

CONSTITUTIONS

SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Apostolic Institute of Pontifical Right

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PRESENTATION

The whole Society has been united in common celebration and thanksgiving for the joy of receiving our Decree of Approbation on January 1st, 1987, Solemnity of the Mother of God.

This Decree of Approbation includes the texts of 1815 and 1982. We have drawn inspiration from our 1815 Constitutions, and these will always be our primitive text, our initial and original gift. The General Chapter of 1982, responding to the call of the Church and wishing to be part of this movement of renewal, undertook to express our charism for our times. As an Apostolic Institute we are discovering, in a new way, the Heart of Christ at the centre of the sufferings and hopes of humanity.

This Approbation confirms our end: to glorify the Heart of Jesus by our whole life. I want each one in the Society to experience both confirmation and sending forth. Confirmation of our spirituality: union and conformity with the Heart of Jesus, in complete openness to the Spirit; confirmation of our mission: to discover and make known the love of the Heart of Christ; confirmation of our service in His Church: education.

It is also a sending forth which we shall live with renewed hope. As an international congregation we are becoming more and more aware of the call to be a sign of communion among peoples; and we commit ourselves to finding effective ways of responding to the challenges of the world and the needs of our times.

Let us welcome these Constitutions in a spirit of deep faith and let us allow the Holy Spirit to call us forth through these texts, so that the written word becomes truly life-giving. For the Constitutions to become a concrete reality in our lives, we need to pray over them, deepen them, absorb them and above all love them.

Our Holy Mother was a woman of her times, captivated by the love of Christ and open to the calls of the world in which she lived; may she give to each one of us her spirit, her courage and her humility.

HELEN MCLAUGHLIN R.S.C.J.
Superior General

Rome, February, 1987.

DECREE

The Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose Generalate is in Rome, has as its end to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by working for the salvation and perfection of its members through the imitation of those virtues of which the Divine Heart is the centre and model, and by working for the sanctification of souls, especially through the education of youth. This is the ideal which inspires the consecration of its members and promotes the unity of their life and apostolate.

The Superior General has requested the Apostolic See to grant canonical approval of the Constitutions, finalised after prolonged study and reflection, according to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, and adopted by the General Chapter of 1982.

For this reason, the Congregation of Religious and Secular Institutes, after asking advice from its Consultors, after preliminary examination by its Congress, and with the inclusion of certain modifications in the text, drawn up in French and kept in its archives, by this Decree approves and confirms these Constitutions. This procedure conforms to the Common Law of the Church.

This text is to be published in a volume entitled *Constitutions*, comprising two parts. The first part includes the Constitutions of 1815, approved by Pope Leo XII on December 22nd, 1826, together with the *Abridged Plan* and the *Summary*.

The Constitutions of 1815 form a fundamental text which expresses clearly the thought of the Foundress and her plan concerning the nature, end, spirit and character of the Society of the Sacred Heart. As such, it retains its own distinctive strength and importance, and the sisters will ensure that they conform to it.

The text established by the General Chapter of 1982 according to the directives of the Second Vatican Council contains the rule of life which the sisters will most faithfully observe.

The approbation which has been given includes both parts conjointly.

By following in the footsteps of their Foundress, Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, by leading the community life proper to their Institute, by their generous practice of the evangelical counsels, the Religious of the Sacred Heart will strive towards the perfection of their state and will labour to carry out every more faithfully that holy ministry which has been entrusted to them by the Church.

Given at Rome on January 1st, 1987, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

+ V. FAGIOLO
Sec.

J. JEROME CARD. HAMER O.P.
Pref.

ABRIDGED PLAN
CONSTITUTIONS OF 1815

Approved December 22, 1826

SUMMARY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

BRIEF OF APPROBATION

LEO XII. POPE

IN PERPETUAL MEMORY

Raised by the ineffable fullness of Divine clemency to the supreme throne of the Church Militant, it is Our desire to strengthen by the authority of Our Apostolic power, those works which may contribute to the furtherance of the worship of God and to the spiritual profit of the faithful in Christ. Whereas then petition has been made many times to Us to grant Apostolic approbation of the Constitutions and rules of a religious Society of Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus recently (and we are assured lawfully), established in Paris and in a great number of other dioceses both in France and beyond its frontiers, and even beyond those of Europe - a Society which consecrates itself to the virtuous education of girls confided to its care and solicitude; We in a matter of such importance made over the examination of these Rules and Constitutions to a special Congregation of some Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church whose office it is to treat of the affairs of Bishops and Regulars, and likewise to the Secretary of the said Congregation. That which after mature deliberation has been laid down by the said special Congregation is seen in the Decree whose insertion We have ordered as follows:

Decree of the Sacred Congregation specially deputed by our Most Holy Father Leo XII with regard to the approbation of the Constitutions and Rules of the Society of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at Paris.

The Sacred Congregation specially named by our Most Holy Father Leo XII on May 5, 1826, and composed of the Most Eminent and Most Revered Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church of the Sacred Congregation placed in charge of the affairs and consultations of Bishops and Regulars, *Pacca*, President and Reporter, *Bertazzoli* and *Pedicini*, and of the Secretary of the said Congregation, having a voice in the deliberations: furnished with attestations and recommendations from the Archbishops of Paris, Bordeaux and Chambéry, as well as from the Bishops of Amiens, Grenoble, Poitiers, Quimper, Orleans, Le Mans and Autun, in whose dioceses are established houses of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, where the Sisters of the said Society live in community; after having seen, examined and considered them in several sessions, has unanimously approved the Rules and Constitutions of this Society and Institute with certain articles inserted and some changes and corrections proposed by the same Most Eminent Cardinals, and the same Secretary, and has decided to implore the Most Holy Father to order that said Society shall have in perpetuity a Protector chosen among the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church residing near the Holy

See, commissioning the said Secretary to refer the matter to His Holiness. Rome, July 15, 1826.

The Secretary of the Sacred Congregation having given an account of all to our Most Holy Father in an audience of the 21st of the same month and year, His Holiness has approved and confirmed in all things the Decree of the Sacred Congregation, and has graciously acceded to the prayer of the said Sisters by designating and nominating as Protector of their Society the Most Eminent and Reverend Lord Cardinal Pedicini at Rome; thus it will be found in the autograph register of the Decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars kept at the Secretary's office of the same Congregation. In faith of which...Rome, December 16, 1826. *Peter C. Apter Adinolfi*, Sub-Secretary.

Now in order that this same Decree already approved by Us on all points, may stand even more firmly, we confirm it by these present letters Apostolic. Desiring therefore to show Our singular kindness towards these pious Sisters and to each of the persons in whose favour We give these letters and declaring them absolved and freed hereby from excommunication, interdict or other ecclesiastical censures, sentence or penalty that may have incurred in what way soever imposed or for whatever reason; receiving with benignity the petition of these Sisters We confirm by the tenor of these letters and by virtue of the Apostolic authority the Decree inserted above and Our approbation and choice of a Cardinal Protector and all therein said and contained; We order that these presents be and remain always stable, valid and effectual, that they may be issued and obtain their full and entire effect; that they may be in everything and for everything fully favourable to the said Sisters and other persons for whom they are given; that they may be henceforward inviolably observed by all those whom it concerns or shall concern; that every ordinary or delegated judge, and even the auditors of the causes of the Apostolic Palace, the Nuncios of the Holy See, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and finally the delegates *de latere*, judge and pronounce in conformity with these presents We withdraw from all and each the power of judging or interpreting otherwise, and we declare null and of no effect whatever may be done contrary to these presents, by whomsoever it may be, with knowledge or in ignorance, in virtue of whatsoever authority, notwithstanding any apostolic ordinance or constitution or declarations whatsoever to the contrary.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome under the seal of the Fisherman, December 22, 1826, the fourth year of our Pontificate.

For the Most Reverend Cardinal ALBANI
J. CAPPACINI, *substitute*.

ABRIDGED PLAN OF THE INSTITUTE

*In the name, and for the glory of the
Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary*

1.

I. - God, whose providence arranges all things wisely for the good of His Church, has always given her help adapted to her needs. It is, however, especially in this latter age that, in His goodness and generosity, He has enlightened her by revealing the wonderful treasures of grace hidden in the Heart of His Son. Thus it was His will to ensure that this Divine Heart should receive the worship of love and adoration which is its due; He willed also through this devotion to rekindle the torch of faith and the sacred fire of love which irreligion was striving to extinguish in the hearts of all.

2.

II. - The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is marked by characteristics which compel us to see in it the Finger of God: the speed with which it has spread throughout the whole Christian world; the eagerness of the faithful in taking up the practice of the Devotion; the zeal of the Popes and bishops to further its progress; the rich variety of the graces which it has produced everywhere, but especially in France, which is its birthplace; the very nature of the Devotion which has the power to touch the hearts of sinners and rekindle the ardour of the good--everything goes to show that the Devotion is very pleasing to God and is inspired by Him.

3.

III. - It is therefore to meet His designs, so clearly manifested in our age, that this little Society, formed under the authority of the bishops, with the desire and hope of obtaining the solemn approbation of the Pope, is consecrated to the Divine Heart of Jesus, and to the propagation of its worship.

4.

IV. - The aim of this Society is, therefore, to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by labouring for the salvation and perfection of its members through the imitation of the virtues of which this Divine Heart is the centre and model, and by consecrating them, as far as it is possible for women, to the sanctification of others, as the work dearest to the Heart of Jesus. The Society proposes also to honour with particular devotion the most Holy Heart of Mary, which was so perfectly conformed in everything to the adorable Heart of Jesus her Divine Son.

5.

V. - Hence it follows that the spirit of this Society is essentially based upon prayer and the interior life, since we cannot glorify the adorable Heart of Jesus worthily, save inasmuch as we apply ourselves to study its interior dispositions in order to unite and conform ourselves to them.

6.

VI. - The means which the Society adopts for the purpose of glorifying the Sacred Heart of Jesus by labouring for the sanctification of others are chiefly the following four:

1. The education of children as boarders.
2. The free instruction of poor children as day-pupils.
3. Retreats offered to persons living in the world.
4. Such contacts with people outside our communities as spring necessarily from its work.

7.

VII. - The Society is composed of two classes of persons, those destined for teaching, and those who are to be employed in household duties.

8.

VIII. - All who join the Society will be admitted, after due examination, to a postulancy of six months in the house appointed by the Superior General; during this time of probation, which may not be shortened, but may sometimes be prolonged, (never, however, beyond a second period of six months), the Postulant shall make a general confession according to the advice of the confessor. Before taking the habit she shall make a full eight days retreat.

9.

IX. - After the first probation, those postulants who have been considered suited to the Society shall take the habit and make a noviceship of two years, at the end of which they make the three simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and reach the stage of Aspirantship, which lasts for five years unless the Superior General decides to shorten for some this period of formation. During these five years they are employed either in private study or in teaching. Towards the close of the fifth year there is a third probation of at least three months, during which they are occupied solely with their own perfection; they are then admitted to the vow of stability, from which the Holy See alone can release them; and in the case of those who are destined for teaching, the vow of consecrating themselves to the education of youth is added.

10.

X. - In like manner, the coadjutrix sisters cannot be admitted to profession until five years after the close of their noviceship, including the three months of final probation.

11.

XI. - Enclosure shall be observed in the manner explained in the Constitutions.

12.

XII. - The habit must be simple and modest, equally free from affectation and singularity, both in material and pattern; such, in a word, as becomes persons consecrated to God, who, in order to attain their end, keep up frequent contacts with people outside their community.

13.

XIII. - There are no obligatory fast-days other than those of the Church, excepting the vigils of the Feasts of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Holy Heart of Mary. No austerities or penances are enjoined by the rule.

14.

XIV. - In order to advance in the interior life, which is truly the soul of the Society, all must apply themselves to the spiritual exercises, of which the most important are: an hour's meditation every morning, and half an hour in the afternoon; holy Mass; two examens of conscience, the particular examen before dinner, and the general examen immediately before retiring to rest, and spiritual reading. Every week all shall go to confession as a preparation for Holy Communion, which they shall receive at least once a week, but which may be received more frequently and even daily according to the advice of the confessor. Besides the ordinary confessions, the religious are recommended to make every six months an extraordinary confession, following therein the confessor's advice. Finally, they make a retreat of eight days every year, in order to renew their fervour and the spirit of their state. The Office of the Blessed Virgin is recited every day in choir.

15.

XV. - There shall be perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the house of noviceship, of which there shall be not more than one if possible; this adoration shall take place in the other houses only on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, during the octave of the same feast, on the first Friday of every month, which are days specially consecrated to the worship of this Divine Heart, and on all days when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed.

16.

XVI. - Since the aim of the Society is to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by labouring with zeal for the perfection of its members, and the sanctification of souls, those who present themselves for admission must have the qualities which are suited to attain this twofold end; of these the chief are: respectable parentage, a good education, an unblemished reputation, a modest demeanour, good health, an upright mind, sound judgement, an adaptable and docile disposition, a certain degree of knowledge and a willingness to develop those talents and virtues which are suited to their vocation; but above all, they should have a relish for holy things, a sincere desire to give themselves unreservedly to God, and complete indifference to the places and employments to which obedience may call them.

With regard to the admission of subjects, the Society conforms itself on all points to Canon Law.

17.

XVII. - Moreover, on entering the Society, the Postulants must make known to the superior, or to the persons appointed by her, their previous situation and manner of living; they must speak to her openly about their tastes and their natural likes and dislikes.

18.

XVIII. - It is also very important to tell those who present themselves for admission, that for the greater good of the Society, and for the spiritual advancement of its members, they may neither receive nor write any letter without leave of the superior, or of the person appointed by her, who after reading it will forward it or keep it back, as she may think best in Our Lord. They must likewise be forewarned, that as all should be animated by a sincere spirit of charity, they must contribute to their mutual sanctification, and be prepared to manifest the failings and faults of their sisters when they are required to do so by their superior.

19.

XIX. - They will retain the ownership of their personal and real property, but from their entrance into the Society they cease to have the free disposal of it.

20.

XX. - All these dispositions are equally required of those who present themselves to be coadjutrix sisters, with the exception of such instruction and talents as relate to the education of youth, and these must be compensated, in their case, by experience in household work, or at all events by good-will and aptitude for acquiring it.

21.

XXI. - The Society is governed by a Superior General, elected for life by a Council representing the body of the Society. She has her own private council, also named by the General Council, and a Cardinal Protector residing near the Holy See.

22.

(Suppressed in 1826).

23.

XXII. - The Society does not bind itself to its members until they make their final vows; but up to that time the Society retains the right of dismissing them for grave causes, and then by the very fact the subject is released from her vows.

CONSTITUTIONS OF 1815

APPROVED DECEMBER 22ND, 1826
SUMMARY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

24.

The Constitutions are divided into four parts: the first treats of the choice of suitable subjects for the Society; the second, of the means of forming them to the virtues and perfection of the Institute; the third, of the means which the Society employs for labouring for the sanctification of souls; the fourth, of the government of the Society.

FIRST PART OF THE CHOICE OF SUITABLE SUBJECTS FOR THE SOCIETY

25.

Reason and experience teach that, whatever care is taken to discern the vocation of those who present themselves for admission into any society, mistakes may and do occur. On the other hand, sometimes, those really called may subsequently lose the grace and spirit of a true vocation by unfaithfulness; this first part must therefore, comprise two divisions regarding (1) the admission of subjects and (2) their dismissal. These will form the subject-matter of two chapters

CHAPTER I

The Admission of subjects

The first Probation or Postulancy

26.

I. The power of examining and admitting to the first probation belongs exclusively to the Superior General, who can delegate it to whom she thinks fit. But as the whole well-being of the Society depends primarily on the choice of subjects, she shall be careful not to entrust the responsibility for this important work to any but those who are enlightened, prudent, imbued with the spirit of the Institute, and full of ardent zeal to obtain for the Sacred Heart of Jesus the honour to which it is so fully entitled.

27.

II. - Those whom the Superior General appoints to examine subjects shall keep faithfully the particular rules laid down for this duty, and give an exact report to the Superior General, or to whomsoever she has empowered to admit subjects to the first probation.

The postulants must above all fulfil the conditions required for admission into religion by the general law of the Church, unless a lawful dispensation has been obtained from the Holy See.

28.

III. The qualities required of every postulant, who wishes to glorify the Divine Heart of Jesus by consecrating herself to God in this Society, are exterior and interior.

Exterior qualities

29.

- IV. - 1. She must be of legitimate birth, and her family must be respectable and respected.
2. She must always have borne an unblemished reputation in the world, and never have pursued a course of conduct likely, if not to forfeit character, at least to leave behind it painful recollections.
3. It is desirable that she should not be under fifteen or over thirty years of age.
4. She must have had a good education.
5. Her health must be good, and she must be free from any disease or notable infirmity that would unfit her for the works or labours of the Society.
6. Her demeanour should be modest and unaffected.
7. Lastly she must be free, and have no tie or commitment in the world. Although widowhood is not an absolute impediment to admission, it is a strong reason for accepting the candidate only after making sure that she has all the qualities required by the spirit and end of the Society. The examination of widows must therefore be stricter, and their admission less readily granted, especially if they have young children who have claims upon their care. Similar caution must be observed in the case of those who have tried their vocation in other religious houses.

Interior qualities

30.

V. - She must have a balanced temperament, neither over inclined to melancholy nor disposed to superficiality and frivolity; also a sound judgement, a frank and open character adaptable to the will of superiors and conducive to union of minds and hearts, knowledge and accomplishments proper to a woman and in keeping with the aim of the Society, viz.: the instruction of young girls; or at least, in default of this knowledge, aptitude and goodwill to acquire what is wanting.

31.

VI. - As to her vocation, she should have an upright and pure intention of glorifying the Sacred Heart of Jesus by working at her own perfection and for the sanctification of others, a sincere desire and firm resolution of giving herself entirely to God by placing herself unreservedly at the disposal of superiors, with complete indifference as to the places and work to which obedience may call her.

32.

VII. - The more these various qualities are found united in the candidate, the more fit will she be judged for the work of the Society. In like manner, she will be judged less fit in proportion as they are wanting. The prudence of the Superior General or her representative must decide what is strictly required to prevent a wrong choice, and as this just discernment can come only from God, it is of the utmost importance that whoever examines and admits subjects should prepare her soul for the light of the Holy Spirit, by purity of intention and frequent recourse to prayer.

