

NORMATIVE TEXTS
OF THE
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES
OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

Rome - 2008

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CONGREGAZIONE DEL PREZIOSISSIMO SANGUE
Viale di Porta Ardeatina, 66
00154 Roma

Il Moderatore Generale

January 29, 2008

Dear Confreres,

The members who participated in the XIX General Assembly, held in Rome from July 16-28, 2007, revised and updated many articles of our *Normative Texts* – the Constitution, General Statutes, and The Assemblies – that were promulgated exactly twenty years ago in July 1988.

The aim was to adapt the *Normative Texts* to the current situation in the life of the Congregation. Today there is a new awareness among the members of the meaning of the spirituality of the Blood of Christ, particularly in the area of reconciliation, the importance of mission, and the reality of internationality and multiculturality. Everything was done with a view to being creatively faithful to the charism given to us and to the entire Church by our founder St. Gaspar del Bufalo.

The work of revision and change carried out by the participants of the XIX General Assembly was the culmination of two years of work in which the entire Congregation in all

its units participated, especially through the district meetings that were animated by the General Curia and by a commission created under its direction.

The General Curia was called to this work by resolution 13. 4 of the XVIII Extraordinary General Assembly of 2004 which declared: *“The Moderator General and the General Council are to establish a commission or commissions to study and make proposals regarding the items listed below which are to be discussed by the different units of the congregation and then presented to the major superiors: [to] review the Constitutions and Statutes to include language of mission, reconciliation, and internationality as well as to better reflect who we are today.”*

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life approved the revisions of the Constitution on January 3, 2008, and happily in its letter of approval emphasized how the proposed theme, that is, the new understanding of the spirituality of the blood of Christ, the international and multicultural reality of the Congregation, and the dimension of mission, has been achieved.

With both joy and a sense of satisfaction I now promulgate these new *Normative Texts*. As was the case with the English edition of the *Normative Texts* of 2003, I wish to include a series of related documents (cf. S36) that constitute policies approved in various meetings of the Moderator General and his Council with the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission Directors. These documents are: *The Decrees of the XIX General Assembly*; the *General Formation Program* (1992), the *Profile of the Missionary of the Precious Blood* (1999), the *Criteria for Founding a Mission and Erecting a Vicariate or Province* (1998), *Criteria for Reconfiguring a Province or Vicariate: A Choice for Life* (2002), the *Policy on Regions in the Congregation* (2006), and the *Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of Members from One Unit Who live and Work in Another Unit of the Congregation* (2006).

The *Normative Texts* constitute a way of life for all of us and each member is called to live them responsibly. They

form part of our tradition and of our history, lived differently in the various parts of the world where we carry out our mission. Each Director is to have the original English edition translated into the language used in his Province, Vicariate, or Mission. These translations are to be sent to the Moderator General who, with his Council, will verify their conformity to the original. The approved translations are then to be published and distributed to the members. Furthermore, every Province and Vicariate must review its own statutes and, if necessary, adapt them to these *Normative Texts*.

May St. Gaspar, whose charism we live faithfully and creatively and the Madonna of the Precious Blood accompany us in our missionary journey to discern God's will and better serve the Church and the world.

United in the Blood of Christ,

Francesco Bartoloni C.P.P.S.
Moderator General

Felix Mushobozi C.P.P.S.
Secretary General



CONGREGAZIONE
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 3 January 2008

Prot. n. R 21-1/2007

Dear Father Bartoloni,

With your letter of 6 September 2007, you requested approval of certain changes in the *Normative Texts* of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, as voted by the XIX General Assembly. We apologize for the delay in our response.

Revisions have been introduced in C 1-4, C 8, C 10, C 12, C 21-23, C. 31-32, C 35, C 37, C 42, C 56-57, C 61, C 70-71, C 74, and C 80. In studying these revisions we note the consistent use of the term Congregation, following your official title, an enrichment of the expressions of your spirituality, an increased attention to internationality and the multi cultural reality of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, and the introduction of an entity known as a Mission.

With this letter, we are pleased to approve the revisions as presented, and as preserved here in our Archives.

With personal best wishes and prayer for many blessings for all of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in this New Year, I remain

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Franc Card. Rodé

Franc Card. Rodé, C.M.
Prefect

+ *Gianfranco A. Gardin, ofm conv.*

* Gianfranco A. Gardin, OFM Conv.
Archbishop Secretary

Fr. FRANCESCO BARTOLONI, cpps
Moderator General
Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood
Roma

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

C1. Impelled by the love of Christ, manifested especially in the shedding of his Blood, and sensitive to the mission and need of the Church, St. Gaspar del Bufalo founded a priestly Institute. He attracted from the diocesan clergy a group of like-minded priests and united them by a bond of charity only, instead of by vows. Living together in mission houses, they were a source of continual renewal for the priests and the people, mainly by preaching missions and retreats.

In this nucleus the Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood had its origin, and from it derives its spirit¹.

¹ All articles in the Constitution are prefaced with a "C"; those of the General Statutes with an "S"; and those dealing with Assemblies with an "A".

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- C2. The Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood is a Society of the Apostolic Life of pontifical right with its own Constitution and Statutes. It is an international and multicultural Congregation of priests, brothers, and definitively incorporated candidates who form a fraternal community. They commit themselves to the service of God in the Congregation by an act of incorporation which is rooted in their baptismal consecration and more fully manifests it².
- C3. The Congregation dedicates itself to the service of the Church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the ministry of the word, which includes the promotion of human dignity, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.
- C4. The spiritual, community, and apostolic life of the members finds its source in the Precious Blood, the mystery of Christ who gives his Blood for the salvation of all. "In this devotion," states our Founder, St. Gaspar Del Bufalo, "we go to the heart of our faith."
- The spirituality of the Precious Blood is manifested in many ways. The Blood of Christ is the most profound sign of the Paschal Mystery, which is sacramentally renewed in the Eucharist, and is especially honored by full participation in the Sacrifice of the Mass.
- C5. By a special devotion our members honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Lady of the Precious Blood, St. Gaspar, our Founder, and St. Francis Xavier, our Patron.

² With reference to membership in the Congregation, when the Normative Texts speak of INCORPORATION or of INCORPORATED MEMBERS or of MEMBERS, they intend to speak of any person incorporated into the Congregation, whether temporarily or definitively, unless they speak explicitly of DEFINITIVE INCORPORATION or of DEFINITELY INCORPORATED MEMBERS, or of TEMPORARY INCORPORATION or of TEMPORARILY INCORPORATED MEMBERS.

TITLE I

Community Life

- C6. Whereas all the people of God are made one in the Blood of the New Covenant, our Congregation gives living testimony of this special unity through its community life according to the spirit of St. Gaspar.
- C7. Members live in the residence to which they are assigned. The basis of this community life is the bond of charity among the members who form a family in Christ. This living union is given expression by mutual assistance, both spiritual and material, the pursuit of common goals and also by living together, as long as the needs of the apostolate do not demand otherwise.
- C8. The bond of charity unites the varied gifts of the members for the service of the Congregation and the Church, so that the differences in culture, gifts, age, and office become advantageous for all the members. Thus they mutually and willingly share their natural and supernatural talents.
- C9. In order to foster this mutual aid to one another, the members give special place to the conferences and meetings of the community and to the daily gatherings for such matters as meals, recreation and ordinary conversations. Thus the members mutually inform one another in both the theological and pastoral fields, rendering more effective the mission of our Congregation. Moreover, in these community meetings, especially on the local level, the members gain a knowledge of the affairs of the Congregation, and Directors gain an insight into the thinking and talents of the members and are better able to direct the community.
- C10. The bond of charity is fostered among the members by the sharing of communications which deepen the sense

of community-consciousness and identity and help the individual members realize that they form an international and multicultural family as a worldwide Congregation.

Members have a right to information regarding their affairs, whether individually or collectively. The exercise of this right, however, presupposes that communications are true and as complete as justice and charity allow.

- C11. The bond of charity extends in a special way to the sick and aged of the Congregation who in their trials have a special fellowship with the suffering Christ and implore God's grace for the other members.

With equal love our dead are remembered in the prayers of all. With their labors they have prepared the harvest the Congregation is now reaping.

- C12. The Congregation also gives witness to the bond of charity by welcoming guests, especially priests and religious, into its houses. Nevertheless, there is recognized the need of each member for privacy for his interior recollection, prayer, and study.

- C13. The members are to strive to develop their spiritual life, uniting themselves intimately with God, in order to increase their apostolic zeal. Therefore they attach great importance to those means necessary to foster this life, particularly the reading of Sacred Scripture, mental prayer, days of recollection and retreats, as well as frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

- C14. Prayer in common is an excellent means of fostering union with Christ and the bond of charity among the members. The concelebration of the Eucharist, the recitation in common of some part of the Liturgy of the Hours and the proper prayers of the Congregation are recognized as effective signs of community life.

- C15. Community life is to be deeply nourished by the spirit of the Gospel, manifested above all in the counsels which the Lord gave to his disciples.
- C16. Imitation of the poor Christ frees the members from every undue attachment to material goods, enriching them for the Kingdom of God and fostering the giving of themselves to the apostolate.

The members may acquire, retain, administer and alienate their own temporal goods. However, they give to the Congregation the income from their ministry. The Congregation in turn provides them with the necessities of life and takes care of them especially in time of sickness and old age. With a sense of responsibility and generosity each member expresses his love for the Congregation and for the poor.

- C17. Just as the individual members give witness of poverty, so does the Congregation as a whole, being careful to avoid whatsoever may offend those we serve.

The Provinces of the Congregation share their resources with one another, those which are better endowed assisting those which suffer need.

The acquiring, possessing, administering and alienating of temporal goods by the Congregation is governed by canon 741.

- C18. Because of our love of Christ, our members undertake to observe perfect continence in celibacy, which is a form of life of proved worth in the Church. It makes them free for God and for service to their neighbor as they await their resurrection in Christ. In community life, characterized by mutual understanding and fellowship, this charism finds protection and development.
- C19. In imitation of Christ who shed his blood, the members are obedient to the Father's will, primarily as manifested in the Gospel. This implies a sacrifice of the will

of the member in order to cooperate in community life and in service to the people of God. This obedience finds a practical expression in our observance of the Constitution and of our norms and regulations, as well as in our obedience to the lawfully constituted authority in our Congregation and obedience to the Supreme Pontiff as highest superior (canon 590 §2).

