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Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality

GUIDE FOR THE SPIRITUAL ANIMATION OF PASSIONIST LIFE: “THE COMMON REGULATIONS OF 1775”

St. Paul of the Cross

Edited and with an Introduction by Fabiano Giorgini, C.P.

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Edited and with an Introduction by Fabiano Giorgini, C.P.
Translation of the text by Silvan Rouse, C.P.
Translation of the notes and index by Sean Goan, C.P.

Cum permissu:
Paul M. Boyle, C.P.

Editor, English-language series: Norbert M. Dorsey, C.P.

Statement of Purpose

The booklets in this series are simply one effort to implement a decree of the 1976 Passionist General Chapter concerning the promotion of a better knowledge of the history and spirituality of the Congregation.

In the two hundred and more years since the foundation of the Congregation, English-speaking Passionists have suffered from uneasy access to historical sources and few translations of works that were based on them. Additional books or articles of reflection on our patrimony were also often left in their original languages. There was a felt need for a greater sharing of such resources in history and spirituality.

The purpose of this series of booklets is to provide information, insight, and a sense of collaboration in a religious adventure. It is not meant simply to re-print or invent more archive material. Besides, there is too much of the dynamism of the Spirit of God in the life of St. Paul of the Cross, the history of the Congregation, and our past and present shadings of spirituality, ever to be fully caught in words or booklets. We are dealing with the response of people like ourselves to God's love and to the call of holiness as revealed to us in Jesus Crucified and risen.

The hope then is not backward looking, but toward the future: through a better understanding of our past and present, to give a better life to others.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Compilation and normative value of the “Common Regulations”

For Paul of the Cross, the Rule was the fundamental indication of God’s Will for the Passionist life of the individual Religious. It was necessary, however, to do the actions accepted as God’s Will with the perfection of charity, so that the twenty-four hours of the day might be lived in an attitude of wondrous gratitude for God’s love manifested in the Passion of Jesus. This gratitude would be expressed in the most efficacious charity toward God and toward the brethren. Moreover, the Founder, like all animators and like those responsible for the reformed religious life of his time, was concerned about uniformity in living the community life according to the characteristics proper to the various Institutes. And he did so not because he wanted to use this as a levelling process but to avoid the danger which individual caprice could cause by disturbing our life together, according to a norm which was accepted by all at the time of entrance into the Community. If uniformity imposed limits on the individual members, it did nevertheless guarantee peace and serenity in external relations which should not be subjected to the pressure of personalism.

The various decrees made on the occasion of the foundation of new communities or in General Chapters or during canonical visitation aimed at safeguarding two aspects which were very important for the vitality of the Congregation. These two aspects were the commitment to fulfill every action, even the most simple, with the perfection of charity and to live in uniformity as the most sure way to discern God’s Will for one’s life and to avoid falling into the possible deception of personal caprice.

The decrees passed up to the year 1754, the personal experience of the Founder and of his first collaborators and the attentive reading of ascetical and spiritual works, among which were those of St. Francis de Sales, St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, the advice to Confessors of St. Charles Borromeo and, perhaps, even those of the older Paul Segneri, will offer the material for the preparation of an organic document which Paul will call “Common Regulations”.

The compilation was made towards the end of 1754 or the beginning of 1755, since the text was certainly promulgated in the first half of 1755. In fact, Paul says in the Circular Letter of October 14, 17[5]4: finally we urge all our Religious to the punctual and exact observance of the Holy Rule and Decrees for their collaboration and the perfect stability which has come from them up to now, as also the continual practice of the Regulations drawn up by us and published in all the Retreats for their spiritual profit (1).

The doctrine, spiritual concerns and style of the Common Regulations reveal Paul as the author of the document. Moreover, it seems certain that the Founder used the services of Father Thomas Struzzi, a man great in theological, canonical and pastoral learning, to edit, in a unified style, the material prepared by Paul (2).

The document was divided into two parts. In fourteen small sections the First Part indicates the way to fulfill with the perfection of charity the actions prescribed by the Rule, daily or periodically. On the other hand, the Second Part is subdivided into Eleven Chapters and gives

norms for the prudent and effective fulfilment of the various offices entrusted to the Religious in the Community. The content is predominantly spiritual-psychological and is permeated by an air of serenity, trust and encouragement for the Religious to carry out their various daily actions “with perfection so that our works might be full before the very pure eyes of His Divine Majesty.” There are also indications and norms for a code of manners so that the social relations among the Religious might be marked by a courteous seriousness, sustained by an affable manner.

For these reasons the title “Guide for the Spiritual Animation of Passionist Life” is appropriate. From this document there emerges in a very concrete way what Paul meant when he spoke about the twenty-four hours of prayer per day, what means he considered necessary so that the solitude of the Retreats might help the Religious to strip himself of worldly maxims and “receive heavenly lights for the acquisition of the true Wisdom” necessary for the apostle of the Crucified (3). This same document teaches us how Paul understood the animating action of the Superior in the Community and the indispensable work of the spiritual director for the benefit of the Religious, so that they might be serene and walk in such a way so as to observe the Rule vivified “by the interior spirit of the heart” (4). This document also teaches the meaning and necessity of solitude for the realization of the Passionist charism for the purpose of attaining union with the “Highest Good” and to guide others whether those going out for preaching or welcoming, in a regulated way, those persons who wish to “taste the delight of a precious beloved solitude for some days at the feet of the Crucified” (5).

The binding force of the “Common Regulations” was the same as that of decrees of the General Chapter or of the Superior General. The General Chapter of 1758 in fact abolished all decrees made up to that date, whether by major superiors or by General Chapter or at Visitation, so that they “might be changed into the Common Regulations” (6). Paul, in the Introduction, as well as on other occasions, took care to recall that the “Common Regulations” are also binding if not in the same way as the Rules approved by the Holy See: “We recommend to all the most careful observance not only of the holy Rule but also of the prescribed Regulations. While they do not oblige in the same way as the Rule, they are of great perfection and benefit for the keeping of the same, are good for interior and exterior purification, and also marvelously foster uniformity in the whole body of the Congregation”(7).

The public reading of the “Common Regulations” was recommended many times and we find different arrangements made in each of the Communities. There is one from S. Eutizio on October 14, 1758, in which Paul directs that the Regulations be read in Chapter on the first week of every month, “dividing the reading over a period of eight to ten days.” In Vetralla, six years later in 1764, Paul directed that it be read in the refectory “on all Feasts and on Thursdays throughout the year” (8). In practice this was the norm which was confirmed in the history of the Congregation.

The text which I am presenting is taken from the oldest copy which we have, that of 1756, compared however with the other two copies of 1759 and 1764 respectively. The copies present only slight variations in four or five places by one or two words. Hence there is absolute conformity among the texts and the minor variations are easily understood when we recall the work of the various copyists. I have improved the spelling and followed the copy of 1764 which is better than the others in this aspect. The punctuation has also been redone, bearing in mind

modern criteria. These retouches, while they make the document more readable, in no way take away the ancient flavor of the language, with its typical expressions or grammatical constructions.

2. Spiritual-Ascetical Content

I have said this document should be called "Guide for the Spiritual Animation" rather than "Common Regulations" because the norms and advice it contains intend to guide the Religious to the union of continual charity with Jesus, the "Supreme Good", the Divine Lover, with whom we share life and by whom we are possessed at the depth of our being. For this purpose he uses the cell in which no thought or affection should enter except God and what is for God. There the Religious and Jesus live the day in a relationship of love, esteem and thought which is manifested in the frequent loving kiss of the image of the Crucified Love, in running in spirit to hide oneself in His Wounds, especially in His Heart, which burns with love for us. The whole day is centered on this absolute and radical intimacy.

The structure of the Retreat's environment: solitude, silence, which should not be disturbed, not even by noises or wandering around the Retreat, etc., everything should help that dialogue of continual love between the Religious and Jesus Crucified. Study, preparation for preaching, spiritual reading, the fulfilment of the various offices necessary for community life, the necessary physical and psychical relief, all is orientated toward and proceeds from this loving dialogical union between Jesus and the Religious. Precisely because he is immersed in Jesus, the Religious is not closed in on himself in an egoistic or sterile introspection, but he is called to think, to offer himself to and with Christ Crucified for the salvation of all mankind, who should populate the cell and the solitude of the Retreat so that the life of the Religious might be salvific intercession for all the scattered sons of God, for whom Christ has given His life.

On a superficial reading, fraternal communion might seem limited or impeded by the rigidity of norms, by silence, etc. Rather it is sustained and justified and required by intimacy with Crucified Love, because the Religious loves with equal intensity and truth also the brother who shares his same vocation and to whom he owes kind, understanding attention, manifested in courteous language, readiness to help him, and sustaining his faith by fervent participation in all community acts.

The proper apostolate of the Congregation is kept in mind by helping the Religious "to recollect their spirit in prayer and fasting, and in this way to be more and more on fire with love for Jesus Christ and to dispose themselves more to go out with deepening fervor to sow the holy seeds of God's Word" (9). The Chapters on Spiritual Direction and the Confessor are destined to prepare those Religious capable of giving this pastoral service to the faithful who approach them. This help is given by setting aside useless moral questions and centering decisively on the theological-spiritual conviction of persons whom we teach how much God loves them, how He loves them and therefore to understand, in the Passion of Jesus, the destructive power of sin, which they are called to detest and conquer for love of Him who loves them so much.

The Chapter on the Local Superior and the Spiritual Father are of the greatest psychological and spiritual interest. They enable us to understand what is required for a community born of faith and which is maintained in balance and vitality only by a continual renewal of the memory of the

motivations of faith which stands at the basis of decision for each member to be part of a community and to recognize an expression of God's Will in the Rule. Of equal importance, however, are the balanced attitudes and delicate requirements for the Superior and Spiritual Father to foster openness of hearts and clarity and peace in giving dialogues.

The Founder's commitment to the peace of the Religious also deserves special attention. He did not want them to be disturbed or anxious, lest this anxiety or a poorly regulated commitment to recollection produce nervous exhaustion, psychic or physical imbalance, which could inhibit them. Hence his concern that the Religious should not close themselves in on themselves, that they should not pass days or periods in doubt, melancholy, etc., but should immediately dialogue with Jesus. They should approach Jesus either in their rooms or in the Church where He lives under the species of the Eucharist; they should also hurry in a spirit of trust to the Superior, who should welcome them with affability and without annoyance, or to the Spiritual Father, who should allow them to speak without interruption and who should encourage them. For this purpose he also used the solitary walk so that the Religious might breathe fresh air into their lungs in a movement which stimulates another kind of nervous and psychical reaction, by looking at the heavens, the flowers, and the birds. It would also assist in bringing about a renewed sense of emotional balance, of trust in God the Provident Creator and Conserver of the cosmos and of persons.