33.

VIII. - She should not, however, rest satisfied with this examination, but should also prudently make enquiries outside, of those whose knowledge of the candidate can best supply information regarding her; unless indeed she be already well known to some members of the Society.

34.

IX. - When there is every reason to think, before our Lord, that the postulant has all the qualities necessary to meet the requirements of the Society, she is admitted to the first probation in whatever house the Superior General may appoint.

CHAPTER II

The dismissal of subjects

35.

I. - In this chapter there are four things to examine: 1. Who can be sent away, and by whom? 2. On what grounds? 3. In what manner? 4. How to deal with those who leave the Society, either by dismissal or of their own accord?

1. Who can be sent away, and by whom

36.

II. - Anyone can be sent away, not only during the noviceship, but for grave reasons even at any time before the final vows. The power of dismissal belongs, of right, only to the Superior General in agreement with her council; she may however delegate it to others. Though great prudence and circumspection are required in admission, still greater should be employed in dismissal. She should then have recourse to prayer, and weigh with tears, before God, the necessity of so rigorous a measure.

2. On what grounds

37.

III. - These grounds may concern the service of God, the general interests of the Society, the good of the subject, or that of persons in the world.

38.

IV. - The first is the known existence in a member of the Society, of some habitual fault or vice, grievously offensive to God and incorrigible.

39.

V. - The second, if the person is deemed harmful or burdensome to the Society; this may be either from some defect of character which she will not correct, and which would make her a scandal to others, or from manifest incapacity, for the end proposed by the Society; or again, on account of some notable infirmity which she had concealed at her examination.

40.

VI. - The third, if the person has not strength to stand the labour or fulfil the duties of the Society without great prejudice to her health; unless this is a consequence of services she has rendered to the Society; or again, if she experiences repugnances, difficulties and troubles of mind which she cannot conquer.

41.

VII. - The fourth, if the person cannot remain in the Society without leaving unfulfilled commitments she had entered into in the world, and which she had not made known before entering religious life.

42.

VIII. - The above reasons would be even more serious grounds for lawful dismissal, if the person had deliberately concealed them when she was examined for admission to the Society.

3. In what manner subjects are to be dismissed

43.

IX. - In dismissing a subject, the superior has three things to observe; the first concerns herself; she must decide only after having maturely weighed the reasons for and against, after having, with all the prudence inspired by christian charity, consulted those who are able to enlighten her, after having had recourse to our Lord by fervent and humble prayer to know His Holy Will, and when she has fully convinced herself by all these means that such is indeed the Will of God.

44.

X. - With regard to the person dismissed, the superior should act prudently, that her leaving may be effected quietly, without prejudice to her reputation, with charity and kindness, that she may carry away with her no ill-feeling against the Society, but may, on the contrary, retain her affection for it as much as possible. The superior should return her dowry to her, helping her if necessary, and giving her wise advice for the regulation of her conduct in the world, or for her choice of a state of life.

45.

XI. - With regard to those both within and without the house, great circumspection and care should be used, that edification and charity may not suffer from a step demanded by prudence. Therefore, details that need not be made known should be kept strictly private, and things should be managed so that on the one hand those within, while retaining their affection for the dismissed and pitying her lot, may profit by her example to exercise greater vigilance over themselves, and that on the other hand, her friends and relatives in the world may not be prejudiced against the Society on account of the just severity it exercises, but may rather esteem it more highly seeing the care with which it excludes those who have no vocation.

4. How to deal with those, who, having been dismissed from the Society, or having left of their own accord, seek for re-admission

46.

XII. - Although it may be said that generally speaking, those sent away should not be re-admitted, yet if one who has been dismissed seeks to be received again, an exception may be made if the Superior General, having consulted her council, can satisfy herself that the causes for dismissal no longer exist, and that the return of the subject will tend to the glory of God and the edification of others; the consent of the Holy See must however be obtained if the person in question had taken her vows in the Society. The Superior General should consider before God whether any reparation is to be required of the person received again, and if so, what reparation, and if it would be better to send her to another house, rather than take her back into the one she had left.

47.

XIII. - If the petition for re-admission is addressed to a local superior instead of the Superior General, the local superior should not receive the person into the house; but if, having heard her reasons, she judges them worthy of the attention of the Superior General, she should lay them down before her in writing, and act in accordance with her reply.

48.

XIV. - If the person who asks for re-admission had not been dismissed, but had left of her own accord, the Superior General shall consider whether she left with or against the approval of her superiors; whether her departure were the result rather of violent temptation than of an habitual dislike to her state of life accompanied by numerous infidelities; whether her qualities and talents are of a high order, such as would render her remarkably useful to the Society, and whether she has given for some time, signs of sincere repentance. In accordance with these considerations, maturely weighed before God, the refusal or re-admission will be decided on by the Superior General, who will obtain any permissions required.

SECOND PART

THE MEANS FOR FORMING SUBJECTS TO THE VIRTUES AND PERFECTION OF THE INSTITUTE

49.

As the pursuit of our perfection is not to be limited to the time of noviceship alone, but must last throughout life, we shall treat of the different stages of religious life according to the Institute of the Society.

1. From the postulancy until the beginning of noviceship.
2. From the beginning of noviceship until first vows.
3. From first vows until profession.
4. From profession until death.
5. We shall devote a chapter to the time of sickness, and the spiritual help to be given to the sick.
6. Of funeral services and prayers for the dead.

Each of these subjects will take a chapter.

CHAPTER I

Postulancy

50.

I. - When, after careful examination, it is decided before God that the person who presents herself seems to possess the qualities that will fit her to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the means which the Society uses to attain this end, she is admitted to a first probation in whichever house the Superior General thinks most suitable under the circumstances and most advantageous for her.

51.

II. - Six months is the length of this first probation; it cannot be shortened, but it may sometimes be prolonged, if the Superior General thinks it expedient, not however beyond a second period of six months. During this time, the postulant shall be under the special charge of one of the professed religious, named by the superior, and she should be examined separately by three choir professed, chosen by the Superior Vicar, to whom they shall send direct in writing the opinion they have formed about her. She shall dress as she might have done in the world, but simply and modestly.

52.

III. - As the chief aim of the first probation is to afford opportunities for the postulant and the Society to become mutually acquainted, the former shall be admitted to the principal community exercises, except to spiritual conferences where faults are told, and to community meals. At other times she shall not have conversations with any one in the house, except with the religious who has charge of her, without special permission from the superior; still more, of course, should all conversation with people outside the community be forbidden unless, in particular cases, which should be rare, the superior allows it for good reasons; neither may she write or receive any letter without leave of the superior, who after having read it, shall deliver or retain it as she thinks best in the Lord.

53.

IV. - As, during this time of probation, the postulant cannot hold any office in the house, she shall have a special order of day to regulate her occupations hour by hour.

54.

V. - As soon as she has entered, she shall prepare for her general confession, as set down in the Plan of the Institute (para. 8).

55.

VI. - To test the measure of her strength and goodwill, various acts of humility, mortification, poverty and obedience, shall be gently assigned to her, and the fervour and fidelity with which she performs them shall be noted.

56.

VII. - The local superior shall be careful to send a true report to the Superior General, who, after six months of probation, unless a longer period is needed to test the person's vocation, shall admit the postulant to the noviceship, or else she shall tell her that she is not called to the Society. In the latter case the rules laid down in the first part of the Constitutions shall be observed in her dismissal.

CHAPTER II

Noviceship

57.

I. - When a postulant has confirmed the favourable opinion formed of her at her examination, by her good conduct during the time of her first probation, she shall be admitted to the noviceship.

58.

II. - There should be as far as possible only one house of noviceship, unless the Society increases so much that one is insufficient.

59.

III. - The noviceship lasts two years. The habit adopted by the Society is taken on entering it, with the differences proper to the novices.

60.

IV. - Besides the spiritual exercises common to all the members of the Society, such as meditation for an hour in the morning, and half an hour in the afternoon, Holy Mass, spiritual reading, the examen before dinner and before retiring to rest, the novices have special exercises, which will be explained in greater detail in the regulations for the noviceship.

61.

V. - Foremost amongst these exercises should be placed spiritual conferences either on the practice of religious virtues, or on the truths and obligations of the Catholic religion, according to the order and method of the Catechism, which they are bound to know all the more accurately as they are called by their state of life to teach it to others.

62.

VI. - Besides the public conferences, the novices have from time to time, in accordance with their spiritual needs and the rules of prudent direction, private interviews with the mistress of novices; they shall open their hearts to her with great confidence as to a kind mother full of tenderness and charity.

63.

VII. - In order to avoid all that might disturb union or impair community spirit, they must not make use of any private devotion or practice, and if they bring in with them any such from the world, they should make it known to the mistress and be ready to lay it aside without hesitation if she thinks fit.

64.

VIII. - If anyone perceives that one of her sisters is suffering from great anxiety of mind, or that she gives any cause of scandal to others by her words or actions, she should, after having recollected herself before our Lord, inform the mistress of novices in a spirit of charity, so that she may prudently find some way of helping her.

65.

IX. - They go to confession every week, and they must endeavour to prepare themselves to receive holy communion on all Sundays and feast days. Their communions may be more frequent with the leave of their confessor. Every six months they make a review of their spiritual state. The review at the end of the year should be made at the same time as the retreat of eight days.

66.

X. - Among the exercises proper to the noviceship, they must particularly value and embrace with special fervour the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Having in view the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, source and symbol of the chief benefits which the love of Christ has bestowed on us, they must adore Him in the most Holy Sacrament in which His Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity are really present, and they must do all in their power by the purity of their homage, the fervour of their love, and the fullness of their oblation, to make reparation to Him for the outrages He everywhere receives. They must enter into the inner feelings and attitudes of this Divine Heart as far as they can with the help of grace.

67.

XI. - Since they are called to consecrate themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the three vows of obedience, poverty and chastity, their chief aim must be to make daily progress in the practice of these three virtues. The mistress of novices must take care to give them opportunities for this by exercising them in the acts proper to these three virtues, according to their strength and the measure of grace that she perceives in each one of them. In order, however, to enter into the spirit of their Institute, whose end is the honour and glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and which proposes to them this Divine Heart as the centre and model of all virtues, they must consider it their most sacred duty and most sweet occupation to contemplate, study and know intimately the interior dispositions of the Sacred Heart with regard to obedience, poverty and chastity, in order to conform and unite themselves closely to them.

68.

XII. - Therefore with regard to obedience, they must consider the love which the Heart of Jesus had for this virtue, since He came amongst men to minister, not to be ministered unto, and made Himself obedient even to the death of the cross. They must study in this Divine Heart the qualities of true obedience, which places the whole being in dependence on God; they must learn from Him to obey in all things with alacrity, with simplicity, with joy, with love, ever ready to sacrifice without a moment's hesitation their likes and dislikes, their will, their judgment, so as to reproduce in themselves more perfectly the interior and exterior obedience of Jesus Christ, whose Heart was enamoured of this virtue because he considered in those creatures to whom He freely subjected Himself the instruments of the will of His Father; they must ever bear in mind that their superiors, whoever they may be, hold the place of God, that they truly obey God when they obey them. Hence they must close their eyes by a blind obedience to the faults and the qualities of the person who commands, and to the usefulness or uselessness of the thing commanded; they must receive all orders, even the least sign of the superior's will, as the expression of God's will; they must hasten to carry out these orders with perfect submission of mind and heart, and they must obey with the same perfection and on the same principle, every person in the house to whom the superior has entrusted any share of her authority, and even the coadjutrix sisters in all that belongs to their various offices.

69.

XIII. They must also go to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to draw thence the esteem and love of poverty, which was the object of the most tender affections of this Divine Saviour, and of which He has given us such touching lessons in the manger and on the cross, having espoused it from His birth that it might be His inseparable companion till death. In order to conform themselves to the dispositions of this Divine Heart, they must cherish poverty as their mother, and rejoice to feel its effects sometimes in their food, their rest, their lodging and clothing.

They must renounce all affection to what they possess in the world, and they may neither give, receive, lend, borrow, nor keep in their possession anything whatever without the permission of the mistress of novices.

As to the ownership of their goods, they only strip themselves of it when they make their last vows, which may not be made before the age of twenty-five years; and, in order to proceed in this matter according to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and not blindly to follow the impulse of flesh and blood, they should have recourse, with the sanction of the superior, to the enlightened judgment of a prudent and disinterested person; and in the course they afterwards adopt, they should decide on what is most likely to glorify God, to be a good example to others and to preserve the bonds of union and charity in their families.

70.

XIV. - Finally, with regard to chastity, they must strive to imitate as far as in them lies, the purity of the Heart of Jesus Himself, who out of love for this virtue willed to be born of a Virgin, and in dying gave her as a Mother to the virgin disciple, who by this precious quality had already obtained special favours from His Divine Master.

71.

XV. - In the same manner they should strive to acquire all other virtues in the degree which befits the holiness of their vocation; that is to say, that the Heart of Jesus should be to them as an open book in which they study all that concerns each particular virtue. From the esteem which the Heart of Jesus had for these virtues, and the manner in which He practised them, they themselves must learn the esteem in which they should hold them and the manner in which they should put them in practice, so that afterwards when they are called upon to perform acts of these different virtues, they need only cast one look upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus in order to conform and unite themselves to His interior dispositions.

72.

XVI. - The virtues to which they should particularly attach themselves as being the most dear to the Heart of Jesus are, first, humility and meekness. "Learn of Me," says Jesus Christ, "that I am meek and humble of Heart." Faithful to this lesson of their Divine Spouse, they must always have a very low opinion of themselves, placing themselves in spirit below and, as it were, at the feet of all, being always ready to yield to every one in all which is not at variance with their service of Jesus Christ and the honour due to Him, always disposed to render to every one with affection the services that are the lowest and most abject in the eyes of the world. They must remember that Jesus Christ their Spouse called Himself, by the mouth of his prophet, a worm of the earth and an outcast of the people; and in order to conform themselves as far as in them lies to these dispositions of His adorable Heart, they must consider themselves as worthy only of contempt; and they must receive with humility and meekness and, as far as they can, with joy, slights, rebukes, penances and humiliations from whatever quarter they come.

73.

XVII. - They must love and desire with all their hearts that beautiful simplicity so pleasing to the Heart of Jesus, which banishes all pretence and dissimulation, keeps at a distance all the silly cunning of self-love, chooses always the most straightforward and obvious line of conduct, leads us to deal with our neighbour without pretension or constraint, without affectation and without guile, but with modest ease and sincere and cordial affection; finally, that simplicity which, with regard to God, leads the soul to seek in all things only what is most pleasing to Him, in conformity with the Heart of Jesus, without thought of self or self-interest.

74.

XVIII. - With regard to the practice of charity, they must remember that Jesus Christ has proposed to us all His Divine Heart as a model of this virtue especially, in saying to us: "Love one another as I have loved you." Hence it is from this Divine Heart that they must draw the love of this virtue and the manner of practising it; in this divine school they must learn to love one another with a love of charity, that is a love which has God alone for its principle and its end; to forestall one another, according to the precept of the apostle, with marks of esteem, respect and good-will; to yield to the desires of their sisters in all that is just and reasonable; to sympathize with them in their troubles, to bear with their

failings, their weaknesses, their importunities; to avoid all divisions, all strife, all that would disturb peace and impair the union of hearts.

75.

XIX. - But to give pleasure to the Heart of Jesus whose love embraces the whole human race, they must above all be on their guard against particular friendships, the bane of religious communities, the scourge which proves most fatal to fraternal charity, the most frequent source of unjust preferences, jealousies, murmurings, antipathies, disputes and divisions, and which, it may be added, even endanger chastity, that perfect chastity at least which is both the principle and the fruit of the pure love of God, which secures to Jesus Christ all His rights and ensures His dominion over the hearts of His spouses. Thus as soon as they feel too tender an affection for any one whomsoever, they must hasten to stifle it in its germ by vigilance, prayer, avoidance of whatever fosters such a friendship, and the practice of interior discipline.

76.

XX.- Nevertheless, the spirit of their vocation and the honour which they should render to the Heart of Jesus, to which they are devoted and consecrated, require that they should not confine themselves to taking It as their model and uniting themselves to It in the practice of the different virtues; they must also in all their actions, even in those that are most common and ordinary, cast their eyes on this adorable Heart and seek in It the dispositions and interior spirit in which they should perform them, since there is not one of them to which this Divine Master has not willed to lower Himself in order to be in all things our model.

77.

XXI. - Therefore with regard to the care due to the body, they must endeavour in going to the refectory and in taking their food, to enter into the interior sentiments of the Heart of Jesus when He ate with His disciples. Their recollection during the prayer which should always precede and follow each meal, their attention in listening to the reading which accompanies it, their modesty and temperance in the use of food, in a word, their whole exterior conduct, should show that they are interiorly united to the Heart of Jesus.

78.

XXII. - In the same conformity to the dispositions of the Heart of Jesus they must take their repose at night, in order to repair their strength to consecrate it to the service and glory of God; it is then particularly that they must observe both in dressing and undressing the rules of the most perfect modesty; they must also be very punctual in rising at the first sound of the bell and in going to bed at the appointed hour, and as in falling asleep their last thought should be of something holy, so on awaking their first care should be to raise their hearts to God, uniting themselves to the inner dispositions of the Heart of Jesus Christ.

79.

XXIII. - During the hours assigned to relaxation and recreation, they must behave with a gentle and modest cheerfulness; their conversation should always include something which will encourage love of Jesus Christ and foster the desire to spread the worship of this Divine Heart.

80.

XXIV. - Finally, let them be thoroughly penetrated with the thought that their whole perfection corresponds to the union which they should have with the Heart of Jesus, by conformity of their sentiments, affections and will.

81.

XXV. - Let them at the same time remember that they will never attain this union which is so desirable, unless they withdraw themselves, as far as in them lies, from dissipation of mind and heart, unless they seek to establish themselves in habitual recollection; in a word, unless they strive with serious application to become truly interior persons.

82.

XXVI. - And as silence is the soul of this interior life of recollection, let them never speak without real necessity out of the hours appointed for recreation, and when it is necessary to speak at other times, let them do so in a few words and in a low voice.

83.

