

Complementary Norms: Foreword

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Foreword

The Identity of the Congregatio Jesu

1. The Complementary Norms to the Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu as an expression of its charism

0.1 The existence and particular character of the Congregatio Jesu have their origin in the spiritual experience of Mary Ward and her companions. As a result of the pastoral care given by Jesuits in their native country, and through the Exercises, these young women were guided towards Ignatian spirituality, and marked by it. They were prepared to understand, accept and put into practice the mission which Mary Ward adopted in 1611: “Take the same of the Society, so understood that we were to take the same both in matter and in manner, that only excepted which God by diversity of sex hath prohibited.”¹

0.2 The realisation of this mission proved to be a long road. Not only Mary Ward and her companions, but also the generations that followed them, travelled along it with love, fidelity and perseverance, and through suffering.

Historical circumstances did not permit her to receive a positive answer to the repeated petitions for approbation from the Church. Mary Ward died trusting that “God hath his times for all”.²

At the time determined by God the first official confirmation was given with the approbation of the 81 Rules by Clement XI in 1703. In 1749 Benedict XIV recognised the structure of the Institute in acknowledging the office of Superior General, and in 1877 Pius IX confirmed the institution under the name IBMV.

0.3 The Second Vatican Council promoted the renewal of religious life, insisting on the need to return with fidelity to the sources of the founding charism. The Congregatio Jesu followed this call. In striving to understand our identity more deeply and to express our mission more clearly, the

¹ Mary Ward, Letter to Nuntius Albergati, Letters of Instruction 5

² Mary Ward, Letter to Winefrid Wigmore, 19th April 1625, NS 31

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Congregatio decided to put into action what had been denied to the foundress and the founding generation.

General Congregation 1977 adopted a selection of the Ignatian Constitutions as Constitutions of the IBMV. In doing this the grace of the founding charism should release in today's members the strength and joy called for by a radical following of Christ in service to the Church in the world.

GC 1993 evaluated the experience with the Constitutions and decided on a new revised version "ad maximum".

GC 2002 adopted the new revised version as Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu, together with the Complementary Norms. At the same time the Institutum as Mary Ward presented it for approbation by the Church was recognised.

The way to full acceptance of the documents which express our Institute was long; it was likewise a long way from the foundation to the Church's approbation of the foundation.

0.4 During extensive research into the roots of our foundation, the significance of the **Institutum**³ became apparent. In it are contained the essential elements of the life and mission of the Congregatio Jesu, as our foundress Mary Ward understood them. In this "way to God", the "defence and propagation of the faith and the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine" are proposed to us as the goal. Conditioned by historical circumstances, the full breadth and variety of the objectives given in the Institutum could not be carried out. The members achieved them within the prescribed limits by developing the tradition of the educational apostolate.

The choice of suitable means or services, and of places in which the objectives of the Institutum can better be attained, must always be the result of conscientious discernment.

In the Institutum Mary Ward called her foundation: "Society of Jesus". The name of Jesus was for her an essential part of the identity of her foundation and of her personal life goal. Under no circumstances could she renounce it.

³ This document, which Mary Ward called "Institutum", is also known under the names "Institutum 1621" or "Third Plan of the Institute". The giving of the date refers to the time of its origin. When the particular law is related to this document, it is cited as "Institutum".

0.5 In the **Constitutions** of the Congregatio Jesu the essential elements of the Institutum are developed and stated more explicitly. The notes to the original Ignatian text explain the Constitutions and adapt them to the situation today.

0.6 The **Complementary Norms** to the Constitutions provide the necessary help in applying the criteria and demands of the Institutum and the Constitutions to the real life situation, thereby making them contemporary.⁴

The most recent general congregations urged us to spiritual renewal by penetrating to the core of our founding charism, as contained in the Institutum and Constitutions. The Complementary Norms give the spur to this renewal, and are the fruit of putting it into practice.

In the Institutum and Constitutions we also encounter the picture of the foundation which Mary Ward had in her own mind from 1611 onwards. The Complementary Norms seek to highlight the individual characteristics of this picture⁵ and help to live it in the world of today. The Complementary Norms, therefore, should always be regarded in relation to the two foundation documents and interpreted in their light.

2. The members of the Congregatio Jesu

0.7 All the members of the Congregatio Jesu share in the same vocation and mission. According to their level of incorporation they have the same rights and obligations. They take part in the Congregatio Jesu, however, in different ways:

1. The novices, who have been admitted after the first probation or postulancy.
2. The juniors, who after the noviceship have pronounced their temporary and public vows for the first triennium, and are preparing themselves for mission by spiritual and professional formation.
3. The juniors who have renewed their temporary and public vows for a second triennium and are continuing their formation for mission or are already engaged in it.

⁴ PD 1

⁵ cf. CN SJ 5

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4. The professed who have made their vows for life. They are the full members, with all the rights and obligations.

0.8 Those who enter all pass through the required probation and formation so that when formation is completed they can be definitively incorporated into the Congregatio Jesu.

0.9 Both in the Institutum and in the Constitutions the original text referring to grades has been kept, even though GC 1953 abolished the distinction in force until then between the fully incorporated members. An alteration in the original text would change or falsify both the criteria for discernment and the spiritual elements they contain, and which constitute a fully valid and essential part of the spiritual patrimony of the Congregatio Jesu. Accordingly, when the Constitutions refer to the juridical status of formed coadjutors – spiritual or temporal – and of professed of three or four vows, the reference is to the professed of final vows. References to approved scholastics (or sometimes simply scholastics) apply to the professed of temporary vows.

3. The particular law of the Congregatio Jesu as expression of its Institute.

0.10 **“Institute of the Congregatio Jesu”** means both our form of life and activity (“our manner of proceeding”), and the written documents which express it authentically and with binding force. Some of these documents are true norms, others elucidate our manner of proceeding and express the tradition of the Congregatio Jesu.

0.11 The **Spiritual Exercises** of St. Ignatius are of fundamental significance for living our spirituality according to the Institutum. Through them we acquire the basic attitudes indispensable for living our vocation. All our norms and statutes are to be judged and interpreted in the light of their principles.

0.12 The **“Institutum”** is the first and fundamental document of the “Institute of the Congregatio Jesu”. It corresponds to the Formula of the Society of Jesus of 1550. Mary Ward adopted the Formula and adapted it,

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omitting what refers to ministerial priesthood and making some modifications and additions which express how she understood the essence of the Institute. The Institutum is the fundamental “Rule” upon which all other norms or laws are based.

0.13 The **Constitutions** explain and develop the essential elements contained in the Institutum and retain their full force, even though some particular prescriptions have been abolished or modified by the common law of the Church or by decisions of general congregations. The adaptations are made in notes approved by General Congregation 2002, which express the authentic interpretation of the Constitutions for the **Congregatio Jesu**. They refer to the Code of Canon Law (CIC) and the Complementary Norms. The Institutum and the Constitutions form our fundamental law, the Codex Fundamentalisis in the sense meant by Church law.⁶

0.14 The **Complementary Norms** explain, update and make concrete particular points in the Institutum and the Constitutions. They consist primarily of the decisions and recommendations adopted by GC 1977 as an essential complement to the Constitutions. They were approved by the Church together with the Constitutions in 1978. They are therefore a collection of the particular law of the IBMV as developed and in force (the specific regulations and traditional way of life,) and are expressed in three documents:

- * Orientations for life in the IBMV
- * Juridical Norms and
- * Particular Decrees.

These documents were modified to bring them into conformity with the new Canon Law, and adapted by decisions of General Congregations 1984, 1993 and 2002 to meet contemporary needs.

The decision of GC 1993 to revise and enlarge the selection from the Constitutions also had a practical effect on the Norms. In order to make the relationship between the two documents more clearly visible, GC 1993 decided to adapt and incorporate the Orientations and Juridical Norms into the ten-part structure of the Constitutions.

⁶ cf. CIC 587

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0.15 The particular law of the Congregatio Jesu approved by GC 2002 consists, therefore, of the following documents, mutually inter-related but different in status:

1. Institutum
2. Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu,
3. Complementary Norms of the Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu.

Interim arrangements are in force for their application.⁷

0.16 The Institutum and the Constitutions, with the annotations provided, have the approbation of the Church and can only be modified with its approbation. As the original text remains unaltered, changes can only relate to the interpretation or the obligation indicated in the annotations. Therefore changes to Complementary Norms which affect the binding force of the Constitutions require the renewed approbation of the Church.⁸

0.17 On the basis of this particular law general congregations may issue **Decrees**, with which they respond to the specific needs of the Church and the world, or clarify questions current for our Institute. The decisions and decrees of general congregations acquire the character of law once they have been promulgated. They remain in force so long as they are not abolished in a later general congregation.⁹ According to their general significance and after appropriate experience the content of decrees may be incorporated into the Complementary Norms.

0.18 If nothing is laid down to the contrary, it is understood that all the ordinances given by **general superiors** remain in force until a general superior or a general congregation revokes them.¹⁰

0.19 Every adaptation of the particular law which seems necessary after a discernment of the circumstances always has as its goal the greater glory of God and the greater good of persons. In this way the **Magis** is shown to be the basic principle and foundation of our law.

⁷ See CN 5.23, 5.24, 6.22

⁸ JN 126

⁹ JN 123

¹⁰ JN 138; see CN 9.2

Part I

The Admission to Probation

1. Admission to First Probation

1.1 The accompaniment of young women who are interested in joining the Congregatio Jesu should be done with every effort “to secure in the Congregatio an increase of workers for the holy vineyard of Christ our Lord”¹¹. At the same time care should be taken about appropriate selection, with a view to the objectives of the Congregatio.

1.2 a. With the request for admission the candidate sets out on a way which has as its final goal incorporation and commitment. It includes a number of stages, to which the candidate will be admitted step by step until she makes her final profession.

b. To be admitted to the next level of incorporation the candidate must make a written request to the competent superior.

2. Authority to admit

1.3 a. The provincial/regional superior¹² decides on admission to first probation, the postulancy, after she has heard the opinion of her council.

b. The consent of the Council is necessary if the candidate has not yet completed her eighteenth year, or has passed her thirtieth.¹³

1.4 a. The general superior decides on admission if the candidate:

- * has been a novice or taken vows in another congregation
- * is a widow
- * is over 50

¹¹ [144]

¹² What is said in the Complementary Norms about the provincial superior applies also to the regional superior, without this being said each time. On the limitation of the regional superior’s authority, cf. CN 9.72

¹³ JN 6

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- * is a convert to the Catholic Church and three years have not yet elapsed since her reception
- * has publicly left the Catholic Church since she was 16 years old
- * has openly and deliberately killed a person.

b. The decision is made on the basis of the request of the provincial superior after she has heard the opinion of her council.¹⁴

3. Who should be admitted

1.5 a. Great care must be taken in the choice of candidates for admission.¹⁵

b. The personal examination of the candidate concerning her past life, and her capacity and suitability for the Congregatio Jesu, should be carried out thoroughly. In this the instructions in the Examen and in the Constitutions are to be observed and adapted to contemporary circumstances.

c. Other suitable means should be used so that the Congregatio Jesu may gain a comprehensive knowledge of the candidate. If she is not already well known in other ways, information about her should be gathered. If necessary the advice of a psychologist should also be sought. Strict confidentiality must be observed about any investigation, and the candidate's freedom respected.¹⁶

d. Those responsible should proceed with great caution when the candidate has a tendency to mental illness, or a behavioural problem arising out of her family background, or when it is doubtful because of other personal characteristics whether she is capable of responsible community and apostolic life in the Congregatio Jesu. A tendency to such an illness makes the candidate unsuitable.¹⁷

e. An invitation to the candidate to live for an agreed time in one of our communities which is suited to the purpose would be a help to better knowledge of her.

¹⁴ JN 6,1-3

¹⁵ JN 2

¹⁶ cf. CN SJ 26

¹⁷ cf. CN SJ 30

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1.6 a. Conditions for admission are membership of the Catholic Church, right intention regarding vocation, and suitability.

b. The Catholic faith is the foundation of religious life. A right intention regarding vocation is the will to live the life of the *Congregatio Jesu* and a readiness to perform any of its tasks.

To be suited to the religious life means:

- * on the positive side, to possess the physical, psychological and moral endowments required for religious and community life in the *Congregatio Jesu* and for the fulfilment of its mission
- * on the negative side, to be free from canonical impediments.¹⁸

1.7 To be able to achieve the objectives of this first stage of probation, the candidate must from the beginning at least show signs of human and spiritual maturity appropriate to her age. These will be evident in:

- * knowledge and acceptance of herself and ability for self-criticism;
- * acceptance of the renunciations involved in a lifetime commitment;
- * understanding of and acquiescence in the life of unconditional service which our vocation demands;
- * an aptitude for community life and for working with others;
- * ability to integrate sexuality and celibacy;
- * capacity to be formed intellectually and socially and to make progress on her road to formation.

The fundamental spiritual dispositions required are:

- * a life of faith;
- * desire to follow Christ more closely;
- * zeal for apostolic service;
- * a vocation to our *Congregatio*.¹⁹

¹⁸ JN 3; cf. CIC 642; 597,1

¹⁹ O 73

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1.8 a. Before the candidate is admitted to postulancy, she must produce the following documents:

certificates of birth and nationality, baptism and confirmation; evidence of re-entry, if she had left the Catholic Church; certificates of schools attended, qualifications obtained, employment; an identity card or passport, a testimonial of good conduct from the police, a doctor's certificate, and a confirmation that she is free from obligations; she must also produce a handwritten curriculum vitae.

b. As well as the doctor's certificate a special examination can be required, for example, an AIDS test.

c. If the candidate has been a postulant or novice in another religious institute, the provincial must obtain the *Litterae Testimoniales*.²⁰

1.9 The personal data of the postulant and the date of her admission to the postulancy must be entered carefully and preserved. A copy is sent to the general superior. A list of the documents and valuables she brings with her, signed by the postulant, should also be kept.²¹

4. The nature of the first probation, the postulancy

1.10 a. The postulancy is the first probation.

b. It usually lasts for six months. The provincial can, after consulting the postulant director and the provincial council, lengthen the time of probation for a postulant for up to one year. The postulant herself can ask for an extension.

c. The provincial can, with the consent of the provincial council, determine the normal length of the postulancy in her province as one year.

d. The length of the postulancy may not, however, exceed one year.²²

1.11 a. The purpose of the postulancy is:

- * to give the postulant a gradual transition to the life of the noviceship;

²⁰ PR 1; cf. CIC 645

²¹ PR 2

²² JN 5; GC93; JN 12

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- * to enable her to become better acquainted with the Congregatio and its mission, so that she can decide about entrance to the noviceship;
- * to enable the Congregatio Jesu to get to know the postulant so as to form a judgment concerning the candidate's vocation and suitability.²³

b. It is important that at this stage of testing the postulant should come to a sufficient knowledge of the Congregatio Jesu. So she should begin to make herself familiar with the history and fundamental documents of the Congregatio Jesu, both those from the time of its foundation, and those of today. Reflection and self-examination in the light of the Examen Generale will help her.²⁴

1.12 The general superior, with the consent of her council and at the suggestion of the provincial who is bound to obtain the consent of her council, entrusts the direction of the postulant to a qualified member, the postulant director²⁵

1.13 a. The postulant takes part in an appropriate way in community life and is given work according to her training. The work given to her should be a help in evaluating her abilities.²⁶

b. In order to continue her professional training or activity, she may spend part of her postulancy outside the Congregatio Jesu. The postulant director should remain in close touch with her.²⁷

1.14 Towards the end of the postulancy the postulant should show a certain degree of security in her vocation, a basic suitability for life in the Congregatio, and at least the beginnings of the attitude of indifference with respect to future missions.

²³ JN 7

²⁴ cf. CN SJ 25,4

²⁵ JN 8

²⁶ JN 9

²⁷ JN 10

5. Impediments to reception into the Congregatio Jesu

1.15 Apart from the prescriptions of Canon Law, the Congregatio lays down no impediments that would render admission invalid.

- 1.16 a. Canon Law makes the admission of the following invalid:
- * One who has not yet completed her seventeenth year;
 - * a spouse, while the marriage lasts;
 - * one bound by profession in an institute of consecrated life, or incorporated in a society of apostolic life, without prejudice to Can.684;
 - * one who enters through force, fear or deliberate deceit, or whom the superior accepts under the same influences;
 - * one who has concealed her incorporation in an institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life.
- b. Dispensation from canonical impediments is granted by the CIVCSVA²⁸

6. Admission to second probation

1.17 a. Admission to the second probation, the noviceship, is decided by the provincial with the consent of her council.²⁹

b. The decision rests on

- * the written request of the postulant to be admitted to the noviceship;
- * the report of the postulant director on the postulant.

c. The provincial can request further reports.³⁰

1.18 a. The postulant prepares herself for entrance into the noviceship by making the eight-day Spiritual Exercises.

b. Before beginning her noviceship, she makes a written declaration that she is aware that on entering the Congregatio Jesu she is not entering

²⁸ JN 4, cf. CIC 643 (CIVCSVA – Congregatio pro Institutibus Vitae Consecratae et Societatibus Vitae Apostolicae – the full title of the Congregation for Religious.)

²⁹ JN 14, cf. CIC 641

³⁰ JN 15, PR 4

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into an employment contract but into a family relationship, in virtue of which, if she leaves the *Congregatio Jesu* or is dismissed from it, she can claim no compensation or payment for any service rendered.³¹

1.19 a At the beginning of the noviceship a personal record is set up for the novice. The general superior is informed of the reception into the noviceship.

b. The novice director keeps the list of the novices and their personal records.³²

7. Transfer from another religious institute

1.20 a. The general superior, with the consent of her council, gives permission for the transfer of a finally-professed member from another congregation.

b. The permission of the general superior of the other religious institute, with the consent of her council, must first be granted.³³

1.21 a. The general superior decides where, in what form, and under whose direction, the probationary period is to be made.

b. After completing a probationary period lasting at least three years, the professed member may be admitted to final profession in the *Congregatio Jesu*.³⁴

1.22 a. By profession in the *Congregatio Jesu* the member is incorporated into the *Congregatio*.

b. The earlier profession is thereby cancelled. All rights and obligations derived from membership of the other religious institute cease.³⁵

³¹ PR 3,1.2.

³² PR 3,3.4.

³³ JN 48, cf. CIC 684,1

³⁴ JN 49, cf. CIC 684,2

³⁵ JN 50

8. The readmittance of a member who has left or been dismissed.

See CN 2.21 – 2.22

Part II

Separation from the Congregatio Jesu

1. Departure and dismissal during the postulancy, noviceship and at the end of the period of temporary profession

2.1 The postulant is free to leave the Congregatio Jesu at any time, and she can be dismissed by the provincial after hearing the opinion of the postulant director and that of the provincial council.³⁶

2.2 a. The novice is free to leave the Congregatio Jesu at any time, after informing the novice director.

b. Likewise, she can at any time be dismissed by the provincial, after she has heard the opinion of the novice director and of the provincial council. She should be dismissed if it can be seen that she is not suitable for life and service in the Congregatio Jesu.

c. The reason for the dismissal must be communicated to the novice orally in the presence of witnesses, or in writing. She should be given a chance to state her opinion.

d. The provincial is to inform the general superior of the departure or dismissal of a novice.³⁷

2.3 a. A member is free to leave the Congregatio Jesu when the term of her temporary vows has expired.³⁸

b. If a member has left the Congregatio at the expiration of her temporary profession, the provincial informs the general superior.³⁹

2.4 a. For just reasons, the general superior, with the consent of her council, may refuse a member permission to renew her temporary vows or to make her final profession.⁴⁰

³⁶ JN 11

³⁷ JN 25; PR 5, 3.

³⁸ JN 56; cf. CIC 688,1

³⁹ PR 8,1

⁴⁰ JN 60; cf. CIC 689,1

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b. The decision rests on:

1. the reports on the junior
2. the negative opinion of the provincial, after she has heard the views of her council.⁴¹

2.5 Admittance can be refused when a physical or psychiatric illness has been contracted, even after temporary profession, as a result of which in the judgment of doctors the member is unsuited to lead the life of the Congregatio. This is not possible if the illness has been caused through the negligence of the Congregatio or through work performed in the Congregatio - with due regard for Can.689, 2.3⁴²

2.6 a. In case of doubt concerning her admission to renewal of temporary profession or to final profession the member should be given timely warning.

b. The reason for non-admission must be communicated to her orally in the presence of witnesses, or in writing. She must be given the opportunity to state her opinion.⁴³

2. The departure of members professed of temporary or final vows

2.7 a. For weighty reasons, a member may ask to leave the Congregatio during the time covered by temporary profession.

b. The general superior gives the permission, with the consent of her council. The permission carries with it ipso facto the dispensation from vows.⁴⁴

2.8 a. With the dispensation from vows all obligations and rights arising from incorporation cease to exist.

b. Legal dispositions regarding the future of her property taken by the member in favour of the Congregatio are no longer valid.

⁴¹ JN 61

⁴² JN 62; cf. CIC 689,2.3

⁴³ JN 63

⁴⁴ JN 57, cf. CIC 688,2

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c. The Congregatio retains the ownership of property already made over to it.⁴⁵

2.9 a. A member professed of final vows can request a dispensation only for very grave reasons, to be weighed before the Lord.

b. The dispensation can only be granted by the Apostolic See.

c. The general superior forwards the member's request for dispensation, together with her opinion and that of her council, to the CIVCSVA.⁴⁶

2.10 a. The member submits a petition for permission to leave, or the indult to leave, with reasons, in writing through the provincial to the general superior.

b. The provincial states her own opinion in a covering letter.

c. The general superior forwards the request for dispensation from final vows, together with her opinion and that of her council, to the CIVCSVA.

d. The indult to leave the Congregatio Jesu is communicated to the member through the provincial.

e. By signing the indult, the member confirms her acceptance of it. The document is preserved in the provincial archives. A copy is sent to the general superior.⁴⁷

2.11 The dispensation takes effect, unless the indult to leave is rejected by the member when it is made known. The dispensation annuls the profession. For the canonical effects, cf.CN2.8.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ JN 55

⁴⁶ JN 58; cf. CIC 691

⁴⁷ PR 8,2f.