I hope that the readers will study this document with attention. Even though it depends on part upon other authors and the culture of the time, still it bears the concern of the Founder that the Religious live a happy life in their dedication to Christ, a Living Person, with whom he realizes a relationship of genuine and peaceful love. Even though lived in faith, which is sometimes luminous and at other times dark, it is always certain.

Solitude is the privileged place where the Religious calls to mind this merciful love and lives it intensely, substantiating it in his daily existence. That demands humility, poverty and penance, so as not to possess things nor be possessed by them, but to consign himself totally to Him who has given Himself through obedient love. This idea develops in a practical way what the Rule expressed in speaking of the conviction which the postulant should have before entering the Congregation. The norm of the Regulations can be understood only with the chapters which refer to the postulant, the formation of the novice, the observance of the vows, the commitment to prayer and the specific apostolate of the Congregation.

The text of this "Guide for the Spiritual Animation of the Passionist Life" not only completes the juridic organization of the Congregation but it is above all a means to understand better the charism of the Congregation and how it should and can be lived. For this reason it deserves an important place in the study of Passionist spirituality and of the means which should be used to animate the community so that it might be "a true mirror of observance, fervor and every virtue and the good odor of Jesus Christ" (10).

Fabiano Giorgini C.P.

**PAUL OF THE CROSS, SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE
CONGREGATION OF THE DISCALCED CLERICS
OF THE PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST**

As we ponder the progress of our Congregation, the regular observance and your spiritual advancement, dear and beloved sons, we never cease day or night to recommend you to His Divine Majesty and to think about those means which are most appropriate for promoting God's glory and the attainment of that holiness to which you should aspire.

Since the greater or lesser perfection depends on the greater or lesser observance of the Holy Rule, then, if you will observe the Rule exactly and with spirit, you will certainly attain union with the Highest Good. For this reason we have resolved to present you with some Regulations which will teach you in the easiest and most manageable way how to fulfill your obligations perfectly.

These instructions which we offer you with all the love of our heart, are not Rules but will certainly protect them, so that they might be kept and not transgressed. They are also the perfection of the Rule so that our works, beloved sons, might be full and rich before the most pure eyes of His Divine Majesty. As a great prince who has in his possession a very precious gem places it in a well locked case so that it may not be lost or its beauty tarnished, so it is with us. The Rule is the priceless gem with which you must obtain holiness and the present Regulations are the case in which you must preserve this precious treasure so as not to lose it and to traffic with it to your advantage. You will discern in these Regulations a combination of spiritual, moral and civil material. Therefore, by putting them faithfully into practice, you will become most pleasing to Our Lord, lovable to the whole Congregation and kindly disposed toward men and women who will be moved by your example to praise and magnify our Omnipotent God.

To proceed therefore with order and to avoid confusion we have divided our instructions into two parts. The first part indicates the way to do the actions prescribed by the Rule perfectly. The second part shows the way of fulfilling with great merit the duties entrusted to the Religious by holy obedience.

In conclusion, my beloved sons, take courage in striving for holiness and for the acquisition of the true spirit of the Congregation which is a spirit of penance, of solitude, and of striving to promote devotion to the Most Sacred Passion of Jesus Christ, from whose Infinite Charity accept the following instructions:

PART ONE: Actions Prescribed by the Holy Rule

Regulation I: Rising From Rest

1 - As soon as the Religious hear the bell, let them do violence to themselves and rise from bed with courage and joy of heart as if the bed were on fire, with the intention of obeying God who calls them to sing the divine praises in Choir where the angels await them.

2 - Let them rise at the first signal which they hear and not give occasion to the devil who will tempt them to wait for the second signal and then for the third and finally they will delay going to Choir when the Divine Office has already begun.

3 - If one is a heavy sleeper, and not accustomed to hear the signal, let him ask the Religious nearest him to have the charity to knock on the door of his cell.

4 - As soon as they rise, let the Religious kneel and say: “To the King of Kings, Immortal and Invisible, Only God, be honor and glory” (I Tim. 1, 17), or: “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening” (I Kings 3:9), as Samuel promptly answered when he was called by God in sleep; or let them say another ejaculatory prayer, according to the spirit of each one to offer himself in sacrifice to God, or the “Hail Mary”.

5 - Let each one do his best to be first in Choir so as to gain victory and to receive a special blessing from the Lord.

Regulation II: The Divine Office

6 - They shall enter the Choir with that modesty and composure which is appropriate to the great majesty of God. After genuflecting to the Blessed Sacrament, they shall make a slight bow to the whole Choir and, if the Superior is there, they shall make a profound bow to him before reverencing the Choir.

7 - The Hebdomadary will look over the office to be recited by reading the Ordo carefully so that there will be no mistakes.

8 - Before the Superior gives the signal to begin the Office, let them recollect themselves in God, recalling His Presence and specify their intentions in the best way possible so as to please His Divine Majesty.

9 - When they say: “At the Name of Jesus let every knee bend, etc.” (Phil. 2:10:11), let all bow together, look straight ahead without turning from one side to the other and modestly join their hands before their breast. For sake of conformity, all will bow their heads to the level of the bench before them; they will do the same at the Sacrosanctae, etc.

10 - In reciting the Divine Office, let all stand upright before the lectern, without leaning their arms or elbows upon it, but only the wrists of their hands to hold the breviary. If they have no need to do that, let them keep their hands within the sleeves of their habit.

11 - Let them not drag the Office nor recite it when they are yawning, but rather let them stop chanting and leave the chanting to the others for that brief interval of time.

12 - Let them not cough or clear their throat unbecomingly, not scratch themselves, not expectorate carelessly from one side to the other. But, when they cough or clear their throats or expectorate, let them put their hands politely before their mouth and, turning from that side where it is appropriate, let them bend a little when they expectorate.

13 - Let them recite the Office in a tone which is neither too high nor too low, so that there may be no discord. Let them avoid prolonging the voice at the asterisk and at the final syllable. Let them not raise or lower their voice in the syllables from time to time but let them use a tone of voice always equal, uniform and devout. In this way the chanting will foster recollection and compunction; this will happen when the words rise from a heart which lives in the presence of God.

14 - Let the Rector appoint the Hebdomadary for each week. The Hebdomadary will always say the last readings; two of the other Religious will take the first and second readings. The Rector shall also appoint two clerics to intone the invitatory and the versicles of the Canonical Hours.

15 - Let the Father Rector appoint another of the most observant and fervent Religious who, when he sees that one of the Religious is absent, will go, at the first psalm, to call him and see whether he is feeling ill.

16 - The lay brothers are not to sit in places out of sight but where they can be seen. When they have finished their required vocal prayer, let them remain recollected in God, preparing themselves by holy mental prayer. Let them not go wandering through the Retreat under any pretext whatever.

17 - When a Religious shall enter the Choir after the Office has begun, he will recite the Hail Mary on his knees in the middle of the Choir, and, kissing the ground, he shall make the usual reverences indicated in number 1; these should also be made by all the Religious who have to leave for any necessity.

18 - When the Office is finished, let them extinguish the lamps so that no sparks will fall and the odor will not cause nausea and headache to the poor Religious.

Regulation III: The Discipline

19 - Let them take the discipline neither to impress others nor because of habit, but in a spirit of penance in the following way: (1) with joy of heart since God loves the one who gives himself with a joyful heart: "God loves a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9,7); (2) with humble sentiments because this penance is nothing in comparison to what our innumerable sins deserve; (3) with great confidence that the Lord will accept that small satisfaction in virtue of the holy obedience with which they do it; (4) by uniting this penance with the very painful sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

20 - Let all take the discipline prescribed by the Holy Rule. Let no one absent himself from it on the excuse or pretext of delicate health or advanced age, learning by experience that the most infirm are those who live outside the observance.

Regulation IV: Prayer

21 - Let the Religious not only pray but give serious attention to prayer, facing it squarely and taking it to heart, since their whole good depends on prayer by which the Lord directs them and pours His graces upon them.

22 - Let them note well that the first, indeed, the only aim of the devil is to take away the most potent arms of holy prayer so as to overcome and oppress the Religious and cause them to fall into the profound evil of tepidity. Therefore, they should never presume to omit it under any pretext or cause.

23 - Let the Father Rector be very vigilant about this, and as the devil does everything possible to impede it, so the Superior should use all the care imaginable and keep his eyes alert so that no one will omit it.

24 - Let all remain in Choir together when the points of the meditation are being read. When the reading is finished, let no one go to make prayer in one's room or elsewhere but let him make it in the Church or Choir.

25 - At the time of mental prayer, let the Religious kneel out of respect for the great Majesty of God to whom they are speaking. If some one has to sit down, let him have an understanding with Father Rector or the Spiritual Father so as to know whether it is a temptation or laziness or whether it seems necessary.

26 - During the time of prayer let them be very quiet and avoid leaning on benches that are too low, stretching out unbecomingly to the grandeur of God, giving bad example to those nearby. To put the hands under the chin or face or to let them hang by the waist is counter to a sense of the living presence of God; rather, let them keep their hands inside their sleeves or crossed on their breast.

27 - Let them put into practice the instructions given them by the Spiritual Father or Father Rector with simplicity and submission, trusting more in those whom God has put in His place than in themselves and their own reflections.

28 - In the Retreats which are not in profound solitude, the Church will be locked during the time of prayer after Compline. This, however, will be done only during the summer.

29 - Let the lay brothers who have to prepare supper or collation do everything they can to finish their work before prayer; but in case of necessity they should leave prayer only during the last fifteen minutes. However, they may anticipate the prayer with the permission of Father Rector, especially during the summer.

30 - Let them be mindful that prayer will never succeed unless they are recollected throughout the day, love interior and exterior solitude, practice holy mortification and observe faithfully even the smallest precepts of the Holy Rule.

Regulation V: Holy Mass and Communion

31 - During winter, let there always be a Mass after the half-hour of prayer in the morning. All should assist at this Mass, including the lay brothers, even though a Mass had been offered during the time of prayer.

32 - As the Holy Rule prescribes, let each one assist at the last Mass provided that he is not legitimately impeded. Let them not absent themselves without serious reason and let them not impede it but rather with foresight remove all obstacles which could delay them from assisting at it.