XXVII. - In order to remove as far as possible every obstacle to this interior life, they must make to Jesus Christ, whom they choose for their Spouse, the sacrifice of all they held dearest in the world, resolving never to love anything but in Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ. They must therefore be quite ready to give up all contacts with persons of the world, either in conversation or by letter, except inasmuch as the mistress of novices thinks well for the glory of God, and this permission she should give only very rarely; moreover, they must faithfully conform to what is laid down in the common rules on the subject of visitors and letters.

84.

XXVIII. - Finally, at all times and on all occasions, they must keep careful guard over their senses, which are, as it were, the doors of the soul, and especially over their eyes, their ears and their tongue. By this continual vigilance, they will prevent the confusion and disorder which negligence on this important point so easily causes; thus they will be able to keep themselves in peace and in a sweet union of heart with the Heart of Jesus Christ; a union which is the special end to which they are called by the grace of their vocation; a union towards which, consequently, they should unceasingly tend; a union which, in one word, will be the measure of their perfection. The perfection to which the novices must tend, shows us with what care the Superior General should choose the person to guide them, and show them how the difficulties in their path may be overcome. There is no office more important, because as there is only one house of noviceship, all the hope of the Society is founded upon it.

85.

XXIX - Thus the mistress of novices should be as far as possible a person of eminent virtue, thoroughly acquainted with the spirit and rules of the Institute, gifted with prudence and wisdom, and, above all, closely united with the Sacred Heart of our Lord. She should, as far as in her lies, be to her novices what our Divine Master was to His disciples, and strive to reproduce His humility, His charity, His goodness, His gentleness and His patience. She must not be surprised at the defects and imperfections she will meet with in the souls of these beginners entrusted to her, but remembering what our Lord's first disciples were, she shall place all her confidence in Him.

86.

XXX. - Like Him she should aim at forming the novices rather by example than by precept, and at leading them to God rather by love and confidence than by fear; like Him she should adapt her teaching and the trials she imposes on them to their character and strength, and to the measure of grace she observes in each one. She shall often speak to them of the inestimable benefit of their vocation by which they are called to a loving union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the glorious work of making known and spreading its worship; but she shall make them understand well

that they can only reach this end by renouncing and dying to self. She must never cease to lead and encourage them to this holy and necessary abnegation, helping them by all the means that ingenious and unwearied charity can suggest, and above all by giving them opportunities for practising humility, obedience and self-renunciation. But at the same time she must make them understand what a mistake it would be to be frightened at the difficulty of attaining the high perfection to which they are called, since they are certain to find in the Heart of Jesus an inexhaustible source of strength, grace and consolation. She must show them our Blessed Lord giving them His Heart with His virtues and merits to supply for their weakness, and remind them of what the apostle says: "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me;" she must teach them to appreciate the consoling truth that whatever may be their poverty and spiritual misery, if in prayer, in distress, in suffering, and in all their ordinary actions, they form the habit of uniting themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they will share in all Its merits.

87.

(Suppressed in 1826).

88.

XXXI. - Desirable as it would be, in order to obtain a more perfect unity of feeling and action, for the mistress of novices to take sole charge of the noviceship with all its details, yet as the labour might be beyond her strength, the Superior General may, when she thinks it advisable, give her an assistant whose duty it will be to lighten her burden and supply her place in everything that she cannot do herself. But it is of the greatest importance that this sub-mistress should be so united in heart and mind with the mistress of novices as to do nothing except by her initiative and direction, and that she should be most careful to foster the confidence of the novices in their mistress, just as the latter should always direct it towards the Superior General, whose representative she is.

CHAPTER III

From first vows till profession

89.

I. - When after two years of noviceship- the Superior General decides that a novice is well fitted for the end that the Society proposes to itself, she shall present her for examination to the bishop, and with his approbation admit her, with the consent of her council, to her first vows, that is to say, to the three simple vows of obedience, poverty and chastity. These she shall make in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, before members of the household alone, according to what is prescribed in the Ceremonial, which should be approved by the local bishop.

90.

II. - Bound thus to the Society, she must receive with holy indifference and perfect abandonment to the Will of God her obedience for whatever house the Superior General decides, whether to fulfil the duties of mistress to the pupils, or to continue her own education.

91.

III. - When leaving the exercises of the noviceship to work in the service of their neighbour, they must carefully beware of thinking that they are entering on a course of greater freedom, in which there will be less restraint and subjection; an error so pernicious would soon lead to relaxation and loss of interior spirit; on the contrary, they must regard

each step in religious life as a step further towards that perfection at which they must aim until their last breath. They have in fact just committed themselves to this before God by making their first vows, and they must feel that it would be a strange abuse of grace and great Infidelity to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, if after completing the five years which follow this first commitment, they were to reach the time for making their last vows more backward in interior life and the virtues of their state than they were at the end of the noviceship.

92.

IV.- It is to guard against a falling off which would be so much to be regretted, that the five years which precede the last vows are regarded as a continuation of the noviceship, whose exercises and practices are kept as far as they can be combined with application to study or teaching.

93.

V. - The aspirants shall have the same trustful and filial relationship with their superior as they had with the mistress of novices. They renew their vows twice a year, at the periods stated in the Ceremonial and with the approbation of the local bishop.

94.

VI. - Until their last vows they continue to make a review of their faults to their confessor every six months: this review takes place at the time of the two retreats which they make each year; one of three days towards the middle of the year, the other of eight days towards the end; besides these two retreats they may with advantage make a day's retreat every month with the superior's permission.

95.

VII. They must regard the duties they have to fulfil towards the pupils, as a precious means of putting in practice, for the glory of the Heart of Jesus, the virtues which they have striven to acquire during their noviceship; they must watch over themselves with the greatest care, in order that their whole conduct towards the young pupils may show only humility, simplicity, zeal, gentleness and charity.

96.

VIII. - If they are allowed to have any special preference with regard to the children educated or instructed in their houses, it is evident that this predilection would be just and praiseworthy if it is directed towards the poor children admitted as day-pupils; they must therefore consider it a privilege to be employed in classes for the poor, whose state of life had such charms for the Heart of Jesus that He chose to be born, to live, and to die in extreme poverty.

97.

IX. - They must, above all, perfect themselves more and more in obedience to the superior and every other person who has authority over them; an obedience which will be full of sweetness, consolation and merit for themselves, if they are faithful in considering in their superior the person of Jesus Christ, to whom they have consecrated themselves through love, and to honour His divine Heart by the imitation of its virtues.

98.

X. - They must look upon the professed as their mothers in Jesus Christ, and on all occasions give them marks of respect, deference and tender affection.

99.

XI. - They must be full of consideration and charity towards the coadjutrix sisters, looking upon their lowly and hidden life with a secret appreciation and a certain envy, and be always disposed to render them every service in their power as far as obedience enjoins or permits.

100.

XII. - During these five years of which we are speaking, the coadjutrix sisters must apply to themselves according to the duties of their state and their various employments all that we have said of the zeal with which they should fulfil their obligations to strive for perfection.

101.

XIII. - Their state of life is all the more to be prized as removing them more effectually from the occasions and danger of self-love, vain self-esteem and dissipation of mind, to which those are exposed who are engaged in study; and it should be the more dear to them because as it is humble, laborious and hidden, it renders them more like Jesus Christ their Spouse, who chose to pass the first thirty years of His earthly life in obscurity and labour. It is thus that attaching themselves lovingly to the humble and laborious offices of their state of life, through love of Jesus Christ, they will find themselves united in a most especial manner with the sentiments and affections of His Divine Heart.

102.

XIV. - All in general must pay particular attention to the spiritual exercises enjoined by rule, above all to their meditation and to the examination of conscience twice a day; they must be convinced that their need of them is so much greater as without them their exterior occupations would lead infallibly to the loss of interior spirit; they must therefore give to them the full time prescribed, and never omit them without real necessity and the permission of the superior, to whom they must have made it known.

103.

XV. - The perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament established in the house of noviceship shall in other houses be restricted to the first Friday of every month, the Octave of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and days of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; they must as far as possible, make up for this privation by frequently raising their hearts to the Heart of Jesus, to which they should endeavour to be closely united in all their actions.

104.

XVI. - During the course of these five years the local superior shall keep the Superior General informed of their progress in virtue and of their success in studies and teaching, that she may judge who are to be admitted at the end of this time to the final probation. If an aspirant joins to a sufficiently mature age the virtues and knowledge required by the Institute, and if there is reason to think she will be very useful to the Society, the Superior General may, with the advice of her council, dispense her from part of the five years of aspirantship, on condition that at least three years have elapsed since her first vows.

105.

XVII. - This final probation may be made in the house where the person has been living. It shall last three months at least, and be made under the guidance of a religious named by the Superior General; since its object is to work more effectually at personal sanctification, and to become fit for admittance into the body of the Society by the final vows, all kinds of

study shall be suspended, manual work alone being allowed, in order to give more time to spiritual exercises and the practices of interior life.

106.

XVIII. - More time shall therefore, be given to prayer and silence, the spiritual conferences of the mistress of probation shall be more frequent, and the aspirant shall be practised more in acts of humility, obedience, poverty and self-renunciation. Finally, the special order of day, prescribed by the Superior General and the mistress of probation, must be exactly followed; the same will hold good for the coadjutrix sisters.

107.

XIX. - When the time of probation has ended, the Superior General, having obtained the necessary information, shall admit to profession those whom she believes fit, and if there is reason for it, she shall prolong the probation of those who do not seem to her sufficiently prepared, but only within the limits allowed.

CHAPTER IV

From profession until death

108.

I. - At the end of the time of the final probation those who are admitted to profession by the Superior General shall prepare themselves by a retreat of at least eight days, after having been examined by the bishop and having obtained his approbation. On the appointed day, which without a special dispensation cannot be before they have attained the age of twenty-five years, they shall join to the perpetual vows of obedience, poverty and chastity that of stability, as determined in the plan of the Institute. Further, those not destined to be coadjutrix sisters shall make a vow to consecrate themselves for their whole life to the instruction of young girls in the manner laid down by their Institute, although they will satisfy the obligations of their vow in any other employment which obedience may assign to them.

109.

II. - They shall make these final vows in the church, in presence of the Blessed Sacrament immediately before receiving Holy Communion. Not only members of the household shall be present, but moreover some people outside the community, whom devotion may bring to the ceremony. Everything shall be done in accordance with what the Ceremonial prescribes, and with the approbation of the local bishop.

110.

III. - It is by taking these last vows that they enter, properly speaking, into the body of the Society, and become eligible for offices of government and administration; now especially, therefore, they must remember that they are more strictly bound than ever to tend to perfection, since they have just solemnly pledged themselves to it in face of heaven and earth. Moreover it is upon them principally that will rest the whole hope of the Society, which has no other aim than to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by offering Him spouses who are worthy of Him, and who are consecrated to His service for the sanctification of souls according to the spirit and scope of their Institute.

111.

IV. - Their love for Jesus Christ, their zeal for the glory of His Divine Heart, their charity towards others - in a word, all the virtues, whether essential or proper to their holy vocation, should as much excel those to

be found in novices as a person running along the road to perfection outstrips one who is seeking it.

112.

V. - And since the three vows of obedience, poverty and chastity are the basis and foundation of the perfection to which they must ever tend, they shall endeavour to excel in these three virtues so as to be models to those who are still in time of probation.

113.

VI. - With regard to obedience they should be so penetrated with that truth of faith which shows them Jesus Christ in the person of their superiors, that they should receive their orders, their instructions, their reprimands as coming directly from Him; and by the promptitude and modest joy with which they perform all that obedience asks of them, they shall show the union of their own will and judgment with the will and judgment of their superiors, and therefore with the Divine Heart of Jesus. They shall be always ready to change house or work at the least sign of the will of any superior invested with competent authority.

114.

VII. - However, they will not be going against the perfection of obedience when, after having consulted our Lord in prayer, they think it their duty to put their case frankly to their superiors, in all simplicity and humility, having accepted fully beforehand whatever may be decided. As to poverty, although the Society in general, or each house in particular, may possess property in order to attain more effectually and more easily the end which the Society proposes to itself for the service of our Lord and the sanctification of our neighbour, yet all the members who compose it should try to reproduce in themselves the holy poverty of Jesus Christ. Those who are bound more closely to Him by their last vows ought to be a pattern to others in the practice of poverty.

115.

VIII. - But as the practice of every virtue necessarily depends on the esteem and love we have for it, they shall honour and cherish poverty as their mother, and to know its worth they shall consider it in the Heart of Jesus, who had so much esteem and love for this virtue that He chose to be born, to live and to die therein. On all occasions they shall seek to give witness of their affection for holy poverty; thus not only shall they possess nothing as their own, nor give nor lend anything, nor receive anything even as a loan, but they shall watch without ceasing over their own heart to keep it entirely detached from what self-love may desire, and even from what necessity or obedience puts at their disposal.

116.

IX. - Although according to the spirit of their Institute, clothing, food and lodging should be clean, becoming, suitable and free from all singularity, yet they should, out of love for holy poverty, carefully reject all that is at variance with the simplicity and modesty which should characterize the practice of poverty proper to the spirit and end of their Institute. They shall, therefore, avoid in their clothing expensive materials, in their rooms any ornate or useless furniture or other articles, and in their food anything that panders only to pleasure.

117.

X. - But as the practice of religious poverty would be very imperfect if it were limited merely to cutting off superfluities without their experiencing want, which is its natural consequence, they must look upon it as an advantage and a precious gain when they have an opportunity of feeling the effects of poverty by partial privation of what is necessary since they may

then with more confidence and truth unite themselves to the interior dispositions of their Divine Spouse, who, although Master of all the riches of Heaven and earth, lived in the most complete destitution of all things. However, if any such privation be injurious to their health or interfere with the duties entrusted to them, they should inform the superior or the person whose office it is to supply what is wanting.

118.

XI. - Everyone, without exception, must be glad, and even rejoice in our Lord, if in the distribution of things necessary, what is meanest and most common is given to them, and that they are treated as the last in the house; drawing this holy joy from the Heart of Jesus, who, out of love for them, chose to be treated as the last of men and the outcast of His people.

119.

XII. - As to the virtue of chastity, there is nothing to add to what has already been said, since it is clear that by the purity of their mind and heart, and by continual watchfulness over their senses, they must try with the help of grace to imitate the purity of angels and even the purity of the Heart of Jesus.

120.

XIII. - Their exterior must be so regulated that the modesty, gentleness and peace which shall be observed in them may be, as it were, an indication and proof of the purity of their hearts.

121.

XIV. - Called as they are by their Institute to consecrate themselves to the service of their neighbour and to the sanctification of souls, let them never forget that they should be deeply rooted in humility and charity. The nobler and grander their work is in the light of faith, the more they should lower and annihilate themselves in their own hearts. In this deep sense of their lowliness and nothingness they must be ready at all times to accept the lowest work in the house. They must also accept contempt and humiliations, no matter whence they come, as well as the reproofs, mortifications, or penances which the superior may think useful for the good of their soul.

122.

XV. - Whatever may be their seniority or the rank they hold, they shall never take advantage of it to write or receive any letters without the approval of the superior, who has the right to read all letters before they reach their destination, or to have them read by any one she may name.

123.

XVI. - The following are the only exceptions to this important regulation: letters to the bishop, to the Superior General, and the Assistants General need not be shown, nor is any permission required to write them. (Cf. Can. 611).

124.

XVII. - These private letters are taken to be sealed either to the superior or to the admonitrix, and when any one wishes to write to the Superior General or to the Assistants General without the knowledge of the local superior, she shall take her letter to one of the councillors, who shall direct it herself and have it sealed by the admonitrix.

125.

XVIII. - Letters from major superiors shall be sent to the local superior, who will act according to their intentions in delivering them.

126.

XIX. - Finally, all the professed shall every year make a retreat of eight days and a review of their faults from the date of the previous one, to the ordinary or special confessor. They shall renew their vows every year at the time prescribed by the Ceremonial.

127.

XX. - Thus faithful to the grace of their vocation, they will advance more and more in the way of perfection, and prepare themselves for eternal union with their Divine Spouse.

CHAPTER V

Of the time of sickness and spiritual
assistance to be given to the sick

128.

I. - The religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus ought to look on the time of sickness as very precious for advancing in perfection, since it is in this state of humiliation and suffering that they will find more opportunities for uniting themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the practice of humility, obedience, gentleness, patience, mortification and abandonment to the Will of God.

129.

II. - By the practice of this virtue of abandonment they will be moulded to the likeness of Jesus Christ, the Man of Sorrows, and will be an inspiration to those around them.

130.

III. - They shall above all give the example of obedience, reproducing in themselves the submissiveness of Jesus Christ, who was obedient even to the death of the cross, not only by complying with all the arrangements of the superior, but also with the orders of the doctor and the directions of the infirmarians; and as Jesus Christ for the love of them drank the chalice even to the dregs, they shall take for love of Him all the remedies prescribed, however unpleasant they may be.

131.

IV. - They shall often make acts of faith, hope and charity, and as the sickness becomes more serious and dangerous, they shall rouse themselves to a greater sorrow for their sins, to greater confidence in God, to more complete abandonment of their whole being to Him, and to greater desire of seeing and possessing Him in heaven.

132.

V. - But it is above all at the approach of death that they shall remember that in entering the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they have devoted and consecrated themselves to God as victims, in union with the Heart of the Saviour of men, who offered Himself to His Father as a Victim for all mankind. They must endeavour by the conformity of their interior dispositions with those of Jesus Christ at His death, to lose nothing of the value of this final sacrifice which is so glorious to God and so meritorious for themselves, and they must humbly repeat these words of their Divine Spouse - "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum."

133.

VI. - It is then, also, that they will reap the reward of the habit they have acquired during their whole life of uniting themselves in all their actions and in every situation to the Divine Heart of Jesus. What a

consolation in one's last moments on which an eternity depends, to give up one's soul to God in union with the Heart of His Divine Son.

134.

VII. - If it is a duty for the sick person to give good example to her sisters, it is none the less indispensable for those about her to render her all possible spiritual help and service which may give her consolation, alleviate her sufferings and, above all, encourage her to bear them patiently and joyfully so as to prepare herself for the final sacrifice.

135.

