquire a deep spirituality and dedicate some time of their lives to finding their vocation (cf. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 12,30). *Miles Jesu* does not promote mixed schools or groups of boys and girls. Experience shows that vocations to the consecrated life of perfection are not nurtured in these types of groups. After a big experimental period with mixed schools in the mid-twentieth century, secular studies conclude that boys and girls in separate schools enjoy a more relaxed atmosphere, progress more effectively in their studies and achieve a more wholesome development of their personalities.

21. **Living of the ideals of St. Anthony Mary Claret, our spiritual Father,** especially:

a) Devotion and reverence for the Most Blessed Sacrament. (St. Claret had the custom to spend all Holy Thursday afternoon and night and Good Friday morning on his knees in front of the Blessed Sacrament. His devotion to the Eucharist was so great that he received the miraculous grace of keeping the Sacramental Species incorrupt in his body from one Communion to another (17) for the last nine years of his life). Adoration of the Most Precious, Life-Giving Body and Blood of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament should have a very important and extensive part in the lives of all the members.

b) A great and tender love for the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady of the Epiphany, Queen of the Universe.(18)

c) Zeal for the salvation of souls(19) "...to become every day more humble, more fervent and more zealous for the salvation of souls" (Prayer of St. Claret in thanksgiving for vocation as a son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary).

d) To cultivate the apostolic potentials of the laity, as was done by St. Claret "the great precursor of Catholic Action, almost as it is today." (20) "This lay spirituality will take its particular character from the circumstances of one's state in life (married and family life, celibacy, widowhood), from one's state of health and from one's professional social activities. Whatever the circumstances, each one has received suitable talents and these should be cultivated, as should also the personal gifts he has from the Holy Spirit.... They should also hold in high esteem professional competence, family and civic sense, and the virtues related to social behavior such as honesty, sense of justice, sincerity, courtesy, moral courage; without them there is no true Christian life." (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 4) With them the true kingdom of Christ can be brought about, "an eternal and universal kingdom, a kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace." (Roman Missal, Preface of Christ the King)

- e) The apostolate of the spoken and printed word. “The press, of its power and nature, is of towering importance.” (21)
22. **The apostolate with widows, widowers and divorcees.** This apostolate originates from the early years of our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life.
23. **To bring about the joyful spirit of repentance** to a world which is sad and depressed because it has made peace with sin.

Patrons

24. **The Immaculate Heart of the Virginal Mother of God, Queen of the Universe, especially in the mystery of the Epiphany.**
25. **St. Joseph, Her Spouse and Special Protector of the Universal Church.**

Chapter I

MEMBERS

Ecclesial Family of Consecrated Life

26. “The originality of the new communities often consists in the fact that they are composed of mixed groups of men and women, of clerics and lay persons, of married couples and celibates, all of whom pursue a particular style of life. These communities are sometimes inspired by one or other traditional form adapted to the needs of modern society. Their commitment to the evangelical life also takes on different forms, while, as a general rule, they are all characterized by an intense aspiration to community life, poverty, and prayer. Both clerics and lay persons share in the duties of governing according to the responsibilities assigned to them, and the apostolate focuses on the demands of the new evangelization.” (Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Vita Consecrata*, n. 62)
27. As an Ecclesial Family of consecrated life, Miles Jesu offers its members a specific form of seeking Christian perfection more assiduously through a consecration with the evangelical counsels. Each member participates in the

consecration and mission peculiar to Miles Jesu according to his condition, branch and degree of membership.

28. A consecration is a theological act of self-giving to God where one irrevocably sets himself aside for the service of God. It is an act of love of God, and love by nature is perpetual; one cannot limit love (*cf. LG 44*). Therefore, any consecration made through the profession of the evangelical counsels, in and of its very nature, is perpetual. If broken, it is very serious because it is not a contract between two human beings but a covenant of an irrevocable gift of self to God.

29. In Miles Jesu there are members who consecrate themselves to God *in the strict sense* by the acceptance of the evangelical counsels as the *norm* of one's life, and this is done by means of vows or other sacred bonds (*cf. CIC 598;712*). The consecration of these members constitutes a new consecration with regard to their baptismal consecration, and by it they are inaugurated into the consecrated state. These consecrated celibate members are called *Domus* members. Nevertheless, their new state as consecrated does not change their canonical condition as lay or cleric (*cf CIC 711*).

30. Consecration to God *in the strict sense* in Miles Jesu is accomplished in its fullest and most perfect form by means of perpetual vows. However, members also consecrate themselves to God *in the strict sense* by means of other sacred bonds, namely promises or perpetual consecration. Like the vows, these other sacred bonds are perpetual and constitute in their essence a complete gift of self to God. Of these three, though, the gift of self to God through the vows is the most perfect because of the unreserved manner in which the Evangelical Counsels are embraced, thus it is a *total holocaust* of self to God by which one is totally immolated for the glory of God. The gift of self to God accomplished by the promises is complete but less perfect than the vows because by the promises the Evangelical Counsels are embraced in a more limited manner, thus it is a *partial holocaust* of self to God in which one is truly immolated for the glory of God, but not completely. Through the perpetual consecration, one also makes a complete gift of self to God, but this gift is even less perfect than the vows and promises due, not only to its more limited object, but also to its less firm nature. Thus, the consecration, rather than being a holocaust, is an *offering* to the glory of God.

31. Therefore, as their response to the grace of their vocation to the living of the Evangelical Counsels, members first consecrate themselves to God *in the strict sense* by means of the perpetual consecration as determined by the specific degree of membership. This consecration can be progressively strengthened whereby a member may renew it with the firmer sacred bonds of the promises as also determined by the specific degree of membership. And again later with the vows as the perfect and total gift of self to God.

32. The consecration with the vows of perfect obedience, chastity and poverty is a supreme act of love of God.

33. The essential element to be a member of *Miles Jesu* is the consecration not the ecclesiastical orders nor the community life (cf. *Const. 40,53,243, cf. CIC 573,714*).

34. The consecrations, made through the profession of the evangelical counsels, are made to God in *Miles Jesu*, though the same *Miles Jesu* can dispense of the obligations towards our Ecclesial Family.

35. Each member recognizes his special call, vocation, to *Miles Jesu*. *Miles Jesu* is an Institute of perfection according to the rules of the Church. Then, a member's primary purpose is not just the engagement of one particular activity, but aspiration to a life of perfection, each one in their own state of life, according to the words of Our Lord, "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:48) As such, in *Miles Jesu*, the whole person is consecrated to God. For this reason the individual who belongs to *Miles Jesu* cannot be a member at the same time of another institute of perfection, like a Franciscan cannot be a Dominican at the same time or vice-versa. As a consequence, a member of *Miles Jesu* can be a member of another association but not of another institute of perfection. He should not belong, however, to any association which, either by its nature or activity, interferes with his special vocation in *Miles Jesu*, nor belong to so many groups that he cannot respond well to his *Miles Jesu* vocation.

36. Each consecration should be written out by hand by the person making the consecration on the altar in front of the Blessed Sacrament prior to the ceremony unless physically impeded.

Branches

37. *Miles Jesu* is an Ecclesial family with two branches: a Men's Branch (composed of consecrated laymen and clergy) and a Ladies' Branch (composed of consecrated unmarried women), united and organized in a way convenient to preserve the necessary unity and cohesion, at the same time with a healthy independence.

38. The Men's Branch and Ladies' Branch of *Miles Jesu* have the same general purposes of this Ecclesial Family. They both follow these same Constitutions, but form independent groups under the same General Director.

Degrees

39. The degrees of membership are not a measure of sanctity but of the depth of commitment to *Miles Jesu* and express the diverse states of life of the members. Each member in whatever degree is called to be a saint. “Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.” (Mt 5:48)

40. There are 13 degrees of membership in *Miles Jesu*. The number 13 was chosen in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady of Fatima. All those in any of the 13 degrees make a consecration to God through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, but the consecrations differ according to the degrees (cf. paragraph No. 29 of these Constitutions), which are as follows:

41. The thirteenth degree is composed of those who, having already made the consecration with the perpetual vows of obedience, chastity and poverty, make a special perpetual vow of obedience and availability to the Holy Father of accepting immediately any position or assignment to serve the Church. The members of the Vanguard, which this degree is called, form the central nucleus.

42. To make the fourth vow it is necessary to be a celibate member of *Miles Jesu* for at least ten years and a member of the twelfth degree for three years (these years may coincide) and they should excel especially in following and promoting effectively and intelligently the teachings of the Holy Father and the Magisterium in faith, morals and Church discipline, in the love of this Ecclesial Family and in their sincere and practical aspiration to the third degree of humility of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Prior to becoming a member of the Vanguard, a member of *Miles Jesu* should make the 30-day Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius under the direction of a spiritual director appointed by the General Director.

43. The twelfth degree is composed of those who renew the consecration with the three evangelical counsels of perfect and perpetual obedience, chastity and poverty by way of vows to God. The members who are in this degree form, with the former, the nucleus of our Ecclesial Family; they will be admitted to this degree after a long probation period carried out successfully. Prior to the consecration with vows, the Spiritual Exercises of eight complete days should be made. The vows are perfect and perpetual promises made to God and their proper juridical objects as determined in this degree are as follows:

- a. The proper juridical object of the vow of obedience is perfect and perpetual obedience to the *Miles Jesu* Constitutions, Complementary Books and Directors, with a formal commitment, in imitation of the perfect obedience of Christ, to an ever-more perfect external and internal submission and conformity to the legitimate authority of this Ecclesial Family of consecrated life as the representative of the Divine Will, in all things referring to the observance of the Constitutions and Complementary Books, to the spiritual life and community life, to apostolic service and service to our Ecclesial Family.

- b. **The proper juridical object of the vow of chastity is perfect continence in perpetual celibacy embraced for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven and by a new title the avoidance of any sin against the VI and IX commandments (cf. CIC 599, Const. 122).**
- c. **The proper juridical object of the vow of poverty is the renunciation of all one's material goods and the very capacity to acquire and possess goods (cf. CIC 668,5). This renunciation is to be made in favor of the Ecclesial Family, prior to the ceremony of making the vows, and, as far as possible, in a form that is valid also in civil law (cf CIC 668, 4).**

44. The eleventh degree is composed of those who renew their consecration and deepen it with the three evangelical counsels of perpetual obedience, chastity and poverty by way of the sacred bonds of promises to God and normally live the common life. As sacred bonds, the promises are perpetual promises made to God of obedience, chastity and poverty but more limited in their object than the vows. The proper juridical objects of these sacred bonds with regard to obedience and chastity are the same as those of the 12th degree (cf. Const. 43 a and b). The proper object of the promise of poverty is the signing of a civilly legal document of their last will and testament, with our Ecclesial Family as the sole and universal beneficiary, made prior to the ceremony (cf. Const. 138; CIC 668, 1), in addition to everything regarding poverty for the 10th degree.

45. The tenth degree is composed of those who make the consecration to live the evangelical counsels of obedience, chastity and poverty, committing themselves to the common life with the express intention to remain in our Ecclesial Family for life (cf. Const. 28,34; CIC 1199-1204). The proper juridical objects of this consecration with regard to obedience and chastity are the same as those of the 12th degree (cf. Const. 43a and b).

The proper object of poverty is the ceding of the administration of all of one's material goods to our Ecclesial Family. The General Administrator, with the approval of the General Director, will decide for the administration of his goods to be done by our Ecclesial Family itself or by somebody appointed by our Ecclesial Family, this could even be the same person making this consecration. The one making this consecration, while maintaining ownership of his property, savings and other assets, gives all of his income: salaries, net profits on investments, gifts, etc. to our Ecclesial Family.

46. The rest of the degrees are determined in the By-Laws.

47. The consecration of the celibate members who do not live in community is as full as that of the community members. The demands for their spirit of detachment from material goods (poverty), goods of the heart (chastity) and of the will (obedience) are the same and should be the same. The only difference is the

adaptation, allowed by these Constitutions and other complementary books, to different circumstances of life.

48. The *Miles Jesu* consecration of a diocesan cleric strengthens and perfects the gift of himself: in his detachment from temporal goods; in the gift of his heart and body to God; and in the union of his will unreservedly with the obedient Jesus Christ, the Supreme Priest.

49. To live in community is a privilege which can be required, recommended, granted or refused by the General Director in consultation with his Council. In general, for the celibate members of our Ecclesial Family it is strongly recommended. It is especially important for all, but more in particular for young men whose perseverance in a world full of dangers and temptations is extremely difficult if they live alone. In general, women can take better care of themselves, but they are also exposed to all the dangers and temptations of the world.

50. The final decision about community life does not depend upon the individual but upon the superiors.

51. Those who do not live in a community of *Miles Jesu* should be assigned to a community with which they must keep in contact and to which they are spiritually bound.

52. The ones living in community should be a great help through example and all kinds of ways and manners to the ones not living in community.

53. A *domus* member is any consecrated celibate member. Any consecrated celibate member is a definitively incorporated member. The consecration of the celibate member is the essential element for incorporation.

54. Bishops who wish to join *Miles Jesu* may be accepted into any one of the *Miles Jesu* degrees to which they wish to belong. Besides following the general norms of canon law for bishops belonging to Institutes (cf. can. 705), a private agreement should be made with the bishop according to the degree he wants to join in *Miles Jesu*.

55. *Miles Jesu* actually has members of the Latin and Oriental Catholic Rites.

Eastern Rite members

[This section on Eastern Rite members was required and approved by His Eminence Myroslav Cardinal Lubachivsky, Archbishop Major of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.]

56. The foundation of Miles Jesu's Eastern Rite regions was unanimously approved by the General Government and enthusiastically supported by all the members.
57. From its earliest years Miles Jesu has had members of the Eastern Rites. Miles Jesu has always had a great respect and admiration for the traditions of the Eastern Fathers of the Church. Even before the founding of our Eastern Rite regions, Miles Jesu members studied the theology and spirituality of the Eastern Rites of the Church. For many years the Latin Rite lay members of Miles Jesu have recited the prayer of St. John Chrysostom before Communion.
58. All the members are subject to their particular moderators according to the norm of the Constitutions in those matters which affect the internal life and discipline of our Ecclesial Family.
59. They are subject also to the eparchial bishop in those matters which affect public worship, the care of souls and other works of the apostolate with due regard for CCEO 415.
60. Each community will follow the liturgical calendar of the rite for which it was approved by the local Ordinary.
61. Miles Jesu guarantees for its Eastern Rite members freedom of worship in their native rite. Whenever a member visits a community of another rite that member will be free to attend, at least periodically, the liturgy of his own rite.
62. For individual institutes there is acknowledged a rightful autonomy of life, especially of governance, by which they enjoy their own discipline in the Church and have the power to preserve their own patrimony intact (cf. Vatican II *Christus Dominus*, 35; CCEO 412, 413; CIC 586, para. 1).
63. Miles Jesu accepts married priests of the Eastern Rites to those degrees specified in the By-Laws.
64. There will be due representation of the members of Eastern Rites at the General Assembly, especially regarding those matters that directly affect the Eastern Rite members. This includes any proposals to the competent Ecclesiastical authority to change the Constitutions, in particular the chapter on Eastern Rite members.
65. Eastern Rite Regions will be formed, each with its own Director/Directress, according to numbers 369-371 of these Constitutions.
66. *Miles Jesu* realizes that the Eastern Rites of the Church are an essential part of the richness of the Tradition of the Church, which must be preserved. Therefore, *Miles Jesu* opposes any form of forced latinization.

**67. *Miles Jesu* accepts and abides by the laws of the Eastern Rites of the Church.
Admission**

68. Numbers do not make the truth, neither do they always give strength. Do not let us fall into the temptation of numbers for the sake of numbers or noise. The spirit is more powerful. Our Lord moved the world with only twelve apostles. A few good men can conquer better than a crowd of half-hearted men.

69. To be admitted to *Miles Jesu* one must be a faithful Catholic who has the right intention, who possesses the qualities required by the universal law of the Church and of *Miles Jesu*, and appears to be free of canonical impediments, and has the sufficient health, temperament and maturity required by the different degrees in which *Miles Jesu* is internally organized. Impediments to admission to any of the domus degrees include serious mental and/or physical illness and/or financial instability and irresponsibility. Our Ecclesial Family will not accept as a domus member anyone who cannot support himself.