- C20. Dialogue among all the members, as it helps them to develop their personalities, must lead them to a realization of that unity which the Lord wished for his disciples. Such unity is a sign of the presence of his Kingdom in their midst. Community life is an important source of their apostolic strength.

TITLE II

The Apostolate

- C21. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood take part in the apostolic mission of the Church, proclaiming the mystery of Christ who has redeemed and reconciled all human beings in his Blood to make them sharers in the Kingdom of God.
- C22. The life and spirit of St. Gaspar are an outstanding apostolic example for our members. His missionary awareness of the conditions and needs of the people of his time and his wholehearted response to them should animate our lives to respond to the signs of our times in creative fidelity to his charism.
- C23. The missionary is to be a living witness of God's word. His apostolic witness will be effective when he seeks his strength in the spirituality of the Precious Blood, in

the Scriptures, the liturgy, prayer, and the living tradition of the Church.

- C24. The Congregation dedicates itself to the ministry of the word according to the spirit of our founder. Every member shares in the apostolate of the Congregation, whether he exercises an administrative function or other related services, or whether he bears the suffering of sickness or age.
- C25. Since Christ shed his blood for all, redeeming them “out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5: 9), in order to form of the entire human race the unique people of God, our Congregation is impelled by its proper end and spirit to further this plan of salvation also by means of a foreign mission apostolate.
- C26. Cooperation among the members in our apostolate is necessary to assure its success. Every means should be used to realize such cooperation, not only in the local community, but also within the Province and, as far as possible, among the different Provinces.
- C27. Coordinated apostolic action will bear fruit if it conforms to the directives of the Holy Father and the bishops, and is supported by cordial collaboration with the diocesan clergy, the religious and the laity (canon 738 §2).

TITLE III

Formation and Incorporation

- C28. Called to be sharers of the mission of Christ in the world, the members of our Congregation, inspired by and living consciously within the mystery of the Pre-

cious Blood, exert themselves continually to attain that conformation to him – human, Christian, communitarian, apostolic – that best promotes the Kingdom of God.

- C29. Their human formation aims at acquiring psychological maturity, a sense of responsibility and of authentic freedom, self mastery and the exercise of those virtues that are highly regarded among human beings: sincerity of heart, constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's word and courtesy of manner.
- C30. Their Christian formation strives to make the members ever more conscious of the gift of faith, of the mystery of salvation and of living their baptismal commitment in its fullness.
- C31. Their communitarian formation demands that the members be vitally and dynamically involved in the Congregation, absorbing its missionary spirit, making its ideals their own, and that of one accord they promote their mutual progress, respect and kindness. "Let there flourish among them harmony, peace, tranquility, reverence, tolerance and love. They should willingly help one another and excuse one another's faults in all charity" (*Praxis of the Rule of St. Gaspar*, Article 9).
- C32. Their apostolic formation demands those virtues indispensable for committing themselves to spreading the Kingdom of God: love of God and of neighbor, generosity in self giving, simplicity of life, adaptability to various environments and cultures, and ardent zeal for helping others. Moreover, it demands that, in the spirit of Christ, the missionary know how to harmonize a profound spiritual life with exterior activity and always to be alert to discover the signs of the times.
- C33. The aim of educating the candidates of our Congregation is to help the young men gradually to acquire the above stated goals in their total formation.

- C34. The education of our candidates is regulated by competent authority (canon 736 §2). Between those responsible for their formation and the candidates themselves there should exist full harmony, animated by a family spirit, mutual cooperation and fraternal dialogue.
- C35. Before his incorporation into the Congregation the candidate undergoes a special program of religious formation which includes a more intense experience of the paschal mystery, a study of the charism of the Congregation, of the theology and spirituality of the Precious Blood, of the history of the Congregation, its Normative Texts, as well as a practical knowledge of its community life and its apostolic endeavors. The Provincial or Vicariate Director is empowered to admit the candidate according to the norms of the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes.
- C36. With the termination of the period of formation referred to in article C35 and upon the request of the individual and his acceptance by the Congregation according to the Provincial Statutes, the candidate is admitted to definitive incorporation by a decree of the Moderator General.

In those Provinces which have a temporary incorporation, the Provincial Director is empowered to admit the candidate to temporary incorporation in accordance with the provisions of the Provincial Statutes.

- C37. Incorporation is the act by which the candidate commits himself to the service of God in the Congregation, perfecting his baptismal consecration. This incorporation is accomplished by a rite which also expresses the commitment by which the candidate and the members of the Congregation freely give themselves to each other in fidelity and perseverance.

The approved formula of incorporation is:

CANDIDATE:

Responding to God who calls me to follow Christ by a special vocation, and in your presence Father Director (or: in your presence as delegate of the Provincial Director), trusting in God who is ever faithful, and begging the intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, of Saint Gaspar, our Founder, and Saint Francis Xavier, our Patron, I, N., of my own free will, promise fidelity to the Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood in accordance with its Constitution and Statutes, giving myself entirely to the service of God for the rest of my life.

DIRECTOR:

(After the last incorporation only, if there are several): As Director (or: As delegate of the Director) of the N. Province of the Congregation of Missionaries of the Precious Blood, I accept your promise, and I admit you into our Congregation definitively. In return, I assure you of the fidelity and care of the Congregation in the bond of charity. Through your faith in Christ who has redeemed us through his Precious Blood may you with God's help remain a faithful member of the Congregation.

(The Director may use other words of confirmation.)

[In those Provinces which have temporary incorporation, the above formula may be used making the appropriate adaptations regarding time.]

- C38. The candidate is to undergo a period of at least three years of formation under some form of commitment before he is admitted to definitive incorporation in accord with the prescriptions of the General Statutes.
- C39. By definitive incorporation a member is no longer incardinated in his own diocese. During the time that a member of another Society of Apostolic Life or an

Institute of Consecrated Life is temporarily incorporated into the Congregation, his rights and obligations in the previous Society or Institute are suspended; with definitive incorporation into the Congregation, these rights and obligations cease.

- C40. The Moderator General grants dimissorial letters to the members who have been approved for ordination by their respective Provincial Directors with the consent of their Councils.
- C41. For the transfer, release or dismissal of a member from the Congregation, the prescriptions of Common Law (canons 742-746) and the General Statutes are to be observed.
- C42. After first consulting his Provincial, or Vicariate, and Mission Director, a definitively incorporated member for a grave reason can obtain an indult of departure from the Congregation from the Moderator General with the consent of his Council. The rights and obligations flowing from incorporation cease, safeguarding the prescription of canon 693.
- C43. A temporarily incorporated member for a grave reason can obtain an indult of departure from the Congregation from the Provincial or Vicariate Director with the consent of the respective Council.
- C44. A decree of dismissal from the Congregation of a not yet definitively incorporated member may be issued according to canon 696 by the Provincial or Vicariate Director with the consent of his Council. The decree must indicate the right which the dismissed member enjoys to have recourse to the Moderator General within ten days after receiving the notification. The recourse has a suspensive effect.

TITLE IV

Government

- C45. Our Congregation is a fellowship of men freed through the Blood of Christ and united in the bond of love. As brothers the members work together to create a community in which each of them can respond in full freedom to the call of Christ. By commitment to one another, however, they must use their freedom to advance the welfare of the community.
- C46. Authority is a necessary support of the community. In our Congregation, as in the Church, some men are called to the office of leadership in which they are to put themselves in a special way at the service of the community.
- C47. The function of authority is to unite the individual members into a single community. The Directors of the Congregation are to reconcile conflicting spirits and to keep the members faithful to the ideals of the community by exhortation and counsel and, if necessary, by direct command.
- C48. The other members recognize the presence of the Spirit in those who have been chosen to guide the community. At times this may require that the individual sacrifice his will for the sake of harmony in the community. The Directors, for their part, are always to be conscious that they have been called by the Spirit to serve rather than to be served. Their ministry, if it is to be faithful to the Gospel, must be characterized by humility, simplicity, brotherliness and the absence of a domineering spirit.
- C49. The ministry of service and leadership in the community is not limited to those who hold administrative offices. Every member is to show a responsible initiative in promoting the welfare of the Congregation.

- C50. In order that the participation and the interests of all the members be reflected in the persons and bodies that exercise authority in the General, Provincial and Vicariate government, universal suffrage, whether direct or by representation, according to the prescriptions of the Statutes, shall always be carefully maintained; moreover, all such bodies are to be as representative as possible.
- C51. In choosing those who are to serve the community as Directors, the greatest attention is to be given to their human and supernatural qualities of prudence, good will, judgment and wisdom.
- C52. To render the exercise of authority more efficient and pliable, Directors are endowed with suitable faculties to obviate needless and frequent recourse to higher authorities.
- C53. Competent authority, as established by these Normative Texts, has the faculty of adapting the manner of government to the cultural and sociological needs of time and place. Always to be preserved intact, however, is the participation of all the members in the choosing of Directors on the General, Provincial, and Vicariate levels as well as in the activity of those bodies which collaborate with the Directors in making decisions.
- C54. The supreme authority in the Congregation is exercised by the General Assembly when one is in session: in this General Assembly representatives of the entire Congregation take part in electing the Moderator General and his Council, and in handling the more important business of the Congregation.
- C55. The General Assembly is convoked by the Moderator General according to the General Statutes. In order that the elections and deliberations be valid, at least an absolute majority of those who have a vote must be present, but all shall be summoned.