VIII. - Now, therefore, more than at any other time, should the superior show the heart of a mother full of tenderness and charity, lavishing upon her sick children all spiritual consolations and assistance according to their need and the gravity of their illness. To fulfil so important a duty according to the spirit of charity, she shall often visit them, and always try to inspire them with thoughts and feelings worthy of a spouse of Jesus Christ, devoted and consecrated to His Divine Heart. She shall send to them those of the community who seem best fitted to console and strengthen them; she shall see that the infirmarians carry out their duties with all gentleness and charity; she shall recommend the sick to the prayers of the community, and have Mass said for them according to their need and the degree of danger.

136.

IX. - She should be especially careful to see that the sick person goes to confession early in the illness, and if the danger increases, she should provide for the administration of the last sacraments before consciousness is lost. At this last moment all shall redouble their prayers to our Lord to draw down upon their dying sisters the powerful graces which are to sustain them in this last trial and prepare them for their eternal reward.

137.

X. - Those detained in the infirmary by long illness without danger of death, should be given the consolation of receiving Holy Communion as often as the illness allows and they themselves desire it, following the direction of their confessor.

Those who are seriously ill, may, as often as they wish during their illness, invite any priest whatever to hear their confession, provided that he be approved to hear the confessions of women.

138.

XI. - Local superiors shall be careful to keep the Superior General and the family of the sick exactly informed of their state.

CHAPTER VI

On funeral and suffrages after death

139.

I. - When a member of the Society has breathed her last, the superior and all those in the house shall lose no time in recommending her soul to God. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be celebrated for the repose of her soul, and the service for the dead and the funeral shall take place in accordance with what is prescribed in the Ceremonial.

140.

II. - The superior shall have a certain number of Masses said for her, and each religious in the house shall offer for her three communions and the rosary three times.

141.

III. - The local superior shall at once notify the death to the Superior General, who will make it known to all the houses, where each choir religious and coadjutrix sister shall offer a communion and say the rosary once for the deceased, recommending her especially to God in her prayers for as long as is suggested by that tender charity which should unite together those consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the centre of all Christian hearts and the bond of their union in time and eternity.

THIRD PART

OF THE MEANS EMPLOYED BY THE SOCIETY
FOR LABOURING FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF SOULS

142.

I. - The principal means are the following four:

1. The education of girls as boarders.
2. The gratuitous instruction of poor children as day pupils.
3. Retreats offered to persons living in the world.
4. Necessary contacts with persons outside the community.

143.

II. - For the success of these means, two things are required of the members of the Society over and above the virtues treated of in the Second Part:

1. The instruction necessary for the efficient fulfilment of their duties.
2. Reasonable and moderate care of health.

144.

III. - Those who are called to work for the sanctification of souls in this Institute ought above all to remember that the first and most necessary means to this end is that they should strive for their own perfection, because nothing helps more to draw down the blessings of God upon their work and the work of the Society.

145.

IV. - It is therefore by steady and solid virtue, by good example and, above all, by obedience and a holy indifference to employments, that they must lay the foundation of the success of their labours for the sanctification of souls and the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to which all the exterior works carried on by the Society must be directed.

146.

V. - Before considering these means in detail, we shall treat: first, of the manner of fitting our religious for them by the knowledge and skills they require, and secondly, of the care to be used in keeping up the strength and health necessary for the labours undertaken by the Institute.

CHAPTER I

Of the instruction given to members admitted to the Society

147.

I. - It is only in the second year of their noviceship that persons admitted to the Society shall begin their studies, and care shall be taken so to temper their application to study and to regulate the time allotted to it, that it may not weaken the spirit of recollection and fervour that they should try to acquire during the noviceship. Those who are studying shall be given a special order of day, which they shall follow exactly.

148.

II. - They may not, even if they possess the necessary knowledge, be employed as Mistresses in the boarding or poor schools, but they may be sent there from time to time as an experiment, and given some subordinate occupation. This may be done most suitably in the poor school, and it will be thus possible to judge of their aptitude for the work of the Society.

149.

III. - For what concerns study, they shall be under the direction of the mistress of studies.

150.

IV. - Those who, after two years of noviceship, are not yet capable of teaching, shall continue their course of study in the house to which the Superior General sends them.

151.

V. - They shall confine themselves purely and simply to those subjects which obedience prescribes for them. They shall try always to keep themselves in the spirit of simplicity and humility, and shall be on their guard against the foolish pretension of becoming and appearing learned; they shall only wish for the knowledge demanded by the spirit of their Institute for labouring in all humility in the service of their neighbour, and glorifying the Heart of Jesus. They shall therefore not use any other books or resources than those allowed by the mistress of studies. Of course no book prohibited by ecclesiastical authority will be found in our houses.

152

VI. - Their consolation for the loss of certain spiritual exercises proper to the time of noviceship, shall be the thought that in applying themselves to study they are laying the foundation of all the good they will do later on for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, an end which piety alone would fail to attain. They shall make up for the other spiritual advantages by the purity of intention that they bring to their work, by their docility towards the mistress of studies, by their constancy in bearing with the weariness and difficulties that they will meet in these new duties, and finally, by the frequent raising of their heart to God.

153.

VII. - They must understand that it would be a very false piety and a real illusion of the devil, to desire practices of devotion to the prejudice of the time allotted to the study which is to fit them for the end the Society proposes to itself. No extra time is to be given to spiritual exercises, lest their application to study may suffer thereby.

154.

VIII. - Their greater or less aptitude for different branches of study should be observed, that they may be employed more specially in those in which they can succeed best; the training of memory should, however, never be neglected.

155.

IX. - Every six months they shall be examined in presence of the superior and of some members of the community. The local superior shall keep the Superior General exactly informed of their attention and progress, in order that the latter, when she judges them capable of it, may employ them as mistresses either in the boarding or poor school.

156.

X. - All those employed as mistresses shall be under the guidance of the mistress of studies, and follow her direction in all that concerns their teaching in the school. They shall have recourse to her in their doubts and difficulties, and give an account to her of their way of accomplishing their duties. Looking on her in this respect as holding for them the place of God, they shall obey her as Jesus Christ Himself. If they thus always unite humility, obedience and self-distrust with their holy zeal for the service of their neighbour, their exterior occupations will be to them a means of constantly growing in grace and in merit, and of glorifying the Sacred Heart of Jesus by working both for their own sanctification and that of others.

CHAPTER II

Of the care to be used in maintaining health and strength

157.

I. - Health and strength are a gift from God, who grants them only that we may use them for His service and glory. It is therefore our duty to watch over their preservation, especially when the labours imposed by our vocation are more important, more arduous and more manifold.

158.

II. - It is for this reason that in the Society, which is entirely consecrated to the service of our neighbour for the glory of the Sacred Heart, the manner of living is simple and ordinary; the food wholesome, and sufficient in quantity, the time allotted for sleep seven hours and half, that neither fasts nor vigils nor austerities are enjoined by rule, with the exception of a fast on the eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and another on the eve of that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

159.

III. - Therefore, no one, without permission, shall perform any extraordinary mortification or penance, without the sanction of authority; but such penances may rightly be taken up with the permission of the Superior who, knowing the obligation, constitution and strength of each

one, shall allow what she thinks conducive to spiritual progress and not injurious to health.

160.

IV. - When any one finds herself seriously affected by the diet, habitation, or any other cause whatsoever, she shall mention it to the superior, first taking care, however, to recollect herself before God, and place herself in the disposition of peaceful acceptance of whatever may be decided on the point.

161.

V. - The superior shall watch with a motherly tenderness directed by Spirit of God to see that nothing is wanting to her daughters of all that is necessary to preserve health, and fit them to bear the labours and fatigues inseparable from their duties. Those who are in charge shall carry out each in her own department the intentions of the superior with that ready kindness which is prompted by charity. They shall even try to discover and to forestall the needs of those to whom anything may be wanting.

162.

VI. - Care shall be taken that mental work is not too much prolonged, but that it is interrupted by some exterior occupations which may serve to refresh the mind and give necessary exercise to the body; none may dispense themselves from assisting at the common recreations without an express permission; besides those hours of relaxation which always follow meals, one afternoon every week shall be given entirely to recreation, reserving only the time of the usual spiritual exercises.

163.

VII. - The time of sleep shall never be shortened without an express permission from the superior, who shall not grant it readily and without serious reasons. If however, any one, owing to her constitution, requires more sleep, she shall tell the superior, who will allow her what wise prudent charity calls for.

164.

VIII. - If anyone is suffering from an infirmity that might become chronic, she shall make it known to the infirmarian and to the superior.

165.

IX. - If she feels unwell, and the indisposition seems to be the beginning of some illness, she shall in like manner make it known, and in this case the infirmarian, with the superior's permission, shall call in the doctor.

166.

X. - The Society, drawing its spirit from the most kind and compassionate Heart of Jesus, makes profession of special charity towards the sick. Thus nothing shall be neglected that could help to relieve their suffering and restore them to health, and whatever expense, privation or inconvenience may be caused by this, the invalid must never be made to feel it, either during her sickness or after her recovery. It is only just to spare nothing for the service of those who do not spare themselves in serving their neighbour for the glory of the Divine Heart of Jesus.

167.

XI. - But the more the Society, like a good mother, is bound to watch carefully over the preservation or restoration of the health of its members, the more also must every individual member trust herself to the watchful care of the superiors and infirmarians in all that concerns the

care of their bodily health. They shall therefore never consult a doctor, nor take anything unusual at meals without a special or general leave.

168.

XII. - Thus all, whilst they are in good health, will find a temperate and regular life a very effectual means of preserving it, and in sickness they will receive all the care and help which tender charity can bestow.

CHAPTER III

Of the boarding school

169.

I. - Christian education of youth is the first and most important means which the Society employs for honouring the Sacred Heart of Jesus to which it is consecrated; all the houses of the Society tend to this end by opening schools for girls amongst whom no day pupil will be admitted. Temporal needs shall be provided for either from the revenues of the foundation, donations or bequests they may have received, or from the fees of the pupils, which shall be fixed according to place and circumstances at so moderate a sum as to make it clear that the Society looks for no fruit from its labours but the glory of God and the good of souls.

170.

II. - Above all, it is necessary that the religious whose vocation it is to work for the education of youth should have a lively sense of the importance of this work and its effectiveness for the spread of the faith, the honour of religion, and the re-establishment in the world of a high standard of morality and of true and solid piety.

171.

III. - Let them reflect that girls educated in their houses are destined in the ordinary course of Providence, to become wives and mothers of families.

172.

IV. - Incalculable good can be done by a truly Christian wife and mother who is solidly virtuous and devoted to all her duties. Many men living in forgetfulness of God and of the faith may be withdrawn from evil and won back to virtue by the example and care, the wisdom, the gentleness and the prayers of a thoroughly Christian wife.

173.

V. - It is certain, at any rate, that the order and regularity of family life, the peace and good behaviour of servants and, above all, the earliest education of children depend principally upon the mother of the family, and that it is through her that the knowledge, love and practice of religion are transmitted to the next generation. Many other good effects besides these will be produced in the world by the example of her virtues and her life.

174.

VI. - The religious of the Society should often ponder deeply the grandeur of this aim, in order to arouse their zeal and enable them to overcome with invincible courage the weariness, difficulty and repugnance they may feel in the course of their duties.

175.

VII. - Let them love to see in the children entrusted to them souls redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ. Remembering that they are His spouses, and that they have been chosen by their God and Saviour to be the

instruments of His mercy towards these souls for whose sake he willed to die upon the cross, they will find only sweetness and joy in all that they may have to suffer to carry out His loving designs for this cherished portion of His flock.

176.

VIII. - Religion should therefore be at once the foundation and the crowning point of the education they intend to give, and consequently the chief subject taught; the rest is only accessory, but yet necessary in its degree, since their object is to form those who, for the most part, are called to live in the world, which they should edify without offence, and whose customs they should know and follow in all that is not contrary to the rules of the gospel.

177.

IX. - Thus, besides the study of religion, they shall apply themselves to that of the secular sciences as far as they may be necessary or useful to a Christian who is to serve God in the world. Accomplishments shall be allowed with due moderation, and special endeavour shall be made to inspire the pupils with a love for work and for those household responsibilities which ought to be the daily occupation of Christian women desirous of fulfilling their duties in the world.

ARTICLE I

Of Religion

178.

X. - Care must be taken to ensure that all the pupils know their Catechism well, and to see that they understand and appreciate all the truths and duties which it teaches.

179.

XI. - They should be taught how to make a good confession, and should be prepared with special care for their First Communion. Some help should be obtained from a priest, who at fixed times will give them instructions on the Catechism in general, and in particular on the sacraments they are to receive, and who, after their First Communion, will continue to give instructions suited to their age on the most important truths of religion.

180.

XII. - Amongst these duties none should be more deeply impressed upon them than the respect, love, and obedience that they owe to our holy Mother the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, and to the Sovereign Pontiff, her visible Head and Vicar of Jesus Christ, attitudes which the members of the Society ought themselves to have drawn from the teaching of Jesus Christ.

181.

XIII. - They shall have a general order of day, which will regulate their occupations and their spiritual exercises, of which the chief are morning and evening prayers, Holy Mass, the offering of their actions to God, examination of conscience, spiritual reading, the visit to the Blessed Sacrament, monthly confession, and communion when they are thought worthy.

182.

XIV. - Above all, nothing must be left undone to ground them firmly in the faith, to inspire them with fear of God, and horror of sin. It is only too common to meet with young people whose tender piety in the course of their religious education gave the fairest promise, and yet who, in the world,

were soon carried away by the love of pleasure. The reason for this may be found in more attention having been paid to inspiring them with those tender feelings of devotion of which many young and warm hearts are so susceptible, than to rooting them deeply in the faith, the fear of God and of His judgements, and the horror of sin that leads to eternal separation from God and the torments of Hell. To establish them afterwards in the practice of a true and solid piety, they must be deeply impressed with the idea that true virtue consists in fulfilling the duties of our state, and that all piety which is not founded on this principle is but a chimera and a most dangerous illusion; nothing must be left undone to give them a love and relish for virtue by forming in them the knowledge and love of our Lord, who by becoming our model puts before us so attractively in His own actions the practice and example of all virtue.

183.

XV. - They should often be reminded that contempt of the world, of its vanities and pleasures, renunciation of self and of our own will, are the basis of the Christian life of which our Lord has made Himself the model. Contempt of, and disinclination for vanity in dress and the slavery of fashion which are so contrary to that humility and modesty which Christianity enjoins, should be early instilled into them. They should be taught the danger of balls and theatres, and made to realize it vividly, and every effort should be made to give them the strength that will enable them to resist the flood of bad example and the seductions of the world that will try to draw them into it. By little sacrifices gently asked of them, they should be gradually prepared to make to God in their life in the world those more painful sacrifices which conscience and salvation require. To train them to this spirit of generosity and sacrifice for God, the great mysteries of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, who offered himself to His Father in sacrifice for our salvation, should often be put before their eyes.

184.

XVI. - After this, it will not be difficult to turn their young hearts, naturally tender and impressionable, towards the Divine Heart of Jesus, and make them see in it the centre and source of all grace, this Heart so loving and so worthy of love, despised, outraged and repaid by the greater number of Christians with the blackest ingratitude; they shall be gently asked what they feel about it, and what they are ready to do to show the Divine Heart of Jesus their love and thankfulness, and to make reparation for the terrible ingratitude of which men and women are daily guilty towards Him. But care must be taken to direct the lively feelings aroused in them prudently and wisely; and only to allow them to act on the impulses of their heart in that measure which on consideration may be judged suitable to their age, their strength, and the spiritual progress of which they are capable. It will be well to leave them always with some unfulfilled desire.

185.

XVII. - They shall also be taught to practise a most tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose Heart shall be put before them as that of the most loving of Mothers and most perfectly conformed to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. They should often hear about her Immaculate Conception, to induce them to give special honour to this wonderful privilege of our Blessed Mother, to whom this glorious title of Immaculate Virgin is so dear that she cannot refuse her help to those who invoke her under it, specially in temptations against the virtue of chastity.

186.

XVIII. - It is thus that the religious of the Society will show themselves worthy spouses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and that by the mediation of

the Heart of Mary, they will offer to Him the hearts of an innumerable multitude of children whom they will have formed upon the model of His own, and who will spread in the world His worship, love and glory.

ARTICLE II

Of the Secular Sciences

187.

XIX. - It suffices to say that the pupils should only be taught what is necessary to be known by persons called to live a Christian life in the world according to the requirements of their state and position. Thus, besides reading and writing, which are for all, they should be given some elementary knowledge of grammar, history, geography and arithmetic; their memory should be cultivated by making them learn by heart what is most necessary for them to know in order to fulfil domestic and social duties and take their place in society.

188.

XX. - At the request of parents, the study shall be allowed of those foreign languages which seem to be for some more or less necessary or at least very useful. There shall therefore be for these languages a special plan of studies, which by fixing the method and limits of the teaching, will banish entirely from it everything that could only tend to foster pride and vanity. This plan shall be based upon the spirit of simplicity and humility characteristic of the religion of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III

Accomplishments

189.

XXI. - Accomplishments require still greater reserve, They shall be allowed only at the parents' express request subject to the discretion of the superior. The strictest supervision will be exercised during the lessons if is necessary to have recourse to secular professors. One of the elder religious should in this case be named by the superior to see that all goes on in accordance with the strictest propriety, and that in so delicate a matter there is no transgression of the limits set by morality of the Gospel which must never be lost sight of.

ARTICLE IV

Manual Work

190.

XXII. - Special attention shall be given to manual work. Love and taste for work shall be instilled into all the pupils as the best means of guarding themselves from the dangers of a frivolous life in the world, of preserving their innocence in it, and fulfilling their duties later on by preferring the happiness of retirement and the home circle to exciting pleasures and a worldly life. They should be taught to sanctify their life, and in general all their occupations by prayer and frequent raising of the heart to God.

191.

XXIII. - Those manual employments should be chosen for them which are most likely to be necessary or useful.

192.

XXIV. - Advantage should be taken of opportunities and means for giving them a knowledge of domestic economy suited to their age and their future position in the world. But special pains should be taken with those who, having finished the ordinary course of instruction, remain at school by the wish of their parents to continue this important branch of education.

193.