70. *Miles Jesu* does not make any new impediments nor peculiar irregularities in regard to the selection of its candidates, but takes as its own the impediments which the law of the Church dictates for the consecrated life (cf. can. 643), as it does for the pre-requisites, irregularities and impediments fixed for those to be ordained “*in sacris*” (cf. can. 1033-1049).

71. The final admission of the members to any of the degrees is the prerogative of the General Director in consultation with his Council. He can delegate it according to the different degrees and cases.

72. Normally no one will be accepted to the eleventh degree before the age of twenty-one.

73. Candidates will be admitted to each degree only when they have thoroughly assimilated the *Miles Jesu* formation according to the degree for which they have applied (cf. can. 597, para.2).

74. Widows and widowers can be admitted to any degree. Innocent divorcees can be admitted according to their different circumstances.

(N.B. Innocent divorcees can be admitted only to those degrees which include only promises not made to God, otherwise a dispensation from the Holy See will be necessary)

75. Only those who are free from any difficulties in obedience will be permitted to make vows.

76. A consecrated member may be invited by the Directors to apply personally for a higher degree according to the signs of maturity and stability he shows. Admission to a higher degree should correspond to the vocation of each individual person and not left to the free will of the Directors.

77. Only those invited by the General Director with the deliberative vote of the Council can become members of the Vanguard (cf. Const. 41). Miles Jesu should be very selective in admitting new members to the higher degrees. As the Lord shows us in Holy Scripture (cf. Jdgs 7:2), it is not the number of soldiers that win the battles of the Lord, but the degree of submission and availability to God (cf. 1 Sam 17:32-51) and of spiritual and real poverty which allows the Lord to work through them in full force (cf. Const. 68). Our dear Mother was able to say, “the Almighty has done great things in me and holy is His name because She knew so well Her lowliness.” (Lk 1:48-49) The efficiency and efficacy of Her apostolate reaches every single human being in the awesome reverential quietness of the Mother of God.

78. An individual should not be easily accepted into the Vanguard. First of all, because of the spiritual preparation that this degree demands and of the complete and total availability of service, but also because the members of the Vanguard have powers to vote in elements that are essential to the format of our Ecclesial Family and in the preservation of purity in the spirit of the founding charism.

79. To be ordained a priest, one must be a member of the twelfth degree for at least five years. Candidates for the priesthood in Miles Jesu will be selected by the General Director after consultation, according to the sacramental needs of *Miles Jesu*.

80. Diocesan priests can belong to any of the degrees of Miles Jesu which they are allowed to according to canon law, these Constitutions and the By-Laws.

81. For a diocesan priest who desires to join Miles Jesu, as the Rule of St. Benedict wisely orders, “permission is not to be immediately granted. If he persists in his desire, he must know that he shall have to obey the Rule strictly. No exceptions are to be made for, as Scripture says, 'Friend, for what are you come'” (Mt 26:50).... “He must give to all examples of greater humility” (1) and obedience. He should fulfill faithfully all the rules of our Ecclesial Family which apply to him.

82. In exceptional cases, and if the bishop allows it, diocesan priests who already belong to *Miles Jesu* and who show outstanding practice and understanding of the spirit of *Miles Jesu* can also be accepted into the rest of the degrees of membership.

83. Young men who are studying for the diocesan priesthood can belong to different degrees of *Miles Jesu* according to the maturity of their formation, their understanding and acquisition of the spirit of *Miles Jesu*, and in accordance with these Constitutions.

Dispensation and Dismissal

84. “In the same manner as the [Ecclesial Family] shall grow by the admission of those that are called and are of the right disposition, so it shall not escape from spiritual relaxation or ruin, except by the expulsion of those who, lacking a vocation, or because they do not correspond to it, do not live in conformity with the spirit of the [Ecclesial Family].”(2)

85. Dispensation of all the commitments in *Miles Jesu* is reserved to the internal Directors.

86. A member of the Vanguard can be demoted from the Vanguard if the General Director with the deliberative vote of his Council thinks him not worthy of such an honor, be he a layman or a priest. For the Ladies' Branch this is done by the General Director with the Vicar-Directress and her Council. This demotion can be temporary or permanent.

87. The dispensation of vows for those in the twelfth degree is reserved to the internal Directors: the General Director with the deliberative vote of the Council, according to the norms of the additional governing books.

88. The dispensation of promises for those in the eleventh degree is reserved to the internal Directors: the General Director with the consultative vote of the Council, according to the norms of the additional governing books.

89. The rest of the commitments can be dispensed by the General Director with consultation, unless otherwise specified in the By-Laws.

90. Besides the common causes stated in the law of the Church, there will be the following causes for dismissal:

- a) To preach, practice or embrace doctrines opposed to the official Magisterium of the Church in morals or in doctrine, or to disobey the official discipline of the Church and of this Ecclesial Family whether it is done openly or under any kind of pretext.**
- b) Creating doubts on the infallibility of the Holy Father or on the obedience of will and intellect we should pay to him in matters of faith, morals and discipline even when he does not speak *ex cathedra* but as the Supreme head of the Church (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 25).**
- c) Causing serious division inside of this Ecclesial Family or undermining the effective use of authority.**
- d) Giving scandal that jeopardizes the name and prestige of our Ecclesial Family.**
- e) Obstinate and stubborn resistance to the superiors.**
- f) Transgressing the rules after being repeatedly corrected.**

91. To report the aforesaid conduct shall be a duty incumbent in conscience on him who shall have knowledge of it. The person who conceals such information will be subject to different penalties proportionate to the seriousness of the matter.

92. Any member in the eleventh degree or higher cannot be dismissed for reasons of health unless it can be proven beyond doubt that he maliciously concealed or disguised his condition before entering that degree.

93. The dismissal will take place according to canons 694-704.

94. Those who have legitimately left our Ecclesial Family or have been legitimately dismissed from it can request nothing from it for any work done in it. Our Ecclesial Family however is to observe equity and evangelical charity toward the member who is separated from it. (cf. can. 702)

Chapter II

EVANGELICAL COUNSELS

the total gift of oneself

95. “Likewise the Church's holiness is fostered in a special way by the manifold counsels which the Lord proposes to his disciples in the Gospel for them to observe.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 42) For this reason, the consecrated life of *Miles Jesu* through commitment to the evangelical counsels is a stable form of life in which some of the faithful dedicate themselves fully, by a new and peculiar title, to the perfection of charity, to the building up of the Church and the salvific service of the world, foretelling in this way the glory to come.

96. The vocation to consecrated celibacy is the summit of the calling to the perfection of charity because it entails the total gift of oneself to God in complete detachment and is objectively the state of life most conducive to the highest sanctity, union with God Himself (cf. Mt 19:21):

Through poverty i offer to God all my material goods (my gold), divesting myself of the possession of them and i acquire freedom from the slavery of the desire to possess things.

Through chastity i offer to God the goods of my body and emotions (my myrrh), divesting myself of the exclusive possession of another human being and i free myself from being possessed exclusively by another human being. I acquire freedom of the heart by which i become capable of loving everyone. I acquire freedom from the very desire to possess or be possessed by another human being.

Through obedience i offer to God my most intimate, precious and valuable good -- my freedom (my frankincense), divesting myself of the possession of the human ego. I free myself from myself and become totally open to the Infinite God. I free myself from my narrow self; i am free from subjectivism. The "I," or ego, becomes the "You," with a capital "Y," and gives me the Freedom, the Openness, the Greatness, the Immensity, the Limitlessness and the Awesome "Beauty of Your Face, O Lord." Not "my small petty will be done," but "Thy Will be done," the Will that encompasses every creature. I acquire the freedom from the desire to possess myself, that i might be possessed by the Ineffable One, always existing and ever the same, "that i may no longer live for myself but for You, Our Master and Benefactor," where the "i" is very, very small and the "You" is Infinite, and where "You are the indescribable gladness of those who love you, O Christ our God." (cf. Divine Liturgy) "This perfect joy is now mine. As he [Jesus] grows greater, i must grow less." (Jn 3:29-30)

By the giving to God of these three gifts, we offer to him the total immolation of self, a holocaust.

97. In *Miles Jesu*, as a form of consecrated life canonically erected by the competent authority of the Church, the consecrated members commit themselves to the evangelical counsels by way of vows or other sacred bonds, according to the degree in which they are accepted and in conformity with these Constitutions approved by the Church.

98. "The Church bears in mind too the apostle's admonition when calling the faithful to charity and exhorting them to have the same mind which Christ Jesus showed, who 'emptied himself, taking the form of a servant...and became obedient unto death' (Phil 2:7-8) and for our sakes 'became poor, though he was rich.' (2 Cor 8:9) Since the disciples must always imitate this love and humility of Christ and bear witness of it, Mother Church rejoices that she has within herself many men and women who pursue more closely the undertaking of poverty with the freedom of God's sons, and renouncing their own will; they subject themselves to man for the love of God, thus going beyond what is of precept in the matter of perfection, so as to conform themselves more fully to the obedient Christ." (*Lumen Gentium*, 42)

99. "Each institute keeping in mind its own character and purposes is to define in its constitutions the manner in which the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience are to be observed for its way of life. All members must not only observe the evangelical counsels faithfully and fully, but also organize their life according to the proper law of the institute and therefore strive for the perfection of their state." (can. 598)

Evangelical Obedience

100. All the members of *Miles Jesu* should recognize and accept with much love and joy the almighty dominion of God over them and the conquest of them made by

the blood of Christ the King, and for this they consecrate their lives to Him. We are “slaves of obedience that leads to righteousness.” (Rom 6:16) We must remember at all times that “those who live might live no longer for themselves but for Him” (2 Cor 5:15) and to always submit our wills, impulses, feelings, ideas and our entire selves with much meekness and humility before God. “As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.” (Rom 5:19)

101. The Holy Father is the first Superior of *Miles Jesu* because our submission to God and to Christ is through His visible Vicar on earth and because *Miles Jesu* is and wants to be an instrument of the Church. We must obey the Vicar of Christ in faith, morals and Church discipline before and above any other authority on earth. Therefore, we want to make it clear now and forever that the first Superior of *Miles Jesu* in theory and practice is the Vicar of Christ (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 25). This is the only number in the entire Constitutions which is repeated. It is found again in Chapter V on Government because of its vital importance for the *Miles Jesu* charism.

102. We renew and deepen our consecration by way of the promise or vow of obedience striving for the perfect imitation of Jesus who “was subject to them” (Lk 2:51), who always obeyed men whenever they represented God or had his authority (cf. Jn 19:11), and who out of love for His Father became obedient unto death and death on the cross (cf. Phil 2:8). The virtue of obedience is a very essential part of the formation and life of a *Miles Jesu*, which those in the higher degrees strengthen with the legal and sacred ties of the promises and vows, and in the Vanguard with even a fourth vow to the visible Vicar of Jesus. “The evangelical counsel of obedience, undertaken in a spirit of faith and love in the following of Christ, who was obedient even unto death, obliges submission of one's will to lawful Superiors, who act in the place of God when they give commands that are in accordance with each institute's own constitutions.” (can. 601)

103. Our obedience is our most powerful and efficient instrument for the salvation of souls.

104. We should strongly exercise mortification especially of the will.(1)

105. Self-will, rebellion, pride and stiffness of the will are the unmistakable characteristics of the followers of the devil with his proud cry *non serviam*.

106. With the vow, promise or virtue of obedience inherent in the consecration in *Miles Jesu*, we commit ourselves to obey the legitimate Directors whenever they truly command or impose something referring to the observance of the Constitutions.

107. The vow or promise obliges, but its violation will be serious only when the director expressly commands in virtue of the same vow or promise and in serious matters.

108. By the spirit of obedience we do not only practice what is commanded in the Constitutions and complementary books which conform to them, but we submit ourselves, for love of Jesus, to the advice, suggestions and direction of the legitimate authority, faithful to Him Who came not to do His own will but the Will of the Father (cf. Jn 4:34; 5:19-20).

109. Those who make the promise or vow of obedience do it so that bound by a firm bond they dedicate themselves wholly to God in works of charity and apostolate, and in all things they remain morally under the authority and guidance of the Directors, according to these Constitutions. The *Miles Jesu* consecration binds to the same, by the virtue of obedience, which virtue is the most essential thing because a promise or a vow without the virtue is empty.

110. Since our obedience is submission to man as a representative of God, not to man for his own sake (cf. can. 601), we have the obligation to obey first the Vicar of Christ and those and only those who are in communion with him in doctrine, morals and Church discipline. A Director or Directress who commands any particular point against the official teaching or discipline of the Church should not be obeyed in that matter and the case should be reported to a higher superior. And even more, any superior, even legally elected or appointed, who is not in communion with the Vicar of Christ must not be obeyed (cf. can. 590).

Obedience and Directors

111. The following directions on the way to perform the duties of Director and Directress are put in this chapter on obedience precisely to make those who have such duties realize that the performance of them is also an act of obedience and submission to the One from Whom all authority comes (cf. Jn 19:11). In their leadership position they must see Christ Whom they are serving in those they lead, and that what they do is done to serve Him better, whether this is with corrections or encouragement. Let no personal ego enter into the performance of the duties of Directors.

112. The Directors have the obligation to treat their brothers and sisters not as inferior to themselves, but as true brothers and sisters. They should share every hardship with them. In fact, they should be the first ones to tackle whatever is difficult; they should be the first to take any burden and suffering upon themselves. Though they have the authority to give orders, they should prefer to convince, to win the hearts of their subjects by love. They should be open to the suggestions of all the members, even the youngest and the newest because, as St. Benedict says, the Lord often reveals the best course to a younger member.(2) Listening to everyone's suggestions does not lessen their authority, but helps them to see aspects or points

they might not have seen; it makes everyone responsible for the decisions and realize that everybody is an important member in building up *Miles Jesu* for the service of the Church. At the same time it is always up to the Director to make the final decision, and the members should obey based on their faith in the Lord. Directors will have to give a strict account to God on judgment day for the way they have fulfilled their duties towards their brothers and sisters entrusted to them. But they will be held innocent if they have done everything in their power to correct any abuses.(3)

113. So that Directors can help everyone to grow spiritually and in Christian human development and increase the number of the soldiers of Jesus, they should recognize the difficulty of their position -- to care for and guide the spiritual development of many different characters. One person might need to be won over by friendliness, another by sharp rebukes, another by persuasion. The Director must adapt himself to deal with individuality.(4)

114. As the occasion requires the Director or Directress should mix encouragement with correction. While showing the firmness of authority he or she should show the love and affection of a father or mother.(5)

115. Each Director should remember the command that St. Francis Xavier makes to a subordinate: "I entreat you, for the love of our Lord, so to behave that all the members of the Society may love you. Write to me and tell me of your spiritual life. If you will do that, you will lift a great burden from my heart." (6)

116. St. Teresa says, too, that obedience and virtue are much easier when the superior is loved by the members.(7) Nevertheless, the Directors should remember that to be loved is not a popularity contest, but to do the right thing according to the law of God, the Church and our Ecclesial Family for the eternal and temporal good of those of whom they are in charge.

117. Directors in their office must be much closer followers of the Lord Jesus, dying to themselves, forgetting about their own feelings and concerns, so to give their total attention to their brothers. Even when they have to take care of their basic spiritual and physical needs they should do it not for selfish reasons but so that they can better fulfill their duties towards their brothers.

118. If the Director does things just to stay in authority, he is not a good Director. He should not be attached to his position. If he is, he loses his freedom to make the right decisions according to the laws of the Church and our Ecclesial Family, and he will be responsible to God. Any type of power struggle must be avoided if we want to really be soldiers of Jesus and true sons and daughters of the one who is the Handmaid of the Lord. *Miles Jesu's* spirituality in essence demands absolute availability in any position whether it is high or low or of authority or not (cf. Const. 184).

119. At any rate, those who have authority do not have it on their own, but it is given to them by God through His Church and as a delegation coming from the Vicar of Christ. The Directors must be closer followers in their spirit of service to the One who said, “I came not to be served but to serve.” (Mt 20:28) Any position of authority that is not taken as a service loses its Christian character, “Do not do like the pagans who lord it over them.” (Mt 20:25)

120. *Miles Jesu's* essential nature of availability demands that each of us is willing to be a subject or a Director in the spirit of obedience and service. As much as possible, all members should be trained to be either. The small, weak, immature personalities do not know how to handle power, and the emotionally mature person does not need it for his fulfillment.