⁴⁸ JN 59; cf. CIC 692

3. Dismissal of members professed of temporary or final vows; expulsion in case of urgency

2.12 a. The dismissal of a member professed of temporary or final vows is decided collegially and by secret vote by the general superior and her council.

b. The request for dismissal is submitted by the provincial with the consent of her council.⁴⁹

2.13 Valid dismissal of a professed member is subject to the following conditions:

- * The grounds for dismissal must be grave, external, imputable and juridically proven, for example, serious and continual faults against obedience and charity and habitual disregard for the obligations of consecrated life.
- * Two clear warnings, given either in writing or orally before two witnesses with an explicit threat of subsequent dismissal, must have been ineffective.
- * The grounds for dismissal must have been clearly communicated to the member in writing or orally before witnesses. She must have been given the opportunity to defend herself.
- * Between the last warning and the dismissal at least fifteen days must have elapsed.⁵⁰

2.14 The decree of dismissal, for validity, must contain the grounds for dismissal, both in law and in fact, and must state the right the religious has of recourse to the CIVCSVA within ten days of receiving the notification.⁵¹

2.15 The decree takes effect when confirmed by the CIVCSVA. If the religious has recourse to the CIVCSVA, the effects of the decree are suspended until the final decision of the CIVCSVA.⁵²

⁴⁹ JN 64; cf. CIC 699, 700

⁵⁰ JN 65; cf. CIC 696, 697

⁵¹ JN 66; cf. CIC 700

⁵² JN 67, cf. CIC 700

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2.16 Lawful dismissal annuls the profession. For the canonical effects of dismissal, see CN2.8⁵³

2.17 a. In urgent cases, a member of the community can be sent away from the house immediately by the provincial superior with the consent of her council.

b. Urgent reasons for dismissal are:

- * a very serious public scandal
- * the threat of grave harm to the Congregatio Jesu.

c. The provincial informs the general superior and decides with the consent of her council if the process of dismissal should be instituted.⁵⁴

2.18 a. A member is considered as ipso facto dismissed if she:

- * has notoriously defected from the Catholic faith
- * has contracted marriage or attempted to do so, even civilly.

b. The general superior, together with her council, establishes the facts of the case which lead automatically to dismissal.⁵⁵

c. The establishment of the facts, together with the collected evidence, is preserved in the archives.

d. A statement of the facts is sent to the CIVCSVA for information.⁵⁶

4. The manner of dismissal and care for the former member

2.19 The Congregatio Jesu supports the former member in charity, so far as is necessary and the means of the house or province allow.⁵⁷

2.20 a. The Congregatio Jesu has no legal obligation towards those who have left the Congregatio or been dismissed from it for any work done by them while members of the Congregatio Jesu.⁵⁸

⁵³ JN 68, cf. CIC 701

⁵⁴ CN 70; cf. CIC 703; CN 2.12-2.16

⁵⁵ JN 72; cf. CIC 694.

⁵⁶ PR 9; cf. CIC 694,2.

⁵⁷ JN 73; cf. CIC 702,2.

⁵⁸ JN 73; cf. CIC 702,1.

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b. Obligations as regards insurance which are customary in the country are to be observed conscientiously by the Congregatio Jesu.

c. As a rule the Congregatio Jesu makes no claim to repayment of expenses incurred on behalf of the former member, for example, the cost of a training.

5. The readmission of a member who has left or been dismissed

2.21 a. The readmission of a former novice who has left during or after completing her noviceship, or of a former member professed of temporary or final vows who has legitimately left the Congregatio, is decided by the general superior with the consent of her council.

b. The readmission is only possible if the reasons which motivated the separation from the Congregatio Jesu no longer exist.⁵⁹

c. The grounds for this decision are:

1. the petition of the former novice or professed member
2. the request of the provincial with the consent of her council.⁶⁰

2.22 a. A former novice who had not completed the noviceship must make the full noviceship.

b. For a former novice who had completed the noviceship, or for a professed member, the general superior must determine a probationary period of at least some months to be undergone by the former novice or professed member. This is followed by a period of six years under temporary vows.⁶¹

6. Transfer to another religious institute

2.23 a. The transfer of a finally professed member to another religious institute requires the permission of the general superior with the consent of her council.

⁵⁹ JN 82; cf. CIC 690,1

⁶⁰ JN 83

⁶¹ JN 84; cf. CIC 690,1

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b. The transfer is subject to the acceptance of the member by the highest superior of the other religious institute, with the consent of her council.⁶²

2.24 Until the member is affiliated to the new institute by profession:

1. she remains bound by the obligations of profession
2. the individual obligations and rights she had as a member of the *Congregatio Jesu* are suspended.⁶³

2.25 If after her time of probation the member is not affiliated to the new institute, she must be accepted back into the *Congregatio Jesu*.⁶⁴

2.26 Through affiliation into the new institute, profession in the *Congregatio Jesu* is annulled.

For the juridical effects see CN 2.8.⁶⁵

⁶² CN 51; cf. CIC 684,1

⁶³ JN 52; cf. CIC 685,1

⁶⁴ JN 53; cf. CIC 684,2

⁶⁵ JN 54; cf. CIC 685,2

Complementary Norms: Part II

Part III

The Testing and Support of those in Probation

1. Nature and purpose of the second probation, the novitiate

3.1 a. The novitiate is the second probation. It marks the beginning of religious life. It lasts for two consecutive years. The canonical twelve months prescribed by canon law to be spent in the novitiate house⁶⁶ are included therein.

b. If at the end of the two years it is not yet possible to decide on admission to temporary profession, the provincial superior, with the consent of her council and after consultation with the novice-director, may prolong the novitiate for up to six months.⁶⁷

c. On admittance to second probation see CN 1. 17 – 1.19.

3.2 a. The novitiate is both a time of probation and of formation.

b. In the course of this process:

1. the novice should learn and experience the manner of life in the Congregatio Jesu, and be marked by its spirit. She should come to greater clarity about her vocation in the Congregatio Jesu;
2. the competent superiors should be able to form a judgement on the intention and the suitability of the novice for life in the Congregatio Jesu.⁶⁸

2. The establishment and direction of the novitiate

3.3 a. The general superior, with the consent of her council, can by a decree

1. at the suggestion of the provincial
 - a) establish, transfer or close a novitiate,

⁶⁶ JN 13; cf. CIC 648

⁶⁷ JN 26; cf. CIC 653,2

⁶⁸ JN 16; cf. CIC 646; 652

Complementary Norms: Part III

- b) incorporate the novitiate into a community;
 2. in agreement with the competent provincials, amalgamate the novitiates of different provinces of the same language group;
 3. in particular cases, and as an exception, permit a novice to make her novitiate in another house under the guidance of an approved member who assumes the role of novice director.
- b. The provincial can permit the novices, with the novice director, to live for a stated period of time in another community.⁶⁹
- 3.4 a. The general superior is responsible for the direction of the novitiates.
- b. With the consent of her council and at the suggestion of the provincial, who is bound to obtain the consent of her council, she appoints a qualified finally-professed member as novice director. The novice director is subject to the provincial in the exercise of her office.
- c. The novice director should be prepared for her office and be freed from other duties. She must be at least thirty years of age.⁷⁰
- 3.5 a. It is important that some experienced sisters, one of whom may take on the role of socia, should support the novice director in her task of formation. In them the novices should find good role models for living our vocation with which they can identify. At the same time these sisters will be in a position to make a considered judgment on the suitability of the novices for life in the Congregatio Jesu.
- b. In the theoretical part of formation other experts can collaborate. The novice director herself, however, is ultimately responsible for the formation process and its coherence.⁷¹
- 3.6 The novice director gives a regular account of the novices to the provincial responsible. During the course of each novitiate year she writes a report on each novice. A copy is sent to the general superior.⁷²

⁶⁹ JN 19; cf. CIC 647

⁷⁰ JN 18; cf. CIC 650; 651,1

⁷¹ O 81,3; cf. CIC 650,2; 651,2.3.

⁷² PR 5

Complementary Norms: Part III

3.7 a. The effective formation of the novices, individually and as a group, will depend on the prudent understanding and sensitivity of the person in charge of the novitiate. She must at the time of taking up her office have had some experience of human and spiritual leadership.

b. Just as the novice director's own life is supported by trustful reliance on God, so also the relationship between novice director and novices should be characterised by trust and love, never by fear. This calls for honest dialogue.⁷³

c. This trustful relationship will make it possible, from the beginning of the noviceship, for the novices to develop an ability for dialogue with one another and with superiors, and will prepare them for the account of conscience with their superiors which they will practise later on.⁷⁴

3.8 a. Training in the novitiates should be uniform.

b. The formation plan is inspired by the charism of the Congregatio Jesu. It shows on the one hand how the spirit of the Congregatio can be transmitted, so that it may be lived by the new generation in the diversity of cultures and geographical situations without falsification; on the other hand it shows all members of the Congregatio the way to live the same spirit in the various phases of life, until we reach the full maturity of faith in Christ.⁷⁵

c. The formation plan is to be drawn up by the members responsible for formation, in agreement with the provincial, and approved by the general superior with the consent of her council.

d. The formation programme must be in accordance with the guidelines of the Church, the Constitutions and the Complementary Norms of the Congregatio Jesu.⁷⁶

e. Sharing of experience and dialogue among the formators is a help to unified planning of first and ongoing formation.⁷⁷

⁷³ O 81, 1.2.

⁷⁴ See CN 6.11

⁷⁵ cf John Paul II, *Vita Consacrata*, 1996; no. 68

⁷⁶ JN 17

⁷⁷ M 93

3. *Fundamentals of formation in the novitiate*

3.9 a. The spiritual formation of the novice will be determined by the objectives of the Congregatio Jesu. It is grounded in the experience of the Spiritual Exercises and seeks to live and develop this dynamic in daily life.

b. To grow in personal prayer and discernment the novice dedicates a set amount of time each day to prayer.

c. In this way she will come to a growing familiarity with God in prayer, grow in personal love for Christ, and learn to seek and find God in all things.

d. Everything should help her to practise familiarity with God and discerning love, so that this familiarity becomes an attitude that is described in the gospel as ‘prayer without ceasing’, or in the sense of the Exercises is grounded in the mystery of service. Spiritual direction and obedience in an atmosphere of trust and freedom are helps to this.

3.10. a. Theoretical formation should include an adequate initiation into theology which opens the mind and heart of the novice to the mystery of Christ. It should also deepen the theological foundations of religious life. It includes an introduction to the history and Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu.

b. Theoretical formation must be related to reality. Knowledge of present day forms of apostolate in the Church is part of this.⁷⁸

c. Knowledge of English, the official language of the Congregatio, should be acquired.⁷⁹

3.11. a. The experiments described in the Examen form an essential part of the novitiate. They respond to the need to put into practice in one’s own life and to integrate through personal experience the principles of spiritual life which are proposed to the novices throughout the novitiate.

b. They also serve to test the novice. They reveal what she has made her own from our spirituality. At the same time they are an introduction to, and practice in, the apostolate of the Congregatio Jesu.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ O 79

⁷⁹ M 93

⁸⁰ O 80

Complementary Norms: Part III

c. It is recommended that new forms of the experiments be tried which are designed to achieve the goals of the experiments under present-day circumstances.⁸¹

3.12 The Spiritual Exercises, the most important and fundamental experiment, must take first place in the formation of the novice. These Exercises should be well-prepared, take place at a suitable time, and be presented with their full spiritual dynamic.⁸²

3.13. a. The further experiments are concerned above all with developing the virtues of generosity, humility and trust in God.

b. In order to evaluate the experiences appropriately and to deepen them, thorough preparation, sympathetic accompaniment and reflection afterwards with the novice director are necessary.

3.14 From the beginning, the novitiate training should aim at uniting contemplation and apostolic action. Experiences of apostolic activity help this process of integration. This activity can take place inside or outside the Congregatio Jesu. The novice director, in agreement with the provincial, will decide if and at what stage such a formative experience is advisable. This activity, in accordance with the experiments and personal experience, serves for the formation and testing of the novice, and is an important element in the novitiate.⁸³

3.15. a. The activity chosen should be make a real demand on the sister. It should indicate forms of apostolate to which she is suited, and test her ability to adapt herself to other people and to cooperate with them.

b. All apostolic activities, like the experiments in the strict sense, should also provide opportunities for meeting and experiencing the various forms of human poverty.⁸⁴

⁸¹ O 80 cf. CN SJ 46,1

⁸² cf. CN SJ 46,2

⁸³ JN 21

⁸⁴ O 80

Complementary Norms: Part III

3.16 The practical activity is subject to certain conditions:

1. In the course of the two years the novice must spend the twelve canonical months in the novitiate community.
2. The novice must spend a suitable time at the beginning of the first year and the last two months of the second year in the novitiate house.
3. During the experiments and the apostolic activity the novice remains under the guidance of the novice director.⁸⁵

3.17 Although entrance into the novitiate must mean a real separation from previous life in the world, nevertheless superiors should see to it that the novices are able to maintain adequate relationships with their contemporaries both inside and outside the Congregatio. Similarly the necessary separation from relations and friends must be carried out in such a way that it promotes growth in spiritual balance and in striving for supernatural love.⁸⁶

3.18. a. Entrance into the Congregatio means not only the beginning of an individual consecrated life, but also acceptance into a community characterised by apostolic service, which necessarily presupposes an ability to collaborate with others.

b. This calls for common life and common work, which offer the opportunity to get to know and to help one another. In daily life the novices should learn acceptance of one another and the need to foster reconciliation. They should be ready to work together in solidarity, excluding any kind of individualism.

c. It is important to learn from the beginning to be contented with what the community can offer as regards external things. Precisely through this 'common life' the sense of belonging to, and solidarity with, the community grows.

d. The novice should question herself seriously and give proof of her capacity for living in community.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ JN 22; cf. CIC 648, 2; Cf. CN 3.1.

⁸⁶ O 78,4; cf. CN SJ 53.

⁸⁷ O 78

3.19 If a novice in danger of death wishes to be admitted to profession, the provincial may grant the permission. In virtue of such profession the novice, if she dies, enjoys full membership of the *Congregatio Jesu*, but the profession has no other canonical effect.⁸⁸

4. Juridical situation of the novice with respect to property

3.20 a. The novice retains the ownership of her property. Before entrance into the novitiate, she must dispose of the income and hand over the administration of her property to whomsoever she chooses. She is not allowed to renounce her property during the time of her novitiate.

b. At the latest before making her temporary profession, and for the time that the profession lasts, the novice must in writing:

1. hand over the administration of her private property to a person of her own free choice or to the provincial administration,
2. dispose of the usufruct from her private property
3. make a will disposing freely of her private property.

c. These dispositions about property are also necessary in case the member inherits property later⁸⁹

d. To change the disposition about property the permission of the superior general is required.⁹⁰

e. All the dispositions concerning property are to be drawn up in conformity with the civil law in force. A copy is to be kept in the provincial archives.⁹¹

f. The member may dispose of the usufruct from her property by

1. surrendering it to the *Congregatio Jesu*
2. surrendering it to outside persons
3. disposing of it in her own favour. In that case the usufruct is added to the capital.⁹²

g. At the member's wish or with her express consent her patrimony may be used to pay for insurance for her old age. If this type of insurance

⁸⁸ JN 24.

⁸⁹ JN 240; cf. CIC 668, 1 JN 241

⁹⁰ JN 241; cf. CIC 668, 2

⁹¹ JN 243; cf. CIC 668, 4

⁹² JN 244

Complementary Norms: Part III

is chosen, care must be taken that the member, should she leave the Congregatio Jesu, retains her personal claim on the property.⁹³

h. The Congregatio Jesu requires no payment for the maintenance of a novice and the latter can make no financial claim. The forms of insurance customary in the country are paid by the Congregatio Jesu.⁹⁴

⁹³ JN 245

⁴⁴⁵ JN 23

Part IV

The Formation of Ours after the Novitiate

1. General principles and nature of this stage of formation

4.1 The whole of formation in the Congregatio Jesu is determined by its apostolic purpose: training ‘with God’s favour to help the souls of its own members and those of their neighbours.’⁹⁵

4.2 The time for study is normally the juniorate, which begins with temporary profession and lasts six years. A prolongation of up to nine years is possible.⁹⁶

4.3 The juniorate should be seen as a process of gradual integration of spiritual and community life, apostolate and study, so that the fullness of spiritual life becomes a source of apostolate and the apostolate an incentive for study and for a deepened spiritual life.⁹⁷

4.4 The decisions of the most recent general congregations concerning our identity and mission in the world today affect the form of training, stress its importance, and give a fresh impetus to formation in its entirety. It is directed to mission and provides what is needed for evangelisation in the world as it is today.

4.5 a. The provincial has primary responsibility for all aspects of the formation of the members of her province. On her depend both the persons and the institutions of the Congregatio Jesu directed to this end. She chooses suitable persons and means, and sees to appointments to the relevant offices⁹⁸.

b. It is her responsibility to adapt the criteria contained in Part IV of the Constitutions according to the guidelines of general congregations, in a

⁹⁵ [351]

⁹⁶ JN 28; cf. CIC 657,2

⁹⁷ JN 39; O 83,2

⁹⁸ cf. CN SJ 61,1

Complementary Norms: Part IV

way suited to the reality of her province, and to devise the means to put them into practice.

c. According to the situation within the province, the various responsibilities mentioned in what follows might be undertaken by one person or by several. What is important is that the responsibilities should be carried out carefully, and the different components of formation be integrated so as to reach the same goal.

4.6 a. The general superior, with the consent of her council and at the suggestion of the provincial who is bound to obtain the consent of her council, appoints an experienced finally-professed member as junior director.⁹⁹

b. It is the responsibility of the junior director to see that the formation process begun during the novitiate is carried forward, and that it develops well during this stage. Through the coordination of the different aspects of formation she takes care that the process is conducted as a coherent whole.

c. This calls for close collaboration between the junior director, the provincial, the local superior of the community where the junior is living, and the director of studies.

4.7 Where necessary the provincial, with the advice of her council, will entrust to an experienced member of the province the direction of the studies of the juniors. She will work out a personal plan of studies with the junior within the framework of the options available, and will supervise her progress. The plan should also include apostolic formation.

4.8 Where the circumstances are appropriate, the superior may take on the role of rector of a community of students, according to Part IV of the Constitutions

2. Spiritual formation

4.9 During the time of studies Ours should learn to value their own vocation more and more, and to take on our manner of proceeding, moved by the interior law of love.

⁹⁹ JN 40

Complementary Norms: Part IV

4.10 Those responsible for formation, in government or in another way, should take care to achieve a good integration of spiritual formation, study and training for the apostolate. Those responsible for spiritual accompaniment can make a particular contribution to this process.¹⁰⁰

4.11 Those in formation should meet often with their spiritual director. The junior chooses the person from whom she wishes to receive spiritual accompaniment, asks the provincial's confirmation of her choice, and informs her junior director.

4.12 a. The length of time given to prayer during studies and the methods used should be chosen in such a way that "a pure intention of serving God" and a "love of true virtues" are maintained. At the same time all excess in devotional practices should be avoided, since study "in a certain way requires the whole person".¹⁰¹

b. Throughout the time of formation, Ours should be so formed in the school of prayer and spiritual responsibility that they come to maturity in their prayer-life, and can apply the rule of discerning love¹⁰².

c. To be true to this requirement each one should daily devote about an hour and a half to prayer, Mass and reflection, and should discuss with the junior director or the superior how much time she is to give to prayer and to preparation for it.

d. Each one, under the guidance of her spiritual director, should seek the form of prayer which may be most fruitful for her in the Lord.¹⁰³

4.13 Those in formation will be initiated gradually into a methodical reading of Holy Scripture, to reach a more intimate knowledge of the mystery of Christ. They should also learn throughout their formation to participate actively in the liturgy and to understand it more deeply.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ O 83

¹⁰¹ [340]

¹⁰² cf. CN SJ 67,1

¹⁰³ cf. CN SJ 67,2,3.

¹⁰⁴ cf. CN SJ 68

Complementary Norms: Part IV

4.14 a. Those responsible for formation are to see to it that Ours become familiar with the sources of the spirituality of the Church and of the Congregatio Jesu, with its history and traditions.

b. They should also help them to grow in thinking with the Church, and to practise spiritual discernment.¹⁰⁵

4.15 a. At every stage of formation attention should be given to personal maturity, especially affective maturity (if necessary, with the help of psychological counselling), so that spiritual, intellectual and affective life grow in harmony towards a healthy balance and true maturity of the whole person.

b. The juniors should also have the opportunity during formation to undertake responsibility.¹⁰⁶

3. Community life

4.16 a. The Congregatio Jesu can maintain its own houses of study for the training of its members.

b. If no house of study of ours is available, or if for other reasons the junior is studying in a outside place, she is a member of the nearest community of the Congregatio Jesu.

c. As far as possible no junior should be sent alone to an outside place of study.

d. The financing of training and of the houses of study should be provided through a secure source of income. See CN 6.27; 6.29; 6.32; 6.34.

4.17 a. In the organisation of community life in the houses of study it must be borne in mind that the community life of Ours in the apostolate is the model for which the young members are being prepared. Pedagogical considerations in the years of training, the nature of the studies or of the work in the houses of study, and also the number of sisters call, however, for appropriate adaptations of community life.

b. The community spirit of each one, which is a prerequisite for apostolic life in the Congregatio Jesu, should be seriously tested and formed during these years .

¹⁰⁵ cf. CN SJ 69-70

¹⁰⁶ cf. CN SJ 72

Complementary Norms: Part IV

c. Importance is to be given to education in communication skills and to communication between the juniors themselves and with superiors, to cooperation, obedience and sisterly correction. All of this should help to form women capable of making the best possible decisions in the light of grace and after thorough consultation.¹⁰⁷

4.18 a. When Ours who are in formation live for a time in communities dedicated to the apostolate, care should be taken that these communities are able and willing to take on responsibility for formation, along with those entrusted with it in the province.

b. The provincial will appoint a member of the community to help the members in formation to pursue their studies, to undergo apostolic experiences and to maintain close ties with their companions.¹⁰⁸

4.19 Within the framework of community life care should be taken that each one may be guided according to her natural and supernatural gifts; but at the same time sensitivity towards solidarity and collaboration is to be promoted, excluding individualism.¹⁰⁹

4.20 a. The juniors should have regular contact with their junior director and with each other. Those responsible determine the frequency, according to the particular situation of each.¹¹⁰

b. Meeting and sharing with young members from other provinces promotes knowledge and awareness of the body of the Congregatio Jesu.¹¹¹

c. Good relationships with fellow students of both sexes enable mutual help with studies, broaden horizons and promote understanding of other cultures and ways of thinking.

¹⁰⁷ cf. CN SJ 77

¹⁰⁸ cf. CN SJ 79

¹⁰⁹ See CN 3.18; CN SJ 73

¹¹⁰ JN 40; O 84,4

¹¹¹ See CN 8,4

4. Professional training, studies

4.21 The purpose of studies in the Congregatio Jesu is the apostolate. Those in training should be given what is needed for them to acquire the best possible preparation for service.

4.22 a. All should bear in mind that their mission and apostolate in this phase of formation is the study itself.

b. For that reason the purpose of apostolic tasks during this period is practical training for future apostolate and progressive integration as member of an apostolic community into the body of the Congregatio Jesu.

4.23 a. The content, place and duration of studies are directed to this end. The capacity and inclinations of each member should be taken into consideration, as well as actual apostolic needs.¹¹²

b. The juniors who are to study should therefore have

- * firm purpose and a right intention
- * sufficient ability for the study in question
- * good health, physical and psychological stamina, and perseverance.

4.24 a. All members of the Congregatio Jesu should obtain an officially recognised qualification, according to their particular situation.

b. If the junior has completed some studies or a training before entering the Congregatio Jesu, it should be considered whether or not she needs an additional qualification for her mission.¹¹³

4.25 a. To be able to fulfil our mission of evangelisation in today's world, all who have the necessary qualifications, or are able to acquire them, should study theology. Those who do not have the qualifications to do a full course of theology should acquire an appropriate, officially recognised basic training in theology/catechetics.¹¹⁴

¹¹² O 82,3

¹¹³ O 82

¹¹⁴ O 82

Complementary Norms: Part IV

b. Professional training and specialisation will be added to the basic study of theology according to each one's capabilities and what is needed for her mission.

