

APOSTOLIC LIFE

PRINCIPLES

[189]

Since the Congregation is dedicated to the Lord's paschal mystery, it strives to live the new life and hope of this mystery in every phase of its apostolic life, so that the religious achieve their own resurrection and that of society. These apostolic endeavors always take into account the demands of a changing world and the needs of the contemporary church as well as the needs of community life.

[190]

The Congregation considers itself called to every kind of ministry in which the charism of our Founder and his disciples can be realized: to enliven the hope based on God's unconditional love and to work for our personal resurrection and that of society. It is necessary, however, that the manner of realizing this mission be in accord with our tradition. Therefore, the Congregation recognizes as its own those ministries in which religious—themselves being a model of Christian community—will be able to create communities, to work together with the laity, and to maintain and deepen their international character.

Examples of these ministries which had and still have a great significance for us are education and parish

work. Also it is essential to carry on these ministries according to the charism of the Founder and in a manner which is in accord with our tradition.

[191]

For the Resurrectionist, the apostolate represents a call through Christ to lead an apostolic life imbued with a deep and lasting faith, “without which it is impossible to please God” (Heb 11:6). Faith is the necessary condition for effective apostolic activity. The religious are to pray for this faith along with the apostles: “Lord, increase our faith” (Lk 17:5). This faith will permeate the religious’ entire life, mobilizing his efforts in the apostolate.

[192]

Under the pressure of apostolic activity, the Resurrectionist will maintain a unity in his work and spirituality. Christ lives and acts in him and he grows in Christ through his ministry. He loves people with the love of Christ and he is concerned for their spiritual welfare. The desire to bring each person to Christ vivifies his apostolate and makes him ready and capable of overcoming any obstacle and, if need be, of laying down his life for the salvation of all men. His entire religious life will be filled with an apostolic spirit, and his apostolic life permeated with a religious spirit.

[193]

In this spirit, each Resurrectionist can be occupied with the work of Christ and acquire a spirituality proper to a pastor of God's people. He will learn to renounce his own convenience in order to exercise greater efforts in fulfilling his pastoral duties and in implementing new approaches to pastoral ministry under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, he will actuate the spirit of the Congregation which demands that he die to self and rise with Christ in order that his new life with Christ will benefit the people of God. Let him minister joyfully so that the new order established by the Risen Christ is made manifest.³⁶

[194]

Each member of the Congregation shall regard it his duty to be concerned about vocations. Let him "beg the harvest master to send out laborers to gather his harvest" (Mt 9: 38). Let him remember, too, that it is especially through brotherly love and the joyful fulfillment of his apostolate that the religious will attract others to share his dedication.

[195]

³⁶ Rev 21: 1-10 (A new heaven and a new earth).

The Congregation strives to bring an ecumenical spirit to every apostolate. It is concerned about people of all persuasions, yet avoids a false conciliatory approach, superficiality or imprudent zeal. Its activity must be in harmony with the faith which the Catholic Church has always professed. It is also important that the religious pray for unity, dialogue on differences and cooperate in common concerns. In this way they can extend their love to all and give witness to Christ.

[196]

The religious will help the laity to discover the power of the Holy Spirit working in the sacraments of Christian initiation, and in this way introduce them to responsibility for the mission of the church. They will acknowledge the dignity of the role of the laity in the life of the church, listening to their voice with fraternal concern and taking into account their desires, points of view, experience and competence. The religious recognize that the laity have a specific ministry in the service of the church, and therefore will give them a free hand and encourage their initiative. They will provide opportunities for the religious education and continuing formation of the laity.

[197]

While the apostolic endeavors of the Congregation are primarily concerned with the faithful, the religious

shall regard those outside the fold, especially those who belong to no church and the alienated, as waiting for them to share the joys and fruits of God's kingdom.

[198]

Religious working among people of nationalities other than their own are strongly exhorted to acquire a thorough knowledge of the language, culture and customs of the people they serve as well as their own. This knowledge will enable them to render greater service to the people of God, to witness more effectively for Christ and to insure their own greater self-fulfillment.