121. When the General Director or Vicar Directress with their respective councils, after consultation, judge that any Director or Directress does not keep these Constitutions (cf. Const. nos. 111-120) and abuses authority after serious correction with no amendment, then they should be deposed. The Vicar Directress should have the consent of the General Director.

Evangelical Chastity

122. “Towering among these counsels is that precious gift of divine grace given to some by the Father (cf. Mt 19:11; 1 Cor 7:7) to devote themselves to God alone more easily with an undivided heart (cf. 1 Cor 7:32-34) in virginity or celibacy. This perfect continence for love of the kingdom of heaven has always been held in high esteem by the Church as a sign and stimulus of love, and as a singular source of spiritual fertility in the world” (Lumen Gentium, 42) “...and the source of more abundant fruitfulness.” (can. 599)

123. By the vow of chastity we oblige ourselves to celibacy in perfect continence for the kingdom of God and avoid by a new title any sin against the VI and IX commandments.

124. By our perfect chastity, resigning from the limited legal pleasures of the body, we gain the great satisfaction of many rewarding pleasures of the spirit: we are given the profound joy and love of those who are faithful, humble and intimate friends of Jesus; giving up physical fatherhood or motherhood, we become real spiritual fathers and mothers of multitudes who will love us as such in time and in eternity.(8)

125. The security of our affections does not come from a possessive love, but from the diffusive love of Jesus who without giving Himself exclusively to any human being belongs entirely to each and every person. In our poverty we are so limited that if we give ourselves totally to another human being our heart becomes divided (cf. 1 Cor 7:35).

126. “Let all, and especially Superiors, remember that chastity is preserved more securely when the members live a common life in true brotherly love.” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 12)

127. A celibate or virginal *Miles Jesu* jealously guards his jewel of purity as a gift from the Lord and the Virgin Mother, watching over the movements of the heart, imagination and body, aware of his extreme poverty or weakness so fragile that only the One for Whom “nothing is impossible” (Lk 1:7) can support it unbroken in abundant prayer.

128. Our senses are wonderful gifts of God given to mankind. Through them we come into contact with external reality. Due to original sin, though, many times senses tend to their own object, independent of the overall good of the individual. Senses, then, must be subject to discipline so that the interior and exterior harmony of the subject can be preserved on the natural level and so that a good supernatural life can flourish. Grace builds on nature.(9)

129. In today's world the mortification of the senses is even more essential since there are so many elaborate and sophisticated ways -- especially in the advertising world -- to appeal to the lower tendencies of the senses. A member of *Miles Jesu* should be thoroughly instructed in the asceticism of the mortification of the senses according to the traditional teaching of the Church and her saints, always with a positive and joyful attitude, knowing that he is not repressing his senses, but subjecting them to reason and faith.

130. St. John the Evangelist in his Epistle (cf. 1 Jn 2:16) talks about the concupiscence of the eyes. The mortification of the curiosity of the eyes has a great importance for an internal harmonious emotional life and for a well-ordered intellectual activity as the foundation of a good supernatural life. Our Blessed Lord Himself says, “If your eye is sound, your whole body is in light.” (Mt. 6:22) This, though it refers to the whole human activity, also refers in a special way to a life of chastity.

131. A *Miles Jesu* is not presumptuous and does not expose himself to any, even remote, temptations, dangers or occasions of sin. The Lord sent his disciples in two's. We should do everything possible not to go alone or with dangerous or even dubious company and always avoid scandal.

132. A *Miles Jesu* also practices some strong physical sacrifice, mainly inspired by the fasting of the Old and New Testament(10) and by the most Sacred Passion of our Blessed Lord by which He has given us an example, since only “he who has suffered in the flesh has broken with sin”. (1 Pet 4:1)

133. A member of *Miles Jesu* in the highest degrees strives to imitate St. Claret in being meager in eating.(11) Even medically, it is proven that eating too much meat

is harmful to physical health. As a general rule, it is good for the body and the soul not to eat between meals. Our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ told St. Claret, “You have to teach mortification in eating and drinking to your missionaries, Anthony,” and the Blessed Virgin added, “By doing this you will reap fruit in souls, Anthony.”(12)

134. The daily use of the discipline, except on holy days and Sundays, under the advice of the Director, is strongly recommended for those who live a celibate life and for some living in the higher degrees. The discipline creates a deeper understanding of the Passion of Jesus who voluntarily submitted Himself to it for our sake and example. It also gives us an attitude of generosity with God throughout the day instead of the unquenchable thirst for self-satisfaction practiced in today’s world.

135. We should practice strong penances voluntarily in addition to the discipline. In a world full of the thirst for pleasure, there is not much preaching about physical mortification. To be able to stand firm in a life of sanctity, like all the saints, we need the strong pillar of serious mortification. Practices like: kissing the floor voluntarily or by obedience; begging for prayers at the entrance of chapel; praying the Rosary by decades or entirely, with arms outstretched; etc.

136. For over 35 years our Ecclesial Family has had the practice of recommending the use of the disciplines, especially among members of the higher degrees who have found it to be very helpful in their spiritual lives and complementary to the other forms of mortification which we practice. Its use and purpose are thoroughly explained based on the practice of many saints and other religious institutes.

Its use is part of the wholesome tradition of our Ecclesial Family established by our founder (cf. CIC 578) and is part of the patrimony which we are obliged to preserve (cf. CIC 586) and inspired even earlier by our spiritual Father and Founder St. Claret who used them regularly (*Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*; Paras. 87, 107, 411, 644).

Evangelical Poverty

137. Since Christ not only taught poverty, but gave an example of it which is valid not only for those who profess a determined rule but for all Christians without exception, in *Miles Jesu* we intend to follow Him, as much as possible, to the letter without comment. The Second Vatican Council urges those who follow the life of perfection that they would be poor in reality and in spirit, putting their treasures in heaven (cf *Perfectae Caritatis*, 13).

138. Inviting us to follow Him, He informs us that He has no place to lay His head (cf. Lk 9:58), and invites us to the unlimited confidence in Divine Providence which takes care of the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field (cf. Mt 6:26-28); if this seems impossible to man it is not impossible for God (cf. Mk 10:23-27).

139. Poverty for the sake of poverty might be a philosophical good, but not a Christian goal. Poverty is just one more means to God and not an end in itself.

140. Through the vow, promise or virtue of the consecration with which we profess the evangelical counsel we practice real poverty and poverty of spirit, we live from our own work distanced from riches and we show strict dependence and limitation in the use and disposition of goods, following Jesus, the Poor One, in conformity with the determinations which follow (cf. can. 600).

141. Therefore, the Lord having said: “If you want to be perfect, go, sell all that you have, give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, then come, follow me,” (Mt 19:21) the members with consecration of vows renounce everything they possess and the very capacity to acquire other goods (cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 13; Const. 43c and CIC 668,5).

142. The members of the higher degrees should keep strict, absolute poverty.

143. In the communities of *Miles Jesu* we beg for our food and clothing. And since our poverty is total, before we die we must beg from the Director the use of some clothing to be buried in.

144. In the communities of *Miles Jesu* we have common dormitories. The Directors should sleep in the dormitories, but have a private room in which to receive the members of the community privately. Our beds should be small, very , like army cots or the beds of the Discalced Carmelite Sisters, and unless health reasons do not allow it, they should have a board underneath a thin mattress. When there is a powerful reason, such as sickness, proper rest, age, or even work or study, individuals may have a private room, but this should not become a common practice.

145. We cannot individually or collectively accumulate riches for our own usage. Our houses should be small, simple and poor. If we have to build something for the apostolate that is more comfortable, we should avoid any extravagance and the community who serves it should have very simple, clean and poor quarters.

146. It is a great blessing to learn to do without, individually and as a community. It is easy, as things progress, to create imagined needs that really do not exist. This can lead to a constant upgrading and renovation of houses and equipment that makes life, not more detached, but more comfortable, wasting money which should be directed to poorer communities and to the poor in general. Oftentimes, remodeling is an example of spending money unnecessarily. Our Ecclesial Family has lived in very primitive and poor conditions and was able to survive. We should strive always to that simplicity.

147. Diligent and responsible care of buildings, automobiles, equipment, furniture and clothing is an essential part of poverty. It avoids the need and even the impulse

to have to buy new things. We should strongly fight against the consumeristic mentality, which is the first enemy of poverty.

148. For those in the thirteenth, twelfth, eleventh and tenth degrees, there are to be no television sets, stereos, radios, tape recorders, etc., possessed privately. They are to keep no precious personal things or furniture. In the higher degrees it is not allowed to possess or wear expensive jewelry, just a rosary ring and a scapular medal of silver or white metal. Any personal gifts given to the members of these degrees belong to the community.

149. We want to follow our spiritual Father, St. Claret, who gives us an excellent doctrine, always practical, but especially in our apostolic missions, of sheer poverty, when we beg for food, room and transportation.(13)

150. We ought to encourage each other to the practice of our poverty, having in mind that the poor are free to preach the Truth because they have nothing to lose or fear from the powers of the world. Jesus loved poverty and those who practice it have a much better understanding of His life and message and enjoy more intimately His friendship.

151. Humility and poverty of spirit are easier for the materially poor, since they must learn to beg from the mighty of this world. They cannot afford to be proud and *stiff-necked*.(14) They only beg, though, for the minimum necessities, not to run the risk of compromising their Christian principles and poor way of life.

152. The materially and voluntarily poor are naturally grateful to men and to God. Material poverty makes the prayer of thanksgiving and praise an ordinary prayer in the lives of those who practice it. It reduces the dangers of self-righteousness and opens the heart to more graces. "Furthermore, as St. Claret says, this lack of resources abates pride, banishes arrogance, clears a path for humility, and disposes the heart to receive new graces. Thus it makes us ascend in perfection, just as lighter liquids rise to the top and heavier liquids sink to the bottom." (15)

153. Those in the 13th, 12th, 11th, and 10th degrees have no private money or allowance. "Do not possess gold, silver, nor money." (Mt 10:9) We only carry the amount of money needed to acquire the particular thing for which we were given permission. If we do not have much money with us there are less occasions of sin, since we have not the means for it.

154. We should dedicate our first money for the service of the Lord in the sick and for chapels and churches. Anything precious given to our communities or individuals which is not directly for the service of God in churches or chapels should be sold and the money applied to the apostolate or to the sick or poor.

155. We have a small common fund, and we are willing to sell everything and to take any work or occupation to care for, in poverty and in fraternal love, our sick who are in a special way the image of Jesus.(16)

156. One of the works of our Ecclesial Family is to help poor bishops, priests, religious communities, and the poor in general. We should always give away at least 10% of any income we receive (cf. can. 640).

157. Since the love of the neighbor commanded by Our Blessed Lord embraces every aspect of human life, the corporal works of mercy are an integral part of the Gospel message. For those who live in the spirit of poverty and detachment of Jesus, it should be easier to help each other, even financially, individual to individual, community to community. This should be done. We cannot claim to practice charity nor poverty when one community has too much and another does not have enough. This applies both within each community and between communities. We should preach the social teachings of the Church, and practice them as well among ourselves.

158. The celibate members with consecration of vows or promises who do not live in community may acquire, possess, administer and dispose of temporal goods with due permission from the General Director or his delegate. The General Director or his delegate should have in mind, when giving them permission, the need of those members to provide for their sickness and old age, keeping at the same time the spirit of the evangelical counsel of poverty; though in these degrees, according to Vatican II, they should not only keep the spirit of poverty, but must have a lifestyle that will reflect in practice a true poverty and detachment.

159. Other consecrated members who do not live in community are obliged to keep the detachment due to the virtue of poverty inherent in their consecration with regard to whatever material goods are possessed, acquired, etc.

160. As laity our habit is to dress modestly and elegantly as the first means of evangelization. This shows our respect for the Gospel of which we are the announcers, above all by our example, as well as our recognition of the dignity of our fellow human beings. Although we should always dress well, we should beg for our clothing or buy it from secondhand stores. Good clothing can be transported from countries where it is more abundant to countries where it is less abundant.

161. “Let the modesty of the sons (and daughters) of the Immaculate Heart of Mary be known to all men” (cf. Phil 4:5). (17) Modesty is a virtue by which we appear in public in a way that we avoid calling attention upon ourselves either because we are dressed too well, too carelessly, extravagantly, ostentatiously or shiny, or in any other way. Our own vanity and pride inspires us many times to use tricks like these to attract attention. Modesty should not be confused with sloppiness.

162. Identifying with the poor does not mean dressing sloppily or adopting other uneducated habits. The poor need to be uplifted, not condemned to their own condition (cf. Const. 301).

163. A lack of hygiene is a lack of poverty.

164. Smoking is bad for the health and goes against poverty.(18)

165. We do not really practice poverty if we are not concerned with the poor around us. St. Claret, our spiritual Father, gave us an excellent example of providing for the improvement of the material conditions of life as a means to help the spiritual.(19)

166. The history of the institutes of consecrated life of the Church shows us how they did not only live poorly, but helped their neighbor to cultivate the goods of the earth and improve their lives, using their material goods like God intended them as instruments and servants of the supernatural goods. This can be done in many different ways provided that poverty does not suffer in spirit or in fact, that our Ecclesial Family or individuals do not become power-hungry, and that this will be used for the highest spiritual purposes of our Ecclesial Family, i.e., the Glory of God, the salvation of souls, the service of the Church, our own sanctification and the spreading of the Kingdom of God. A daily purification of our motives and practices by private and collective examination of conscience should be a great safeguard. Each individual can practice this according to his possibilities, talents, generosity and commitment.

167. Although Our Blessed Lord Himself and His Church have a preference for the poor, this is not to the exclusion of the leaders of society and the rich. This was re-affirmed by Pope John Paul II: “As I have already noted, love for the poor must be preferential, but not be exclusive. The Synod Fathers observed that it was in part because of an approach to the pastoral care of the poor marked by a certain exclusiveness that the pastoral care for the leading sectors of society has been neglected and many people have thus been estranged from the Church. The damage done by the spread of secularism in these sectors -- political or economic, union-related, military, social or cultural -- shows how urgent it is that they be evangelized...insisting especially on the formation of consciences on the basis of the Church's social doctrine. This formation will act as the best antidote to the not infrequent cases of inconsistency and even corruption marking socio-political structures.” (Ecclesia in America, 67) Our Lord came to save everyone. St. Paul exhorts, “I became all things to all men.” (1 Cor.9:22) To Christianize the influential of society and their children is a very essential part of Christianizing the world. The poor are for sure helped also by Christianizing the consciences of the influential.

168. For everyone, whatever comes to them in consideration of our Ecclesial Family belongs to our Ecclesial Family (cf. can. 600).

Work, the privilege of the poor

169. The poor have no choice but to work. We are not poor if we do not work.

170. “When we were with you we used to lay down the rule that anyone who would not work should not eat. We hear that some of you are unruly, not keeping busy but acting like busy-bodies. We enjoin all such, and we urge them strongly in the Lord Jesus Christ, to earn the food they eat by working quietly. You must never grow weary of doing what is right, brothers. May He who is the Lord of peace give you continued peace in every possible way.” (2 Thes 3:10-13,16)

171. Work is a most important means for sanctification in our system of asceticism and apostolate. The lay members especially should realize that they have the obligation to sanctify the world through their lay jobs or professions. A layman's job or profession is not just something to tolerate, to put up with or to make money; it is above all his tool *par excellence* to sanctify the world. His dedication and professionalism is the way to co-create the world with God. Among other examples, a modern airplane is a magnificent instrument given to humanity by God through the dedication and intelligence of many human beings.

172. “They should, each in his own assigned task, consider themselves bound by the common law of labor, and while by this means they are provided with whatever they need for their sustenance or their work, they should reject all undue solicitude, putting their trust in the providence of the heavenly Father” (*cf. Mt 6:25*). (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 13)

173. Nevertheless, in this most important spirit of balance, one always should have in mind that work is just one more means to God and not make a god out of work. We should only worship the Lord and only to Him dedicate our lives.