4.26 a. Likewise all members should acquire confidence in the use of English, the official language of the *Congregatio Jesu*,¹¹⁵ during the juniorate at the latest.

b. Members whose mother-tongue is English should learn another language commonly used in the *Congregatio Jesu*.

4.27 a. All should receive a sound basic training and acquire the skills needed for independent study. These are the foundation for the constant updating and ongoing formation required by the apostolate, and for a professional retraining that may be necessary later on.

b. Those in training should receive the help they require in planning their study well, and in carrying it through in a methodical and systematic way.

4.28 They should strive during their studies to grow in familiarity with God; in this way they will gain confidence and come to a sound judgement about the different opinions of experts. They should be given solid teaching in accordance with the norms given by the Church, and come to deeper thinking with the Church and mature love for her, as our vocation demands.¹¹⁶

4.29 They should enter into dialogue with the spirit of our contemporary society, learn to understand people's customs, ways of thinking, feeling and acting, develop a sound critical sense, and be sensitive to the burning issues of our time.

4.30 a. According to their capabilities they should in the course of their studies undertake various experiments suited to the apostolic works of the province or of the *Congregatio Jesu* as a whole. These experiences should help them to understand the world of the people among whom they find themselves.

¹¹⁵ GC 93

¹¹⁶ O 83; cf. CN SJ 100.

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b. This apostolic formation should be integrated into the personal study-plan. They will be accompanied by someone responsible, who will help the junior to examine critically the experiences she has had, and to learn from them.¹¹⁷

4.31 a. The juniors should make themselves familiar with the key principles of human communication and have practice in approaching and meeting with people in the contemporary context. They should, especially, learn the skills of speaking and writing, so that they are able to proclaim the gospel of Christ appropriately.

b. They should learn to evaluate critically the modes of expression of present-day culture, and to use the communications media responsibly in their apostolate.¹¹⁸

5. Supplementary notes

On formation and formative activities during the novitiate, see Complementary Norms Part III.

On the ongoing formation of members, see Complementary Norms Part 6

On the apostolate of education in the Congregatio Jesu, see Constitutions and Complementary Norms Part VII

¹¹⁷ See CN 4.5; 4.6; 4.7; 4.18.

¹¹⁸ cf. CN SJ 96

Part V

**Admission to Profession or Incorporation
into the Congregatio Jesu**

1. Authority for, manner and effect of incorporation

5.1 The general superior, with the consent of her council, decides on admission to profession.¹¹⁹

5.2 The decision rests on:

1. the member's request for admission
2. the reports on the member
3. the recommendation of the provincial, who must obtain the consent of her council.¹²⁰

5.3 The admission-procedure:

1. The member requests in writing to be admitted to profession.
2. The provincial asks for reports from the novice or junior director and from at least two other professed members who know the member well. Anyone asked for such a report is in duty bound to give it.
3. The reports must express a clear opinion for or against admission, and are to be treated as strictly confidential.
4. The provincial council decides by secret vote.
5. The novice or junior director is present at the meeting but she does not vote unless she is a member of the council.
6. The provincial sends the general superior:
 - * her recommendation, with the results of the voting of the council
 - * the member's request,
 - * the reports about the member,

¹¹⁹ JN 30, 41; cf. CIC 656,3

¹²⁰ JN 31

Complementary Norms: Part V

* her own opinion and that of her council.

The provincial of the province to which the member belongs is regarded as the competent superior, regardless of where the member has made the novitiate, or spent the juniorate, or has her apostolate.

7. The vote of the general council is secret.¹²¹
8. For non-admission, see CN 2.4 – 2.6

5.4 The general superior receives the profession. In virtue of their office, provincials and general assistants are competent to receive the profession. The general superior and the provincial superior can also delegate this authority to other members.¹²²

- 5.5 a. For validity of profession the following are required:
1. lawful admission
 2. voluntary making of the profession, without the influence of force, fear or deceit
 3. that the profession be explicit
 4. reception of the profession by the competent superior
- b. For first profession, in addition:
1. completion of the twentieth year of age
 2. completion of a valid novitiate¹²³

- 5.6.1 The manner of making profession:
1. The making of profession is preceded by the eight-day spiritual exercises.¹²⁴
 2. The novice or junior writes out the vow-formula by hand, giving the place and date of the profession.
 3. The vow-formula counts as the record of profession. It is signed by the novice or junior and by the member who receives the profession. The record of profession is preserved in the provincial archives.

¹²¹ PR 6

¹²² JN 35

¹²³ JN 29; cf. CIC 656

¹²⁴ PR 6

Complementary Norms: Part V

4. The fact of the profession is entered in the profession-book by the provincial, and is signed by the professed herself and by the member who received the profession.
5. The provincial informs the general superior of the profession.
6. Since the time of its foundation it has been the tradition of the Congregatio Jesu that profession is made during the celebration of the Eucharist, immediately before reception of holy communion. The novice or junior recites the vow-formula aloud before the assembled community, and receives holy communion immediately afterwards.¹²⁵

5.7 a. In profession the member binds herself by public vow to the three evangelical counsels, poverty, chastity and obedience.

b. The consecration of the member to God and incorporation into the Congregatio Jesu are received and confirmed through the ministry of the Church.

c. The member accepts the Institutum, the Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu with the Complementary Norms as well as the Decrees of the General Congregations currently in force, as her rule of life.¹²⁶

d. The professed is a member of the Congregatio Jesu, with all the rights and duties conferred by membership, for the time specified by the profession.¹²⁷

e. Private vows are suspended for as long as the profession remains effective.¹²⁸

2. Temporary profession

5.8 a. For admission to temporary vows it is a requirement that the Congregatio is convinced of the suitability of the novice for life and service in the Congregatio Jesu, and that both the novice and the Congregatio experience this conviction as consolation, in the sense of the testing prescribed in the Constitutions.

¹²⁵ O 10, PR 7

¹²⁶ JN 27; see CN 0.15-0.18; cf. CIC 654, 656.3

¹²⁷ JN 37

¹²⁸ JN 38

Complementary Norms: Part V

b. The novice should let it be clearly seen that she is resolved to make ‘our manner of proceeding’ her own.

- * Personal love of Christ, expressed and nourished in daily life, is part of this.
- * It is expressed in availability, generosity and self-denial, which bring freedom to overcome the limitations of personal wishes and desires.
- * It is expressed in readiness and ability to integrate into and contribute to community life joyfully and constructively.

c. The novice should let it be seen that she is able to make progress and to allow herself to be helped. For this it is necessary that she should have achieved sufficient knowledge of herself and interior freedom, shown in openness and candour towards the novice director.

5.9 Before making the profession the novice declares in writing:

1. that she is making the profession of her own free will and that she is resolved to live according to the manner of life of the Congregatio Jesu, as contained in the Institutum and Constitutions;
2. that she has not deliberately concealed anything that might prove an impediment to profession;
3. that she is aware that in the event of her freely leaving or being dismissed from the Congregatio Jesu, she can make no financial claim for work or services rendered, since at her entrance and subsequent profession no employment contract is made with the Congregatio Jesu.¹²⁹

5.10 The profession formula is as follows:

“Almighty and everlasting God, I, Mary N.N., although most unworthy of appearing in Your divine sight, yet trusting in Your fatherly goodness and infinite mercy, and moved with the desire of serving You, vow before the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the Saints to Your Divine Majesty and in Your place our general superior N.N. (our provincial superior N.N. as delegated by our general superior; our general assistant N.N. as...; our superior N.N. as...; Sister N.N. as...) for three years (two years, one year) poverty, chastity and obedience in the Congregatio Jesu, according to our Institutum

¹²⁹ PR 6,2

and Constitutions. By the same vow of obedience I promise to devote myself to the service of the Church, especially to the care of youth.

Therefore I most humbly beg of Your infinite goodness and clemency, through the precious blood of Your Son Jesus Christ, to accept my sacrifice, and, as You have given me the grace to desire and offer it, so You will also give me plentiful grace to fulfil it. Amen.¹³⁰

- 5.11 a. Temporary profession is made twice, each time for three years.
- b. For just reasons the province may choose the method of making the temporary vows for one, two and three years.¹³¹
- c. It is possible to prolong temporary profession for up to nine years.¹³²
- d. Temporary profession is made on the anniversary of entrance into the novitiate.
- e. The provincial can allow the profession to be anticipated, but not beyond one month
- f. The provincial can allow the profession to take place outside the novitiate house. If a novice makes her novitiate in another province, she returns to her own province to make her profession.¹³³
- g. Every renewal of vows takes place on the anniversary of the previous profession. For just reasons, the provincial can allow the profession to be anticipated, but not beyond one month.
- h. The general superior can postpone the profession day up to a period of one month. She authorises the renewal of vows for the intervening period.¹³⁴

3. Final profession

- 5.12 a. The requisites for admission to first profession expressed in CN 5.8 are still more important for admission to final profession and the complete incorporation which this entails.

¹³⁰ JN 36; [540]

¹³¹ JN 32; cf. CIC 655

¹³² JN 28; see CN 4.2; CIC 657,2

¹³³ JN 33

¹³⁴ JN 34

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b. It is expected of all that they will distinguish themselves in the following of Christ in the spirit of the gospel, the ultimate norm of religious life. A person may be considered such:

- * who with all zeal seeks the salvation of persons and is ready and available to be used and to be sent
- * who usually in everyday things does what virtue informed by the love of Christ calls for, so that it may be hoped that she will act in the same way in more difficult situations that present themselves;
- * who receives with humility admonitions about her failings in religious life, and strives generously to improve;
- * who, impelled by love, lives more and more for Christ and his Body, which is the Church, and in the daily exercise of virtues gives testimony both to Ours and to other people of the new life gained through redemption in Christ.¹³⁵

c. Also necessary are:

- * clear knowledge of the content of the vows
- * appropriate experience of “our manner of proceeding” and of service in the Congregatio Jesu
- * full availability for mission.

5.13 a. With the making of final profession the junior becomes a member of the Congregatio Jesu with all rights and duties.

b. She now assumes definitively the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu, the Institutum, the Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu with the Complementary Norms and the Decrees of General Congregations currently in force as her rule of life.¹³⁶

5.14 a. Final profession is preceded by a year of preparation, the tertianship. In this time spiritual, professional and apostolic formation should reach a point where the junior, through the integration of previous experiences in the Congregatio Jesu, becomes a spiritual person who is capable of unconditional commitment.

b. During this year the juniors should be partly released from their professional work and be entirely free from it for at least six months.

¹³⁵ cf. CN SJ 120

¹³⁶ JN 44; see CN 0.15 – 0.18

Complementary Norms: Part V

c. The preparation takes place under the direction of the junior director, or of some other experienced finally-professed member.

d. The preparation follows a formation programme drawn up by the members responsible for formation in agreement with the provincial and approved by the general superior with the consent of her council.

e. Some form of long retreat should be included in the preparation, even if the 'Thirty Days' Spiritual Exercises have already been made in the novitiate.¹³⁷

f. During the tertianship the juniors should be given an opportunity to experience the internationality of the Congregatio Jesu in an appropriate way.

5.15 a. Final profession is made on the anniversary of the last temporary profession.

b. For just reasons the provincial can allow the profession to be anticipated, but not beyond one month. The general superior can anticipate for up to three months.

c. The general superior can postpone the profession day for up to one month. She authorises the renewal of vows for the intervening period.¹³⁸

5.16 The vow-formula for final profession is as follows:

"I, Mary N.N., make profession, and I promise to Almighty God, in the presence of His Virgin Mother, the whole heavenly court, and all those here present, and to you, Mother N.N., superior general of the Congregatio Jesu and the one holding the place of God, and to your successors (or to you, Sister N.N., as representing our superior general), perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the manner of living contained in our Institutum and our Constitutions. By the same vow of obedience I promise to devote myself to the service of the Church and especially to the care of youth."¹³⁹

¹³⁷ JN 45

¹³⁸ JN 43; cf. CIC 657,3

¹³⁹ [532]

4. The fourth vow – the vow of obedience “circa missiones”

5.17 General Congregation 2002 was granted the grace of putting into practice a fundamental principle of “our manner of proceeding”, the so-called “fourth vow”, the vow of obedience to the Pope with respect to missions.¹⁴⁰ For the content and meaning of the fourth vow see CN 7.4 – 7.8.

5.18 Because the vow on mission belongs to the “principle and foundation”¹⁴¹ of the charism, all members who enter after General Congregation 2002 make the fourth vow.

5.19 a. The procedure for admission takes place in the customary way.¹⁴²

b. The time for making the vow is decided by the province with consent of the general superior after hearing the opinion of the general council.

c. It can take place at the making of final vows.

d. It can also take place later in the context of the year of spiritual renewal.¹⁴³

e. This ruling is valid “ad experimentum” until GC 2011. GC 2011 will evaluate the experience and make the necessary decisions.

5.20 The condition for admission is:

- * a clear understanding of the content of the vow
- * full availability for mission
- * appropriate experience in the apostolate and in “our manner of proceeding”
- * an appropriate experience and knowledge of the international character of the Congregatio Jesu and its worldwide mission.

5.21 a. Specific formation for the fourth vow is included in the general formation at all levels.

b. If the fourth vow is made at final profession, immediate preparation is made with the tertianship.

¹⁴⁰ Institutum, 1 and 3; [7; 529; 603; 605]

¹⁴¹ See CN 7.8

¹⁴² See CN 5.1–5.3

¹⁴³ CN 6.56; 6.22.

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c. If the fourth vow is made later, the preparation and making of the vow take place in the context of the year of spiritual renewal.¹⁴⁴

5.22 The vow-formula for making the vow at final profession is as follows :

“I, Mary N.N., make profession, and I promise to Almighty God, in the presence of His Virgin Mother, the whole heavenly court, and all those here present, and to you, Mother N.N., superior general of the Congregatio Jesu and the one holding the place of God, and to your successors (or to you, Sister N.N., as representing our superior general), perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the manner of living contained in our Institutum and our Constitutions. By the same vow of obedience I promise to devote myself to the service of the Church and especially to the care of youth.

I further promise special obedience to the sovereign pontiff in regard to the missions, according to the same Institutum and Constitutions .”¹⁴⁵

5.22 b. The vow formula for making the vow separately from final profession is as follows:

“I, Mary N.N., *renew* my profession, and I promise to Almighty God, in the presence of His Virgin Mother, the whole heavenly court, and all those here present, and to you, Mother N.N., superior general of the Congregatio Jesu and the one holding the place of God, and to your successors (or to you, Sister N.N., as representing our superior general), perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the manner of living contained in our Institutum and our Constitutions. By the same vow of obedience I promise to devote myself to the service of the Church and especially to the care of youth.

I further promise *today* special obedience to the sovereign pontiff in regard to the missions, according to the same Institutum and Constitutions.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ See CN 6.56

¹⁴⁵ [527]

¹⁴⁶ cf. [527]

5. Provisional arrangements for the members who entered the Congregatio Jesu before the end of General Congregation 2002

5.23 These provisional arrangements are valid until General Congregation 2011.

5.24 a. The members who had already entered the Congregatio Jesu before the end of General Congregation 2002 are not obliged to make the fourth vow. They are free to ask for admission to the fourth vow.¹⁴⁷

b. GC 2002 encouraged all members to take this step with generosity and openness in the sense of the ‘magis’.

c. The making of the vow is preceded by a period of intensive preparation, and takes place in the context of the annual retreat.¹⁴⁸

5.25 On the content and meaning of this vow see CN 5.17 – 5.18 and CN 7.4 – 7.8

5.26 a. The admission procedure takes place in the usual way. See CN 5.1 – 5.3

b. On the conditions, see CN 5.12 and 5.20

c. For the vow-formula see CN 5.22a. and 5.22b.

¹⁴⁷ See CN 0.15, 6.22

¹⁴⁸ See CN 5.21

Part VI

The Life of the Fully-Incorporated Member

1. Life under the vows¹⁴⁹

1.1 The vows in general

6.1 a. Self-surrender under the vows is our loving response to the Lord's call, and makes concrete the surrender of the Suscipe: all that we are and have is God's gift to us. We give ourselves in return, and bind ourselves to Christ, by whom we believe we have been called to serve him.¹⁵⁰

b. In following him we hope to become ever more like him. He draws us more and more deeply into the reality of his death and resurrection.¹⁵¹

6.2 In binding us the vows set us free from self and make us available for service:

- * free through the vow of poverty to place our life and our resources at the service of those in need;
- * free by the vow of chastity, to be "women for others", in friendship and communion with all, but especially with those who share our mission of service;
- * free by the vow of obedience, to answer the call of Christ and allow ourselves to be missioned.¹⁵²

1.2 Consecrated chastity

6.3 a. Consecrated chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" is a gift from the Father (Mt.19:11,12), and an intimate personal relationship

¹⁴⁹ Cf. CIC 598

¹⁵⁰ cf. Sp. Exx. 234

¹⁵¹ O 6

¹⁵² O 8 (cf. CN SJ 143.2); cf. Mary Ward's letter to Fr. Roger Lee of 1st Nov.1615, Letters of Instruction VI.

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with Christ gives it life. It is governed by “the interior law of love and charity which the Holy Spirit writes and engraves upon the hearts.”¹⁵³

b. Our response to the love of the triune God is our undivided love, our total dedication to him, through which we are “wholly God’s”;¹⁵⁴ a love so deep as to make the giving of exclusive love to another human being impossible. (Mt.19:12)

c. This love excludes marriage and every other exclusive human relationship. The vow precludes any form of intimate physical relationship. Sexuality is a positive life-force, not to be repressed but to be accepted and affirmed. In this way – even though it does not find expression in a physical relationship - it can become fruitful in service for people.

6.4 a. So that the love consecrated to God once for all can constantly grow, all should cultivate an interior intimacy with God and friendship with Christ through meditation on his mysteries and living assimilation to him through the Exercises, the sacrament of reconciliation and the Eucharist. They should pray daily for the gifts of perseverance and fidelity in their vocation.

b. As Mary Ward¹⁵⁵ learnt from experience, it is important for us also to keep the desire for perseverance alert in us through humble and simple devotion to Mary, virgin and mother of fair love.¹⁵⁶

6.5 a. Natural predispositions for a life dedicated to God are positive acceptance of our feminine identity and affective maturity, that is, ability on the one hand to be in touch with inner feelings, but also to distance oneself from them and to express them in a controlled way, in speech and behaviour.

b. This does not mean that all disturbing emotions, desires, or sufferings should be suppressed. These forces can be used in building community and relationships.

¹⁵³ [134]

¹⁵⁴ Mary Ward: Retreat notes, Letters of Instruction 9, and letter to W. Bedingfield, October 1635, Letter 123, Nymphenburg collection; O 11.

¹⁵⁵ Cf Retreat notes of 12th October 1619 and 8th January 1624, Letters of Instruction 9.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. CN SJ 146,1,2.

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c. It is necessary also to accept each phase of life, and thereby accept personal limitations and weakness, and seek to form good interpersonal relationships, especially within the community.

6.6 a. Natural and supernatural helps for a life of celibacy are: generous dedication to mission, concern for human formation, life in community, genuine mutual love, friendship, truthfulness, fortitude in bearing with hardships, openness with superiors, personal prayer, spiritual joy, and a love of God which sees him in all things and all things in him.¹⁵⁷

b. In using the means of social communication a necessary discretion is to be observed. Members are to avoid whatever is harmful to their vocation.¹⁵⁸ Seeking compensation in difficulties and crises is unhelpful and leads to more distress.

c. All bear responsibility for one another for the preservation of chastity. A warm and benevolent atmosphere in the community is a help to this. Let each one be ready to help others and to allow herself to be helped.

6.7 a. Union with Christ and familiarity with God are the source of genuine love for others. They teach us to affirm and accept others and to show goodness and sincere friendship towards them. Such love makes us more and more open and available for our apostolic service.¹⁵⁹

b. In dealings with the people to whom we are sent through our apostolate, as with respect to visits, relaxation and free time, we should be conscious of dedication to God, and maintain such a balance that our living of chastity may be apparent.

c. This calls for sensitivity to varying cultural perceptions, in order to take due account of customs in different places.

d. Our life always calls for a certain separation from the world, in order to be a witness in the world to the primacy of Christ and his kingdom.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ O 12

¹⁵⁸ cf. CIC 666

¹⁵⁹ O 13

¹⁶⁰ cf. CN SJ 147,2.3; cf CIC 607,3

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6.8 a. The renunciation of marriage and family and the human limitations of community living necessarily bring renunciations, disappointments and a certain solitude. Therefore a sufficient tolerance of frustration is part of affective maturity, in order to deal constructively with difficulties and be able to endure tension. Solitude of heart is the entry-gate for God, who wants our heart wholly for himself and also a share in the solitude of Christ in his suffering from which the power of love grows.¹⁶¹

b. We are aware that consecrated celibacy is a contradiction to the mentality of today, and we allow for the fact that we shall not be understood. But even where this ideal is appreciated, it always requires a profound act of faith in the love and power of God, so that our life may be spiritually and humanly fruitful through our relationship with him.

1.3 Obedience

6.9 Obedience is also a gift of God's grace, through which we become more steadfastly and securely united with the divine will for salvation. Impelled by the love of the obedient Christ, let us accept this gift, which allows us to become fit instruments in the Church.¹⁶²

6.10 Obedience is always an act of faith and freedom, in which we recognise and accept the will of God, which is made clear to us through the one who has authority to send us in the name of Christ.¹⁶³

6.11 a. The relationship between member and superior in the Congregatio Jesu consists fundamentally in spiritual leadership of the members by the superiors. It is possible solely on the basis of trustful openness.

b. In the relationship with the provincial this openness takes the form of manifestation of conscience, which is specific for us.

c. The account of conscience is a necessary prerequisite for assigning a mission. Through it the provincial gets to know the member with her strengths and weaknesses. Thus she can help her in her personal discernment. At the same time she gains the knowledge and insight necessary to decide on the mission to be entrusted. The apostolic task may be bound up with dangers which require counter-measures.

¹⁶¹ O 14

¹⁶² O 25

¹⁶³ O 26

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d. The provincial should, therefore, give members the opportunity to open their consciences with love and trust, at least before a new mission. The provincial may not make use, directly or indirectly, of what she has heard in the account of conscience, without the express consent of the member who gave the account. The practice of the account of conscience is made in accordance with what is laid down in CIC 630 § 5: “The members are to approach their superiors with trust and be able to open their minds freely and spontaneously to them. Superiors, however, are forbidden in any way to induce the members to make a manifestation of conscience to themselves.”

