International Formation Commission
of the Congregation of the Resurrection

RESURRECTIONIST FORMATION

O Risen Lord,
the Way, the Truth and the Life,
make us faithful followers
of the spirit of Your resurrection.
Grant that we may be inwardly renewed,
dying to ourselves
in order that You may live in us.
May our lives serve as signs
of the transforming power of Your love.
Use us as Your instruments
for the renewal of society,
bringing Your life and love to all,
and leading them to Your Church.
This we ask of You, Lord Jesus,
living and reigning with the Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever.

Amen.

RESURRECTIONIST FORMATION

CONGREGATION
OF THE RESURRECTION

RESURRECTIONIST FORMATION

INTERNATIONAL FORMATION COMMISSION
Rome 2019

ON THE FRONT COVER
Risen Christ and two disciples on the road to Emmaus.
A detail from the triptych "Emmaus"
in the church of the Resurrectionist Major Seminary in Kraków, Poland.

CONTENTS

Preface 7
Abbreviations 17

PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION IN RESURRECTIONIST SPIRITUALITY

1. God loves us unconditionally 21
2. God created us from nothingness 39
3. Evil attracts us 49
4. We succumb to sin 65
5. God calls us to conversion 71
6. God calls us to community 95
7. God calls us to work for the resurrection of society 109
8. Mary: our model and Mother 119

"OUR FATHERS HAVE TOLD US"

1. Anthropological/theological bases of formation . . 127
   - 1.1 *Nature and Person* 127
   - 1.2 *Original sin* 130
   - 1.3 *Self-activity* 132
   - 1.4 *Concrete application* 137
2. Vocation 141
   - 2.1 *Nature* 141
   - 2.2 *Discernment and acceptance* 143
3. Principles of formation 149
   - 3.1 *With truth and charity* 149
   - 3.2 *Of the whole person* 155
   - 3.3 *Of each one individually* 162
   - 3.4 *The subjective character of those in formation* . . . 166

4. Formators 171
4.1 *Love/Charity* 171
4.2 *Patience* 174
4.3 *Trust* 175
4.4 *Example* 178
4.5 *Reprimands* 181

Appendices 185

Preface

Throughout the Sacred Scriptures, the religious upbringing process appears as an essential undertaking since God's covenant established *ex gratia* with Abraham and his lineage described in terms of a *father-son* relationship (cf. *Genesis* 17:5). Such a process represents for the *children of God* a decisive means of internalization, commitment and transmission of the divine promises and instructions so that they may have life. Therefore, the Patriarchal narratives, Moses' discourses, prophets' warnings and especially the Sapiential exhortations will portray God's revealing deeds and redemptive message by largely adopting both endearing and authoritative didactic styles. Moreover, the prime importance of fulfilling the duty of a wholehearted ongoing theological formation on God's loving teachings by all generations of the Old Testament members of the covenant community is indeed steadily founded upon Israel's fundamental religious truth peremptorily stated in the *Shema*: "*Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today. You shall teach them diligently to your sons* (*Deuteronomy* 6:4-7a)."

In the context of the new covenant, Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, fully performs and perfects the divine-commanded traditional Hebrew religious education in both vertical and horizontal dimensions. On one hand, St. Luke implies that Jesus Himself was lawfully home-schooled by his parents (cf. *Luke* 2:51-52). Likewise, Jesus talks about Himself as well as of the source of His teachings calling upon

His intimate Father–Son relationship with God (cf., respectively *John* 10:31 and 8:38). On the other hand, in His life-giving public ministry, Jesus carries out the duty of Teacher (cf. *John* 10:10). Through His merciful deeds and trustworthy preaching, He states anew both the fundamental *Shema*-exhortation as the greatest commandment of love for God (cf. *Mark* 12:29) and reveals the divine sonship of the whole humanity who are to call God "*our Father*" (*Matthew* 6:12). The divine duty of edifying the world in the law of God's redemptive love, Jesus hands it over to the group of the Twelve, within a new family framework, the Church. Indeed, once Jesus Himself had chosen and tutored His disciples, during the Last Supper, a Passover meal to be eaten within one's single family unit (cf. *Exodus* 12:46), Jesus commands them "*Do this in remembrance of me*" (*Luke* 22:19; *1 Corinthians* 11:24). In this way, Jesus makes the disciples His Apostles and institutes the ministerial priesthood (see COUNCIL OF TRENT, Session 22, *Doctrine touching the Sacrifice of the Mass*, Chapter 1, DH 1740). Then, the Risen Jesus affirmatively commissions the Apostles to teach all nations to observe all that He commanded them throughout the ages to come (cf. *Matthew* 28:19-20). Instilled and guided by the Holy Spirit and through the Apostolic succession, the Church takes this mission as its own and carries it on exercising the threefold office of teaching, sanctifying and governing.

Among the several considerations made on this divine legacy of the Church, the Second Vatican Council judiciously assigns a special participation at the educational mission of the Church to the religious consecrated persons ("*intimus consecrator*"). Their peculiar vocation to abandon everything to follow Christ like the Apostles did entitles them a distinguishing place ("*pars praecellens*") and value ("*praestans valor*") in the Lord's Family (cf. *PC* 6 and 1 respectively) and a special status in the service of God (cf. *LG*

44). Indeed, the Council Fathers appraise the religious community as the continuation of the community of the Apostles (cf. *PC* 15) and emphasize the fecundity of their apostolate (cf. *PC* 15 and 8 respectively; see also *AG* 18). Therefore, the Council indicates that the success of such a vocation relies primarily on an adequate ongoing formation aimed to "bring up" the religious in harmony with the community and unity of life with Christ (cf. *PC* 18), which is responsibility of the superiors to provide (cf. *LG* 40, *PC* 6, 18 and 24-25).

Successively, these ideas are corroborated by the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992). By recalling that the *New Law* also includes the evangelical counsels (cf. 1973), the *Catechism* talks about the apostolic mission received from Christ as a common endeavor to be carried out by both ordained ministers and consecrated persons (cf. 864), and specifies that religious life accomplishes such a mission "*by showing forth Christ and signifying the very charity of God*" (926). Thus, the catechetical teachings implies that the formation process of the consecrated person must be understood and promoted by the superiors as means of *conformation to Christ*.

It is indeed St. Pope John Paul II in the *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Vita consecrata* (1996) who systematically goes into the identity and role of consecrated religious life as well as the formative aspects of its members – as he had already done for the laity (*Christifideles laici* [1988]) and priests (*Pastores dabo vobis* [1992]). On one hand, the Roman Pontiff describes consecrated life drawing on the existing doctrine. He portrays the religious community as a new family inaugurated by Jesus (cf. *VC* 41), of which the members conduct an *apostolica vivendi forma* (93; see 14) and participate intimately in Christ's mission (cf. 18, see 25) to be a living memorial of His way of living and acting in relation to the Father and the brethren (cf. 22). On the other hand,

the Polish Saint enriches this doctrinal picture by exploring and attesting to the great import of one's dynamic fidelity to charism and mission of foundation of each Institute (cf. 36-37) and devotion to Mary (cf. 18 and 28), to the singularity of the religious vocation. It follows a strong exhortation addressed to all Institutes to commit themselves to the proper biblical, theological and spiritual formation both initial and permanent (cf. 63-71). Such an enterprise includes drawing up of a *ratio institutionis* inspired by the intimate relationship of the Holy Trinity, Mary's model of consecration and service, and the mystic view of the Institutions' founders.

It is widely known that Bogdan Jański was a lad brought up into the faith and knowledge of the Scriptures in the bosom of a staunch Polish Catholic family. Yet, Jański was a well educated man, who was scarred by both the wound of sinful rebellion against God and a healing of conversion. Likewise, Jański was also a man instilled with the Holy Spirit whose ideas on religious life, although observant, were prophetically ahead of his own time. Albeit living in the first half of the 1800s, Jański's vision on the Catholic Church's apostolic mission and the role of the consecrated life in it mirrored those advanced by the Second Vatican Council more than a century later. He envisioned a religious community constituted of clerical members, vowed brothers members of the community houses, and external lay brethren, who would be able "*to establish a connection between the sacristy and the marketplace*" (J. IWICKI, *Resurrectionist Charism*, vol. 1, Rome 1986, 32). Reborn in Christ, Jański pursued his dream, relying on God's providence, being faithful to the Church's authority and making use of his eloquence and a sense of an energetic mission to attract and guide his first disciples in order to build a Christian community of prayer and good works. Therefore, Jański devoted special attention and efforts to provide his first confreres a suitable, genuine and solid formation in a familial environment. Initially, Jański

himself nurtured religious, moral and educational services. He first carried out this duty himself with fondness by advocating a frequent attendance to the Sacraments of Confession and Eucharist and the study of Catholic dogmatic teachings by all members of the group. As well, he led them in special prayer and Bible readings and weekly conferences on spiritual instruction. Another of Jański's meaningful initiatives on formation was his solicitude about making sure that the candidates aspiring for the priesthood were well trained to succeed in doing it. Accordingly, Jański sent Peter Semenenko and Jerome Kajsiewicz for philosophical and theological studies first in the College Stanislas, in Paris, and then, in Rome.

By the Lord's grace, all of Jański's struggles to rear the "first Resurrectionists" to be faithful followers and ministers of Jesus through consecrated life and apostolic work were not in vain. It could not be otherwise. The first fruits yielded soon as both Semenenko and Kajsiewicz tirelessly exerted themselves engaging in the process of institutionalization and internationalization of the "Congregation of the Resurrection" as well as the foundation of new female religious communities, and the formation of the clergy by establishing and running the Polish Pontifical College in Rome. Likewise, the Venerable Servant of God, Father Paul Smolikowski, another rector of the Polish Pontifical College, laid great stress on the quality of the formation. He established and operated one single integral center of formation (*studium domesticum*) for the entire Congregation in Rome (1899-1902). Besides all the pedagogic and spiritual activities that he carried out in this program, the excellence of Smolikowski's domestic school was that of instilling in the seminarians the Resurrectionist principles of religious life as outlined by Semenenko.

Needless to say, throughout the history of the Congregation, the precious work developed by these outstanding men

was followed one another by the many contributions made all and sundry by other Resurrectionists in their willing struggle to live and hand down the "words of life" they had received. God, through His unfailing providence, has constantly blessed this process of perpetuation and development of the Christian consecrated way of life of Jański's disciples in the Church. These blessings flowed from the ordinary hands on parochial-educational apostolate itself as well as from specific undertakings pursued by specially gifted men. Undeniably, the pioneer Resurrectionists fulfilled such an immeasurable and invaluable task in unfavorable circumstances, in each sector of the Community as well as in the Bulgarian Mission, and most recently, in the Tanzanian Mission. Indeed, besides being an effective vehicle of dissemination of the Gospel, these enterprises were and continue to be a thriving instrument to fostering new vocations. As advantageous as individual academic achievements have been (*e.g.*, in the disciplines of philosophy, theology, spirituality, ecclesiastical law and psychology) an enthusiastic commitment to the formation process has also enriched the Community. In fact, it is memorable how this former calling was fulfilled by some enlightened Resurrectionists. Among them, it is impossible not to recall the formation activities and spiritual guidance carried out by the late Fathers Charles Fedy and Bob Liddy in the Ontario-Kentucky Province, Grzegorz Treder in the Polish Province, and Leonard Krzywda in the USA Province and South American Region.

In the effort to fulfill God's commandments and suit the teachings of the Church by following the footsteps of the Founders of the Community, since 1981, the members of the International Formation Commission have been officially conducting unceasing activities on the Resurrectionist formation in both its initial and ongoing stages. As a result of its activities in 1993, the IFC published a whole set of

material in one single publication entitled *Resurrectionist Formation*. Subsequently, the Commission completed two other documents, *Admissions and Promotions* (1998) and *On-Going Formation* (2001). Thus, for a long time, the foundations and directives contained in these volumes have been – together with the Constitutions – secure instruments of religious fidelity and distinctive identity to all Resurrectionists worldwide by commonly fostering the conception of *unitas in diversitate* as a principle of interest in all levels of formation.

During the meeting of the IFC members held in January 2012 in Rome, it was concluded that in order to keep these documents effective, two of them, namely the handbooks *Resurrectionist Formation* and *Admissions and Promotions,* needed reviewing and updating. This work should requalify the texts to meet the new cultural and ecclesial realities and legislations shaped throughout more than 20 years of contemporary history. The first major section of the document *Resurrectionist Formation*, entitled "Principles of Resurrection Spirituality," was identified as the immediate subject of such an endeavor. Indeed, in this case, the editing should apply to the three-sub-sectioned texts (1. Explanation of the Principle; 2. The Principle and Contemporary Mentality; 3. Application of the Principle in Formation) of the sections concerning the eight fundamental principles developing the parallel main points of the Resurrectionist *Charism Statement*. Having been first published alone in 1991, this text had focused predominantly on the reality of the communist society of Poland. Thus, there was a pressing need for amending it to reflect the world's current language and conditions. It meant to compose a textbook apt to continue being an effective mainstay of the identity of the Community and a manual of formation for the members of Jański's Family worldwide including the *youngest children* of the African territory.

Throughout five years, the IFC members pursued this far-reaching and laborious task with earnest commitment and spirit of service. The *modus operandi* was most characterized by frequent exchanges of ideas and unbiased mutual understanding all embraced by an easy cooperative atmosphere. In addition to the ordinary IFC personnel, the project also counted on the active involvement of two extra men of the Province USA and on that of the seminarians of the *Collegium Resurrectionis Romae* and the Major Seminary of the South American Region in Curitiba, Brazil, who offered valuable input. Furthermore, competent editors were engaged in the redaction of both the English and Polish final versions of the text. Fundamentally concerned with updating, in each of the *eight principles* corresponding sections, most amendments were made to the second and third subsections as they deal respectively with actual altering reactions and practical application of the principles. Their substance was drawn from two main sources: the "on-the-job experience" and the most recent official instructions of the Church. In the first case, the influence and impact on the contemporary generation of concrete benefits and threats were considered with matters or issues such as cultural links across borders, high-speed communication, freedom of expression, free trade, terrorism, technology, social web, consumerism, xenophobia, drugs, depression, pornography, same-sex marriage, and gender ideology. The abundant literature produced by the last three Supreme Pontiffs and the Roman Curia Congregations and specialized publications were the source of both fundamental Christian topics (*e.g.*, love, hope, holiness, faith, ecology, and family) and ongoing subjects particularly relevant for religious life and priesthood (*e.g.*, vocations and their promotion, stages and dimensions of formation, apostolate, mature vocations, life-long commitment, homosexual tendencies, sexual abuse of minors, and clerical careerism). Finally, following the revised text,

what is kept is the material that used to be the third section of the handbook *Resurrectionist Formation* (1993), entitled "Our Fathers Have Told Us," which is a thematic anthology of the texts of our Founders, Fr. Paul Smolikowski and other Resurrectionists pedagogues on didactics and religious formation. Together with the biblical truths and constitutional instructions, this treasury illustrates and crowns both the authority and worth of the *eight principle*s for all generations of the spiritual sons of Bogdan Jański worldwide.

In June 2017, the capitulars of the 33rd General Chapter praised and approved the final updated version of the "Principles of Formation in Resurrectionist Spirituality" and recommended its use for the initial formation, annual retreats, days of recollection and personal reflection (cf. *WR*, 15). The same juridical body also called on IFC to perform the same work on the section "Stages of Formation" and on the other two main formative documents of the Community in order to prepare a thorough Resurrectionist formation guide (cf. *WR*, 16). Now, the new text on the *eight principles* abreast with the section "Our Fathers Have Told Us" is being published apart from the section "Stages of Formation." This action aims to enable the *principles* to instill the foundations of the Resurrectionist spirituality also among the lay groups sharing the Charism and Mission of Jański's Family – (later, after their revision, "Stages of Formation" and *Admissions and Promotions* will compose a separate legislative document). The achievement of this important goal is a milestone in the service carried out on behalf of the Community by the IFC, which lately has also been in charge of the Renewal Program for formators (cf. *NHH*, 11 and *WR*, 18) and responsible for disseminating monthly prayers for vocations (cf. *WR*, 23). Moreover, in order to continue carrying on its duties faithfully, this team is now about to devote itself to reformulate the remaining pedagogic texts of the Community in order to bring them up to code according to the most recent meth-

ods and norms stipulated by the Church on religious life and priestly formation.

Therefore, it is with great joy and deep gratitude to God and all who collaborated in pursuing such a project that I tender all *Brothers of the Resurrection* the fruits of it gathered in the refreshed pages of this enhanced edition of the handbook *Resurrectionist Formation*. It continues to enshrine the foundations underpinning the Resurrectionist identity, which is now a renovated powerful directive instrument of vocational discernment and integral formation, substantially responsive to particular cultural contexts, according to its implementation by those responsible for formation *in loco*. Its certainties and instructions must lead all Resurrectionists into the religious upbringing process both meek children as well as good educators in their vowed life and ecclesiastical apostolate. Moreover, the handbook wants to be a reliable companion for all consecrated and lay people who feel particularly called to fulfill the *Shema* commandment by receiving, internalizing and transmitting the unconditional saving love of God by conforming themselves to the Risen One. It means enabling them to respond to their Christian vocation in the manner of Bogdan Jański and his spiritual offspring in the Catholic family of the Congregation of the Resurrection. May Mary, *Sedes Sapientiae* and *Apostola Apostolorum*, teach us to be docile to the enlightening guidance of the Holy Spirit in the life-long homeschooling of Christ.

Evandro Miranda Rosa, C.R.
IFC Chair

Rome, April 21, 2019
Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

Abbreviations

The quotes from the Scriptures are taken from *The New Jerusalem Bible* (1985).