174. In this Ecclesial Family, regardless of position or occupation, no one should be so busy or so intellectual that he or she does not occupy himself sometimes with manual work, simple things like cleaning the house or washing dishes, sweeping the floors, etc.. These little things keep us more down to earth and help us avoid living in a dream or fantasy world. They help our humility and make us realize that our vocation is not to be lords but servants. In one word, it makes us more human and more meek, this in imitation of Our Lord who was known as the carpenter's son. St. Claret, as an archbishop, used to do menial work in the hospital at night when it was not so noticeable.

175. Those who work inside the communities still have the financial responsibility for the expenses of the community.

176. Working inside the communities demands as much responsibility as working outside, since in both cases we are working for God and for the salvation of souls.

177. As people in secular jobs cannot easily leave their jobs to make visits to friends or family, those working in the communities should consider their job even more sacred and not easily abandon it. They are working for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

178. To strive for excellence in our jobs and professions, inside or outside the communities, is a matter of collaborating with God in the creation of the world, of contributing to a continuous improvement of society, of service to our fellow man, and is a concrete expression of our zeal for souls and our responsible obedience.

179. An irresponsible person is not a spiritual person. In one of His parables Our Lord praises the good administrator of money: “You have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater.” (Mt 25:21)

Chapter III

CARDINAL VIRTUES

Charity

180. “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.’ (1 Jn 4:16) God has poured out His love in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (cf. Rom 5:15); therefore the first and most necessary gift is charity, by which we love God above all things and our neighbor because of Him.... This is because love, as the bond of perfection and fullness of the law (cf. Col 3:14; Rom 13:10), governs, gives meaning to, and perfects all the means of sanctification. Hence the true disciple of Christ is marked by love both of God and of his neighbor.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 42)

181. So we have a clear idea of what the love of God is, Jesus said, “If you love Me you will keep my commandments”. (Jn 14:15) The genuine love of our neighbor looks first and above all for his eternal salvation, without neglecting the rest of his human needs. “I was hungry and you gave me to eat.” (Mt 25:35)

182. Neighbor means the one who is closest to you, spiritually and physically. We do not love our neighbor if we do not first love our own brothers and sisters in our entire Ecclesial Family of *Miles Jesu*. “Therefore, while we have time, let us do good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” (Gal 6:10) St. Ignatius of Loyola wanted the supreme rule for his Society of Jesus to be the *Lex Amoris*, and so do we for *Miles Jesu*. Paragraph 2 of these Constitutions says that the supreme rule of *Miles Jesu* is to follow Christ Who says, “In this they will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another,” not just in any way but, “as I have loved you”. The most powerful way to attract vocations to *Miles Jesu* will be if people see that we really love one another.

183. True love does not wait for great opportunities; it is expressed in the thousands of little details of life. Love is detail; it is caring, thoughtful and very practical. Love does not ask, it gives. Love is ingenious.

184. The love of neighbor in *Miles Jesu* is simple. It does not seek attention. It is even surprised when it is discovered. The *Miles Jesu* love of neighbor really and in practice cares for the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social good of our brothers and sisters and anybody we meet, excluding no one.

185. Love is not feelings, it is action, action for the good of the other. Love with feelings is easier but not more genuine. “If you love those who love you, what reward have you?” (Mt 5:46)

186. “Real love is demanding. For it was Jesus -- our Jesus himself -- who said: 'You are my friends if you do what I command you.' (Jn15:14) Love demands effort and a personal commitment to the will of God. It means discipline and sacrifice, but it also means joy and human fulfillment.”(1)

187. No competition or division should exist between clerics and lay people, between men and women, etc. “A house divided cannot stand. (Mt 12:25) If you go on biting and tearing one another to pieces, take care! You will end up in mutual destruction.” (Gal 5:15) Realizing that “in my Father's house there are many mansions,” (Jn 14:1) each one should be happy with the lot that the Lord has reserved for him, growing in his sanctification in the fulfillment of the duties and privileges given to their particular vocation (cf. 1 Cor 12:12-31). Any type of power struggle between clerics and lay people, men and women, will seriously hurt the cause and the purpose of *Miles Jesu*; and instead of helping to build the edifice of the Church, it will tear apart Her structure (cf. Const. 118).

188. In the *Miles Jesu* communities, the members' virtues and faults are eventually told to each individual in different ways, so everything is dealt with in the open and there is no room for gossip behind anybody's back. This creates a healthy atmosphere that nourishes and encourages true love among all the members of our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life. This also develops humility and charity between the one who is told and the one who tells. We simply care for everybody's continuous improvement starting with oneself.

189. Never speak badly of each other, especially with outsiders. Keep the defects of your brothers and sisters a family matter; always defend each other except in the case of doctrinal error or obvious lack of discipline especially against the Church. Make this your own law: "I will not talk against my Ecclesial Family, and I will not let anyone else talk in my presence against my Ecclesial Family."

190. The Directors should be the first in giving example of this love. To govern is to love (cf. Ch. V, Government; Ch. II, section on Obedience and Directors).

191. One concrete and practical way by which we practice this love is the group reunion. We need one another to grow and persevere until death in our beautiful and struggling way of love of God and neighbor (cf. can. 602). For this, every week we make group reunion, Cursillos-in-Christianity style, to share with and encourage each other. This group reunion has its doctrinal basis in the following teaching of St. Teresa of Jesus, Doctor of the Church: “It is a great evil for a soul beset by so many dangers to be alone.... For this reason I would advise those who practice prayer, especially at first, to cultivate friendship and intercourse with others of similar interests. This is a most important thing.... For people trouble so little about things pertaining to the service of God that we must all back each other up if those of us who serve Him are to make progress.... It is a kind of humility for a man not to trust himself but to believe that God will help him in dealing with those

with whom he has intercourse. Charity grows when it is communicated to others.”
(2)

192. The communication of charity to others is the essence of the apostolate. A love of God that is centered in self is a contradiction, an impossibility. Love by its essence is diffusive with no limitations. The enemy of love is self-centeredness.

193. As consecrated laity, our love of God naturally expands over into the world. “The Holy Spirit...has called to himself, by a great and special grace, many beloved sons and daughters...so that...they may be for this dark world which has lost its savor...the leaven, small in quantity yet ever active, which always and everywhere at work, mingled with all grades of society, from the highest to the lowest, strives by word, example and in every way to reach and permeate them each and all until the whole mass is transformed and wholly leavened in Christ.” (3)

194. *Miles Jesu* does not pretend to be the only faith family in the Church. It realizes the Church is a garden with many different flowers in which God reflects His Infinite Beauty and Power, creating many gifts and vocations according to each temperament and historical circumstance (cf. can. 577). As a consequence, we realize we are a part of the Mystical Body of Christ that has the obligation to collaborate with the other faith families in building up the edifice of the Church for the salvation of men. Pettiness must be avoided and personal views sacrificed.

195. *Miles Jesu* commits itself to work for the unity of all the Christian denominations in the bosom of Mother Catholic Church with practical charity, to fulfill the will of the Lord that there may be one flock under one shepherd, the Vicar of Christ. This unity can only be accomplished by a sincere effort to be one in Jesus Christ, in the renunciation of self.

196. The proof of love is time -- a love that will last through all the ups and downs of life, all the good and bad times, all the feeling good, feeling bad, feeling nothing. This is a love in which the loved one is more important than or at least as important as myself. “Love your neighbor as yourself. Love one another as I (Jesus) have loved you,” laying down my life for you. A love that lasts is genuine.

Poverty of Spirit

197. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Mt 5:3)

198. We are the followers of Jesus, the Poor of Yahweh.

199. It is our deep belief that we must come back to the sincerity, the simplicity, and the poverty of the Gospel.

200. This poverty is first of all spiritual, of the spirit. A man recognizes himself indigent, poor, helpless -- spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, physically, psychologically and economically. In every single aspect of life we depend willingly or unwillingly from Almighty God. We are beggars. "Every hair on your head has been counted." (Mt 10:30)

Sincerity

201. To be able to admit this sheer poverty of ours and make it fruitful we must be violently sincere with ourselves, with God and with others. "The kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force." (Mt 11:12) This is why God loves a sincere heart, a heart which is in love with truth.(4)

202. Without sincerity it is impossible to be spiritually poor, and the gift of self dies, and for this the observations of our brothers and sisters can be most valuable. For example, during the Spiritual Exercises every year we have our chapter of virtues and faults in which each one is told his positive and negative points. After one is told a list of his faults it takes true humility to accept the list of one's virtues.

203. Our sincerity should be checked against our actions, not only against our words. "Through your precepts I gain discernment, therefore I hate every false way." (Ps 118:104)

204. Most of all, we must be sincere with our superiors, our brothers and sisters, and our spiritual directors. "He who acts with sincerity and speaks sincerely...will dwell in the heights, he will find refuge in a citadel built on rock." (Is 33:15,16)

Prayer

205. But a man who is so much in love and in contact with the truth of the reality of his sheer poverty and of God's infinite richness cannot help but fall on his knees and humbly beg God for help, thank Him for everything he has, praise Him for everything He is, atone for any mistake or sin he has committed, in a word, pray.(5)

206. A continuous life of prayer is the essence of our life consecrated to God.

207. From the very beginning of *Miles Jesu* there has been a special emphasis on meditation in depth. "It is morally impossible for him who neglects meditation to live without sin." (6)

208. Prayer is communication with God. If we are too concerned about my recollection, my sins, my faults, my virtues, or my defects, we are liable to end up with only the my, a big *ego*, incapable of communicating with God. In our prayer we need to examine our lives, but we need even more to contemplate the wonders of God or we might become discouraged.

209. Some people confuse prayer with introspection. Prayer is communication with God; introspection is absorption with oneself, i.e., self-centeredness. In true prayer God is the end; in introspection God is used merely as a means for someone to go deeper and deeper into self-centeredness.

210. In order to avoid living in an unrealistic dream world in which the person comes to a point where he cannot distinguish between reality and fantasy (in extreme cases in psychology this is called schizophrenia), special attention should be paid to the internal sense of imagination or fantasy, which is most necessary to have under mortification and control. Otherwise, true prayer is impossible and consequently any true Christian life falls to pieces.

211. We have group prayer and private prayer, both essential and complementary.

212. Daily we have our Holy Mass (or Divine Liturgy) and strongly encourage daily Communion (do not trust an apostle who does not hunger for daily Communion); every day is started with an hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament (exposed in the Latin Rite), ordinarily this is followed by Holy Mass and one-half hour of thanksgiving after Holy Mass.(7) This way the Holy Mass is more profoundly lived and the meditation is centered around the highest act of worship. At the *Confiteor* of the Holy Mass or before the recitation of Psalm 50 at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy different individuals publicly confess some of their faults. We also have 45 minutes of adoration to the Blessed Sacrament in the evenings (when Holy Mass is in the evening it is preferable to have the hour of adoration in the morning and one half hour of adoration before Holy Mass in the evening); the Angelus (or part of the Eastern-Rite Akafist Hymn) three times daily and particular examen at noon, all as group prayers. Privately we say daily the rosary, evening general examination of conscience and twenty minutes of private prayer in chapel.

213. Weekly each one goes to confession and has an hour of nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. "At night my soul longs for you... my Lord". (Is. 26,8,9)

214. Monthly, our day of recollection with its prayer-penance meeting of self-accusation. (cf. Jas 5:16)

215. Yearly, we have our Spiritual Exercises of eight complete days preferably during Holy Week. This is obligatory for those in the highest degrees and for those

who live in a *Miles Jesu* house. For the others, the additional governing books will specify more in detail.

216. The Rosary has a prevalent place in our spirituality. Of St. Claret it was said, “Her rosary was never out of his hand.” (8) St. Louis de Montfort says that the apostles of Mary shall carry the rosary in their hands.(9)

217. The Stations of the Cross are an excellent way to meditate on the Passion of Our Lord, to learn to cope with sufferings and difficulties and to grow in the love of Jesus.

218. A mere recitation of words is not prayer. “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.” (Mt 15:18) St. Teresa of Jesus talks about people who pray but don't pray. Quite frequently the words of the prayers are repeated over and over again without one reflecting on what he is saying, letting the imagination wander.

219. The official prayers of the Church are full of deep theological ideas. The *Miles Jesu* prayers have been very carefully selected to form apostles in the backbone ideas of the spirituality of Christianity. To really pray and get the full benefit from them, we must stop frequently and choose just one of those words or ideas to meditate upon and digest profoundly, even doing it over and over again on the same ones. This will truly bring the heart into communication with God, to actually pray.

220. It is impossible to talk with a person while thinking of another. To converse with God, which is prayer, we have to have an image of Our Divine Lord or His Mother before the external eyes or in the internal eye of the imagination through a painting (theology of the icon), a statue or a passage of Their lives. This is central to the theology of prayer of St. Teresa of Jesus (Avila).

221. Generally speaking, after night prayers an atmosphere of silence should be kept in the houses of our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life. This helps to respect the members in their rest and creates an atmosphere of prayer and study. All the members of our Ecclesial Family should have in mind what the Church says to consecrated men and women: “The interior man is aware that times of silence are demanded by love of God. As a rule he needs a certain solitude so that he may hear God 'speaking to his heart.' It must be stressed that a silence which is a mere absence of noise and words, in which the soul cannot renew its vigor, would obviously lack any spiritual value. It could even be harmful to fraternal charity, if at that moment it were essential to have contact with others. On the contrary, the search for intimacy with God involves the truly vital need of a silence embracing the whole being, both for those who must find God in the midst of noise and confusion and for contemplatives. Faith, hope and a love for God which is open to the gifts of the Spirit, and also a brotherly love which is open to the mystery of others carry with them an imperative need for silence.” (Evangelica Testificatio, 46)

222. St. Claret's idea for the layman in the world is a contemplative within the world, finding in the Immaculate Heart of Mary the sweetest, the most tender and delicate cloister.(10) Following his teaching, *Miles Jesu's* spirituality is strongly founded on meditation and contemplation. The full realization of this are the contemplative *Miles Jesu* communities for men or women in which some *Miles Jesu* members live a contemplative life permanently and where others retire themselves from time to time to recover spiritual strength, vigor and peace. "The contemplative life should be restored everywhere because it belongs to the fullness of the Church's presence." (Ad Gentes, 18)

Joy

223. Our whole spirituality should be marked with joy. Joy is a gift from the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Thes 1:6; Gal 5:22). A son or daughter of Mary is full of gratitude and joy because he or she has been chosen.(11) A soldier of Jesus cannot afford sadness of the spirit or depression which certainly leads to defeat. "Rejoice in the Lord. (Phil 3:1) I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness." (Phil 4:4) After all, each of us, along with every other human being, is worth the blood of Christ.

224. As St. Francis of Assisi says, "Are you sad because you have fallen into sin? Go to confession and be happy again."

225. An apostle of youth gives youth joy, love and direction: Christian joy, chaste love, and the direction of the official teaching of the Church, not his private direction. He respects youth with joy. He does not experiment on them with his or anyone else's private ideas. He does not impose on the youth his moods.

226. Christian joy is the joy that comes from knowing that we are worshipping a loving, forgiving God, a God who becomes one of us and who gives us His Mother for our maternal, virginal intercessor. We believe that today there is too much self-righteousness and not enough of a spirit of obedience. This is why there is not enough joy, joy like the joy of the Blessed Mother which is not based on self, but on the Lord: "My heart rejoices in the Lord my Savior". We believe this type of joy is a good preserver of the true Christian spirit, in particular in *Miles Jesu* - a joyful soldier.

227. Our sheer poverty is a great source of joy because it puts our security not in human limited means, but in the infinite goodness of the Father. Our Queen and Mother is the *Cause of our Joy*.

228. A very important means of evangelizing without making it appear as such, and thus especially suited to the anti-religious and which is within the reach of all of us, is casual conversation with co-workers and strangers when doing daily jobs or

traveling. People are open to a friendly attitude especially if it is a joyful one and shows unselfish interest in them. This is a great means to work for the salvation of souls and to do practical daily charity in a simple way, and to influence people as St. Claret himself practiced and recommended.(12) *Joy, a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.*

Loyalty

229. We must be absolutely loyal to the official Magisterium of the hierarchical Church instituted by Jesus which, objective and free from private interpretations, has kept for 2,000 years the pristine revelation of God given to us by Jesus and handed down to us through the centuries by the Tradition of the Church. We do not follow a Christ who is the product of anyone's imagination or private ideas, but the historical Christ with His objective message of salvation transmitted to us through the Church founded by Him.