6.12 Within the community all receive their tasks from the superior; but she expects both the individual member and the community to seek with her concrete ways of fulfilling God’s will in the mission. Community discernment remains, however, only advice and help for the superior in deciding what seems to her to serve better the glory of God and the good of people; for to her is entrusted the charism and burden of exercising authority.¹⁶⁴

6.13 a. Obedience does not dispense the individual sister from personal responsibility; on the contrary the genuine attitude of obedience presupposes it.

b. If a member has misgivings concerning any matter, she should, after prayer, state them plainly to the superior; at the same time she must be ready to accept the superior’s decision and to see in it the will of God.¹⁶⁵

6.14 a. If a sister honestly believes that her conscience forbids her to obey a command of the superior, she should seek to clarify the matter in an open conversation with her.

b. She can also turn to the higher superior.

c. If the conflict cannot be resolved either through discussion or through appeal, a third party can be brought in, by mutual consent, in order to arrive at a clear decision in conscience. Such a discussion can, however, not be imposed either on the superior or on the subject. It takes

¹⁶⁴ O 32

¹⁶⁵ O 26

place completely voluntarily and on a friendly basis. It is simply a further attempt to find God's will. The opinion of such a third person is of an advisory character and does not stand legally above the authority of the superior.

d. If the subject is still unable to obey with good conscience, the superior decides what she recommends to be done.

e. If the member repeatedly has this difficulty of conscience, it seems advisable for her to serve the Lord in another way.¹⁶⁶

6.15 The members are not to allow outsiders to interfere in any matter with superiors.

1.4 The vow of poverty

1.4.1 General principles

6.16 a. The principle and foundation of our voluntary poverty is love for the poor and humble Christ, the Son of God, who became man and took up his cross. In following him we hope to attain the freedom which will enable us to love God and people without hindrance.¹⁶⁷

b. Our poverty is the expression of our unconditional trust in God and the gratuitousness of our service. Thus we become signs of the freely-given love of God revealed in Christ.

6.17 Because our poverty is apostolic, the precise form and measure of poverty will be determined by the mission, while on the other hand our whole apostolic activity must be informed by the spirit of poverty.¹⁶⁸

6.18 a. Our poverty is an expression of our solidarity with the poor and marginalized. It includes protest against unjust structures in the world and the call for justice.¹⁶⁹

b. Mary Ward wanted us to give what we have, not only from surplus, but from what we ourselves need. The inscription on the gravestone shows this: "To love the poor, to live with them...."¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ cf. CN SJ 154

¹⁶⁷ O 16

¹⁶⁸ M 93

¹⁶⁹ M 93

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6.19 Our poverty calls for responsible use of the resources that belong to humanity in common, and in a particular way for care of creation for the future.¹⁷¹

6.20 a. For the right use of material goods it is important to realise that our way of life cannot be regulated by norms fixed once and for all, but must remain subject to discernment and new decisions in our responsible adaptation to particular situations with a view to greater service.

b. Individual members and the community as a whole should frequently consider whether their expenditure is in keeping with these criteria.¹⁷²

c. Let our poverty, sincerely and profoundly renewed, be:

- * Simple in community expression and joyous in the following of Christ;
- * happy in sharing all goods among ourselves and with others;
- * apostolic in its active indifference and readiness for any service;
- * inspiring our selection of ministries and turning us to those most in need;
- * spiritually effective, proclaiming Jesus Christ in our way of life and in all we do.¹⁷³

1.4.2 The vow of poverty and the members' rights to property

6.21 a. After profession and until she has made the renunciation of goods, the member retains the right of ownership of her personal property and the legal competence to acquire further property through inheritance or gift.

b. In the exercise of the right to property the member is subject to the restrictions of canon law.

c. She transacts with the provincial's knowledge whatever legal business is prescribed by the civil law.

¹⁷⁰ O 21

¹⁷¹ GC93

¹⁷² O 19

¹⁷³ cf. CN SJ 162

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d. Gifts made to anyone as a member of the Congregatio Jesu become the property of the Congregatio Jesu. If there is doubt as to the intention of the donor, the matter is decided in favour of the Congregatio Jesu.¹⁷⁴

6.22 a. At the end of the year of spiritual renewal, about ten years after final profession, the member renounces all personal security of a material kind in the form of private property and effects the renunciation of her personal patrimony.¹⁷⁵

b. Thereby the member loses the ability to inherit and own property. What comes to her after the renunciation of property as inheritance or gift belongs to the Congregatio Jesu.¹⁷⁶

c. The renunciation covers all the goods and rights that the member possesses at that time, and those which may come to her later.

d. The renunciation should be done in a way that is valid according to civil law.

e. The members who had already entered the Congregatio Jesu before the conclusion of General Congregation 2002 are not bound to carry out the renunciation of property. However, GC 2002 encourages all members to take this step with generosity and open-handedness.¹⁷⁷

1. 4. 3 Our poverty in community

6.23 a. We live poverty in community. That means in practice common and responsible use of material goods in the community.

b. It is a matter of observing the double law of common life: each one gives to the community whatever she receives by way of remuneration, salary or gift, and receives from the community whatever she needs. Dependence and limitation of the right of disposal are an essential part of the practice of poverty.

c. Where it seems appropriate, the sisters have money at their disposal, rendering an account of it in accordance with what has been agreed with the superior.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ JN 239

¹⁷⁵ JN 242; cf. CIC 668,4; see CN 6.56; 5.19

¹⁷⁶ cf. CIC 668,5

¹⁷⁷ see CN 0.15, 5.23, 5.24

¹⁷⁸ O 18

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6.24 a. Mary Ward wished her foundation to have “an ordinary manner of life” as regards poverty. This requires of each member an attitude of modest expectations, simplicity and contentment.

b. The lifestyle of our communities is related to its surroundings and may not be superior to that of a family of modest means which has to work hard for its living.

6.25 Our dress is also an expression of simplicity of lifestyle. According to the circumstances of place it may be the common dress with veil that General Congregation 1977 decreed and General Congregations 1984 and 1993 confirmed, or the pinafore-dress or two-piece, with or without veil. Where the situation requires it for greater service, simple ordinary clothes may be worn, with the official emblem of the Congregatio Jesu. The provincial gives permission for this.¹⁷⁹

6.26 a. Poverty in the following of Jesus is not primarily an economic or social question, even if it has material and economic consequences.

b. We are conscious that “a life removed as far as possible from all avarice and as like as possible to evangelical poverty is more gratifying, purer and more helpful to our neighbour.”¹⁸⁰ So our various forms of work and activities should not aim at material profit or prestige, but should be directed to the best possible service of people, in which we “give gratis what we have so received”. This is the measure for the use and administration of material goods.¹⁸¹

1.4.4 The poverty of the communities, provinces and regions, and of the Congregatio Jesu as a whole

6.27 a. The Congregatio Jesu, the generalate, the provinces, regions and local houses are juridical persons as defined by canon law and therefore capable of acquiring, retaining, administering and alienating movable and immovable goods. A filiation belongs to a local house and does not possess its own property.¹⁸² The general superior is the legal representative of

¹⁷⁹ M 93; O 23; Sp.EXX. 6; cf. CIC 669,1; Vita Consacrata 25.

¹⁸⁰ Institutum,7

¹⁸¹ O 17; see CN 6.37, 8.11.

¹⁸² JN 221; cf. CIC 634,1.

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the Congregatio Jesu, the provincial of her province, the regional superior of her region, and the local superior of her local house.¹⁸³

b. The strict juridical distinction made in the *Institutum* and in the *Constitutions* between:

- * houses and churches not capable of owning fixed properties and income, and
- * colleges capable of possessing fixed properties and income, are applied in a way suited to our time.

c. Fixed income in the sense of income from property should be secured for the financing of:

- * houses of probation and studies
- * houses for the care of elderly and infirm members
- * apostolic works.

d. Apostolic communities are subject to the common law of work. Living on alms is not appropriate in our time.

e. Communities have the right to receive the income generated by the activities of their members, such as salaries, stipends and pensions, and social security payments.¹⁸⁴ Their expenditure should not exceed the annual budget agreed by the provincial.

f. Communities should adopt a modest style of accommodation and living, separate from the well-equipped works.

g. The apostolic works should build reserves for development and to safeguard their future.

h. At all events it is necessary that the income and expenditure of the community be separated from that of the apostolic works.¹⁸⁵

6.28 The property of the generalate consists of:

1. movable and immovable goods,
2. income from:
 - a) annual contributions made by the provinces, the amount being fixed by the general congregation,
 - b) income from property,
 - c) gifts and donations to the generalate.

¹⁸³ JN 222

¹⁸⁴ JN 236

¹⁸⁵ O 19; see CN 6.37

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d) In cases of grave necessity the general superior, with the consent of her council, can require an extraordinary contribution from individual provinces.¹⁸⁶

- 6.29 a. The property of the generalate provides for:
1. the maintenance of the members of the generalate,
 2. the expenses of government,
 3. the maintenance of the “Casa Generalizia”, the community which is at the service of the generalate and of the Congregatio Jesu,
 4. the maintenance of the house of study annexed to the generalate for students from the provinces, if they are not able to provide for the expenses of their own members,
 5. assistance for provinces in need,
 6. help and support for apostolic works of a more general nature.¹⁸⁷
- b. A study fund serves to finance the student-community or individual students.

6.30 The contributions from the provinces are regulated by the following principles:

1. Necessary expenditure incurred by the general government is met by the Congregatio Jesu as a whole, and divided among the provinces according to the number of members.
2. The sum per capita will be reckoned differently according to the earning power of countries and provinces. The general congregation makes this distinction.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ JN 231

¹⁸⁷ JN 232

¹⁸⁸ Decisions of the most recent general congregations:

GC77: The amount needed was divided between all the European provinces.

GC84: The expenditure to be covered was divided among the members of the European provinces under 70 years old. The provinces outside Europe were to make voluntary contributions according to their ability.

GC93: The amount per capita was calculated on a proportional scale, 6:1:2 for Western Europe, Eastern Europe and provinces outside Europe. All members under 70 were included.

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3. If in the time between general congregations the need arises for the formula for differentiation to be revised, the general superior together with the Congregation of Provincials makes the decision.
4. The general government renders an annual account of income and expenditure to the provincials.¹⁸⁹

6.31 a. The generalate also administers the Solidarity Fund of the Congregatio Jesu.

This provides support for provinces, houses and apostolic works of the Congregatio Jesu and help for the poor and for any kind of need throughout the world.

b. It is financed by provinces, houses, apostolic works, members and benefactors.¹⁹⁰

c. In the administration of it the following is to be observed:

1. The monies placed at the disposal of the Solidarity Fund are not to be used as capital, but distributed annually. If they are not used in one year they are to be accounted for as income for the following year.
2. The monies are obtained from:
 - * obligatory contributions from the provinces, at a level fixed by the general congregation
 - * voluntary contributions (such as, income from the sale of houses or land, income from legacies....)
3. The distribution of such funds is decided by the general superior, acting collegially with her council.
4. The local houses send their applications through the provincial to the general superior, together with the opinion of the provincial and her council. The provincial sends her application to the general superior, together with her supporting statement and the opinion of the provincial council.
5. The general government renders a yearly account in an appropriate form to the Congregatio Jesu of how the funds have been spent.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ PR 32

¹⁹⁰ JN 233; cf. CIC 640

¹⁹¹ PR 33

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6.32 The provinces and regions may possess property and fixed income from capital. According to their situation they may create funds:

- * to cover the costs of the formation and studies of the members of the province (Formation Fund/ Study Fund)
- * to care for the elderly and infirm (Fund for the Elderly)
- * to create or complete houses or foundations
- * to promote particular works which would otherwise not have sufficient means.¹⁹²

6.33 a. The property of the provincial or regional government consists of:

1. movable and immovable goods
2. income from:
 - a) annual contributions made by the local houses
 - b) income from the property of the provincial or regional government
 - c) interest from dowries
 - d) gifts and donations to the provincial or regional government.

b. In cases of grave necessity the provincial, with the consent of her council, can require an extraordinary contribution from individual local houses.¹⁹³

6.34 The income of the provincial or regional government provides for

1. the maintenance of the members of the provincial or regional government
2. expenses incurred in the discharge of their office
3. contributions to the general government
4. the maintenance of the novitiate and the training of members
5. support for houses in need
6. support for pastoral, charitable and social undertakings.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² cf. CN SJ 205

¹⁹³ JN 234

¹⁹⁴ JN 235

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6.35 a. The property of the local house consists of the movable and immovable goods of the community and of the works, which are to be administered and accounted for separately.

b. The income of the community comes from:

1. the income of the active members (salaries etc.)
2. income from past activities (subsidies, pensions, securities etc.)
3. from property
4. donations and legacies¹⁹⁵

6.36 The income of the community is used for

1. the maintenance of members
2. the expenses of government and administration
3. contributions to the provincialate
4. support for the apostolic and charitable works of the local house and other pastoral, charitable and social activities.¹⁹⁶

6.37 a. At the end of each year, in genuine solidarity, the community surplus should be put at the disposal of the province, of the Congregatio Jesu, or for the relief of poverty in the world. The community should have only a modest reserve. The decision on the amount the community may keep as reserve is made by the provincial superior with the consent of her council.

b. The works hold reserves to be used for development and consolidation.

c. In the distribution of the community surplus account will be taken, first, of the needs of the apostolic works attached to itself. This need will, however, be weighed against the needs of the province and of the Congregatio Jesu as a whole.

6.38 a. At the suppression of a work or of a local house the provincial with the consent of her council disposes of the property. The property of the work should, as far as possible, be devoted to another apostolic purpose.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ JN 236

¹⁹⁶ JN 237

¹⁹⁷ JN 238; see CN 6.31

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b. If a filiation is suppressed the property remains that of the local house.¹⁹⁸

1.4.5 Administration of temporal goods

6.39 a. The temporal goods of the Congregatio Jesu are ecclesiastical property. The persons who administer it do not act as proprietors but as ecclesiastical administrators.¹⁹⁹

b. The competent superiors with their councils are responsible for the property and its administration.²⁰⁰

c. Each superior should give account of the administration to the immediately higher superior, and present an annual statement of accounts.²⁰¹

6.40 a. The legal basis for the administration is canon law, the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu and civil law.

b. The administration should be regulated by the following principles:

- * material goods, like persons, are at the service of the apostolic purpose of the Congregatio Jesu;
- * through them we express our solidarity within the Congregatio Jesu and with the needs of the whole world;
- * investments are in accordance with our ethical principles and the principle of solidarity;
- * we allow ourselves to be questioned by the need in the world, and discern the quantity of reserves that we need for ourselves.

6.41 a. Against this background of Christian conviction and social justice, the administration should be regulated by sound economic principles.²⁰²

b. The competent superiors can validly incur ordinary expenses. They and the bursars have authority to sign bank accounts.

¹⁹⁸ JN 238; cf. CIC 616

¹⁹⁹ JN 223; cf. CIC 635

²⁰⁰ JN 224; cf. CIC 636,1; 638,2.

²⁰¹ JN 225; cf. CIC 636,2

²⁰² JN 226,2

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c. For extraordinary expenditure the general congregation fixes the maximum amount which superiors may dispose of independently; after hearing the opinion of their council; or with its consent.

d. The general superior with the consent of her council may establish new limits if in the intervening time changes in the economic situation necessitate it.²⁰³

e. Monies not being used immediately should be invested profitably. In this particular care should be given to considerations of security.

6.42 Directions for administration:

1. As far as possible medical and old age insurance contributions should be paid. Although according to civil law each religious may possess her own pension, in the sphere of religious law she has no right to ownership of it. The same is true of grants or bursaries for study.
2. An account of money destined for a set purpose should be rendered to the competent authorities.²⁰⁴
3. Decisions on sale, donation, lease and acquisition of land and buildings, taking out loans, with or without mortgage, the erection of substantial buildings, the acceptance of gifts with obligations attached to them, rest with the general superior with the consent of her council.

If the sums involved exceed the limit fixed by the Episcopal Conference the general superior will seek permission from the CIVCSVA for the alienation of property and the contracting of loans. For these acts of administration it is advisable to seek the opinion of the local Ordinary.²⁰⁵

6.43 a. Bursars at general, provincial and local levels are appointed to administer temporal goods. They are under the direction of their respective superiors and must render an account to the superior and her council. The extent of authority delegated to bursars must be exactly established and laid down in writing.²⁰⁶

b. The bursars must bear in mind the following:

²⁰³ JN 227; cf. CIC 638,1.2.

²⁰⁴ JN 228

²⁰⁵ JN 229; cf. CIC 638,3

²⁰⁶ JN 230; cf. CIC 636

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1. Valuation in writing by a competent expert is required for the alienation and leasing of land and buildings of considerable value
2. In leasing of land and buildings the limits of the right of disposal do not refer to the rent but to the value of the property being leased. Usually the lease should not be for more than nine years.
3. In leasing, a copy of the norms prescribed by the Episcopal Conference in accordance with canon 1297 should be obtained from the local Ordinary, and the norms should be observed.
4. In contracting debts it must be guaranteed that the interest and payments due can be paid from current income
5. The mortgage of land and buildings may not exceed half their market value.
6. Only the juridical person who is contracted to them is responsible for the debts. A clause to this effect should be included in the contract.²⁰⁷
7. It is not permissible to stand surety for anyone or to grant loans
8. Objects of value should not be accepted for safe-keeping.
9. If in some particular case this should be unavoidable, the owner must insure the object against all risks.
10. Written contracts of employment must be made with secular personnel. In conscience current social legislation and salary scales should be observed
11. Lawsuits should always be avoided if possible. If a lawsuit is unavoidable the superior must gain the consent of the provincial, who in this case is bound to obtain the consent of her council. She should inform the general superior of the matter.
12. For a lawsuit in a province the provincial superior needs the permission of the general superior, who in this case is bound to obtain the consent of her council.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ cf. CIC 639,5; 639,1

²⁰⁸ PR 31

2. Other aspects of life in the Congregatio Jesu

On this, see also Part VIII of the Constitutions and Complementary Norms.

2.1 The spiritual life of the fully-incorporated member

6.44 To attain the end of the Congregatio Jesu it is necessary that our religious life should be apostolic and contemplative at the same time - “contemplative in action”. This unity should mark our whole manner of prayer, life and work and lend it an apostolic character. In meditating on the world we shall be seized by the call of Christ, who meets us in the distress and in the longings of people.²⁰⁹

6.45 a. Familiarity with God is grounded in and nourished by the Exercises. They lead us to the freedom of discerning love.

b. Members may choose the form of annual retreat which is best for them.²¹⁰

c. Since the beginning of the Congregatio it has been the tradition to renew vows twice a year, at the end of the annual retreat and of the triduum.²¹¹

d. The vow-formula recommended for this is:

“I, Mary N.N., make profession, and I promise to Almighty God, in the presence of his Virgin Mother, the whole heavenly court, and all those here present, perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience according to the manner of living contained in our Institutum and our Constitutions. By the same vow of obedience I promise to devote myself to the service of the Church and especially to the care of youth.”²¹²

6.46 a. The time for personal prayer, one hour as a general norm, and the form it takes, will be adapted in discerning love to the different circumstances and needs. The best prayer for each one will be that in which God

²⁰⁹ O 33

²¹⁰ M 93.

²¹¹ See [346], [546] and footnotes.

²¹² [532]; see CN 5.16

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communicates himself more to her so that she can truly seek him in all things, love him and serve him.²¹³

b. It is the task of the superior to take care that the necessary conditions are provided for private and communal prayer, sacramental life and spiritual sharing.²¹⁴

6.47 a. Each community of the *Congregatio Jesu* is a faith-community. The community comes together to celebrate common faith in the Eucharist. All are to value and care for the daily celebration of the Eucharist as the centre of their religious and apostolic life.²¹⁵

b. Frequent reception of the sacrament of reconciliation is a help to spiritual progress, and to forgiveness of one another. Each one should choose a confessor to whom she normally makes her confession.

6.48 a. The recitation of the Divine Office unites us with the great praying community of the Church.²¹⁶

b. Ignatius considers the Examen as the most important quarter of an hour of the day. In this “prayer of loving attentiveness” we submit our life and activity to spiritual discernment and exercise ourselves in “seeking and finding God in all things”, or “referring all things to God.”²¹⁷

c. We nourish our spiritual life in meditation and spiritual reading.

6.49 a. Mary Ward recommended “Ours ought to make veneration of the Holy Name of Jesus their concern.”²¹⁸

b. The name of Jesus, “the first and last word of Mary Ward,”²¹⁹ is thereby expressly entrusted to us. This veneration expresses the wish of the members to identify themselves with Jesus, “the Head of the Congregation”, which bears his name, because “they desire to clothe themselves with his garb and uniform.”²²⁰

²¹³ cf. CN SJ 225

²¹⁴ cf. CN SJ 226

²¹⁵ O 48; see CN 8.9

²¹⁶ O 50

²¹⁷ O 51; GC 93

²¹⁸ Maria Ward und ihr Institut, 1957, 61.

²¹⁹ VE, 96f

²²⁰ [101]; see CN 10.1

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6.50 a. “To be placed with Jesus” to share in his mission as companions, is the grace of our vocation. We constantly renew our prayer for this through the intercession of Mary.

b. We beg of her that she may obtain for us from her Son the grace to be accepted “under the banner of the cross, and that we may constantly grow and live in that grace in imitation of and identification with Christ.

c. Since the time of Mary Ward the Congregatio Jesu and its members have been distinguished by a particular reverence for the Mother of the Lord. She teaches us to be motherly as she is, to receive the Word of God at all times and to bring it to life. In this way human history becomes salvation history.

d. Our Marian devotion has in daily life a community dimension and one that is personal to each member. In the tradition of the Congregatio Jesu the rosary has an honoured place.²²¹ But we also cultivate other traditional and new forms of Marian devotion.

e. With the Church we unite ourselves in a particular way in the celebration of the Marian feasts. The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, on 1st January counts as the official Marian feast of the Congregatio Jesu.²²²

6.51 Regular spiritual direction is a help to progress in spiritual experience and in the practice of discernment. So all should value spiritual direction highly, and do their best to find suitable persons.²²³

2.2 Spiritual communication and the responsibility of members for each other

6.52 a. Each community needs communication at a spiritual level and constant spiritual discernment to be able to hear and respond to God’s call to us in this world. But we cannot achieve this spiritual quality without self-abnegation.²²⁴

b. Apostolic spiritual discernment, personally and in community, helps us to accept and live our mission in obedience. This attitude will be

²²¹ O 56

²²² See CN 10.2c.

²²³ GC 93

²²⁴ O 32; see CN 8.10

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encouraged by the examination of consciousness, personal prayer, dialogue in the community and complete openness with the superior.

6.53 a. All have a care for one another, and responsibility for the human and spiritual progress of each one and for the good of all. Sisterly correction can be an expression of this. It takes place in personal conversation or in a suitably directed community meeting.

b. If the well-being of individuals or of the community is in danger, it may be necessary to make the superior aware of the fact. This must always take place with a pure intention, love and discretion.

c. The superiors should investigate the matter, and give those about whom the report was made an opportunity to state an opinion.

2.3 Spiritual progress and ongoing formation

6.54 a. An apostolate appropriate to the time asks of us a process of ongoing formation.

b. All should take steps to nourish and renew their spiritual life constantly from the sources, so that it becomes ever deeper even in increasing and advanced age, and so that apostolic activity can correspond better with the needs of the Church and of people.