AG	*Decree **Ad gentes** on the Mission Activity of the Church,* Rome 1965.
Art.	***Article of the Constitutions***.
CIC	***Codex iuris canonici***.
Constitutions	***Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ***, Rome 2019.
CRR	**Archives** of the Congregation of the Resurrection in Rome.
Diary	***Bogdan Jański Diary 1830-1839***, Andrzej Jastrzębski (ed.), English transalation Francis Grzechowiak, C.R., Rome 2000.
DH	**Denzinger Heinrich**, ***Enchiridion simbolorum***, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei e morum.
EE	***Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life as Applied to Institutes Dedicated to Works of the Apostolate***, Rome 1983.
EGC	**Extended General Council**.
GS	Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World ***Gaudium et spes***, Rome 1965.
IFC	**International Formation Commission**.
LG	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church ***Lumen gentium***, Rome 1964.
Mss	**Manuscript(s)**.

NHH	***New Horizons of Hope***. Document of the 32nd General Chapter of the Congregation of the Resurrection, Rome 2011.
OT	Decree on Priestly Training ***Optatam totius***, Rome 1965.
PC	Decree ***Perfectae caritatis***, Rome 1965.
PDV	Apostolic Exhortation ***Pastores dabo vobis***, John Paul II, Rome 1992.
USRS	***Under the Standard of the Risen Savior***. Statements of the Founder on the Theme of the New Community. Selected and arranged by Fr. Bolesław Micewski, C.R., Chicago, IL 1978.
VC	*Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation* ***Vita consecrata,*** John Paul II, Rome 1996.
WR	***Witness to the Resurrection***. Document of the 33rd General Chapter of the Congregation of the Resurrection, Rome 2017.

Principles of Formation in Resurrectionist Spirituality

GOD LOVES US UNCONDITIONALLY

> "*We have recognized for ourselves, and put our faith in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him*."
>
> (*1 John* 4:16)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

1. John's message is clear and direct: "*We have known and put our faith in God's love toward us*." How wonderful to be able to make such a statement, to be able to say, "*God loves me and that is the basis of my life*." Unfortunately, many of us never manage to say such words or, if we do, they express an abstract idea we have, but they do not express our lived experience.

2. It appears that our Founders were able to identify concretely with the Evangelist's words. Their conversions were a struggle which gradually enabled them to understand, and more importantly, to experience with their whole being that they were personally loved by God. They came to know God not only as the Creator, the all-knowing and all-powerful Lord, but as a loving and personal Savior. God's love for them was something they were able to recognize in their daily lives. For this reason it was only natural that it had become the centrepiece of their spiritual lives and of our *Constitutions*.

3. Quotations from John the Evangelist on this theme were made the scriptural foundation of the earliest Community

Rules. For example, *The Rule of 1850* stated in Art. 4 that the Congregation "*shall treasure these words: 'God is love' (1 John 4:16); His love created us: 'for You love all things* [...] *that You have made* [...] *because they are Yours, O Lord and Lover of souls' (Wisdom 11:25,27). Having created and redeemed us, He further extends His love by making us His sons: 'Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we are called children of God; and such we are' (1 John 3:1)*."

4. Although God's love for us is the basis of an authentic Christian spirituality, it is not a truth we easily arrive at and personally experience. Thus, in the very first Art., our *Constitutions* refer to God's love as "*the most fundamental fact of our lives*," and then continues to explain how a life-long process is required in order to understand and experience it with our mind, will, heart and emotions. The possibility exists for our experience of God's love to surpass our experience of all other loves extended to us. This is true because that is the nature of God's love for us.

5. Unfortunately, the reality is often different; our experience of God's love for us is frequently a shadow of the other loves which we experience. Bogdan Jański recognized the slow and hesitant progress that most of us, like he himself, make in grasping this basic truth. He wrote, "*This must be proclaimed to sinful man, something which he was unable to find for himself: God loves him* [...]" (*USRS*, 19). Jański was not referring to a proclamation consisting of mere rhetoric. His own life modelled the type of proclamation which he had in mind. He reached out to others through charitable deeds, wishing others to taste and feel God's love for them through his own concrete acts.

6. There are good reasons why we are slow to experience God's love. Our experience of love and our notion of love are

derived from our relationships with those who surround us. People teach us about love through their manifestations of love. Very early in life we come to know that others are able to love us in only a limited way, sometimes only under certain situations and conditions. We learn that it is best to conform to their expectations and to act in a manner acceptable to them if we hope to receive their love. It is only natural for us to conclude that such must be the case for everyone who loves us, including God.

7. It is sometimes difficult to suspect that God's love is very different and that God could love us at all times and under all circumstances despite our behaviour, good or bad; that his love is not earned, but was present before we existed and perdures even when we sin; that it will never be withdrawn. We are generally conditioned to think that others' love for us is a consequence of our good behaviour, whereas with God the reverse is true: our good behaviour flows from His love. Our goodness is an expression of His love for us.

8. If God's love for us is so different from our common experience of love, it is natural to ask: How do we come to know and appreciate God's love? Unfortunately, some people never do so or only in a slight way, but it is possible, because from time to time we do receive true unselfish love from others. Moreover, God can make us directly aware of His love. Truly blessed is the person, child or adult, who has the conscious experience of being loved by another in good times and in bad. The experience is not only wonderful in itself, it prepares the person to recognize and to accept God's love as the marvelous gift that it is.

9. Once someone has come to accept the possibility that another can love them without demanding something in return, it is more likely that they will recognize through Scrip-

tures, the Sacraments, prayer, and nature the love which God has for them. Reflecting on Sacred Scriptures reveals the story of God's love for us (cf. *Constitutions*, 2). This is especially true of the Gospel narratives in which God's love becomes manifest in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. After accepting the Scriptures in this way, a person can then turn to their own personal history and re-examine it as an expression of divine love for them. For their part, prayer and the Sacraments are then no longer merely or even primarily human efforts on the part of the individual. They rather become occasions to know and accept the unconditional love of God.

10. Reflecting on the Old Testament can be beneficial as well in this regard. Love and fidelity (*ḥeseḏ*) were the characteristics which the Hebrews attributed to God from the earliest times. *Ḥeseḏ* is what prompted God to make a covenant with the people, and to be faithful to this gratuitous covenant regardless of the response of the Hebrews. The word *ḥeseḏ* encompassed God's loving forgiveness and benevolence. For the Hebrews it gave God His personal identity and was the key to understanding His basic character. The first Christians saw the death and resurrection of Christ as the perfect manifestation of the *ḥeseḏ* of God (cf. *Romans* 5:5,6).

11. One's vocation takes on a new perspective and dynamism when one has come to see life primarily as a response to God's love. The religious life, Holy Orders, marriage and unattached life are then viewed not merely as one's personal decision to take on a specific life style for one's own benefit, but as a response to an invitation from God to be loved by Him in a specific way and to be a sign of His love for others. This invitation to be loved by God originates in God's loving creation of each human person, continues in God's loving provision of Baptism, Confirmation and Eu-

charist, and reaches an apogee in God's loving call to a distinct state of life. Since it is the religious life which concerns us in this document, let us explore this concept further in reference to this particular vocation.

12. God loves us and wishes that we experience His love through a personal relationship. Our whole life is His gift to us and an expression of His love. Our vocation to religious life is a specific instance in which God invites us in a particular way to deepen the loving relationship between Himself and us. He is giving us special gifts which will permit us to relate to Him in a specific way, namely through a life of chastity, poverty and obedience lived in community and directed to apostolic service.

13. The religious life is not something we take upon ourselves; it is a response to the gifts which the Lord has given to us (cf. *Constitutions*, 3 and 149). These gifts are intended to help us experience His love in a new way, a way that in the mystery of grace is ideally suited to us. The religious life is one of the wonderful ways that God has at hand to say to an individual: I love you and wish to express my love for you by relating to you in a particular manner. Consecrated life gives witness to the superabundance of love which drives one to "lose" their own life as a response to the superabundant love of the Lord, who first "lost" His life for us. For the religious this means a relationship expressed through a life of chastity, poverty and obedience (cf. *EE*, 5).

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

14. In this section we turn our attention to the life of the people we know, the societies in which we live and the candidates who are exploring whether or not they are called to

be Resurrectionists. How do these latter view God's love for them? Do they experience it?

15. Usually individuals who present themselves as candidates for religious life take the Church and their own spiritual life seriously. Even if they have been involved in the life of their local parish and/or Catholic school, and their contacts with religious have given them the opportunity over many years to reflect on their decision and thus to be generally highly motivated to lead a virtuous life; nevertheless, this does not preclude confusion, struggles and immaturity, sometimes on very basic levels. It is this confusion and weakness that we wish to focus on here in order to be able to assist candidates to discern their vocation and to grow spiritually. At the same time we must remember the goodness and the strengths which the candidates bring to the formation program, affirm them and encourage their development.

16. It has already been stated that many people do not come to recognize the true nature of God's love for them. They fail to perceive and to experience it, despite the possibility to do so through nature, Sacred Scriptures, the love of others and the events of their personal lives. An examination of our own history would probably reveal that our personal growth in coming to experience God's love for us was slow and uncertain. It should not surprise us then that candidates for our Community have usually only begun to grasp the depth of God's love for them. Their notion of God's love is often twisted and clouded.

17. Each candidate is unique and each society has its own influences on its members. Generalizations are thus limited in value and need to be considered carefully. The following should be read in that context since it is a summary of the experiences of formation personnel working in different sectors

of the Congregation all over the world. Each group describes new candidates differently. In one cultural environment candidates may possess initiative and great ability intellectually, socially or organizationally. Yet they may also experience feelings of inadequacy and unworthiness. They may question their competence to respond faithfully to the spiritual, communal or apostolic demands of the call to religious life.

18. Elsewhere, some candidates may be strong in the practice of their faith but possess little initiative and creativity. They may lack self-confidence in their natural abilites. The qualities common to youth everywhere are the hope, enthusiasm and faith in ideals they possess, but also the lack of perseverance and fear before lifelong commitments. Frequently the hope they possess has been ignited in part by the hope, the joy and the dedication they see in consecrated persons. They desire to make these virtues the pattern for their own lives. It is important that formation personnel acknowledge and nurture this hope in order that it may sustain the candidate and bear fruit in good works.

19. On the other hand, for the candidates whose activity and outlook on life may be dominated by the weaknesses stated above, formation directors should explore to see if it is caused by a lack of appreciation of God's love. Frequently this is the case. Such candidates have experienced very little true love. Perhaps those closest to them manifested love in a confusing way. The love they received from parents, relatives, teachers or friends may have confused them, since it may have been determined by their response to the demands of these people. Such a love is far from God's way of loving.

20. A young person's concept of love and its possibilities is determined primarily by the manner in which their parents, grandparents and friends treated them and treated one an-

other. If these individuals did not model God's love in their relationships, it is unlikely that the young person will understand that God loves them unconditionally, as they are, and forever. In families in which both parents, if there are two present, work outside the home for long hours, there is frequently little opportunity for parents and children to relate more deeply than on a functional level. In such homes, relationships may manifest the superficial and perfunctory style common to modern business and industry. This may leave the young person with the idea that love is dependent upon good performance, and that it is a reward for work well done. Transferring the concept to their relationship with God, candidates may consider themselves unlovable by God unless they have done good deeds to earn God's love. Their sins evoke feelings of guilt and anger because according to their perception, they are a barrier keeping them from God's love. Their concept of God's love is contractual rather than covenantal. They do not view God as irrevocably committed to love them no matter how they respond.

21. The problems faced by a youth who spends long hours before the computer, watching television or films or engaging in merely virtual relationships may be somewhat different. Many programs depict love only in terms of emotions, and not in terms of lasting, maturing relationships that transcend emotions. Such a candidate may identify love with emotional experiences. If their relationship with God has never touched them positively in an emotional way, they obviously wonder if God really loves them. Even if they have had a positive emotional experience of God's love, they will soon learn that such experiences, precious as they are, do not perdure. Disillusioned, they become more confused than ever about God's love. They need assistance to put their experience into perspective and to establish a relationship with God on a faith basis nourished by daily spiritual practices.

22. In other cases the family, school and society all too often teach the young, both directly and implicitly, that their value as individuals will be measured in terms of salary, productivity or status. This is conveyed by means of goals the young are encouraged to set for themselves, goals which inherently exclude, or at least ignore, the spiritual and humanitarian dimensions of human life. Also, the treatment extended to the disabled, the sick and the aged in one's family and in society conveys a strong message about values and about who is considered lovable. Similarly an atmosphere of constant competition or a penalty-reward system suggests to the young that acceptance is based on performances.

23. There are also situations in which youth may believe that all institutions are failing to live up to their high ideals: the family which is weakened by working parents and divorces; the school which focuses on information and not on the development of the total person; society with its unemployment, bureaucracy and inefficiencies; government with its unjust structures, practices and loss of credibility; and even a Church with sexual and other abuses which are coming to light. As a result, the young person, who nowadays may even be a fresh convert, searches for a communal setting in which their idealism might be fulfilled. This may be the Church or a religious community. A spark of hope may be ignited in them by being in contact with ecclesial movements of spiritual renewal, communities within the parishes and non formal pastoral groups, and by an opportunity to be active as a parish lay leader, or by the Church's concern for social issues and by volunteer work. Their youthful enthusiasm may have started them on a new path, but they still need to overcome the obstacles of their own past. These often are a poor self image and consequent inertia in the face of struggle. A fragile and easily threatened self image prevents them from taking the risks inherent in the process of emotional and spiritual growth. As a result, their view of God remains stunted.

24. A person with a poor self image is not able to accept and love themself. Without a healthy love for self, they are unable to love God who created them and is responsible for their own being. Such a person needs to begin by recognizing their own basic goodness, which flows from the goodness of God. They must learn to love and nourish this goodness. To love oneself in this way is not only good, but it is necessary for a healthy emotional and spiritual life. Healthy love of self is to be distinguished from narcissism which focuses on self and relegates God and others to subordinate positions. To grow a true love of self, many candidates may need assistance to distinguish such manifestations of narcissism from true self love. Truly, authentic love of self involves the acceptance of God's love for us.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

25. Thus far we have given a general description of the basic principle of all Resurrectionist spirituality and formation. We have seen where candidates stand in reference to learning and integrating this principle into their lives. Let us now consider how our formation programs can assist these candidates to grow as Resurrectionists.

26. Formation programs are influenced both by the goals set by directors and by the maturity and views of the candidates entering the program. It is not surprising then that many formation directors today find themselves expending much of their time and energy correcting false notions of love, and modelling true relationships for students. In order not to lose sight of the very essence of the program, it is necessary to screen candidates prior to entrance with the aid of personal interviews and psychological instruments (cf. *Constitutions*, 174). Some can be admitted immediately. The

admittance of others should be deferred while they are assisted by means of programs apart from the Seminary or Novitiate.

27. Before someone is accepted into a formation program, the nature of their relationships must be known. How do they view God? What were their relationships with their parents and peers? Such information allows both the candidate and the directors to appreciate the strengths and the weaknesses of the candidate in reference to self image and personal relationships. A particular characteristic of these relationships, to which special attention should be paid in the early stages of evaluation, is the candidate's ability to trust and to be open with others. Without these basic virtues of trust and openness, a person will not be able to grow in skills and in maturity, except in areas they themselves have selected. In other areas, and in general, they will merely conform to regulations touching on external behaviour and will not personally adopt the values presented by the program of formation. Unconsciously or otherwise, the candidate wears a mask and plays according to the rules set down as such. Therefore, the candidate fails to internalize the values which the rules and practices are intended to inculcate.

28. Candidates who because of their family or societal background have not learned to trust others, especially those in authority, will require special attention on the part of the directors. Such candidates will be skeptical that directors have their best interests at heart, and therefore will not approach them. The directors need to make special efforts to arrange meetings with such candidates and to gain their confidence. Candidates who have not learned to trust others will object unduly to rules and expectations placed upon them, claiming that the authorities do not trust them. Such protests need to be recognized as manifestations of an

absence of trust in the candidate. Because lack of trust and openness affects the candidate's response to so many aspects of the formation program, it deserves special attention, and could be considered a *sine qua non* condition for continuation in the program.

29. Trust in another is based on one's perception that the other person loves them and is concerned about them. Thus the director will assist candidates to overcome their lack of trust only through personal contact and manifestations of love. For this reason one goal of formation is to foster warm and close friendships in which values and the important experiences of one's life are shared. True friendships are a positive expression of the vow of chastity by which consecrated persons commit themselves to use their affectivity and their power to love to build relationships with God and with people.

30. Warm and close friendships should be encouraged among the participants of the formation programs as well as with their families and acquaintances. These relationships are seen as a necessary means to spiritual, emotional and social development. Important among these relationships are those between the student and the formation director, and between the student and the spiritual director. Each of these relationships will have its own characteristics, but both need to be open, loving and accepting on a reciprocal basis (cf. *Constitutions*, 158). These relationships will build upon and, when necessary, correct earlier perceptions about relationships which a student had either with parents or other authority figures. For this reason, it will be necessary for the director to have extensive contact, in both leisure and formal settings, with those they are guiding. It is hoped that in this way the director can mirror and suggest dimensions of the ideal relationship between God and each person.

31. One experience which may help formation participants to understand true relationships is an apostolic outreach to the aged, the sick, the disabled and the poor. Contact and friendships with such persons can help the student gain a true appreciation of human dignity and to understand the strengths and limits of his own ability to trust and to be loved.

32. Let us return to the topic of true love for self. Perhaps the most basic way to assist a candidate who is lacking in this quality is to bring candidates to recognize and to accept their personal gifts and talents. Such recognition is the first step to proper self-love and self-acceptance. It will also lead a person to accept God's love if they realize that God is the source of their gifts. The recognition of one's gifts flows naturally from their use. However, to ensure that one is not using their gifts in a narcissistic way, a person needs to be able to use their talents generously for the benefit of others even when this involves no personal advantage, but rather inconvenience and suffering. In such cases, the use of one's gifts becomes a practical example of living the Paschal Mystery. Besides coming to accept one's own gifts and learning to use them in a way that will aid their growth, the candidate also matures through recognizing and appreciating the gifts of others. Such maturation occurs when the gifts present within the group are accepted as complementary and supportive rather than as a source of competition and conflict. For this purpose, the following reflection of St. John Paul II could be very instructive (*Novo millenio ineunte*, 43): "*To make the Church the home and the school of communion: that is the great challenge facing us in the millennium in which a spirituality of communion means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters as 'those who are a part of me'. This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship.*

[...] *A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a 'gift for me'*."