230. Our spiritual Father, St. Claret, was a great defender of the infallibility of the Holy Father during Vatican I. We must be strong defenders of the principle, *Sentire cum Petro* (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 25).

231. St. Ignatius' Rules for *Sentire cum Ecclesia* are so good and practical that we want to make them our own so we will apply them to all our undertakings.(13)

232. Absolute and unconditional loyalty to *Miles Jesu* is of utmost importance also.

233. Any human institution can only be built on unconditional and perpetual dedication. Those members who have it are the backbone of it and the ones who get the most benefits.

Chapter IV

FORMATION

234. A Miles Jesu, Soldier of Jesus and Son or Daughter of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, is called by God to the following realities which are different dimensions of the same vocation. For a true and complete formation it is absolutely necessary to have in mind all these points and realities. Sometimes formation is incomplete, with bad results when some of these points are not kept in mind. Angelism, which does not count on the vegetative, animal and psychological aspects of human life, can have disastrous results. A materialistic approach ends up in self-destruction. A naturalistic approach annihilates any true spiritual life. An eclectic approach, in which all religions become the same and Christian reality is de-emphasized, ends up in skepticism – a superstitious magical thinking without the divine and human reality of the Church, sacraments and hierarchy. This ends in chaos and self-deceit. To avoid all these dangers and many others, our formation should have in mind all the following points:

God calls us. (God's call is efficient, what He calls He creates.)

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom says: "We thank You, O invisible King, by Your infinite power You created all things and, in Your great mercy, You brought all things from nothingness into being. Look down from heaven, O Master, ... guide the course of our life for our own benefit and in accord with each one's personal need."

This masterpiece describes man's being and needs. As such, it outlines the extent of the Miles Jesu (Soldier of Jesus) formation:

1st. God calls us to be. Our existence belongs to God, not to us.

2nd. God calls us to be vegetative, with its own needs and demands,. For example, the importance of digestion for healthy physical and psychological well-being.

3rd. God calls us as a higher gift to be sensitive animals. Here some of our emotions often have an animal sensitive origin, though not exclusively. These feelings sometimes have origins from the soul.

4th. God calls us in His infinite goodness, from being purely material, to be spiritual also with an intellectual soul, making man the point of union of all creation, between the material and the spiritual. The human intellect is subject to the bodily senses for its information: a rational soul.

5th. God calls us to be supernatural, elevating man from the natural to the supernatural, making him to share the very Divine Nature of God, in grace, like the prophets and saints of the Old Testament, and those of the just who have not received the sacramental Christian baptism yet.

6th. Here appears with gigantic proportions the Only-Begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ. This turns history all around. Jesus Christ becomes the center around which all history revolves.

7th. “In the fullness of time,” (Eph. 1:10) God the Father sent His Only-Begotten Son to become a Man without ceasing to be God. “His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave.” (Phil. 2:6,7) The Father sent His Only-Begotten Son to make man a son of God by grace. This is a giant step for man being admitted into God’s very Trinitarian Being. Man becomes a son of God, by grace, by his intimate union with the Son of God but without ceasing being himself.

Men as sons of God are not many christs. There is only one Christ. All of us are united profoundly in the Son of God. “There is no room for distinction between Greek and Jew, between the circumcised or the uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free man.” (Col. 3:11) “All of you are one* (*person*) in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:28). *This “one” in Greek, is a personal pronoun, not neuter.

8th. God calls us in Confirmation to receive the fullness of Christ with the gift of the very Person of the Holy Spirit, the Trinitarian “impetus.” In Baptism we are united with Christ as sons of the Father. In Confirmation we become united with Christ also as the Spire with the Father of the Holy Spirit. Then man is made a Soldier of Jesus as a member of the Church. “The effect of the Sacrament of Confirmation is that in it is given the Holy Spirit for strengthening, as He was given to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, namely that the Christian may boldly profess the name of Christ” (*Council of Florence, Decretum pro Armenis*).

9th. God calls us to be one in fact with all Christians, and in potency with all human beings, and taught us to pray in plural saying: Our Father... give us this day *our* daily bread... forgive *us our* trespasses. Individualism has no place in Christianity.

10th. God calls us to be a family. Every man is born into a family. The commandment “honor your father and mother” is rooted in our very being. Man is essentially social, normally called to form a natural family, the natural family sacramentally elevated by Jesus Christ to a supernatural level. For everyone though, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, God and Savior must be first. “Whoever loves father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.” (Mt. 10:37) “For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.” (*Gloria, Roman Missal*)

11th. God calls some of us to a higher life of consecration directly to the service of God “for the sake of the Kingdom.” Those called to this life choose poverty to be free from material possessions, perfect chastity to have the freedom of

heart to love everybody, and obedience to God's representatives in the Church, to be free from one's self (*cf. Const. 96*) that we might live no longer for ourselves but for You, our Master and Benefactor." Then man can make a faith-family of consecrated individuals. (*Eucharistic Prayer IV, Roman Missal; Prayer after Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*).

All these natural and supernatural gifts from Almighty God unite together to lead us to heaven for all eternity, "where the sound of those celebrating never ceases and where there is no end to the delight of those who behold the ineffable beauty of Your face." (*Prayer after Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*)

Sacrifice, mortification is not a negative thing. It is the way to bring our nature to the necessary saving self-discipline. It might be sometimes painful like a surgical operation but always healing for the individual as a whole. For example, for years we thought that fasting was good for the soul but a negative, painful exercise for the body. Medicine has discovered today that fasting is most of the time healthy for both the body and the soul, and sometimes the only way to survive. Jesus Christ, Our God, is not an enemy of the human body. He redeemed it and saved it through the sacrifice of His Own Body on the Cross, feeds it in the Eucharist, the Body of Christ, and prepares it for the resurrection.

12th. God calls the human race to the highest intimate life in the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, in Mary, True Mother of God and ever Virgin who uniquely, through the person of God the Father (*cf. Creed of the 12th Council of Toledo*), becomes the instrumental Mother of God, the true God-Bearing-One "ever blessed and immaculate Mother of our God. More honorable, more honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you." (*Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*) The Immaculate Heart of the Immaculate Mother of God symbolizes the summit of the love of a mere creature, Mary, for God and for man.

235. The formation of the members of *Miles Jesu* at all levels is the most important occupation and responsibility of all Superiors and Directors of *Miles Jesu*. They have the grave duty to look after the formation of each and everyone taking personal interest in each individual.

236. One's formation depends primarily from the individual's interest and efforts to assimilate the spirit of *Miles Jesu* and to grow in its virtues. The program of formation of *Miles Jesu* aids and guides the member's efforts in this process. Therefore, no one can be formed who has the passive attitude, "Form me," and takes no personal interest in his own formation.

237. Being that the permanent attitude of perfection in everything is an intrinsic demand of their consecration and of the mission of *Miles Jesu*, the members of *Miles Jesu* will continue their own formation without rest throughout their whole life.

238. All who enter our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life should keep all the Constitutions and rules in their entirety pertaining to their degree of commitment. With their whole heart and strength, with the help of divine grace, they should keep these Constitutions and rules perfectly.

239. This formation should be deeper and longer as the commitments are greater and the degrees of consecration higher.

240. Do everything possible so that all those who are going to have positions of great responsibility are prepared for it by a special year of formation all together in one central international location. As much as possible those in the twelfth and thirteenth degrees should also have one year of spiritual formation in one central international location. Preferably this should be done at our Ecclesial Family's headquarters or at our Ecclesial Family's birthplace.

241. In order to be admitted to a higher degree, a member must first go through a process of formation, systematically organized to give him a fuller understanding and assimilation of the charismatic life and mission of *Miles Jesu*. The nature, specific ends and duration peculiar to this necessary formative process are found articulated in a defined program or "Ratio formationis," inspired by these Constitutions, but independently elaborated.

242. In our "Ratio formationis" these Constitutions occupy a privileged place which is basic, peculiar and constant. It is the obligation of those in charge of formation: 1st, to deepen the understanding of the spirit and laws of *Miles Jesu* in prayer, in study and in the knowledge of the history of our Ecclesial Family; 2nd, to explain in detail with clarity the principles which give form to its spirituality according to these Constitutions in the introductory section, Founding Charism, nn. 1-25, and other complementary books.

243. An essential means of formation is Spiritual Direction with the spiritual directors of our Ecclesial Family.

244. The defining and fundamentally inspiring characteristics of our formation must be:

1st, Human as a sound base for the supernatural formation. Our members, each in their own sphere, personality and possibilities, should improve their human education in all the aspects of life: intellectual, emotional, social and professional education. Our poverty of spirit and our evangelical poverty make us even more clear examples of our dignity and simplicity as children of the King of the Universe presenting the Gospel with humility, respect and with as much perfection as possible in our profession;

245. 2nd, Christian, working principally to acquire the virtues as means to imitate and to unite us to Christ with Whom we are one by Baptism;

246. 3rd, Marian, in a deep love and dependence on the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady of the Epiphany, to share in the love of Jesus for His Mother and in the love of the Heart of Mary for Her Son.

247. 4th, Formation in our life of Consecration in the different degrees. We should be formed in a profound mentality of our belonging to the Lord and the Mother through our joyful and voluntary consecration;

248. 5th, Militantly Apostolic, according to the spirit of these Constitutions. Our apostolic spirit is the spirit of a Soldier of Jesus in the Church Militant, a dynamic and vanguard spirit. Even the prayer of each *Miles Jesu* should be burning with the ideal to further God's kingdom in the world and vibrant in total confidence in the all-powerful strength of Jesus, not in his own abilities. The prayer of a *Miles Jesu* animates and makes efficient all other means, making himself a true Soldier of Jesus.

249. 6th, Claretian, mainly in the reading and meditation of the very writings of St. Claret, especially the Autobiography in its spirit and letter.

250. The better a member is formed, the more valuable he is for the purpose of our Ecclesial Family. Let us be careful with a formation which develops too much the intellectual, leaving behind the spiritual. Nevertheless, intellectual laziness is no virtue. Knowledge is power in the salvation of souls.

251. *Miles Jesu*, as much as possible, should strive to give to the lay members the same type of formation in philosophy and theology that the priests receive so they can be firm in the faith and intelligent defenders of the Church. "Be ready to answer anyone...." (1 Pet 3:15) This especially should be applied to the members of the Vanguard and the twelfth degree. In this way more people can be available for ordination in case of need and for a better and wider choice for the election of the General Director. The priests and those who already have this philosophical and theological formation should organize courses in catechism, philosophy, theology, canon law and Church history for the formation of the others.

252. A feature which is essential in the formation of a member is an imperishable loyalty and an unbreakable fidelity to the Holy Father.

253. Fidelity to one's vocation is also an essential part of formation. "Let the [members of *Miles Jesu*] remember that the calling to the apostolic ministry is a special gift from God: it is a calling to a divine state, to which our Lord has promised a hundredfold in this life and eternal glory hereafter. However, let it be known that, according to St. Jerome, eternity depends on one's vocation, and for this reason the Apostle exhorts us to continue in it, saying: 'Let every man abide in the same calling in which he was called.' (1Cor 7:20) And in another place he says: 'Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he has justified, them he has also glorified.' (Rm 8:30) From this follows the absolute necessity of remaining

faithful to one's vocation. This is, doubtless, the reason why the devil, transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14), assails it and tries it in so many ways; and thus, not without great detriment to one's own soul and those of others, he removes not a few from the vocation to which God has called them. And he prevents many even from embracing apostolic life, availing himself now of the inordinate love of relatives, now of the fear of sickness entailed by work, now of a false persuasion of their lack of knowledge and prudence; finally, insinuating a false humility, or filling them with the idea that they can work better elsewhere to their own sanctification and that of others.”(1)

254. “In order then to avoid these dangers let them be mindful of these words of the Divine Master: 'He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.' (Mt 10:37) And elsewhere: 'If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother...he cannot be my disciple.' (Lk 14:26) Again: 'Everyone of you that does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be my disciple.' (Lk 14:33) And again, 'Whosoever does not take his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.' (Lk 14:27) Accordingly, they shall embrace a life disengaged from parents, relatives, and even from themselves: they shall have no intercourse with the world, and, as from something greatly harmful, they shall flee from every particular friendship -- even with those who live in our Ecclesial Family -- especially with those who are sad, or speak ill of it, or give other signs of a doubtful vocation.” (2)

255. “For the love of Jesus Christ Who said: 'He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,' (Mt 10:37) let them leave their parents and relatives and be in affection like Melchisedech, 'without father, without mother, without genealogy,' (Heb 7:3) loving them only with a spiritual love, even though they evince sadness remembering that they have a Father in heaven, Whom alone they must please. Therefore let them not desire to visit their country, or their parents or relatives, under pretext of piety, or procuring the salvation of their souls, or to be visited by them, or to concern themselves with their personal affairs.” (3)

256. St. Claret warns that sadness is the moth that destroys many vocations. St. Teresa of Jesus has strong teachings against what she calls melancholy. Today this is called depression. Some, with good intention but bad knowledge confuse depression with piety, or humility, or recollection and let their imaginations go uncontrolled. As Saints warn us, this is a great danger in which sometimes the devil even disguises himself as an angel of light in order to destroy what could have otherwise been excellent vocations (cf. Ch. III, section on Joy).

257. A *Miles Jesu* whose own honor in serving Jesus does not stimulate him to be faithful to his duties and even go beyond them with his own initiatives, proves that he is not aware of the importance of the service of God, which is more important than the service of any purely human enterprise. A *Miles Jesu* who does not speak often of his vocation and Ecclesial Family proves that he does not appreciate his call to the service of the great King.

258. Any member who does not have a sense of financial responsibility for his own expenses and those of our Ecclesial Family is lacking an integral part of his basic human formation. A member of *Miles Jesu* cannot have the attitude that he only prays or studies and the others have to support him financially, that is, "You work and i pray." On the contrary, all of us work and all of us pray.

259. A person who is not formed with a zeal for vocations is not formed.

260. The men and women in *Miles Jesu* should always be gentlemen and ladies in their attire, speech and social manners. They should be gentlemen and ladies in dealing with the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated, and with all races. In a special way the men should be gentlemen in dealing with women. Our brother Paul Murphy was a striking example of making women feel at ease and respected. A man is more of a man who knows how to respect women. Likewise the ladies should show maturity and respect in their relations with men, not demanding privileges. The men and women of *Miles Jesu* should not look for undue attention from members of the opposite sex, which makes their hearts empty.

Special Guidelines For Women

261. From the inception of the Ladies' Branch of this Ecclesial Family, our Father Founder firmly established that the women should not be the servants of the men. Men and women are equal in the eyes of God and should be equal in the eyes of our Ecclesial Family. Neither is superior to the other, just different. These differences should not be minimized. God made them and they should be respected and taken into proper consideration. Feminism, which is really an aspiration to be the same as men, is rooted in an inferiority complex and is the negation of the feminine gifts of women.

262. Though there should always be much charity and generosity between all the branches of our Ecclesial Family, nevertheless, for the sake of keeping everything clear (something that always helps the harmony of mutual relations), the Ladies' Branch in general and each community in particular should be economically independent; though between the branches the communication of goods should be very generous. The ladies should help the men in whatever is more proper for them and vice versa.

263. They will offer constantly their work and their prayers for all the needs of our Ecclesial Family. They must have a very abundant life of prayer and recollection. Some of the ladies (but not only they) should recite daily the Office of the Blessed Mother praying for vocations for our whole Ecclesial Family, as St. Claret recommends.(4) Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament should have a very important and extensive part in the lives of all of the members of *Miles Jesu*. The ladies especially should zealously spread this devotion together with a great love for the Immaculate Heart of our most beautiful Mother and her rosary.

264. They should watch out especially for sins of speech. “If a man who does not control his tongue imagines that he is devout, he is self-deceived; his worship is pointless.” (Jas 1:26-27)

265. As prudence demands and the example of the Gospel teaches, they should always keep a proper distance and inspire respect in their relationships with the men in *Miles Jesu* and with other men as well.