33 - When they enter the Church or pass before Blessed Sacrament, let them genuflect the following way: (1) let the body remain erect;(2) do not bend the head; (3) let the knee touch the floor; (4) position the knee which bends near the ankle of the other foot, which is to remain stationary on the floor.

34 - Let them assist at Mass with fear, trembling and reverence, kneeling before the Divine Sacrifice, which is a memorial of the Most Holy Passion of Jesus Christ. The sons of the Passion should be distinguished by this devotion.

35 - While hearing Mass, let them do four things, namely: appease God, honor Him, thank Him and petition Him.

36 - Since the aim of our Congregation is to promote devotion to the Most Holy Passion of Jesus Christ, let them, above all, pray to his Divine Majesty for sinners, for the conversion of infidels, for the Congregation so that the Most Holy Name of Jesus might be known and venerated and so that all people, believing in these ineffable Mysteries, may have compassion and mourn over and be devoted to the most bitter sufferings of Jesus and of His Holy Mother.

37 - Let the lay brothers serve the Masses which are offered up until the time of Tierce; on Feast Days, however, a cleric in surplice will serve the Community Masses.

38 - Let them prepare themselves for Holy Communion fervently and with all their soul, recalling what St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi said, that a single Communion well-received is sufficient to make a saint.

39 - On the principal Solemnities the clerics shall go to Communion in surplice and the lay brothers shall wear mantles. On other days during both summer and winter, the clerics and lay brothers shall wear mantles out of greater propriety.

40 - After Communion let them converse with Our Lord in leisure because this is the most appropriate time to obtain graces and to treat of the important matter of their eternal salvation and sanctification.

Regulation VI: The Cell.

41 - After Tierce they shall go to put their cells in order. The cells should be conspicuous for cleanliness. Let them make their beds and do whatever else is necessary.

42 - Every morning they shall wash their hands in the place designated, comb their hair and brush the habit which they are wearing.

43 - When they enter or leave the cell, let them kneel before the image of our Blessed Mother and ask for her blessing, requesting permission from Her, as their Teacher, to do this action or to go to that place.

44 - Let them love the cell and not leave it except for reasons of necessity or service. Let them not go wandering around the Retreat; otherwise they will commit innumerable faults and will put themselves in danger of transgressing the Rule in multiple ways.

45 - Let them always keep the Crucifix before their eyes and often kiss His sacred wounds with love so that the heart may often make acts of love to our Supreme Good.

46 - If Father Rector or another Superior enters their room, let them rise and kneel down, considering themselves honored that the Lord has come to make them a visit in the person of this Superior.

47 - During study time let them do as when they say, with one foot raised and the other one on the ground, i.e., with their mind on the book and their heart on God.

48 - Let them often make ejaculatory prayers which are a wonderful help toward recollection when they are said in time of aridity.

49 - When they are thus alone, let them be careful to dispel from their mind or memory everything which is not God or about God.

50 - When they experience some little cloud of melancholy or shadow of disturbance and temptation, let them kneel immediately before the Crucifix and hasten to hide themselves within the Sacred Side of Christ with acts of love like a child who runs to its mother's arms in order to flee from the one causing it fear.

51 - When they are called by holy obedience to the common acts of observance or by someone, particularly by the Superior, let them obey promptly, interrupting the word which they are reading or leaving unfinished the letter they are writing.

52 - Let them not remain idle so as not to give the devil the opportunity to thrust temptations and suggestions upon them but let them study, write, read and pray.

53 - To avoid the useless loss of time, those who have not studied moral theology, philosophy or dogmatic theology (even though they have applied themselves and worked hard at it for a time) are not to give catechetical instructions, preach, give the meditations or anything else without the permission and advice of Father Rector. The Rector, after evaluating the ability of all, will advise them to do what will be most appropriate for each one.

54 - Let them not bring any outsiders into their cell without special permission from Father Rector, but there should be a room near the front door to receive and converse with such visitors.

55 - When they change their clothes, let them do so with all modesty; for that reason let them close the window shutters.

56 - Let them sweep their cells at least once a week.

Regulation VII: Particular Examen

57 - Let the particular examen which is made after study not be done hastily but with a genuine efficacious will to remedy one's faults.

58 - Let the examen be made on the resolutions which were made in holy prayer and on those virtues which they were inspired to practice.

59 - Let the examen be made, not on general areas, but on particular things which should be determined so as to attain the end.

60 - It is very useful and profitable to be concerned with and to propose one substantial thing alone of great consequence which would draw with it the complexus of many virtues as, for example, the Presence of God in all one's works, interior recollection in all one's actions, and to focus the examen always on this one thing.

61 - When faults have been discovered, let them say culpa at the feet of the Crucified or of the Blessed Mother, as is done when we say culpa in the refectory, asking Them for their particular help and light.

62 - Besides humbly asking God to pardon the infidelity committed, let them spend considerable time on purpose of amendment, because numberless other faults stem from weak resolutions.

63 - Let them not rush the examen nor make it perfunctorily and solely for the purpose of fulfilling an obligation; but let them make it calmly, slowly and with that exactness as if one must then appear before the judgement seat of God.

64 - Let them remember that their spiritual profit depends on this examen very much.

Regulation VIII: Spiritual Reading

65 - Spiritual Reading is a wonderful help for making prayer well and for interior recollection. Therefore, never omit it, neither in the morning nor during the day.

66 - If one cannot make it at the prescribed hour because of some very urgent necessity, let them make it up at another time so as not to be deprived of so great a good.

67 - Let them do Spiritual Reading for the time allotted on the horarium; therefore, let them not cut it short in order to finish a sermon or catechetical instruction or meditation or for any other trifling reason.

68 - Let the Father Rector or Spiritual Father assign the book which they are to read.

69 - Before beginning Spiritual Reading, let them raise their mind to God and ask Him for His grace and lights. If the book is written by some Saint or is the life of some servant of God, let them recommend themselves in a special way to them so that they might communicate their spirit to us.

70 - Let them not read out of curiosity or of personal satisfaction, nor hastily, but let them read calmly and slowly like the bee which alights on the flower and gently extracts the honey and flavor from it.

71 - Let them keep one eye on the book and the other on the Crucifix. If they feel their heart moved to some sentiment of compunction or love, let them remain with this as long as it lasts; when it ceases, they will continue the reading.

Regulation IX: Solitary Walk

72 - At the prescribed time let all go for a walk to get a little air to relieve the head so that they will be better able and disposed for interior recollection.

73 - Let no one absent himself from this walk, even under pretext of remaining more recollected, except when the weather is very cold or because of sickness, without the explicit permission of Father Rector.

74 - Let them not go too far from the Retreat, but they should remain in sight of the Retreat so that they might always be under the eyes of the Superior.

75 - Let each one go by himself alone so that he may not have occasion to break silence; therefore, let them keep a proportionate distance between themselves.

76 - Let them not allow their eyes to wander too much, for in this way innumerable distractions enter. But let them contemplate the grandeur, beauty and majesty of our God from the beauty of the flowers, the fields, the heavens and the sun.

77 - In the open country let their hearts pour out to God and send ardent aspirations and fervent acts of love heavenward.

78 - They may carry with them a spiritual reading book or the New Testament so that their hearts might be inflamed with love toward God by a word or sentiment from these books.

79 - If they should meet some passerby, let them respond courteously to the greeting, but they should not stop to engage in conversation with them.

80 - At the first sound of the bell which summons them for the recitation of the Canonical Hours, let all move immediately and approach the Retreat so as to be ready for Choir.

Regulation X: Food To Be Taken

81 - When it is time to go to the refectory, let the Religious proceed with great modesty, mindful that the Saints were accustomed to eat poor, sparse food with sorrow of heart.

82 - Before eating let them not allow themselves to be carried away by this carnal action, but they should purify their intention in the best way they can and in accordance with the lights the Lord will give them.

83 - Let them recall that at times our Lord Jesus Christ did not have a crust of bread to satisfy His hunger and that in His Holy Passion He did not even have a glass of water for refreshment but only gall and vinegar. Hence his sons should mingle tears with their drink and eat the bread of sorrow, thinking about the most painful sufferings of our Blessed Lord and our Blessed Mother.

84 - Let them recall that it is God who sustains, conserves and gives flavor to the food they are consuming. If God were removed, everything would be reduced to nothing. Therefore, let them be more attentive to the love of God than to the taste of food; and when they drink, let them imagine that they are putting their lips close to the Sacred Side of Jesus to drink of that heavenly nectar.

85 - Let them be attentive to the spiritual reading so that the soul might be fed along with the body. Therefore, let the reading be done in a loud voice, word for word, without haste and calmly.

86 - Let them eat with all modesty and good manners and let them not smack their lips.

87 - Let them not lean over the food while eating nor hold their head too high so that no oil or grease falls on their chest; neither should they keep their head so low that it seems as if they are eating their food more through their eyes than through their mouths.

88 - Let them keep their eyes lowered and not turn them here and there; they should not be looking at the food of the brethren seated near them.

89 - Let them not complain if their food is not to their liking, whether as regards quantity, quality or flavoring, convincing themselves that the poverty of the Retreat cannot give anything else and that the lay brothers have done as well as they could.

90 - When the book is passed along, let the one receiving it clean his fingers well so as not to wet or stain the book.

91 - When they have finished their soup, let them clean their spoon well; at the end of the meal, let them clean their forks well.

92 - If the cup has two handles, let them hold it with both hands when drinking; to do otherwise would be impolite.

93 - Let them not lean their arms or elbows on the table, but only wrists.

94 - When a Religious comes to the table and the others are already seated, let him say an Our Father and Hail Mary on his knees for the Souls in Purgatory; then, after kissing the floor, let him go to his place.

95 - Let them often say culpa in the refectory and do the customary penances; they should not allow one week to pass without making some act of mortification.

96 - It would be a serious defect or a sign of poor spirit to mention only faults of minor import and to omit other more serious ones either through human respect or out of fear of rebuke or a heavy penance.

97 - If anyone is lacking soup, the main dish or anything else, let the Religious next to him, upon noticing it, inform the Superior or server, without disturbing the silence.

98 - After carrying everything into the refectory, let the lay brother who is serving at table and before sitting down to eat, walk around the tables slowly to see whether bread or any other necessity is missing.

99 - Let them carefully gather up the crumbs and, if they do not wish to eat them, put them in a little pile at the edge of the table. Let them put their cup, upside down, in its place, that is, in the shelf prepared for this purpose or under the napkin.