33. The promotion of warm friendships and the recognition of gifts of which we have been speaking, normally occur spontaneously. There are times, however, when the process needs to be examined and encouraged and conflicts delicately attended to. Our Community history suggests that this should occur in several forums: first, in the relationships between student and director, or student and spiritual director; second, in community meetings. The latter refers to meetings in which all gather to share the joys and burdens of common life through dialogue and understanding. The purpose of such meetings is not to make decisions, or to convince others of a certain viewpoint, but to allow each person to speak on an equal basis concerning matters of personal or communal concern. It is a time to listen and to learn about the other person, and to share one's personal views without attempting to make the other person agree. Obviously, this type of group meeting is quite different from meetings in which the director of the program gathers the group to instruct them or to decide on specific issues.

34. Although the principle we are treating is God's love for us, the practical applications given so far have focused exclusively on human relationships. This was done deliberately because the primary method available to us in order to teach others about God's love is through human relationships just as Jesus taught God's love to us most forcefully through the love manifested in His own words and actions. However, in the final analysis, the experience of God's love needs to be spoken of and recognized in terms of grace, the hand of God Himself touching the deepest part of the human being. This

is not something that can be programmed although the candidates prepare themselves for it by the various things that were mentioned earlier concerning human relations.

35. Obviously prayer also plays a key role in assisting a person to awaken to the realization that they are loved deeply and intimately by God. This experience is described by Paul Tillich, in his *The Shaking of the Foundations*, (Scribner Library Books), Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, NY 1948, 120, as an experience of grace, an experience of being accepted. He describes the moment at which grace strikes us: "*A shaft of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: 'You are accepted,* [...] *by that which is greater than you.* [...] *do not seek anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted.' If that happens to us, we experience grace*." Tillich's description of the experience of grace or of acceptance is none other than the experience of God's love of which our Founders speak.

36. In these final paragraphs let us consider the role of prayer in helping a person come to an appreciation of God's love for them. Our Founders were great examples in this regard. When all three were together in Paris (1835-1837), they spent extended periods of time in prayer at Solesmes and La Trappe. On various occasions, between 1835 and 1840, Jański would spend up to a month or more at these places. Semenenko and Kajsiewicz set aside a month for retreat in preparation for ordination in 1841. It was during these times that they came to understand and experience the basic principle of the Community which they were in the process of founding.

37. The Founders' view of the importance and the role of prayer is set down in *The Rule of 1850*, "*The Brothers must realize that the total perfection of religious life consists in tending*

to a most intimate union with God by love. The necessary means of attaining this end is prayer for God's grace depends on prayer, and grace alone leads to this intimate union with God through love" (cf. *Constitutions*, 54 and 61). It is God's grace, His love for us, which enables us to pray and to love in return. Prayer is the necessary means to make this relationship of love mutual because through prayer we experience God's love.

38. Prayer is essential in all its expressions: private and communal, verbal and interior. All types will be practised throughout formation and life but with different emphases. Early formation will give a greater stress to vocal and communal prayer, *e.g.*, liturgy, rosary, benediction. It will also teach the candidate meditative and discursive private prayer based on the Scriptures.

39. After formation participants have progressed in discursive meditation which stresses an intellectual understanding of the Scriptures and their application to one's life, they should be taught to become more passive in prayer and to enjoy the Lord's presence and love. Such a "quiet prayer" will help them to be open to the movement of the Spirit who helps us to pray (cf. *Romans* 8:26,27) and teaches us of the wonderful ways in which God has been present to all as well as to each of us individually in our day-to-day activities. It is of prayer such as this that our *Constitutions* say: "*Personal prayer is our intimate conversation with God. In it we see His great love for us and our total dependence on Him*" (*Constitutions*, 61).

40. In this prayer, a person makes use of their imagination and emotions as well as their memory, intellect and will, and thereby learns to integrate better the various aspects of their life and personality. They will hopefully be led to consider prayer as an approach to life rather than as a set of words and

rituals. To learn to pray in this way does not always come quickly, and a student may need years of guidance and encouragement from the directors and confreres.

41. The widely-known directed retreats, according to the original design of St. Ignatius, are especially helpful in teaching a person this type of prayer. These retreats may last from several days to a month. The month-long retreat in which the person undergoes the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises is especially valuable prior to someone's major vocational decisions. These retreats should not be viewed as foreign to our tradition. The first Resurrectionists in Rome were directed and assisted in many ways by the Society of Jesus. Years later, Semenenko wrote a series of conferences on these Spiritual Exercises.

42. To conclude this chapter, let us underscore again the importance of candidates building a personal relationship between themselves and God. It needs to be a relationship based on an experience of God's love for them, modelled to some extent by the love of others for them, and nourished by their life of prayer. Reflection on the Gospels, in which they see both the humanity and divinity of Jesus, will assist candidates to understand the nature and the responsibility of their calling and to respond wholeheartedly and honestly.

Second principle

GOD CREATED US FROM NOTHINGNESS

> "*If we look at the matter from the purely rational angle, we are forced to admit that for a long span of time we did not even exist. We were nothingness, and this nothingness is the dark soil from which we were formed by God.* [...] *In the New Testament St. Paul says: 'For if anyone thinks himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceives himself' (Galatians 6:3). Nothingness is what we are. As to what we have, the same Apostle says: 'What have you that you have not received?' (1 Corinthianas 4:7).*"
>
> (P. SEMENENKO, *The Interior Life*, 1969, 314)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

43. We are all familiar with the opening story of the Scriptures. God created the universe and all that it contains; last of all, He created man and woman. All that He created was good, and the human being stands at the centre of this masterpiece of goodness and beauty. We need to remind ourselves frequently of God's pleasure in creating and, in particular, His pleasure in creating us. Such thoughts will not make us proud. Instead, they are a reminder that just as the human beings are the highlight of creation, so God is their master and glory. God is the centre of our lives, ontologically and spiritually. Yet, in a person's psychological perspective, God can be on the fringe, or not even part of his life. The human instinct for existence and survival is so strong that a

person tends to place himself at the centre of his universe. Anything less stirs up within him a fear of failure and annihilation. Paradoxically, this urge to focus on one's self can lead only to self-destruction. This is the greatest lesson of life and the most difficult to learn.

44. Our Founders, especially Peter Semenenko, developing the seminal ideas of Bogdan Jański, wrote extensively on the human condition. Semenenko was not blind to the wonders of nature, of human accomplishments, or even his own intellectual genius. His thinking was philosophical and spiritual: creation is the product of God's love. It, and we, would not and could not exist apart from God. All that we have and are is a gift to us from God: our talents, our faculties, our virtues, our very existence. To recognize this does not lessen the beauty or devalue them or us. Rather it opens to us the one and only path to human greatness.

45. Human beings come into existence apart from any decisions or power on their part. Human existence is a deliberate wish of God. Thus, from the beginning, a person's power comes from outside of them and is limited to what God bestows on him. Accepting this fact is difficult, and we prefer to ignore the entire issue. Yet, this is the very basis of religion and of worship, the act by which we recognize the true relationship between God and ourselves. Worship is not only the truest prayer, it is also the basis of all prayer. Petition, thanksgiving and reparation are either impossible, or their nature greatly distorted from the Christian ideal if a person does not have a sense of divine worship. As worship prepares us for the whole range of prayer, it also leads us to spiritual freedom in general. The person who accepts the limitations of their being and talents and recognizes that God is the source of all the good they possess is freed from the burden that an "*assumed divinity*" places on them.

46. A person begins life with nothing of their own making, and what they later possess is not something they have totally earned or deserved. They have it primarily because God wished them to have it. A person's role is primarily receptive but by no means exclusively so. They can either accept or reject the gifts; they can use or abuse the talents and graces. What occurs so often, however, is not merely an acceptance and use of the talents and graces, but an appropriation of them that ignores God as their source, and also a refusal to develop the gifts according to His plan for them. What often happens is our failure to acknowledge, accept and use the gifts God is giving. Many of us realize only a small percentage of our potential for growth because we fail to take the risks which are involved in growth (recall the parable of the talents and the one who buried his talent out of fear) so that many go through life avoiding responsibility. This could be a part of the leadership crisis we are experiencing in consecrated life and in the Church today. A false appropriation of God's gifts dooms a person to a limited and restricted existence because it closes the door to the full action of the Lord's Spirit within him or her.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

47. In nearly every country, society is afflicted with much suffering, fear and insecurity. One would expect and hope that the response to such a situation would be an acknowledgement of human failures and limitations and a movement toward humble, united action. Instead, we find that belief in human autonomy and unlimited power is as strong as ever. The focus is on economic well-being and individualism, and people appear oblivious of the consequences that a blind total commitment to these goals is having on society: marriage breakdown, neglect of the aged, lack of respect

for life, dishonesty and deceit on the one side, and poverty and environmental degradation on the other. Despite these evils, there is no acknowledgement that the individual and society have inherent limits in the goals they can achieve and the means acceptable for achieving these goals.

48. This delusion concerning human potential and proper goals, which is prevalent throughout society, enlarges the challenge faced by young people who are attempting to clarify their ideas as they emerge from adolescence. As adolescents, they are testing their own decision-making abilities, and attempting to reconcile their right to make decisions with their respect for parents and authority in general. Society for the most part tells young people that to be needy, to discipline themselves, to be limited is not simply unnecessary, it is bad. Likewise, there is a strong sense of entitlement in some of them today. They can over-stress their rights and downplay their responsibility. It is no wonder that they can be in a frenzy to reject outside restrictions and to set their own course. They view authority as a non-value or as something in conflict with their right to personal development. For example, any effort made to call them to be accountable to others for their actions is seen as a failure on the part of others to respect their persons, or as a lack of trust on their part.

49. In a formation setting, some young people expect to be able to set their own goals as well as the means and the rate at which they will achieve them. Taking responsiblity for one's formation is excellent, but it must be done within the parameters of the Community which the person is joining. Otherwise, this desire for self determination is merely a particular instance of a general rule: the human being does not readily accept the reality that while their horizons may be wide, they are limited by creation and the human situations

in which they find themselves. Further, the means individuals use to achieve their goals will be effective only if they are consistent with God's design of creation.

50. Since this struggle to understand their exalted and yet limited position in creation occurs in the life of a young person simultaneously with the experience of some autonomy as adults, they may find themselves alternating between moods of unlimited power and feelings of failure and despair. The experience of such contradictory emotions may be triggered or exaggerated by the abuse of sex, drugs, alcohol, peer pressure or irresponsible group activity. The exaggerated autonomy which young people experience may cause them to set unrealistic goals for themselves and others. Later, failure to achieve the goals leads to despair and distorted views of himself, society and God.

51. In this regard, it is worth recalling the life of Bogdan Jański between 1823 and 1834. At that time he was 16 to 27 years old. Beginning with alcoholic and sexual irresponsibility and an exaggerated notion of what economic and political reforms he could achieve, there arose within him an antipathy toward religious authority and practices. Next, his idealism motivated him to reform his personal life-style and to give himself totally and energetically to humanistic socialism. When this movement disintegrated from within, he was near despair and in poor health. He was finally able to put his life together on a solid basis by recognizing the great love and guiding hand that God was extending toward him.

52. Religious formation programs need to take into account the conflict in which candidates often find themselves. Society suggests to them that their desires and plans come first, while the awareness that each person has a vocation from God is lacking in many young people; with the result that

responding to God has nothing to do with their life discernment. Yet Sacred Scriptures teach them that while the human being has dignity by the very fact that they are a part of God's creation, that dignity is dependent on a proper relationship to God and the rest of creation.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

53. A formation program in which the person is recognized and treated as having dignity flowing from God's creation will have the characteristics of compassion, encouragement, forgiveness, unity and especially gratitude. Directors will admit mistakes and limitations without surrendering their authority. The students will feel encouraged to take risks and to forgive one another. All will work in unison, with an attitude of gratitude toward one another and especially toward the Lord. Successes will be celebrated in gratitude and not be taken for granted. Failures will be openly reviewed to pinpoint their cause. Were they avoidable? Is there culpability? What can be learned from each failure? In this way failures become a valuable part of the development and growth of the person. Individuals who have experienced failures will be given support to accept their failure, and will continue to be accepted by others.

54. Living out our status as part of God's wonderful creation affects the goals we set for ourselves and others, as well as the means we employ to attain those goals. God has begun the work of creation in us. As we continue this work, our goals and the efforts we expend to achieve them must be consistent with what God has begun and continues through grace. We must view ourselves as continuing the creation of ourselves and society together with God, the master Creator. We use the gifts He has given us, allowing the fullness of His life to vivify ourselves and society.

55. There are many ways in which the above ideas can influence specific areas of formation: *e.g.*, prayer, the vows, one's attitude toward the Constitutions. Let us look at each of these in turn. Candidates who have come to accept themselves as part of creation, and as cooperating with God in the creation of a better world, can more easily acknowledge the central place of adoration in prayer and make it a part of their own prayer life. Such individuals will also be more inclined to initiate the practice of the presence of God in order to become more aware of cooperating with God to continue the work of creation within themselves and in society. In fact, since our world is so crowded with frenzy and entertainment, every candidate should be taught and encouraged to practice turning their attention to the Lord frequently during the course of the day. The rationale for doing so is precisely to assist the candidate to view their life and work as co-creating with God. We need in fact to become more aware of how God is continuing to work in our world today, and then to discern how we can use our gifts and the Congregation's Charism to co-operate in the mission of God. This is suggested as something more than a pious or frivolous practice, and it will be such if it is undertaken seriously and with a minimum of external manifestation. It gives God a place in the candidate's consciousness, and God in turn builds a personal relationship with the candidate.

56. Religious vows are intended primarily to express a bond between the individual and God, and to specify this relationship (cf. *Constitutions* 13 and 14). They "*are the expression of the free and total gift of ourselves to God*" (Art. 14). Such an act is possible and rational only to the extent that the candidates recognize that their life and energies flow from God, their Creator, and that they can give themselves totally only to their Creator. Moreover, this can be a loving act only if the Creator is experienced as loving them totally.

57. Notwithstanding the fact that vowed life and formation to it are a mutual discernment process involving both the candidate and the community, through the vows the religious commit themelves personally. By the vow of chastity, the religious commits oneself to "*die to the pursuit of inordinate self-love*" (*Constitutions*, 16). What is inordinate self-love? The response depends upon one's perception of the nature of the human being and their autonomy. A clear understanding of our created status will assist us to recognize self-love and to be guided by the Spirit to transcend it. "*By evangelical poverty we worship God by acknowledging our total dependence on Him*" (Art. 21). Of all the vows, poverty most clearly and directly expresses our status as created beings. This aspect of the vow is called interior poverty, and it is the motivating force which assists us to practice external poverty (cf. Art. 22). By the vow of obedience "*we offer our own will to God the Father and, in a spirit of faith, to our superior, whom we consider His representative on earth*" (Art. 40). Jesus is presented as our exemplar of obedience. His dedication to living out the Father's will, which allowed Him to surrender His life, is presented to us as our ideal.

58. It is obvious that the vows are defined in strong and bold concepts which can be accepted only by individuals who have recognized the inherent limits of their power and autonomy, and the dignity that is theirs when they share in the omnipotence and sovereignty of God. The formation programs need to assist the candidates and students to grow in this awareness so that their perpetual vows become a true sign of these interior convictions, as well as a positive and joyful expression of their relationship to their Creator.

59. Finally, our status as part of God's creation has implications for the manner in which we view ideals and goals, and, specifically, our *Constitutions*. As stated earlier, unrealistic

goals which are beyond our capabilities as finite beings lead to defeat and despair. How do we view our *Constitutions* and present them to candidates in formation? Are they presented as the description of what a good religious believes and does, or are they presented as ideals which call the student to a deeper and deeper conversion each day of their life? For a candidate with great fervour and zeal, the first approach can lead to discouragement and eventual rejection of the *Constitutions* as a practical norm. The second approach has the advantage of asking only that the student take appropriate first steps, something they can joyfully achieve with grace from God.

60. The *Constitutions*, like the Scriptures, become a source of wisdom and power to which the formation candidate can continually turn. This will not occur automatically or without a struggle. The directors will have to encourage the students to read and reflect on the *Constitutions*; they must arrange formal discussions and give conferences based on our rule. However, if the students can be brought to adopt the second approach to the *Constitutions*, these will have a deeper and more lasting effect upon them. The end to be achieved is not mere conformity to laws, but the internalization of values (cf. Art. 224). Conformity can be instant, external and temporary; internalization is generally a slow process, deals with the inner person and insures that values are more deeply rooted and more likely to endure.

61. The *Constitutions* present us with a set of ideals. Directors will stress that these are supernatural ideals. A person can achieve them only by cooperating with God's grace. Grace helps us to overcome our sinful inclinations through self-discipline. Spiritual development is a blend of God's grace moving us forward and our own efforts to respond generously and conscientiously. Neither grace nor our own

efforts alone are sufficient to live the *Constitutions*. Thus, the students need to take the middle ground between unrealistic expectations based on their own efforts, and complacency, *i.e.*, expecting God's grace of itself to remove all obstacles. The formation candidates must be involved in the struggle of self-growth even if the immediate results are meagre. Those in the initial formation process must be doing something here and now. Moreover, there must be indications that they have the gifts to live the *Constitutions* at a basic level when they come to profess vows. If they do not have these gifts, it is better both for themselves and for the Congregation that they leave.

62. As has been stated, to live the values embodied in our *Constitutions* requires God's grace and is accomplished only through struggle. The discussion of our next principle of spirituality will develop the nature of this struggle.