266. The ladies, especially widows and divorcees in whatever degree they are allowed to belong, should avoid the danger of using the men's branch as a psychological substitute for husbands. The men in *Miles Jesu*, likewise, should be aware of the danger of using the women as psychological substitutes for their mothers or for wives.

267. The *Miles Jesu* women should be dynamic leaders and, at the same time, very feminine like St. Teresa of Jesus and the Servant of God, Queen Isabel.

268. In the history of the Church many outstanding women with their feminine and motherly gifts have accomplished great missions: the education of children, the care of the sick, the teaching of the spiritual life, and in being the backbone of civilization. The fruitfulness of the virgins of the Church, spouses of Christ, has been overwhelming in the human and divine spheres.

269. The development of the feminine gifts of a woman is an essential part of her human equilibrium. A woman who deals only with papers and office work runs the risk of becoming unbalanced.

270. The *Miles Jesu* ladies should learn the arts of hospitality, sewing, embroidery, cooking, cleaning, etc. and should be exemplary in the care of people and things. Queen Isabel the Catholic, an outstanding ruler and leader of people, used to sew the garments of her husband.

271. All women are made by God to be mothers. For the consecrated celibate ladies of *Miles Jesu* this means becoming spiritual mothers.

272. Unguided and unmortified feelings hurt the emotional life, imperil one's vocation, damage community relationships, and handicap the apostolate. This is especially important for women, whose dependence on feelings is stronger. Meditation on the Litany of Humility or Freedom by Cardinal Merry del Val as well as developing the intellectual capacities can help avoid these dangers. In this again, St. Teresa of Jesus and Queen Isabel are examples of real feminine women with clear thinking.

273. Feelings in women, generally, are more powerful than in men. This is their virtue and their fault at the same time. When they are applied for the good, it can produce saints, and in fact, there are more canonized women than men. When they

are applied wrongly it can create a lot of negative feelings and divisions in women's communities.

274. It happens not infrequently that a group of women who live or work together focus too much on the negative feelings about each other's faults, real or imagined. There cannot be a good spiritual life when one is caught up in the negative points of others. Nevertheless, women's communities are much more numerous and have more group activities. The ladies of *Miles Jesu* should focus on the positive qualities of others, for example by writing an objective list of their virtues and talents. Saints have the art of finding the positive in their own brothers and sisters. This will provide for a healthy community life which greatly helps chastity, encourages vocations and facilitates perseverance. This fault is not a monopoly of women; it also happens with men.

275. It is essential for the celibate *Miles Jesu* woman to be deeply aware and thankful that the Lord has chosen her to be His spouse. Her personal career or job should be thoroughly permeated by this reality. Her vocation as the spouse of the Lord is her most fundamental calling, above all other jobs and occupations.

276. The women members of *Miles Jesu* should nurture in their spiritual lives a special devotion to the Passion of Our Lord. Meditation, in common and in private, on the sufferings of Our Lord is an excellent way to cultivate the compassion of a woman's heart. The Immaculate Heart of Mary gives us a masterful example of accompanying Our Lord in his trials and sufferings.

277. Each lady member of *Miles Jesu* should endeavor to enter into personal conversation with the Blessed Mother each day, asking her to reveal herself more and more as her Mother, her Virgin model of purity, her model of life and her most intimate friend. St. Clare encourages the daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to enter into Her Immaculate Heart as a refuge, a cell of recollection and a furnace of formation.(5)

Widows

278. *Miles Jesu* has a special mission, not only to work with widows, but more importantly to develop in the widows the awareness of their talents and possibilities, to deepen their spirituality and to use these talents and possibilities to do much good in the world.

279. They will develop all kinds of activities to help widows in all their needs. This apostolate also extends to repentant or innocent divorcees who for all intents and purposes are widows.

280. Their activities can be spiritual, apostolic and some social, but they will try to make them mainly of a spiritual and apostolic nature.

281. The ones living in community should work unless impeded by sickness or age; their jobs are of great importance in their sanctification and a means for the apostolate (cf. Const. 18).

282. They should also avoid developing too much of a purely natural feeling of motherhood towards the men through which they may become a nuisance instead of a help for them.

283. The ones who can should make rosaries with their own hands.

Special Guidelines For Priests

284. Since the purpose of the priesthood is the care and growth of the sacramental life of the faithful, the priests of *Miles Jesu* are obligated and privileged to provide for the sacramental life of the *Miles Jesu* members.

285. Since the General Director of our Ecclesial Family is also a priest, the priests of *Miles Jesu* will show a special love and respect for the General Director and collaborate with him in having a rich sacramental life in our Ecclesial Family.

286. As a consequence, they must be involved most of all with saying Holy Mass and hearing confessions. These are the exclusive things that only priests can do in *persona Christi*. The priest and deacon, but more so the priest, is in charge and privileged to be responsible for the Eucharistic worship, helping to fulfill one of the most important means of our sanctification and apostolate (cf. Const. 21a).

287. The *Miles Jesu* priest should appreciate and be faithful in saying daily Mass which, as Pope John Paul II reaffirms, “retains its meaning and value even when, for a just reason, it is offered without the participation of the faithful, yet always offered for the faithful and for the whole world.” (Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday 1999) He should be especially exemplary in the way he says the Holy Mass with devotion and reverence and how he handles Our Divine Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. One of the most important apostolates a priest can exercise is in the way that he says the Holy Mass. He should avoid any mannerisms, ostentatious display or any type of superficial piety. The Christian faithful can tell when the priest has an internal reverential, humble, repentant attitude when he deals with the Lord of Love and Forgiveness.

288. Following the teaching of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, of St. Claret, St. Philip Neri, St. John Vianney, and many others, and the tradition of *Miles Jesu*, the priests of *Miles Jesu* should be especially dedicated to the apostolate of hearing confessions. They should prefer this apostolate to any other type of non-sacramental external activity.

289. As an ambassador who dispenses the treasures of the Church, he must not impose on the faithful his own private ideas or doctrines, but he should detach himself from his own subjectivism and feed them the rich pastures of the official teaching of the Church; this should be especially kept in hearing confessions. He should combine firmness with compassion, never bending the teaching of the Magisterium, but always willing to make any effort to conquer the hearts. He should avoid the severity which St. Claret calls *diabolical zeal*. With his attitude he should make very clear that this sacrament, so human and so divine, is primarily of salvation and forgiveness not of condemnation or excuse (cf. can. 978).

290. Because many priests are severely criticized in the way that they hear confessions or say Mass, sometimes unjustly and sometimes by their own mistakes, in the *Miles Jesu* communities the *Miles Jesu* priests will listen to the charitable comments of the members of the community on how they hear confessions and say Mass. Many priests keep making the same mistakes because they lack the facility of being able to hear the charitable comments of their own communities. This should be done from time to time during the year in community, not in private, to avoid any possible personal frictions and antagonisms.

291. A *Miles Jesu* priest is always available to hear confessions at any place, at any time, joyfully. As an instrument of the mercy of God, he should make himself available so he does not limit the dispensation of the infinite treasures of the Mercy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

292. The *Miles Jesu* priests, because of their direct role in guiding souls in the confessional and in spiritual direction more easily can discover and cultivate the seeds of a vocation. Because of these extraordinary circumstances and the *Miles Jesu* zeal for vocations that a *Miles Jesu* priest must have, they should be great promoters of vocations for *Miles Jesu* of the *Domus, Vinculum*, men, women, lay and clerics. A *Miles Jesu* priest who does not produce vocations for *Miles Jesu* is a father without children. In fact, no one will be ordained a priest who had not previously brought good *Domus* vocations to our Ecclesial Family. A good example of this is the Claretian priest who was sent to a town in which there were no vocations for many many years. He started sitting down in the confessional for many hours when very few people would come. But little by little, his patience, his compassion and his own development of the knowledge of the human psychology in five years produced sixty vocations that ended up being in key positions in the religious order that they went to. He got to know when the penitent needed clear direction and when the penitent came just for superficial consolation or just to have a chat, or even to see how he would react to the things the penitent was saying. This applies especially to women since they tend to be more secretive and even to dig out the psychology of the confessor. Then without being rude he would be shorter and more distant. Combining these things prepared his penitents to develop a strong personality and become better vocations and leaders.

293. For this purpose *Miles Jesu* commits itself to create confessional churches to which the faithful can come to receive the Sacrament of Mercy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on a daily basis during a large portion of the day. Special methods should be developed to make themselves available to hear the confessions of their brother priests and consecrated people day and night.

294. It is not the charism of *Miles Jesu* nor the mission of the *Miles Jesu* priests to run parishes. In some very exceptional cases, for very powerful reasons and with the approval of the General Director in consultation with his Council, some parish may be accepted when it is for the good of our Ecclesial Family and not contrary to its charism. This rule does not apply to the *Miles Jesu* diocesan priest members.

295. *Miles Jesu*, following the constant teaching of the Church, especially the spirit and letter of the Second Vatican Council, has a clear idea of the distinctive and complementary roles of the priest and lay person in the Church and does not wish to confuse them.

296. As a consequence, there should be a cordial Christian collaboration between priests and lay people based on the command of the Lord to love one another, so we may work together for the building up of the Body of Christ. “They should unite their efforts with those of the lay faithful and conduct themselves among them after the example of the Master, who came amongst men 'not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' (Mt 20:28) Priests are to be sincere in their appreciation and promotion of lay people's dignity and of the special role the laity have to play in the Church's mission.” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 9)

297. “Priests, in common with all who have been reborn in the font of baptism, are brothers among brothers as members of the same Body of Christ which all are commanded to build up.” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 9)

298. The *Miles Jesu* clerics will avoid any type of private cliques among themselves and should intermingle with the other members of our Ecclesial Family. Though sometimes they can have meetings to help each other in the performing of priestly duties, they must avoid giving the impression of being an elite or superior group.

299. As St. Benedict says, the priest must be neither arrogant nor proud, and must not do anything other than what his Directors order for he is more subject to the rule's discipline. He should never use his priestly office as an excuse to stray from the rules, obedience and discipline, but must forever strive to reach God. He must follow the rules, and if he does not, he will be “judged a rebel, not a priest.” (6) “He must give to all examples of greater humility.”(7)

300. The Church has always taught that the priesthood is not a right anyone can demand (cf. Heb 5:4-5), but an office the Church entrusts to some; not for their own

personal benefit or gratification, but for the service of the people of God; and for the *Miles Jesu* priests it is primarily for the service of the *Miles Jesu* members.

301. The priesthood also is not anything we can "earn," demand, expect or take as a reward, neither from God nor the Church. The priesthood cannot be demanded as necessary for personal sanctification or fulfillment (cf. Const. 5).

302. As St. John Chrysostom already warned centuries ago, the priest should not use his office to gain personal prestige or a social position but to give more humble service following the example of the One who is the Eternal Priest and who said, "I did not come to be served but to serve." (Mt 20:28)

303. Spiritual direction, retreats, spiritual exercises, Cursillos, and any other type of method to promote conversion are very much in accord with the spirit of *Miles Jesu*, and the *Miles Jesu* priests should be very active in these things.

304. The *Miles Jesu* priests should be proud of wearing their clerical garb approved by the National Conference of Bishops and especially the soutane, so highly recommended by our Holy Father. The use of the soutane is obligatory in the ordinary administration of the sacraments and priestly functions; it should be worn at least in *Miles Jesu* houses.

305. The priests, who by their own nature are ministers of the sacred sacraments of the Church, should always dress well, even elegantly, in their clerical suits, in their cassocks and at the altar. A sloppy priest gives a poor representation of the Church and shows no respect for the sacredness of the divine mysteries that he administers. The priest, when dealing with the poor, should be neat but not overdressed in his clerical attire. In this he shows that he is not superior to the poor but that he respects their own dignity (cf. Const. 157-159).

306. Their formation in philosophy and theology should be carefully selected so they are deeply and well educated in these disciplines according to the documents of the Magisterium and the laws of the Church (cf. can. 232-264) and by the specific norms of the Episcopal conferences in which countries *Miles Jesu* has seminarians aspiring to Holy Orders. Nobody should be ordained who does not know enough philosophy and theology, so they can properly understand the mysteries of God and not be easily swayed by false doctrines. Before and after ordination they should always continue reading and studying the ongoing development of the official teachings of the Church, i.e., the Magisterium, to improve their thinking with the Church. *Sentire cum Petro. Sentire cum Ecclesia.* At the same time they should avoid reading doctrines with dangerous tendencies that are in disagreement with or that are rebellious towards the Magisterium.

307. Before ordination to the priesthood, a fifteen-day Spiritual Exercises in silence must be made.

308. Every priest, as well as every layman, should work at least as many hours as is the norm for the working man.

309. When necessary or convenient, candidates to the diaconate and priesthood of the twelfth and thirteenth degrees can be ordained for a diocese and incardinated in it, provided that a contract is made with the Ordinary to release them for full-time service of our Ecclesial Family. Most of the priests and deacons will be incardinated in our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life itself.

310. Deacons and priests should be faithful in praying the Liturgy of the Hours daily with devotion and reverence. It is the official prayer of the Church even when it is said privately. It is a source of strength, priestly graces, and many times of consolation.

Special Guidelines for the Vinculum

311. There are other members in Miles Jesu called *Vinculum* members (married and single) who, without commitment to celibacy, consecrate themselves to God *in a broader sense* by the acceptance of the evangelical counsels as a *special criterion* in the living out of their own baptismal consecration. In binding themselves to our Ecclesial Family these members pledge to seek evangelical perfection according to their particular state of life by the faithful living of our Ecclesial Family's spirit and sharing in its mission (*cf. CIC 725*). In the celibate, the gift of self is total and complete, directly to God in Miles Jesu, and fully without reserve. In the married, the self giving to God is done through the spouse.

312. *Vinculum*, Latin for "bond," describes the unity in purpose, in spirit, in charity, in prayer and in action that all the members of *Miles Jesu* have in Christianizing the secular world.

313. The single person not committed to celibacy, through spiritual direction in *Miles Jesu* and earnest prayer, should invoke God for guidance in finding his vocation to a particular state in life.

314. The *Miles Jesu* married member should realize the importance of inserting his or her love in the divine love as the only way to give it consistency, durability and security. He or she should also realize that marital love is a means for the spouses to help each other in keeping and growing in the divine love and to attain heaven where all of us will be *like angels*, (Mk 12:25) full of much greater love for each other without limitations or weaknesses. The consecration of the *Miles Jesu* married member strengthens marital love.

315. Marital chastity is the love and respect for one's spouse that prefers any type of sacrifice and self denial to keep oneself from any exposure to temptation that will endanger the fidelity to each other. As one member of *Miles Jesu* said: "I spend

lots of time kneeling down with my arms stretched out in front of the crucifix in the living room of my house, so not to do anything that will harm my wife physically or spiritually or hurt her emotionally.” When love is genuine this is possible. If it is based on God it is even easier. Spouses should pray every day together.

316. A global anti-Christian, inhuman and atheistic propaganda has created a fear of children under false facts and lies that support the so-called "over-population." Many emotional, racial and labor problems are arising from this. The private citizen is overwhelmed by the false propaganda. As a result, a false fear of large families is deeply seated, the sense of family is disturbed and the families are torn apart (cf. Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes* 51).

317. Husbands and wives in their own very nature are called to cooperate with God as co-creators of the human race. Generosity, being open to God is manifested in their generous openness to life. Couples who prefer to give material wealth over spiritual wealth to their children, selfishly reducing their number of them, many times find out too late that the results are great disappointments in the type of children they have raised. Each child brings the natural problems of life and with it an enormous satisfaction of the heart: “A woman in labor is in pain because her time has come, but when the child is born she forgets the anguish in her joy that a man has been born into the world” (Jn 16:21), even greater security for parents in their old age (cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 48) and another soul to be with God for all eternity, and with this innumerable blessings from God. The heart enlarges with each child. A large family teaches children how to share, a very important preparation for life and vocation to the marital state or the common life of the consecrated in celibacy. A large family is even financially better protected since they all naturally learn how to help each other. It is less burdensome for the mother because she divides the household chores and they all contribute. It is proverbial that most mothers of large families are very active women and enjoy good health. It is highly recommended for couples to read the document of Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes*, (Joy and Hope).