[199]

To assess better the needs of the time, each province and region should form educational policy and parochial policy in the light of the Constitutions and according to the needs of the particular country. The manner of achieving this formulation is left to the discretion of the individual province or region.

EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE

[200]

True to the spirit of its founders, the Congregation considers its work in education to be a fruitful aspect of its apostolate and, under the guidance of the church, di-

rects its energies to all phases of this work, including the direction of educational institutions at every level. The educational and parochial apostolates work together to achieve the common goal of the Congregation which is the resurrection of society.

[201]

The goal of the educational apostolate is the development of the entire human person. This end is accomplished by cultivating the intellect and fostering right judgment, thereby leading people to God, the source and end of all wisdom and knowledge. The religious must instill in people a sense of personal dignity, freedom and mission and create a faith community alive with the spirit of the Risen Christ. In the educational apostolate the religious are committed to a meeting of intellectual and spiritual values.

[202]

The religious will strive to nourish in others a deep appreciation and love for truth whose source is Christ, “the way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14: 6). By their teaching and research they encourage others to become actively involved in the search for truth through scholarly investigation engaged in with due freedom, through reflecting on their own life experiences and through questioning the world around them.

[203]

The religious will endeavor to instill in others a sense of personal dignity, freedom and mission. The sense of personal dignity derives from man's creation, redemption and call to communion with God. From a recognition of the God-given dignity and freedom flows a sense of mission, evident in the lives of the religious. This sense of mission prompts the individual to respond to the needs of other people at every social level and to take an active part in one's own parish, country and world community with a view to the resurrection of society. Of special concern is the developing of leaders in every professional field, not the least of which must be spiritual leaders in the religious life and priesthood.

[204]

The religious will strive to create faith communities described in the Acts of the Apostles³⁷ and the writings of Bogdan Janski which provide an experience of Christian life, worship, friendship and affirmation. In such communities people can deepen their appreciation for their Christian, cultural and national heritage, while simultaneously learning to transcend the limitations of personal background and the prejudices of social class,

³⁷ "They devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2 :42).

culture or nationality.

[205]

The religious will look upon their educational institutions as excellent places in which to develop Christian community. In these institutions they seek to create an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility while maintaining the discipline necessary to attain the ideals of the Christian community. They also strive to maintain a fundamental and reverent respect for the integrity and individuality of both students and teachers. Openness and availability to their students and co-workers will be an important means of fostering Christian community.

[206]

The experience of Christian community living in the local houses helps us to create Christian community in the Congregation's educational institutions. Community living teaches the religious to become more like Christ and to become an example of true Christian living for their students and co-workers. Each of them has a personal responsibility in this regard, so that he can say with Saint Paul: "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1Cor 11: 1).

[207]

As educators, the religious recognize their responsibility to be professionally competent. They

also pursue ongoing formation in accord with the wishes of the Congregation, their own talents and abilities, and the welfare of those entrusted to their care.

[208]

The religious should strive to lead those with whom they work in the educational apostolate to share in the educational goals and objectives of the Congregation.

[209]

In the educational apostolate the religious will work in cooperation with the local church through their own participation in its life and by leading their students to a similar active participation.

PARISH APOSTOLATE

[210]

The Congregation considers one of its principal works to be the parish apostolate since the parish constitutes the basic unit of the ecclesial community. The religious working in the parish apostolate will exercise special care so that the parish will become one family, united in the Spirit and love of Christ, on the model of the first Christian community in Jerusalem where “the community of believers were of one heart and one mind” (Acts 4:32).

[211]

The building up of the church is effected in the parish especially by means of the family. The family deserves special attention so that, as the domestic church, it will find its rightful place in the mission of the parish. The family will realize its apostolic vocation through mutual love and common prayer, by living a life of mercy, justice and charity and by serving all people, especially those in need.