- C56. Ex officio members of the General Assembly with deliberative voice are the Moderator General and his Council, even after the election of their successors at that Assembly, the most recent living ex-Moderator General, and the Provincial and Vicariate Directors.
- C57. Each Province, Vicariate, and Mission elects, according to the norms of the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes, delegates to the General Assembly, in proportion to the number of its definitively incorporated members and according to the ratio given in the General Statutes. The number of elected delegates ought to exceed the number of ex officio members.
- C58. Safeguarding the determinations of Common Law and of the General and Provincial or Vicariate Statutes, only definitively incorporated members enjoy active and passive voice in all levels of government.
- C59. To change or authoritatively interpret anything in the Constitution, the General Assembly needs the approbation of the Holy See. At least a two-third vote of the members is required before anything in the Constitution or General Statutes can be changed. A doubtful norm of the Constitution is to be referred to the Holy See for interpretation.
- C60. The decrees and mandates of the General Assembly are binding in the Congregation and remain in force until they are changed or abrogated by another General Assembly, or the reason for which they were issued ceases to exist.
- C61. The visible sign of unity in the Congregation is the Moderator General, endowed with the authority over all Provinces, Vicariates, Missions, houses, and members invested in him by Common Law, the Constitution and the General Statutes, and decrees. His first duty is to animate and renew the spirit of the Congregation, and to promote its expansion. Working in the closest

harmony with the other major superiors, he coordinates the whole life of the Congregation, and promotes unity among members, and Provinces, Vicariates, and Missions, and fosters the mission of the Congregation.

- C62. Safeguarding the prescriptions of Common Law regarding the qualifications of the Moderator General, he has to be definitively incorporated at least five years.
- C63. The Moderator General is elected in a General Assembly for a term of six years and can be re-elected to a second term. For election to a successive third term, he must receive a two-thirds majority of the members present on the first or second ballots.

If for any reason his office becomes vacant, he is succeeded by the Vice-Moderator General for the completion of the term of office, and a new Councilor is chosen according to the norms of the General Statutes. Then the Moderator General and his Council designate one of the Councilors Vice-Moderator.

- C64. The Moderator General is elected by secret ballot. A two – thirds majority of the members present is required on the first and second ballots. If such a majority is not attained on the first or second ballot, an absolute majority is sufficient on the third or, if necessary, on the fourth ballot. If a fifth ballot becomes necessary, the choice is between the two candidates who have obtained the greater number of votes, or, if there are several (with the same numbers), upon the two who are senior in age. On this fifth ballot these two candidates are deprived of active voice. In the event of a tie vote on this fifth and final ballot, the one who is the senior in age is considered elected.
- C65. In case of tendering his resignation, the Moderator General, observing canon 189, is to submit it to a General Assembly when one is in session or, having informed the other major superiors, to the Holy See and abide by its decision.

- C66. If the Moderator General is to be removed from office, a majority of the General Councilors, having informed the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, brings the case before the Holy See for a decision.
- C67. The Moderator General is aided by a General Council consisting of no fewer than three members, as well as by the Provincial and Vicariate Directors as determined in the General Statutes.
- C68. The members of the General Council shall be elected by an absolute majority of the members present in distinct, secret ballots. After the second inconclusive ballot, the choice is between the two candidates who have obtained the greater number of votes, or, if there are several (with the same number), upon the two who are senior in age and both of them are deprived of active voice in the third ballot. In the event of a tie vote on this third and final ballot, the one who is the senior in age is considered elected.
- C69. All members of the General Council are to be summoned to every session of the Council if possible. To transact business validly a quorum of two General Councilors and the Moderator General or his substitute must participate in the decision. For a reasonable cause the counsel of a Council member may be given by letter, telephone, or telegram.
- C70. The Congregation is divided into Provinces, Vicariates, and Missions, each having at its head respectively a Provincial, Vicariate, or Mission Director.
- C71. To divide the Congregation into Provinces or Vicariates, or to join presently constituted divisions or restrict them in any way, or to suppress any such parts, pertains to the authority of the Moderator General, and the General Councilors, and the Provincial and Vicariate Directors acting in accord with the General Statutes.

- C72. Safeguarding the prescriptions of Common Law, regarding the qualifications of the Provincial or Vicariate Director, he has to be definitively incorporated at least three years.
- C73. The Provincial and Vicariate Directors are elected for a term of not more than four years as determined by the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes and can be re-elected to a second term. For election to a successive third term, they must receive a two-thirds majority of the members present in the first or second ballots.
- C74. Unless the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes provide otherwise, the election of a Provincial or Vicariate Director is according to canon 119, 1. Mission Directors are elected and/or appointed according to the statutes of the Province or Vicariate and the norms of the Mission.
- C75. The election of a Provincial Director requires the written confirmation of the Moderator General or his delegate in response to the request of the person elected. The election of a Vicariate Director requires the written confirmation of his Provincial Director or his delegate in response to the request of the person elected.
- If for any reason his office becomes vacant or he is impeded from exercising it for a time, the norms of the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes are to be observed.
- C76. The Provincial or Vicariate Statutes are to assure that provisions are made for the possible removal from office or transferral to another office of a Provincial or Vicariate Director.
- C77. The Provincial or Vicariate Directors are aided in the exercise of their authority by a Council or equivalent body, consisting of no fewer than three members, as established by the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes.
- C78. Major superiors in the Congregation must personally make the profession of faith in accordance with canon

833 § 8, at the beginning of their term of office. The profession is made to their respective Assembly or Council or equivalent body using the Nicene Creed.

- C79. The fundamental social element of the Congregation is the local community. It is here that our fidelity to the Gospel, the ideals of the Congregation and the union of members is fostered. Here authority places itself most directly at the service of the members. Wherefore, the Director of the local community especially, in exercising his authority, must be constantly alert to apply all that our Normative Texts recommend.
- C80. In our Congregation those places where members reside at the direction of the Provincial, Vicariate, or Mission Directors are called "residences." The residences of the Province, Vicariate, or Mission are erected, accepted or suppressed in accordance with canon 733 and according to the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes.
- C81. The Local Director, chosen according to the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes, exercises his authority according to the prescriptions of the Normative Texts. He may be aided by other members of the local community according to norms specified by the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes.
- C82. To be named or elected Local Director of any residence of the Congregation, safeguarding the prescriptions of Common Law, a member must be definitively incorporated at least for the number of years specified in the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes. These same Statutes are to assure that the Local Directors do not remain too long in office without an interruption.

TITLE I

Community Life

- S1. The official title of our Congregation is *Congregatio Missionariorum Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*. Its abbreviation by custom is C.P.P.S. Every Province is free to translate this title according to the needs of its culture and language.
- S2. Our members are privileged to wear the mission crucifix and chain which St. Gaspar gave his confreres as a sign of the Community. Its use is regulated by the Provincial Statutes, which also may provide for another emblem to be worn by the members of the respective Province.
- S3. Every year the members are to receive an appropriate vacation according to the norms established in the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes.

- S4. Each Province is to formulate a Manual of Prayers containing those exercises of piety recommended for the whole Congregation as well as those the Province judges opportune for its own use according to the spirit of our tradition.
- S5. Members honor the Precious Blood in the celebration of the liturgy, in contemplative prayer, exercises of piety, and study. Through these means they seek to live the spirituality of the Blood of Christ more fully, to understand its relevance for humankind today, and to share this gift with the Church and the world.
- S6. To facilitate the study of the theology of the Precious Blood and the understanding of its spirituality, appropriate initiatives should be taken at all levels of the Congregation.
- S7. At the death of the Holy Father and of the Moderator General a Mass is celebrated as suffrage in every residence. At the death of a member or a candidate (cf. C35 and S19) of the Congregation all the members are to fulfill the suffragia prescribed in the Provincial Statutes. Once a year every priest is to offer Mass for all the deceased of the other Provinces; the other members offer the suffragia prescribed in their Provincial Statutes.

Moreover, one Mass is celebrated for all the faithful departed, another for the deceased of the Congregation and third for our deceased relatives and benefactors at the time and in the places determined by the Provincial Statutes.
- S8. Mass stipends received by the members are property of the Congregation and are to be handed over to the Congregation as determined in the Provincial Statutes.
- S9. Incorporated members – priests, brothers and students – receive respectively a fitting allowance to be determined by the Provincial Director with the consent of his Council or equivalent body, to take care of those things not provided by the Congregation.

- S10. The Congregation, whether a Province, a Vicariate, a Mission, or a residence, is never held responsible for the private debts or obligations incurred by members. Likewise the Congregation assumes no responsibility for unauthorized debts or burdens contracted by members in the name of or in behalf of the Congregation, Province, Vicariate, Mission, or residence.

TITLE II

The Apostolate

- S11. Besides the apostolate described in the Constitution, our Congregation dedicates itself to the needs of the local and universal Church and devotes itself to the parochial ministry and other works of the apostolate which are assumed according to the Provincial and Vicariate Statutes and the norms of the Mission.
- S12. The missionaries work to form leaders of the lay apostolate who wish to dedicate themselves in a special way to the service of the Church and collaborate with them for the kingdom of God. The Congregation recognizes and encourages lay associations that participate in our Precious Blood spirituality (the Union of the Blood of Christ, Companions, and others) as a blessing to the C.P.P.S. community and values their presence. These lay associations are governed by their own statutes or norms.
- S13. Impelled by the love of Christ, who shed his blood to make us one (Eph 2, 13), we seek ecumenical dialogue and collaboration with our brothers and sisters in other churches and ecclesial communities with whom we are connected through baptism.

In our commitment to human dignity, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, we are ready, under the directives of the Church, to dialogue and collaborate with people of other religions and with all men and women of good will.

- S14. Since ours is an age of continual and rapid change, prudence dictates that we look ahead with far-reaching, methodical and wise programs. Therefore, the local, mission, vicariate, provincial and, the general administrations, in dialogue with the members, establish the objectives of the missionary apostolate and provide the appropriate means to realize them.
- S15. Of great benefit to the whole Congregation and its members are frequent communications from the Moderator General to the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission Directors and, through them, to the members and lay associates, of the spiritual and apostolic activities of the various Provinces, Vicariates, and Missions.

TITLE III

Formation and Incorporation

- S16. The missionary, living the spirituality of the Precious Blood, by prayer, sacrifice, word, and by the overall witness of his life, attracts vocations and promotes the growth of the Congregation.
- S17. The success of the work of educating our candidates depends principally on suitable instructors. The competent Directors, therefore, are to exercise care in choosing persons well prepared for such an assignment.