318. Married women in *Miles Jesu* whose vocation is to be spouses and mothers have a most important role in the formation of the family, which is the basic cell of Christian society. Throughout history mothers have had a most defining part in the upbringing of many saints who were their own children. Even before pregnancy the spiritual formation of a woman to be a mother is vital. Saint Monica and so many other women, who they themselves became saints as spouses and mothers, are an excellent example of their powerful influence. Wives have a great influence in helping their husbands mainly with the support of their part in the daily duties and obligations of their husbands. Many many times a good wife means in reality the eternal salvation of the husband, and vice versa. A spouse and mother's first professional duties are in the home. Their influence in society in this way is much greater than in any other social position.

319. The education of children is primarily the obligation of the parents. Parents must provide for the education of their children, not only in things of the soul, but also of the body both created by God through them - the parents. The children must receive education from their parents in supernatural things, in intellectual things, in emotional things, in natural sciences. Also their children should receive education in social things, since they came to be in the natural cell of society -- the family, and they are destined to be profitable members of the larger family -- the whole of society. Since the first rule of social manners is respect for other human beings, parents have the obligation to teach their children social forms: to be ladies and gentlemen in how to talk, how to dress, how to eat, etc...; in the cleaning and care of their bodies but without affectation; in the order of their rooms and the respect for the things that are theirs and that they use; knowing how to take second place in relation with the others and never to impose on the others bad or self-centered behavior. They should be formed in the consideration of other children who have less than they do. The members of *Miles Jesu* should form their children to be future leaders of society, instruments of the Lord Jesus Christ in the world and in the Church. Parents should inspire, not force, vocations for the consecrated life and priesthood especially in our own Faith Family of *Miles Jesu*. All this so one day to be all reunited in heaven.

320. The *vinculum* members realize the importance of uniting themselves in associations or groups (in their case, *Miles Jesu*), according to the teachings of Vatican II and the Popes, to help their spiritual life and to be apostles and effective apostles (cf. Const. 19). They recognize that Our Lord taught us to pray in plural, saying, "Our Father,... give us this day our daily bread,... forgive us our trespasses," since a Christian who is not concerned about the temporal and eternal salvation of other people is not a good Christian. And St. Teresa of Jesus (Avila), first woman Doctor of the Church, said that to live the spiritual life isolated is almost an impossibility: "It is a great evil for a soul beset by so many dangers to be alone.... For this reason I would advise those who practice prayer, especially at first, to cultivate friendship and intercourse with others of similar interest. This is a most important thing.... For people trouble so little about things pertaining to the service of God that we must all back each other up if those of us who serve Him are to make progress.... It is a kind of humility for a man not to trust himself but to believe that God will help him in dealing with those with whom he has intercourse. Charity grows when it is communicated to others." (*Autobiography of St. Teresa*, ch.7)

321. The *Vinculum* members form communities in their own style.

322. The *vinculum* members are organized into *Vicinitates* (Neighborhoods) and *Foci* (Hearths).

323. A *Focus* (Hearth) is a local group of *vinculum* members united in spirit, in charity, in prayer and in action in order to form and inflame their zeal for the Christianization of the secular world. If they choose they may set up funds to

promote the *Miles Jesu* apostolates, local, national and international and in the case of genuine need, to help the most needy members. At the center of the *Miles Jesu* Hearth is the Heart of Mary as the *Miles Jesu* coat-of-arms depicts.

324. A group of *Foci* (Hearths) is a *Vicinitas* (Neighborhood).

325. The respective Directors and Directresses of each *Focus* and *Vicinitas* are appointed by the General Director after gathering information and making consultations with the respective *Focus* and *Vicinitas* members.

326. The jurisdiction of the Directors of the *Foci* and *Vicinitates* is over the *vinculum* members. Nevertheless, there should always be a healthy, fraternal and generous collaboration in spiritual, apostolic and financial matters *in caritate Christi* among all *Domus*, *Regiones*, *Foci* and *Vicinitates*.

327. The *vinculum* members should also realize that, as administrators of God's goods and property, what they possess is first of all for the good of their families, and also for our Ecclesial Family from which they receive spiritual nourishment, formation and in case of need, even material help, and for the poor.

Chapter V

GOVERNMENT

General Government

328. The Holy Father is the first Superior of *Miles Jesu* because our submission to God and to Christ is through His visible Vicar on earth and because *Miles Jesu* is and wants to be an instrument of the Church. We must obey the Vicar of Christ in faith, morals and Church discipline before and above any other authority on earth. Therefore, we want to make it clear now and forever that the first Superior of *Miles Jesu* in theory and practice is the Vicar of Christ (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 25; *Const.* 101).

329. There is only one head of *Miles Jesu* for both men and women, so there is only one Ecclesial Family of consecrated life and not two; this is the General Director in communion with the Vicar of Christ.

330. The authority which our Superiors receive from God through the ministry of the Church is to be exercised by them in a spirit of service (cf. *Can.* 618).

331. The *Miles Jesu* is governed by the General Director assisted by his General Council which is comprised of the Vicar Director for men, the Vicar Directress for women, the other General Advisors, appointed by the General Director, according to these Constitutions, together with the General Administrator and the General Secretary appointed by the General Director, with the consent of his Council. They all should be members of the Vanguard or preparing for the Vanguard. They should at least be in the twelfth degree and in this case should be prepared to join the Vanguard.

332. The General Director is elected, under the presidency of the Bishop or his delegate of the diocese where the General Assembly is celebrated, by two-thirds of the votes of the men and women members of the Vanguard. The proportion of men to women voters will be the same as the proportion of the number of men in the twelfth and thirteenth degrees to the number of women in the same.

333. The General Director should be at least 35 years old and a member of the twelfth degree for at least five years and should make the profession of the Vanguard. He should be a priest or should prepare to be one. He should be chosen from among the most holy and most wise, the most prudent, with a great zeal and love, respect and dedication to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, to the Church and to *Miles Jesu*. He should have a zeal for the observance of the Constitutions and the practice of the other virtues. He should have a clear understanding of the spirit of *Miles Jesu*. His term of office is for 12 years and may be re-elected only for a second consecutive period.

334. The duties of the General Director, Common law being observed in each case, are:

- a) To attend upon the preservation and increase of our Ecclesial Family.**
- b) To see that the Constitutions, By-Laws and Customs are observed and that not even the slightest laxity creeps in.**
- c) To promote as much as possible the spiritual and temporal welfare of all the members of our Ecclesial Family.**
- d) To see to it that all, especially the Directors, perform their duties.**
- e) To see that only worthy candidates are admitted and that those who prove themselves unfit are expelled.**
- f) To discuss with the advisors that which concerns the foundations in different countries and adopt such measures as prudence shall suggest or the welfare of our Ecclesial Family shall require.**
- g) To diligently watch over whatever has reference to formation, modification and suppression of *Regiones* and in this last case to decide what disposition shall be made of properties. The same applies to the formation and suppression of *Domus*, and in general to all that refers to the good government of our Ecclesial Family.**
- h) In matters of greater importance, to ask the consent or counsel of his advisors, according to the case, and also, whenever convenient, to hear the Regional Directors or others that may be interested in the matter.**
- i) To preside personally or through a delegate at the Regional Assemblies.**
- j) To promote the collaboration of all in the life and the apostolate of our Ecclesial Family.**
- k) To make the general visitations either directly or by a delegate to all the *Domus* of our Ecclesial Family every six years.**
- l) To be responsible for maintaining a spirit of universality and unity throughout our entire Ecclesial Family. For this purpose he may change individuals from one *Regio* to another or from one *Domus* to another to avoid the development of nationalisms so that the catholicity or universality of our Ecclesial Family will be kept. This can especially be done with the members of the higher levels.**
- m) To appoint the directors of the *Regiones* and *Domus* with their councils after proper consultation. He has authority to appoint the directors of the communities or groups formed of the members of the lower degrees, but he can also allow for them to be elected. He can also delegate this authority according to circumstances, like for example allowing the Regional Director to appoint the *Domus* directors.**

335. In the event of the death of the General Director or his removal from office, the Vicar Director will automatically become acting General Director. Within two weeks the acting General Director will convoke a General Assembly of elections to convene not sooner than one month and not later than three months from the date of the General Director's vacancy from office. If the Director General considers it his duty to resign his office, outside the General Assembly, he, after having

informed the General Council, presents in writing his reasons for resignation to the Holy See.

336. If, however, God forbid, it becomes necessary to remove the General Director from his office, when, in the judgment of the Vicars and other General Advisors, his government has become very harmful to our Ecclesial Family, the matter will be referred to the Holy See.

337. The Vicar Directress is elected by a two-thirds majority of the votes of the women members of the Vanguard. Her election must be confirmed by the General Director for its validity. In this way her election follows democratic procedure and the canonical norms concerning elections and insures the loyalty and unity of government necessary for the unity of our Ecclesial Family. When her election occurs, the General Director or his delegate will preside over those sessions.

338. The Vicar Directress has the same responsibilities and obligations in the Ladies' Branch as the General Director has in our whole Ecclesial Family. She has many more powers than the Vicar Director, since she is practically the General Director for the Ladies' Branch, but with a vicar authority for the sake of deepening the unity of our Ecclesial Family and at the same time giving the Ladies' Branch a healthy independence in order to grow and develop spiritually, numerically, economically and apostolically.

339. Her term is for 12 years, since she is practically equivalent to a Supreme Moderator (cf. can. 624, para.1) and may be re-elected only for a second consecutive period.

340. If the Vicar Directress considers it her duty to resign her office, she, after having informed the women members of the General Council, presents in writing her reasons for resignation to the Holy See.

If on the other hand, for grave reasons, the General Director, with the consent of the women members of the General Council, retains it opportune to remove the Vicar Directress from her office, he must present in writing his motives to the Holy See.

341. In consultation with the Vicar Directress the General Director, with the consent of the women members of the General Council, appoints a Vice-Vicar Directress.

342. The Vicar Director, Vicar Directress and Vice-Vicar Directress should be very loyal to and of one mind with the General Director. Their qualities should be the same as the General Director's. Their duties are the same as the General Director's in what is applicable to each branch and to their respective positions.

343. If, for any reason, the office of the Vicar Directress becomes vacant, the Vice-Vicar Directress will automatically become acting Vicar Directress. Within two

weeks, she will convoke a General Assembly of elections to convene not sooner than one month and not later than three months from the date of the Vicar-Directress' vacancy from office.

344. In addition to the duties of the Vicar Director and of the Vice-Vicar Directress, he or she shall take the place of the General Director or Vicar Directress, respectively, when the latter are absent or hindered by ill-health from performing their duties. Therefore, they must have, as far as possible, the same requisites and qualifications.

345. The causes for their removal from office shall be the same as those herein-before-mentioned for the removal of the General Director. Their removal, with the consent of the General Council of the Men's Branch or the Ladies' Branch, is reserved to the Holy See.

346. The General Administrator and General Secretary may be chosen from either the Men's or Ladies' branch.

347. The first and most important quality of the General Administrator is that he be trustworthy and reliable. The duties of the office of General Administrator are specified in Chapter VI of these Constitutions.

348. The General Secretary deals with matters that pertain to our whole Ecclesial Family of consecrated. Under the direction of the General Director, he prepares the meetings of the General Council and takes in writing the minutes and the decrees. The Secretary must be endowed with diligence and prudence, with a good personality and well-learned, and solicitous for the welfare of our Ecclesial Family; he should have a special love for our Ecclesial Family such that its affairs may be entrusted to him without fear of being revealed.

349. According to the number of people who belong to *Miles Jesu*, the General Director will choose a prudent number of Advisors not inspired by his own personal whim but looking for the will of God, to Whom he shall answer, and for the good of our Ecclesial Family (cf. can. 626). He should have in mind the different regions and countries in which our Ecclesial Family is present. There shall be an even number of men and women advisors so that both branches are equally represented and when a vote is required there will not be a tie. It is preferable that the majority of the men advisors be laymen. The term of office for the General Government members is six years. Half of the advisors are chosen every three years so there is always continuity and new blood in the General Government. For the appointment of the women General Advisors, the General Director will consult the Vicar Directress.

350. Other qualities and duties of the Advisors: They should always be very faithful and sincere in exposing their opinions though they might be contrary to the opinion of the General Director, being careful not to be influenced by a desire to

please men, but full of the zeal of pleasing God Whom they serve through men and to Whom they will also give a strict account. They should be generous in offering their help to the General Director or Vicar Directress. Nevertheless, they should always be willing to cooperate with the General Director and Vicar Directress in the governing of our Ecclesial Family, not creating conflicts, but working together as a unit for the betterment of our Ecclesial Family. Their main job is to help them in the governing of our Ecclesial Family. This should take preference over any other particular or private job that they might have or choose. This applies proportionally to all the advisors in the different levels of government.

351. The General Director should request consent or advice of his Council when the universal Canon Law and the proper law of Miles Jesu require it and in the way they require it and in the more serious and obscure questions even when it is not required to do so by law.

General Assembly

352. The General Assembly authentically represents our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life and expresses the participation and care of all the members in the life of this Ecclesial Family and its activity in the Church.

353. In the General Assembly things pertaining to our entire Ecclesial Family of consecrated life will be treated, promulgating the decrees and ordinances that might seem necessary or opportune. “The task of the General Assemblies is not limited to making laws; they should also foster spiritual and apostolic vitality.” (*Ecclesiae Sanctae* II, 1)

354. There are two types of General Assemblies, the ordinary General Assembly of elections and the extraordinary one which convenes whenever the need arises according to the norms of these Constitutions.

355. The extraordinary General Assembly will be convened by the General Director in the time and place he, in consultation with his Council and the respective branch advisors, deems best.

356. The extraordinary General Assembly is composed of both Branches of this Ecclesial Family of consecrated life, Men’s and Women’s. During the Assembly there are three different types of sessions according to the matter that needs to be discussed: common sessions for men and women, sessions for men, and sessions for women, in harmony with the other norms given in these Constitutions.

357. The ordinary Assembly of elections will be held for the election of the General Director or Vicar Directress according to numbers 331 and 339 of these Constitutions and the extraordinary Assembly whenever, in the judgment of the General Director in consultation with his Council and the respective branch

advisors, it seems necessary for the increase, expansion or renewal of our Ecclesial Family or for some other cause very beneficial to it.

358. The extraordinary Assembly is composed of either both branches or only one of them according to the needs to be resolved, the subjects to be discussed or the office to be filled. If it is for women only, the General Director on his own authority or the Vicar Directress in consultation with the women members of the General Council and the Ladies' Branch advisors can convoke it with the approval of the General Director. If it is for men only, the General Director convokes it in consultation with the men members of the General Council and the Men's Branch advisors. If it is for one branch only and it seems proper and convenient, some members of the other branch may be invited so that the Assembly may profit from their advice and talents. The General Director in consultation with the Vicar Directress decides who those members would be.

359. The General Director has the right to preside over both men's and women's sessions either directly or by delegate. Normally, the General Director would appoint as his delegate for men the Vicar Director and for women the Vicar Directress although, if it seems prudent and convenient, he may appoint someone else.

360. During the General Assembly in the "very important" matters that pertain to the spiritual advancement of our Ecclesial Family, only those delegates who are members of the Vanguard have a vote. For example, only members of the Vanguard can vote to propose a change in the Constitutions to the competent ecclesiastical authority. The General Director with the consultative vote of his Council will decide which other matters are "very important" and should be reserved to the Vanguard.

361. Changes in the By-Laws are ordinarily made by the vote of the members of the twelfth and thirteenth degrees unless the General Director with the consultative vote of his Council decides that the particular By-Law is a "very important" matter and should be reserved to the Vanguard. Members of other degrees can be consulted in matters that pertain to them.

362. The following persons attend the General Assembly. (If the Assembly is for one branch only, the following applies only to members of that branch)

- a) The General Director as President, the Vicar Director, the Vicar Directress and the rest of the General Council.
- b) The advisors of the Vicar Director and Vicar Directress.
- c) The Regional Directors and Directresses with a delegate elected by the members of the twelfth and thirteenth degree members of the region.
- d) Some of the members of the thirteenth and twelfth degrees are chosen by the General Director. He can also choose members from other degrees who may vote on matters pertaining to them. The Vicar Directress may also choose some other women members with the approval of the General

Director, some of whom, with the consent of the General Director and Vicar Directress, may vote on matters pertaining to them.