XXV. - All the children shall be arranged in different classes according to their age and capacity. Each class shall have its own mistress, and there shall be, moreover, a mistress of studies whose office it will be to direct and help the class mistresses, to superintend all branches of instruction, and to see that everything laid down in the plan of studies is exactly followed. She shall confer with the mistresses according to their need of formation and as far as the superior judges desirable. She shall be present when the pupils are examined before the community and even from time to time at the private classes in order to be able to judge, not only of the progress of the pupils but also of the capacity and application of the mistresses, and to give them suitable advice. When she notices any serious and habitual negligence she should inform the superior in a spirit of charity.

194.

XXVI. - She should be careful to collaborate with the mistress general of the school. It would even be desirable with a view to perfect unity of action that the latter should combine the two offices of mistress general and mistress of studies, if her occupations allow of it and she has the necessary qualities.

195.

XXVII. - At the head of the school is one of the professed whom we have just called the mistress general of the school. She has authority over all the pupils and supervision of the class mistresses in what concerns their duties in the school. She carries on the correspondence with the parents of the children, but she can neither receive nor send away pupils without the superior's consent; her office is to watch over all that concerns the spiritual and temporal good of the children and to maintain the observance of the rule of the school by punishing transgressions and rewarding fidelity.

196.

XXVIII. - It is her duty also to see that order and cleanliness are maintained throughout the school building; she shall therefore have the necessary authority over the coadjutrix sisters who help to take care of the pupils.

197.

XXIX. - She shall keep a register of the dates of entrance and departure of pupils, with suitable notes, as prescribed in her special rule. She shall also have a second register in which she shall note down such observations as she may judge necessary or useful on the character of each pupil, her progress in virtue and in the various branches of education. At stated times she shall send the parents a report on their children's conduct, and in general upon all that concerns them.

198.

XXX. - Moreover, she shall always keep the superior informed of all that goes on in the school, she shall follow her advice and do nothing unusual without her consent.

199.

XXXI. - The mistress general should look upon herself as holding a mother's place to all the children entrusted to her. She shall therefore have for all of them a mother's love and try to gain their confidence by gentleness and kindness; she shall watch with motherly tenderness over the preservation of their health and procure for them when sick, and even personally bestow on them, all the care which tender charity can suggest. But the first and most essential object of her care shall be to watch over the preservation of their innocence and forestall everything that might expose it to danger. She shall therefore watch over them continually, either personally or by means of the religious named by the superior to help her in this supervision, so as never to lose sight of them.

200.

XXXII. - She shall above all, take the greatest precautions to make them always observe the rules of modest reserve; to hinder or break off particular or over-tender friendships, and to prevent them from receiving any books, letters or other papers which she has not looked over and allowed to be given to them. In a word, let her always consider supervision as her most sacred duty, which cannot be neglected without the most disastrous consequences, and let all the religious who share this duty with her have a deep sense of the greatness of their obligation in this matter.

201.

XXXIII. - Finally, to conclude this article concerning the school, which treats of one of the most important works and the chief means that the Society proposes to itself for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, let all the religious whom obedience employs directly in the education and care of the children always remember that it is principally by humility, gentleness and kindness that they will gain the hearts of their pupils; that they will bring the seeds of virtue which they have planted there to maturity; that they will gather with joy the fruit of their arduous labours. Let them therefore be filled with tender and sincere affection for their children, but let the true love they bear them be drawn entirely from the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Their love will then be without weakness, without over-familiarity and without favouritism on account of personal appearance or other external advantages; it will be tender indeed, but lofty, pure and disinterested, and whilst trying to gain the hearts of their children, the religious of the Sacred Heart will aim only at gaining them for Jesus Christ and binding them closely to Him, and thus they will show themselves worthy spouses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

CHAPTER IV

Of classes for the poor

202.

I. - If the religious of the Society are consecrated by their vocation to the education and instruction of youth, they cannot, as spouses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, reject the children of the poor.

203.

II. - If possible, then, there shall be in every house of the Society a place set apart in which classes may be held for the instruction of poor children. It should be entirely separated from the boarding school; the children shall be received and dismissed at fixed hours, but they should be kept as long as possible during the day.

204.

III. - As the eternal and spiritual good of their souls is the object aimed at, the utmost endeavour shall be made to teach them the catechism well, and to give them on the truths and duties of religion all the instruction suited to their age, capacity and station. They shall be taught to know the excellence and merit of poverty, and learn how to sanctify it by an esteem and love for it, based upon the sentiments and example of Jesus Christ.

205.

IV. - Reading and writing shall be taught, and arithmetic also to those to whom it is likely to be useful.

206.

V. - Some manual work, under supervision and guidance, shall be provided for all during part of the class hours, to protect them early from the dangers of idleness, and later on, to procure them means of subsistence and of gaining a suitable and respectable livelihood.

207.

VI. - They shall be divided into classes, according to their age and capacity; each class shall have its own mistress, under the direction of a mistress general, who shall usually be a professed choir religious.

208.

VII. - If the spirit of gentleness and kindness towards their pupils is so earnestly recommended to all the religious of the Society, their tenderest charity should be reserved for those whose poverty makes them specially attractive. Firmness however will be needed for the maintenance of order, silence and quiet in the classes.

209.

VIII. - There will be distributions of prizes during the year.

210.

IX. - It is the duty of the mistress general to exercise supervision over all the children, over the way in which the other mistresses and the special supervisors acquit themselves of their duties, and over the observance of the rule which will embrace all the details relating to this important part of the work of the Society.

211.

X. - From amongst the children presented to her, the mistress general may, without further reference, admit such as she judges advisable, only taking into consideration what will be most pleasing to our Lord. But she cannot send away those she has once admitted, without leave from the superior.

212.

XI. - She shall have a register in which the names of the children with other useful particulars, shall be entered, and she shall often give an account to the superior of the state of the school, the conduct of the children, and the zeal and charity of the mistresses.

213.

XII. - She shall keep in touch by letter with the respective parish priests of the children, to ascertain that they go to Mass and receive the sacraments at the appointed times.

214.

XIII. - She shall receive the parents of the children with cordial interest, and whilst recommending them to second by their good example the care taken of their children by the religious of the Society, she shall prudently give them such advice as she thinks most useful to ensure their own salvation.

215.

XIV. - It is well to repeat here that the religious of the Society will show themselves to be true spouses of Jesus Christ, only in so far as they are full of esteem, zeal and love for this work for poor children, which is incomparably dearest to the Heart of Jesus. They will, therefore, consider as a favour and as an enviable mark of preference the choice made of them to work in this apostolate.

CHAPTER V

Retreats for persons of the world

216.

I. - Experience has proved that retreats are one of the most efficacious means of conversion for those who have fallen into habits of sin and of leading to a more perfect way of life souls upon whom God has special designs.

217.

II. - In order to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by every means in their power, the religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus offer an opportunity for retreats to women living in the world. This work may almost be looked upon as the continuance and consolidation of the good they have done by the education of young girls, to whom it gives the opportunity, after their entrance into the world, of coming back from time to time, to refresh and strengthen those good principles and sense of values which they had acquired during the course of their education, and which the dangers of the world have weakened.

218.

III. - Therefore, in towns where houses of the Society are established every effort that circumstances allow shall be made, with the permission of the Superior General, to obtain suitable premises, adjacent to the convent, for this purpose.

219.

IV. - The building shall be arranged so as to offer a certain number of small bedrooms, and some common rooms, to persons who wish to spend a few days in retreat. In determining who shall be received, the prospect of the greater good which may be achieved for the glory of God should always be kept in view; only those who have already made their First Communion are admissible.

220.

V. - At certain fixed times, and according to the number of persons in retreat, the exercises should be given publicly, by one or more priests, expressly approved by the bishop. This, however, does not preclude the

exercises from being given in private to other persons who cannot come at the fixed times, or for whom a private retreat would be more useful.

221.

VI. - Although the object of this system of retreats is to offer an absolute seclusion from the world for a certain time to persons living in its midst, yet, if it seems conducive to the glory of God, some who cannot wholly absent themselves from home, may be admitted to the exercises of the public retreats given at fixed times.

222.

VII. - There should be, if possible, a library of approved spiritual books for the use of the retreatants, where they may find what is most helpful for their souls.

223.

VIII. - The religious who have charge of the retreatants shall always be named by the superior from amongst the professed. They should be of mature age, prudent, discreet, of good and pleasant manners, imbued with a spirit of zeal and charity, and of solid and tried virtue. It shall be their business to see that nothing is wanting to those in retreat; they shall visit them and pay them every charitable attention. They shall be on their guard against introducing any topic of conversation which is useless or foreign to the aim of the retreat, anything, in fact which is not for the spiritual good and consolation of those who are making it. They shall avoid entering upon questions of theology, or the direction of souls, which belong to the confessor; but they may turn their own experience to account, by giving advice upon the way to live a Christian life in the world. On the education of children, the care of servants, and the observance of the commandments of God and the Church; they shall give an account of their conduct to the superior, and follow her advice.

224.

IX. - It has already been said, and cannot be too often repeated, that the religious of the Society should remain in a state of holy indifference with regard to the various offices, since their sole ambition is to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and none of their works can ever please Him unless they are directed by obedience. If they are neither to wish nor to ask for any office, far less should they do so for one which would give them charge of retreatants, for this office may become very dangerous for those who are not solidly established in humility and the interior life. They should, in a manner, rather fear than desire it; but if obedience calls them to it, then, with full confidence in God, they shall see in the office they are about to fill a means of working for the salvation and perfection of souls and they shall do their utmost, by the depth of their humility and the fervour of their prayers, to draw upon themselves, and upon the souls they have to help, the graces and blessings of the Lord.

CHAPTER VI

Of contacts with people outside the community

225.

I. - The religious of the Society, in order to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus, do not confine themselves to the pursuit of their own perfection. They have consecrated themselves as far as possible to the salvation and perfection of their neighbour. For this reason they have adopted a manner of life that appears common, simple and ordinary, so as to show nothing

that may offend the eye, alarm the imagination, or repel the souls they so ardently desire to win to God.

226.

II. - For this reason, although they shall keep enclosure, which is so precious a security for the entire observance of their vows, yet this enclosure is tempered and modified according to the spirit and end of their Institute; what dispensations are necessary will be determined by the local bishop.

227.

III. - Thus the religious of the Society may leave their houses either for journeys which the Superior General thinks necessary for the good of the Society, or when they are sent to work in other convents. They should on each occasion give notice to the local bishop of the diocese they are leaving, and when they have arrived at their destination they shall, through the superior, inform the bishop of that place. On journeys they should have as companion another member of the Society, or at least a trustworthy person approved by the superior.

228.

IV. - In the houses of the Society there shall be neither gratings nor other barriers, but the entrance door shall be kept closely shut and shall open only from the inside.

229.

V. - There shall be an outer parlour for the reception of visitors and those of our religious who may be called thither should go with a companion, unless in certain cases and for good reasons the superior thinks it well to dispense with this rule.

230.

VI. - Persons from outside the household are not to be brought into the interior of the house. It seems, however, right to make an exception in favour of mothers and near relatives bringing children to school if they wish to see the part of the house allotted to them. They may in this case be admitted with the necessary leave.

231.

VII. - If a novice, or one who has not made her last vows in the Society, falls dangerously ill, her mother, father, or sisters may be allowed to visit her, with the necessary leave, especially if there are family affairs which the likelihood of the novice's death makes it urgent to settle.

232.

VIII. - If some foundress or signal benefactress wishes to have the satisfaction of knowing the house and property, this privilege may be allowed.

233.

IX. - If in certain extraordinary cases some distinguished personage asks to see the house, the superior may allow it, but no one should ever be admitted to share the community meals in the refectory, unless charity or gratitude seem to call for it in the case of nuns of some other order. Other people to whom great attention is due may be offered refreshment in the guest-room.

234.

X. - Persons from outside the household may be admitted to the church during Mass and other services, if a high, open-work screen separates them from those of the house.

235.

XI. - In case of illness, the doctor and priest shall be taken to the sick person as necessity requires, but never without being accompanied by the religious whose duty it is to do so.

236.

XII. - When the portress has shown a visitor into the parlour, she shall first of all inform the superior, and not until her permission is granted shall the person asked for be called, unless this permission is already attached to the duties of her office.

237.

XIII. - When called to the parlour all the religious of the Society must bear in mind that they are consecrated to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and that it should be the end and aim of all their conversations with their neighbour; they should, therefore, carry thither that interior spirit, that recollection and that prudent and gentle zeal which should characterize the spouses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

238.

XIV. - Let them remember that conversation and other contacts with their neighbour are, in the designs of God and according to the spirit of their vocation, means of furthering the salvation of souls by their edifying words and example and by that sense of the presence of God which must always accompany them; all which can only be secured if their contacts with the outside world are strictly necessary and if they enter upon them with the dispositions of which we have just spoken.

239.

XV. - They should, therefore, only go to the parlour in a spirit of obedience, recollecting themselves before entering it, and asking our Lord for grace that their whole manner may be consistent with the sanctity of their state; far from showing any curiosity as to news from without, they shall always try to turn aside with tact all vain or useless talk, and they shall try to shorten the interview as much as Christian charity and politeness allow.

240.

XVI. - They shall prudently discern what the age, rank, and position of persons allow them to say for the glory of God and the good of souls; to some they may be able to give suitable advice and suggest wise rules for their conduct in the world, inspiring them with a contempt for its vanities and a resolution to avoid its pleasures, inducing them to adopt certain practices of devotion, such as meditation, examination of conscience, spiritual reading, and the habit of recourse in all their necessities to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, recommending above all the frequent reception of the sacraments. Let them be deeply convinced, that if they are dead to themselves and united to God, the interior spirit that animates them will suggest to them what will suit the circumstances, position and spiritual needs of different people; and who can tell what result may follow for the glory of Jesus Christ and the salvation of souls? But under all circumstances and with all kinds of people the modesty, the recollection, and a certain serenity and happiness which should appear in their whole exterior will not be without fruit for the honour of religion, and no one will leave the convent without edification and without a greater love for virtue which will inspire them with the desire to become better.

241.

XVII. - Thus, the life lived by religious of the Sacred Heart is such that everything in it can be instrumental for the sanctification of others.

242.

XVIII. - At one time amongst their pupils in whom they strive to lay the foundations of virtue and of that Christian life which they ought one day to lead in the world; at another amongst children of the poor whom they raise out of the ignorance so common amongst them, and whom they teach to sanctify themselves in their lowly conditions; or again, amongst persons of the world whom desire of salvation leads into retreat and to whom by the ministry of their zeal and charity they open, so to say, and facilitate the way to heaven; at other times by their conversations and dealings with those whom they meet they communicate to them the living presence of Jesus Christ; but oftenest of all far from the world and amongst their sisters where they mutually edify, encourage and console one another; always under all circumstances it may be said that they work for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is true even of the time which they reserve for themselves to devote to prayer and spiritual exercises; for in their contacts with God they seek only to revive their interior spirit and to keep up the humility, charity, and zeal with which they are soon to return to the service of their neighbour.

243.

XIX. - It is thus that, continually occupied in the care of their own perfection and the sanctification of souls from a desire to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they will live their vocation in all its fullness and full of confidence and merit will attain a glorious and unending union with their Divine Spouse.

PART FOUR

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIETY

244. This last part includes:

1. What concerns the Superior General, that is to say her election, the qualities to be looked for in her duties, the extent and limits of her authority.
2. What concerns the persons given to the Superior General to help her in the government of the Society
3. Relations with the Cardinal Protector of the Society
4. What concerns local superiors
5. The means of preserving the Society in the spirit of the Institute.

CHAPTER I

Of the Superior General

245.

I. - The Superior General is nominated by the Society in the manner that will be laid down in the last chapter of this part. Her election is for life and not for a limited time. Grave reasons founded on experience seem to show that in this course there are fewer drawbacks and more advantages.

246.

II. - The Superior General will be fully aware of the greatness and importance of the duties of her charge and the obligations which it imposes on her towards God, towards the members of the Society, and towards the world at large. She is set in her position to govern the whole Society according to the rules and spirit of the Institute, that is to say, to watch without ceasing over the interests, the well-being, and the advancement of a work whose aim is to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by labouring for the perfection of those whom He chooses as His spouses, and for the salvation of a great number of souls called to live a Christian life in the world.

247.

III. - The Superior General, therefore, according to the foregoing explanation, should be a person closely united to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, since it is from this centre of all good that she must always derive the light and the graces that she needs for herself, and that she should draw down upon all the members of the Society. But how many virtues do not this union and intimate familiarity with the Heart of Jesus imply in her? A truly interior spirit, an habitual desire for prayer, great purity of heart, forgetfulness of self and of her own interests, entire devotedness to the good of the Society, an ardent zeal for the interests of the glory of the Heart of Jesus, and at the same time a spirit of prudence and wisdom to direct her in the choice and use of means. Such are the principal and necessary qualifications of one who is chosen to govern the Society.

248.

IV. - In order to ensure the advantages of a good and wise government, it has been thought right to invest the Superior General with great authority. Thus it belongs to her:

1. To admit subjects to the first probation, to the noviceship and to their vows with the agreement of the local bishop, as also to decide who are to continue their studies after their noviceship, and determine the time and place for doing so.

249.

2. To send away subjects whom she does not consider suitable for the Society, either when they are still undergoing the probation of the noviceship, or for grave reasons during the course of the five years that precede the final vows, with the agreement of her council, made known by secret voting.

250.

3. To establish new houses for carrying on the work of the Society, but she can only suppress these with the consent of her council general and approval of the Cardinal Protector of the Society, (of whom we shall speak in the third chapter), and of the bishop of the place.

251.

4. To name for three years local superiors and the chief officials in each house. She may maintain these in their respective offices as long as she thinks it conducive to the service of our Lord and the good of the Society; she shall, therefore, herself name the mistress of novices, the assistants, the councillors, the treasurer, the mistress general of the school, the mistress general of the poor, the mistress of studies, as well as the mistress of each class, whom she shall however, choose in collaboration with the local superior; it is she also who shall name the professed religious to undertake the direction of the retreats.

252.

5. She shall have authority over all the property of the Society and direct its administration. It belongs to her to accept foundations and enter into contracts for buying or selling, but she cannot alienate any of the property of the Society without the consent of the council general; and her actions must always and in all things be in conformity with canonical prescriptions. She shall have under her a Treasurer General named by the council general and may, if needed, appoint others to assist her.

253.