6.55 Ongoing formation of this kind calls for particular periods of time to be devoted to participation in courses or to private study. In this respect opportunities offered by the Church or the Congregatio Jesu, in which spiritual- theological or apostolic-practical themes are treated, can be helpful.

6.56 a. About ten years after final profession each member should be given a year for an intensive spiritual, human and apostolic renewal.²²⁵

b. This consists of:

- * reflection on the personal spiritual way so far and on apostolic service in the light of faith and “our manner of proceeding”, through:
- * new experiences and broadening of knowledge,
- * and the new directions arising from these.

²²⁵ JN 47; CIC 661

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- c. So this renewal process should enable:
- * the opportunity for a genuine experience in another culture, in the form of an experiment or apostolic task,
 - * experience of the universality of the Congregatio Jesu, and
 - * international collaboration.

d. It calls for accompaniment by an experienced member of the Congregatio Jesu, appointed for this task.

e. The provincial is responsible for seeing that each member is given this time of renewal, and that the programme is suited to the end.²²⁶

2.4 Sickness, old age and death

6.57 a. In old age and sickness members continue to be directed to the purpose of the Congregatio Jesu, service to the kingdom of God. They have from superiors the mission of praying for the Church and the Congregatio Jesu and of uniting their personal sufferings and difficulties with the all-embracing mission of salvation. In the “House of Prayer” they are a worldwide praying community of the Congregatio Jesu.²²⁷

b. They should share with the sisters the wisdom which they have acquired through their service in our mission, and strive to encourage others through their example to an acceptance of their situation and trustful surrender to God.²²⁸

6.58 All should give much attention and care to the old and sick members, and meet them with respect. The superiors have particular responsibility in this matter.

6.59 a. Even in death we can show solidarity with our fellows, in making an offering beforehand of organs for transplant.

b. In view of the medical possibilities of today, members can, according to the law of the land, make the provisions which they consider right in conscience as expression of their own personal worth for the moment of passage from earthly to eternal life.²²⁹

²²⁶ See CN 5.19; 6.22

²²⁷ See CN 7.29

²²⁸ O 39

²²⁹ [595]; see CN 7.29; cf. CN SJ 244,4

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Part VII

Mission and Service in the Congregatio Jesu

1. Companions of Jesus in his mission

7.1 a. The Incarnation of Christ springs from the loving care of the triune God for the world in need of salvation: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son.” (Jn.3:16) Our mission is a participation in the sending of Christ to the world: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (Jn.20:21)²³⁰ Christ’s wrestling for the salvation of humanity goes on throughout history. As members of the Church we are called to collaborate in the ongoing redemptive work of Christ.

b. We understand our call to a consecrated life in the Congregatio Jesu within this universal Christian vocation.²³¹ The mission of the Congregatio is participation in the comprehensive mission of the Church, to proclaim the gospel and bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Mk.3:14). Her aim is the realisation of the Kingdom of God in the whole of human society, not only in the life to come but also in this life. This mission is a single but complex reality, which is expressed in a variety of ways.²³²

7.2 The sending of Jesus Christ, “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations” (Mt.28:19) extends our mission universally. We are ready to be “dispersed throughout Christ’s vineyard”²³³ and to labour in the work entrusted to us. Universality and mobility were realities taken for granted by Mary Ward, and should characterise our way of understanding and living mission.

7.3 Like the apostles we are sent to people, to serve them and to proclaim to them the gospel of the Kingdom of God which is present, hidden among us. Our whole religious life is ordered to this mission. Herein lies the identity of the Congregatio Jesu and of the individual member: to be

²³⁰ O 34,1

²³¹ O 3.1,2

²³² cf. CN SJ 245, 1.

²³³ [603]

with Jesus, to labour with him, to proclaim salvation to the world and to bring it back to the Father.

2. The fourth vow as expression of the specific nature of the Congregatio Jesu

7.4 “To help souls”²³⁴ was for both Ignatius and Mary Ward the guiding ideal of their life and the defining characteristic of their foundation. “To serve the Church in procuring the good of souls by all means possible for women to the greater glory of God”²³⁵ is valid today for each one of us.

7.5 So as to be “surer of being led by the Holy Spirit” in the carrying out of the goal set, Mary Ward followed Ignatius and decided “that each of us and any others who will pronounce the same profession in the future pledge ourselves in addition to the common bond of the three vows by a special vow to carry out whatever the present and future Roman pontiffs may order which pertains to the progress of souls and the propagation of the faith; and to go without subterfuge or excuse, as far as in us lies and as seems proper to discerning love, to whatsoever regions they may choose to send us.”²³⁶

²³⁴ PL30: God “showed her clearly that to help to save souls is a far greater gift than monastic life or even than martyrdom itself”.

“As Christ left the bosom of the Father to combat sin and heresy, so the sisters have abandoned the quiet and solitude of convent walls, not only to support the work of God with prayer and penitence, but to participate, under the standard of the Cross, in the redemptive work of the return of souls to their Creator”. (Part of a founding document drawn up by Fr. Andrew White SJ for the Institute, London 1622; Institute Archive Munich-Nymphenburg, Alte Schriften 6; quoted in B. Hallesleben, *Theologie der Sendung: Die Ursprünge bei Ignatius von Loyola und Mary Ward*, Frankfurt 1994, 62)

²³⁵ Mary Ward, *Reasons why we may not alter*, “...and therewith to serve also the Church in procuring the good of souls by all means possible for women to the greater glory of God”, Letter no.5, Nymphenburg collection, cf. Peters p.349

²³⁶ Institutum, 3.

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7.6 Mary Ward saw it as her task to pave the way for women to a closer sharing in Christ's mission. She writes plainly in the 'Brevis Declaratio': "Therefore, following the counsels of Christ, we bring to the Divine Majesty the three vows of perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience; offering ourselves to the most holy Apostolic See, to be always ready for all tasks which can be undertaken and carried out by women for the salvation of souls."²³⁷

7.7 a. In the fourth vow we offer ourselves to Christ, the Head of the Congregatio Jesu.²³⁸ This offering is made specific in complete availability for sending through the Pope, the "Vicar of Christ on earth",²³⁹ whether it be that we receive the mission directly from him, or through the superiors of the Congregatio Jesu by virtue of the authority given them.

b. Sending through the Pope is understood as universal, both geographically and in content.

7.8 a. For the Society of Jesus the vow of obedience to the Pope was a constitutive element of the foundation, "the principal and chief foundation",²⁴⁰ as Ignatius described it in the Constitutions of 1544/45.

b. For us this vow, with which we offer our readiness and availability for mission, "to serve the Church in the care for the salvation of souls in every way possible for women, to the greater glory of God" is an important element of the founding grace of 1611.

c. It expresses what is specific in "our manner of proceeding", and determines how we live the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and how we understand our being sent as a community for mission. The fourth vow at the same time gives the Congregatio Jesu its distinctive features.

²³⁷ Mary Ward, Brevis Declaratio: "Itaque Christi consilia secutae tria vota divinae Maiestati nuncupamus Paupertatis, Castitatis et Obedientiae perpetuae; Sanctissimae Sedi Apostolicae nos offerentes, praesto semper futurae ad ea omnia munera quae pro salute animarum a faeminis suscipi ac praestari possunt." Copy A, Generalate Archives, Rome.

²³⁸ Sp. Exx.97

²³⁹ Institutum, 1.

²⁴⁰ MI Const.I, p. 162: "nuestro principio y principal fundamento".

3. Conditions for mission

7.9 a. With Mary Ward we are aware that the requirement for a mission on apostolic service is not only “readiness for all good works” but also “aptitude”²⁴¹ for them. In the discernment which precedes the sending, the gifts and natural predispositions that a sister brings are therefore to be considered realistically by herself and by the provincial.

- b. This aptitude for apostolic service requires, in addition to ability:
- * entering into genuine dialogue with new developments and unfamiliar cultures,
 - * openness to the signs of the times and ability to respond to people’s need,
 - * loyal and trusting collaboration with fellow members and other collaborators,
 - * taking on and delegating responsibility.

7.10 a. The wide field of our apostolic commitment in the individual countries and continents calls for a broad view, and courage for new ways. The Christian faith and the charism of the Congregatio Jesu must receive individual expression in each particular culture.

b. This requires that each sister bring the necessary human qualities, and that she receive the appropriate formation for her field of work. Above all, however, she must live a life of faith, and be familiar with the charism of Mary Ward and the history of the Congregatio Jesu.²⁴²

7.11 Ongoing formation is an obvious duty for every apostolically active sister. It is part of the responsibility that she takes on with the mission. For in a period of rapid change we can give no convincing apostolic response if we do not constantly broaden our personal ability to recognise intellectual links and to reflect on the world situation in the light of faith. In this respect regular personal study is an indispensable means.

7.12 Commitment to apostolic service will be promoted by continuing personal conversion, growing familiarity with God in personal prayer and

²⁴¹ cf. Mary Ward “Just Soul”, Letters of Instruction VI

²⁴² O 44

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in the Exercises and by constantly renewed orientation of our life in poverty, chastity and obedience to its apostolic purpose.

4. *The nature and manner of mission*

7.13 Each individual member's full availability for service and obedience in sending, and that of the whole Congregatio Jesu, give expression to the fourth vow.²⁴³

7.14 a. All members of the Congregatio Jesu, although they live in communities in various places and are reckoned as members of a province or region, nevertheless belong directly and primarily to the apostolic body of the whole Congregatio Jesu.

b. This membership must be stronger than any other bond through which anyone belongs to any institution whatever, inside or outside the Congregatio Jesu. This membership should mark any other commitment, because in this way it becomes "mission".²⁴⁴

c. Each sister can work only in a small section of the "vineyard" of the Church. Insofar as she gives herself in that place with wholehearted love and dedication, she is united in spirit with all those who offer their strength and their life in other places.²⁴⁵

7.15 a. Each member receives her mission directly from her superiors, but ultimately from Christ himself. This sending for service is an essential characteristic of our call to service in the Congregatio Jesu. Whatever we do, even the simplest activity, in loving union with Christ and in virtue of our mission becomes a sharing in the service which the Congregatio Jesu renders to the world.²⁴⁶

b. The provincial superior decides on transfers within the province, after hearing the opinion of her council and discussing the matter with those concerned, and assigns the mission.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ See CN 7.4 – 7.8

²⁴⁴ O 40,1; cf. CH SJ 255

²⁴⁵ O 40,2

²⁴⁶ O 34,2

²⁴⁷ O 25

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c. It belongs to the general superior, after consultation with the provincials concerned and with the member, to transfer members to another province or back to their home province.²⁴⁸

d. The local superior assigns the offices and works of the house. By her each sister is assigned to specific tasks.²⁴⁹

e. The appointment of officials responsible for apostolic works is reserved to the provincial.²⁵⁰

5. Our service

7.16 Mary Ward's apostolic intentions were those of St. Ignatius: "The defence and propagation of the faith, through the service of the word of God, through the practice of Christian life²⁵¹ and all works of humility and love, as Mary Ward says.²⁵² She formulated this goal with openness to the future. It could be carried out "by any other means that are congruous to the times, or in which it is judged that we can by our labours promote the greater glory of God, and in any place further the propagation of our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church."²⁵³

7.17 If we follow the inner dynamic of the Constitutions, the whole reality of the Congregatio Jesu is directed towards mission. We are fundamentally open to all the possibilities for helping people and a new discernment is demanded as to which service promises more fruit in the specific situation.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁸ JN 164; see CN 9.81

²⁴⁹ O 25; JN 205,1.

²⁵⁰ JN 205,2.

²⁵¹ Institutum, 1

²⁵² Ratio Instituti, Biblioteca Vaticana, Rome, Fondo Capponiano 47; O 35

²⁵³ Ratio Instituti "Secundo desiderium nostrum est, ut post studium propriae perfectionis omni diligentia, zeloque prudenti in proximorum salutem promovendam seu procurandam maxime incumbamus, nominatim vero in puellarum educatione seu alio quovis modo, quo his temporibus constabit vel iudicabitur, nos posse laboribus nostris aliquid conferre ad maius Dei obsequium et Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Catholicae ubicunque locorum propagationem"

²⁵⁴ M 93

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7.18 a. On account of the rapidly changing conditions of the times and the many new fields of work open to women in the Church, a regular revision of our activity, our programmes of work and our personal commitment is indispensable.

b. Attentive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we seek to discern prudently the signs of the times and to make the right choice. The criteria for the choice of works and for the activity itself are the greater glory of God and the better service of people.²⁵⁵

7.19 a. Ever since the beginning of the *Congregatio Jesu*, education and instruction have been the main focus of our apostolic activities, the importance of which the Church reaffirms today.

b. In the framework of social and educational work in pre-school and school there is an opportunity for a full human formation of children and young people in the Christian spirit, as is urgently needed in our time.

c. We see in religious instruction one of the most important ways in which we carry out our service to today's young people. We should have particularly at heart the moral and religious education of the young. In order to make a real impact on young people, we must include in our apostolate their families and the surroundings in which they are growing up.

d. From our day and boarding schools we can develop an out-of-school apostolate which should be an object of special concern. We should make time for individual conversations with the pupils and create an atmosphere in which young people can feel at home. Being open to them and their way of expressing themselves and sharing in their needs will affect our own manner of living.

e. In order to lead young people to a life of faith, to convey a real experience of faith, we must be courageous enough to discover and apply new methods. Prudent discernment is always necessary.²⁵⁶

7.20 a. Those who work in centres of higher education should participate in research and communicate their knowledge in the area of mission. They are challenged in a particular way to deal with the questions of the coming generation.

²⁵⁵ O 43

²⁵⁶ O 36

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b. For the sake of the quality of our service, we must make every effort to develop our capacity to analyse and evaluate our mission.²⁵⁷

7.21 a. Through scientific work and high quality publications we can fulfil in a special way the task of the Congregatio Jesu, “defence and propagation of the faith”, and at the same time have an influence on the pluralistic society of today.²⁵⁸

b. The general superior, or in certain cases the provincial or local superior, has authority to authorise publications. There is a distinction in principle between publications within the field of theology and spirituality and those in other specialist areas.

* Authorisation for the publication of theological books is the responsibility of the general superior.

* Authorisation for the publication of articles in theological or spiritual periodicals and in Church newspapers, and also for publishing textbooks, is that of the provincial.

c. For publications on our spirituality the general superior decides on the expert opinions to be obtained, and on publication.

d. Those responsible should always seek the opinions of experts in the subject.

e. The provincial superior assigns the mission of working in the social communications media.

7.22 a. Pastoral work, direct commitment to “defence and propagation of the faith”, which goes back to the origins of the Congregatio Jesu, has taken on a new significance for the Congregatio Jesu today.

b. Open to the wishes of the Church, we are ready to engage ourselves. We understand these services as the Church allows them to women.

c. The service presupposes close collaboration with the local Church. With regard to their pastoral commitment, public liturgical celebrations and with regard to the apostolic works of the Congregatio Jesu,

²⁵⁷ cf. CN SJ 297

²⁵⁸ For publication the norms of universal law and our particular law are to be observed (“Directions for the publications of books and other works by members of the Institute” promulgated by M. Annuntiata Pak, August 1997)

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the sisters are bound to observe the directives given by the bishop of the diocese.²⁵⁹

d. Given the shortage of priests which exists in many countries, we help where possible in the direction and accompaniment of parishes. This pastoral task brings us closer to the people.

7.23 The accompaniment of the Spiritual Exercises should, in conformity with our spirituality, become a characteristic ministry of the Congregatio Jesu. It is urgently recommended that suitable members be trained in counselling, in pastoral and spiritual ministries, and particularly in accompanying the Exercises.²⁶⁰

7.24 Missionary service, to proclaim the gospel and its values to other peoples and cultures, has been part of the aim of the Congregatio Jesu from the beginning. Each province should support evangelisation with personnel and material.

7.25 a. The Congregatio Jesu is worldwide. In view of the dire needs and poverty of so many peoples, the love of Christ impels us to dedicate ourselves more than before to the abandoned, “to bring the Good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives” (Lk.4:18).

b. The Church today sees the service of justice, particularly of the poor and marginalised, as an essential task. This duty belongs especially to religious. Without commitment to justice the Gospel message in many countries today lacks credibility. For this reason the Church exhorts us to establish communities among the poor as a sign of love.²⁶¹

c. The fundamental option for justice will have consequences for all our works. In all our activities we seek to raise people’s awareness of the different forms of injustice.

d. The educational apostolate offers a vast field of action to awaken sensitivity to justice and injustice in personal conduct and social structures, both in children and young people and in teachers and parents.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ cf. CIC 678

²⁶⁰ O 37

²⁶¹ O 38; cf. Evang. Test. 18,20.

²⁶² O 38

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e. Where concrete possibilities present themselves we should try, individually and as community, to support groups and organisations whose aim is to promote justice, to concern themselves with the gospel and the Church's social teaching, and to work in the spirit of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.

f. A consequence of this fundamental attitude is also the sending of some sisters to work among the socially disadvantaged and other marginalised groups.

7.26 All over the world women are disadvantaged in many ways. The Congregatio will focus its special attention on the role of women in the Church and in society. To live our vocation as women in gratitude and joy is in itself an important contribution to the solution of the various problems.²⁶³

- * We take opportunities to work with solidarity-groups of women, and to encourage them to intervene effectively in political and social life;
- * we help women in social and spiritual need;
- * we seek in our educational work to form "women who live for others"²⁶⁴ with awareness and moral responsibility.
- * We bring our creativity to the life of the Church.

7.27 Every service is a share in the proclamation of God's love to people. So all members are involved in the apostolate of the Congregatio Jesu, including those whose form of service is in the house, and is less visible outside. Through their selfless devotion the common work is made possible.²⁶⁵ At the same time they ought also to have an opportunity to carry out a direct apostolate, if they so wish.

7.28 a. The apostolic work of individuals must be supported by the understanding, interest and prayer of the whole community.

²⁶³ M 93

²⁶⁴ cf. P. Arrupe, *Orientierung für das Erziehungsapostolat*, 1977; P. Kolvenbach „Ignatianische Pädagogik heute“ in *Wissen-Gewissen-Gespür*, HG. Thomas Neulinger, *Dokumente zur Ignatianische Pädagogik*

²⁶⁵ O 39.

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b. Members sent to serve outside the works of the community should make a conscious effort to be in touch with the community and to share with it the riches of their experience.²⁶⁶

7.29 a. There is no situation in our lives in which we can consider ourselves retired from mission, because our whole life is directed to the glory of God and the good of people.

b. The prayer and suffering of those who bear the burden of illness and advanced age are in themselves an apostolate which cannot be too highly valued.²⁶⁷

c. The members of the House of Prayer make an invaluable contribution to the mission of the Congregatio Jesu.

d. Conscious dealing with sickness and death is service in a particular way in a society which seeks to close its eyes to these realities. It helps us also to remain aware of the deeper level of vocation to the saving work of Christ. In the end it is not the efficiency of our work, but “fellowship with his suffering” (Phil.3.10) which brings about salvation.²⁶⁸

6. Collaboration with lay people

7.30 a. Involvement in our own works, as well as in other spheres such as parish work, youth organisations and social service, demands a willingness to work in close collaboration with others. This will be all the more fruitful in proportion as we live as persons dedicated to God and make our own the spiritual dispositions which Mary Ward expected of Ours.²⁶⁹

b. Many of our works can only continue with the help of laypeople who are not themselves members of the Congregatio Jesu. Sometimes we are co-workers with laypeople who have taken on the leadership of our works. We affirm this development and also see in it an enrichment. But the Congregatio Jesu carries responsibility for the identity of the work. This takes place through the formulation of clear aims and communication of our spiritual values.

²⁶⁶ O 37

²⁶⁷ O 39; cf. CN 6.57

²⁶⁸ See CN 6.59

²⁶⁹ O 42; see CN 9.99, 10.6

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7. Supplementary points

On preparation for mission see Constitutions and Complementary Norms Part IV.

On apostolic community see Constitutions and Complementary Norms Part VIII

Part VIII

Fostering Union in the Congregatio Jesu

1. The Congregatio Jesu - a Body for Mission

8.1 a. As members of the Congregatio Jesu we are called to be companions of Christ in mission (Mk. 3:13-14).²⁷⁰ He called those whom he willed. With their answer to the call the disciples found themselves in the community of those who had received the same call. Thereby the Congregatio – the community of those called together – constitutes the body in mission.

b. We belong to a community of friends in the Lord who have all prayed to be received under the standard of Christ. With St. Ignatius and Mary Ward we also are placed by the Father with the Son.²⁷¹

c. It is our ideal in community life that we should be not only collaborators in apostolic work but true sisters and friends in Christ.²⁷²

d. Christ is our centre. In him we form a single Body (1Cor.10: 17). One Spirit was given to us all to drink (1 Cor.12:13). If we live by the truth and in love, we shall grow in all ways into Christ, who is the head (Eph.4:15-16).²⁷³

8.2 a. Our fundamental community is the whole body of the Congregatio Jesu²⁷⁴ even when it is dispersed over the whole world. The community to which a member belongs for a particular time is for her the concrete and privileged expression of the worldwide community of sisters.

b. Even if we are more aware of our own local community with whom we live daily, we should nevertheless be conscious of the worldwide family of the Congregatio Jesu and be ready to sacrifice our own interests for the sake of solidarity with others.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ M 93

²⁷¹ O 62

²⁷² cf. CN SJ 311

²⁷³ O 61,2,3.

²⁷⁴ GC93

²⁷⁵ O 71

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8.3 a. Greater flexibility of province boundaries, common planning and cooperation, such personal or material help beyond the province as are possible, are strongly to be recommended.

b. Communities and provinces with surplus means should help those who are in need or whose apostolic work involves them more closely with the poor.²⁷⁶

8.4 a. Through the international character of the *Congregatio Jesu* we have a special share in the universality of the Church.

b. We maintain contact by personal exchange of letters, by sharing news with other houses and provinces, and by the hospitality that we offer one another.²⁷⁷

c. To promote union within the province and the *Congregatio*, meetings and conferences at various levels are recommended, within the limits of our poverty, such as meetings of communities which are close to each other; conferences or working-parties for particular apostolic spheres, or for the superiors in a province; working-parties for areas with the same language.²⁷⁸

d. Even while they are in formation young sisters should learn to experience and understand and love the worldwide character of the *Congregatio*.²⁷⁹

8.5 Together with the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary we have the same roots and the same sources. The dialogue and collaboration which have already begun should be promoted at as many levels as possible. Thus we are faithful to our common responsibility for the heritage of Mary Ward.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ O 71; see CN 6.31

²⁷⁷O 71

²⁷⁸ cf. CN SJ 313

²⁷⁹ See CN 4.20

²⁸⁰ M 93

2. The community – an apostolic fellowship

2.1. Life in apostolic community

8.6 a. The whole Congregatio Jesu and its individual communities are determined by mission. The shape of each community is created by its specific mission and that of each one of its members.²⁸¹

b. In some cases a clear distinction is to be made between communities whose members are in active apostolic service and those which are a home for our elderly sisters, who support and promote the apostolate of the Congregatio through their prayer.²⁸²

8.7 a. The apostolic community can as such be both apostolic means and apostolic sign. The community can create an environment in which the apostolate can be carried out; and the "communio" existing between the different members can present an effective apostolic witness.²⁸³

b. The community serves the apostolate in three ways. Through it we bear witness to the presence of God among men and women, for God, three Divine Persons, is the community of love. Following the example of the primitive Church we are a community of disciples, striving to be one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32), to bear one another's burdens (Gal.6:2) and to love one another as Christ loves us. (Jn.15:12)

c. The human fellowship in our community has an effect on our relationships with those who are entrusted to our care and those who work with us.

d. Prayer, appreciation of one another, sisterly sharing and love, give us security and strengthen us for our work. We bear responsibility with one another and for one another, and support each other.²⁸⁴

8.8 The Church calls for strengthening of community life. The younger generation needs a life of faith in a communion that is more intense and of high quality. In our time of growing isolation, apostolic communities have a particular significance and responsibility.