- S18. The *General Formation Program* expresses the basic principles and norms of formation for the Congregation. The application of these principles and norms to the needs of the particular vocation of priest and brother is specified by the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission programs of formation.
- S19. Safeguarding the norms of Common Law (canon 735 §2) and of our Congregation in regard to the acceptance of candidates for priesthood or brotherhood, they are admitted to the formation referred to in article C35 of the Constitution after a period of adequate preparation and probation according to the accepted formation program of the Province, Vicariate, or Mission.
- S20. Our members should consider their vocation as a special grace of God, praying fervently for perseverance and seeking to live faithfully according to the ideals of the Congregation. Let them not leave it without just and grave reasons.
- S21. If a member should request laicization and dispensation from the obligations of the priesthood, after the petition has been submitted to his Provincial or Vicariate Director and until a response of the Holy See arrives, he is deprived of active and passive voice. The same is applicable to a definitively incorporated member who is involved in a process of dismissal or whose unlawful absence as described in canon 665 §2 has lasted six months.
- S22. After first consulting his Provincial or Vicariate Director, a definitively incorporated member can obtain from the Moderator General with the consent of his Council the permission to transfer to another Society of Apostolic Life. In the meantime, his rights and obligations in our Congregation are suspended, safeguarding his right to return before his definitive incorporation into the new Society.

For a definitively incorporated member to transfer to an Institute of Consecrated Life or a member of the latter to transfer to our Congregation, the permission of the Holy See is required.

For a definitively incorporated member to transfer to a Diocese, the permission of the Ordinary is required.

- S23. After first consulting his Provincial or Vicariate Director, a definitively incorporated member can obtain from the Moderator General with the consent of his Council an indult of living outside the Congregation, not however beyond three years, with the rights and obligations which are not suitable for the new condition being suspended. The member, while on indult, loses the right to active and passive voice. The member remains however under the care of his Provincial or Vicariate Director. If it is a question of a cleric, there is required in addition the permission of the diocesan bishop of the place in which he must dwell under whose care and dependency he also remains.

In each case, the Provincial or Vicariate Director is to specify in writing the rights and obligations of the member to whom the indult has been granted and a copy of this document is to be sent to the Moderator General.

- S24. According to the nature of the case, the dismissal of a definitively incorporated member is governed by canons 694-704.
- S25. The members who leave should always be considered as our brothers in Christ, and are to be helped in the spirit of charity if they are in need.

Government

- S26. The Major Superiors of the Congregation are: The Moderator General, the Provincial Director in his Province, the Vicariate Director in his Vicariate, and their substitutes whenever they take the place of the former.
- S27. To apply the norms of the Constitution and the General Statutes to its particular circumstances, each Province is to have its Provincial Statutes approved by the Provincial Assembly and confirmed by the Moderator General with the consent of his Council. Each Vicariate is to have its Vicariate Statutes approved by the Vicariate Assembly and by the respective Provincial with the consent of his Council and confirmed by the Moderator General with the consent of his Council. The norms of the Missions are regulated by the respective Provincial or Vicariate statutes.
- S28. Dispensations should be used with moderation. Whenever the spiritual or temporal good of a member requires it in particular cases, his immediate Director is empowered to grant dispensations from disciplinary norms. The Moderator General can grant such dispensations for a longer period of time. If a dispensation involves an entire Province of the Congregation, the counsel of the members of the General Council is required.

Provided the nature and purpose of the Congregation are not changed thereby, the Moderator having consulted the members of the General Council may also grant for urgent reasons and *per modum actus*, a dispensation from the other norms of the General Statutes.

- S29. A doubtful norm of the General Statutes is to be referred for interpretation to the Moderator General and

his Council; a doubtful norm of the Provincial Statutes is submitted to the Provincial Director and his Council; a doubtful norm of the Vicariate Statutes is submitted to the Vicariate Director and his Council. These decisions regarding the Statutes are valid until the next General, Provincial or Vicariate Assembly, which is competent to render a final decision.

- S30. The Moderator General is helped in governing the Congregation by a General Council consisting of four members. The first of these assumes the office of Vice-Moderator General.

The Councilors are elected with the Moderator General by a General Assembly for a term of six years. They ordinarily reside with the Moderator General at Rome, the headquarters of the Congregation.

- S31. Whenever the office of a General Councilor becomes vacant, the Moderator General and General Council will select a new Councilor from those who received votes for the office of General Councilor at the Assembly in which that Councilor was elected.

- S32. In case of tendering his resignation, a Councilor submits it to the Moderator General and abides by his decision. He informs the other General Councilors and his respective Provincial Director.

- S33. In matters for which the Common Law or these Normative Texts require the Moderator General to consult his Council, it is sufficient for valid action if the Moderator hears the Council. Although he is not strictly obliged to follow their vote, even if it is unanimous, he should give it serious consideration, and not decide contrary to it unless he has grave reason.

In matters for which the Common Law or these Normative Texts require the consent of the Council, the Moderator acts invalidly if he overrides the decision of the Council. While the Council's affirmative vote in

such a matter is necessary for valid action on the part of the Moderator, such an affirmative vote does not impose on him the obligation of acting.

In matters for which the Common Law or these Normative texts require the Moderator to act collegially with his Council in a certain matter, a majority affirmative vote imposes on the Moderator the obligation of acting, just as a majority negative vote prohibits him from acting³.

- S34. The Moderator General with the consent of his Council appoints, from within the Council or from without, the Procurator General, who transacts the business of the Congregation with the Holy See; the Postulator General, who promotes the canonization of saints; the Secretary General; the Economist General; and the Archivist of the Congregation.
- S35. The Secretary General writes the minutes of each session of the General Council, which, after their approval by the Moderator General and the Council members, are also signed by them. In all ecclesiastical matters he is the notary public of the Congregation. Documents signed by him carry official guarantee. He serves as Secretary for all General Assemblies and is responsible for the minutes and Acta of these Assemblies.
- S36. The Moderator General and his Council are aided by the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission Directors. They are to meet at least biennially in one or the other Province to share their experience and discuss questions that pertain to the whole Congregation.

³ In the Texts wherever there occurs the expression such as “the Moderator and the General Council” or “the Provincial Director and his Council” or “the Vicariate Director and his Council”, there is meant a COLLEGIAL action of the Moderator General and his Council, or of the Provincial Director and his Council or of the Vicariate Director and his Council.

For special reasons the Moderator General with the consent of his Council, may call an extraordinary meeting. The Moderator General and his Council must call an extraordinary meeting on the request of five Provincial and/or Vicariate Directors.

In the business of these meetings the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission Directors have only consultative voice, except in the following cases in which they also have deliberative voice: a) To divide the Congregation into Provinces or Vicariates or to join presently constituted divisions or restrict them in any way, or to suppress any such parts; b) To approve an extraordinary expense on the part of a Province or Vicariate, which, in the judgment of the Moderator General and his Council, should be submitted for a decision; c) To modify an article of the General Statutes until the next General Assembly; d) To approve the General Formation Program; e) To approve extraordinary assessments for the Congregation's needs; f) to approve or modify policies binding on the Congregation⁴.

- S37. In proportion to its definitively incorporated members, each Province shall contribute to the maintenance of the Generalate, as determined by decree of the Moderator General and his Council, having consulted the Provincial Directors.
- S38. The General and Provincial Assemblies are conducted according to the prescriptions contained in the norms for "Assemblies."

⁴ Article S36 treats of the biennial meeting of the Moderator General and his Council with the Provincial and Vicariate Directors. The phrase "Meeting of Major Superiors", although never used within the Texts, was, however, sanctioned by the XIV General Assembly (Rome, 1986) for the sake of brevity and convenience, especially for informational articles in newsletters.

- S39. To enable the Moderator General and his Council to have a better understanding of the development of the life of the Provinces, Vicariates, and Missions, the Provincial, Vicariate, and Mission Directors send them a comprehensive report of the past year.
- S40. The permanent transfer of a member from one Province to another can take place with the consent of the individual and of the respective Provincial Directors. Notice of the transfer is to be sent immediately to the Moderator General.
- The Moderator General, having consulted his Council, for a just cause and after having heard the respective Provincial Directors and the individual concerned, can request that a Provincial Director temporarily assign a member to another Province or Vicariate.
- S41. Safeguarding the right of universal suffrage according to the Constitution, the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes regulate the competence, composition and election of the Provincial or Vicariate Council or equivalent body, the qualifications of the members, their tenure of office and how a vacancy is to be filled.
- S42. Safeguarding the norms of article C50, the Provincial Statutes determine the bodies that are to treat the more important matters of the Province.
- S43. To facilitate its communitarian and apostolic organization, every Province, Vicariate, and Mission is recommended to have districts, at the head of which is a chairman empowered according to the prescription of their respective Statutes or norms.
- S44. Any Province, with the consent of the Provincial Assembly and of the Moderator General and the General Council acting with the Provincial and Vicariate Directors according to the norm of article C71, can establish a Vicariate for the sacred ministry outside the limits of that

Province. The Vicariate is governed by a Vicariate Director, aided by a Council or equivalent body and endowed with the ordinary power specified in the Statutes of the Vicariate. The Vicariate Statutes, after having been confirmed by the Provincial Director acting with consent of his Council, require the confirmation also of the Moderator General acting with the consent of his Council.

- S45. Safeguarding the norms established in the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes and the *Criteria for Founding a Mission/Delegation and Erecting a Vicariate or Province* the consent of the Moderator General and the General Council is required for the founding of a mission or delegation. If such a foundation takes place in the territory of another Province, also required is the consent of the respective Provincial Director.

In addition to a Province or Vicariate, the Moderator General and his Council in consultation with the Major Superiors may initiate the establishment of a new foundation or foundations (*ad experimentum*) in collaboration with various units of the Congregation.

- S46. Within their respective jurisdictions the Moderator General, the Provincial and the Vicariate Director, with the help of their respective Councils, are to draft or approve a realistic budget which lists the foreseen income and expenditures for the ensuing year. The Provincial and Vicariate Directors are also to approve the annual budgets of those residences designated by them to present a similar budget.
- S47. All alienation and the incurring of liabilities that exceed the amount decreed in the Common Law need the approval of the Moderator General and his Council and subsequent authorization of the Holy See.
- S48. Every General Assembly is to issue an updated decree which indicates who has the faculty of approving ex-

penditures, sales of property and the borrowing of sums of money that exceed the amount specified in that Assembly.

- S49. Inasmuch as each member is in some fashion to participate in the financial decisions of the Congregation, and even be entrusted with community funds for apostolic projects and personal needs, each one is to be fully informed about the financial status of his own residence, Vicariate, and Province.
- S50. Besides the local director spoken of in articles C81 and C82, the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes determine the other officials needed in the local community.
- S51. All major superiors are to visit the residences and members of their jurisdictions at least once during each term of office.