V. - The treasurers in individual houses shall put themselves frequently in relation with the Treasurer General, send her the balance sheet every six months, and inform her of any important and considerable repairs, in order that through her the Superior General may always know the state of temporal affairs in the Society. Lawsuits shall always be most carefully avoided, and if recourse to law becomes unavoidable, the Superior General shall only allow it after taking advice of her council.

254.

VI. - As the Superior General is charged with watching and providing for the needs and preservation of all the houses of the Society, it is just that all should contribute to what serves the general good; thus the Superior General receives from each house of the Society the tenth part of all the revenues coming either from the real property, or the incomes of the religious or the fees of the pupils. The only exceptions are gifts made to individual houses, and not to the Society; they remain, according to the intention of the donor, the property of the house and are exempt from this contribution.

255.

VII. - The sum of these various contributions shall be added to the general fund at the time fixed by the Superior General. Only the Superior General, the First Assistant General and the Treasurer General shall have keys which give access to this common fund. No money from this fund can be used by the Superior General for her own purposes, nor even for the Mother House, unless her council should judge that one of those special cases had arisen in which it would be the Superior General's duty to help some other house. In short, she has no power to draw upon the common fund without the advice of her council.

256.

VIII. - The contents of the general fund are destined to help in defraying the expenses of new foundations, in maintaining the noviceship, in paying for journeys, and in rendering assistance to individual houses in special circumstances. If the general fund cannot supply for these needs, the Superior General shall have recourse to the General Congregation to decide what means are to be employed.

257.

IX. - It is above all the duty of the Superior General to watch over the faithful observance of the Constitutions and Rules throughout the Society; in special cases she may grant dispensation from them, with due regard for persons places and times, seeking always what will be most pleasing to our Lord.

258.

X. - She shall consider it an important duty to have prayers offered for benefactors; she shall therefore not content herself with having the Holy Sacrifice solemnly offered separately for all benefactors living and deceased, at the times fixed by the Ceremonial and with having on both occasions a general communion offered throughout the Society for this intention; but she shall besides decide with her council what gratitude and charity call for with regard to individual benefactors.

259.

XI. - She may impose penances according to the nature of faults committed, having always in view the honour due to our Lord.

260.

XII. - It belongs to her to convoke the council general at the times fixed by the Constitutions. She may also, under special circumstances, assemble it, if she judges it necessary or very useful for the glory of our Lord and the good of the Society.

261.

XIII. - The Superior General shall visit the houses when, before God, she considers it suitable. She shall be accompanied by one of the assistants, or at least by a professed religious. She may also name one of the assistants, accompanied by a professed, to make the visit.

262.

XIV. - In the event of a great increase of the Society, it is left to the prudence of the Superior General to communicate part of her authority for a longer or shorter period, as may be needful, to one of the members of the council, or to some local superior, for the visitation of some houses or to carry on the business of the Society; but she will always be free to revoke the authority thus delegated, and to annul or confirm what has been done in virtue of such powers.

263.

XV. - As it is most important for good government that the Superior General should have a thorough knowledge of all her subjects, it is necessary (1) that local superiors should from time to time, and whenever she thinks fit, give her an exact account of the characters, dispositions and conduct of their subjects; (2) that every member of the Society should be free to write to the Superior General, and that letters written to her, as well as those received from her, should not be read by others.

264.

XVI. - Whilst enforcing the practice of obedience with that just firmness which the maintenance of order and religious discipline requires, she shall be careful so to temper it with the spirit of humility, meekness and charity, that the Spirit and Heart of Jesus Christ, to whom, as has been said, she must be intimately united, may always be recognizable in her; and the more bound she is to maintain the perfection of obedience amongst those subject to her, the more should she herself give an example of it in her relations with her own ecclesiastical superiors.

265.

XVII. - As the houses of the Society look upon the bishop of the diocese as their special superior, the Superior General must of necessity keep in contact with those bishops who have a house of the Society in their dioceses. On all occasions she shall show her deep respect and veneration for the dignity with which they are invested; in removing subjects from one house to another she shall avoid changes that would displease the bishop; she shall try by every possible means to act according to his wishes and to win his favour for the Society, and particularly for that house of which he is specially superior; she shall most carefully see that in every house the bishop is shown those marks of respect and submission which are due to him on account both of his dignity and of his office of special superior, and she herself must be the first to set the example in the house where she may be staying.

266.

XVIII. - In conclusion, the Superior General shall strive to express in all her conduct the feelings, thoughts and dispositions of the Heart of Jesus, who, though He was Sovereign Master said to all, but especially to those who share His authority: "Learn of Me, that I am meek and humble of Heart."

CHAPTER II

Of the persons given to the Superior General
to help her in the duties of her charge

267.

I. - Whatever may be the zeal of the Superior General, and her talents for the government of the Society, it is easy to see that she could not by herself bear so heavy a burden, and that she would soon break down under the weight of the many different duties incumbent upon her in the discharge of her office; she needs therefore to have about her a certain number of persons on whose zeal and fidelity she can rely, with whom she can share the burden imposed upon her, and in whom she may, whilst placing all her confidence in God, find the advice and support necessary to her. But as the government has been entrusted to her by the Society itself, it is fitting that the Society also should nominate those who are to help her in that important position on which its preservation and prosperity essentially depend.

268.

II. - The Society represented by the council general, shall name from amongst the professed:

1. Three Assistants who shall form the council of the Superior General. A fourth shall be added if necessary.
2. A Treasurer whose special office it is to help the Superior General in the administration of the property of the Society.
3. A Secretary who shall be as it were the hand and memory of the Superior, relieving her of some of the multitude of details that government and correspondence involve.
4. Lastly, an Admonitrix who shall be at hand to make such observations and give such advice as may seem to be for the good of the Society, or her own perfection.

269.

III. - The council general shall choose for these various offices religious who unite aptitude for business with great virtue, a sound judgement, much prudence and discretion, and the other qualities necessary for dealing both with members of the Society and persons of the world. They shall be nominated for six years, but may be re-elected if it seems more pleasing to God and more useful to the Society.

270.

IV. - The Assistants alone form the Superior's council; she shall consult them individually and collectively, when she thinks well to treat of the affairs of the Society; she should not, however, pass a week without calling them together; she shall admit the Treasurer General when the property of the Society is in question. The Secretary shall attend but without a voice in the deliberations.

271.

V. - The Assistants should on all occasions set an example of obedience, respect, and sincere attachment to the Superior General. When they are called together, they shall state with humility and frankness what they think conducive to the service of our Lord and the good of the Society. They shall discuss the questions proposed, but in a spirit of peace and charity, and when the Superior, having weighed everything before God, has decided, they shall adopt her view with a complete submission of mind and judgement; except in cases provided for in Chapter III, Art. 4, relating to what must be referred to the Cardinal Protector, and the other cases determined by the Constitutions, in which the Superior General should only act with the consent of her council.

272.

(Suppressed in 1826).

273.

VI. - The Assistants shall observe the utmost secrecy with regard to all that has been treated of in Council or that has been communicated to them by the Superior General. They shall make nothing known to any one except so far as they are certain they are acting in accordance with her wishes; they should consider as one of the first duties of their office the care of upholding the authority of the Superior General over all the members of the Society, and of winning over to her all minds and hearts.

274.

VII. - The Assistants are, moreover, given to the Superior by the Society to regulate all that concerns the care of her person, of her health and maintenance; they shall fulfil the duties of this part of their office in a spirit of wisdom and charity.

275.

VIII. - If in the course of six years one of the Assistants dies, the Superior with the other Assistants will nominate a substitute until the next election. The same holds good for any member of the council, for the Treasurer, the Secretary General, or the Admonitrix.

276.

IX. - If any official nominated by the council general performs the functions of her office in a way essentially contrary to the good of the Society, the Superior General with the consent of her council will inform those members of the council general whose duty it is to apply a remedy.

CHAPTER III

Of the relations of the Society with the Cardinal Protector

276. (A)

I. - The original idea was that the Society should be under an ecclesiastic, as Superior General, to whom in certain cases recourse could be had to modify and direct the authority of the religious appointed to govern the whole Society. But as the Society seems destined to spread not only through the various countries of Europe, but also, if Divine Providence so wills, through other parts of the world, it has been decided that to preserve the unity of so widespread a body it is essential that it would have the support of a more universal authority. This measure, tending to strengthen the body and prevent any kind of division, seems all the more suitable as the authority of the Superior General, already necessarily subject to the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, is sufficiently held in check by her private council and by the council general, whose opinion, in certain cases foreseen and specified by the Constitutions, she is obliged to ask and to follow. Thus, for the extraordinary cases in which recourse must be had to a higher authority, the Society will have in Rome a Cardinal Protector, whom the Superior General shall beg His Holiness to appoint, and to whom recourse shall be had in the four following cases:

1. If either of the contingencies pointed out in the fifth and last chapter should arise, namely, if the resignation or deposition of the Superior General were to be judged necessary and it became needful either to appoint a substitute or proceed to a new election, the Assistants shall have recourse to the Cardinal Protector that, armed with his authorization they may take prudent and effectual measures to meet the needs of the Society.
2. If the good of the Society seems to require the suppression of a house, since this matter is by its nature reserved to ecclesiastical authority, and from its importance great prudence and maturity are required to avoid the danger of counteracting the good at which the Society must aim, this extreme measure will only be resorted to when the reasons that make it appear necessary have been laid before the Cardinal Protector, and his approbation has been obtained according to the prescriptions of canon law.
3. Recourse shall likewise be had to the Cardinal Protector if his protection is necessary to overcome obstacles affecting the foundation of a new house, especially in distant countries.
4. If in some matter that the Assistants consider of serious import for the general interest of the Society the Superior General, in spite of warning, refuses to take the measures that the council think necessary, and wishes to adopt a completely contrary course, the Assistants, if unanimous on the matter, or if at least a majority agree, may have recourse to the Cardinal Protector; and the Superior General, after laying her reasons before him, must abide by his decision, pending which she shall abstain from carrying out her purpose.

CHAPTER IV

Of local superiors

277.

I. - The Superior General, charged with the government of the whole Society, must provide for the good administration of each house and see that the Constitutions and Rules laid down for the whole body of the Society are observed with all possible uniformity in every house belonging to it. For this purpose she must put at the head of each house a superior who shall represent her by acting in her name and who shall give her a faithful account of her administration.

278.

II. - Local superiors should, as far as possible, join with solid virtue a thorough knowledge of the spirit and rules of the Institute and a tender love for the Society; their whole conduct should show such moderation and wisdom that the Spirit of God may be recognized in them. Whilst watching with firmness over the observance of the Rule in the houses entrusted to them, they shall try to gain the confidence of their community by sincere marks of tender charity, and they shall always be anxious to establish and preserve amongst all the close and holy union which should reign amongst persons consecrated to the Heart of Jesus, the centre and source of all charity.

279.

III. - They shall communicate with persons outside the community in a way that is prudent, gentle and pleasant; thus they shall have a good influence upon them and predispose them in favour of the Society, and especially of their own house.

280.

IV. - Local superiors have authority and supervision over everyone in the house, over the boarding school and the poor school, over the professed named by the Superior General to help retreatants and in general over all offices.

281.

V. - But as it is evident that the superior cannot do everything personally, and that to govern a house well she needs advice and help, she shall have with her an assistant and two councillors, a treasurer, a secretary, and an admonitrix named by the Superior General.

282.

VI. - The first three shall form her council; she shall call them together every week for the business of most importance for the good of the house; she may assemble them more frequently, or consult them individually as she may judge fitting; but after hearing them and weighing their reasons, the decision rests with her according to the judgement she forms before our Lord, to whom she should always have recourse with humble confidence. However, if she sees that all opinions are at variance with her own she shall not press the matter, and if it is of some importance shall submit the question to the Superior General and conform to her decision.

283.

VII. - The assistant is especially charged under the superior with general supervision throughout the whole house, and shall replace her wherever she cannot be present.

284.

VIII. - Every day she should receive the superior's orders, have them exactly carried out, give her an account of how this has been done as well as of anything she has noticed in the various offices, and add such suggestions as she may think useful for the good order of the house.

285.

IX. - The secretary is to help the superior in the management of her correspondence, to take minutes of those decisions of the council which are to be preserved, to keep the necessary catalogues in order and to take charge of the archives.

286.

X. - The duty of the treasurer is to provide for all that regards temporal goods and needs in conformity with the rules of her office and the instructions of her superior; she shall lay a balance sheet before her every month, and send the same every six months to the Treasurer General.

287.

XI. - The admonitrix is a confidential adviser given to the superior to point out to her whatever she thinks before God belongs to the accomplishment of her duties, if she notices any forgetfulness or neglect likely to entail serious consequences.

288.

XII. - She also acts as an intermediary between subjects and the superior, to communicate to her remarks which others would not think it right to make themselves; she keeps a seal to fasten letters which members of the community wish to write to the Superior General; her office requires great virtue, but especially the spirit of wisdom which knows how to reconcile the confident frankness with which she should act towards the superior, with the respect, obedience and deference which she owes her and of which she should set the example to the whole house. She must also be very prudent and discreet in making nothing known of her special relationship with the superior unless there be an answer to return to those who have commissioned her to speak to the superior.

289.

XIII. - The Superior General appoints the religious who are responsible for the apostolic works of the house - namely: mistress general of the boarding school, mistress general of the poor school, mistress of studies, mistresses of class and directress of retreats, but those charged with other duties may be chosen by the local superior.

290.

XIV. - The latter therefore shall appoint the mistress of the choir or sacristan, the mistress of the wardrobe, the religious in charge of the parlour, the time-keeper, the librarian, the store-room keeper, the refectorian, the religious who has charge of the reading in the refectory, the mistress of health and the infirmarians, the cook and her assistants, the portresses, the caller and the visitor at night.

291.

XV. - She must moreover provide herself with one or two women servants of recognized virtue, discretion and fidelity, to manage all purchases and commissions outside the convent. At the end of a year, when their suitability to the spirit of the house has been ascertained, they shall make a vow of obedience, but this vow is to bind only as long as they remain in the service of the Society. For their spiritual duties they shall be under the direction of the assistant. If after ten years they are

disabled by infirmity, the Society shall provide for their needs. They are to be called commissioners and to follow a special rule.

292.

XVI. - All those who have been appointed to these various charges shall have a special rule proper to their respective offices. They must follow it exactly, read it every week, and carefully examine themselves as to how they have kept it. They must never lose sight of the important principle that on their fidelity in fulfilling the duties of their charge depends their progress in perfection and the general good of the Society, and consequently the honour and glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which is the end of the works of the Society. They should be thoroughly convinced that without this fidelity to the duties of their charge all virtue is only a vain and hurtful illusion.

293.

XVII. - The first and most important duty of a superior is to see, either personally or through those who help her, that all fulfil their duties reliably and devoutly. She must not fail to punish negligence on this point, and, in general, she shall impose penances in conformity with the established custom of the Society as far as she thinks useful for the greater good of individuals and to warn and instruct the community.

294.

XVIII. - She may, in special cases, dispense for a limited time from different points of the rule when she thinks it necessary or useful, provided these dispensations are not contrary to the substance of the Institute, always seeing in this the service of our Lord and the general or special good of her subjects: she must be very exact in keeping the Superior General informed of the state of the house and in leaving her in ignorance of nothing that may enlighten her, whether upon matters concerning the community or upon the conduct of individuals.

295.

XIX. - Local superiors are to look on the bishop as a superior and father, whose authority will be a powerful means of maintaining in their houses observance of the Rules and Constitutions; they shall therefore have recourse to him with confidence on all occasions when they have need of his light, advice and support. When the good of their house or the general good of the Society requires some important change they shall ask for his approbation, and when he is good enough to visit their houses they and all the community shall show him marks of respect, submission and filial confidence; they shall ask his permission to follow the directions of the Ceremonial in the services held in their chapels, and in this matter shall do nothing without it. They shall ask him also to name and approve for their house the confessor and chaplain who seem best fitted to promote the spiritual welfare of the community, and they shall come to an understanding with both to secure that they act in agreement according to the order and Rule established in the Society.

296.

XX. - The confessor, especially, must be made well acquainted with the Constitutions, Rules and spirit of the Institute, that he may maintain them with all the strength that his ministry gives him, and impose no penance or give any advice in the confessional that is not in accord with the Society's end and special manner of life. They shall, moreover, ask the bishop to name an extraordinary confessor for the Ember weeks, according to the spirit of the Holy Council of Trent: every one in the house is bound at least to present herself to him.

297.

XXI. - In general all superiors must be persuaded that they can do nothing more pleasing to the Heart of Jesus, to which they are consecrated, and consequently nothing more effectual for their own perfection, than to watch continually over the faithful observance of the Constitutions and Rules within their houses; to maintain peace and union amongst the members of their communities; to lead all minds to obedience and confidence towards major superiors; and to preserve a good understanding and all holy and kindly relations with persons of the world.

298.

XXII. - In this way they will worthily acquit themselves of the office entrusted to them and will give true glory to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

CHAPTER V

Of the means of preserving the Society
in the spirit of its Institute

The Society conforms to the changes introduced in 1851 with regard to II, III, VIII, IX and XII of this Chapter.

299.

I. - Having established the main principles on which the Society is based it only remains to set forth the means of preserving and perpetuating it.

300.

II.* - The first of these means is the council general, the members of which have been named for the first time by the local superiors and a professed religious of each house; but henceforward this same council must perpetuate and renew itself every six years. It has been thought best to limit the members to a small number: (1) To avoid commotion and other inconvenient results from the departure and journeys of a great many persons consecrated to God, all of whom have important duties to perform in their own houses; (2) to ensure greater tranquillity and calmness in the discussion of business in the meetings of the council, experience having always proved how difficult it is to preserve in large assemblies the calmness of mind which is so necessary; (3) because there is every reason to think that this small number, chosen amongst its wisest and most able members, will obtain light and every other advantage desirable for the general good of the Society.

301.

III.* - Thus as long as the Society is confined, or very nearly so, to France, the number of members of the council general shall be limited to twelve, however numerous the houses of the Society may be; but it is thought better to limit the number to six until there are six houses, when it shall be raised to nine; and not to the full number before there are twelve houses.

302.

IV. - The council general shall meet every six years. The Superior General shall summon and preside over it. The approbation of the bishop of the diocese shall be asked for the opening of the assembly, and notice of the day when it closes shall be sent to him. The decrees shall be communicated to the Cardinal Protector.

303.