Third principle

EVIL ATTRACTS US

"*The Law, of course, as we all know, is spiritual; but I am unspiritual; I have been sold as a slave to sin. I cannot understand my own behaviour, I fail to carry out the things I want to do, and I find myself doing the very things I hate. When I act against my own will, that means that I have a self that acknowledges that the Law is good, and so the thing behaving in that way is not my self but sin living in me. The fact is, I know of nothing good living in me – living, that is in my unspiritual self – for though the will to do what is good is in me, the performance is not, with the result that instead of doing the good things I want to do, I carry out the sinful things I do not want. When I act against my will, then, it is not my true self doing it, but sin which lives in me. In fact, it seems to be the rule, that every single time I want to do good, it is something evil that comes to hand.*"

(*Romans* 7:14-21)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

63. Original sin is not a topic that is widely discussed today and when it is, the explanations given differ greatly. Nevertheless, the concept itself is prominent in both Scriptures and Church teaching. Peter Semenenko wrote extensively concerning its consequences and the dynamics surrounding the biblical account in *Genesis*. It was from his reflection on

the effects of original sin that Semenenko moved to his analysis of the human being as he or she responds to daily life. Today such an analysis generally comes under the topic of psychology or secular anthropology and often lacks completeness because the links to original sin and the human relationship to God are ignored.

64. The aspect of original sin which we are concerned with here is the *disorder* that it has caused within the human being. Regardless of how one describes the exact nature of original sin, it is clear from our own experience, and from what we see in others, that our lives manifest a certain fragmentation; there is a lack of integration between our will, intellect, senses and emotions. On all levels, we experience an attraction to evil and frequently succumb without really knowing why or fully desiring it. Semenenko used the term misery to describe this phenomenon and compares it to an illness. "*Illness, generally speaking, is the image of misery. A sick person is in a state of disorder, because he ought to be well. Illness humbles him externally; corporally it knocks him off his feet. In the body of the sick person, illness produces one general and three special effects. The general effect: weakness and inertia. The special effects: 1. During the time of his illness a person loses his sense of taste; he feels an aversion to healthy things and desires those that are unhealthy; his appetite is perverted, 2. his spirits are low, and his intellect is weakened, 3. he does not, and cannot, move about. He experiences a lack of energy and has no desire to move about.*" (*The Interior Life*, 322).

65. Similarly, the effect of original sin is that it disorients our sense appetites by attracting us to what is evil rather than to what is good. Also, truth and falsehood become blurred for our intellect, and our will becomes focused on the human self rather than on God.

66. Thus, on all levels (sense, intellect, will and their associated emotions) there is not only a lack of enthusiasm for what is good, but also a tendency towards a goal that is not in the person's best interest. Of itself this has no moral value. However, this does not mean that such an attraction can be ignored without moral and psychological harm. Quite the contrary, since humans can be attracted to goals on the sensual, intellectual or volitional levels, which are actually harmful to their welfare, they need to evaluate all attractions which they experience prior to responding. For this, they need a standard other than their natural inclinations or disinclinations, to judge whether a particular action or omission is in their best interest. This idea will be developed further in the third part which deals with this principle. Let us first examine more thoroughly the consequences of human attraction to evil as seen in today's society.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

67. Perhaps the most obvious consequences of our attraction to evil can be seen on the emotional level of people's lives. Our emotions are an integral and essential part of our human nature. As such, they are good in enriching our lives, giving us a zest for life, warning us of danger, strengthening us in difficult times. We need to be aware of our emotions, feel at ease when they well up within us, see them as friends which enable us to live our lives more fully. Unfortunately, integrating our emotions with the rest of our being, our life view and our life goal is not always easy, and no one does it perfectly. In fact, some people lead very unhappy lives because they have not managed to attain even a minimum of integration.

68. This failure can take two forms: some people have repressed their emotions; others act out their emotions indiscriminately. The first group believes that some emotions

are evil in themselves, and these they have repressed. The second group accepts emotions as infallibly leading to what is good for them, and so they use their emotions as their principal guide for living. Both groups eventually suffer the pain and other consequences of these distorted views. Frequently, these people also have a false image of God, imagining Him to be unduly harsh or overly indulgent.

69. Blindness to this tendency to evil within a person is especially dangerous today when choices are so multiple and change happens so quickly. Failure to realize the need to step back in order to evaluate the options presented in the light of revelation, faith and theology leaves a person at the whim of ever changing attractions and their own undisciplined desires. The very concepts of objectivity and permanency are soon forgotten or negated.

70. At the general level of entire societies, we can detect similar disastrous consequences due to human disorientation after original sin. Societies in which Resurrectionists live differ but none escapes the consequences of original sin. In some societies today this attraction to evil manifests itself in an overt and ever-present promotion of and manipulation by the pain-pleasure principle: avoid what causes pain, pursue what gives pleasure. In these compromising social contexts, pain and pleasure become the primary focus although not necessarily on the sense level. This has noticeable effects on society not least of which is a great attention and energy directed toward the acquisition and enjoyment of material objects (consumerism/materialism) and devaluation of activities that do not result in material acquisition, while demanding hard work, devotedness and self-sacrifice.

71. The combined deleterious effects of the pain-pleasure principle in societies where this principle is manipulated or

inordinately promoted has, at times, resulted in hyper-commodification of not only material goods but also of critical concepts such as identity, community, solidarity and even the transcendentals (*e.g.,* the good, the beautiful, the true). The result of this hyper-commodification is not only a potential increase in the defense of the goods attained, but the fragmentation of life's most meaningful concepts and tools for sense making. Flowing from this fragmentation comes a lack of commitment to spiritual values. The results can be seen in various ways including indifference toward virtuous living, an unstinting self-centered lifestyle complete with drug and alcohol abuse to cope with societal fragmentation, celebration of niche communities to the exclusion of the needy or ostracized, blindness to both suffering and the beauty of the unexceptional, failed vocational commitments as well as degradation of life and its intrinsic value.

72. An influence in society that can be prevalent alongside or apart from the pain-pleasure principle is the tendency to individualism and distrust. The fear-laden context established and promoted in some societies, for example, divides individuals and communities. Family members, neighbors, co-workers and friends can be perceived as threats with the result that genuine human relationships, or even their prospect, can remain inaccessible or superficial. Moreover, the free-exchange of ideas through open communication becomes compromised because of a lack of trust. Dialogue shifts away from a candid communal search for the truth to a guarded testing of ideas and an indirect attempt to have the other person express ideas consistent with one's own opinion. The bonds that can be forged through the process of identifying and negotiating differences and conflicts become crippled if not impossible and thus perpetuate a destructive isolationism.

73. So far in this section on the third principle we have focused on the senses and the emotions. The intellect and the will can also be deflected from their true objectives so that the person is attracted to evil and becomes fragmented. The intellect was created to seek the truth; the will is intended to choose freely what is good for the person. Original sin interferes with the intellect and the will pursuing their proper objects. Having lost direct contact with God's love, the person attempts to use the intellect and will to create false and superficial experiences of self-worth and lovability. For example, through patterns of behavior called defense mechanisms, the intellect is used to deny or mask over the truth rather than to discover it. Let us examine some of the ways in which this occurs.

74. In the presentation of our first principle, God's love for us, it was stated that the absence of an experience of being loved will cause a person to lack a proper love of self and to consider oneself as worthless. All of this is a consequence of the disorder caused by original sin. To compensate for an absence of a sense of self-worth and lovability, a person may use their intellect in any of the following ways:

- exaggerating or bragging about oneself in order to achieve recognition and a sense of worth;
- rationalizing failures because they see them as obstacles to being lovable;
- being critical of others, projecting ones own weaknesses onto them, in an attempt to elevate oneself;
- depreciate ones own self and talents so that others begin to feel sorry for them;
- overly identifying with a hero, imagining they possess similar qualities.

In all of these cases and in others, the intellect has been sidetracked from searching for the truth, and focuses instead on mirages. In effect, the person's life is guided or tyranized by an intellect controlled by illusions and falsehoods.

75. There are also ways in which our will has been weakened through original sin so that it does not readily respond to the truth, to search for what is good for the person. We can be inclined to be over-achievers or perfectionists, convinced that accomplishments and possessions will bring us recognition and love. Or else, we may tend to be absolutely agreeable, totally docile with the hope that compliance, being the "*nice guy*," will bring us friendship and love. A third possibility exists in the person who is such a loner that they shun anything more than surface sociability, for fear of making improper decisions and losing acceptability from others.

76. It is important to remember that these defence mechanisms by which a person's intellect or will create a fictitious world are not morally wrong in themselves. They are misguided attempts to attain that experience of being loved which is part of our nature. At least initially, they are unconscious drives within the person. Although morally neutral, they are still harmful and prevent pyschological and spiritual growth. Generally, indviduals need assistance to recognize how and why they are responding in these ways so that they can discard them and arrive at an authentic experience of God's love, human love and their own self-worth.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

77. Let us now consider the means we can use in our formation programs to assist candidates and members to counteract and to go beyond their natural sensual attraction to evil, and their tendency to use their intellect and will to create inauthentic behavioural patterns designed to protect fragile self-images.

78. Our first concern will be the one's sensual, emotional attraction to evil. The fact that humans are attracted to evil as

well as to good makes it imperative that they have a norm by which they can distinguish whether or not that which attracts them is truly good. Further, they need to discipline themselves to use the process and to follow its conclusions. This necessitates that a person avoid haste in acting upon what they first view as good or evil. Haste is an indication of attraction to evil: "*By it [haste] we can recognize whether it is the spirit of God or the spirit of man that is at work*" (*The Interior Life*, 146).

79. As a first stage in this process of slowing down and using valid principles to guide oneself, individuals must first become aware of their emotions, understand their messages, and recognize to what extent they influence their daily decisions. Unfortunately, some people have blocked or repressed their emotions for fear of acting indiscriminately or suffering pain in some way. This is no solution; it is at best a very limited and short term defense against struggle and confusion. The absence of the full experience of the emotions or the lack of an awareness of their drive does not prevent the emotions from being present and having an effect upon the person, physically and psychologically.

80. It is necessary to permit oneself to experience the emotions and to be conscious of their presence without responding to them by an act of the willfully or by action. As individuals become more accustomed to their emotional reactions to situations, they will be able to distinguish whether their actions are reflex responses to these emotions, or whether they result from rational evaluation of the situation. They will probably become aware that so many of their "*good deeds*" are merely responses to their emotions and therefore are not so virtuous as they thought; similarly, "*evil actions*" may be reflexes to emotions and less culpable. Awareness of one's emotions is the first step in avoiding

their tyranny over one's life and choosing a proper basis for decision-making. Traditionally, a significant number of religious have experienced difficulty in integrating the affective dimensions of their sexuality and their feelings of anger, with the result that repression can readily occur in these areas. Candidates must be helped to become comfortable with their experience of sexual responsiveness and their feelings of anger and be helped to choose how to use their energy in a way which will build the Kingdom, rather than to react in a way which is destructive of the Kingdom.

81. Formation directors themselves need to be comfortable with their own emotional responses if they are to assist candidates in this regard. The formation setting should be one in which emotions are valued, where they can be freely expressed and discussed but do not tyrannize the community. Thus, the next step is crucial: choosing a solid criterion by which to judge what type of response to our emotions is appropriate. The simplistic pain-pleasure principle must be recognized as personally and socially destructive. In its place, the formation programs will teach the candidates to live by the principle of the Paschal Mystery. This is to follow the example of Jesus: to respond to events according to the call of the Father and in a way which allows the Spirit to live in us. God, who created us out of love, continues to manifest His love by guiding us in a very personal manner and calling us to union with Himself.

82. The call of the Father can be complex and mysterious as well as clear and direct. It can be heard while reading the Scripures or listening to the teachings of the Church; it can be discovered in private prayer or in the people and events of one's daily life (cf. *Constitutions*, 43). It is this diversity of sources as well as the interference caused by one's own interests and fears, that makes finding it mysterious. For this rea-

son, it is important for a candidate to have a spiritual director. Growth in the spiritual life and in the living of the Paschal Mystery can occur so much better with the aid of a director that our *Constitutions* state that it is essential for all candidates to accept regular spiritual direction (cf. Art. 154).

83. The purpose of spiritual direction can be described in various ways. In the present context, it can be defined as the assistance of a skilled and mature person to help a candidate become aware of tendencies to evil on the one hand and of the action of the Holy Spirit within the person on the other. Both of these affect the person and their decisions, with or without their knowledge. Reflection, information and discussion can raise these influences to the conscious level so that evil can be avoided and grace responded to. The role of the director will be varied: listener, advisor, clarifier, teacher, supporter.

84. In accompanying candidates in early formation, the director will need to focus a great deal on their emotional and psychological life because the candidates are often operating on this level, whether or not they realize it. Young candidates, more than others, frequently give generously of self. However, the motivation can be emotional, or a defence mechanism of the intellect or will in order to compensate for a poor self-image. In such cases pious practices and a cooperative spirit are built on false bases and will not perdure in times of challenge or after psychological maturation of the candidate.

85. One of the challenges that spiritual directors face is having a relationship with their directees which encourages the latter to be open about the difficulties in their lives. Perhaps the spiritual directors do this best by their own attitudes towards God, themselves, and others. The extent to which

they themselves have a proper view of God and themselves will be evident in the manner of their dialogues with students. They need to display an openness, a comfortable feeling about emotions, a public image that demonstrate that they experience God's love, a desire to grow in the awareness of themselves. The directee must be able to sense that the director is non-judgmental, trustworthy, fair, accepting and supportive, relaxed and knowledgable. There are times when the spiritual director will have to direct the attention of the directee to painful facts or to present them with difficult decisions. One does this, however, as a friend and not as an uncaring judge. The goal is not to have the directee fear the director or be in awe, but to be a healer, to assist the directee to grow in an experience of God's love.

86. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also an important means of growth in this area. In this context, the penitent and confessor are both concerned with allowing the grace of the Holy Spirit to heal the brokenness of the penitent. The Sacrament is viewed as an opportunity for the penitent to manifest this brokenness and confusion – the consequences of sin although not sinful in themselves – in order to receive counsel, strength and direction from the Lord. In an even more direct way, the Eucharist is the Sacrament which enables us to face our tendencies to evil and to act contrary to them. Daily participation in this Sacrament is most important. The more candidates become aware of their evil tendencies, the more likely are they to appreciate the strength which can be received from the daily Eucharist.

87. In addition to our personal inclination to evil and personal disintegration as a consequence of original sin, there are also present in society structures and systems that attract us to evil. Jański was very aware of this when he began his work among the Polish emigrants in France. His first con-

cern in bringing a compatriot back to the faith was to remove a man from an environment that pulled him away from the Lord. For this reason, he set up houses for living and as meeting places, but the overall plan of Jański was not to run from the evils of society; it was to change society. This shall be discussed later under apostolic works. The point at issue here is that a candidate needs to recognize evil consequences that may be promoted by practices, systems and customs found in society. The influence of these on one's own conduct is generally denied or disregarded as of no real concern because it is unavoidable or all-pervasive. This is all the more reason why directors must take care to instill in candidates a clear understanding of their society in the light of the Gospel as well as the social teaching of the Church and episcopal conferences.

88. Knowledge alone will not be adequate to help a candidate to overcome personal attraction to evil and societal influence. Basic ascetical practices must be an integral and evident part of all formation programs, including continuing formation which endures throughout life. These practices need to be stressed more frequently in the early stages of formation when candidates are growing in the purgative stage of spirituality. At this stage, communal practices of mortification are especially appropriate to assist individuals to grow in self-discipline.

89. Here a reference to the traditional term, "*purgative stage of spirituality*," could profitably be made in order to emphasize the considerable change that is so often required in a person before they are capable of responding to the actions of the Spirit within them. They can grow in appreciation and response to God's love for them only if they are able to recognize, and then disengage themselves from attraction to things and actions inconsistent with God's love. In this

sense mortification is certainly a negative and painful experience, but it is not intended to be merely or primarily a negative experience. However, since it may be experienced as such for a time, a spiritual director is very important as a support and as a teacher. A director can assist the student to view mortification as a means to experience God's love through virtuous living and to be patient during the painful stage of withdrawing from sinful or less perfect things in order to open oneself to the action of the Spirit.

90. If a spiritual director suggests a mortification to the directee, it is important that it be understood not as a punishment, either from God or the director, but solely as a means to overcome an inclination to evil or to grow in virtue. Thus, the mortification must be truly linked, and seen as linked, to the avoidance of evil or the acquisition of virtue. Moreover, the directee must be made to feel free to accept or reject the practice. They need to make this decision and not have it forced on them. The situation is modified and less critical when other formation personnel impose practices of mortificaion, but the general principles given above still influence the benefit to be gained from the practice.

91. Art. 139 of our *Constitutions* speaks of the importance of the community meeting to resolve tensions. The community meeting can have an important place in formation, modeling for candidates an appropriate way to express anger by speaking the truth in love and without blaming or condemning others for tensions being experienced.

92. The year of Novitiate is a special time for growth in the spiritual life and since it comes at the beginning, or near the beginning, of the religious formation programs, it is intended to be a "*desert experience*." This time is spent in a manner more distant from society than is typical of life in our Con-

gregation, *e.g.*, minimum television, public entertainment, visiting, internet and use of cellphones. This is done with a deliberate purpose: to elicit from the novice a clear, explicit commitment to a life dedicated to the Lord. Such a commitment presupposes several things. First, the novices must be sufficiently mature to have experienced their limitations as a person, to recognize the ways in which their decisions are influenced by their motions, by their defence mechanisms and by society in general, and finally to admit to their own sinfulness.

93. Second, the Novitiate program must afford them the opportunity to experience the interior struggle, the dying to self that is an integral part of consecrated life. Finally, and most importantly, the program must lead them to an experience, in prayer, of God's love for them. Without this third dimension, the privations of the Novitiate and of consecrated life in general are not freely chosen renunciations but rather necessary evils arbitrarily imposed, and thus to be circumvented or ignored whenever possible. They become artificial challenges imposed by those in authority, rather than beneficial means to personal growth in holiness.