ASSEMBLIES

A. The General Assembly

I. Its Announcement and Its Convocation

- A1. The Moderator General and his Council, after hearing the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, specify the time and place of the General Assembly. For a grave reason they may postpone or anticipate this time, but not beyond six months.
- A2. One year before a General Assembly is to meet, the official announcement is made by a public letter from the Moderator General to all the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, in which he invites all the members to join in prayer for the success of the Assembly. The Provincial and Vicariate Directors immediately send the letter to all members of their Provinces or Vicariates.
- A3. In order that the questions to be discussed at the coming General Assembly may be dealt with as thor-

oughly as possible, the Moderator General announces them in the aforementioned letter. The Provincial and Vicariate Directors then transmit them to all the members so that they, individually or, if they wish, through appropriate bodies, may suggest other matters.

After receiving the suggestions, the Moderator General and his Council prepare the Agenda for the Assembly, and send it to all the delegates in ample time for study. Finally, they send the letter of convocation which gives the definite date and lists those who have the right to participate in the Assembly.

II. *Its Members*

- A4. Providing that its number of definitively incorporated members is ten or more, each Province, or Vicariate, elects, according to the norms of the Provincial or Vicariate Statutes, its delegates to the General Assembly in proportion to the number of its definitively incorporated members, according to the following ratio:

From 10 to 40 members: one delegate; over 40 members: one delegate for each 40 members or fraction thereof.

In the case of Missions: 2 to 40 members: one delegate; one delegate for each 40 members or fraction thereof.

Membership is computed from the date of the letter of the Moderator General officially announcing the Assembly; the membership of a Vicariate or Mission is not reckoned in that of the Province of origin.

- A5. Only for a grave reason can a member of the General Assembly be excused by his immediate major superior. If the Provincial or Vicariate Director or any elected delegate cannot be present at the General Assembly, the respective Province or Vicariate shall elect a substitute according to its Statutes. No substitute is provided for other members who for any reason cannot be present.

- A6. The Moderator General with consent of his Council, or the General Assembly itself, can invite other persons to the General Assembly who have consultative voice only.

III. *Order of Business*

- A7. At the opening and the close of the General Assembly, as well as before and after the elections, all the participants are urged to join in prayer, possibly of a liturgical nature, which asks God's help and thanks him for the decisions of the Assembly. At the opening and close of each session of the Assembly the participants recite an appropriate prayer.
- A8. In the preliminary session the following matters are treated: a) Recognition of the documents of the Assembly; b) Election of the Secretary of the Assembly if for some reason the Secretary General cannot fill this role; c) Election of one or more co-chairmen, if the Assembly sees a need for them; d) Confirmation of the selection of the recording secretaries made by the General Secretariate; e) Nomination of the tellers by the President; f) Presentation of reports of the Moderator General and the Provincial and Vicariate Directors.
- A9. The Moderator General gives the Assembly an account of the more important problems regarding the spiritual, communitarian and apostolic life of the whole Congregation. Moreover, he presents a financial report of the General Curia as well as a summary of the financial standing of the Provinces and Vicariates, gleaned from the annual reports sent to the General Secretariate. Similarly, the Provincial Directors summarize the state of their Provinces and the Vicariate Directors of their Vicariates by submitting a written report, copies of which are to be provided for all the members.

- A10. Before the President declares the General Assembly validly and officially in session, the following documents are to be recognized. a) The letter of convocation of the Assembly and other eventual documents regarding the convocation; b) The credentials of the elected delegates; c) An alphabetical list of the members of the Assembly, with the date of their birth, incorporation and ordination; d) The rules of procedure of the Assembly; e) The Agenda of the Assembly; f) A copy of the reports of the Moderator General and the Provincial and Vicariate Directors; g) Any other documents deemed necessary or useful.
- A11. Elections are conducted by ballot. If anyone of the electors is in the house in which the elections take place, but cannot be present at the elections because of infirmity, his written vote shall be sought by the tellers.
- A12. After the elections and all pertinent matters have been fully discussed and defined, the General Assembly is dissolved by the President with consent of the members. With its dissolution it loses all authority.
- A13. The Acts and Decrees of the General Assembly are signed by the Moderator General and the Secretary of the Assembly. Then, edited according to the prescriptions of the Assembly and under the direction of the Moderator General and the General Council, they are to be promulgated by the Moderator General and sent to the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, and through them to all members.

IV. *Officials*

- A14. The Moderator General, or in his absence the Vice-Moderator, presides at the General Assembly until the election of the new Moderator General. After his elec-

tion, the new Moderator General assumes the office of the President. The General Assembly itself can designate one or more members as co-chairmen to assist the President in directing the discussion of business.

- A15. The office of the Secretary is filled by the Secretary General. Should he be unable to fill this office, a Secretary of the Assembly is elected from among the members by a relative majority vote in a secret ballot.

His duties are:

- a) To call the roll of the members in alphabetical order;
- b) To announce by order of the President each election or business matter;
- c) To record accurately and to announce the number of votes cast;
- d) To present the minutes of each session to the members for their approval at the beginning of the next session, and other necessary documentation.

The Secretary of the Assembly, if necessary, may be aided by other persons to write the minutes and other documentation of the Assembly.

- A16. The President names tellers whose task is to see that the voting proceeds with order, and to control and count the votes in the presence of the President. If the number of votes cast exceeds the number of members, the ballot is invalid and the Assembly proceeds to a new ballot. Furthermore, they inform the Secretary of the Assembly of the number of the members present in the Assembly Hall, and of the names of those who arrive late or depart early.

v. General Electoral Assembly

- A17. When the election of the Moderator General has been completed the President asks the members whether the

election has been conducted properly and validly. When an absolute majority has answered affirmatively, he asks the one elected whether he accepts the election. If the one elected is the President himself, this twofold questioning is made by the Secretary of the Assembly. If the one elected accepts, he assumes his office immediately and presides over the General Assembly.

- A18. If the one elected is not present, he shall be summoned immediately, and the sessions of the Assembly shall be suspended until he arrives, or his explicit acceptance has been ascertained with certainty in the case where a prompt arrival is impossible. In the latter case the sessions of the Assembly are resumed, and after the Vice Moderator General has been elected he takes the place of the President until the arrival of the newly elected Moderator General.
- A19. If for a grave reason the person elected refuses, in the presence of the Assembly or before the President and two witnesses or in writing, to accept the office, the session is suspended for a time. Once a person has refused the office, he may not retract, but he can be elected again. When the members have reassembled, the session is resumed and they proceed to a new election.
- A20. After each election the President makes the interrogations as prescribed in Article A17; when an absolute majority has answered affirmatively, he asks the one elected whether he accepts the office. If he answers affirmatively he immediately assumes it.
- A21. If anyone of the newly elected members of the General Council is not present at the Assembly, he is to be summoned at once. The Assembly, however, is not interrupted to await his arrival. If a person duly elected refuses the office according to the norms of Article A19, the procedure noted there is followed.

- A22. The procedure for handling the Agenda of the Business Assembly is determined by each Assembly according to the nature of the business. If elections of the Moderator General and his Council are also on the Agenda in a General Business Assembly, the members determine the most opportune sessions in which they are to take place. It is recommended that they take place towards the end of the Assembly.
- A23. The voting on the business which has been included on the Agenda or which has been properly proposed and admitted according to article A25 is to be by secret ballot when requested by the President or any member of the Assembly. Safeguarding article C59, on the first and second ballots, an absolute majority of the members present decides the issue. On the third ballot, a relative majority decides the issue. However, if the votes are equally divided after the third ballot, the President can decide the issue if the matter cannot be delayed, even if he himself has already voted.
- A24. It is the function of the General Business Assembly:
- a) To issue decrees in conformity with the Constitution to promote the common good of the Congregation, and to confirm, abrogate or amend decrees promulgated by any former General Assembly, according to article C60;
 - b) To introduce, amend or abrogate any ordinance of the General Statutes, as well as to interpret authentically the General Statutes according to the prescription of article C59;
 - c) To prescribe those exercises of piety which are to be inserted into the Provincial Manual of Prayers, and to approve the necessary revisions for the common Ceremonial of the Congregation;

- d) To prescribe norms for administering the property of the whole Congregation and of the individual Provinces;
- e) To consider other matters pertaining to the life of the Congregation which, in the judgment of the Moderator General and his Council, should be submitted to the General Assembly.

A25. New business brought up by a member after the publication of the Agenda or within the Assembly itself, may be dealt with, provided one-third of the members consent to this. The items of this new business shall be given in writing to each member before they come up for consideration.

B. The Provincial Assembly

A26. The supreme authority within a Province is exercised by the Provincial Assembly in accord with the Constitution and the General Statutes.

The Provincial Director, in convoking a Provincial Assembly or other similar body, designates the time and place. It is conducted according to the procedure outlined in the Provincial Statutes.

A27. Safeguarding the right of universal suffrage and the prescriptions of the Constitution and the General Statutes, the composition and competence of the Provincial Assemblies and similar bodies, as well as the manner of election and term of office of the members of these bodies, are to be established in the Provincial Statutes.

A28. All acts of the Provincial Assembly, signed by its President and Secretary, shall be sent to the Moderator General so that he, with the consent of his Council, may confirm them.

POLICIES

DECREES
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The XIX General Assembly abrogates all decrees of the XVII General Assembly, except in so far as some of them are contained in the following decrees issued by the XIX General Assembly.

DECREE NO. 1 AUTHENTIC TEXT OF THE ACTA

The authentic text of the Acta of the XIX General Assembly of 2007 is the English version.

DECREE NO. 2 PUBLICATION OF THE ACTA

The General Assembly commits to the Moderator General and the General Council the task of publishing the Acta of the Assembly. These shall contain the following:

- a) All decisions, decrees, resolutions, and the document, *“The Message of the XIX General Assembly of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood”* together with the precise voting on them;

- b) The results of the elections of the Moderator General and the General Council, together with the precise voting on these elections;
- c) Brief chronological notes, in order to give an overall view of the activity of the Assembly.