Regulation XI: Recreation

100 - Before entering recreation let them recollect themselves and with a strong resolution renew their intention to remain in God's Presence since the devil is accustomed to make many conquests in recreation and the refectory.

101 - The Holy Spirit says that the person who does not offend by word is perfect (James 3,2); therefore, before offering any opinion, let them think it over briefly and simply.

102 - Let them always speak about God and useful and edifying things which inspire the heart and do not divert them from that modesty which all should have in order to acquire the holy fear of God.

103 - Let them speak with gladness of heart which is a proper characteristics of holy conversation. Let them be affable, polite, gentle and loving in the Lord.

104 - Let them avoid contradictions as a pest of the soul and of fraternal union and charity. After having expressed their opinion, even though it seem that the other is the victor and conqueror, let them remain peaceful and rejoice in their humiliation. Let them humble themselves before God and men, since it is certain that in these battles, the one who conquers loses, and the one who loses conquers.

105 - Let a cleric or priest be assigned to recall the presence of God when the clock strikes or when some improper and unbecoming conversation is introduced.

106 - Let them not murmur about anyone, not even in minor things; let them not ridicule anyone, nor speak about faults in the refectory or Chapter, nor about weddings and marriages, shows and vanities of the world, nor about their own homes and areas, nor anything else which could create levity of heart.

107 - Let them not praise themselves under any pretext, not even in jest, since praise is a speck of dust to which one is easily attached, and it causes vain joy.

108 - Let them sit with their knees together and not put one leg over the other.

109 - Let them not say ridiculous things nor foolish jokes which are not proper for Religious as St. Paul informs us (II Tim. 2,16).

110 - Let them not make comments on the sermons, confessions or matters which manifest wrong feelings against the Superior.

111 - Let no one ever make a sign or gesture or show the least sign of disrespect toward others. Let them externally show that veneration and respect to all the brethren which they have and should have in their hearts.

112 - Let no one touch another on the head, hands and still less on the face, because this is very contrary to holy modesty.

113 - When the bell rings, let them obey promptly – breaking off in the middle of a word – and let them go where holy obedience calls.

Regulation XII: General Examen and Chapter

114 - Let all be present, with no exception, at the Examen and Chapter, since these two observances are very strongly and gently practical for spiritual profit and progress.

115 - Let the Religious who is to speak to the brethren prepare himself by foreseeing what he wants to say; even more important, let him recommend himself to the Lord by prayer and interior recollection so that the Lord might put on his lips what is most useful for the Religious.

116 - Let him avoid, at any, cost making particular allusions but let him speak in general and touch prudently on those points which he thinks necessary for improving the conduct and deportment of the Religious.

117 - When he corrects a vice or some other defect, let him preach within his heart, considering himself the poorest and neediest of all.

118 - Let him always maintain an interior peace so that his heart might be disposed to receive God's inspiration; let him be careful not to confuse zeal with what could be passion in reproof and correcting.

119 - Let him not be concerned with words, but with the substance and the spirit, and let him look at the Religious in the loving Heart of Jesus with a deep desire to see them all saints, so that they might promote God's glory and proclaim the Crucified Love to the world.

120 - Let him try to be brief and avoid speaking about the truth in such generic terms that the Religious would not know how to acquire it.

121 - Let him be gentle and not discourage his listeners, and let him deal with them in love so that generous and lasting resolution will be made.

122 - Let the Religious go to the examen and Chapter with eagerness. Let them renew their faith that God is speaking to them, and let them keep themselves in the living presence of His Divine Majesty.

123 - Let each one be careful never to suspect that a particular thing is said for them because they will not draw any profit from it, will impeded the graces of God and will incur, in the hardness of their heart, a very just castigation for their pride.

124 - Let them welcome what they hear with simplicity and humility of heart and let them keep before their eyes the mirror of their own soul to see all the blemishes and stains in order that they might correct them.

125 - During the day let them reflect on what they heard; otherwise they will forget it and never be able to put into practice the holy doctrine given to them. Let them be convinced that food which is not masticated and passed down to the stomach is not at all beneficial.

126 - In Chapter let them mention faults in a spirit of humility and truth, not lessening the fault by circumstances or justifying words, but rather magnifying them by strong feelings which are born of knowledge of one's own cowardice and misery.

127 - Let them hear correction with all submission, kneeling on the floor with the desire to correct themselves together with an efficacious will to do what the Superior says; they should consider the Superior's voice to be that of Jesus Christ.

128 - Let them often ask His Divine Majesty to give the Superior light regarding their conduct; God will be most faithful in giving great light to the Superiors for their direction in time and place, when and how the Religious will rule their interior by this living faith: "He who hears you, hears me" (Luke 10,16).

Regulation XIII: Conferences

129 - Let not a week pass – or at most two weeks – without having the Conferences with Father Rector or the Spiritual Father.

130 - Let them pay attention to the devil who will tempt them to absent themselves from the Conference, suggesting that they already know what the Father should say or respond to them,

because God wants this humility in the directees; further, He gives efficacy to his words and grace to the Religious to practice what they know and shall hear.

131 - Before Conference, let the Religious kneel down to receive the blessing of the Superior or the Spiritual Father.

132 - When they experience interior anxieties, disturbances or anything else which destroys peace of heart, let them go immediately for a Conference in order to regain calm at once. Otherwise they shall lose weeks and whole months fruitlessly, because without that aforementioned interior peace, either little is done or nothing at all is done or it is overdone.

133 - If they have temptations against the Director, let them not be afraid to tell him clearly; and let them be assured that it will not displease him, in fact, he will love them more as he sees their sincerity, simplicity and confidence in virtue of which they approach him with their heart in their hands.

134 - Let them be sincere in talking about their interior life in detail, and not hide any serpent in the heart without uncovering it.

135 - Let them take care to understand well what is said to them; still more let them try to put it into practice so that the Conference is not rendered useless.

136 - When the Conference is finished, let both kneel down and say: "Agimus tibi gratias," etc. Let the Religious who has had the Conference then go before the Blessed Sacrament for a short visit, offer himself to the Lord, resolve to observe what His Divine Majesty was pleased to teach him, ask for His grace and assistance while affirming that he wants to become a saint in order to do the Lord's most Holy Will.

137 - Let him go to his cell and reflect on the teaching given to him; in fact, the best thing would be to write down what he should do to acquire that virtue or remedy that temptation or anything else which he heard.

Regulation XIV: Dealing with Seculars Inside and Outside the Retreat

138 - Let them not bring any secular into their cell without the permission of Father Rector, but there should be a room near the front door to receive visitors; this is where the Religious who is requested should go.

139 - No visitor is allowed to walk around the Retreat unless he is accompanied by Father Rector or a senior Father assigned to him. Let him suggest politely that he speak in a low voice and that he walk quietly so as not to disturb the peace, quiet and recollection of the Religious.

140 - If circumstances allow and the visitors should want to stay for a while in the Retreat, let both the Rector and the others courteously invite them to assist in Choir, at the Examen or other community observance and they will be edified.

141 - Let them treat the visitors with gentleness and delicacy, with modesty and fewness of words, which they have pondered so that the visitors might be composed and admire Jesus Christ Crucified in the Religious.

142 - Let them avoid idle, superfluous and ridiculous conversations; let them shun affectation in gestures and sentiments. While speaking, let them show their cordiality and not pursue worldly ways, but use expressions which are appropriate for Religious.

143 - With holy eagerness let them mention some thought on the Passion of Jesus Christ in their conversation so that they might espouse this very beneficial devotion and grow in fervor.

144 - When going outside, let them be as clean as possible, knowing that poverty is good but uncleanness is inappropriate.

145 - When travelling, let them avoid even the slightest murmuring, and let them not speak about the Religious, damaging the reputation of this or that one.

146 - Let them wear the habit becomingly and modestly so that the legs are not notably visible.

147 - Let them use every effort not to leave any bad odor in the homes of benefactors since our Religious of the Passion of Jesus Christ are known for their deportment, in their actions and even their gestures; therefore, let them dry themselves with all modesty. After speaking with the benefactors for that brief time which courtesy demands, let them go to do their work or ask to be shown to their room so that they may fulfill their duties, for example, praying the Office or whatever else.

148 - As regards dealing with women, let them observe exactly the prescriptions of the Holy Rule; let them not offer the least sign of intimacy such as laughing, smiling, taking tobacco, saying sweet and affectionate words, but let them be reserved and respectful. Let them not stand face to face nor body to body, but to the side and with eyes lowered; let them finish their business quickly and never allow them to kiss their hand.

149 - Let them be every attentive while eating and drinking so that the seculars may not observe the least intemperance and greediness in them. This happens in those Religious who want to go out of the Retreat and for a hidden interior reason of pleasing themselves and eating non-Lenten food.

150 - Let them not tell outsiders what the Religious are doing and what is going on in the Retreat. But let them praise all for the glory of God and let them exalt the goodness and holiness of the Religious for the honor of the Congregation.

151 - After eating, let them go to their rooms as soon as possible to take a little rest because this is a time when one likes to talk, open one's heart and easily complain.

152 - Let them not write letters either for mailing or not without the permission of the Rector or Major Superior.

PART TWO: Offices

Regulation I: Father Rector

153 - As the good order of the Retreat and the Regular Observance depends on the vigilance, good government and example of the Rector, let him do his best in these areas so that the Retreat might be a very delightful garden where white lilies of all the virtues flower, and where the gentle Jesus finds His delight.

154 - Let them elect as Superior of the Retreat Mary Most Holy, whom they shall honor in some particular way every day so that She might ask for light and grace that he fulfill his ministry perfectly.

155 - Every morning let him make an act of great distrust in himself and great confidence in God, convincing himself that the members of his Community will never be able to walk uprightly by his own effort and prudence alone, but by God's assistance.

156 - Let him not aim at keeping his government irreproachable before men, because when the contrary happens, he will lose his peace and will be immersed in a sea of faults; rather let his sole aim be the glory of God and to please Him alone.

157 - Let him be gentle to all, affable, charitable and take upon himself the infirmities of his Religious. Therefore, he should not use harsh and authoritarian words in giving orders, but rather gentle words by saying: "Have the charity to do this or that," etc.

158 - Let him remember that he is not the proprietor but he should consider himself as the servant of all. Therefore, let him not ask others to do his duties if he can do them himself.

159 - Let him remember that he should have the heart of a father, indeed a tender and cordial love of a mother in order to elicit the respect, veneration, obedience and love from his Religious.