V. - The Mother House seems the most suitable place for assembling the council. It may, however, if special circumstance require, meet in another house. The decision on this point rests with the Superior General and her council.

304.

VI. - The Superior General shall give notice beforehand to the local superiors of each house, who, with their councillors, shall consider if they have any representations of sufficient importance to be submitted to the council general - if so, they shall transmit them to the Secretary General, who is to keep them with the seal unbroken until the first meeting; and during the three days previous, the members of the council shall give her also in writing and under seal the questions they think ought to be proposed to the assembly.

305.

VII. - At this first meeting the council will name by a majority of voters two of its members to examine and sift privately, along with the Superior, all the different observations placed in the hands of the Secretary; they are to eliminate whatever seems useless or foreign to the purpose of the assembly, and draw up in writing a list of the more important questions for submission to the council. Notwithstanding this, should any observations, which seem serious and important, occur to any one during the course of the meetings, she may submit them to the council.

306.

VIII.* - One of the most essential points, and one which should always claim the attention of the assembly, is to examine whether the Constitutions and Rules are faithfully observed throughout the whole extent of the Society, and whether any local innovations have been introduced contrary to that precious uniformity which ought to prevail everywhere; and should any have crept in, to decide on the means of their removal without disturbance or commotion. After dispatching particular business affecting general interests, the election of the Assistants General shall be proceeded with. Each member shall ballot on one voting-paper for as many persons as there are to be Assistants. She must, therefore, seek conscientiously for those whom she may judge before God most fit to fill this post, not only amongst the members of the council, but amongst the whole body of the professed who compose the Society. The Secretary shall next collect the voting papers, which are to be opened by the three persons above-named. Those who have most votes shall be declared Assistants, and amongst them the one who has the greatest number shall be First Assistant, charged with the duty of taking the Superior General's place under the circumstances foreseen by the Constitutions.

307.

IX.* - After this the assembly shall proceed in the same way to renew the members of the council. Those who have just been named Assistants are ipso facto members of it. So end the meetings of the council general, the closing being put to the vote and decided by the majority.

308.

X. - Although regularly the council should assemble only every six years, yet in extraordinary cases the Superior may convoke it, with the consent of her Assistants, if such a step is deemed of great service to the Society.

309.

XI. - In the same way, besides the cases pointed out by the Constitutions, in which she must have recourse to the votes of the members of the council,

though dispersed, she may do so whenever she thinks well, in order to act with more light and give more weight and authority to her measures.

310.

XII.* - In case of the death of the Superior General, the First Assistant shall, in the course of the following month, convoke the council to proceed to a new election. The bishop of the diocese shall be invited to preside, either in person or by deputy, at the election of the new Superior. If five years have already elapsed since the last assembly, this council shall take the place of that which should be held every six years and shall transact all the business described above.

311.

XIII. - If, which God forbid, it should happen that the Superior General become culpably negligent in fulfilling the duties of her position, and thus run the risk of compromising the Society, the Assistants, after having consulted our Lord, shall lay the case before the Cardinal Protector and beg him to persuade the Superior General to resign of her own accord. If she refuses, the First Assistant shall, with the approbation of the Cardinal Protector, convoke the council, and if after mature deliberation it is judged necessary to proceed to the deposition of the Superior and to a fresh election, the bishop of the diocese shall be begged to preside at such election.

312.

XIV. - If in consequence of ill-health or advanced age the Superior becomes unable to transact business and incapable of governing, it shall be suggested to her with all the consideration due to her position, that she should resign, and if she consents, the council shall be convoked for a new election. If she refuses, since she is not considered to blame for her present incapacity for governing, it seems just to show her every consideration and regard compatible with the general good of the Society, for these are justly due to the position she holds and to the services she has rendered - services, moreover, which may well have contributed to bring on her infirm condition. She should, therefore, retain the title of Superior General and all the marks of respect due to her position, but recourse must be had to the Cardinal Protector, as laid down in the third chapter, and with his permission the council must be convoked in order to nominate a substitute, who, with the name of Assistant General, shall be invested with all the authority of the Superior.

313.

XV. - If the Superior General thinks she ought to offer her resignation, recourse shall be had to the council to decide whether her resignation should be accepted or not.

314.

XVI. - From the very nature of their business the members of the council may easily gather the spirit that should animate them; they represent the whole body of the Society, whose dearest interests are in their hands, for to them is entrusted the election of the Superior General and of those who share with her the cares of government.

315.

XVII. - All the most important affairs touching the general good of the Society are discussed amongst them; the fate of the whole Society is, therefore, in their hands; without mentioning, then, those solid virtues looked for in all the members of the Society, they should be remarkable for great zeal for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the good of the Society, of whose Institute and spirit they should have a thorough knowledge, for good judgement and wise discernment of minds and characters,

and finally, for an uprightness and purity of intention which will banish from elections, and from the discussion of other affairs, all merely human affection and lead them to seek only the greater glory of God and the greater good of the Society. Such is the first means for preserving the Society in the spirit of its Institute.

316.

XVIII. - The second depends upon the exact observance of the Rules and Constitutions, and especially upon such as have for their principal object the spirit of prayer and interior life, self-renunciation, and obedience, zeal for the spiritual progress of our neighbour, and tender affection for all members of the Society. This exact observance, which ensures the preservation of the whole body of the Society, depends upon the vigilance, charity, and firmness of the Superior General.

317.

XIX. - However important the exact observance of the Rules and Constitutions may be, it has, nevertheless, not been judged right to make them binding under pain of even venial sin, so as to avoid anxiety of conscience. There is, therefore, sin only when the thing forbidden by Rule is wrong in itself, or, which can but very rarely happen when the Superior commands in virtue of holy obedience, or when there is contempt of the Rule.

318.

XX. - The third means is the union of minds and hearts. Let the members of the Society feel deeply how precious and necessary this union is, what blessings spring from it, and what disastrous consequences would follow from division.

319.

XXI. - This close union will be for them the infallible sign spoken of by the Saviour of the world, a divine mark which will show them to be His servants and spouses, and impress on their Society the character of God's work; it will be at the same time that source of peace and heavenly consolations of which holy King David never spoke without admiration.

320.

XXII. - With regard to our neighbour, it will be a subject of edification, and an ever-fresh cause for blessing and glorifying our Lord, by inspiring esteem and love for religion, which alone can unite so closely so many different minds and characters.

321.

XXIII. - It will be a sweet and powerful attraction to young persons to seek the source of true happiness in the service of Jesus Christ, and renounce the false joys of the world.

322.

XXIV. - Finally, it will be a sight that Heaven will look down upon with delight. The Heavenly Father will recognize in them His children; Jesus Christ, His spouses; the Holy Ghost, His living temple; the Blessed Virgin Mary, so closely united to the Three Divine Persons, will look on them with tender affection, and will declare herself their protectress, and their Mother.

323.

XXV. - On this union, therefore, which is the work of grace, rests all the hopes of this little Society; by this union of minds and hearts it will maintain and strengthen itself, and spread more and more for the greater

glory of God, for the propagation of the worship of the Sacred Heart and for the sanctification of souls.

324.

XXVI. Moreover, it is to consolidate and preserve this precious union that a Superior General has been established, who, at the head of the whole Society, may be as the mother of one and the same family.

325.

XXVII. - It is with the same object that local superiors are encouraged to frequent communication with one another, and still more with the Superior General, and that full liberty is left to all to have recourse freely and with all confidence to the first Superior.

326.

XXVIII. - It is for this end that the Superior General shall from time to time send to the different houses, circular letters in which for the glory of the Heart of Jesus, she shall make known the most edifying incidents that she has remarked throughout the whole Society, and shall add what she thinks most fitting to maintain and renew fervour and union.

327.

XXIX. - It is, again, to this end that the prayers offered in all the houses, for the whole Society, are directed; that every month there shall be in each house a Mass and General Communion for the same intention, and that at the death of one of the members all shall pray for her, as directed by the Constitutions. The Superior General shall order prayers for the preservation of the Cardinal Protector, and prayers after his death.

328.

XXX. - It is principally with a view to this union that all the novices are united in one house under one mistress of novices, in order that being formed in the same school, and receiving the same lessons, they may learn from the outset to love one another as sisters, and may afterwards carry to the different houses where obedience sends them, that spirit of union and charity which forms, as it were, the fundamental and distinctive mark of the Society.

329.

XXXI. - The last means, which includes all the others eminently, will be found in the love of all for the Divine Heart of Jesus, and in their fidelity in honouring and studying It, knowing It intimately, and uniting themselves, as far as they can to Its interior dispositions, remembering always that the surest way of obtaining easy access to It is a tender devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is, in fact, from this Divine Heart that they will draw that spirit of humility, gentleness, simplicity and obedience, which should characterize all the members of the Society. They will learn from the Heart of Jesus what is the value and importance of little things in the service of God, and above all, in religious life, and by their fervour in fulfilling the least of their duties, they will solidly establish themselves in fidelity to all the details of the Rule, a fidelity on which the preservation of the Society singularly depends. It is from this Divine Heart that they will learn, according to the precept of Jesus Christ, to love one another as He has loved them, and will fulfil the precept of the great Apostle, when he said to the first Christians: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"--"Hoc sentite in vobis quod est in Christo Jesu." Then in the members of this little Society will be seen the fulfilment of that most touching prayer which Jesus Christ, on the eve of His Passion, addressed to His Father on behalf of His disciples: "That they may be one as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee: that they also

may be one in Us: that they may be one as We also are one. I in them, and thou in Me: that they may be made perfect in one."

Let, therefore, the motto of the members of the Society be these words "Cor unum et anima una in Corde Jesu."

SUMMARY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

FIRST PART

End and spirit of the Society

330.

I. - This little Society is wholly consecrated to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the spread of its worship: such is the end which all those who become members must propose to themselves.

It is for this end that they contract the obligation of aiming unceasingly at their own perfection by the imitation of those virtues of which the Heart of Jesus is the centre and the model, and of consecrating themselves to the salvation of souls by inspiring them with a tender and solid devotion to this Divine Heart.

The honour bestowed upon Mary being in the designs of God and the constant practice of the Church, inseparable from that which is given to her Divine Son, the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is consecrated also to the Holy Heart of Mary, and to the spread of this devotion.

The spirit of the Society is essentially based upon prayer and the interior life, since we cannot glorify the adorable Heart of Jesus worthily, save inasmuch as we apply ourselves to study Its interior dispositions, in order to unite and conform ourselves to them.

Life style

331.

II. - It has seemed more suited to the end which the Society proposes to itself to establish in it a manner of living simple and common to all; consequently no corporal austerity nor extraordinary penance is enjoined by rule, nor any other fasts but those ordained by the Church, excepting the Vigils of the Feasts of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and of the most Holy Heart of Mary; but each one individually may, with the sanction of the superior, practise such works of mortification and penance as appear conducive to the advancement of her soul; she must even be ready to accept such as superiors may, before the Lord, think proper to impose upon her for the same end.

Spiritual exercises

332.

III. - The chief spiritual exercises of each day, not including such as belong to the period of the novitiate, are: an hour's meditation in the morning, and half an hour in the afternoon, Holy Mass, spiritual reading, and the examen of conscience before dinner, and before retiring to rest. The coadjutrix sisters follow the same rule except that in the morning they are only bound to half an hour's meditation.

333.

IV. - Let all be thoroughly convinced that prayer is the foundation and support of the Society, and that if neglect thereof should become general, the ruin of the Society would speedily follow. Let each one individually consider it as so essential to her own perfection, and even to her

salvation, that she cannot become careless in this respect without exposing herself to being lost.

Let all then apply themselves lovingly to prayer, which will lead them to the Heart of their Divine Spouse, and unfold to them Its adorable perfection, especially its immense charity: let them place their happiness as much as possible in this holy exercise, which by purifying their hearts will unite them closely to the Heart of Jesus, by conformity of sentiments, of affections and of will.

They must take great care to give to prayer at least the time which is prescribed by rule, and should any one be prevented from doing so by reason of her work or any other cause whatsoever, she must not fail to inform her superior, who will consider it her first duty to remove all hindrance, and to maintain in its vigour this point of the rule which is of such consequence to the general welfare of her house and to the advancement of each of her daughters.

334.

V. - The Office of the Blessed Virgin is said in common; all must be present, excepting the coadjutrix sisters and those to whom, on account of their other duties or for some lawful causes, the superior may judge proper to grant a dispensation. It is a tribute of praise and gratitude which they must affectionately offer to the Queen of Virgins, whose heart is for them the heart of the most tender of mothers.

335.

VI. - There shall be every fortnight a spiritual conference, at which they may publicly accuse themselves of their failings and of faults against the rule, and at which the Superior shall give such special or general counsels as she may consider most calculated to revive their fidelity to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Manifestation of faults

336.

VII. - As all must be animated by a sincere spirit of charity, and a real desire of mutually contributing to their spiritual advancement, they must be always ready to manifest to the superior, when required to do so, the failings and exterior faults they may have noticed in their sisters.

Confession and communion

337.

VIII. - a) There will be for each house only one ordinary confessor who shall hear the sacramental confessions of the whole community.

b) All those who enter the Society must, before taking the habit, make a general confession unless, for the greater advantage of some one in particular, it be judged better to defer it. They shall go to confession every week, and prepare themselves to receive holy communion on Sundays and feast days. Their communions may be more frequent, and even daily according to the advice of their confessor.

Retreat and renewal of vows

338.

IX. - Every six months all those who are not professed shall make a review of the last six months. The review in the middle of the year is accompanied by a retreat of three days, and that at the close of the year by a retreat

of eight days. They renew their vows twice a year. The professed are only bound to make one review of their faults, and one annual retreat. They renew their vows in public only once a year. Thus all, by renewing themselves at stated periods, will persevere unto the end in fidelity to the grace of their vocation.

By this grace of their vocation they are called upon to conform and unite their hearts to that of Jesus Christ. Hence it is from this Divine Heart that they must derive the esteem and love, as well as the spirit and form of all the virtues which they should practise, but above all of those that are the special matter of their vows.

339.

X. - a) Therefore with regard to poverty, if they consider it in the Heart of Jesus, they will have no difficulty in attaching themselves to it; remembering that so great was His esteem and love for that virtue, that he chose to be born, to live, and die, in the midst of poverty. They must cherish it as their mother, and under all circumstances they must seek to give it marks of their tender affection. Not satisfied with the strict obligation of the vow of poverty, which forbids them to give, lend, or receive without permission, or make use of anything except in dependence on authority, they must endeavour in all to conform themselves to the spirit of that holy poverty which was the inseparable companion of their Divine Spouse. They must think themselves happy to be clothed in the livery of holy poverty after His example. Every one without exception must be glad and even rejoice in our Lord, if in the distribution of things necessary what is meanest and most common is given to them, and that they are treated as the last in the house; drawing this holy joy from the Heart of Jesus, who, out of love for them, chose to be treated as the last of men and the outcast of His people.

b) In like manner recollecting that religious poverty would be very imperfect were we to confine it to cutting off superfluities, without our ever experiencing want, they must consider as an advantage and as a precious gain, those opportunities in which they may feel its effects, in the privation of a portion of such things as are necessary; for then they will be able with more confidence and truth to unite themselves to the interior dispositions of the Heart of their Divine Spouse, Who, although Master of all the riches of Heaven and of earth, lived in the most complete destitution of all things.

c) However, should any such privation be injurious to their health, or interfere with the duties assigned to them, they must inform either the superior or the religious, whose office it is to provide what is wanting to them. In fine, to conclude this subject, which is of such importance, let all be thoroughly convinced that the true spirit of poverty is so essential to the Society of the Sacred Heart, that were it to be lost, Jesus Christ would no longer acknowledge it as belonging to Him, and He would abandon it to itself, that is to say, to speedy ruin.

Chastity

340.

XI. - With regard to the virtue of chastity, suffice it to say, that, by continued watchfulness over the senses and by the purity of their mind and heart, the spouses of Jesus Christ must strive to imitate the purity of angels, and even the purity of the Heart of Jesus, as far as it is possible for creatures aided by divine grace. Their exterior must be so regulated, that the modesty, gentleness, and peace which shall be observed in them, may be, as it were, the sign and proof of the purity of their hearts. This perfect purity of heart requires that always remembering that they have

left father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all they held dearest in this world, to attach themselves to Jesus Christ, they must have stripped themselves of all affection of flesh and blood, and love those whom they loved according to nature only with a pure heart, and one conformed to the Heart of Jesus Christ.

Obedience

341.

XIII. - a) With regard to obedience, let them never forget that in every religious body obedience is the bond, as it were, that unites all the members with one another and their Head, and that, should this bond ever come to be severed, there is nothing to expect but the complete destruction of the body.

b) In order to bind themselves to this virtue the more closely, and even unto death, let them hearken to their Divine Spouse, Who tells them that He came down from Heaven upon earth, not to do His own will but the will of His Father; that the fulfilment of this holy will became His food; let them contemplate Him in the exercise of obedience from His birth to His death, even to the death of the cross. After this, it will not be difficult for them to discover in His Divine Heart the love which He had, and which they themselves must have for this virtue.

c) The exercise of obedience will become very sweet to them, if they always consider, as they should do, in every superior the person of Jesus Christ Himself; they will find no difficulty in conforming their will to their superiors in everything in which there is not evident sin; and by the conformity of their judgement with that of their superiors, by the readiness and joy that will accompany their obedience, they must endeavour to omit nothing that may belong to the perfection of this virtue of which Jesus Christ is the model.

d) Thus they must leave all at the slightest sign of the superior, or at the first sound of the bell, leaving unfinished even a letter in a word begun.

e) They must ever be ready to obey in the same spirit all those who hold any office in the house, even in the lowest employments, when sent to help them in their offices, for they must remember that Jesus Christ made Himself the servant of all, as he says Himself in these words: "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

f) They must accept with humble submission of judgement, and a sincere desire of amendment, any penance that may be imposed upon them, for acts of negligence or any exterior faults, even for such failings as may not render them guilty before God. Let all understand that, from the moment they enter the Society of the Sacred Heart, they must no longer write or receive letters without leave of the superior, who, after reading them, shall deliver or retain them as she thinks best for the glory of our Lord; no exception is made save in favour of first superiors. But, what is of special importance to the peace of their soul, to their progress in perfection, and to the advancement of the work of God, whose instruments they are, is, that all should attend most particularly to acquiring and maintaining a holy indifference with regard to residence and employment, so that they must be ready at any time to quit house or office on the least sign from any superior invested with competent authority. There is, perhaps, no point about which self-love is more sensitive, and a complete detachment from self is more rarely found; but they must remember that, having consecrated themselves to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

they can procure it only in the position assigned to them by holy obedience.

g) In fine, to conclude this fundamental portion of their obligations, let them hold this principle as certain, that if their happiness consists in a tender and intimate union with the Heart of Jesus, their Divine Spouse, there can never exist for them union of heart if there be not union of will; without the latter, all would be delusion and falsehood; now obedience only can effect this union.