94. The above is not intended as a complete description of the Novitiate program, but only of those aspects related to the spiritual principle under consideration. It should also be added that the term "*desert experience*" is used in a relative sense. It does not rule out all contact with society. Throughout formation, it is necessary to have contact with various groups, especially peer groups and those whose suffering is aggravated by the sinful tendencies of society: the abandoned, the aged, the lonely and the poor.

95. Finally, it is important that religious practices of mortification not be viewed as a condemnation of self, creation or

society. On the contrary, they must be viewed as means to accentuate the great goodness and beauty already present in oneself and the universe. As part of a freely chosen lifestyle, religious mortification is a liberating experience. It assists the person to hold evil tendencies in check and to discover discrepancies in their behaviour, in order to experience more fully God's love directly and through people and things. Unfortunately, our attempts to avoid evil are never totally successful and we do succumb, at times quite willingly. In the next section we examine the consequences of the fact that we are guilty of personal sin.

WE SUCCUMB TO SIN

> "*If we say we have no sin in us, we are deceiving ourselves and refusing to admit the truth, but if we acknowledge our sins, then God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and purify us from everything that is wrong. To say that we have never sinned is to call God a liar and to show that his word is not in us.*"
>
> (*1 John* 1:8-10)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

96. Despite our best efforts and good intentions, all of us surrender at times to the attractions of sin. St. John the Evangelist states it clearly and unequivocally: all of us have sinned. This personal sin has a harmful effect on us and others since it reduces or totally destroys our receptivity to love, God's love and the love of others. Since religious centre their lives on loving relationships through religious vows, this lack of receptivity to love affects their very sense of personal identity. They become isolated from God, others and even themselves.

97. The effects of this personal sin disorient religious from their goals and increase their inclination to evil. Peter Semenenko calls this "corruption" and describes its consequences in the following way: "*The consequences of sin endure after the actual commission of the sin. Every act is actually transient but virtually permanent.* [...] *The first thing we note is that such de-*

liberate sin leads our intellect to a love for falsehood. This is more than the inclination to learn whether something evil may be true; such an inclination is a result of the misery of our nature. What we encounter here is a delight in and a love for falsehood. [...] *Our delight has as its object a whole false state of soul: false concepts about ourselves, about others, and even about God.* [...] *As a result, we seek our own truth. Some of the other results are attachment to our own opinion, arguments, and generally, individualism. After sin, unchastity takes root also in the sensitive appetite, the heart. Not only do we experience the attraction of the forbidden fruit and a desire to taste it,* [...] *but* [...] *our appetite and delight are renewed by the desire to relive this experience.* [...] *On the level of the will, deliberate sin leads us to settle down to a life within ourselves. We become the center and the beginning of all our activity.* [...] *We establish ourselves as the beginning, the center, and the end. We desire to possess all things for ourselves and this desire becomes a kind of necessity.* [...] *Finally, we firmly establish ourselves in our person, as the Lord and proprietor"* (*The Interior Life*, 336-337).

98. It is important that we recognize and accept sin for what it really is and not merely as a contravention of ethical laws or social norms. It causes disintegration within our personal life, separates us from our neighbour and destroys our personal relationship with God. Let us now examine these effects as they manifest themselves in those who participate in our formation programs.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

99. Few will deny the presence of widespread evil in today's society. Yet, if people agree on such evil, there is little agreement that such evil constitutes sin, and minimal willingness to admit one's own contribution and involvement in such

sin. This is true not only for society in general but also of the Catholic population. There is a reluctance to attach personal responsibility to the evil that is perpetrated. It remains evil in general, unrelated to a personal God or to someone's personal action. In this way it is seen less and less as evil unless it has touched one's immediate life. Thus, actions that not many years ago were considered sinful by many, no longer are described as such: abortion, lying, deceit, divorce, violence, pornography, vandalism, sexual irresponsibility, dishonesty, corruption, and bribery. Other social evils continue to go unrecognized such as exploitation of the poor caused by unjust structures. The proliferation of such evil appears to have robbed many people of their ability to judge it as the evil it truly is. This is in accord with the analysis given by Father Semenenko as quoted above.

100. There is in society a practical norm which states, "Admit no wrong." This is the common stance suggested for all involved in an auto accident, for those questioned by the police, for persons taken to court, for employees speaking to employers, and early in life it becomes the approach of children toward their teacher and even their parents. Nowadays, we are experiencing a very significant decrease in the use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and many participate at penitential services but do not take the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament. Father Semenenko says of the person who sins, "[...] *the devil keeps whispering in his ear: 'admit nothing! If you admit your fault, you become a horrible sinner!'*" (*The Interior Life*, 168).

101. It is no wonder that candidates and young religious have a poor concept of what is sinful and of how to respond to feelings of guilt. They may suffer simultaneously from a lax conscience in one area and false feelings of guilt in another dimension of their lives. This combination of per-

sonal sinfulness and high ideals will cause them to have a poor self image and to believe that they are unlovable since they have come to believe falsely that God does not and cannot love a sinner. They attempt to overcome their sinfulness by means of their own power. When this proves impossible, they are in an even worse state, not merely spiritually but emotionally. They become depressed; they repress their emotions to an even greater extent and fall victim to bizarre behaviour, morally and psychologically.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

102. In conjunction with their stress on God's love for each person, formation directors do a great service when they are able to lead those in their charge to a proper acknowledgement of sin in the world and especially in their own lives. Young *formandi* are greatly helped if they recognize that sin is real, and by a proper formation of their conscience acknowledge the sin they find both in themselves and in society. Today special attention needs to be directed both toward sins such as dishonesty, destructive conversation, sexual irresponsibility and various forms of deceit as well as toward sinful attitudes such as superstition, syncretism, racism, and use of profane language. Many are entering religious life today who have lax or false consciences. Without clear and explicit instruction, they are unable to lead healthy spiritual lives. On the one hand, they unknowingly perform actions that are objectively evil; on the other hand, they may suffer from neurotic guilt arising from failure to achieve self-imposed goals. Such guilt is really a form of pride; the formation student is attempting to be superhuman. This can occur also in the very struggle to objectively overcome sinful actions. The proud sinner desires to overcome their sin through their own efforts. The humble sinner, on the other

hand, recognizes their sin and accepts it as their own; then they turn to God for help. They are able to accept the Lord's forgiveness and healing, which includes self-forgiveness and self-acceptance. In this way, they make the struggle against sinfulness an integral part of their spirituality.

103. As candidates progress in the formation programs, they need to be taught in an ever deepening way the responsibilities they embrace with the vows and community life. In a very practical way this requires help to recognize when they sin against these new obligations. There may be a tendency for directors to ignore a student's attitudes and transgressions since they are minor. However, this is the time when lifelong attitudes and habits are formed, and both the individual and the Congregation will suffer if young religious do not grasp the full extent of their religious obligations.

104. Directors should focus on sin in spiritual terms rather than in moral terms, *i.e.* right or wrong. In spiritual terms, sin is a failure to live out a spirituality of communion in our relationship with God, with others and with all of creation. Sin disintegrates one's own person, one's relationships with others and ruptures the covenant which God extends to each person. Focusing on relationships and on goodness is the ideal toward which directors work. At the same time, they should not overlook the fact that the actions of most people are motivated by laws and by the expectations of others, rather than by an attraction to the good in and of itself.

105. Directors must adjust their words and actions to the stage of development in which they find those in formation, and work to raise their motivation to a higher stage. Thus, they do not speak and act as if the *formandi* were fully mature, nor would they be content with correct outward behav-

iour. They assist the students to grow to more mature moral judgments: from motives of fear to motives of obedience to a law, to motives of accceptance by others, to motives of appreciation for goodness, to motives of a personal love relationship with God. Such growth on the part of the students will require a certain freedom in order that they may test their motives and become aware of them. This presupposes trust on the part of the director and openness and accountability on the part of the student. Obviously, such an approach involves more risk and will cause more worry for the director than a strict law and order approach, but hopefully, the result will be a more mature religious.

106. The Sacrament of Reconciliation and paraliturgical services of reconciliation should be given prominence throughout formation (cf. *Constitutions*, 58). Students should be encouraged to have a regular confessor who can assist in making the Sacrament a celebration of God's mercy. By approaching the Sacrament as a sinner in search of healing rather than merely with a list of sins to confess in order to quiet one's conscience, the *formandi* are better able to use the Sacrament to develop their relationship with the Lord. They become increasingly aware of their sinfulness, not as something to be feared, but as a reminder of God's great love for them. Each new insight into their sinfulness is accepted as an opportunity to allow God a greater role in their life. Thus they joyfully accept their sinfulness with the knowledge that in dying to it the Spirit lives more fully in them.

GOD CALLS US TO CONVERSION: TO THE PASCHAL MYSTERY OF DYING AND RISING WITH JESUS

> "*Jesus replied: I tell you solemnly, unless a man is born through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God: what is born of the flesh is flesh; what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be surprised when I say: You must be born from above. The wind blows where it pleases; you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. That is how it is with all who are born of the Spirit*."
>
> (*John* 3:5-8)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

107. The action of the Spirit is mysterious, not entirely within our comprehension and our expectations. We cannot program the Spirit. Yet the teaching of Jesus gives us certitude of some basic truths. Conversion is the personal and ongoing process by which a person accepts these truths and allows the Spirit to change their life. This rebirth in the Spirit is at the heart of spirituality and spiritual living. In this chapter we wish to describe this conversion or rebirth in terms of the Paschal Mystery. The previous chapters of this document examined the essential truths leading to personal conversion in light of our Resurrectionist tradition: God's love for the person, a person's creaturehood, tendency to evil and personal sinfulness. The open acceptance of

these truths will not leave a person inert or indifferent. If someone's true significance is really understood and freely received, that person will be moved to action: first to open oneself to the action of God, then to love God in return and to strive to love oneself and one's neighbour as God loves them. This personal conversion will have a profound effect upon the person's life and influence the person's actions and attitudes. For a Resurrectionist, it means more than an inner conversion. It leads to a commitment to live in community, to work for the resurrection of society and to accept Mary as the model of this new life in the Holy Spirit. True conversion is based on TRUTH and leads a person to acts of CHARITY. "*If we live by the truth and in love, we shall grow in all ways into Christ, who is the head by whom the whole body is fitted and joined together*" (*Ephesians* 4:15,16). In this chapter, the nature of the conversion process will be examined in the light of the Resurrectionist Charism. Succeeding chapters will investigate our call to grow in Christ through charity in our community life and apostolic works.

108. God is the initiator and the source of power for all conversions and for the entire process of salvation. He invites us to begin the process and supports us by his Spirit throughout it. The result of conversion, first and foremost, is that Christ lives in us. The ones who freely allow the Holy Spirit to form them in the image of Christ gradually come to freely make all decisions according to the grace of the Spirit.

109. In the previous two sections the tendencies to evil and personal sinfulness were described. Jański and Semenenko called them our misery and corruption. When a person succumbs to their influence, the human self (*ego*) becomes supreme in the person's life. The result is self-gratification. Our Founders, like all in the Catholic tradition, taught the wisdom and the need to counteract this influence. This does

not mean that the "self" must be destroyed because it is evil. No, a human being is essentially good. Conversion leads the person between the extremes of self-gratification (self is supreme) and self renunciation (self is evil) to self-transcendence in which the self is accepted as good, neither supreme nor evil, and is directed toward God and one's neighbour by the power of the Spirit.

110. Baptism celebrates in a public way this commitment to grow in a life of self-transcendence. It involves a commitment to share in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus throughout one's entire life by continuing to die to a self-centred existence and to rise to a God-centred and other-centred existence.

111. By the process of personal conversion, a person lives the Paschal Mystery. What this means is not easy to capture in words. A person's own experience and openness to the Spirit must take the person beyond the ordinary significance of the words and enlighten them so that they can grasp some of the profundity of this marvellous work of God in their life: Jesus, the Christ, has redeemed them. By His commitment to love the Father, to make Him known and to promote His Kingdom, Jesus willingly accepted suffering and death rather than turn away from the Father. On the surface, this appeared to be a defeat for Jesus and a victory for the forces of evil. In reality, the opposite was true. Jesus was raised to a greater and richer life by the Father, a life in which He is supremely above suffering and death. The secret of this victory was Jesus' total surrender to the will of the Father guided by the Spirit. What is even more amazing is that the victory was not for Jesus alone, but for all who open themselves to the guidance of the same Spirit in order to have this same action continued in their lives.

112. The Paschal Mystery centres on Jesus, but is not confined to His historical life. Nor is it something which happened once in history with the effects trickling down through time. The new life of Jesus transcends time and space. He is able to continue His offering of Himself to the Father even as He enjoys the victory granted to Him by the Father. This continued offering and victory is celebrated, first and foremost, in the Eucharistic Sacrament. This Sacrament, like the others, brings the participant into the Paschal Mystery. To celebrate a Sacrament signifies that the individual acknowledges Christ's continued action in reference to the Father and also that they wish Christ to continue His saving paschal activity in their own life. This saving activity, although celebrated in the Sacraments, occurs also apart from the Sacraments whenever a person freely cooperates with the Spirit to die to self in order to have the Father's Kingdom come into existence. At these times, Jesus acts in and through the person so as to incorporate the person's action into His own giving of Himself to His Father. In turn, the person shares in the new life of the Spirit that Jesus receives from the Father. St. Paul refers to this unity with Christ through suffering and self-giving, which is at the heart of the Paschal Mystery, as making up "*all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of His body, the Church*" (*Colossians* 1:24; cf. also *Constitutions*, 80).

113. The Paschal Mystery or process of conversion involves dying and penance as well as celebration and glorification. There is a tendency to stress only one or the other, or to forget that the latter results only from the former. Generally, people who live in more affluent countries will need to be reminded of the call to share in the Lord's suffering and death. People who live in poorer countries might need to be reminded more about the hope and joy of the resurrection since suffering is so much a part of their daily experience.

114. If in the past Catholic practices focused too much on penance and suffering, it is also true that since the Second Vatican Council there has been such an emphasis on hope, joy and glorification that at times the basis for these virtues has been lost. Christian hope, joy and glorification of the person are not founded on human strength, talent or initiative, but rather on the presence of the Spirit within us. The Spirit does not remove mortification and suffering from human life. In fact, mortification and suffering are frequently the very means used by the Spirit to enter more deeply into a person's life. Without them, the person is too caught up in self and the material world to recognize the promptings of the Spirit to respond to God's love. Mortification is often the necessary means which assist a person to attain the internal dispositions necessary for the Spirit to be heard.

115. Since mortification and suffering are means and not ends, not all mortification and suffering are beneficial. If they prevent an individual from fulfilling prior or more basic Christian commitments, they should be avoided. Or if a specific mortification is beyond a person's spiritual strength, it will not promote their spiritual development. However, in this latter case one must not judge prematurely. A practice of mortification may leave a person temporarily in desolation, unloving in thought or action, or even bitter. This is not always a sign that the mortification is inappropriate; it may rather signal the normal resistance of human nature to death of self. In this case, the person needs to persevere in mortification in order to allow the Spirit to break into their life in a new life-giving manner. The role of directors and the community in such a case is to encourage the *formandi* in perseverance and fidelity. That being said, it may also become the role of directors and the community to express concerns about excessive mortification practices and identify when a mortification practice is, in fact, inappropriate and harmful to growth in a candidate's spiritual life.

116. The need for support to remain faithful in suffering is especially important in reference to the practice of the religious vows. Before the vows lead the *formandi* to new life in the Spirit, there is suffering and mortification attached to their practice. This occurs in cycles throughout life as the religious faces the challenges of the vows in ever changing circumstances and at deeper and more intimate levels of the person. As each new cycle of suffering begins, there is a temptation to tell oneself that what is being asked of them through the suffering is not really required by the vow, that it was not what they understood and knew of the vow when they made their profession. There is obviously some truth in such reasoning, but it is not the whole truth. The religious vows, like marriage vows, are open-ended. The basic commitment is clear and definite, but there is no limit to the commitment in terms of time, amount of suffering to be endured, or willingness to die to oneself in order to love. Candidates beginning the formation process need to assess prayerfully their struggles to live the vows in terms of whether they have received the grace to live the Paschal Mystery as religious. The grace must not be presumed but realistically tested, and the struggles they meet may be a sign that they are not called to our Congregation. Professed religious in final vows, on the other hand, must take a different approach. The presumption is that they have been called to the Congregation and that the suffering they encounter in living the vows is an invitation from the Lord to live the Paschal Mystery more deeply. This basic approach presumes that the grace of a religious vocation is permanent and that the commitment made by the religious is lifelong. This does not deny that at times poor judgment is made by the religious or by the Congregation, and that it may be in the best interests of both for the person to withdraw from religious life. This situation must be viewed as the exception, but not as a disgrace to either the individual or the Congregation.

117. From the above, it is clear that the conversion involved in living the Paschal Mystery comprises a death with all its pain and anxiety. It also involves new life, putting on "*the new self that has been created in God's way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth*" (*Ephesians* 4:24). One's focus must always be on this new life, especially in the midst of the dying to self, in order to prevent discouragement or the making of suffering into an end instead of a means.

118. In the previous paragraphs the emphasis has been on the conversion inherent in the Christian commitment initiated through Baptism. Reference to the vows was introduced only in the treatment of the renunciation/new life process that is the basis of living the Paschal Mystery. It is important now to develop the basic nature of religious life and to show how the vows are its essential element and involve a living of the Paschal Mystery on a new and more profound level.

119. The baptismal commitment is intended to move a person away from that which is evil, away from whatever prohibits God's presence, toward what allows the Spirit to operate in them. Baptism is meant to signal a person's desire to renounce sin and all its consequences. Since these consequences are already present in the candidate's life, it requires a death to part of the person and an acceptance of a new life. The commitment of religious profession involves the same dynamic in a new way. The religious desires to live for the Father in union with Jesus not only by dying to sin, but also by freely renouncing things that are morally good and beneficial. This desire for a new life motivates them to choose not merely a good life but a radical style of Christian life. It is radical in the sense that it goes beyond what is required by one's baptismal commitment. The religious freely choose to take upon themselves a "*radical*" way of life in or-

der to give expression to their appreciation of God's love, and their own passionate response to that love. They have discovered a treasure of great value for which they freely sacrifice other treasures.