160 - Let him observe well the nature of his Religious in order to deal with each one according to his temperament. Let him treat the irascible and sanguine type with gentleness so as not to lose them and to elicit full obedience from them. Let him deal with the meek and humble of heart type at times with harshness and moderate rigor so as to protect their treasure. Let him treat the melancholic and pusillanimous types with gentleness since they need encouragement so that they will not stop on their journey to the Lord.

161 - At his discretion, let him visit the Religious in their rooms and go around the Retreat and offices as necessary so as to learn whether the regular observance is being kept.

162 - When correcting, let them act with great prudence so that the medicine is not worse than the disease; hence, let him correct and advise the Religious with such skill that the latter does not perceive that his fault has been mentioned by someone else; otherwise charity will, little by little, be quenched and opposition will arise.

163 - He will have to give a very strict account at the judgment seat of God if, through his own folly or because of his weak spirit, abuses have been introduced into the Retreat, which then can easily spread to other houses.

164 - Let him be careful and quick to bring immediate correction to major disorders. Let him have no human respect nor regard for whomsoever. When the honor of God is at stake, it is imperative to show strength when necessary and to be strong in resistance.

165 - Let him take care to be the first at the common observance and most fervent in the observance of the Holy Rule so that his words in the examens and in corrections, both public and private, might have their effect.

166 - In correcting the faults of others when they make culpa, let him be mindful not to exaggerate what is not a fault or is scarcely the shadow of one, because then the corrections for other genuine serious faults will carry no weight; and these will be taken either as a joke or the usual story; this will be the way the Religious will think.

167 - Let them not consult with persons who can't give counsel, and particularly with the young, but with those who either because of their balance or long experience can make equitable and prudent judgements.

168 - Let him take care of his own provisions of macaroni, pork, etc., as regards time and place, so that he will not have to spend much or cause his Religious to suffer much.

169 - Let him not permit pictures with gold frames to be kept in the Retreat except for the Church, Choir, Sacristy and Chapter Room.

170 - Let him not be inclined to send the professed Religious outside the Retreat, but let him often use the service of the "oblate". When he does have to send the professed out, let him choose the most recollected and fervent and those whom he can trust will not give a bad impression.

171 - Let him never send one Religious alone outside the Retreat, but let him always have a companion. When they return, let the Rector inquire from both how each one behaved.

172 - Let him see that the Religious practice some days before the sacred functions which they are to celebrate in the Church on Solemnities, such as Christmas, Easter, Holy Week, etc., so that everything will be done with the decorum fitting the great Majesty of God. That practice will take place during recreation time, particularly the singing practice or at another time which he will consider more appropriate.

173 - On Holy Saturday let him bless or have the Retreat blessed according to the custom of Holy Mother Church.

174 - Let him be vigilant about the observance of things, even the most minute, regarding the Holy Rule. Let him be exact in executing the directions and decrees which were given on the occasion of Visitations.

175 - Let him not show partiality nor manifest particular confidence or affection to anyone, but let his love be equal for all, and let him look upon all with the same eye.

176 - Let him be good to the lay brothers who are encouraged in the observance and service of God by the kind face of the Superior:

177 - Let him be ready to listen to all the Religious each time they come to his room; let him receive them affably and listen without hurrying them – as if he had nothing else to do that day. He should never show annoyance or disturbance by these visits, even though they be frequent.

178 - Let him love holy poverty but be attentive that the Religious lack nothing necessary. Let him see that the Retreat has adequate provisions of material things and linens, and that the Religious have habits, sandals and whatever else the Holy Rule requires.

179 - Let him never permit seculars to eat meat within the Retreat, even outside the refectory. Above all let him not allow any of the Religious to eat meat a short distance from the Retreat, as this would introduce a great abuse. Those Religious alone may eat it when it is put before them when outside the Retreat for other reasons as the Holy Rule Provides.

180 - Let him not transport any contraband goods for any great benefactor under pretext of belonging to the Religious or the Retreat.

181 - Let him never take on the custody or concealment of forbidden arms or contraband goods at the request of anyone whomsoever.

Regulation II: Vice-Rector

182 - What has been said of the Father Rector should also be understood proportionately of Father Vice-Rector.

183 - According to the provision of the Holy Rule, in the absence of Father Rector, the Vice-Rector should do everything which pertains to his office. However let him not decide on or take any important step by himself, but wait until the Rector returns.

184 - Let him not give any permission to a Religious but tell the person to approach the Rector so that he may know whether this is in accordance with the Observance. For it is certain that neither the houses nor the Religious nor the communities are governed well when there are two in command.

185 - Let him also be vigilant about the observance of the Holy Rule. When he sees any transgressions, let him inform the Rector, so that he might remedy it.

186 - When he is requested to give his opinion to the Rector, let his sole purpose be the glory of God, the good of the Retreat, the advantage of the Congregation and not personal and particular aims.

187 - Let him depend totally on the Rector for everything and appropriate to himself only those faculties which the Father Rector or Major Superiors give him.

Regulation III: Spiritual Father

188 - Piety, zeal and prudence should radiate in a special way from the Spiritual Father because upon him depends in great part the good of the Retreat, the peace of consciences and the full observance of the Holy Rule.

189 - Let him receive all who approach him for a Conference with gentleness, kindness and joy, manifesting externally the interior joy he has in wanting to help and console them.

190 - While listening to the Religious, let him remain humble, in the presence of God and actually praying to God to suggest what response he should make for the good direction of this soul.

191 - Let the Religious say everything he wants to say, without interrupting him. Let the Director endeavor to get to the bottom of everything he is talking about, so that his response may be just, adequate, true and convincing.

192 - Let him study works on the direction of souls and above all let him pray for the souls committed to this care so that he can say: "I have lost none of those whom you have given to me," (John 6,39).

193 - Let him encourage and hearten all, and lighten their hearts, trying especially to engender in souls a great hope and confidence in God. When confidence in God is lacking, discouragement because of failures sets in and many souls come to a standstill and do not grow in perfection.

194 - Let him try with all his strength to calm interior disturbances, the grumbling of nature, complaints, misunderstandings, suspicions suggested by the devil against the Superior and Religious, so that they might remain in great peace and undertake the practice of virtue with greater courage and spirit.

195 - Let him be careful that the Conferences do not become useless conversations and that the Religious, under the pretext of a Conference, do not go to his cell simply to have a good "gab session," because it will end up by murmuring or other major faults.

Regulation IV: The Sacristan

196 - The Sacristan has more opportunities than others to remain in God's presence since he is often near the Blessed Sacrament. Let him realize how honored and fortunate he is to have this assignment. Therefore, he should endeavor to fulfill this office with perfection like the Angels who assist continually before the throne of the Most Holy Trinity with seraphic ardor.

197 - Let him keep the Church, Sacristy and Choir spotless. After the Masses are finished he will cover the altars well, arrange the candles and candlesticks properly, fold the vestments neatly, both inside and outside the case.

198 - Let him sweep the Church every week, that is, on Saturdays after Vespers. He should dust the altars every day. The sacristy vestment cases and the Church predella should be cleaned every two days, especially if they are made of walnut. Let him dust the gradines of the altar every week, after sweeping the Church. The walls, columns, pillars and cornices of the Church should be dusted three times a year, i.e., before Easter, the Feast of the Assumption and Christmas.

199 - The wine and the sacred vestments should be prepared in the evening; the wine however should be kept tightly closed in a very clean vessel.

200 - On the day before, let them bring the water to be used on the following morning for the priests who are to celebrate Mass to the lavabo.

201 - After removing the vestments, the priest should be careful not to leave them scattered all over and disorderly, but let him arrange them neatly.

202 - Let him not serve Mass in his bare feet but wear sandals or slippers. Let the same practice be observed by the others, whether lay brothers or clerics.

203 - Let him be attentive that the altar cloths, purificators, corporals and chalices are very clean, spotless – without the least stain. Such is befitting our great God.

204 - Let him have new particles consecrated every week during the summer and every two weeks during the winter.

205 - When he notices a small hole in the amices, purificators, surplices, altar cloths or sacred vestments, let him remedy it immediately; otherwise he will offend holy poverty and will not be honoring God when linens and vestments have large patches.

206 - At the end of None let him lock the doors of the Church and not open them until after Vespers. When Compline is finished let him lock them and bring the key to the Rector's room.

207 - Let there be an assistant Sacristan to help him; this assistant will depend totally on the Sacristan.

Regulation V: Confessors

208 - Since the conversion of sinners is totally the work of God, the Confessors should recommend themselves with all their heart to His Divine Majesty that He might give them special help in a matter of such great importance.

209 - Let them study some Moral Theology every day so as not to err and to know how to solve at the right moment the most complex cases which may occur.

210 - Whenever they are called to the exercise of this ministry, let them go willingly and with good grace and not from obligation and ungraciously. Such a poor disposition is a great impediment for receiving God's help.

211 - It would be a very bad sign of a heart devoured if one were to go more willingly to hear the confessions of women than men. This temptation is often hidden under the pretext that more can be done for women than for men. However, experience proves that the conversion of men is more lasting than that of women. It is easy to be deceived by dealings with women because of their appearance of piety.

212 - Before going to hear confessions, they should kneel before the Crucifix or the Blessed Sacrament and say: "O Lord, give me wisdom from your throne so that you may be with and work through me" (Wisdom 9,4) or some other prayer asking for God's assistance.

213 - Let them not be in a hurry to finish with a penitent, for haste is a temptation all the more dangerous since it is not easily recognized. Whatever is done in haste is done badly.

214 - Let them hear confessions not because they are constrained to do so, but with a strong desire to convert the soul, to snatch it from the clutches of the devil and to make it a citizen of heaven. Heaven rejoices more at the recovery of the lost sheep; therefore, let them regard each soul in the Heart of Jesus, who, for that one, shed His blood and who for that one alone would have remained on the Cross even until the end of the world.

215 - Let them not become interiorly disturbed by the bad manners of the penitent, but rather let them always maintain peace of heart and keep themselves in the presence of God. It is from Him that they should take the counsel to be given. If they should be interiorly disturbed, they should hide their feelings, for everyone knows that words which come from a disturbed heart will not touch the heart of the penitent.

216 - In hearing the confessions of women they should not stare at them nor draw near to their face at the grate, for even one single breath of their persons could be prejudicial. Let the screen of the grate be very close and these grates covered on the inside with perforated paper or some thin cloth so that nothing may be seen and only the voice pass through.

217 - Let them be very careful not to address affectionate, honied, or tender words to women or call them by a pet name, or ask them anything unnecessary or carry on any useless conversation; rather they should finish their task as soon as possible. Let them be mindful, above all, in the matter of the sixth commandment; it is better than asking too many questions to pose too few, so that the poison of the penitent will not be communicated to the confessor. Let them be content to know the species of the sin, with its number and the circumstances seriously affecting it.