Charity

342.

XIII. - a) Although poverty, chastity, and obedience are the three principal bonds which are consecrated by the Church for the purpose of uniting souls in religion to Jesus Christ, and of making them His spouses, still they must understand that they can never unite themselves to His Divine Heart without a fourth bond uniting them all with one another; and this bond, which does not fall under a distinct vow, but under the great precept of Jesus Christ, is that of mutual charity.

b) The spouses of the Sacred Heart will readily understand that it is especially to them that these words of our Divine Master are addressed: "This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you." Who can comprehend the extent and strength, the purity and sanctity of this love which He commands! It is to the school of His own Heart that Jesus Christ calls His spouses, and it is the same love with which this Divine Heart has been inflamed for them, that He offers them as a model of the charity which must unite them all with one another, so as to form but one heart, as it were, with His own.

c) The spouses of the Sacred Heart must therefore fulfil towards each other with holy joy every duty of tender and sincere charity, gently bearing with the faults of their sisters, forestalling them by marks of esteem and of goodwill, and their loving eagerness to assist those who are employed in the lowest offices of the house.

d) They must avoid with the greatest care all that might tend to disturb peace and impair this union of minds and hearts; and, as in religious communities there is no rock more dangerous, and at the same time less dreaded, than that of particular friendships, so also is there nothing against which they must be more on their guard. Let them bear in mind that friendships of this nature are the scourge which proves most fatal to Christian charity - the most frequent source of unjust preferences, jealousies, murmurings, antipathies, and divisions; nay, that they endanger chastity; that perfect chastity at least, which has consecrated all the affections of the heart to Jesus Christ; in a word, that these particular friendships are justly termed the bane of communities.

It is to guard against such abuses, and to maintain always this union of mind and heart in the Heart of Jesus Christ, that every month and in each house a Mass and general communion are offered for this intention and that all the members of the Society have no other motto than these words: "Cor unum et anima una in Corde Jesu", which placed upon their hearts between the arms of the cross, shall be constantly before their eyes.

SECOND PART

Sanctification of souls. Fourth vow

343.

XIV. - The members of this little Society, consecrating themselves wholly and unreservedly to the greater glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, do not confine themselves to glorifying It by seeking their own perfection, through the imitation of Its virtues, and through the isolated practices of mere personal devotion; but they embrace every means in their power of spreading the worship of the Sacred Heart, in labouring for the sanctification of souls, chiefly by the instruction of youth, which is the matter of the fourth vow made on the day of their profession. This noble and sublime vocation of itself points out sufficiently the virtues which should characterize the spouses of the Heart of Jesus, and make them worthy instruments of His love for souls.

Lively faith

344.

XV. - 1. a) A lively faith, which, impressing deeply upon them the truth, that God is all, and that everything else is nothing, raises them above the weaknesses of nature, the sensitiveness and miseries of self-love, and makes them insensible to everything but the glory of God and the honour of the Heart of Jesus Christ.

b) A lively faith which, reminding them incessantly of the love with which the Heart of Jesus is inflamed for them, of the innumerable benefits with which He has loaded them, of the singular grace of their vocation, inspires them with the most tender and the most generous love for Him.

c) A lively faith, which each day brings before their eyes Jesus Christ showing them His Heart, and addressing to them these words: "Behold this Heart which has so loved men, which has spared nothing even to exhausting and consuming Itself to show them Its love, and in return I receive from most men only ingratitude by their irreverence and sacrileges, and by their coldness and contempt for Me in this sacrament of love; but what wounds Me yet more deeply is that souls consecrated to My service should treat Me thus."

d) Enlightened by the light of faith on the value of souls, the objects of this incomprehensible love, deeply moved at their blindness and at their ruin, penetrated with the most intense grief at the sight of the many outrages which Jesus Christ receives from these very souls that He has loved so tenderly, let the spouses of the Sacred Heart devote themselves generously to the reparation of His glory, outraged in His love, and let them be filled with an ardent desire of gaining all hearts to Him. In fine, a lively faith, which animating all their prayers, may render them all-powerful over the Heart of their Divine Spouse, and may obtain from Him everything they ask for His glory and for the salvation of souls, particularly of those that are entrusted to them.

Contempt of the world

345.

XVI. - 2. A thorough contempt of the world and of all that is the object of its esteem and its ambition: spouses of Jesus Christ, humbled, poor, and crucified, they must abhor all that is contrary to the spirit and to the Heart of their Divine Spouse. If they only gave heed to the impulses of

their hearts, they would wish never to appear in anything but the humble livery of Jesus Christ; and in what they are allowed to use, their rooms, their clothing, and their food, that everything should breathe the poverty and humiliation of Jesus Christ, as is the case in certain orders: but if with a view to His glory, and to draw to Him souls too feeble to bear the sight of this poor and abject exterior, they are obliged to make some concession to the world's ideas of propriety and to its weakness, they must go to the feet of their Divine Spouse and lovingly complain to Him of the necessity which He Himself imposes upon them; and they must endeavour to impress each day more deeply upon their hearts the love of abjection, of humiliation, and of poverty. They must be constantly on their guard not to pass beyond the proper limits in that which the glory of God and the interest of souls oblige them to present outwardly to the eyes of the world.

Humility

346.

XVII. - 3. a) A profound humility, all the greater indeed because their duties, so elevated in the sight of God, bring them before the eyes of men.

b) Each one of them must therefore look upon herself as the last of all, and be satisfied with the lowest employments without ever desiring such as are higher.

c) Humility requires further that they should never quit the thought of their own lowliness and nothingness, that they should accept with a certain satisfaction the contempt and humiliations which divine providence may deign to provide for them, and that when success is granted to their labours, they should refer all the glory thereof faithfully to the Heart of Jesus, the source of every good.

Modesty

347.

XVIII. - 4. a) Called by their vocation to deal with their neighbour, the spouses of the Heart of Jesus must never forget that modesty and simplicity should form their clothing and adornment in the eyes of the world, and serve as the guardian of the interior virtues.

b) This gentle and gracious modesty shall therefore regulate their looks, their gestures, their demeanour, their walk, their conversations and the very tone of their voice; it must accompany them everywhere, and never forsake them when for the sake of relaxation they meet for a becoming and lawful recreation; nor even when they think that they are far from the sight of every one, since they are always under the eyes of God, in the presence of the angels, and do not cease for moment, wherever they are, to be the spouses of Jesus Christ.

Simplicity

348.

XIX. - 5. a) Modesty will also lend additional grace to that noble and beautiful simplicity with which the spouses of the Heart of Jesus are to treat with their neighbour; they must love and desire that simplicity which springs from the calmness of a soul who seeks and longs for nothing but her God, and who, without any thought of self or of her own interests, looks only to God Whom alone she wishes to love and please in all things.

b) They must therefore practise as far as they can this lovable and frank simplicity, which excludes all disguise and dissimulation, keeps at a distance all the silly cunning of self-love, avoids all singularity, chooses always the most straightforward and obvious line of conduct, leads us to treat our neighbour without affectation or constraint, without pretension and without guile, but with unaffected cordiality and a pure and sincere affection. It is from the Heart of Jesus Christ that they must draw the spirit of this modesty and simplicity, which are so recommended to them, and are so necessary.

c) A lively faith, thorough contempt of the world, great humility, modesty and simplicity, are therefore the solid and principal virtues that should characterize the spouses of the Sacred Heart and enable them to glorify It by their works and in their contacts with others, so that not only they may receive no injury to their own souls, but sanctify themselves, and find therein an abundant source of grace and merit.

Boarding school

349.

XX. - a) Thus with regard to children educated as boarders in their houses, the spirit of faith by which they are animated will only allow them to consider and esteem those qualities and titles which render them truly great and noble in the sight of God. They must behold in them souls, children of God, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ and destined to reign eternally with Him. Looking on them as the most precious trust which the love of Jesus Christ can place in their keeping, they must become mothers to them, they must have a truly maternal love for them, but drawn entirely from the Heart of their Divine Spouse. Remembering constantly the account which they will have to render to Jesus Christ of these souls which have cost Him so dear, they must unceasingly watch over them in order to keep from them everything that can endanger their innocence, and they must neglect nothing that may ensure its recovery to those who have been so unhappy as to lose it. As levity is the most ordinary and the most dangerous failing of youth, their great aim must be to lay deep in their souls the solid foundation of faith, the fear of God, and horror of sin; and afterwards they will easily lead these hearts, so tender and susceptible, to the lovable devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which will become a source of grace to all. They must therefore devote themselves with their whole hearts to the salvation of these dear children, and direct to this end all the branches of education. If they are themselves obliged to study secular sciences in order to teach them to their children, they must carefully guard against the vain pretentiousness of a proud age, and keep within the limits of that humble and prudent discretion which modesty prescribes in such matters to women. If they must necessarily allow their pupils to learn the various accomplishments required by their state and position in life, they must warn them against the too common abuse which they might make of them, and must carefully superintend the lessons given in these accomplishments by secular masters.

b) Without entirely refusing the confidential communications which the children may be inclined to make to them, they must endeavour to guide and direct their confidence to the mistress general of the school; but they must be particularly upon their guard to foresee and check all the over-tender and over-natural affections of which the hearts of children are so susceptible, and which often degenerate into a sort of passion, the least effects of which are to close their hearts against all the impressions of grace and form an absolute hindrance to their progress in piety. The mistresses who may be the object of so dangerous an affection must, with

wise prudence, check all familiarity and caresses offered on the part of the children, and if they notice that a child does not correct this defect they must not fail to inform the mistress general.

c) All those employed with the children, remembering that all share the common responsibility with regard to the important work confided to their care, must be careful always to co-operate with one another and to act in perfect harmony under the direction of the mistress general, who must herself give an account of everything to the superior, and conform to her instructions.

Poor school

350.

XXI. - a) Though all the souls confided to the care of the spouses of the Heart of Jesus have apparently the same claim to their affection, nevertheless there are some for whom they are allowed to have a special attraction, namely, the children of the poor who come to learn from them the knowledge of salvation of which the greater number would be deprived in the midst of their families. Their poverty, which makes them so closely resemble Jesus Christ, will give them additional claims to the tenderness and zeal of the spouses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

b) It is with these poor children that they will find, with more merit and safety, the opportunity of practising the virtues that should distinguish them; that lively Faith which will unveil to them and allow them to love without danger these souls so precious and so dear to the Heart of Jesus Christ; that contempt for worldly vanities, which will give them a relish and love for what the world disdains and scorns; that humility which will employ whatever knowledge and talents they possess in the most simple and ordinary instruction, thus better resembling their Divine Spouse, Who possessing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, took pleasure in instructing the poor and the ignorant. Moreover, amongst these poor children they will find reason to humble themselves when they reflect, that whereas they, who have made a vow of poverty, want for nothing, these poor children without any such obligation seem in want of everything.

Retreats

351.

XXII. - The work of retreats, according to the method explained in the Constitutions being one of those adopted by the Society for the greater glory of the Heart of Jesus, those whom holy obedience calls to it, should by a lively faith impress upon themselves the importance of a work which has so close and direct a connection with the salvation of souls. With a lowly opinion of themselves, they must render to those in retreat all the cares of an attentive charity, bearing in mind that it is especially by their profound humility and the fervour of their prayers that they will draw down upon souls the graces of salvation; for the rest they must conform in everything to the particular rules of their charge.

Parlour

352.

XXIII. - a) The end which the Society has in view for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus often renders contact with persons of the world necessary. The spouses of Jesus Christ must guard against two dangers: some

might be led to engage in the work from merely natural motives and for that reason would incur great risks; others through fear of such dangers or through love of solitude, might seek to avoid it altogether, or take to it ungraciously, and thus they would fall short of the spirit of the Society, which has the glory of God as its object in all. There is for both a rule which must unite them all in one spirit, and in one manner of acting, for the honour of the Heart of Jesus.

b) Let them all remember that necessary contacts with secular persons is laid down by the Constitutions as one of the four principal means offered to all the members of the Society, in order to procure the glory of God and of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; let all at the same time understand well that it cannot serve as a means to such an end, excepting inasmuch as it is necessary, that is to say, based upon the nature of the duties of their office or upon obedience.

c) On these occasions the spouses of the Sacred Heart, renewing their spirit of faith, their contempt for the vanities of the world, and still more contempt for self, must meet persons of the world with unassuming simplicity: ever faithful to recollection they must turn aside with tact all vain or useless words, and always bring back the conversation to some useful or edifying subject; they must take care not to prolong the interview beyond what is required by business, charity and due consideration for others. They must prudently discern what the age, rank and position of persons allow them to say for the glory of God and the good of souls. In any case the modesty, the recollection and a certain air of contentment which should appear in their whole exterior, will not be without fruit for the honour of religion, and no one will leave the convent without being edified and carrying away with them a greater love for virtue, which has been inspired by the good odour of Jesus Christ. Thus for the spouses of the Sacred Heart, no time and no opportunities will be lost to promote the glory of God and the sanctification of souls.

Health

353

XXIV. - a) As the works to which the members of this little Society consecrate themselves for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of necessity imply a laborious life, which requires strength and health, a moderate care for the preservation of the latter is therefore not only praiseworthy but necessary, and all must take such care with a view to promote the glory of God.

b) No one therefore may do penances or observe extraordinary fasts without the sanction of the superior, who knowing the obligations, constitution and strength of each one, shall only allow what she thinks conducive to her spiritual progress, and without prejudice to her health.

c) If any one finds herself seriously affected by the diet, habitation, or any other cause whatsoever, she must mention it to the superior, after having first recollected herself before God, and placed herself in the disposition to accept peacefully whatever may be decided on this point. Likewise if she is suffering from any infirmity which may be of consequence, or seems to have the symptoms of some illness, she must make it known to the infirmarian and the superior.

d) If the Society like a good mother is bound carefully to watch over the preservation and restoration of its members, individuals are bound to leave themselves in peace to the watchful care of the superior and the infirmarians. They must, therefore, never consult the physician, or make

use of any remedy, without leave; in like manner no one must take anything extraordinary during meals or between meals without a particular or a general permission.

Sickness

354.

XXV. - a) Sickness is a gift of God, as well as health. The spouses of the Sacred Heart must therefore accept it with thanksgiving. They must look upon it as a very precious time, since it is in this state of humiliation and suffering that they find more opportunities of uniting themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and of edifying their sisters by the practice of humility, gentleness, patience, and an entire resignation of themselves to the will of God.

b) They must above all give the example of obedience, by submitting, through love for Jesus Christ, who was obedient unto death, not only to all the decisions of the superior, but also to all the prescriptions of the physician and directions of the infirmarian and they must readily take the most unpleasant remedies, fixing their eyes on our Lord, Who through love for them drank the chalice even to the dregs.

Although at the very beginning of their illness they should have renewed the disposition of the sacrifice of themselves, yet it is more particularly when the danger becomes imminent, and they are told that the hour of their last sacrifice has come, that must remember that in entering the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they devoted and consecrated themselves to God as victims in union with the Heart of the Saviour of men, Who offered Himself to His Father as a victim for all mankind; they must endeavour, by the conformity of their interior dispositions with those of Jesus at His death, to lose nothing of the value of this final sacrifice; and they must then in sentiments of humility, of confidence and of love, repeat these words of Jesus when dying: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit." By this means they will reap the fruit of the holy habit which they have acquired during life, of uniting themselves in all their actions to the Divine Heart of Jesus. What a consolation in one's last moment, on which an eternity depends, to give up one's soul to God in union with the Heart of Jesus, His Divine Son!

355.

XXVI. - a) If this little Society be truly the work of God, and if it be wholly consecrated to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the sanctification of souls: if all those who are called to it should consider the grace of their vocation as one of the most signal favours of Heaven, it only remains to implore all the members of the Society, by all that is most sacred, to watch over its preservation, and to labour incessantly to perpetuate the good it produces. Its fate is in their hands; it may perish through their fault, while at the same time it will receive through their fidelity fresh increase for the glory of the Heart of Jesus and for the salvation of souls.

b) All the success of God's work depends on the exact observance of the Rules and Constitutions; and, indeed, it is only by this constant fidelity that union of mind and heart in the love of Jesus Christ can be maintained between all the members of the Society; that union, too, which stamps upon each member the character of disciple and spouse of Jesus Christ, and puts upon the whole body the seal of God's work; that union which is most pleasing in the sight of our Lord, will draw down His blessing, will be a subject of edification to our neighbour, a sweet and powerful attraction to young persons living in the world, and a source of

peace and of consolation to all the members of the Society, from which they will derive invincible strength and courage.

c) It is, therefore, to secure and maintain the exact observance of the Constitutions and Rules, upon which depends the preservation of the Society by the union of its members, that the superiors and all those that are in office, must, in a spirit of humility and meekness, each day renew their vigilance and firmness; they themselves, far from claiming any exemption by reason of their position or of their seniority, must ever make it their duty to be to all those subject to them a living example of regularity, thoroughly convinced, as they must be, that if nothing works more powerfully upon the mind than example, never has example so much power to persuade and influence others as when it is given by persons placed in authority. They must, therefore, most earnestly attend to this point, that they may ever be able to say, in the words of their Divine Master, Whose place they hold: "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also" (St. John xiii. 15). It is also with a view to maintain the observance of the Constitutions and Rules that all must examine each day in what manner they have observed them during the day, and that from time to time they must be careful to ask the superior for some penance for the faults they may have committed against the observance of the rules; that every month, during meals, the Summary of the Constitutions and Common Rules shall be read; and that every six years the Council, which represents the whole body of the Society, shall assemble to examine with all possible diligence whether uniformity continues to reign in all the convents by the exact observance of the Constitutions and Rules, and to re-establish right order if unhappily any deviation should have crept in.