120. It is in the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience that religious find their primary identity as religious. Neither the apostolate, nor community life, nor their practices of prayer are adequate in this regard. The apostolates a religious performs might be able to be accomplished as well professionally by a lay person or by a diocesan priest. If religious find their identity primarily in their apostolate, they face several dangers. They can become disillusioned when the vows make demands for which they have not prepared themselves, with the result that they depart from religious life, or settle for mediocrity, or become blind to their abuses in living out the vows. If their identity is tied exclusively to their apostolate, they may guard this apostolic position jealously and deny lay persons a just and required participation in the life of the Church. Religious who find their identity in community life will tend to exaggerate the importance of particular community practices or may be easily threatened by the visits of laity to community houses or at community events. They might also place unrealistic expectations on community and become angry and disillusioned when these expectations are not met.

121. Consecrated life is based on a relationship with Jesus who expresses the limitless love of God for us. Thus, the religious choose to live the vows because of Jesus; they choose to model their life on the Paschal Mystery because Jesus did so. Their identity is tied to their relationship of faith, hope and love with Jesus expressed through chastity, poverty and obedience (cf. *Constitutions*, 12 and 13). The vowed life can be an act of faith through which a religious can proclaim

that Jesus is the centre of their lives, more important than any other person or object. It can be an act of hope when the religious set aside other securities and expect God to be their security and ultimate source of fulfillment. It can also be an act of love through which the religious express their desire to offer the Risen Lord all that they have, do and are.

122. Living the vows is a paschal experience, a conversion experience, because the religious has freely chosen to renounce one way of living the Christian life in order to live another that expresses faith, hope and love more immediately and more strongly. The religious are not satisfied with striving for virtue as challenged by the vicissitudes of secular life, but decides to put themselves directly under the demands of the religious vows. They publicly surrender their natural right to an exclusive marital relationship and parenthood, to independently possess and freely use material things, and to their personal autonomy. These real and painful renunciations are made in order to make space in their lives for the invisible presence of God. For someone to make these renunciations without faith is absurd since they involve good things which contribute greatly to human fulfillment and happiness. When someone with a religious call makes these renunciations, they become meaningful acts since they are symbolic actions which express how real Jesus is to them and how important is this relationship with Jesus (cf. *Constitutions*, 14). These concrete symbolic actions in turn support and nourish the relationship.

123. The living of the Christian life creates a tension in a person's relationship with the world. A Christian is called to use creation without making it the centre of their life; they are called to go beyond creation without rejecting it. In this regard religious and non-religious are a sign to each other, reminding one another of what it means to have a truly

Christian attitude toward the world. Secular persons give witness to the fact that the world is good and that it is a sign of God's love for us. It can be enjoyed, but because of sin, it must also be healed and redeemed. The witness of a religious is that all of God's Self-giving and Self-communication through the gifts and goodness of creation have been superseded by the gratuitous gift of Himself through grace. The Christian goal is not simply the reform of human structures and behaviour, but a personal relationship with the transcendent God.

124. The secular Christian is called to let go of this world little by little so as to live in the world of God's own life. The path to this participation in God's life is through union with the passion and death of Jesus. Every Christian is called upon to experience some separation from the world and each renunciation is a preparation for the final complete separation from the world which is experienced at death. At the moment of death, each person surrenders family, possessions and oneself. If the person can let go in trust, believing that Jesus and the Father will fill them with new life through their Spirit, this moment can be a happy and peaceful one. If the person cannot make this act of faith and clings to family, possessions and self, it will be a very painful and anxious moment.

125. The religious anticipate this final act of renunciation when through their vows they freely surrender family, possessions and self. Their life is to be a witness that Jesus offers happiness and fulfillment through the new life of grace. The life of the religious is intended to proclaim to others that they do not have to be afraid to let go of the goods of this world when the Lord asks them to make this act of surrender. Religious vows proclaim that Jesus profers higher offerings to those who surrender the goods of this world,

namely Himself, His peace and joy, His Spirit, and eternal life. This is the prophetic character of religious life (cf. *Constitutions*, 15). Faced with ever-increasing hedonism, consecrated individuals are required to manifest the courageous witness of chastity as an expression of a heart that recognizes the real beauty and value of God's love. Faced with the thirst for money, their sober life dedicated to serving the needy reminds all that God is the true wealth that will never perish. In the face of individualism and relativism, their fraternal life, open to collaboration and therefore capable of obedience, affirms that their personal realization is found in God.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

126. As has already been stated under the earlier spiritual principles, the concept and practice of living the Paschal Mystery is foreign to modern society. In addition to human reluctance to undergo suffering and pain for the sake of spiritual goals, people have not been adequately taught or encouraged to live the Paschal Mystery. Pain and suffering are seen normally as things to be avoided at all cost. They are not viewed as a means to new life in Christ. People allow their instinctive tendency of promoting the natural self, to take precedence over the Father's Kingdom which gives new life in the Spirit. Thus the promotion of material progress is highlighted to the detriment of spiritual development. The media, the entertainment industry, some government regulations and business in general produce deep spiritual confusion by continually and unremittingly argueing that self-gratification is the sensible and true approach to life. The modern way of life is proclaimed superior to Catholicism because it is claimed it can more easily bring a person to perfection. Postmodern liberalism declares that it gives a person more freedom, and that its sexual

ethics are easier to live with and more enjoyable than is Christianity. In modern society, there are institutes of research and publications based on the philosophy that people by their own efforts can reach perfection. While these institutes recognize the remarkable capacity for human self-realization, they fail to recognize this capacity as fundamentally a cooperative effort between humanity and God, whose grace initiates and sustains the process.

127. There are certainly many people who live their daily lives according to the Paschal Mystery, attaining new life through suffering and death to self-centred activity. Unfortunately for society and for the Church, this is often done in a private manner so that there are few public heroes who model this style of life. St. John Paul II and St. Teresa of Calcutta are fine examples of this life style, but there is a need on the local level and in the media for men and women to be acclaimed publicly for their example in living the Paschal Mystery. People, especially the young, need encouragement to pursue such a life and to realize that this is not something which happens to a person from without, but that it is the result of a person freely and internally responding to the action of the Spirit within. The youth have not learned that faith and hope in God's love for them enables a person to grow by means of self-discipline and suffering. They do not recognize nor appreciate the signs of the Spirit in a person living the Paschal Mystery. They rely almost entirely on their own strength, rather than on the Spirit acting in them directly or through the Church. As a result, the Paschal Mystery is seen as a threat to their goals and to their self-image.

III. APPLICATON OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

128. Learning to live the Paschal Mystery is a life-long process for all Christians. Candidates have entered into the process long before they approached the Community for admission, and they need to be open to new dimensions of it throughout their life. The role of the formal formation programs is to assist the candidate and religious to learn how to live it more deeply and in a new way. This flows from the fact that our religious vows imply a deepening of our baptismal commitment and a communal life of chastity, poverty and obedience.

129. Let us consider first the aspect of deepening our baptismal commitment. All that has already been stated under the first four principles of spirituality is part of this process. We do not wish to repeat those individual principles, but to look at their overall effect in the life of the individual whom God calls to religious life. Each candidate will have their own personal history in reference to each of the four basic principles already discussed, and so each will have experienced conversion in a unique manner. Each will have deepened their baptismal commitment in their own way and to a different extent. The directors - vocation, formation and spiritual - must keep this in mind as they assist each person to follow God's call.

130. Although the spiritual path of each person is unique, writers, ancient and modern, speak of stages of spiritual growth and development that are applicable in general to everyone. The stages are neither entirely distinct nor sequential, but they are generally regarded as the normal path of growth. Some writers stress that these stages cannot be entirely passed over if authentic development still occurs. To focus on a later stage when the characteristics of an earlier

stage have not been integrated into a formation candidate's life is counter-productive to true growth. The student is forced eventually to return to the more basic elements of Christian and religious development, often with unfortunate consequences: great personal suffering or even the loss of faith or religious vocation. Formation personnel need to know the people they serve so that they can assist them in a gradual and authentic growth to new life in the Spirit by living out the Paschal Mystery.

131. The earlier principles spoke of the basic spiritual truths that lead a candidate to accept baptism and commitment to God in imitation of Jesus. These principles continue to be the motivating force through all the stages of spiritual growth and the candidate needs to return to them repeatedly. The first challenge that they present to candidates is to eliminate deliberate serious sin from their life. The challenge may come from external sources at first, but as the student comes to experience God's love through others, through personal prayer and the grace of the Spirit, the challenge becomes an inner desire to attain that which is attractive and good in itself. In time, the challenge focuses not only on serious sin, but on all deliberate sin. This is not to suggest that the formation candidate actually achieves this goal. The important point here is not total success, but acceptance of the commitment to die to deliberate sin and to experience visible growth in the proper motivation and the means used to achieve it. A person considering religious life needs to be at this stage of living the Paschal Mystery prior to entrance into the Novitiate. The very purpose of the Novitiate demands such spiritual maturity.

132. The second stage of living the Paschal Mystery as a Christian is the desire to have the Spirit guide one's life so that efforts are made to eliminate even indeliberate faults

from one's life. Such a goal requires significant self-knowledge and self-acceptance. A person must become aware of their emotions and inner motivations so as to guide them with the help of the Spirit rather than being unconsciously controlled by them. Much was already said about this under the third principle and only one comment will be added here. A religious practice which is helpful to this stage of growth is the awareness examen. As the examination of conscience focuses on deliberate sins and faults, the awareness examen is directed more at attitudes and emotions flowing from the unconscious acts of the Spirit on the one hand, and of one's own sinful nature on the other hand. It takes the form of reviewing one's day in the light of the Paschal Mystery. The various steps are: 1) a prayer of praise and gratitude for God's love; 2) a prayer for light and guidance of the Holy Spirit; 3) a general review of one's day to become aware of the emotions experienced throughout the day and to ask what prompted these emotions. Did they move the person toward God or toward self-activity? Are they a sign of an experience of the new life of the Risen Lord? Are they a sign of a call from the Risen Lord to share in His suffering and death? Are they a sign of a missed opportunity to share in the Paschal Mystery? 4) a prayer of gratitude for the good experienced throughout the day and a prayer of sorrow for failures; 5) a prayer for help and guidance for the next day. As one reads the diaries of the Founders, it becomes evident that they incorporated a practice similar to this into their daily lives.

133. The third stage in living the Paschal Mystery occurs when acts of disinterested love become frequent and more generous. These acts of kindness or charity are the goal of the spiritual life and are unmistakable signs of the Spirit's presence when performed out of love for God or for others, and not for selfish reasons.

134. Since the profession of religious vows is an act of love and not of Christian obligation, it is important for religious to move toward this level of spiritual development as they prepare for the profession of perpetual vows. It would be unrealistic to expect a person who has a serious problem of deliberate sin in their life, or who is totally unaware of tendencies to evil to make a permanent commitment to live religious vows. They have neither the self-knowledge nor the self-discipline and inner freedom to live such a commitment. If they are successful in living the commitment, it is likely to be through fear of failure or non-acceptance, and consequently at a great cost to their personal development. From one perspective this may be admirable, but it is not the purpose of religious vows. Spiritual and other aspects of human development are intended to be integrated; true growth in one area of the *formandi* may shift attention away from another area, but it does not reinforce immaturity in that area.

135. It is the role of the spiritual director to assist a novice or religious to discern if they are called and if they are prepared to respond to the call to live a vowed religious life. It is the role of the formation director to judge if the Church, through the Congregation, can reasonably accept the profession of vows and thereby bind the religious to a specific life-style and bind the Congregation to give them personal and moral support. For all concerned, this is a process which must not be entered into lightly. The decisions need to be based on the person's inner preparedness to live the vows. Do they have the virtue (graced action) to support such a life? Have they eliminated serious habits of sin, and are they working with some success at eliminating deliberate venial sin and imperfections? Without this spiritual basis, they will be attempting to live the vowed life by human effort alone. If this occurs, it is likely that early in their religious life the vows will become a burden, and they will seek ways, con-

sciously or unconsciously, to minimize their effect on their lives. The temptation to lower standards for accepting candidates at those times when we are receiving fewer vocations must be strongly resisted.

136. In reference to spiritual preparedness for the profession of vows, it is worth noting the difference between marriage and religious vows. Both flow from a love for another, which prompts a person to commit himself or herself to the other. In marriage, this love and commitment is directed to one's spouse in union with God. In religious profession, the love and commitment are directed to God in union with the Church. In both, the commitment flows from a love freely given. In the marriage commitment, the love is directed to God through the other person, whereas in religious profession, it is directed immediately to God.

137. Until now we have spoken of the formation program in reference to the concept of conversion inherent in one's baptismal commitment. As outlined in the first section under this principle, the conversion process takes on an added dimension for a religious. Let us now investigate the ways in which the formation programs can assist novices and religious to live the vows in terms of the Paschal Mystery, to discover the richness of God's love, and to respond with a radical life-style expressed by the vows. The vows should be taught, by word and practice, in this context. They are not external adjuncts to facilitate community life or the apostolate. They give a religious their identity and permit them to give external expression to this interior relationship and total dedication to God. Obviously, such a total response is normally impossible at the beginning of one's religious life. It is an elusive, life-long goal. What is important, however, is the manner and the means used to teach the practice of the vows in early formation. If the radical nature of the vows

is ignored or scoffed at as too idealistic, it harms both the individual's vocation and the Congregation.

138. The formation programs can use several strategies to assist novices and religious to appreciate and live their vows and thereby attain their purpose. The first step is to teach the moral obligations consequent upon the profession of vows. The novices must know as clearly as possible the obligations they are assuming. These should be discussed not only in the context of their novitiate experience, but also in terms of life situations in the future.

139. Secondly, the vows must be situated in a theological context. The moral context presents only the restrictions contracted by the vows. This is the dying to self-activity. The positive new life they bring can be understood best in the theological context of faith, hope and love. Each vow must be explained in the framework of the Scriptures and the human development so that it becomes clear how the vow brings the religious to personal fulfillment and Christian maturity (cf. *Constitutions*, 14). A survey of personal experiences, as well as professional literature, indicate that terminology presents a real problem in presenting the death aspect of the Paschal Mystery. So many generous people draw back from terms like "dying to self" or "self abnegation" that one must wonder if the terms are being used and understood in their proper gospel sense. To live the commandments and the vows involves a painful experience that is labelled a death to self. This death which is spoken of, however, must not be viewed as an annihilation of the personal self. To desire this would be contrary both to our natural self and biblical teaching. The self is good and calls for preservation and perfection. The perfection, however, does not consist in fulfilling all the desires of the person. This is both impossible since the desires are limitless and harmful,

and since all the desires are not compatible among themselves. The human self is perfected through the pursuit of certain innate desires and the non-fulfillment of other personal desires. The choice is determined by the goals which move individuals beyond themselves. For a religious, the goal is a personal relationship with Jesus through faith, hope and love expressed in service. Further, this relationship is one of self-giving: "*man can discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself*" (*GS*, 24). This process which some authors refer to as self-transcendence is consistent with the views of Peter Semenenko (cf. *Spiritual Life*, 19-23).

140. In presenting the vows and their relationship to the Paschal Mystery to those in formation, it is important to show how each is a call to share both in the Lord's suffering and death and also in the new life of His resurrection. Each vow can lead to a deepening of their baptismal consecration by leading to a deeper union with God, a closer identification with Jesus who was chaste, poor and obedient (cf. *Constitutions*, 12), and to a greater freedom for mission. The points in the following six paragraphs could be developed further by formation directors to show how each vow relates specifically to the Paschal Mystery.

141. The vow of chastity calls one to die to self and to a life of self-transcendence by living without a spouse and children of one's own. It also implies a dying to the pursuit of inordinate self-love (cf. *Constitutions*, 16) and to the pursuit of self-gratification. We should grow to appreciate ourselves and others as sexual persons, but reject the temptation to treat others as sexual objects. The temptation to treat individuals as sexual objects must be rejected even when this would remain within one's own heart. Also, to be resisted is that pride which can cause a religious to act as though they do not need significant relationships with others.

142. The faithful observance of the vow of chastity enables a candidate to experience the richness of the new life of the Risen Lord in many ways. The individual can be made more aware of their need for a significant relationship with Jesus and through Him with the Father. When this awareness is brought to prayer, it can lead to a deeper union with Jesus and the Father. The experience of loneliness can be transformed into one of solitude in which the person is aware of being deeply loved by the Lord. Much of the love which a married person would give to their spouse and children can be used by a celibate to give new life and to nurture those to whom they minister, especially those who are most in need of a sign of God's unconditional love. This is the experience of spiritual fatherhood referred to in Art. 17 of our *Constitutions*. The religious' love must also go out to others in the community as they support and affirm one another and share goals, values and faith with one another and strive to become a model Christian community, united in the Lord and one in mind and heart (cf. *Constitutions*, 136). This vow also calls a person to experience intimacy with others (men and women) and to take the risk of revealing oneself to them by speaking the truth in love. This experience of intimacy with others can lead to a greater intimacy with Jesus and the Father. This vow can also bring persons to a greater appreciation of themselves and others as sexual beings as they continue throughout life to integrate their sexuality and discover how it can be a rich source of energy for building the Kingdom.

143. The vow of poverty calls the religious to die to self and to live a life of self-transcendence through the acceptance of limitations on the use of created things. It is a call to resist the temptation of greed and the injustice to which this can lead. Running contrary to the vow of poverty and its accompanying recognition of limitation in the use of created

things is the wastefulness of consumerism and its accompanying pollution of the environment. Such wastefulness is to be rejected as irresponsible stewardship over God's gift of creation. The pride which leads a person to reject the limitations of their humanity is to be seen as being untrue to the call to share in the way in which Jesus accepted all of the limitations of our humanity (cf. *Philippians* 2:5-11).