218 - Nothing evil will befall confessors who are truly fearful of God, because they are protected by the Lord, whose presence they always try to remember. However, confessors of little spirit should often remember that countless souls have fallen from the confessional into the hands of the Sacred Inquisition.

219 - Let them avoid, as far as possible, dogmatizing, such as: this is a venial sin, that is a mortal sin, the other is nothing – unless there is some most pressing necessity for acting in this way or on things that are as clear as the noonday sun. This practice should be observed particularly in the matter of impurity, for if one is mistaken only in small things, the consequences could be grave.

220 - In counseling one to remain unmarried, they should praise the desire of holy virginity, but should be cautious lest they appear to show a low esteem for Holy Matrimony or to demean it with less sublime words which might seem less becoming for such a great sacrament.

221 - Let them not get involved in arranging or dissolving marriages or engagements, but let them simply fulfill their obligation in settling matters of conscience, imposing on the penitent only the accomplishment of their duties and nothing more. If they go beyond this they will only dash themselves against a thousand reefs and submerge themselves in a sea of difficulties. The parish priests should be concerned with anything more and the penitents should be referred to them.

222 - Let them never encourage quarrels and not give advice about going to court. Some things may appear to be justified, yet this is not according to the gentle spirit of Jesus. Rather, let them always exhort to peace, to pardon, to meekness and to harmony.

223 - Let them be very careful about making prophecies to penitents, especially the dying, predicting for them what will happen and what will not happen; when such things are mistaken they will become the gossip and laughing stock of seculars.

224 - Let them not rush the penitents but rather hearten and encourage them by strong, efficacious and gentle motives to lay bare their conscience openly and not to hold back.

225 - The art of a good confessor consists in knowing how to prescribe timely remedies for recidivists, habitualists and occasionalists; confessors who take this to heart will provide good remedies to heal such pestilential ills.

226 - Let them keep far from criticizing the conduct of other confessors before their penitents, even though these say that they are not good, they are too brusque, they do not want to work hard or any other thing; on the contrary, they should excuse them, defend them and preserve priestly dignity.

227 - Let them encourage devotion to the most Sacred Passion of Jesus not with barren words as if they had in mind fulfilling only the strict obligation of their vow, but rather let them inculcate this devotion with great zeal, unction, strength and efficacy so that it will really take root in the heart of the penitents.

228 - Let them not judge penitents, particularly if they should be nuns, according to what they have heard from others, because they may be deceived and misled. Rather let them judge according to what the penitents themselves admit. Credence must be given to them and not to others, moved perhaps by passion, by suspicion, if not by hatred or jealousy.

229 - Whenever their advice is asked about the matter of wills, gifts or legacies etc., let them refer the penitents to the learned and to those whose profession it is to handle such matters; above all, let them not seek to procure wills or alms in favor of the Retreat.

230 - Let them not treat venial sins with severe words or undue gravity, so that uneducated penitents form an erroneous conscience and consider grave what is not so, which they can easily fall into when the confessors have brought burdens and upset into their souls.

231 - Let them be mindful that it is not the proper spirit of the Congregation to give spiritual direction to women because serious problems of soul and body can jeopardize them. Hence let them avoid with all their strength taking on permanent penitents; those who fail to do this will experience the consequences.

232 - Let them not take upon themselves the exorcizing of those who are possessed. This is at once a very dangerous and very difficult art.

233 - Let them be more willing to hear the confessions of the poor than of the rich. As far as they are able, let the young priests avoid hearing the confessions of the sanctimonious, of women, and of nuns.

234 - Let them be careful not to succumb to envy when they see that some other confessor of the Retreat is given more praise or sought after more than they. Little by little irreparable harm and serious consequences result from this envy.

235 - Let them never hear confessions of children under sixteen years of age outside the confessional, and never hear women in the afternoon.

236 - Whenever they have to defer or deny absolution, let them do it without human respect, but in such a way, with kindness and with words so gentle that the penitent will understand that it was done for the good of his soul. He should be encouraged to follow the suggestions in order to receive absolution after a few days, so that he will not fall into despair, nor into grumbling. Otherwise he perhaps might turn to drink iniquity as water, should the devil represent his case as almost despaired of.

237 - Let them never impose as a penance having Masses said in the Churches of our Retreats, and, if a penitent, out of devotion or obligation, wishes to have Masses offered, let the confessor never accept the offering, but rather let the Sacristan or Porter receive it.

238 - Let them avoid as much as possible taking upon themselves the burden of making restitution for penitents. Should they be constrained by necessity to do this, they shall demand a written receipt from the one to whom the restitution is made, to be returned to the penitent.

239 - Let them never allow women whose confessions they have heard come to them after confession to kiss their hand or their stole in front of the confessional. They should take care not to stop to converse with them in the Church or in any corner of it.

240 - Let them never speak to anyone about things which they have heard in confession, even though there may be no danger of identifying the penitent, for this is an impropriety toward a great Sacrament. If the laity hear such things, they would be scandalized and would no longer have the openness to confess their sins sincerely in the fear that the confessor would spread them throughout the world.

Regulation VI: Those In Charge of the Kitchen

241 - The Kitchen should be kept clean, so that it might look like a little study, by arranging everything in its proper place and order.

242 - The Kitchen should be swept every day; one of the layman appointed to help in the kitchen could do that.

243 - The first thing to be done by the kitchen help is to start the fire after Tierce so that the food will be cooked at the proper time.

244 - Let the cook wear a hat if the fire gives him a headache.

245 - The layman appointed to help in the kitchen depends entirely on the cook; he should do nothing without the direction of the cook.

246 - Let no one comb his hair, shave or brush his habit in the kitchen.

247 - When necessary, let them frequently wash their hands for greater cleanliness, so that the salt odor will not remain on their hands.

248 - Let them wear clean aprons which are tied tightly in front so that their clothes will not be stained.

249 - Let them do things neither slovenly nor in haste which causes plates, pots and glasses to be broken constantly; but let everything be done calmly and discreetly.

250 - Let the cook not leave the kitchen and wander from one part of the Retreat to another because the food will either be burned or not properly cooked.

251 - The layman appointed to work in the garden should bring the vegetables which the cook wants to the kitchen; the cook should wash them well at the fountain:

252 - Let them be very careful to clean the herbs and vegetables well so that no hairs or worms will be in the food. Let them be mindful that the health of the poor Religious is in their hands and that if they ruin their stomachs they will not be effective in their work for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

253 - They should sometimes taste the food with a spoon to see whether it is well seasoned, and they should not put the spoon back in the pot.

254 - The food should be well seasoned in conformity with our poverty and the money paid by the Superior for oil which should be neither too scarce nor too abundant.

255 - During summertime they should never give the community only vegetables but they should mix them either with pasta or herbs or wheat or rice. In wintertime, however, they may sometimes give only vegetables.

256 - Let them never cook cabbage in the morning; it should be served in the evening on a warm plate, because it could cause fever.

257 - On Feast days, let all the lay brothers help in the kitchen; they will all obey the one in charge.

258 - They shall not allow any secular or ecclesiastic into the kitchen, even though he be a prominent benefactor, without the explicit permission of Father Rector; therefore, the kitchen should always be locked.

259 - The silence prescribed by the Holy Rule is to be observed in the kitchen. Let them not speak except when necessary or useful and in these cases, let them do so in a low and subdued voice.

260 - Let them not be wasteful in using the wood and let them always remember that they are the poor of Jesus Christ.

261 - Let them not neglect the holy custom of kneeling to beg pardon; let them often make these acts among themselves and with genuine humility. Above all, let them never omit it when some resentful word is passed among them.

262 - They should work in the kitchen not for men, but for Jesus, whose Person is represented in the poor Religious.

263 - Let them often raise their minds to God and remind each other of the Lord's presence. In the burning fire let them reflect on hell which is deserved for so many sins and also on the gentle Heart of Jesus which is a furnace burning with Infinite Love.

264 - In preparing the dishes let them not show any partiality but give equal portions and bring them to the table without any distinctions.

265 - Let the pittance be moderate, that is neither too small so that the Religious may not suffer, nor too big so that intemperance prevails.

266 - When Sext and None are said, they shall begin to get the meal ready so as not to keep the community waiting. When None is being said they shall begin to put the soup in the plates.

267 - The plates shall be brought into the refectory on the designated table because, if they are carried in by hand, there is danger that the fingers will touch the soup and this is contrary to cleanliness and decorum.

268 - All the Religious will go to eat when all the pittance is placed on the table. Let them not purposely delay - neither in the morning nor evening - so as to be free to eat alone or with some one who comes in late after the others. This would be an act of the devil inducing transgressions of the Rule either by breaking silence or eating what the Community has not eaten, since their food should be the same as that given to all.

269 - After dinner and supper, let all the lay brothers help in the kitchen and refectory. They should wash the dishes and no one should leave until all the work is done. When everything is in order, they should then go to the common recreation.

Regulation VII: Those In Charge of the Refectory

270 - The brother in charge should always try to keep it clean. Therefore, every Saturday he shall sweep the floor and, if necessary, he shall clean the floor under the table everyday.

271 - The tables should be carefully dusted twice a week.

272 - After dinner and supper let them carefully gather up the old bread and the crumbs in a basket which is to be put in a cupboard and not scattered around in the refectory.

273 - At the edge of the table there should be, for every two Religious, a small board for the flask of wine, the bottle of water and two cups, so that the table may be kept clean.

274 - There should be no gold-framed pictures on the refectory walls so that poverty may be conspicuous along with cleanliness.

Regulation VIII: Those In Charge of the Wine and Storeroom

275 - The one who is appointed to set the refectory will also ordinarily have charge of the wine cellar and storeroom.

276 - The wine cellar and storeroom shall always be closed, well-protected and locked with a key so that no cats or other animals may enter.

277 - They should often check the barrels to see whether the wine is beginning to spoil so that it may be remedied at the proper time.

278 - Let them never serve pure wine at the table, but the wine is to be mixed with water in the measure which the Rector judges proper according to the quality of the wines. The general rule should be this: if the wine is strong, put a half mixture of water in it; if the wine is somewhat weak, then mix a third of water with it. In short he should take cognizance of whether the strength affects the brethrens' head or spirit, or whether the weakness of the wine debilitates their stomach.

279 - When he pours the wine into the flasks, he should be careful not to spill it on the floor as this would be against holy poverty.