²⁸¹ O 62

²⁸² GC 93

²⁸³ GC 93

²⁸⁴ O 41, 65

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8.9 a. Apostolic community is more than a support-structure for the service of the members. The service of the individual will be performed in a "communio".²⁸⁵

b. So that a spiritual community can come into being, the community must come together according to a regular programme (daily, weekly) for prayer, sharing, meals and relaxation.

c. The daily celebration of the Eucharist is the centre of our community life. In receiving the one Bread, in drinking of the one Cup, we shall become one with the Lord and with each other (1 Cor. 10: 16-17).²⁸⁶ Where a celebration of the Eucharist is not possible, a liturgy of the Word or a Communion service together is recommended.

d. Apart from the celebration of the Eucharist we meet together according to the community programme to pray together, to give praise and thanks, and to place our intentions and those of the world before God. In prayer together we experience ourselves as community before God, and come to greater "union of hearts."²⁸⁷

e. We need suitable forms of community reconciliation, in which we ask and offer forgiveness. In this way sisterly union will be strengthened, and the "light of Christ" can penetrate us more and more (2 Cor. 4:4);²⁸⁸ together we ask for grace to direct our lives according to the model of Christ.

8.10 So that we may really live the spiritual dimension of companionship, we need spiritual conversation and sharing of our common calling, 'our manner of proceeding'. At this level of bonding the community will become a community of spiritual discernment.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁵ GC 93

²⁸⁶ O 48; cf. CN 6,47

²⁸⁷ O 49

²⁸⁸ O 59

²⁸⁹ See CN 6.52, 6.53

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8.11 a. The apostolic community lives its commitment to poverty and justice in a way suited to its surroundings and to the service performed by its members.²⁹⁰ Mary Ward wanted "an ordinary manner of life."

b. Our communities will be a sign for our contemporaries only if both corporately and individually our lives express the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. This applies equally to our manner of behaving in private and in public.²⁹¹

c. For the right use of material goods it is important to realise that our way of life cannot be regulated by norms fixed once and for all. It must be a matter for discernment and decisions in responsible adaptation to the given situation, with a view to greater service.

d. Individual members and the community as a whole should frequently consider whether expenditure on food, clothing, housing, journeys, telephone calls, are in keeping with our ideal of poverty²⁹² and that our wish must correspond with living in solidarity and simplicity, "to give gratis what we have received", to share our possessions with our sisters and with the poor.²⁹³

8.12 a. The apostolic community will be held together through the bonds of love and obedience.²⁹⁴

b. We live the vow of obedience in everyday life in the daily practice of obedience, as Christ himself lived it: "He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them" (Lk.2:51). This obedience consists in a sense of responsibility, glad submission to the orders and arrangements of the superior, whether in the work entrusted to each one, or in the general order of the day worked out for the good of the whole.²⁹⁵

8.13 a. Unity in the community will be strengthened through the superior as head of the community.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁰ GC 93

²⁹¹ O 19

²⁹² O 19

²⁹³ See CN 6.23 – 6.26; 6.35 – 6.37

²⁹⁴ GC 93

²⁹⁵ O 26

²⁹⁶ GC 93

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b. The most important task of the local superior is the building up of the community, care for the members, the fostering of their spiritual life and of the apostolic works.²⁹⁷ In prudent discernment she will take into account both the good of individual members and the common good of the community.²⁹⁸

c. The following are necessary for fostering community life in the Congregatio :

- * exchange of information between superiors and members;
- * common deliberation on the coordination and development of the apostolate, and questions concerning the wellbeing of the community; in this the help of experts can be brought in, and the active participation of all members encouraged;
- * delegation by superiors in favour of their subjects;
- * collaboration of various kinds transcending every sort of individualism;
- * a plan for community life worked out in common, approved by the provincial, and regularly revised;²⁹⁹
- * a feeling for universality, that transcends local and personal limits.³⁰⁰

8.14 a. Apostolic community expresses its union of hearts concretely, in that its members commit themselves to a common lifestyle and come together over matters of common interest.³⁰¹

b. Each one has a right to the quiet she needs for prayer, work, study, relaxation and sleep. The importance of evening silence should be considered when the order of the day is planned. Keeping silence is a form of love. The measure for this is mutual consideration, which creates a place for the quiet that is a pressing need for each individual and for the community.³⁰²

²⁹⁷ JN 204

²⁹⁸ O 28,4

²⁹⁹ O 67

³⁰⁰ cf. CN SJ 319

³⁰¹ GC 93

³⁰² O 68,3.

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c. The superior should see that each one's timetable allows for genuine relaxation. The annual holiday should be so arranged as to provide refreshment for body and soul.³⁰³

d. The provincial, in agreement with the community, determines which parts of the house are to be reserved for the sisters. For just reasons, the superior can allow exceptions to be made.³⁰⁴

e. The apostolic community is flexible enough to adapt its structures according to the changing needs of its members and their service. It creates a framework within which regular revision and discernment can take place.³⁰⁵

8.15 a. Our diversity of human talents is an enrichment (Rom.12:6) for the community, but it also calls for patience and forbearance on our part.

b. Each one should contribute to the building up of community life by devoting to it the necessary time, effort and thought. This will help to create an atmosphere of love, in spite of the manifold differences in character and opinion.

c. Yet a number of conflicts will remain insoluble. These should be seen and accepted as part of life. If we bear these burdens in Christ, they become a source of liberating strength.³⁰⁶

8.16 a. The members are bonded together principally through the fact that Christ has called them to become companions in mission. Likemindedness and compatibility of character are of secondary importance in this respect, even though they can often be a great help.³⁰⁷

b. Healthy human relationships should be fostered and encouraged, and enable genuine sisterliness and companionship.

8.17 a. Apostolic community is of its nature open to the people among whom its members live.³⁰⁸

³⁰³ O 69, 2.3

³⁰⁴ O 68, 4

³⁰⁵ GC 93

³⁰⁶ O 66

³⁰⁷ GC 93

³⁰⁸ GC 93

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b. Christ himself comes to us in the person of a guest. We should therefore give our visitors a warm welcome and be ready to devote our time to them.

c. We should be generous in practising hospitality, but be guided by prudent discernment.³⁰⁹ However much the community needs a protected private space, it should avoid everything in its lifestyle that cuts off and isolates. The people who come to us should experience our communities as welcoming places for conversation and meeting.³¹⁰

8.18 a. The Congregatio Jesu is a body which each individual member enriches and builds up through her personal vocation.

b. In gratitude for the gift to the Church and to the Congregatio Jesu which every sister's vocation constitutes, we celebrate the jubilee of entrance into the Congregatio Jesu. We reckon from the beginning of the novitiate,³¹¹ because the noviceship is the first step in incorporation into the Congregatio. The novices already live in readiness "to live and die in this Congregatio."³¹²

2.2 Life outside the community

8.19 Each sister is a member of a particular community.³¹³

8.20 a. The provincial, with the consent of her council, can permit a member to live outside the community for the purpose of recovering from sickness, for studies or for undertaking an apostolate in the name of the Congregatio Jesu. The duration of the permission lasts for as long as the cause for the absence continues to exist.

b. The general superior, with the consent of her council, can on reasonable grounds grant a member an extraordinary leave of absence from the community, for up to one year.³¹⁴

³⁰⁹ O 70

³¹⁰ GC 93

³¹¹ O 65

³¹² [511]

³¹³ O 61; cf. CIC 602

³¹⁴ JN 74; cf. CIC 665,1

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c. A member with leave of absence retains all the rights and duties attached to her membership of the *Congregatio Jesu*.

d. The member gives the provincial a regular account of her manner of life and activity.³¹⁵

e. The provincial or the general superior can recall the member before her leave of absence expires, if the need for absence no longer exists or if some danger threatens the member.³¹⁶

8.21 a. The general superior, for a grave reason and with the consent of her council, can grant an indult of exlaustration to a finally-professed member.

b. The indult allows the member to live outside the *Congregatio Jesu*.³¹⁷

c. Exlaustration is granted for a period of up to one year.

d. The general superior, with the consent of her council, can prolong the total period of exlaustration for up to three years.³¹⁸

e. The exlaustrated member remains dependent on and subject to the care of superiors and of the local Ordinary.

f. The obligations arising from religious profession remain binding.

g. The member is dispensed from obligations which are not compatible with her new state of life.

h. During this time she loses her right to active and passive voice.

i. During the period of exlaustration the member does not wear a religious habit.³¹⁹

k. The exlaustrated member can at any time return to the community; she can likewise be recalled by the general superior, if the motive for exlaustration no longer exists.³²⁰

8.22 a. For grave reasons and with the consent of her council, the general superior can petition the CIVCSVA for compulsory exlaustration.

³¹⁵ JN 75

³¹⁶ JN 76

³¹⁷ JN 77; cf. CIC 686,1

³¹⁸ JN 78; cf. CIC 686,1

³¹⁹ JN 79; cf. CIC 687

³²⁰ JN 80

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b. The indult of compulsory exlaustration sets no time limit. It is revoked by decree of the CIVCSVA.³²¹

8.23 The member submits the petition for leave of absence or exlaustration to the general superior through the provincial. The provincial gives her own opinion and that of her council.

1. The decree is sent to the member through the provincial
2. The provincial, in agreement with the general superior, settles the necessary details with the member.
3. The exlaustrated member has to provide for her own maintenance.³²²

3. The Congregatio Jesu - gathered together in the General Congregation

3.1 Nature and functions

8.24 a. The general congregation is the legitimate assembly of those members of the Congregatio Jesu who have a right to take part in it.

b. It represents the Congregatio Jesu and holds the highest authority in it.³²³

8.25 a. The ordinary general congregation is a congregation of elections and administration. It takes place when the general superior and the general assistants are to be elected.

b. The duty of the administrative congregation is to protect and authentically interpret the way of life of the Congregatio Jesu, to promote suitable spiritual renewal in accordance with it, to deal with major business matters and to make decisions binding on all members.³²⁴

³²¹ JN 81; cf. CIC 686,3

³²² PR 10

³²³ JN 85; cf. CIC 596; 631,1

³²⁴ JN 86; cf. CIC 631

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8.26 An extraordinary general congregation has an administrative function. It takes place when important matters concerning the *Congregatio Jesu* cannot be postponed until the next ordinary general congregation.³²⁵

3.2 Preparation

8.27 The general congregation is convoked by the general superior or the vicar general, with the consent of the council.³²⁶

8.28 The general superior or the vicar general fixes the date and meeting place of the general congregation. It should be announced about one year, but not later than six months, before it is due to begin.³²⁷

8.29 a. The general superior or vicar general convokes the provincial congregation in preparation for the general congregation.

b. The provincial congregation elects the delegates (cf. CN 8.40) from the province to the general congregation and decides on the postulata to be sent from the province to the general congregation.

c. The general superior fixes the date by which the elections of delegates are to be communicated to her and the postulata submitted.³²⁸

8.30 The general superior or vicar general makes known to the members of the *Congregatio Jesu* the names of the delegates who have been elected. At the same time she convokes the delegates to the general congregation.³²⁹

8.31 a. Every province, community and individual member of the *Congregatio Jesu* has the right to send in postulata to the administrative congregation.³³⁰

b. The members of the *Congregatio Jesu* send in their postulata to the provincial congregation. They can also send in postulata directly to the

³²⁵ JN 87; cf. CIC 631

³²⁶ JN 88

³²⁷ JN 89

³²⁸ JN 90, 179; GC 93

³²⁹ JN 91

³³⁰ JN 92, GC 93; cf. CIC 631,3

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general superior or vicar general, or directly to the general congregation or through a member of the general congregation.³³¹

8.32 a. The general superior, with the consent of her council, can summon a preparatory commission.

b. The general superior, with the consent of her council, appoints the members of the preparatory commission from among the members of the general congregation.

c. The general superior informs the *Congregatio Jesu* of the convocation and composition of the preparatory commission.³³²

8.33 a. The general superior gives the commission instructions for its procedure, and presides over it. The work of the commission counts as official preparation for the general congregation.³³³

b. The commission works through the postulata. It recommends that the congregation should consider postulata which:

- * contain something new, and do not ask for what is already contained in the particular law of the *Congregatio Jesu*;
- * are about something that concerns the whole *Congregatio Jesu*, not about a matter which can be settled at province level;
- * raise a question open to discussion, because various answers are conceivable, and the solution is not self-evident;
- * concern a matter of substance, not simply of expression.

c. The general congregation makes the final decision about the handling of the postulata.³³⁴

8.34 The general superior or the vicar general, even before the start of the general congregation, can ask its members for their opinion on matters of greater moment, or forward to them postulata which have been sent in, so that they can express their opinions on them.³³⁵

³³¹ PR 11; cf. CIC 631,3.

³³² JN 93; PR 12; GC 93

³³³ JN 93

³³⁴ GC 93

³³⁵ JN 94

8.35 The convocation of a general congregation must be communicated to the CIVCSVA and to the Bishop in whose diocese the congregation is to take place.³³⁶

3.3 Members of the General Congregation

8.36 The members of the general congregation are:

1. ex officio:

- * the general superior
- * the general assistants
- * the general secretary and the general bursar
- * the provincial superiors and the regional superiors

2. elected:

- * two delegates for each province
- * one delegate for each region
- * one delegate for each area directly dependent on the generalate³³⁷

3. The general superior can for good reasons and after consultation with the congregation of provincials, with the consent of the general council, determine an additional number of elected delegates for particular provinces.³³⁸

8.37 All members of the general congregation have active voice and a deliberative vote.³³⁹

8.38 The general superior or vicar general, with the consent of the council, can invite the following, although they have no active voice or deliberative vote:

1. members whose nationality is not represented among the delegates to the general congregation,
2. guests, whose participation as observers seems advisable because of their function,

³³⁶ JN 95

³³⁷ JN 96

³³⁸ JN 96; GC 2002

³³⁹ JN 97

3. experts.

The general congregation decides which sessions the experts and guests are to attend.³⁴⁰

3.4 Election of delegates

8.39 The delegates are elected by the members of the provincial congregation.³⁴¹

8.40 a. All members of the provincial congregation have active voice.
b. All fully incorporated members of the province have passive voice, except the provincial.³⁴²

8.41 a. The election is decided by absolute majority.
b. Each delegate is elected in a separate ballot.
c. If in the first two ballots there is no absolute majority, in the third, fourth and fifth ballots only those members are eligible who in the previous ballots have received one or more votes. In the sixth and subsequent ballots only those three are eligible who received most votes in the preceding ballot.³⁴³

8.42 After the election of the delegates the three, or two substitutes, as the case may be, are elected in the same way.³⁴⁴

8.43 a. For the conduct of the election the regulations for the voting procedure are analogous to those at the general congregation .
b. Before the election the members of the provincial congregation promise to elect as delegates to the general congregation the sisters whom they judge to be suited to this task. No-one may abstain from voting, no-one may hand in a blank paper.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁰ JN 98

³⁴¹ GC 93

³⁴² GC 93

³⁴³ JN 101; GC 93

³⁴⁴ JN 101; GC 93

³⁴⁵ GC 93; cf. CIC 626

3.5 Procedure of the General Congregation

3.5.1 Opening

8.44 The general superior or the vicar general presides.³⁴⁶

8.45 a. The general congregation opens with a common celebration of the Eucharist and a hymn to the Holy Spirit.

b. The president fixes the date for the opening of the session.

c. At the first session

* she checks the names of those present,

* states the main purpose of the general congregation,

* proposes the order of dealing with business matters,

* and reminds those present that the proceedings of the general congregation fall under the heading of official secret.

d. The plenary session decides on the order of the day.

e. In preparation for the elections and deliberations, it is recommended that all take part in the spiritual exercises at the beginning of the general congregation.³⁴⁷

8.46 The members of the general congregation are in duty bound to attend its plenary sessions and all other official working sessions. For serious reasons and in individual cases the president may dispense a member from the duty of attendance.³⁴⁸

8.47 a. The members of the general congregation elect by a relative majority:

1. a member (possibly with others to assist her) to act as secretary for the duration of the general congregation; she will keep a written account of the proceedings;

2. two members to act as scrutineers for the duration of the general congregation;

³⁴⁶ JN 102

³⁴⁷ PR 17

³⁴⁸ JN 103

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3. three members to examine the statement of accounts of the general bursar, excluding members who have taken part in preparing the report.
- b. Before the election, candidates may be proposed.³⁴⁹

8.48 Every day, the secretary checks the presence of the members of the general congregation and reads out the minutes of the previous day. These include a short summary of the spoken interventions and decisions.³⁵⁰

8.49 The general superior renders an account of her tenure of office and reports on the internal and external state of the *Congregatio Jesu* and its development since the last general congregation.³⁵¹

8.50 a. The general bursar renders an account of her administration and reports on the financial state of the *Congregatio Jesu*. The report must be signed by herself and countersigned by the general superior or vicar general as well as by the general assistants.

b. In a later session, the members chosen to examine the financial and economic statement of the general bursar will report on the results of their examination. The general congregation ratifies the report of the general bursar.³⁵²

3.5.2 Election of the General Superior and General Assistants

8.51 a. Members of the general congregation have the right and duty to vote. No one can abstain from voting, no one can give in a blank paper.

b. No one can validly vote for herself.

c. All fully-incorporated members of the *Congregatio Jesu*, not only members of the general congregation, are eligible. Cases in which passive voice is restricted are indicated in CN 9.16 and CN 9.24.³⁵³

³⁴⁹ JN 104

³⁵⁰ PR 17

³⁵¹ JN 105

³⁵² JN 106

³⁵³ JN 107, 134, 144

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8.52 Before the election of the general superior, candidates are proposed in a preparatory election. The preparatory election has no canonical significance.³⁵⁴

8.53 a. An absolute majority is required for the election of a new general superior. The number constituting the required majority is reckoned each time, according to the number of valid votes.

b. In the case of a fourth and fifth count, only those three members are eligible who in the third count have obtained the highest number of votes. In case of equality of votes, seniority of profession (final profession) or, failing that, of age, shall decide the election.

c. From the sixth count, only those two members are still eligible who have obtained the highest number of votes in the fifth count. The two members do not vote. In the case of equality of votes, seniority of profession (final profession) or, failing that, of age, shall decide the election.

d. Election by common inspiration, according to [700] is considered valid when it is unanimous.³⁵⁵

8.54 For the re-election of the general superior, a majority of two-thirds of the members of the general congregation with the right to vote is required. If this majority is not obtained in the second count, she is no longer eligible.³⁵⁶

8.55 At the conclusion of the voting, the former general superior or vicar general announces the name of the newly-elected general superior. She then asks her whether she accepts the election. She can only refuse on grounds of conscience.³⁵⁷

8.56 a. The election of the general superior is ratified by her acceptance of the office.

b. Placing her trust in God, she promises to serve the Congregatio Jesu to the best of her ability.

³⁵⁴ JN 109

³⁵⁵ JN 110

³⁵⁶ JN 111

³⁵⁷ JN 112

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c. The members of the general congregation will express to her individually their loyalty and obedience in the customary manner.³⁵⁸

8.57 The former general superior or the vicar general hands her the Constitutions and seal of the Congregatio Jesu as the insignia of her rights and duties.³⁵⁹

8.58 By accepting the office, the new general superior becomes president of the general congregation.³⁶⁰

8.59 General instructions on the conduct of elections:

1. All voting is secret.
2. Each member writes on her ballot paper the name of the one she has chosen.
3. The ballot paper is folded in four.
4. The scrutineers collect the ballot papers in the ballot box. Before the election begins, they collect the votes of any who are sick, in a closed envelope.
5. In the presence of the voters, they take the ballot papers from the envelope and place them in the ballot box.
6. When all the papers are in the ballot box, the box is shaken. The scrutineers check whether the number of ballot papers tallies with the number of voters. If the number is not the same, the election must be repeated.
7. If the number tallies the scrutineers unfold the ballot papers one after the other, read out each name and hand the paper to the president of the election.
8. The secretary writes down the names, counts them and hands the list to the president, in order of the number of votes obtained.
9. The scrutineers count the number of ballot papers for each name and check that the numbers tally with the list.
10. The president announces the result.

³⁵⁸ JN 113

³⁵⁹ JN 114

³⁶⁰ JN 115

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11. At the end of each election, the ballot papers are destroyed by the scrutineers.³⁶¹

8.60 For the election of the general superior the procedure is as follows:

1. In the preparatory election, each voter can propose up to three members of the Congregatio Jesu for the office of general superior.
2. The secretary, with the scrutineers, draws up a list of the proposed candidates in a secret count, without giving the number of votes received. Each voter receives a copy of the list.³⁶²
3. The election takes place in a climate of personal spiritual discernment
4. At least three days are set aside for prayer and personal information. There are no group discussions or deliberations in the plenum.
5. Each voter is at liberty to obtain or communicate information concerning the candidates. Any member of the general congregation can ask for information, in private conversation, from any other member of the general congregation. The information should be asked and given with the utmost discretion.³⁶³
6. Any member who is asked for information is in duty bound, in accordance with her conscience, to supply the information.
7. No one, either directly or indirectly, may recommend voting for a particular member of the Congregatio Jesu.³⁶⁴
8. Elections take place in the meeting hall; the general congregation fixes the day and hour for the election of the general superior.
9. Each member of the general congregation receives a list of members of the Congregatio Jesu who enjoy passive voice.
10. The ballot papers are put in each one's place.

³⁶¹ PR 20

³⁶² PR 21

³⁶³ JN 108

³⁶⁴ JN 108; PR 18; cf. CIC 626

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11. The members take their place in order of profession.
12. Ballot papers are given up in the same order.³⁶⁵
13. The election opens with a hymn to the Holy Spirit.
14. The one presiding gives a brief exhortation. This is followed by a half hour of silent prayer.
15. The voters take the following oath, individually or in groups: "With all reverence I call upon Jesus Christ, Eternal Wisdom, to witness that I, N.N., choose and name as general superior of the Congregatio Jesu the one I think most fit to bear this burden."³⁶⁶
16. If the required majority of votes is not obtained in the first ballot, the president determines when the next is to take place.
17. If the majority of votes is obtained, the president asks the question indicated in CN 8.55. If the member elected accepts the election, the election is closed.
18. Then the president formulates the decree of election, saying "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, I declare [....]N.N. as general superior of the Congregatio Jesu."
19. The one elected kneels before the crucifix and declares that she recognises the will of God in the election and promises, trusting in God and to the best of her ability, to serve the greater glory of God and the preservation and development of the Congregatio Jesu, and to fulfil her vow of obedience through particular obedience to the Church and to the Constitutions of the Congregatio Jesu .
20. Then all the members of the general congregation show her through some sign of reverence that they recognise her as general superior of the Congregatio Jesu and offer obedience to her.
21. The one who has so far been presiding at the general congregation immediately communicates the name of the newly-elected general superior to the CIVCSVA and to the provinces of the Congregatio Jesu .