144. The experience of dependence to which the vow of poverty calls someone can lead to a deeper appreciation that all is a gift (poverty of spirit) and that a person is nothing, has nothing and can do nothing without God (Charism Statement). This vow can also lead to a life of more responsible stewardship which expresses itself through a greater willingness to share what one has with others and through a greater concern about ecological issues. It can also enable a person to develop a more grateful heart. The simplicity of life to which this vow calls the religious can enable them to be prophetic signs in a world where unjust structures support the affluent life style of the rich and make the rich, richer and the poor, poorer. This vow can also call a religious to a ministry of justice and peace, which are important signs of the reign of God. Finally this vow can help the religious to accept their own limitations and to experience that God's power is best in weakness (cf. *2 Corinthians* 12:10-11).

145. The dying to self which the religious is called to by the vow of obedience comes through the acceptance of limitations on their freedom to choose where and how they will serve God's people, with whom and where they will live and form community, and how they will grow as consecrated individuals. This vow also calls a religious to die to self activity and to reject the misuse of power which leads one to manipulate and oppress others.

146. The new life offered through the observance of this vow is a closer identification with Jesus who came not to be served but to serve (cf. *Mark* 10:45). This vow can give a religious a greater freedom to respond to the needs of the Church and the Congregation and to do God's work rather than one's own work. Another fruit of a life of obedience is an attentive and listening heart, one which is sensitive to the many ways in which God speaks (cf. *Constitutions*, 43): for us as Resurrectionists, especially by means of chapters, committees and house meetings to discern together how the Spirit is calling us to live and minister. This vow can also empower religious to be prophetic voices when they use authority to build the Kingdom of God rather than to misuse authority to build and protect their own kingdoms.

147. Since the vows are both an expression and a means of union with God, anything that strengthens this union assists a religious to live the vows. For this reason, prayer and all the practices of the spiritual life are an indispensable part of the vowed life. Solid practices of prayer must become an integral part of all in formation. Each religious must be assisted personally to develop, through prayer, a personal relationship with Jesus and the Father through the Spirit. As the Spirit becomes more dominant in one's life, the religious lives life in the context of a beloved son of the Father. The bond and motivation for action is no longer fear or law or desire for praise, but love of goodness, unity and beauty whose one name is God. This acceptance of God as loving Father, the source of all goodness, enables formations students to abandon themselves more and more into the hands of God. This total abandonment of oneself to God is the goal of all spirituality and of every Christian vocation. It is the purpose of creation itself. St. Paul expressed it clearly when he wrote, "*I live now not I, but Christ lives in me*" (*Galatians* 2:20).

148. To counteract the influences of society which promote self-gratification, an important part of formation can be the reading of biographies of virtuous men and women, ancient and modern, who practised self-transcendence and experienced a loving union with God. These people can become the role models that are so desperately needed by many young people today.

149. It is important that the practice of living the vows during the years of formal formation be evaluated regularly by both the novice/religious and the directors. This means more than correction for failures. Focus on failures emphasizes the moral or negative aspects of the vows and ignores the theological aspects which signal union with God through the vows. Religious need assistance and affirmation to review their lives to see how the living of their vows expresses their union with God. How has love helped the religious to reach out to others, especially those to whom they are not naturally attracted? (chastity). How has the religious grown in trust and gratitude to God so that material things are less important to them? (poverty). How has the religious been able to accept decisions of superiors or the group as expressing God's will for them? (obedience).

150. A theme that is repeated frequently in this document is that growth occurs gradually and in stages. Directors must take this into consideration when it comes to the practice of the vows. The longer a candidate participates in the formation programs, the more fully they should live the vows, in the sense that they should affect and motivate the candidates more deeply. It is hoped that with time they will be more loving, living more simply and having greater openness to the direction of superiors and the community. In reference to growth in living the vows, it is worth noting that enjoyable and rewarding situations seldom offer the

optimum environment for growth. Both the individual and the community learn much when the individual is faced with painful and unattractive situations inconsistent with one's vocation. Such occasions force the formation candidate to allow the Lord to have a greater role in their life, or to realize their limitations in this regard.

151. The Resurrectionist's vocation to live the Paschal Mystery through fidelity to the vows is never completed in this life. There are always new opportunities to go beyond oneself and to unite more closely with God and with others. For this reason, even in the years of continued formation, spiritual direction can be of great assistance and is sometimes essential. It can provide a priest, brother or deacon with support and clarification in reference to the challenges of the apostolate and the daily living of the vows.

152. Within the context of on-going formation, the local superior and the entire local community also have a role to play in assisting each religious to progress in their spiritual journey through death to resurrection (cf. *Constitutions*, 137).

GOD CALLS US TO COMMUNITY

"*Thus, we decided to begin our common life together; we founded a little home in the beginning of 1836* [...] *Since as recent converts we wanted to devote ourselves completely to the service of God* [...] *this community was for us a center and hearth where we concentrated all our fervor, all of our hopes. It created a bond of spiritual relationship which was to last a lifetime* [...] *We established this home with the idea that it would be a shelter, a place for self-improvement and spiritual training for all those experiencing conversion. It would be a kind of symbolic standard for those who, leaving aside completely all plans for their own careers, surrender their whole life, their strength and financial means, for the service of the Lord God, to defend and spread the truth of Christ and its practice in all forms of life*."

(B. Jańśki, *Under the Standard of the Risen Savior*, 2)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

153. The human being is social by nature. Living with others and cooperating with them in both work and leisure is normal, enjoyable and necessary for the development of the various aspects of a person's personality. Thus we find that the typical person is involved with many different social groups or communities: a civic group, a work group, the family, a circle of friends, a church, charitable organizations,

etc. In this section the term community is used to refer to a particular type of community, a religious congregation and specifically the Congregation of the Resurrection.

154. "*The model of every Christian community is the Trinity*" (*Constitutions*, 136). In the Trinity, there is perfect unity and love flowing from the attributes of openness, trust, understanding and acceptance. The Father in openness and trust reveals Himself fully in His Word, personified in the Son. The Son responds to the Father with total acceptance and understanding. This relationship gives rise to the unity and love of the Holy Spirit. One dimension of a person's call to our religious community is authenticated by a willingness to be open and trusting as one gives oneself to the Lord and to the members as well as by their acceptance and understanding of others. From the manifestation of these virtues, they create unity and love within the community.

155. The common life lived in a manner which promotes unity and love with the Lord and among the members is a lofty goal. Its accomplishment demands a conscious and serious effort on the part of each member. Each has an active role. Each is called to surrender certain personal preferences and to adopt a way of life that is designed to promote the goals of all in the group. This new way of living is intended to help the individual as well as the apostolic goals of the group. Unfortunately, the communal life style is not always perceived nor experienced by each individual religious as assisting them personally. Such situations pose real problems and their resolutions demand great wisdom and prudence. In each case, it must be decided whether it is the communal life that can and ought to be altered, or whether the individual is being called to undergo a conversion process, to die to a part of self in order for the truest self to come to new life in the Spirit. It is on the level of the common life and the

apostolate that the discipleship of Jesus is truly experienced through practical acts of charity. Each member is called to respond generously to these daily challenges so that community life is characterized by an interdependence of its members who thereby develop in maturity. There is no narcissistic dependence, and the community as a whole is not closed in on itself. Again imitating the life of the Trinity, the community moves out of itself to share its richness with others.

156. In the previous chapter it was explained how the identity of a religious is found in the consecration through religious vows. It flows from this that the community dimension of a religious is also determined by these vows. A religious community arises when individuals live together in order to assist each other to respond more generously to their vowed commitment (cf. *Constitutions*, 149). Since its primary purpose is the spiritual development of its members, the religious congregation is a faith community. The motives for its existence, its goals and the means used to attain these goals are rooted in faith. Members further hold that of themselves they cannot attain the group goals and need to rely on the presence and the power of the Lord within them to do so. The faith dimension means that activities whereby members interact with the Lord are essential to the life of the community. Their common life is not merely an occasion for members to interact socially or apostolically, no matter how enjoyable or necessary that may be. A religious community achieves its goal of being a faith community only if the members have an active relationship with the Lord, manifesting this relationship in their life together, and assisting one another to deeper relationships with God. Thus acts of faith are essential for a religious community and need to be part of the group's communal life as well as the members' private lives. The very nature of a re-

ligious community suggests that the fruits of personal relationships with the Lord be shared in an explicit manner.

157. Prayer is an activity that is specifically intended to be an interaction with God, and thus prayer is one of the primary activities of the faith community. This prayer needs to be both communal and individual, liturgical and private, vocal and contemplative. Each type of prayer assists the other types and moves the entire community to a deeper interaction with God. The celebration of the Eucharist has a special place as the prayer of the community. It creates and signifies the greatest union between God and an individual. At the same time, it naturally creates and signifies unity among the participants. It is a visible expression of God giving himself to each person and the person reciprocating by giving themselves and their activities to the Lord. Christ in the eucharist is the model for community leaders; He unites the group through His service and the giving of Himself.

158. Our Founders and early members experienced both the joys and the pains of community life. Father Eugene Funcken and Edward Glowacki in their letters from Canada to Rome recalled the joy and graces they shared while living with the community at St. Claude's. In contrast, a very sad experience was undergone by Peter Semenenko who spent a year or more on the fringes of the Congregation and suffered a breakdown in health because others misunderstood him and did not accept his explanation of a particular incident. To his credit, he did persevere in his community vocation without bitterness. With God's grace he was able to use the circumstance to grow spiritually and to deepen his vocation. He thereby enriched the community which had treated him harshly.

159. Community life is an appropriate environment for personal development and for living the religious vows. This is

true not only for novices and young religious but for all religious throughout their lives. The goals and basic principles remain the same for all; it will be the practices employed to attain these goals that will change with the age and with the experience of the members. Older members will use different forms of common prayer to manifest their faith; they will be called to manifest openness and acceptance in new ways. Their community life will manifest itself differently but will deepen and not lessen with age.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

160. Today's more globalized society brings us all closer to each other but does not make us brothers and sisters. Thus, fraternal life is one of the aspects most sought by young people when they come to consecrated life. It is an important prophetic element that religious offer to a profoundly individualistic world. The description of community can be a very intellectual process, and the ideal described can easily be far removed from our actual communities as they are experienced day after day. The ideal community is such an attractive entity that few would not be drawn to it. People are social beings and are continually searching for good community: the perfect marriage, the ideal friend, the model neighbourhood, the utopian society. So it should not surprise us that candidates approach the Congregation open and hungry for community living. Perhaps this is more true today, especially in those societies which are experiencing a breakdown in family and neighbourhood communities.

161. The ideal community is such an attractive setting that candidates, especially the younger members and those from a difficult family milieux, may not only be attracted by it but have unreal expectations of the religious community they

are joining and helping to form. They view community as a reality that should be perfect from the start, forgetting their own imperfections and self-centredness, which makes this impossible. They may also be unwilling to tolerate the weaknesses of other members who are likewise struggling to create community. When they do not experience the ideal community they are looking for, they become discouraged and no longer put forth the necessary effort and sacrifice expected and required to create a normally healthy but fragile religious community. Unreal expectations of candidates and young religious generally focus on demands, explicit or unconscious, which suggest that community relationships ought to have the same emotional overtones and rewards as spousal and parental relationships. Such expectations may be expressed in statements such as, "*I don't have a really close friend*" or "*I don't feel needed around here.*" Unsaid but perhaps felt are views such as "*People in community should make me feel loved as a wife would make me feel loved*" or "*The community should make me feel needed as children make their father feel needed.*" Such statements would not be used unless there is a confused expectation between a spousal relationship and a healthy community relationship. Or perhaps they expect all relationships within the community to be equally close, and that there be absolutely no conflicts nor pain. The promotion of friendships and the removal of conflicts within community are always tasks to be faced, but their attainment will be slow and always only partial.

162. Candidates may also place a high priority on community as serving their need to be dependent on others for affection and the practical necessities of life. They fear assuming personal responsibility for their own life, and they cannot even imagine themselves as having responsibility for the lives of others or the common needs of the group.

163. As well, candidates may approach community life from the other extreme. Their background has made them fiercely independent. As a result, they find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to set aside their own preferences when these are contrary to the needs or wishes of the group. They may be willing to sacrifice a great deal for the group when the project is consistent with their own desires, but they do not cooperate in projects which they have not initiated or do not view as personally satisfying. Community is great when it assists them; otherwise, it is something to be ignored or avoided. Moreover, considering some elements of the influence of contemporary culture, it must be remembered that the desire for self-realization sometimes enters into conflict with communitarian projects; the search for personal well-being, both spiritual and material, can make total dedication to service of the mission difficult; a vision of the charism and of apostolic service which is too subjective can weaken collaboration and fraternal sharing. Religious must thus have the determination to seek nothing but the will of God, being aware that the logic of the Gospel is often "upside down" in relation to that of humans seeking success, efficiency and recognition.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

164. Perhaps no part of the formation program is better learned through lived experience than the aspect of community. The better the program can create the communal atmosphere suited to the development of the candidates in the context of religious formation, the easier it is for both the candidate and the Congregation to discern whether the candidate has the qualities that suggest a call to community living within our Congregation. For this reason, vocation discernment and formation occur best in a group. Without

negating the need for times of appropriate solitude, there is value and need for a candidate to be in contact with peers, both within and outside of the formation program as well as within community settings of the Congregation at large. Peer interaction is especially necessary in the novitiate program which limits outside contacts in order to have the novice focus on a personal relationship with the Lord. The novice can learn much through discussions, personal interactions and joint projects with the other novices. They are more likely to learn certain things about themselves from contact with other novices than directly from the novice director. For this reason it is recommended that Provinces and Regions that have few candidates, novices and newly professed combine their programs with those of other Provinces or Regions whenever this is feasible in terms of language and culture. It is also recommended that candidates, novices and newly professed have contact with religious in the formation programs of other congregations of men and women. Such contact can greatly assist a person to see more clearly the nature of community itself and the charism of the community they wish to join.

165. The fact that a candidate is part of a group does not of itself mean that they are learning to live in community and are called to community life. A group of individuals and a community of persons are different realities. For the formation group to become a community, there must be openness, trust, dialogue, a unity of heart and mind manifested through shared responsibilities and activities with consequent accountability not only to the formator but in some manner to the entire group. If from the very beginning of the formation programs candidates and novices are taught and encouraged to dialogue, both on a one-to-one level and in a group setting, many problems of community living can be avoided and the benefits of sharing enjoyed. When con-

flicts arise, the formator must judge how best to facilitate their resolution: leave it to the persons involved; act as a mediator between the parties; bring the matter to the entire group. If it is decided that the last choice is appropriate, the community meeting described in Art. 137 of the *Constitutions* can be used for this purpose. However, this community meeting is seen as the time to handle much more than conflict resolution. It is intended to promote dialogue on both pragmatic and spiritual topics, personal and communal concerns, to offer opportunities of accountability and risks as well as support and affirmation.

166. Formation programs can promote community living and assist individuals greatly by teaching a religious how to dialogue about problems in a loving way. This is often referred to as confrontation, but the word dialogue will be used here since it has a more acceptable and amicable connotation and better signifies the process. Dialogue presupposes that each party speaks and that each listens; each expresses their own thoughts and feelings without presuming the thoughts and feelings of the other persons. Dialogue places the problem to be resolved in front of both parties rather than between them so that both can work side by side toward the solution. The willingness to work together to solve the common problem, rather than forcing it onto the other person as their duty alone, is a good sign that love is present and guides the dialogue. When a person foregoes dialogue on problems, they become hurt, angered and withdrawn because the problems are not addressed. Or if lack of experience results in poor dialogues, they may view all dialogue as uncharitable since they have resulted in pain for themselves or someone else.

167. Community signifies common activity and shared responsibilities. In formation, there are countless opportuni-

ties: physical tasks such as upkeep of the house and grounds; communal and liturgical prayer; celebrations, entertainment and parties; sharing of personal gifts and talents such as in the area of music, sport, writing, house repairs, cooking. Candidates need to learn how to share their talents for the benefit of the group even when it becomes a burden for themselves; otherwise, it may be simple self-aggrandizement. They also need to be encouraged to learn new skills, to attempt shared responsibility in projects where there is risk of failure. In this they learn not only a new skill but a trust in the community and in the Lord. They may also learn how to accept failure and to cope with it in a manner which helps them to grow.

168. Much was said earlier in this chapter about the emotional expectations that young religious might have of community. Directors need to address these expectations in a realistic manner so that both the individual and the Congregation can discern whether a call to community is present. Community is not intended to take the place of a spouse in one's life. That place is reserved for God alone. In fact, chastity means an intense relationship: it is truly a relationship with the living Christ, and by means of this, with the Father Himself. Thus, by the vow of chastity lived in a celibate life, religious do not consecrate themselves to individualism or to an isolated life, but rather promise solemnly to place themselves totally and without reservation at the service of the Kingdom of God – and therefore at the service of people – in intense relationships of which they are capable and which they receive as a gift. Although the community does in fact help the religious in some ways as a spouse does, it should not completely fill the space or completely take away the loneliness in a person's life; this loneliness can prompt the religious to turn to God in order to begin to transform the experience of loneliness into one of solitude.

It is God who wishes to relate to the religious as a spouse. This does not mean that God immediately removes the loneliness. He may permit the loneliness to continue and to intensify so that through suffering the religious acquires a new and deeper life. Again it is the Paschal Mystery to which the religious is called. On the other hand, the loneliness may be one of the signs which indicate that the person is not called to celibate life in community.

169. The fact that a religious community is first and foremost a faith community needs to be underscored time and again by the formation programs. This is done not merely by word but primarily by the activity of the members. Common prayers and Eucharistic liturgy celebrated daily are the most important aspects of a faith community of religious. They not only express the common faith of the members, but when celebrated, they well stengthen the faith of the members. Times and places set aside for silence and prayer are important reminders and incentives to build up the faith of the members. Also, the meetings of the community will give the members an opportunity to speak of their faith and their relationship with the Lord and not focus merely on physical concerns or apostolic interests. For instance, after reflecting together on a Scriptures passage or a significant article or the readings for the liturgy, a member may share what they have heard God saying to them and how they are being called to respond. Obviously, this sharing should always be optional; however, this kind of faith exchange should be encouraged and put into practice in our formation programs. Likewise, group discussions leading to decisions need to promote faith arguments as well as to address material concerns.