280 - They should draw out enough wine for each meal because, if they take out too much, they will have to reserve what is left over from the morning for the evening – and what is left over in the evening for the following morning. In this situation, the poor Religious will be drinking a spoiled wine.

281 - The remaining wine should not be left in the flasks, but should be immediately put in a container for this purpose and tightly closed so that it will not spoil.

282 - In summertime let them take preventive care by putting the wine in a cold place; this will contribute very much to the health of the poor Religious.

283 - The wine for the evening collation should not exceed three small cups for each Religious.

284 - Let him often visit the storeroom to see whether anything is damaged or deteriorated so that a prompt remedy may be applied.

285 - When some item is just about out of stock, let him notify the Superior promptly so that he will have time to order more provisions; this notice should be given a month in advance.

Regulation IX: Porter

286 - He should keep the door of the Retreat always locked and carry the key as needed.

287 - When the doorbell rings, let him set aside immediately whatever work he is doing, whether in the Choir, Church, refectory or elsewhere and go to do the Holy Will of God, Who calls him to the door.

288 - He should not open the door until he first sees through the small window who it is, what he wants and whether it will be necessary to open the door with the key.

289 - He should speak to the guests in a quiet and low tone of voice, with eyes lowered and a modestly joyful face and in words which are pleasant but few.

290 - He should bring the guest into the room near the door assigned for this purpose; then he should summon the Religious asked for or do the errand requested.

291 - The Porter shall bring letters addressed to any of the Religious immediately to the Rector.

292 - When some Religious is asked for, he shall not summon the Religious but go and tell Father Rector who will do what is necessary.

293 - When he returns to inform the guest, he will ask the guest to wait until the Religious comes, or Father Rector, so that the guest does not go wandering around the Retreat.

294 - He should be careful that the door is always locked, especially during dinner, supper, recreation and rest time. In the evening he shall bring the key to Father Rector's room.

Regulation X: Infirmarian

295 - The Infirmarian should be full of charity as the Holy Rule prescribes. Let him remember that we look for a mother or a saint to serve a sick person with delicate care.

296 - He should leave any act of piety and observance of the Rule when the sick need help.

297 - He should renew his faith and look at the person of Jesus Christ in the sick Religious, mindful of Christ's words: "I was sick," etc. (Matt. 25,36).

298 - Let him endure any compliant, rudeness or disapproval from the sick person because this does not come from bad will but from the distress of the illness.

299 - He should be very vigilant that the sick Religious take restorative broths and the prescribed medicines at the proper time. He should often check the kitchen so that the food be well-prepared, seasoned and properly portioned.

300 - From time to time let him console and encourage the sick Religious, compassionate him and suggest good thoughts to him. If the illness allows, let him read a little each day to him from some spiritual reading book.

301 - Let him help him to change and get up with due modesty; he should keep his room clean and odor-free. He should not surrender to false compassion and give the sick Religious anything prohibited by the doctor.

302 - He should be attentive to the directions of the doctor and understand well what he is to do. If his memory is poor, he should write the directives down so as not to make any mistake.

303 - He should not make any spiteful, sharp or annoying remark to the sick Religious so as not to add more pain on the afflicted one.

Regulation XI: General Observation For All the Religious: Priests, Clerics and Brothers.

304 - They should have no other will or desire than that the Superiors, who, by God's light, know the capacities of all the Religious. Hence they shall not pretend to know how to preach, hear confessions, catechize; indeed they shall not even seek it. When, however, they shall be entrusted with some work by holy obedience, they shall immediately bow their head in submission.

305 - To ensure their interior peace, they shall not desire nor show any desire to go outside the Retreat under any pretext or appearance, because a gadabout Religious will never have the spirit of the Congregation which is precisely solitude. Let them remember that what is acquired in one year in the Retreat is lost in one day of dissipation.

306 - The priests should be convinced that they, just like the others, should submit by blind obedience to the Superiors. As they are regarded for their dignity, they should also be distinguished by the practice of all the virtues.

307 - The clerics endeavor to acquire the most solid virtues, especially obedience, humility and recollection. Otherwise, when they are raised to the priestly dignity, they shall fall into such great laxity that they shall become incorrigible and will be the heaviest crosses of Superiors, the scandal of the community and the pest of the Congregation. The good or bad spirit of the clerics will be known only when they become priests.

308 - The lay brothers should respect the clerics, priest and especially the Superiors. They should not take advantage of their cordiality. Let them remember that their state leads to perfection with greater ease – always bearing in mind the example of famous, noble men – men of royal blood and conspicuous for their holiness, who chose the state of the lay brother in religious life.

309 - All the Religious should be careful to do every action from the principle of virtue and to please God alone. Otherwise, after many years of so much exhausting work, they shall find themselves empty-handed.

310 - When they are offended, they should accept it externally in a light manner; interiorly they should offer some good act for the one who offended them.

311 - They should be careful not to talk about their interior disturbances and especially their temptations against their religious vocation. They should never speak against Superiors, murmur about them nor attack their way of governing.

312 - Each one should speak of all the Religious with respect. They should not give the least sign or gesture of contempt against anyone. If ever anyone should dare to say some word against another, let no one mention it to the one offended; otherwise he would commit a serious fault which would give rise to hatred, dissension, aversions and a thousand other disorders.

313 - If some disorder or fault occurs in some Retreat, the one who knows about it should not dare to reveal it to anyone either inside or outside the Retreat. For charity prohibits this as well as justice; one could easily commit a mortal sin according to the quality of the matter.

314 - They should be careful talking about the Examen, since it is great pride to criticize or accuse the ministers of God.

315 - The priests should not use the familiar form of “you” with anyone. The clerics and lay brothers should use the reverential form of the second person among themselves and should refer to the priests as “your reverence.” Everyone should be called by the title of Father, Confrater or Brother.

316 - They should not walk hurriedly through the Retreat, with their hands hanging down, pounding their feet and making noise, so as not to break silence and destroy the recollection of the Religious.

317 - In opening and closing the windows and doors, they should not bang them, but do it very slowly and carefully, one after the other, so that the wind does not shatter or break the glass.

318 - When the Superior comes into the refectory, recreation or another place, all should stand with that respect due to one who represents God.

319 - They should visit the Blessed Sacrament and often recommend themselves to Jesus. St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi went to reverence Christ in the Blessed Sacrament thirty times a day.

320 - When aversion arises against your brother, you should not flee but deal with him in a loving way; use even greater refinement and cordiality than you customarily do with others.

321 - Let them make up in virtue for the faults committed against charity; therefore, they should at once apologize and ask pardon from the brother they have offended either in word or deed.

322 - Let them not bring worldly news within the Retreat; neither should they fill the world with the news of the Retreat.

323 - They should all have at heart the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of the neighbor, and the liberation of the souls in Purgatory. Therefore, let them offer the Passion, Death and Most Precious Blood of Jesus to God frequently, and they should do this with the commitment proper to our Institute.

324 - They when are ill, let them accept it from the hand of the Lord. They should not be too solicitous for their own health which is in the hands of God and not of the doctor, to whom they are to give blind obedience. They should not complain if they seem to lack something or it is not prepared at the proper time. Let them often make ejaculatory prayers since they can not make a long meditation in this condition. Let them not complain about pains of little significance by exaggerating them more than they really are. They should look at their illness in the light of the will of God, to whom they make acts of love and show themselves ready for life or death. Let them remember that it is a mark of great perfection to suffer joyfully the lack of some refreshment or necessary medicine.

325 - During convalescence they should guard against dissipation since vain joy over recovered health and absence from community acts are the cause of laxity. Therefore, they should be very cautious, keep themselves in God's presence and do what they can to keep the observance of the Holy Rule. They should not be too easy on themselves and should often recall that the Servants of God did not discontinue their customary severe penances in their most painful maladies; such a thought should at least confound and humble them.

326 - A punctual response to the common bells is recommended to all; they should never absent themselves without a very serious need approved by Father Rector.

327 - Each Religious shall have a copy of the Holy Rule in his cell; he shall read a Chapter everyday if it is short; if it is long, he shall read half a chapter.

328 - Finally, let them take to heart the observance of the Holy Rule, bearing in mind that they never, never will be able to attain perfection unless they observe it even in the smallest details.

329 - Therefore, my beloved sons, take care to put these holy regulations into practice. Keep a copy of them in your cell in order to read them every so often.

I assure you that His Most Divine Majesty will gift your blessed souls with His heavenly blessings which will fill you with every grace and lead you to that blessed, heavenly union with your Eternal Father which you desire and yearn for so much. Live happily in the Lord.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

- (1) *Lettere di S. Paolo della Croce*, V. Vols. Rome 1924, 1977; Vol. IV, p. 253. (Further references to this work will be abbreviated as Let.)
- (2) Cfr. *Let IV*, 238-241; some decrees are from canonical visitations, from the foundations of Retreats, as well as from General Chapters. For the part played by Struzzieri, cfr. P. Filippo, *Storia dei Passionisti Prov. Add.*, I. f. 183; RAVASI, *Il Servo di Dio Mons. Tommaso Struzzieri*, Milano 1965, pp 118-119
- (3) St. Paul, *Accounts of the Congregation*, Notizie 1768, no. 4.
- (4) Cfr. *Let IV*, 253.
- (5) St. Paul, *Accounts of the Congregation*, Notizie 1747, no. 26.
- (6) *Decreti e Roccomandazioni dei Capitoli Generali della Congregazione della SS. Croce e Passione di N.S.G.C.* A cura di Fabriano Giorgini, C.P., Rome 1960. Decree no. 98. (Fontes Historicae Congregationis Passionis, no. 3. Further references to this work will be abbreviated as *Decr. e Rac.*)
- (7) *Let IV*, 291, no. 7. Paul calls the “Regulations” “a compendium” of the Rules, saying that its aim is to better observance of the same, cfr. *Let IV*, 262. Already in 1747, speaking of the decrees of the General Chapter and the “Regulations concerning the amount of time for the exercises” of each day, he described it as “merely an explanation or a great help to the Rules,” in order that the Religious might journey towards “that highest perfection which is intended for all those who are clothed under the sorrowful sign of the Passion and Cross of Our Lord,” cfr. *Let IV*, 224.
- (8) Visitation to S. Eutizio, 1758, decrees addressed to all, no. 1; Visitation to S. Angelo, 1764, decree no. 3; but already here in 1759 he had directed that the Regulations be read on Sundays in the refectory, *decr.* no. 1. In 1763 he also ordered in S. Angelo the Regulations be read once a month: “We order that our Regulations, which are an epilogue of our Holy Rules, be read once a month for spiritual reading. Take care to divide the readings in such a way that this will be done when all the community is present, so that they be read completely every month.” Finally, in a decree of 1764: “We direct and order that the Regulations, which are a compendium and an extract of our Holy Rules, be read and used instead of a book for reading in the refectory on all Feast Days and Thursdays throughout the year.”
- (9) *Regulae et Constitutiones Congr. SSmae. Crucis et Passionis D.N.J.C.* Editio Critica Textuum, curante Fabriano Giorgini, C.P., Rome 1958, 8/I-III/5-15. (Fontes Historicae Congregationis Passionis, No. 1. Further references to this work will be abbreviated as *Reg. et Const.*)
- (10) *Let IV*, 274, no. 12; it is a Circular written by Paul to the superiors on May 4, 1761, renewing some of the prescription already present in the chapter about the superior in the “Common Regulations”, intending to give a reminder to the superiors “on whose good and prudent conduct depends not only the proper and efficient running of the Retreats, but also the greater perfection of the entire Congregation.”