³⁶⁵ PR 19

³⁶⁶ [705]; PR 21; cf. CIC 626

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22. The secretary draws up the minutes of the election which are signed by the president of the election, the secretary and the scrutineers, and afterwards preserved in the archives of the generalate.³⁶⁷

8.61 a. If the newly-elect is not a member of the general congregation, she must immediately be summoned. Pending her arrival, the former general superior or vicar general presides at the general congregation, but in the meantime no elections take place and no decisions are taken.

b. On her arrival the newly-elect is asked by the president whether she accepts the office. For the further procedure see CN 55 – 58.³⁶⁸

8.62 Under the presidency of the new general superior the general assistants are elected.³⁶⁹

8.63 Before the election of the general assistants, possible candidates are proposed in a preparatory election. The preparatory election has no canonical significance.³⁷⁰

8.64 a. Each general assistant is elected in a separate count.

b. The election requires an absolute majority of votes.

c. In a third count, only those three members are eligible who have obtained the highest number of votes in the second count.

d. From the fourth count, only those two members are eligible who have obtained the highest number of votes in the third count. They do not vote.

e. If several members obtain an equal number of votes seniority of profession or, failing that, of age shall decide the election.³⁷¹

8.65 a. The president asks each member who is elected whether she accepts the election.

³⁶⁷ PR 21

³⁶⁸ JN 116

³⁶⁹ JN 117

³⁷⁰ JN 118

³⁷¹ JN 119, 120; cf. JN 110

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b. By accepting the election, the member who is elected takes office.³⁷²

8.66 If anyone is elected who is not a member of the general congregation, she is immediately summoned. By accepting the office, she becomes a member of the general congregation and has the right to vote.³⁷³

8.67 Further directions on the procedure for the election of the general assistants:

1. The election follows the same procedure as for the election of the general superior.³⁷⁴
2. In the preparatory election for the general assistants, each voter can propose up to four members.
3. The general superior communicates to the provinces the names of those who have been elected as general assistants.
4. The minutes of the election, duly signed, are preserved in the archives of the generalate.³⁷⁵

3.5.3 Administrative deliberations

8.68 a. The general congregation discusses and decides on the proposals presented by the general superior or by the preparatory commission and on the petitions sent in by members of the Congregatio Jesu.

b. It reviews, on the basis of the new decisions, the decrees of the preceding general congregation and decides accordingly.³⁷⁶

8.69 a. For the validity of a vote, at least two-thirds of those entitled to vote must take part in the voting.³⁷⁷

b. The majority of votes needed for a decision will be calculated from the number of voting members of the general congregation.

8.70 a. Administrative matters are decided by absolute majority.

³⁷² JN 121

³⁷³ JN 122

³⁷⁴ See CN 8.59 – 8.60

³⁷⁵ PR 22

³⁷⁶ JN 123

³⁷⁷ JN 124

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b. Equality of votes counts as a negative decision. A second ballot is possible.³⁷⁸

8.71 a. For the amending or declaring obsolete of a complementary norm, through which an amendment or declaration as obsolete of a constitution ensues, a majority of two-thirds of the members of the general congregation with the right to vote is required.

b. These decisions must be approved by the CIVCSVA.³⁷⁹

8.72 a. Voting on administrative decisions is normally open. It is secret if at least three members request this.

b. As far as possible, voting on matters of particular importance should not take place immediately after deliberation, but be postponed to a later session.³⁸⁰

8.73 The general congregation, by a relative majority of votes, can elect one of its members to act as moderator.³⁸¹

3.5.4 Dissolution of the General Congregation

8.74 a. The general congregation entrusts to the general superior the task of promulgating its decrees to the members of the Congregatio Jesu, in the form decided by the general congregation, and of seeing that they are implemented.

b. The general congregation grants the general superior the necessary authority for this. The general superior uses this authority according to the mind of the general congregation, and the conditions laid down by it.

c. In detail, the general congregation authorises the general superior, with respect to the editorial work:

- * to undertake the necessary editorial corrections in the text of the decrees and to clarify possible contradictions in the decrees according to the mind of the general congregation,

³⁷⁸ JN 125

³⁷⁹ JN 126; see CN 0.16; cf. CIC 583

³⁸⁰ JN 127

³⁸¹ JN 128

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- * to undertake corrections which seem necessary after consultation with experts, and changes called for by the CIVCSVA in points which require approbation by CIVCSVA,
- * to add to the notes in the Constitutions the decisions which concern the binding force of the Constitutions
- * to make provision for correct translations of the decisions and recommendations of the general congregation.³⁸²

8.75 a. The general congregation elects by relative majority the members of the general congregation who are to carry out these tasks.

b. Other members of the Congregatio Jesu may also be brought in to help in specific work.

c. The general congregation elects by relative majority four members who will decide collegially with the general superior over all the changes and additions undertaken.³⁸³

8.76 The general congregation also gives the general superior authority, with consent of her council, in the course of her term of office:

1. to alter in individual cases, for good reasons, decisions of the general congregation; she must give an account of these changes at the next general congregation;
2. to make decisions in all matters that could not be decided finally by the general congregation, but must be settled before the next general congregation.³⁸⁴

8.77 a. When all official matters have been dealt with, the plenary assembly declares the general congregation closed.

b. If after the anticipated time has elapsed certain official matters are still undecided, the plenary assembly can either prolong the general congregation, or suspend the proceedings. If it is not reconvened within one year from the time of suspension, the general congregation shall be considered closed.³⁸⁵

³⁸² JN 129

³⁸³ cf. principles in [707], [715]

³⁸⁴ JN 129

³⁸⁵ JN 130

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8.78 After the minutes of the proceedings have been approved, they are signed by the general superior, the secretary and all the members.³⁸⁶

8.79 The general congregation ends with a solemn Mass of thanksgiving.³⁸⁷

4. *The Provincial Congregation*

8.80 a. The provincial congregation is the legitimate assembly of those members of the province who have a right to take part in it.³⁸⁸

b. All the members have active voice and a deliberative vote.³⁸⁹

8.81 The general superior convokes the provincial congregation in preparation for the general congregation.³⁹⁰

8.82 a. The provincial, with the consent of her council, can convoke a provincial congregation.

b. A provincial congregation of this kind is intended to help collaboration and planning within the province; its character is consultative.

c. With the convocation the provincial makes known the purpose of the provincial congregation.³⁹¹

8.83 The provincial congregation should take place about every three to five years.³⁹²

8.84 a. The provincial presides at the provincial congregation.

b. The provincial, with the consent of her council, can invite experts to take part in the provincial congregation.

c. The provincial congregation can elect a moderator, by a relative majority of votes.³⁹³

³⁸⁶ JN 131

³⁸⁷ PR 23

³⁸⁸ JN 178; cf. CIC 632; 633

³⁸⁹ See CN 8.40

³⁹⁰ JN 90, JN179; GC 93; see CN 8.29; ; cf. CIC 632

³⁹¹ JN 180, PR 29; cf. CIC 632; 633

³⁹² JN 181; cf. CIC 632

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8.85 The members are:

1. Ex officio:

- * the provincial superior
- * the provincial assistants
- * the provincial secretary and the provincial bursar
- * the local superiors
- * the novice director and the junior director

2. The elected representatives, the number of whom must exceed by fifty per cent that of ex officio members, but may not be more than double the number of ex officio members.³⁹⁴

8.86 a. The provincial, with the consent of her council, determines the total number of representatives of the province to be elected.

b. The voting is direct. It takes place at the provincial level, from among the members of the province.³⁹⁵

8.87 a. All members of the province who have been temporarily professed for at least three years have active voice.

b. All fully incorporated members of the province have passive voice.³⁹⁶

8.88 a. In the first ballot candidates for the election are proposed.

b. In the second ballot the representatives and substitutes are elected by simple majority from the list of proposed candidates.³⁹⁷

8.89 Directions for the election of representatives for the provincial congregation:

1. The provincial decides with the consent of her council the number of votes that each member qualified to vote may give. This number must correspond to at least half of the number of representatives to be

³⁹³ JN 185

³⁹⁴ JN 182; cf. CIC 632

³⁹⁵ JN 183

³⁹⁶ JN 184

³⁹⁷ GC 93

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elected. The provincial, with the consent of her council, decides how many substitutes are to be elected.

2. The provincial sends to each house:

- * the list of members with active and passive voice, with religious and family name, occupation, year of birth and year of final profession,
- * the list of members with active voice only (provincial or regional superior, assistants, bursar, secretary, local superiors, novice director, junior director and juniors with at least three years of profession.),
- * voting papers of uniform size,
- * envelopes marked "Election", for collecting the voting papers.

3. The provincial fixes the date by which the results of the separate elections are to be returned to her.³⁹⁸

4. The first election: the election of candidates:

- * The local superior fixes the day and hour of the election. She and the two scrutineers (consultors) are responsible for the orderly conduct of the election.
- * The election opens with a prayer to the Holy Spirit.
- * The superior checks the number of members qualified to vote.
- * Each member qualified to vote writes on her ballot paper the number of names that the provincial, with the consent of her council, has decided.
- * The ballot papers are folded in four and placed in the ballot box. Before the election begins, the scrutineers fetch the ballot papers in closed envelopes from the sick members. In the course of the election they are taken from their envelopes and placed in the ballot box.
- * The scrutineers, in the presence of the assembled electors, count the ballot papers without unfolding them and place them in the envelope marked "Election". If the number of papers exceeds that of those entitled to vote, the election is

³⁹⁸ PR 13

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invalid; the ballot papers must be destroyed and the voting repeated.

- * After a valid election, the "Election" envelope is closed in the presence of the electors. The superior sends it to the provincial.
5. The counting of votes in the provincial council:
- * At a session of the provincial council on a day fixed by the provincial, she and her council check whether election envelopes have been received from all the houses, take out the folded ballot papers and drop them into the ballot box, counting them as they do so. The box is then shaken, the ballot papers taken out and unfolded, and the names written on them are read out.
 - * The results are written down and counted.
 - * If there are fewer names on the ballot paper than the number of votes that may be cast, the ballot paper is valid. If the same name is written twice over on a ballot paper, it is counted once only.
 - * A ballot paper bearing more names than the number of votes that may be cast is invalid.
 - * When the results of the election have been established, the ballot papers are destroyed.
 - * The provincial secretary lists the names of those nominated, in order according to the nominations received, but without indicating the number obtained.
 - * The provincial sends the list to all the houses of the province and by registered post to the general superior.
 - * These regulations also apply at the regional level.³⁹⁹
6. The second election: the election of delegates and substitutes:
- * Delegates are elected from the list of those nominated, sent out by the provincial,
 - * The procedure is the same as for the first election; see nos. 4 & 5.

³⁹⁹ PR 14

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- * The members with the highest number of votes are the delegates to the provincial congregation. In the case of equality of votes, seniority of profession (final profession) or, failing that, of age, decides the election.
- * The members with the next-highest number of votes are the substitutes.
- * In the case of equality of votes seniority of profession (final profession) or, failing that, of age, decides the election.
- * The provincial secretary draws up the list of elected representatives and substitutes with the number of votes obtained. The rest of the names are listed in order, according to the votes obtained, but the number of votes is not indicated.⁴⁰⁰

7. The provincial sends the results of the election to all the houses of the province and by registered post to the general superior.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰ PR 15

⁴⁰¹ PR 16, 29

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Part IX

Government of the Congregatio Jesu

1. Government in general

1.1 Authority

9.1 The general congregation represents the Congregatio Jesu and possesses full legislative power. It exercises the highest authority in the Congregatio Jesu in an extraordinary manner.⁴⁰²

9.2 a. The general superior exercises the highest ordinary authority over the Congregatio Jesu in conformity with the universal law of the Church and the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu. She governs the Congregatio Jesu in all spiritual and temporal matters.⁴⁰³

b. She receives her authority from the Church. She delegates part of her authority to the provincial superiors and other superiors whom she appoints directly. The provincial superior delegates part of her authority to the local superiors and other officials whom she appoints.⁴⁰⁴

c. By virtue of this authority the general superior can give instructions for the whole Congregatio Jesu, for individual provinces, regions, houses or members, which are binding in the context of canon and particular law.⁴⁰⁵ These remain in force until revoked by one of her successors or by a general congregation.

d. By virtue of this authority the general superior also has the right to give dispensations in particular cases, to provinces, houses or individual persons, from precepts of the Constitutions or of the norms laid down by general congregations. The other superiors have this faculty of dispensing to the extent that she concedes it to them.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰² JN 85; see CN 8.24

⁴⁰³ JN 132; cf. CIC 622

⁴⁰⁴ O 27

⁴⁰⁵ JN 138; see CN 0.18

⁴⁰⁶ JN 138

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e. The exercise of this authority belongs to the mission and service of the superior.⁴⁰⁷

1.2 General principles for the exercise of authority

9.3 a. The most important task of superiors at all levels is to foster the spiritual life of the members, and to promote the apostolic works, unity and development of the Congregatio Jesu.⁴⁰⁸

b. They should encourage the members to grow in responsible freedom, so that they observe the Institute not out of fear but out of deep personal conviction.

c. They are to see to it that the Institute is observed both by the individual members and as a whole. Where necessary they should admonish and correct with firmness, without respect to age or position.

9.4 In fulfilling her office, the superior should be mindful of the kindness and love of Christ (Mt.20:26-28). The more selfless her service is, the more clearly will her actions proclaim that Christ our Lord is the head of our community.⁴⁰⁹

9.5 In order to make the right decisions in the light of God's grace, superiors must be intimately united with God and possess the gift of discerning love.⁴¹⁰

9.6 a. Government in the Congregatio Jesu is to be understood as spiritual government. The superiors lead the members more through discerning love than through norms and commands.

b. They should strengthen the members in their mission, take care of the spiritual life both of the individuals and of the communities, and promote the fulfilment of the mission.

⁴⁰⁷ O 27

⁴⁰⁸ JN 135, 160, 204

⁴⁰⁹ O 27,2,3

⁴¹⁰ O 27,4

9.7 a. They are to exercise with great responsibility the office of government which is entrusted to them, plan and decide courageously and carry out steadfastly what has been decided.

b. They should take care that their intentions are known and understood by the members.

1.3 Helps for the superiors through assistants or consultors and the admonitor

9.8 a. Every superior should have a council to work with her, to help her to take initiatives and make decisions, and to share the burden of responsibility. Timely and adequate information will help the council to make this possible.⁴¹¹

b. In order to think through particular questions or greater problems more deeply and comprehensively, superiors at the various levels can set up working parties or commissions.⁴¹²

9.9 Matters which, in conformity with the universal law of the Church or the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu, require the consent of the council, must be decided by secret vote. Consent must be signified by an absolute majority of votes.⁴¹³

9.10 a. Each superior is advised to choose an admonitor. This choice is to be confirmed by her immediate superior.

b. The superior allows herself to be advised by the admonitor with respect to her personal way of life, her external behaviour, her work-load and her health.

9.11 a. The task of the admonitor is to point out to the superior, according to her understanding and conscience, after prayer and with due simplicity and humility, what she believes necessary for the good of the Congregatio Jesu and for the greater glory of God.

b. The admonitor should be a spiritual woman, familiar with God in prayer. She should have good judgment and the gift of wise discernment. She should, above all, know and love “our manner of proceeding.” She

⁴¹¹ O 30,1; cf. CIC 633

⁴¹² O 30,2.

⁴¹³ JN 149

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should have a certain tact, and be a woman who is agreeable to the superior. She must be free enough to carry out her duty for the good of the *Congregatio Jesu*, without human respect.

1.4 Helps through the communities or members – spiritual discernment in common

9.12 Awareness of their common vocation will foster in all the members a readiness to take their share of responsibility.

9.13 Superiors should readily and often ask for and listen to the advice of their sisters, of a few or of many, according to the importance and nature of the matter, or even of the whole community. This may take the form of a spiritual discernment carried out in common. Superiors should gratefully welcome suggestions that their sisters offer spontaneously, but their duty to decide and enjoin what ought to be done remains intact.⁴¹⁴

9.14 Those in charge of works should do the same; they should be altogether alert to the advice and suggestions of their sisters, so as to be helped by them in carrying out their offices.⁴¹⁵

2. Government of the Congregatio Jesu through the General Superior

2.1 Election

9.15 a. The general superior is elected by the general congregation.
b. Her term of office lasts for nine years.
c. She may be re-elected for a further six years.⁴¹⁶

9.16 a. The general superior must be at least 40 years of age and have been finally professed for at least five years.

b. An exception with regard to age is decided by the general congregation.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁴ O 32

⁴¹⁵ cf. CN SJ 354,1.2.

⁴¹⁶ JN 133; cf. CIC 624; 625,1.

9.17 a. The general superior may not resign from office during her term, except with the consent of the CIVCSVA.

b. If during the general congregation she announces her intention of retiring from office, a new election can take place without first having recourse to the CIVCSVA.⁴¹⁸

2.2 Powers and duties of the general superior

9.18 a. The general superior has her residence in Rome.

b. The general superior cannot at the same time be provincial or local superior.⁴¹⁹

9.19 She takes her decisions in the spirit of the Constitutions and in conformity with the Juridical Norms, either alone, or after hearing the opinion or obtaining the consent of her council, or collegially with her council.⁴²⁰

9.20 a. The general superior should support the provincials in the performance of their office.

b. It is her duty, at least once during her term of office to visit each province, region and house, or to entrust a general assistant with the visitation.⁴²¹

9.21 She should not issue orders under holy obedience except in extreme situations, and only after seeking advice from her council.

9.22 The general superior informs the provincial of dispensations or special permissions she has granted to a member, and likewise the provincial informs the local superior of dispensations she herself has given.

⁴¹⁷ JN 134; cf. CIC 623

⁴¹⁸ JN 141

⁴¹⁹ JN 140

⁴²⁰ JN 136; cf. CIC 627

⁴²¹ JN 137; cf. CIC 628

2.3 *The general assistants, the general secretary and general bursar, the admonitor*

9.23 a. The general council supports the general superior in her government of the Congregatio Jesu.

b. The general council consists of four assistants, who come from different cultures and provinces.⁴²²

9.24 a. The general assistants are elected by the general congregation.

b. They must be at least 35 years of age and have been finally-professed for at least five years.⁴²³

c. They should know and love the Congregatio Jesu, have sound judgement and the gift of wise discernment, and be capable of working in a team.

9.25 a. The general assistant first elected is at the same time vicar general.

b. She is the legitimate representative of the general superior in case of absence or inability to act, and has as vicar the representative authority of the general superior.

c. She ranks as a major superior.

d. In the exercise of her office, she must act strictly in accordance with the mind of the general superior.⁴²⁴

9.26 a. In case of premature vacancy of the office of general superior, the vicar general takes over the government of the Congregatio Jesu.

b. If any decisions have to be taken, she must obtain the consent of the general assistants.

c. As soon as possible, she must convoke an ordinary general congregation.⁴²⁵

9.27 a. The task of the general assistants is to support the general superior in the performance of her office.

b. They are to work with her in the basic orientation of her leadership, in the making and implementing of decisions.

⁴²² JN 143; cf. CIC 627,1

⁴²³ JN 144

⁴²⁴ JN 145, cf. CIC 620

⁴²⁵ JN 146

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c. They should not only carry out the tasks assigned to them, but also make suggestions on their own initiative as regards important common matters.

d. The general assistants reside in the generalate house.⁴²⁶

9.28 The care or responsibility for one or more provinces of the *Congregatio Jesu* will be divided out among the four general assistants, and likewise responsibility for various specialist areas, without prejudice to responsibility for the whole *Congregatio*.

9.29 a. The general assistant maintains contact with the provinces entrusted to her, gathers information, keeps the general superior and the other general assistants up to date about events and developments in the provinces, prepares the incoming applications for deliberation and decision in the session. She can also make suggestions on her own initiative.

b. The general assistant deepens her knowledge in the specialist area entrusted to her. She keeps herself fully informed about the situation within the *Congregatio* and about matters concerning the Church and the world at large.

9.30 a. The general superior discusses all important matters in the sessions of the general council. She leads the session.

b. The general assistants may propose a session.⁴²⁷

c. All matters discussed in the sessions are strictly confidential. Breaches of this confidentiality are not to be tolerated. The penalty may be removal from office.

9.31. a. For all important decisions full attendance by members of the council is required.

b. If a general assistant is unable to be present, her place is taken by the general secretary or, failing her, by the general bursar.

c. In urgent cases which require consultation of the general council, the opinion of absent members of the council may be obtained by telephone.

d. The opinion given by telephone should be confirmed in writing.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ JN 147

⁴²⁷ JN 148

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9.32 The general superior fixes the date of the council sessions, giving its members timely information about the agenda and placing the necessary documents at their disposal.⁴²⁹

9.33 The general secretary and general bursar are appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council, after consultation with the provincials concerned.⁴³⁰

9.34 a. The general secretary is entrusted by the general superior with official correspondence and has charge of all documents connected with the central government.

b. She attends the sessions of the council and takes the minutes, but does not vote.⁴³¹

9.35 a. She writes out the decrees, completes the minutes and, together with the general superior, signs both the decrees and the minutes.

b. She keeps

1. the membership file and
2. the register of all the members of the *Congregatio Jesu*,
3. the catalogue of all the houses
4. the register of deceased members

c. she draws up the annual statistics of the personnel and activities of the *Congregatio Jesu*,

d. keeps the generalate chronicle

e. and is responsible for the archives.

f. Without permission from the general superior she is not allowed to hand out documents from the archives, except to the general assistants.⁴³²

9.36 a. The general bursar administers the temporal goods of the central government and keeps the generalate accounts.