- e) The General Director may invite to the General Assembly members of the other degrees who can participate in discussions, but who have neither an active nor passive voice. The number of representatives will depend from the prudence of the General Government and the number of members.
- f) All members obligated to attend must do so unless they are dispensed by a competent authority for a serious reason.

363. At the beginning of the General Assembly all the members, unless impeded by reasons of health, shall make a poustinia followed by two days of spiritual exercises in silence. Before the Assembly starts, the members of the Assembly should make an oath of secrecy.

364. Though we are not religious but consecrated members, the following text from *Ecclesiae Sanctae* applies to the different Directors and individuals in their different degrees: “The cooperation of all superiors and subjects is necessary for the renewal of their own religious lives, for the preparation of the spirit which should animate the chapters, for the accomplishment of their task, and for the faithful observance of the laws and norms laid down by the chapters.” (*Ecclesia Sanctae* II, 1)

365. “All should remember, however, that hope for renewal lies more in greater diligence in the observance of the rules and constitutions than in the multiplication of laws.” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 4)

366. “Besides, suitable renewal cannot be achieved once for all; it needs to be fostered continually, with the help of the fervor of members and the solicitude of chapters and superiors.” (*Ecclesiae Sanctae* II, 19)

Branch Government

367. The Vicar Director with his administrator, secretary and advisors form the Branch Government of the Men's Branch. The Vicar Directress with her Vice-Vicar Directress, administrator, secretary and advisors form the Branch Government of the Ladies' Branch. There should be an even number of advisors so that when a vote is required there will not be a tie. The offices of administrator and/or secretary coincide with the office of advisor for the Vicars. Some members of the General Council might also be members of the Vicars' councils. The General Director appoints all the members of the Branch Government after consultation with the proper members. They should be members of at least the twelfth degree and prepare for the Vanguard.

368. “Directors in conferring offices, and members in electing to office, are to observe the norms of the universal law and their institute’s own law, avoiding any abuse or preference of persons. They are to have nothing but God and the good their institute before their eyes, and appoint or elect those whom, in the Lord, they know to be worthy and fitting. In elections, besides, they are to avoid directly or indirectly lobbying for votes, either for themselves or for others.” (can. 626)

369. All the members are subject to their particular moderators according to the norms of our Ecclesial Family's own proper law in those matters which affect the internal life and discipline of our Ecclesial Family. “A true autonomy of life, especially of governance, is recognized for each institute. This autonomy means that each institute of consecrated life has its own discipline in the Church and can preserve whole and entire the patrimony described in can. 578.” (can. 586, para.1)

370. The members of *Miles Jesu* in “fulfilling the duty towards the Church inherent in their particular form of life must show respect and obedience towards bishops in accordance with canon law, both because these exercise pastoral authority in their individual churches and because it is necessary for unity and harmony in the carrying out of apostolic work”. (*Lumen Gentium*, 45)

Regional and Local Government

371. Our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life is divided into *Regiones and Domus Vicinitates* (Neighborhoods) and *Foci* (Hearths). The Men's Branch and the Ladies' Branch of *Miles Jesu* have their own respective *Domus* and *Regiones*, with their respective Directors and Directresses.

372. A *Domus* is a house in which a celibate community lives, and to which celibate members are attached.

373. A *Regio* is composed of a group of *Domus*.

374. Each *Regio* has its respective Director with its own secretary, administrator and advisors appointed by the General Director after gathering information and making consultations. The office of secretary or administrator may coincide with that of advisor.

375. Each *Domus* has its respective Director with its own secretary, administrator and at least two advisors all of whom are appointed by the General Director after gathering information and making consultations. The office of secretary or administrator may coincide with that of advisor.

376. The General Director can delegate to the Vicar Directress the authority to appoint different positions of authority in the Ladies' Branch.

377. The *Miles Jesu Domus* has a local meeting of the Director or Directress with their community officers at least twice a month and a general meeting of all the members of the *Domus* once a month. In the *Domus* meeting there shall be a spiritual part, a business part and a family part.

378. The jurisdiction of the Directors of the *Domus* and *Regiones* is over the *domus* members.

Chapter VI

GOODS AND ADMINISTRATION

379. The temporal goods of *Miles Jesu* are ecclesiastical goods set aside without exception for accomplishing, above all, the foundational and institutional ends for which our Ecclesial Family of consecrated life has been approved and, in second place, for the ends for which the Church destines her own goods. For this reason, they should be scrupulously administered according to the norms of *Miles Jesu's* own law, of the law of the Church contained in Book V of the CIC, *De bonis Ecclesiae temporalibus* and of canons 636-640 to which *Miles Jesu* pays particular attention.

380. *Miles Jesu* as an Ecclesial Family of consecrated life, as well as her Branches, Regions, Houses, and other organisms, are juridical persons and, as such, possess the complete economic capacity which can be specified as the faculties to acquire, to possess as its own, to administer and to alienate. This should be carried out to the tenor of para. 375, according to the specific criteria of charity and poverty.

381. There is no exclusive ownership of any temporal goods of our Ecclesial Family by any one juridical person of our Ecclesial Family. All the temporal goods are interchangeable among the juridical persons of our Ecclesial Family. The General Director in consultation with the particular juridical persons involved will have the final decision.

382. The administration of the goods of *Miles Jesu* is the competency of the General, Branch, Regional, and Local Administrators and other possible administrators of works, enterprises, or associations, which may be peculiar to *Miles Jesu*. The General Administrator, besides administering the goods of *Miles Jesu* as such, coordinates and watches over the branch, regional and local administrations.

383. All the administrators of *Miles Jesu* carry out the duties of their office in the name of our Ecclesial Family and the Church to whom ultimately belong the goods they administer; but they carry this out under strict subordination to their respective Superiors and Directors in conformity with the law of *Miles Jesu* and the Church.

384. It is preferable that the administrators, but above all the General Administrator, be lay persons, desirably specialized in civil law and in economics because of the nature of the job. Lay people being “eligible for certain offices...become more directly involved in the life and activities of the community, and the priests will have the freedom to perform those ministries which are reserved to them.” (*Ecclesiae Sanctae* II, 27)

385. In the ordinary administration of goods, the administrators can proceed on their own authority within the limits of their respective offices. In the extraordinary administration of goods, they should obtain the permission of, and render accounts to, their respective superiors from whom they depend, besides the Holy See in the case of alienations above the maximum value marked out by the Episcopal Conference for each country, in conformity with the norms specified in this regard in the By-Laws.

386. The principal duties of the office of the General Administrator are the following:

- a) To vow honesty and fidelity to this office in the act and moment of taking possession, signing and/or completing the inventory of the goods received for his administration;**
- b) To administer in the spirit of poverty and charity;**
- c) To be constantly vigilant in order to avoid the loss or deterioration or theft of goods which are not his own, insuring them in the best manner by contract according to civil law;**
- d) To withdraw at the opportune time the returns, interest, profits and products, and to know how to invest safely, making all the goods bear fruit as they should;**
- e) To pay opportunely and with exactitude the passive interest, legitimate debts, mortgages, and whatever other charges exist in the name and responsibility of our Ecclesial Family;**
- f) To have an efficient accounting system in our Ecclesial Family keeping an up-to-date ledger of "Earnings and Expenditures," "Income-Expenses" and any other accounting books of administration;**
- g) To prepare the financial report and the long range financial projection for presentation to the General Government or the civil and/or ecclesiastical authorities, if needs be;**
- h) To file and keep scrupulously all the documents which attest to the property and ownership of the goods of *Miles Jesu*, of its regions and houses, as well as its enterprises, works and associations;**
- i) To give an account at the established time to the respective superiors and administrators, without whose express or tacit approval he cannot give away or accept donations in the name of our Ecclesial Family;**
- j) To review the financial administration of the *Regiones*, *Domus* and other organisms;**
- k) To not enter into legal litigation in the name of our Ecclesial Family, nor renounce arbitrarily the office of Administrator, under the pain of having to compensate for eventual damages which he may have caused, without the written permission of the General Director with the consent of his Council.**

387. The above paragraph (Const.382) applies also to the other administrators of *Miles Jesu* according to the different levels of responsibilities and having in mind the different norms contained in the By-Laws.

388. In conformity with the laws of the Church in can. 1280, the administrators of the juridical persons established by para. 376 of these Constitutions should have the help of their own Administrative Council or Council of Economic Affairs, or at least two advisors for this purpose. The composition, functions, meetings, etc., of the said Council are determined in the By-Laws.

389. Each juridical person of *Miles Jesu*, although by itself alone and without unjustly involving the others, is answerable before canon and civil law for the debts and obligations legitimately contracted by its administrators, directors or legal representatives within the limit of their office carried out in the name and by the authority of *Miles Jesu* in its various levels.

390. Any administrator or director or member of *Miles Jesu* in whatever degree who contracts illegitimately any other possible debt or obligation is personally accountable for it and not the juridical person they represent or belong to, not only if this involved their own personal goods, but even more so if this involved the goods of *Miles Jesu* or any of its juridical persons.

391. Safeguarding charity and piety, it is always possible to start a judicial action in both civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions against those who unduly enriched themselves or who contracted illegitimate debts or obligations, taking advantage of their office or carrying it out against the law.

Chapter VII

VALIDITY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

392. The Constitutions which are merely disciplinary do not oblige by themselves under sin. But, being the ordinary means of sanctification willed by God for the members of our Ecclesial Family, they cannot be broken without damage to the soul and to our Ecclesial Family of which we are living responsible members (cf. can. 598, para. 2).

393. The legitimate authority may dispense in particular cases of the obligation of the Constitutions.

394. The legitimate authority will be able to issue norms and criteria of action and formation which are not contrary to these Constitutions.

395. The community life can be allowed adaptations by the General Government according to local customs.

396. “The intention of the founders and their determination concerning the nature, purpose, spirit and character of their institute which have been ratified by competent ecclesiastical authority as well as its wholesome traditions, all of which constitute the patrimony of the institute itself, are to be observed faithfully by all.” (can. 578)

397. These Constitutions are the safeguard of our founding charism and reflect the charism that God has inspired in our Founder and so in turn reflect the Will of God for this Ecclesial Family and each of its members and give *Miles Jesu* its identity.

398. It is not our place as individual members of our Ecclesial Family to be proposing this or that change according to our personal opinion, whim or taste because the consequences can be disastrous for all and undermine the essential charism of our Ecclesial Family. The essential thing is not to seek changes but to live well what we already have before us. To live the Constitutions well requires constant personal purification and conversion, according to the mind of the Church which invites us every day at the beginning of Holy Mass to "call to mind our sins" and to humbly and trustfully confess them.

Fullness of the Law

**399. “Love is always patient and kind;
it is never jealous;
love is never boastful or conceited;
it is never rude or selfish;
it does not take offense,
and is not resentful.
Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins
but delights in the truth;
it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope,
and to endure whatever comes.
Love does not come to an end....
In short there are three things that last:
faith, hope, and love;
and the greatest of these is love.”
(1 Cor 13:4-8,13)**

Perseverance

**400. “I tell you solemnly...
everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or land for
the sake of my name will be repaid a hundred times over, and also inherit eternal
life.” (Mt 19:28-29)**

**401. “Whoever holds out to the end shall see salvation” (Mt 24:13) and will hear
the sweet words of the Lord, “Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for
your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.” (Mt
25:34)**

ENDNOTES

Founding Charism

- (1) The militant idea is taken from many Church documents, especially the following: Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* 3; Complete Works of St. Anthony Mary Claret: *Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. 20, note 124, B.A.C. Spain; *Motu Proprio: Primo Feliciter* says in the Introduction "*de novo hoc Agmine, quod exercitum consilia evangelica profitentium in saeculo adauxit,...in aciem ordinata, praelia Domini fortiter praeliari valiant.*"
- (2) Jn 15:13; cf. can. 588.
- (3) Dt 6:5-7; Mt 22:38-39; Jn 15:12; 1Thes 3:12; Gal 3:17-28; Phil 2:1-6
- (4) Mt 22:40; Mk 12:33; *Lumen Gentium*, 42
- (5) cf. Introduction to the *Rule of St. Benedict*; *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola
- (6) "Third Degree of Humility," *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola
- (7) "Perfect Joy," *Little Flowers of St. Francis*
- (8) *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, n.494
- (9) Jn 7:14; Lk 21:27; Mt 25:31-32
- (10) Allocution of Pius XII about the Beauty of Mary
- (11) St. Louis de Montfort, *True Devotion to Mary*, n.55
- (12) 2 Cor 5:14; Motto on the Coat of Arms of St. Anthony Mary Claret
- (13) cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 40; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II, II q.24; art. 8, 9
- (14) St. John of the Cross
- (15) *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, "Meditation on the Two Standards"
- (16) cf. Pope Paul VI to Secular Institutes, 20 September 1972; cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 11; *Primo Feliciter*, Introduction n.II
- (17) cf. St. Anthony Mary Claret, *Autobiography*, n.694
- (18) *Ibid*, nn.43-55
- (19) *Ibid*, n.8-17
- (20) Pius XI, Discourse on the Beatification of St. Anthony Mary Claret
- (21) cf. *Communio et Progressio*, 106, 126 and 136

Chapter I Members

- (1) cf. *Rule of St. Benedict*, 60
- (2) Claretian Constitutions, Part I, Ch. 20; cf. "*Provida Mater*", Introduction "*Per Severam Prudentem que Suorum Sodalium Selectionem*"

Chapter II Evangelical Counsels

- (1) cf. Claretian Constitutions, Part 1, ch.26; cf. St. Ignatius' "Letter on Obedience"
- (2) cf. *Rule of St. Benedict*, ch. 3
- (3) cf. *Ibid*, ch. 1

- (4) Ibid
- (5) Ibid
- (6) *Saints for Sinners*, Alban Goodier, S.J. "The Failure of St. Francis Xavier"
- (7) St. Teresa, Const, ch. 9, 1
- (8) cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 12; Jn 12:24-26
- (9) cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q99, art. 2, ad 1.
- (10) cf. Jn 6:18; Jn 2:12; 2 Sm 12:16; Ne 1:4; Mt 4:25; Mt 6:17,18; Mt 17:21; Lk 2:37; Acts 13:2, 14:23
- (11) *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, nn.403-405
- (12) Ibid, n.406
- (13) *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, nn.358-361
- (14) cf. Dt 9:13, 10:16; 2 Chr 30:8; Acts 7:51; Ex 32:9-10
- (15) *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, nn.358-361
- (16) *Cum Sanctissimus* 7, 6
- (17) *Claretian Constitutions*, Pt. II, ch.3
- (18) St. Maximilian Kolbe used to say this: cf. *The Death Camp Proved Him Real*, by Maria Winowska
- (19) *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, n.565

Chapter III Cardinal Virtues

- (1) Pope John Paul II, "Homily on Boston Common," *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22 March 1979
- (2) *Autobiography of St. Teresa of Jesus*, 7
- (3) *Primo Feliciter*, Introduction
- (4) cf. Jer 7:28; Ps 12:1-2; 28:3; 63:11; 84:12; 51:8; 101:6-7; 119:163; 145:18-19; 1 Jn 2:21; Jn 11:20
- (5) cf. Wis 9:1-6,11; 13:18; St. Augustine, "Letter to Proba," Ep.130, CSEL 44
- (6) St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The Great Means of Salvation and Perfection*
- (7) cf. *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, n.801
- (8) *Saint of the Day*, Vol. II, edited by Edward Foley, O.F.M.
- (9) *True Devotion to Mary*, 59, St. Louis de Montfort
- (10) Treatise by St. Claret, *Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Mary*, Introduction.
- (11) cf. *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, nn.492-493
- (12) cf. *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, nn.334-339
- (13) cf. *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola, nn.352-370.

Chapter IV Formation

- (1) *Claretian Constitutions*, Part I, ch. 24, nn.111-112
- (2) *ibid.*
- (3) *idem.* Part II, ch. 15
- (4) cf. *Autobiography of St. Anthony Mary Claret*, Part IV, ch. 10
- (5) cf. St. Claret, *Treatise Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary*, Introduction

(6) *Rule of St. Benedict*, n.62

(7) *ibid.*, n.60