NOTES TO THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE

N.B. The notes refer to the corresponding numbers of the text.

(5) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 38/I-III/29-33: “Obey at the sound of the bell when you are called to praise God, going promptly to the offices of the Congregation.” The first five numbers show how to live out this point of the Rule.

(9) Cfr. *ibid.*, 68/I-III/25-36.

(10) Cfr. *ibid.*, 68/III/19-24: “Both Matins and the rest of the Divine Office are to be recited standing, to show greater reverence to the infinite and most adorable Majesty of our great God, except when the lessons are being read.” The stalls in the Choir were adapted to facilitate this.

(12) Spitting on the ground was a common practice in public places. In order to avoid the inconvenience which, with time, would arise in the Choir, spittoons filled with quick-lime were left at each place.

(13) Cfr. *Ibid* 68/I-III/7-17.

(17) Kissing the ground as an act of humility is found in religious ceremonies, especially those of Franciscan origin; it is prescribed for Passionists on arriving late for a common observance in the Choir and also in the refectory, cfr. no. 94.

(20) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 134/I-III/32 f: The discipline was a typical expression of penance and was used not only by Religious but also by lay people dedicated to the spiritual life. The frequency and duration of its use varied in different Religious Institutes.

(21) Nos. 21-23 attempt to concretize the Rule: “Take great care never to leave prayer, lest one fall into an abyss of tepidity. The fervent man never lacks time to dedicate himself to holy prayer” *Reg. et Const.*, 72/I-III/5-56; 76/I-III/35-53.

(29) Cfr. *ibid.*, 74/137-45.

(31) Cfr. *ibid.*, 70/III/9-12.

(32) *ibid.*, 70/I-III/24-54.

(35) Nos. 35-39 show how to participate at Mass using the ceremonial of the time. It is important to note that if a more direct exterior participation was lacking because of the use of Latin and the rubrics of the period, there was, nonetheless, a very real participation in the interior sense of union with Jesus who sacrifices himself for the glory of God and the salvation of men. Through this participation the Religious, although maintaining an exterior silence, is to be in communion with all people, both the faithful and those outside the fold, in harmony with all the communities of the Congregation. A catholic openness of mind and heart.

(40) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 78/III/2-20.

(42) It must be remembered that for water one had to go to a water tank or a well and because of this, besides the problem of tiredness, there was also the difficulty of having an abundant supply. This seems to emphasize the commitment to cleanliness desired by the Founder, cfr. also Nos. 41, 56, 90, 91, 99, 144, 197-200, 203, 241, 242, 246-248, 270-271, 273, 301.

(43) This kneeling down to ask permission of the Virgin to go out for some reason repeats the gesture by which one asked the Superior for permission on one’s knees: cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 52/I-III/63-69. The practice of asking the Virgin for permission was also seen as an invitation to reflect on the action about to be performed, and on the necessity of going out or not.

(45) This number, as well as nos. 47-50, shows how to give expression to the intimate relationship with the “Spouse” Jesus; this is the reason why a private cell was provided; it was, however, a notable concession for that period.

(57) Cfr. *Req. et. Const.*, 70/III/49; 78/I-III/50-56.

- (61) This gesture of spiritual freedom indicated once again the reason for a cell being given to each Religious; cfr. also no. 71.
- (68) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 78/III/54-55.
- (73) Cfr. *ibid.*, 78/I-III/50, 60 ff.
- (75) *Decr. e Rac.*, *decr.* no. 7, 3; *Let IV*, 241, no. 15.
- (81) To understand this number and the one following, we have to keep in mind the ascetical tradition initiated by the monks of the desert; the instinct for self-preservation can mean that one eats in a rather animal-like manner to preserve one's life. Moreover, the time spent in eating takes away from one's total attention to God, true life and true joy; and this results in a certain unease for whoever has experienced that life, that joy. For these reasons the recalling of Jesus' fast is suggested, as are spiritual reading and the performing of public acts of mortification.
- (89) Cfr. *Let IV*, 239, no. 8.
- (91) The utensils were for personal use and were cleaned with a napkin which was changed frequently.
- (93) Cfr. *Let IV*, 241, no. 14.
- (95) This concerns acts of mortification which were originally spontaneous and later became in some way obligatory for all, and still later, in 1778, were made normative; cfr. St. Paul of the Cross, *Account of the Congregation*, 1747, no. 13. Cfr. also *Processi IV*, 295.
- (100) To help one behave better during recreation, "with a modestly happy and joyful spirit, accommodating oneself to all, abstaining from buffoonery, and fleeing disputes and arguments which are so harmful to fraternal charity" (*Reg. et Const.*, 102/I-III/14-25), Paul "introduced the pious practice that, at the beginning of recreation, which takes place after dinner and supper, as well as in common walks, the guardian angels be greeted with the antiphon: "Sancti Anqeli, custodes nostri," etc., and the prayer: "Deus qui ineffabili providentia, etc." *Processi IV*, 377.
- (105) The practice of calling to mind the presence of God is also found in other Institutes and it seems that it was introduced among us by Father Marcoaurelio when he was director of students in 1747.
- (106) Cfr. *Let IV*, 240 no. 9.
- (114) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 70/I-III/29-42; 124/III/27-40. The general examen was an instruction in religious discipline and regular observance obliged by Clement VIII in "De reformation regularium", no. 38, to stimulate Religious to reflect on the spiritual and faith dimension of their lives and to carry out a sincere review of their actions. Paul shows a particular confidence in the spoken word of the Superior as a graced means of deepening the fervor of the Religious.
- (129) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 122/I-III/3-37.
- (136) Coming before the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist indicated Paul's faith in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and the help which the Religious should obtain from that presence in vivifying his spousal relationship with the "Sacramented Love", cfr. also *Reg. et Const.*, 76/II-III/54 ff.
- (138-139) Cfr. *Decr. e Rac.*, *decr.* no. 83.
- (143) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 58/I-III/62-29.
- (145-147) Cfr. *ibid.*, 128/I-III/24 ff; 64/I-III/14-70.
- (148) Cfr. *ibid.*, 54/I-III/46-51; 56/I-III/1-11; 92/I-III/28-43.
- (149) It is to be remembered that meat was not eaten in the Retreats until 1785.
- (150) Cfr. *Decr. e Rac.*, *decr.* no. 82.
- (152) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 38/II-III/43-49; *Decr. e Rac.*, *decr.* no. 3.
- (153) The following numbers try to help the Rector put into action what the Rule was actually saying: *Reg. et Const.*, 124/I-III/1-66.

- (170) The oblate was a pious lay man who lived in the Retreat; he was used to doing business outside the house, for requests, etc. He was also called a tertiary, cfr. *Let IV*, 252, no. 6.
- (178) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 52/I-III/46-53.
- (179) Cfr. *ibid.*, 64/III/20-21.
- (180) Cfr. *Decr. e Rac.*, no. 55.
- (183) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 114/III/3-6.
- (188) Cfr. *ibid.*, 122/I-III/32-37.
- (202) The practice of coming to the altar in sandals and not in bare feet was observed from the time of the stay in the Hermitage of S. Antonio; cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, p. 155. The content of this number also lets us see that in 1755, inside the house, it was still permissible to go completely barefoot, although in the Rule it did not yet read: “In the Retreat, as far possible, go completely barefoot”; *Reg. et Const.*, 12/I-II/46-50.
- (208) On August 16, 1757 Paul directed the confessors to make a personal copy of this chapter so that they might always have it before them, with a view to administering the sacrament well: the chapter “effectively described the especially careful guidance of the confessors in relation to penitents”; *Let IV*, 254.
- (227) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 4/I-III/1-2; 58/I-III/17-42.
- (235) This reflects the common pastoral practice.
- (259) *Let IV*, 240 no. 12.
- (267) The plates were put on a small round table or stand with a handle in the centre for carrying it.
- (269) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 102/III/49-52; *Let IV*, 24 no. 11.
- (286) Cfr. *Decr e Rac.*, *decr.* no. 84.
- (287) Cfr. *Reg. et Const.*, 38/I/34-38.
- (289) *Ibid* 38/I/39-42; *Let IV*, 239, no. 4.
- (295) Cfr. *ibid.*, 138/III/56 ff.
- (298-303) Cfr. *ibid.*, 138/I-III/56 ff.
- (304) Cfr. *ibid.*, 120/I-III/16-45.
- (308) Cfr. *ibid.*, 76/III/20-23.
- (309) Cfr. *ibid.*, 24/III/32-39; 76/I-III/44-53.
- (311) Cfr. *ibid.*, 120/I-III/46 ff.
- (318) Cfr. *ibid.*, 120/III/16.
- (319) Cfr. *ibid.*, 76/II-III/55 ff; 78/I/26-40.
- (323) Cfr. *ibid.*, 2/I-III/4-40.
- (324) Cfr. *ibid.*, 138/I-III/64 ff.
- (326) Cfr. *ibid.*, 38/I-III/29-33.
- (327) Cfr. *Let IV*, 254, no. 1. We do not know why Paul states this decree in the Circular of August 6, 1757, when it was already in this number of the Regulations.
- (328-329) The conclusion repeats the invitation (which is already in the text of the Rule) to that fidelity from which processed serenity and peace in this life and eternal glory in the next. Besides this, the evocation of the union with the Most High Good recalls the first chapter of the Rules in which it is affirmed that the aim if the Congregation consists in leading the Religious to “holy union with God.”

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