DECREE NO. 3 TEMPORALITIES

EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES: When funds are available for a project, the competent authority empowered to authorize an extraordinary expenditure is:

- a) The Moderator General and the General Council acting collegially after having consulted with the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, when the amount equals or surpasses US\$ 2,500.000 or its equivalent in other currencies.
- b) The Moderator General, after having consulted the General Council, when the amount equals or surpasses US\$ 1,000.000 but is less than US\$ 2,500.000 or its equivalent in other currencies.
- c) The Provincial Assembly, or the Provincial Director and his Council, when the amount is less than US\$ 1,000.000 or its equivalent in other currencies.

SALE OF PROPERTY AND BORROWING OF MONEY: Safeguarding the right of the Holy See, which gives permission for the sale of property and the contracting of debts:

- a) The Moderator General and the General Council acting collegially after having consulted with the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, authorize action for the “*sale of property*” when the amount equals or surpasses US\$ 2,500.000 or its equivalent in other currencies.

- b) The Moderator General, after having consulted the General Council, authorizes action for the *“sale of property”* when the amount is less of US\$ 2,500.000 but more than US\$ 1,000,000 or its equivalent in other currencies.
- c) If the sum for the *“sale of property”* is US\$ 1,000.000 or less, or its equivalent in other currencies, the Provincial Statutes regulate the matter.
- d) The Moderator General and the General Council, acting collegially with the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, authorize action for the *“contracting of debts”* when the amount equals or surpasses US\$ 1,000.000 or its equivalent in other currencies. The Moderator General and the General Council, acting collegially, authorize action for the *“contracting of debts”* when the amount is less than US\$ 1,000.000 but more than US\$ 500.000 or its equivalent in other currencies. For the *“contracting of debts”* if the amount is US\$ 500,000 or less, or its equivalent in other currencies, the Provincial Statutes regulate the matter.

GENERAL FORMATION PROGRAM
SOCIETY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

General Observations

1. The “Congregation of Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (C.P.P.S.) is a Society of Apostolic Life founded by St. Gaspar del Bufalo that includes both priest and brother members.
2. The spirituality of the Blood of Christ is central to their identity as members and is at the heart of their spiritual, community and apostolic life. The Eucharist is a privileged moment for celebrating their spirituality and from the Eucharistic table the members take the courage to proclaim the liberating and redeeming love of God in the Blood of Christ. The members are called to promote the kingdom of God through the apostolic and missionary activity of the ministry of the Word (C3).
3. The Society invites others who are called by God to share in this missionary task and provides for their for-

mation in an environment which facilitates the candidate's growth to maturity and fullness of life in Christ.

4. This maturity requires a formation that addresses all the dimensions of the person: human, Christian, communitarian and apostolic. It likewise promotes the development of values conducive to living and proclaiming the Gospel.
5. Basic formation for membership in the Society is the same for priesthood and for brother candidates, since all members are called to life in community and to share in its apostolates.
6. The task of formation takes place within the concrete cultural, social, political and ecclesial reality. This context challenges and enriches the entire formative process.

GOALS AND VALUES IN FORMATION

7. The Society values and affirms the documents of the Church which call for the human and spiritual development of the candidates. Among those documents which serve to orientate our formation process are: current orientations issued by the Magisterium of the Church concerning formation of priests and religious, the Instructions of the respective National Conference of Bishops, National Conferences of Religious, our Normative Texts, and our C.P.P.S. Formation Program.
8. Some of the values to be developed during the formation process include: honesty and truth, capacity for self-disclosure, ability to listen and to value other's perspectives, ability to live in community, a deep appreci-

ation of personal and community prayer, a capacity to live a simple life-style, the evangelical counsel of celibate life and love, self-denial, compassion, social awareness, solidarity with the world, concern for justice, endurance under difficulties, cross-cultural sensitivity, a capacity for collaborative ministry with laity and with religious women and men, initiative in ministry, obedience, and a respect for C.P.P.S. traditions.

9. Along with those qualities of life required by the Church for all ordained or consecrated ministers and members of Institutes of Apostolic Life, the Society calls for a distinctive formation which develops those qualities and virtues seen as enabling the candidate to share in the mission of the Society.
10. One of the essential goals of the formation program is to discover and to appropriate our C.P.P.S. identity. Some of the distinctive sources wherein members discover their identity as Missionaries of the Precious Blood are: the spirituality of the Blood of Christ; the missionary charism; the life of St. Gaspar; the Normative Texts; and their community history. These distinctive sources need to be utilized at all levels of formation, especially in the period of Special Formation, in order to shape C.P.P.S. identity.

STAGES OF FORMATION

11. Each province is encouraged to develop a vocational promotion program and to designate the personnel needed for the Vocation Ministry. All prospective candidates, assisted by the vocation personnel, are to undergo a process of discernment before entrance into

the INITIAL PREPARATION stage of formation. During this period of inquiry, the candidate undergoes assessment through comprehensive interviews and psychological testing to discern if he is suited for life in an apostolic institute.

12. The formation program within the Society has three principal stages: INITIAL PREPARATION, SPECIAL-ADVANCED, and CONTINUED. The formation in these three areas is to be progressive and adequate to the stage in which the candidate is living.

INITIAL PREPARATION

13. In this stage, mentioned in article S19 of the Normative Texts, an individual prepares for entrance as a candidate of the Society. Some of the elements stressed during this period of formation are:
 - a) Growth in human and religious development and in basic Gospel values;
 - b) Initiation in spiritual direction, liturgical life, and the celebration of the sacraments;
 - c) Identification of the individual's gifts, as well as his strengths and weaknesses;
 - d) Development of personal prayer life and initiation into community prayer;
 - e) Introduction into community life;
 - f) Basic introduction into the patrimony of the Society;
 - g) Gradual involvement in apostolic formation according to age and previous pastoral experience.

SPECIAL-ADVANCED

14. Referring to C35 and C38 of the Normative Texts, this is a stage that in some provinces is done separately or simultaneously.

SPECIAL

It is a definitive period of time prior to incorporation into the Society in which the candidate undergoes a special program of religious formation to deepen his spiritual life and to experience more intensely the Paschal Mystery. Special attention is given to:

- a) The patrimony of our Society: the theology and the spirituality of the Blood of Christ, the missionary charism, the life of St. Gaspar, the Society's history and its Normative Texts. The candidate is urged to confront this Patrimony within his cultural, social, political and ecclesial context in order to discover its vitality in today's world;
- b) The experience of community living on a local level and a practical knowledge of the apostolates of the Society;
- c) The deepening of the "Bond of Charity" which forms the foundation for our common life;
- d) The celebration of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation which hold a central place in the life and development of the community.

ADVANCED

In this period of training, the individual deepens his formation and education necessary to enable him to be a part of the life and mission of the Society, and he refines more clearly his identity as a future priest or brother.

- a) Preparation for priestly ministry in the Society is to be given at a seminary or school of theology which meets the needs both of the Society and of the candidate.
- b) Brother members are entitled to all the preparation and professional or vocational training necessary for their ministry in the Society.
- c) Special attention is given to preparation for the Ministry of the Word.
- d) A growing integration of the individual's gifts into the Society's ministries is sought.
- e) The member is gradually introduced into the apostolates of the Society and of the local Church.
- f) The member discerns his entrance into the mission of the Society as a priest or brother.

CONTINUED FORMATION

15. Special support is given to the recently ordained priests and definitively incorporated brothers as they begin their ministries. The on going formation of all members is essential. Therefore, opportunities are afforded to the membership for continued growth in our Patrimony, in theological study, in spirituality, and in pastoral skills which enrich them as persons and which enhance their ministry.

FORMATIVE ELEMENTS

16. Each Province designates the personnel needed to accompany the candidates in their process of formation throughout the various stages. These designated persons are afforded an adequate on going formation in those skills and understandings needed to accompany and to guide the candidates; namely, in the area of human development, the spiritual life, pastoral skills, and the C.P.P.S. Patrimony.
17. The Formators enable the candidates to discern God's call by providing a Gospel-based environment that is open to faith and sharing.
18. Formators need to be persons with a capacity to listen, to communicate, and to challenge the candidate to growth. He respects the individual's needs and stages of growth and knows how to integrate them with the needs and rhythms of the community.
19. Throughout the formation process, the formator facilitates peer group interaction as an important formative element.
20. Spiritual direction plays a significant role in helping the candidate discern his vocation and deepen his spiritual life and his commitment to following Christ in the Society.
21. Given that we are called to minister to and with lay people and are in turn ministered to by them, it is encouraged that the wisdom and the perspectives of the laity be integrated into the Formation Program.
22. Even though there is a formation team directly involved in the day-to-day accompaniment of the candidates, the task of formation is the responsibility of the entire community. All members are called to be a part of the

“formative community” who give witness in their lives and create a hospitable and inviting atmosphere wherein the candidates feel motivated to respond to God’s call to community and to ministry as members of the Society of the Precious Blood.

Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and General Council with the Major Superiors

January 14, 1992, Valdivia, Chile

Observations:

Each Province is authorized to translate this General Formation Program using its own terminology.

PROFILE OF THE MISSIONARY
OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

The Society of the Precious Blood is a Society of Apostolic Life. It is dedicated to the apostolic and missionary ministry of the word (C3). Our mission and our community life are sustained and directed by the spirituality of the Precious Blood.

This profile lists the qualities of a Precious Blood missionary. It serves as an aid to envisioning the ideals toward which we strive. A profile is general in nature and is intended to be developed in each concrete cultural circumstance. This *Profile of the Missionary of the Precious Blood* will help vocation directors and prospective candidates discern their call to our Congregation. It serves to guide formation directors and candidates in elaborating programs of formation. In a spirit of ongoing renewal, each member is urged to use this profile for ongoing growth and renewal. This profile is seen within the context of the spirit of our Founder, St. Gaspar, our C.P.P.S. heritage, the Normative Texts, and the General Formation Program.