⁴²⁸ JN 149

⁴²⁹ PR 24

⁴³⁰ JN 150

⁴³¹ JN 151

⁴³² PR 25

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b. She audits the statement of accounts from the provinces and administers the temporal goods of the Congregatio Jesu.

c. She is present at the sessions of the general council to give information and advice when financial matters are being discussed.⁴³³

9.37 The general bursar

- * administers the generalate fund and keeps the accounts;
- * draws up the annual budget for the generalate which will form the basis for assessing the contributions from the provinces;
- * she submits a half-yearly financial report to the general superior and her council for their information, together with the annual balance sheet to be examined and signed,
- * she audits the annual statement of accounts from the provinces and presents them, along with her own opinion, to the general superior and her council.
- * She is responsible for the safekeeping of deeds and documents pertaining to her office.
- * She should keep herself up to date on general matters of finance and economics.⁴³⁴

9.38 a. The term of office of the general assistants, general secretary, general bursar and admonitor corresponds with that of the general superior.

b. Re-election or re-appointment is possible.⁴³⁵

9.39 a. The consent of the general superior is required for members of the central government to resign from office.

b. For grave reasons, the general superior, deciding collegially and by secret vote with her council, can remove a member of the central government from office.

c. If an office becomes prematurely vacant, the general superior informs the provincial superiors and asks for their suggestions.

d. A new general assistant is elected by the general superior and her council, acting collegially and by secret vote.⁴³⁶

⁴³³ JN 152

⁴³⁴ PR 26

⁴³⁵ JN 153,1

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e. The general secretary and the general bursar are appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council.⁴³⁷

9.40 a. If the general council is convinced that in the interest of the Congregatio Jesu the general superior should resign, it is the duty of the vicar general to propose resignation to the general superior.

b. If the general superior is not prepared to resign, the vicar general informs the provincials and asks their opinion. If it seems necessary she summons a congregation of provincial superiors. This congregation decides whether the matter should be presented to the CIVCSVA.

c. The vicar general presents the matter to the CIVCSVA.⁴³⁸

3. Government of a province or region through provincial and regional superiors

3.1. The provincial superior

9.41 a. The Congregatio Jesu is divided into provinces, regions and houses directly subject to the generalate.

b. The general superior, with the consent of her council, has the power to erect or amalgamate provinces.

c. The suppression of a province is decided by the general superior, acting collegially with her council.⁴³⁹

9.42 The provincial superior governs the province in accordance with the norms of the universal law of the Church and of the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu.⁴⁴⁰

9.43 a. She is appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council.

b. Before appointment and reappointment, specific information is obtained from members of the province.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁶ JN 153,2.3

⁴³⁷ JN 150; see CN 9.33

⁴³⁸ JN 142

⁴³⁹ JN 154; cf. CIC 621; 581; 585

⁴⁴⁰ JN 155

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- 9.44 a. Her term of office lasts six years.
b. Reappointment for three years is possible, as an exception, for good reasons.⁴⁴²
- 9.45 The provincial must be at least 35 years of age and have been finally-professed for at least five years.⁴⁴³
- 9.46 a. During her term of office the provincial cannot resign from her position without the consent of the general superior.
b. For grave reasons and with the consent of her council the general superior can remove a provincial from office.⁴⁴⁴
- 9.47 a. The provincial resides in her province, in a house appointed by the general superior.⁴⁴⁵
b. The provincial should not undertake work which could hinder her from fulfilling her duties to the province.⁴⁴⁶
- 9.48 a. Every two years, as far as possible, the provincial should make a visitation of the houses of the province. She may also entrust the visitation to a provincial assistant.
b. She should frequently visit the houses in order to keep in touch with the members.⁴⁴⁷
- 9.49 The purpose and conduct of the visitation:
* The provincial should have a clear view of the situation of the local houses; she should seek to encourage efforts aimed at deepening the spiritual life and achieving a more fruitful apostolate; she should also try to remove abuses.

⁴⁴¹ JN 156; cf. CIC 625,3

⁴⁴² JN 157; cf. CIC 624

⁴⁴³ JN 158; cf. CIC 623

⁴⁴⁴ JN 167

⁴⁴⁵ JN 159; cf. CIC 629

⁴⁴⁶ JN.160; cf. CIC 618; 619

⁴⁴⁷ JN 161; cf. CIC 628,1

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- * She should give the members the opportunity of a personal interview with her, examine the material and financial position of the house (the state of buildings and equipment, the financial situation, possible debts, the remuneration of secular staff, the honouring of existing contracts and other obligations, the administration of endowments, etc.) and inspect the chronicle and archives.
- * At the end of the visitation, she will discuss her impressions, first with the superior and then with the community, then give the necessary instructions. She reports on the visitation at a session of the provincial council. She sends to the general superior a summary report.⁴⁴⁸

9.50 a. The provincial can issue for the whole province norms or prescriptions which answer to local circumstances and are to be observed in the houses of the province.

b. Norms or prescriptions for an unlimited time and for the whole province require the consent of the general superior.

9.51 The new provincial, when she takes office, asks the members of the province to renew particular leaves and dispensations given by her predecessor. If this is not done, they expire.

9.52 The provincial should support the local superiors in the performance of their office.⁴⁴⁹

9.53 She is responsible for the training and further formation of the members and should devote particular care to the novitiate.⁴⁵⁰

9.54 She assigns missions and arranges transfers inside the province. See CN 7.15 and 9.81.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁸ PR 27

⁴⁴⁹ JN 162

⁴⁵⁰ JN 163; see JN 4.5.a-b.

⁴⁵¹ JN 164

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.55 She should command under obedience only in extreme situations, and only after hearing the advice of her council.

9.56 The provincial must endeavour to collaborate closely with the general superior.⁴⁵²

9.57 a. The provincial keeps the general superior frequently informed about the situation of the province and about special events.

b. At the end of the year, she sends the prescribed report, and the quarterly reports at the appropriate times.

c. She forwards to the general superior any business which depends on the competency of the general superior.⁴⁵³

9.58 The provincial takes decisions in the spirit of the Constitutions and in conformity with the Complementary Norms, either alone, or after hearing the opinion or obtaining the consent of her council.⁴⁵⁴

9.59. a. The provincial council consists of four assistants.⁴⁵⁵

b. The provincial assistants are appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council, at the suggestion of the provincial.⁴⁵⁶

9.60 a. The first provincial assistant is the legitimate representative of the provincial in case of her absence or inability to act.

b. If the office of provincial becomes prematurely vacant, she takes over the government of the province until the installation of the new provincial. If any decisions have to be taken, she is bound to obtain the consent of the provincial council.⁴⁵⁷

9.61 The task of the provincial assistants is to support the provincial in the performance of her office.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵²JN 165

⁴⁵³PR 28

⁴⁵⁴JN 166; cf. CIC 627,2

⁴⁵⁵JN 168; cf. CIC 627,1

⁴⁵⁶JN 169

⁴⁵⁷JN 170

⁴⁵⁸JN 171

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.62 a. The provincial convokes meetings of the provincial council at which she presides.

b. The provincial assistants can also propose a meeting.⁴⁵⁹

c. Voting should follow the procedure laid down in CN 9.31.⁴⁶⁰

The provincial can invite local superiors and experts to the meetings.⁴⁶¹

9.63 The provincial secretary and provincial bursar are appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council, at the suggestion of the provincial.⁴⁶²

9.64 Their official capacities, at the provincial level, correspond with those of the general secretary and general bursar.⁴⁶³

9.65 a. The term of office of the provincial assistants, provincial secretary and provincial bursar and of the admonitor corresponds with that of the provincial.

b. The appointment can be for three years

c. They can be re-appointed.⁴⁶⁴

3.2 The Regional Superior

9.66 The general superior, with the consent of her council, can group together into a region houses which have been directly subject to her, or part of a province, if the establishment of a province is not yet possible.⁴⁶⁵

9.67 The regional superior governs the region in accordance with the norms of the universal law of the Church and of the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁵⁹ JN 172

⁴⁶⁰ JN 173

⁴⁶¹ JN 174

⁴⁶² JN 175; cf. CIC 636

⁴⁶³ JN 176; cf. CN 9.34-9.37; cf. CIC 636

⁴⁶⁴ JN 177

⁴⁶⁵ JN 186

⁴⁶⁶ JN 187

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.68 a. The regional superior is appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council.

b. Before the appointment, specific information is obtained from the members of the region.⁴⁶⁷

9.69 a. Her term of office lasts for four years.

b. She can be re-appointed for a further four years.⁴⁶⁸

9.70 The regional superior must be at least 35 years of age and have been finally professed for at least five years.⁴⁶⁹

9.71 The regional superior resides within the region, in a house appointed by the general superior.⁴⁷⁰

9.72 a. She ranks as a major superior, with ordinary delegated authority.

b. Her duties are substantially those of the provincial superior, but her rights are more restricted.

1. She requires the consent of her council to decide on the following:

- * the transfer of members
- * the appointment of directors of apostolic works
- * the training of members.

2. She must refer the following decisions to the general superior:

- * admission to the novitiate
- * the appointment of local superiors
- * the establishment of local houses.⁴⁷¹

9.73 a. The regional council helps the regional superior in the government of the region.

b. It consists of three assistants.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁷ JN 188

⁴⁶⁸ JN 189

⁴⁶⁹ JN 190

⁴⁷⁰ JN 191

⁴⁷¹ JN 192

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.74 The regional assistants are appointed by the general superior with the consent of her council, at the suggestion of the regional superior.⁴⁷³

9.75 a. For the task of the regional council, convoking it, and the procedure to be followed during the meetings, see CN 9.61 – 9.62.

b. The minutes, duly signed, are forwarded to the general superior. A second copy remains in the archives.⁴⁷⁴

9.76 For the regional secretary and the regional bursar, see CN 9.63-9.64 and 9.33- 9.37.⁴⁷⁵

9.77 a. The term of office of the regional assistants, the regional secretary, the regional bursar and the admonitor corresponds with that of the regional superior.

b. They can be re-appointed.⁴⁷⁶

3.3 Collaboration between provinces

9.78 a. At least every three years the general superior should call the provincials to a Congregation of Provincials in which the general assistants, general secretary and general accountant may also take part.

b. The Congregation of Provincials has an advisory function. In it the provincial superiors exercise their collegial responsibility for the whole Congregatio Jesu.

c. It serves to promote

- * interprovincial collaboration
- * common planning
- * universal mission
- * collaboration in the area of formation
- * mutual interprovincial support (personal, financial, material)
- * “union of hearts” in the Congregatio Jesu.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷² JN 193

⁴⁷³ JN 194

⁴⁷⁴ JN 195

⁴⁷⁵ JN 196

⁴⁷⁶ JN 177

⁴⁷⁷ JN 139

Complementary Norms: Part IX

- 9.79 a. Once during her period of office the general superior should summon a Congregation of Province Representatives.
- b. The task of the Congregation of Province Representatives is:
1. to provide the general administration with supplementary information from the “grass roots”
 2. according to the situation, to discuss together questions concerning the whole Congregatio Jesu
 3. to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the general administration or to the Congregation of Provincials.
- c. The province representative is elected by the provincial congregation. (cf. CN 8.39-8.43)
- d. She should not be an office-holder.⁴⁷⁸
- e. The province representative informs herself appropriately on the state of her province and writes a personal confidential report to the general superior. In doing this she needs the cooperation of the members of her province.

- 9.80 a. The provincials of the same country, region or cultural area should develop structures for collaboration between the provinces.
- b. The general superior can give members special responsibilities for individual provinces or groups of provinces.⁴⁷⁹

- 9.81 The carrying out of mission in another province:
1. The general superior decides on the transfer of a member to another province or return to the province of origin, having discussed the matter with the provincials concerned and with the member in question.
 2. In agreement with the provincial of the province receiving, a provincial can send a member to another province. If she is carrying out a task in service of the other province, as long as the task lasts the member exercises her rights in that province (for example participation in congregations).
 3. By a definitive transfer the member is incorporated into that province.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁸ M 93

⁴⁷⁹ M 93

Complementary Norms: Part IX

4. Anyone sent only provisionally to another province is a member of the province of origin, with all rights and obligations.
5. This applies also for members who live in another province for reason of studies, or for a service which does not belong to that province, or for health reasons.

9.82 On the Solidarity Fund, see CN 6.31

4. Government of the houses by the superior

4.1 Government of a local house by the local superior

9.83 a. A province consists of a certain number of local houses and filiations.

b. The erection of a local house or of an apostolic work is decided by the provincial with the consent of her council.

1. The written consent of the local Ordinary is required.
2. The erection of a local house requires confirmation by the general superior with the consent of her council.

c. The closure of a local house is decided by the general superior with the consent of her council.

1. The closure is requested by the provincial with the consent of her council
2. The local Ordinary is to be consulted.⁴⁸¹

9.84 Conditions for the erection of a local house:

1. its work must be in keeping with the apostolate of the Congregatio Jesu,
2. it must have the required number of members (at least four, with final or temporary vows),
3. the maintenance of the members must be guaranteed,
4. it must be certain that the members will be able to lead a regular religious life.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ JN 164

⁴⁸¹ JN 197; cf. CIC 608; 609; 616

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.85 Every local house should have its own chapel.⁴⁸³

9.86 The local superior governs the local house in accordance with the norms of the universal law of the Church and of the particular law of the *Congregatio Jesu*.⁴⁸⁴

9.87 a. The local superior is appointed by the provincial with the consent of her council.

b. Before the appointment, specific information is obtained.

c. The appointment must be confirmed by the general superior, after she has heard the opinion of her council.

d. The newly-appointed superior is missioned to her office by the provincial or her representative.⁴⁸⁵

9.88 The local superior must have been finally-professed for at least two years.⁴⁸⁶

9.89 a. Her term of office lasts for three years.

b. She can be re-appointed for a further three years.

c. A third triennium is decided by the general superior with the consent of her council.

d. After a superior has completed her term of office, she should not be immediately reappointed to an office of government.⁴⁸⁷

9.90 a. During her term of office, the local superior cannot resign from office without the consent of the provincial.

b. For grave reasons, the provincial, with the consent of her council, can remove a local superior from office.

c. The removal from office must be confirmed by the general superior, after she has heard the opinion of her council.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸² JN 198; cf. CIC 610

⁴⁸³ JN 199; cf. CIC 608

⁴⁸⁴ JN 200

⁴⁸⁵ JN 201, cf. CIC 625,3

⁴⁸⁶ JN 202; cf. CIC 623

⁴⁸⁷ JN 203; cf. CIC 624

⁴⁸⁸ JN 207

Complementary Norms: Part IX

9.91 The local superior makes decisions according to the Constitutions and the Complementary Norms, either alone or after hearing the advice of, or with the consent of, her consultants.⁴⁸⁹

9.92 a. The most important task of the local superior is the welfare of the community, the fostering of their spiritual life and the promotion of apostolic works.

b. As far as possible, the superior should not undertake work which might hinder her from fulfilling her duties to the community.⁴⁹⁰

9.93 a. The superior should do her best to be a spiritual guide to the community and to its individual members. She should foster the growth and development of our spirituality and enable the members to fulfil their mission. She should strengthen and encourage them to carry out their apostolic task.

b. The superior should be available to all, helping each one to integrate into the community and to find the personal freedom that she needs. With generosity, the superior should try to understand and help each member in her particular situation.⁴⁹¹

9.94 a. The superior can fulfil her office only if her relationship with the members of the community rests on mutual sincerity and trust.

b. Information from the superior to an individual member should be received with the same discretion as the member herself expects from the superior.

c. The dialogue twice a year between the superior and each sister should strengthen mutual trust, and offer human and spiritual help.⁴⁹²

9.95 The new superior when she takes up office asks the members of the community to renew special leaves and dispensations given by her predecessors. If this is not done, they expire.

⁴⁸⁹ JN 166

⁴⁹⁰ JN 204; cf. CIC 618; 619

⁴⁹¹ O 28,1.3

⁴⁹² O 29; on openness and trust with superiors, see also CN 6.11

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9.96 a. The local superior assigns the offices and works of the house; cf. also CN 7.15.

b. She co-ordinates the work and, should difficulties arise, will try to resolve them. With that prudent discernment which St. Ignatius so often recommends, she will ensure that the various areas of work are all directed to the same apostolic end.⁴⁹³

9.97 a. As far as possible, the superior should entrust work and responsibility to individual members. Delegation makes leadership easier and stronger. The extent of authority delegated, and the relationship of the office-holder to the superior, should be precisely agreed upon and set down in writing.

b. It will benefit the Congregatio if the superior, applying the principle of subsidiarity, grants as much freedom of action and personal responsibility as possible to individuals, while at the same time providing them with the necessary help. Within her own sphere of work, each member should be entrusted with responsibility and allowed to make decisions.⁴⁹⁴

9.98 a. The superior and the director of the apostolic work should collaborate closely and effectively in the carrying out of their specific tasks. They exercise different functions, but are both under the obligation to order everything to the greater service of God.

b. If necessary, their competences should be precisely agreed upon and set down in writing

9.99 All members of the community should show trust in the laity with whom we work, share our charism with them and learn from them.⁴⁹⁵

9.100 a. The local superior should take care to collaborate closely with the provincial; she should inform her regularly about the affairs of the house and her administration.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ O 28,2

⁴⁹⁴ O 31,2,3

⁴⁹⁵ On collaboration with laypeople, see CN 7.30; 10.6

⁴⁹⁶ JN 206

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b. She writes and presents to the provincial an official annual report.⁴⁹⁷

9.101 The local superior is supported in the performance of her office by consultors.⁴⁹⁸

9.102 a. The number of consultors will depend on the size of the community, There should not be more than four.⁴⁹⁹

b. The consultors are appointed by the provincial with the consent of her council, at the suggestion of the local superior.⁵⁰⁰

c. The term of office of the consultors corresponds with that of the local superior. They can be re-appointed.⁵⁰¹

9.103 a. The first consultor represents the superior in case of her absence or inability to act.

b. If the office of local superior becomes prematurely vacant, the provincial entrusts the government of the house to the first consultor until the appointment of a new superior.⁵⁰²

9.104 The local superior calls meetings with the consultors; the latter can propose a meeting.⁵⁰³

9.105 a. The local bursar is appointed by the provincial, with the consent of her council and at the suggestion of the local superior.

b. Her duties at the local level correspond with those of the provincial bursar.

c. The local bursar cannot at the same time be a consultor.

d. In small houses, the superior can undertake the duties of bursar.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁷ See CN 9.57

⁴⁹⁸ JN 208,1; cf. see CN 9.8-9.9

⁴⁹⁹ JN 208,2; cf. CIC 627,1

⁵⁰⁰ JN 209

⁵⁰¹ JN 210

⁵⁰² JN 211

⁵⁰³ JN 213

⁵⁰⁴ JN 214; cf. CIC 636

4.2 Government of a Filiation

9.106 A filiation is an integral part of a local house, with its own base and work.⁵⁰⁵

9.107 The erection and closing of filiations are subject to the same norms as for the erection and closing of local houses.⁵⁰⁶

9.108 If possible, a filiation should consist of at least three members, professed of final or temporary vows.⁵⁰⁷

9.109 a. The members of the filiation are members of the local house. The superior of the local house is the superior of the filiation.

b. The sister in charge of the filiation is an official with a delegated authority to be clearly limited and defined.

c. She must be a finally-professed member.⁵⁰⁸

9.110 a. The sister in charge of the filiation is appointed by the provincial with the consent of her council, after consultation with the local superior and her consultors.

b. The general superior is informed of the appointment.⁵⁰⁹

9.111 New foundations which do not yet fulfil the requirements for the erection of a local house can, until they become local houses, be considered as filiations directly dependent on the provincial or central government. In this case, the superior of the filiation is the provincial or general superior.⁵¹⁰

9.112 a. The extent of authority delegated to the sister in charge of the filiation is to be exactly defined, above all with regard to her care of the members, the fostering of their spiritual life and apostolic tasks.

⁵⁰⁵ JN 215

⁵⁰⁶ JN 216; Cf. CN 9.83-9.84

⁵⁰⁷ JN 217

⁵⁰⁸ JN 218

⁵⁰⁹ JN 219

⁵¹⁰ JN 220

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b. Depending on the extent of her delegated authority, the sister in charge should not remain too long in office (cf. term of office of local superior).⁵¹¹

⁵¹¹ PR 30

Part X

The Growth and Preservation of the Congregatio Jesu

10.1 In adopting the name of Jesus the Congregatio Jesu follows the instruction given to Mary Ward. With it special reverence for the name of Jesus is entrusted to us. This is particularly expressed in the feast of the Name of Jesus on 3rd January, which we celebrate as the official feast of the Congregatio.⁵¹²

10.2 a. All her life Mary Ward loved and revered the Mother of the Lord.⁵¹³ She gave this love and reverence for Mary with her foundation.

b. Mary shared in the life and work of Jesus in a particular way. We commend ourselves and our mission to her, as individuals and as the Congregatio Jesu.⁵¹⁴

c. The official Marian feast of the Congregatio Jesu is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, on 1st January.⁵¹⁵

10.3 Anniversaries and feast days of the Congregatio Jesu are:

1 st January	Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God
3 rd January	Feast of the Name of Jesus
23 rd January	Mary Ward's birthday, 1585
30 th January	Anniversary of Mary Ward's death, 1645
15 th February	Confirmation of the Congregatio Jesu as IBMV, 1877
20 th April	Permission to call Mary Ward Foundress, 1909
7 th June	Confirmation of the particular law of the Congregatio Jesu, 2003 according to the General Congregation 2002: Institutum, Constitutions, Complementary Norms.
13 th June	Approbation of the 81 Rules, 1703
31 st July	Feast of St. Ignatius
22 nd December	Approbation of IBMV Constitutions by the Church, 1978 ⁵¹⁶

⁵¹² See CN 6.49

⁵¹³ O 7; see CN 6.50

⁵¹⁴ O 56

⁵¹⁵ PD 3

Complementary Norms: Part X

10.4 The history of the *Congregatio Jesu* is also a history of its benefactors, with whom it feels bound in a relationship of love and gratitude. The superiors should see to it that they are remembered in prayer, and may determine other suitable ways of expressing our gratitude in a concrete form.

10.5 a. It should be a matter of concern for all members that the *Congregatio Jesu* may continue into the future its service for the salvation of people. Therefore they should make efforts to attract new members, above all by prayer and the convincing witness of their own lives.

b. If possible, in each province/region there should be a member dedicated principally to vocation-promotion.⁵¹⁷

10.6 a. We want to share our charism still more with interested people and to learn from their insights.⁵¹⁸

b. Existing structures to allow interested people to share in a closer way in the life and mission of the *Congregatio Jesu* should be encouraged and extended.

c. Through close contact with them we shall learn about their lives, concerns, and religious attitudes, and about the way they think and feel. In sharing our spiritual heritage with them we can receive much from them to strengthen our own vocation and mission.⁵¹⁹

10.7 Each sister's solidarity with the *Congregatio Jesu* and responsibility towards it find expression in knowledge of its chequered history and its present worldwide mission. We take an interest in the service and the well-being of the sisters, especially those who face difficulties for the sake of Christ and who are in danger because of their commitment.

10.8 All are to take care through reading, meditation and shared discussion to know, value and love the Constitutions and our particular way of life. Even though the Constitutions do not bind under pain of sin, observation of them, not out of fear but out of love, should be a concern for us.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁶ PD 3

⁵¹⁷ See CN 1.1

⁵¹⁸ M 93

⁵¹⁹ See CN 7.30, 9.99; cf. EN SJ 305,2

⁵²⁰ [602]

Complementary Norms: Part X

*“I will always love, highly esteem and choose, if I may be permitted,
this holy Institute.*

*And in myself and my proceedings
I will seriously endeavour to have and exercise
those virtues which are proper and peculiar to this Institute,
truly, solidly and perfectly.”*

(Mary Ward, Resolutions, 1612/1614)

Jesus, say Amen.