[212]

The formation of the new person is the common mission of the family and of the church. For this reason the fundamental motive for all the Congregation's pastoral efforts in its parishes for the benefit of children and youth, will be the concern for the new person, reborn through the sacrament of baptism, the Christian's first resurrection. The formation of children and youth is accomplished through catechesis, retreats, liturgy and other pastoral means. All ministry should reflect the joy of the paschal mystery.

[213]

Just as the man at the sheep pool who had suffered thirty-eight years with no one to aid him until the Lord Jesus came to him,³⁸ so too, the sick, the aged, the lonely

³⁸ Jn 5:19

and all people finding themselves in any other kind of need, await the special care and attention of the religious. Programs of sacramental and social ministry to the sick and elderly will constitute an integral part of the Resurrectionist parish apostolate. An effort must be made to bring such people to the awareness that, when united with the sufferings of Christ, their suffering has great value for the church and for themselves, since it can lead to their own participation in the glory of the resurrection.

[214]

The parish is a community made up of smaller communities through which the faithful will be able to realize their responsibility for the church. For this reason, the Congregation supports and encourages communities of the faithful. Such communities develop personal growth and promote friendship and cooperative effort in the parish apostolate.

[215]

The center and source of true spiritual life among the members of the parish family is the liturgy; especially the Eucharist. Through liturgical celebrations Christ, ever present in his church, gives perfect praise to God and makes people holy. Because it is an action of Christ, the High Priest, and of his body the church, the liturgy is a sacred action, surpassing all other activity in efficacy. Consequently, the religious will regard it as their duty to

insure that the faithful participate knowingly, actively and fruitfully.

[216]

In the liturgy, the priest or deacon acts in the person of Christ. Therefore, they will preach God's word and not their own. They will prepare themselves diligently to proclaim the word of God and they will make their lives conform to the truth they speak. "I charge you to preach the word, to stay with this task whether convenient or inconvenient -correcting, reproofing, appealing- constantly teaching and never losing patience" (2 Tim 4: 2).

[217]

Parishes will foster devotion to Mary, the Mother of the Church. Her spiritual maternity began at the Annunciation and will continue until Christ has been formed in all members of his body, the church. Mary prayed with the disciples for the outpouring of the Spirit on the church at the first Pentecost. She continues to be active in the outpouring of the Spirit upon the church, upon the Congregation and upon the people to whom the religious minister. Her aid and intercession are important if the apostolic activities of the Congregation are to be fruitful.

[218]

In the administration of parishes, the religious are subject to the ordinaries in conformity with general ecclesiastical law. Those who are nominated to a parochial office receive it from the Bishop; nevertheless, they will exercise it with due regard for the charism and traditions of the Congregation.

[219]

The pastor administers parochial property according to the prescriptions of ecclesiastical law. The local superior directs the affairs of the house. However, the duties of pastor and superior may be performed by the same individual.

MISSIONARY APOSTOLATE

[220]

Although the Congregation is not a missionary institute; it will be involved in the missions to the extent which the Church expects an active religious institute to be involved. It will exercise missionary activity in those areas where there exists great spiritual and material need. It will focus its activity on developing and forming the local church into a community of faith, hope and love according to its culture. The whole purpose of this activity is to make the human race form one people of God,

coalesce into the one body of Christ and be built up into the one temple of the Holy Spirit.

[221]

Because of the complexities of mission projects, major superiors must respond to the needs of missionaries with special attention. The following areas merit their attention:

- a) to assure that religious going into the missions are well prepared for their assignment,
- b) to visit the missions on a regular basis and for a length of time in order to become acquainted with the ministry performed,
- c) to care for the material needs of the religious when local support is insufficient,
- d) to encourage all community members to support the men in the missions with personal interest and prayers.

SPIRIT OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

[222]

We will have at heart the study of our Constitutions since we have obliged ourselves to live by these Constitutions and regard them as our rule of life. The loving and faithful observance of them, not by mere attachment to the letter which kills but by loving submission to the spirit that gives life, will help us to know God's will more clearly and intimately and lead each member of the Resurrection Community to the fullness of his consecration to the Risen Christ.