I. *Mission*

Missionaries of the Precious Blood evangelize through the apostolic and missionary ministry of the word. The Precious Blood missionary hears the cry of the Blood. Our mission calls us:

- to be evangelized by the revealed Word of God in Jesus Christ and by the living Word of God present in the people and in the values of the culture to whom we are sent;
- to evangelize
 - in the ministry of the Word;
 - in witnessing by life style;
 - in promoting peace, justice, and reconciliation;
 - in human promotion;
 - in defending human rights and dignity.
- to read the signs of the times and to hear the cry of the Blood;
- to defend life in a culture of death;
- to respect and promote the inculturation of the Church in every society;
- to collaborative ministry with all the faithful;
- to intercultural and international sensitivity;
- to educate ourselves in other cultures and languages;
- to allow God's Word to transform the patterns of human living;
- to an ecumenism disposed to dialogue (S13) and to collaboration with other religions;
- to stand in solidarity with those who suffer: the alienated, the poor, the disempowered, victims of oppression, the marginalized;
- to work with perpetrators and victims to recover their full humanity;
- to be prophetic: to resist deceit, injustice, and whatever is contrary to God's reign;
- to mobility, flexibility, and availability to various situations and cultures.

II. *Community*

We embrace community life which supports our mission. Our community life is sustained and directed by a spirituality of the Precious Blood. In community we pursue the perfection of charity through the bond of charity as sons of St. Gaspar. Our community life is characterized by:

- the bond of charity;
- living together, as long as the needs of the apostolate do not demand otherwise (C7);
- a spirit of dialogue;
- a sharing of personal faith, gifts, and talents;
- mutual encouragement;
- a simple lifestyle;
- reconciliation;
- conversion;
- hospitality;
- shared meals, prayer, ministry, and study;
- embracing intercultural, international, and intergenerational community living;
- an exchange of candidates and members in the international community.

III. *Spirituality*

The spirituality of the Precious Blood motivates us and focuses our mission. The missionary finds at the center of his vocation the Blood of Christ. The spirituality of the Precious Blood includes:

- individual and communal prayer and study, especially with the Sacred Scriptures and C.P.P.S. heritage;

- our gathering at the Eucharistic table where our bond of charity is celebrated, and we are healed and strengthened for mission, and where the Cup of the Covenant creates communion and calls us to places that would challenge us;
- reconciliation;
- inclusivity and multicultural diversity;
- openness;
- interior freedom and poverty of spirit;
- celibate loving;
- a radical response to the call of the Blood;
- renewal of person, culture, society, and Church;
- humility which recognizes our interdependence;
- our Gasparian charism;
- deepening of our spirituality with others who share it.

We seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and grace in all the dimensions of our apostolic life as Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Those involved in the ministries of vocation animation and formation offer this profile of the Precious Blood missionary to guide and assist the Congregation in vocation and formation work. It represents our understanding of the realization of the charism of St. Gaspar at this point in time.

Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and General Council with the Major Superiors

September 15, 2000, Kufstein, Austria

(It was decided by the vote of the Major Superiors that this profile as approved by them would form part of the General Formation Program of the C.P.P.S.)

CRITERIA FOR FOUNDING
A MISSION / DELEGATION
AND ERECTING A VICARIATE
OR PROVINCE

Introduction

Our Founder St. Gaspar spoke of his dream that someday there would be “a thousand tongues” to proclaim the mystery of the Divine Blood and its message for the salvation of the world. It has always been incumbent upon his successors, the Moderator General to encourage and oversee the expansion of the Society to new parts of the world (Cf. C 61). Especially in recent times, it has been possible for the Moderator and the entire Society to move toward realization of that dream.

Encouraging and overseeing the expansion of the Society involves responding to invitations and opportunities for the Missionaries to begin work in new areas, as well as supporting the work of charismatic Missionaries who have a special vocation in this field. It also involves assuring that, once the work of the Society has been begun in a new area, measures are taken to ensure its stability and steady growth.

The C.P.P.S. has had no explicit criteria in the past for founding a mission/delegation, or for erecting a vicariate or province. The General Curia developed some informal guidelines for discussion in 1987, but these were never implemented. The Normative Texts do determine who makes the decision (cf. C 71; S 36, S 45).

The criteria presented here are intended to provide a framework for assuring that stability and growth. Specifically, they are intended to:

- a. help discern when an apostolic work should petition to become a mission/delegation;
- b. help a province decide when to elevate a mission/delegation to a vicariate or a province;
- c. guide the decision-making of the Moderator and his Council, with the deliberative voice of the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, in erecting a vicariate or province.

The selection of criteria has grown out of experience through the years, but does not intend to be a judgment on past decisions. The selection has been guided also by the experience of other religious institutes and societies of apostolic life, as well as consultation on certain canonical issues.

Prolegomenon

These criteria are concerned with the appropriate way of expanding the C.P.P.S. to new regions. As stated in the Normative Texts (C 61), the Moderator General has the task of overseeing any expansion of the Society. It is for this reason that the founding of missions/delegations, and the erecting of vicariates and provinces involve decisions not made simply at a local level.

Central to that oversight by the Moderator General is that any expansion of the Society be an expansion of the Society according to the charism that St. Gaspar entrusted to

it, and not for other kinds of reasons (such as expansion only to get vocations, accrue financial gain, and the like). Any proposed expansion must be able to show that it is an extension of the C.P.P.S. as a Society of Apostolic Life living out the charism of St. Gaspar. Concretely that means:

- a. An apostolate of “service of the Church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the Word.” (C 3)
- b. A community life in the spirit of St. Gaspar that supports and strengthens the members in that apostolate. (C 6)
- c. A spirituality of the Blood of Christ “holding a special place in the spiritual, community, and apostolic life of the members.” (C 4)

These three aspects of St. Gaspar’s charism – apostolate, community life, and spirituality – are the three pillars upon which the C.P.P.S. as a Society of Apostolic Life is based. Together, they form a unity. Not to have any one of these as part of a vision for expanding the Society results in an incomplete expression of the charism which St. Gaspar entrusted to his Society.

Criteria for Founding a Mission/Delegation

The initiative for founding a mission/delegation begins in a province or vicariate after having assigned members to a new region. When the work undertaken by those members has reached a certain maturity, the province, or the vicariate through the province, may petition the Moderator and General Council to have it founded as a mission/delegation, providing it is not in the territory of another province (S 45).

A petition to found a mission/delegation should include evidence that the following criteria have been met:

1. The work undertaken in the prospective mission/delegation is indeed the work of the province, and not merely the personal project of an individual. That is to say, (1) it involves more than one definitively

incorporated member of the province working in the area to be designated as a mission/delegation, and (2) the work has the manifest support of a substantial number of members of the province.

2. Clear apostolic needs have been identified in the region that would permit the establishment of a C.P.P.S. identity of being dedicated “to the service of the Church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the word (C 3).”
3. There is reasonable assurance that the C.P.P.S. will be able to continue its work in the region.
4. The prospective mission/delegation has the consent and the support of the local Ordinary.
5. A clear apostolic identity has been established before any formation program is initiated.

Criteria for Erecting Vicariates and Provinces

When a mission/delegation has been deemed to have reached a certain maturity and stability, it may be considered for erection as a vicariate. Similarly, when a vicariate has reached a certain maturity and stability, it may be considered for erection as a province. In either instance, it is the responsibility of the Moderator and his Council, with the deliberative voice of the Provincial and Vicariate Directors, to approve such an erection (S 36). The Moderator and his Council will not consider a petition unless it has been approved by the respective sponsoring province, according to its Provincial Statutes.

Further, the petition must include evidence that the following criteria have been met in the areas of (1) mission and apostolate, (2) community life, (3) resources to sustain mission and community life, and (4) administrative structure to sustain the life of the vicariate or province. It is understood that the degree of autonomy in each of the areas is different

for a vicariate and a province, i.e., that a province must give evidence of greater autonomy and stability than does a vicariate.

Mission and Apostolate

1. The mission/delegation or vicariate has a clearly articulated sense of its mission, which meets distinctive needs of the local church. Its apostolate represents, therefore, more than the interests of local members.
2. The mission/delegation or vicariate has shown the capacity to “establish the objectives of the apostolate and provide the means to realize them (S 14).” That is, it has articulated a pastoral plan or mission statement that fits in with or contributes to the diocesan pastoral plans in the region in which it is working, that exhibits both a sense of collaboration with the local Church, and a sense of distinctive C.P.P.S. contribution to the local Church.
3. For erection as a vicariate, a mission/delegation must have at least three houses, with a minimum of twelve definitively incorporated members. For erection as a province, a vicariate must have at least five houses, with a minimum of twenty definitively incorporated members.
4. The possibilities for pastoral assignment of the members are of a number and variety that permit change of assignment over a period of years, thus not consigning members to a single apostolate or assignment for an overly long period of time.

Community Life

5. The mission/delegation or vicariate has shown the capacity to create and sustain a community life that nourishes and supports the members in their apostolates.

6. The mission/delegation or vicariate has been able to establish a regular cycle of meetings for prayer, spiritual growth, retreats, and the conduct of its business.

Resources to Sustain the Apostolate and Community Life

7. The mission/delegation or vicariate has sufficient personnel to staff its apostolic commitments, and is able to show that it will have sufficient personnel for the foreseeable future.
8. It has enough members of sufficient years of incorporation to provide for leadership (C 70) and to maintain its own formation program.
9. It has the resources to maintain its own formation program, that is, (1) sufficient appropriate and qualified personnel, and (2) of such a number that they are not the same as those who serve in administration, so as to safeguard proper decision making regarding candidates, and candidates' right to appeal decisions made by those entrusted with formation.
10. It has members of sufficient years of incorporation and of experience to provide for a pool of potential major superiors and council members, so that no one remains in office for too long a period of time (can. 624 §2).
11. It has shown the capacity to change administrative leadership in an orderly fashion that assure continuity in apostolate, community life, and formation.
12. It has the financial resources or access to those resources to sustain its members in apostolate, community life, and formation. This entails demonstrating regular, reliable sources of income, and a system of regular financial accounting and reporting.
13. It has developed a financial plan that gives evidence of its ability to sustain itself over a longer period of time. Such a plan includes a projection of income and

expenses over a period of several years, to include not only annual income and operating expenses, but also ways of financing extraordinary expenses (such as expansion of commitments, sustaining apostolic commitments that cannot sustain themselves, and capital expenses such as buildings, etc.).

Administrative Structures

14. The mission/delegation or vicariate has proposed statutes to govern the various aspects of its life.
15. The mission/delegation or vicariate has developed other written policies regarding administration, apostolates, formation, and finances. It has also provided procedures for their revision. It has given evidence that these policies are being observed.

Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and General Council with the Major Superiors

July 23, 1998, Morogoro, Tanzania.

CRITERIA FOR RECONFIGURING
A PROVINCE OR VICARIATE:
A CHOICE FOR LIFE

Introduction

In September 2001, the delegates to the Seventeenth General Assembly gathered in Rome to address the theme: “The Future Face of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.” In looking into our future as an international congregation, the delegates believed that reconfiguring may become desirable in the years ahead.

In September 2002, the major superiors came together in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and decided to place this document in the context of a process of envisioning the future of our congregation in discussions that would take place in regional gatherings of the members. The major superiors saw this as a way of promoting the examination of relationships both present and past in order to create new relationships among the members and reconfigure units of the community. This document is seen as a tool to be used in future collaboration among the various units of the society.

The opportunity to change in response to new circumstances can be a moment of grace, offering us the prospect of new life, even though such change might be prompted by what might be a painful situation. Our spirituality invites us to cross boundaries, to let go, and to see the life which can emerge beyond what might appear to be dying.

In other words, reconfiguring can mean a choice for life, a choice to live more fully the charism and mission of our Founder. Such reorganization can provide the chance to find new ways of being missionary, of being in community and of deepening our spirituality. Reconfiguring can lead to a better stewardship of our human and economic resources for the sake of our mission.

Such a process can mean internal reorganization, new ways of collaborating, merging with or joining another unit of the Society, or even creating something new.

We face our future with hope and trust that the Lord who has begun the good work in St. Gaspar and his companions will enable us to continue that work in this third millennium of Christianity.

Background

The delegates of the Seventeenth General Assembly approved a draft document on reconfiguring. This document proposed criteria for reconfiguring a province or vicariate. The text was distributed to all the members for their comments and suggestions and then brought to the Major Superiors for final discussion and was approved on 13 September 2002.

This document presents criteria which might be used to evaluate the need for reconfiguring, values to be honored in any such process, and a model for the process itself.

Some material has been drawn from the document *Criteria for Founding a Mission/Delegation and Erecting a Vicariate*

or *Province* approved in 1998 at a meeting of the Major Superiors. While the processes involved are in some ways similar, they are not entirely parallel.

The Normative Texts determine who makes the decision for the erection of vicariates or provinces (cf. C 71; S 36, S 45). Presumably the same bodies would have authority for the reconfiguring process.

General Criteria

A province or vicariate may decide to initiate a discussion of reconfiguring for positive reasons. While the province or vicariate may be in good overall health, members might see possibilities for more creative and effective ministry and community life in some kind of reorganization, some sort of new reality.

On the other hand, a province or vicariate might find itself facing a problem or problems which might trigger such discussion. The following criteria describe ongoing conditions which should prompt serious discussion on the part of a province or vicariate or on the part of the Moderator General and General Council. They are based on the three pillars of the C.P.P.S. as a Society of Apostolic Life: apostolic mission, community life, and spirituality.

A province or vicariate which recognizes that it no longer meets one or more criteria might take steps to address the challenges posed prior to any discussion of reconfiguring.

The criteria proposed are not of equal weight and should be applied with prudence and good judgment.

Mission and Apostolate

- 1.1. The vicariate or province can no longer sustain the ministries to which it has committed itself. Members pursue only personal commitments.

- 1.2. The vicariate or province can no longer contribute the richness of its charism to the pastoral plan of the diocese.
- 1.3. As a vicariate, it no longer has at least twelve definitively incorporated members. As a province, it no longer has twenty definitively incorporated members. Age, health of members, the number of active members and candidates in formation should also be considered.
- 1.4. It can no longer meet its financial responsibilities as a vicariate or as a province, in sustaining its houses, internal and external ministries, and the well-being of its active and retired members.

At the same time, an otherwise healthy province / vicariate could meet these responsibilities through a sharing of economic resources by other units of the Congregation.

Community Life

- 2.1. The province or vicariate is no longer able to create and sustain a community life which nourishes and supports the members in their apostolates nor is there a guarantee that it will receive support from other units of the Society. Community life includes a willingness to share in common the prayer and mission of the Society and to come together for days of prayer, study, assemblies, etc.
- 2.2. The province or vicariate has not been able to attract and sustain vocations to its membership over an extended period of time.
- 2.3. There are not sufficient active members to maintain structures of governance, so that no one remains in office for too long a period of time (cf. canon 624 §2).
- 2.4. The formation program cannot be maintained, even with collaboration with another unit of the C.P.P.S.

Spirituality

- 3.1 The vicariate or province finds itself too small for common spiritual activities such as an annual retreat and the celebration of feast days. A shared prayer life is lacking.
- 3.2 The spirituality of the Society is no longer a common source of the apostolate and is not being shared with the laity.

Values to be Considered in the Process

These are values which should be honored in each step of the reconfiguring process:

- Creating something new might be superior to reconfiguring the old or clinging to past models;
- Full consultation with, and participation of, the members affected should always be sought. Each member and his apostolate is valuable;
- Sensitivity to the history, culture, philosophy, and language of the vicariates or provinces affected is important;
- There should be ample care of members before, during, and after the process;
- Better stewardship of finances would better support community life and mission;
- A sharing in financial resources (e.g., through a “solidarity fund”) should be considered in the case of an otherwise healthy unit of the Society which faces economic uncertainty;
- More equitable disposition of community property might be called for;
- Mutuality is crucial: i.e., one province/vicariate should not be dominant over another in the process;

- Attention must be paid to civil legal consequences of reconfiguring, e.g., pension funds;
- Lay associates should be involved in the process to the extent this is possible.

These values should be affirmed for all the provinces or vicariates involved in the reconfiguring, especially if there is the possibility of members of one unit joining another.

Desired Outcomes

Although it may be that discussion about reconfiguring might be prompted by negative events or situations, the following are some of the positive outcomes which could result from reconfiguring:

- A renewal of the spiritual life of the members;
- A regrouping of members and resources in order to engage more fully and effectively in mission;
- The development of a more healthy and dynamic community life;
- The development of better resources for attracting vocations;
- A wider pool of members available for leadership;
- The opportunity to engage in new areas of apostolic mission;
- A richer and more diverse program of formation.

Steps in Reconfiguring

How should the process be undertaken? It would appear that there are several steps.

First there is the initiation of discussion. This can happen in either of two ways.

In the first way, the vicariate or province comes to the decision to initiate the process after discussion and a vote in an assembly. This happens after a voluntary examination of the situation and a realization that the members want to initiate a process of reconfiguring. A decision to initiate the discussion does not mean that a decision has already been made about the eventual reconfiguring.

In the second way, the Moderator General, after a visitation of the province or vicariate, notes in his report that sufficient signs of an incapacity to continue as a vicariate or province are present to warrant discussion of the issue. In coming to this conclusion the Moderator General should have spent sufficient time in the province or vicariate to assess the reality of its life. He should encourage renewing the values and spirit of the Society within the province or vicariate before asking for discussion of reconfiguring to take place.

The Moderator General, with the advice and consent of his Council, may mandate such a discussion to begin, and require a report to be presented by the vicariate or province. The report should: 1) make a cogent case for the ongoing viability of the vicariate or province; or 2) at least show why reconfiguring would be harmful to the life of the vicariate or province in regard to its apostolic mission, community life, and spirituality; or 3) would agree that reconfiguring is necessary and outline a direction it might take in the discussion step.

Second is the discussion step. This would involve getting members to reach agreement that something should be done. While the outcome may not be unanimous, there should be an opportunity for all sides to be heard. Prior to reconfiguring the possibility of assistance from another province or provinces should be considered. In the case of a province or vicariate which may face suppression there should be the opportunity for the membership to choose to join another unit of the Society, merge, or start a new unit of the Society.

Third: preparing a plan. This would involve an invitation from the Moderator General to the vicariate or province to come up with a plan for transition to its new situation, taking into account the values articulated above. In the process care should be taken to involve all members who might be affected. Building a consensus among them should be encouraged. The plan would be submitted on a timeframe set by the Moderator. Submission of the plan would imply acceptance by a simple majority of the members in the vicariate or province.

Fourth comes a review of the plan. This would involve a commission of three provincial/vicariate directors appointed by the Moderator General. They would review the plan to be sure it conforms with the Normative Texts and the values and criteria of this document.

Fifth is the final decision and implementation. A decision would be made at a meeting of the Major Superiors with the Moderator General and General Council. In implementing the decision attention should be given to helping members adapt to the new reality, giving them an opportunity to make choices where this is possible.

*Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and
General Council with the Major Superiors*

September 13, 2002, Niagara Falls, Ontario

POLICY ON REGIONS
IN THE CONGREGATION

In our Congregation we recognize five regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North America. The purpose of these regions is to promote further understanding and appreciation of our international and multicultural identity, the sharing of human and economic resources, and collaboration in formation and in mission.

The directors of the provinces, vicariates, and missions of a region are responsible for organizing gatherings and other activities of their region. The directors of the units of each region should meet yearly. They may select a member or members to plan and coordinate the activities of the region.

Given the uniqueness of each region, the kind of regional sharing and collaboration will vary. The provincial, vicariate, and mission directors, in consultation with their members, will determine the nature and extent of regional gatherings, collaboration, and so forth.

The Moderator General and the General Council will make every effort to be represented by one of their number at regional gatherings, both to learn and to provide animation. They will also help to provide support and resources to the regions. The regular meetings of the moderator general and general council with the major superiors (“major superiors meetings”) will continue to be a significant resource for promoting sharing and collaboration among the provinces, vicariates, missions, and regions of the Congregation.

Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and General Council with the Major Superiors

August 23, 2006, Belém, Para, Brazil

POLICY ON THE RIGHTS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF MEMBERS FROM ONE UNIT
WHO LIVE AND WORK
IN ANOTHER UNIT
OF THE CONGREGATION

A member who will be working in the ministry of another unit of the Congregation for more than one year enjoys all the rights and responsibilities of the unit of the Congregation in which he lives and works. His rights and responsibilities in his unit of origin are temporarily suspended. A contract will be drawn up between the directors of the units involved concerning health care and pension expenses and other financial matters concerns of the member.

Approved at the meeting of the Moderator General and General Council with the Major Superiors

August 23, 2006, Belém, Para, Brazil

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LAUS SANGUINI AGNI!

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