170. Houses of formation have excellent opportunities to live community life. The group is generally quite homogen-

eous in age and activity so that much time can be spent together. This is not always the case in other local communities of the Congregation where the focus is on the apostolate, and members have little time and energy to spend on one another after devoting so much to the apostolate. This has become a real problem in several Provinces, and it has become common to speak of the tension between community and apostolate. For members in such apostolic houses, the community life of the formation house is idealistic and far removed from the real community of the typical religious. There is no adequate response to such a statement. It would not be correct to modify the type of community life promoted in houses of formation. However, it is necessary for the newly professed religious to be fully aware of the situation in the wider community and to be prepared for possible disappointments after they are given an apostolic assignment. The danger of disillusionment is very real. Members in formation should have the opportunity to live in houses of the community and to experience the type of community living that will be their's in later years. Such opportunities can be learning experiences for members of the host house as well as for the member in formation.

171. Our men in formation must be led to appreciate that our life in community is not only as a response to the Lord's call to love one another as brothers (cf. *Constitutions*, 7), but also as a response to the deep conviction of Bogdan Jański that society can be resurrected only through the establishment of Christian communities where the truth that was revealed by Jesus is lived out in love and that, as a consequence, the establishment of vital and highly visible local communities is an essential element of the Congregation's mission (cf. *Constitutions*, 137). If we are to call others to communities of the Risen Lord, our Congregation must be a model of Christian community in which people are one in

mind and heart (cf. *Mission Statement*). This could help to resolve the tension which can exist between community and apostolate.

172. Each of us relates to many people, but we relate to them in different ways. With some it is very superficial; with others it deals solely with tasks. We should distinguish between friendship and fraternity. We should not expect to have a relationship of friendship with all those with whom we are living, but we should strive to be a brother to all and to live out a spirituality of communion with them. We should also distinguish between common life and fraternity. Both are important aspects of community, but unfortunately, people can live together without exercising fraternity, and conversely, we can exercise fraternity towards members with whom we do not live a common life, by reaching out to them.

173. There are some people, however, who hold a very special place in our lives. With these few, we share the more personal elements of our lives. We trust them with our secret feelings and thoughts, and we rely on their friendship for support and counsel. These individuals and ourselves have what is called a primary relationship. Frequently, for religious, these relationships occur among members within the community itself. However, this need not be so. It should be considered quite acceptable and in fact encouraged for members in formation to have primary relationships with people outside as well as within community.

174. Our *Constitutions* have always stressed hospitality as an expression of charity, provided it avoids worldly extravagance prompted by the desire for pleasure (*1882 Constitutions*, Part I, Art. 136; *1967 Constitutions*, Art. 78; *1988 Constitutions*, Art. 139; *2019 Constitutions*, Art. 141). It is important that our formation communities foster this spirit of

hospitality in a manner compatible with the overall objectives of the formation program. Both male and female friends of our members in formation should be welcomed by the community for prayers, meals and visits. Members should not feel obliged to visit with their friends only away from the religious house.

175. It must be remembered that community extends beyond those with whom we live, even beyond those in the Province or Region of which we are members. The Congregation is an international community of faith. This meaning of community can be taught in a variety of practical ways. It is made evident when Provinces or Regions have combined formation programs. Other means include the study of the history of other parts of the Congregation; serious consideration of international newsletters and events; prayers for members of other countries through use of the community prayer calendar; the exchange of Easter and Christmas greetings between formation groups; the study of the language and cultures of countries in which Resurrectionists live; preparation for a possible assignment in other parts of the Congregation; a willingness to go beyond one's own culture and approach to apostolic work.

176. The original concept of community members was that they were called to renew Polish society. Father Kajsiewicz, as superior general, moved the Congregation beyond this limited view and challenged the members to think in terms of renewing society wherever the Lord invites us. Such a challenge continues to have validity today and it is expressed clearly in both our *Charism Statement* and in our *Mission Statement*.

GOD CALLS US TO WORK FOR THE RESURRECTION OF SOCIETY

> "*In a word, what the Congregation proposes as its end – if not in effect, at least in desire – is the resurrection of the whole of human society, its eternal salvation and material prosperity, which is to be found nowhere else except in the search and effort to achieve eternal salvation. In the words of Christ: 'But seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all things shall be given you besides' (Matthew 6:33). To attain this end, the Congregation shall use the means indicated and provided by Christ: teaching and baptizing, that is, the word of God and His holy Sacraments. By the former, we understand all the means of propagating the divine truth; by the latter, the various means of distributing God's blessings and His holy grace.*"
>
> (*The Rule of 1850*, Art. 165)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

177. The Congregation was founded to assist its members to grow in holiness. Our Founders and members always believed that the apostolate is an integral part of achieving one's own sanctification and happiness (cf. *Constitutions*, 195). Each member, and the life of the Congregation, is directed to create a new society by working "*to overcome sin, ignorance, injustice and misery*" (*Constitutions*, 9). In general, this involves

two approaches towards society. First, it calls members who have become aware of their own brokenness through the call to conversion to have an experiential knowledge of people suffering from sin, ignorance, injustice and misery. These are the "*poor*" of society, to whom we are called to minister. Members need to associate with them, to experience their life, to appreciate their suffering at least empathetically and to join in solidarity with people diminished by unjust structures (*Mission Statement*). Secondly, through its apostolates, the Congregation strives to assist them and to change society and these unjust structures. In its apostolates, the Congregation recognizes that ministry is mutual, that is, its members receive as well as give when ministering according to the Gospel. For this same reason, the Congregation attempts to have all strata of society work together to change society. The Gospel values we promote are in the best interests of everyone and not simply the "*poor*". Class distinctions and conflict between groups are contrary to these values.

178. The apostolate of the community is much more than a social program. It flows from the salvific work of Christ and is guided by the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. The principles of the Paschal Mystery are used as a guide for what is happening in the lives of both the members and those they touch in their apostolates. Thus, it is not simply a matter of eliminating suffering, but rather of practicing a love of neighbour that leads to union with God our Father. Members by their lives and their words help others to change their lives and the life of the whole of society insofar as that is possible, but more importantly, they teach people of God's love for them. "*We share Christ's own desire to enkindle the fire of divine love in the heart of every person on this earth*" (*Mission Statement*). It is this love which is to be their support and guide, since the appreciation of God's love draws a person to personal conversion and enables them to

labour peacefully and faithfully for the elimination of all unjust structures.

179. For most members apostolic work is a very rewarding experience, a source of affirmation and joy, an activity to which they fervently give themselves. This is proper provided the apostolic works are integrated into one's religious life so that the calls of Baptism and religious vows mature and bear fruit through the apostolate. In this way, the apostolate is not self-activity, but a prophetic statement to society. The work done is guided by the Holy Spirit and promotes the coming of the Kingdom of the Father. This means that we follow the example of Jesus whose dedication to the establishment of the Kingdom was steadfast despite rejection and death leading to resurrection. Similarly, religious must find their deepest satisfaction not in the acceptance of themselves and their message by others, but in knowing that they are proclaiming the Word, the source of truth and charity. The apostolate like all other aspects of their life invites them to live the Paschal Mystery.

180. Resurrectionists are attentive to the needs of the Church according to our Charism. This Charism has involved us in the apostolates of parish ministry and education. Rooted in history and tradition, a community Charism takes on different expressions according to the needs of society and the gifts of the members. All members should be concerned about new expressions of our Mission; however, it is up to chapters and community leaders to determine when and if new expressions should be adopted. Our formation programs need to prepare our religious for apostolates which are consistent with our *Mission Statement*.

181. In addition to specifying areas of apostolic involvement, our Charism gives us attitudes with which to carry out our apostolates. Two of these are a desire to reach those on the

fringes of the Church and a desire to practice our apostolates in a manner which will prompt others to consider them as a model to follow. To reach those on the fringe means going out to others and a willingness to meet them in their own mentality and culture (*ad cultura alterius*); that is, the ability and freedom to learn "the language" of another – his or her symbols, values, hopes and approaches, but also their fears, insecurities and contradictions; and somehow to make them one's own, in order to be able to communicate one's spiritual wisdom in the cultural milieu of the other rather than from one's own personal culture. To desire to be a model to follow, means to be able to show that the spirituality we have is inclusive; it has a lot to do with today's society; it has much to say and to offer to it; it can be also a vital element for the world as a radical, Gospel-based alternative to a certain lifestyle, which today suffers more and more a crisis of authenticity. It is important that such attitudes be based on an authentic concern for the spread of the Gospel and the needs of the people within and outside the Church rather than on concern for novelty or inflated self-opinion. Authentic concerns require willingness to risk, to go beyond the mediocre, to give oneself even when there is no favourable response.

182. Our Charism also calls us to work closely with other groups: lay, clerical and religious. These groups are seen as collaborators and not as competitors and subservients. The concept of external brethren was not simply a part of the dream of Jański, but something he actually brought about (cf. J. IWICKI, *Resurrectionist Charism*, vol. I, 58). This aspect of the Congregation disappeared after his death, and only recently attempts are being made to revive it. The Sisters of the Resurrection have a special place among the many groups of religious sisters with whom we work. Not only do we share the same name and related histories, but the same spirit imbues the two Congregations.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

183. Young people bring to the Congregation their gifts of energy, enthusiasm, idealism, generosity and a sensitivity to the needs of society: a strong sense of justice and a desire to reach out to the poor. They are similar to our Founders who were young men, eager and generous in their desire to face societal problems in a new way. Candidates entering the Congregation are a continual source of these gifts which are beneficial to any group as it continues to develop its mission. It was during times of few vocations (*e.g.* 1844-1856) that the Congregation, or part of it, was tempted towards discouragement and confusion concerning its apostolates, and its future in general. During these times, the call appeared too grandiose for such a small, limited group. On the other hand, when vocations are plentiful and youth predominate, there is a danger of resorting to merely human strategies to change society and advance the kingdom of the Father.

184. Candidates frequently enter the Congregation because of their contact with members in the apostolate. Their expectations are conditioned by the views of these members. If their contact was with members who are mediocre in their personal and apostolic lives, the candidates may be shocked and disbelieving when the expectations of the formation programs are set before them. It becomes extremely difficult for such candidates to internalize the values proclaimed to them.

185. The Congregation works in widely diverse societies: from dictatorial regimes to very liberal-democratic societies, from affluent societies to societies that have large groups living in subhuman conditions. Candidates entering from these diverse backgrounds have vastly divergent world perspectives and expectations. Some are accustomed to facing

an atheistic environment; some come from countries where diverse religious groups live side by side; some are critical of the role the Church has played or is playing in changing society. Their views have been nurtured by personal and national histories, and each could undoubtedly rationalize the legitimacy of their approach to life and apostolic endeavours. Let us list some examples of faulty approaches to the apostolate that candidates may bring with them when they enter the Community: the separation of the apostolate from the spiritual development of the religious themselves; the adoption by the religious of customs, life style and values of the society which are contrary to the Gospel, thereby negating the distinctive and prophetic element of their own vocation and work; involvement in apostolates because of personal needs or for personal gain which prevents spiritual growth in both the religious and those being served; an almost exclusive concern for the material and intellectual development of the people to the detriment and neglect of their spiritual development; an involvement in the apostolate that is so total that it deprives the religious and those in the local community of the benefits of communal living; a desire to do all works irrespective of one's own energy or the call of the Community to specific types of apostolates.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE IN FORMATION

186. Since we form an apostolic religious Community, our formation programs must have clearly stated apostolic goals which encompass more than the intellectual development which occurs in the classroom. Especially during the years of theological training, students can benefit from apostolic work during the summers and, to a limited degree, throughout the year. Thus apostolic work might include one or more of the following: involvement in preparing and conducting

para-liturgical services; working with social programs for the poor; assisting the physically and mentally challenged; involvement in retreats for young people; programs for learning counselling skills and assisting in schools and parishes in a general way. The involvement may be principally physical, intellectual or spiritual. However, it needs to focus on being with and assisting people directly, and it needs to be supervised. The main goal is not to accomplish a task but to assist the new religious to learn how to minister and to determine whether they may be called to minister within the apostolates of the Congregation. During this period of training, the emphasis is just as much on the ministering religious as on the effect their ministry has on others. To lose sight of this fact may negate the entire value of the program. For example, it may happen that a seminarian does marvellous work with a parish youth group. The group is more active than ever before and much good is happening in the lives of the youth while the seminarian is becoming more skilled in leading them. If we look only at the youth group, we would undoubtedly say that the seminarian is called to ministry. However, what is happening in the life of the seminarian? It may be that he is driven by a need to be received as a hero. The youth involvement is then feeding this need instead of assisting him to recognize it and to deal with it. From this perspective, the apostolic involvement has been a hindrance to the seminarian in the discernment of his vocation and in his personal growth.

187. The examples given above underscore the fact that supervision and reflection are indispensable if early apostolic involvements are to be learning experiences in the discernment of a seminarian's vocation. Unsupervised, unreflected apostolic involvements can harm the development of a formation student's vocation, even though it may benefit those receiving the ministry. The role of the supervisor is to assist

the young religious as they learn to minister, and so the focus must be on the person of the young religious as well as on the ministry. The supervisor's most important role, so far as the formation program is concerned, is to help the candidates to become aware of what is happening within the self as they learn to minister. What are they learning about themselves? Why do they minister as they do? How are they changing? How does this ministry call them to grow? How has it affected their prayer and their relationship with God? How has the Lord been present in their ministry? How do they experience the Paschal Mystery through ministry? How do the vows facilitate this ministry? These are the important questions that the supervisor can put to the candidates so that they may grow by sharing responses and by reviewing ministry. Such supervision helps the candidates to integrate the various aspects of their life and to discern their vocation realistically. Of course, if the new religious are to be in a position to answer such questions, the apostolic involvement needs to be more than superficial. It must be of such a nature and duration that it affects the candidates' life at a deep level and calls for change. The apostolic invovement must not be so intense that there is not adequate time for reflection on the experience each day.

188. The very selection of apostolic involvement for candidates in formation is crucial. The selection cannot be left to chance, or be the prerogative of the candidate. The work must be chosen by the director in conjunction with the religious so as to move the religious through another stage of growth. Improper selection may cause the candidates to regress, or it may discourage them because they are not yet prepared for its challenges.

189. So far we have continually referred to candidates or to young religious in formation. The point under discussion re-

lates to all religious insofar as we are called to continuing formation and to ever new ways of ministry. Reflection and discussion of one's apostolate and its effect on one's personal development is a powerful tool for spiritual and emotional growth. This can be done on a regular basis with a spiritual director. Or it can occur more informally with a friend, or as part of a house meeting. In the latter case the discussions could focus on the living of the Paschal Mystery through our apostolates. In such circumstances, the entire community assumes the role of supervisor.

190. Earlier it was stated that the environment from which candidates come differs from country to country, and even within one country. Along with this fact, we have the recent community phenomenon of members called to minister in foreign countries or with ethnic groups different from their own. All members must be prepared, at least in some small way, for cross-cultural ministry and its implications (cf. *Constitutions*, 200). Even if a member is not sent by the Congregation to minister in a foreign culture, they will probably be in contact with co-religious from other cultures. They need to be sensitive to difficulties these other religious may be facing in their new culture. For this reason alone, it is important that every candidate study a foreign language during training. Languages of special importance to us are English, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Swahili, and Spanish. In addition to the study of the language in academic settings, students and young religious are encouraged to gain experience by living and working among ethnic and cultural groups other than their own.

191. When a religious prepares for the apostolate, they need to have attitudes that differ from a person preparing for a career. While seeking professional expertise, they need to integrate their knowledge and skills with their evangelical voca-

tion and Community traditions. At the same time, they must remember that the community through obedience calls them to develop their gifts and assigns them to an apostolate. This same obedience keeps them open to changes in their place of ministry and even in the nature of the ministry they perform. Their formation must assist them to grow in this openness to the Lord, who speaks to them through the Congregation, and to avoid focusing solely on professional skills and their own preferences.

192. During the periods of apostolic training, the candidates and young religious should be involved in projects and programs which will assist them to cooperate and to share the ministry with the laity and other religious. They need to be cognizant of the role of these groups in the Church consequent to the changes of the Second Vatican Council (*Constitutions*, 216). The future of the Church depends greatly upon helping the laity and sisters to assume their rightful role in the local churches (cf. *Mission Statement*).

193. In the academic field, it is important for candidates to be especially well versed in the Church's social teachings in order that these may form the basis of our efforts to change society. As well, because of our historical link and also because we work together in some localities, it is important for our candidates to learn the basic history of the Resurrection Sisters. In general, all Church documents should be well received and thoroughly studied as an expression of our desire to be allied with the apostolic and ministerial efforts of the Pope and the Bishops (cf. *Constitutions*, 11 and 151).

Eight principle

MARY: OUR MODEL AND MOTHER

> "*God has honored Mary by choosing Her to be the Mother of our Savior. She is also the Mother of the Church which is His body. In our tradition, we have claimed Her as Mother of our Congregation and have been dedicated to promoting Her honor. She is the model of what salvation is for each of us.*"
>
> (*Constitutions*, 8)

I. EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLE

194. By referring to Mary as Mother of the Congregation, our community tradition wishes to recognize that She is interested in our welfare and assists us, individually and communally, to fulfill our vocational goals. Her role in the development of the life of Jesus and the early Church is repeated once again for us. She intercedes on our behalf for the graces we need to live out our call to be disciples of Jesus by living the Paschal Mystery, and She serves as a source of support and encouragement for us in a manner that surpasses that of all other members of the communion of saints. This is succinctly captured by one of the titles given to Mary, namely Mother of Divine Grace. It is by this title that Our Lady of Mentorella is honoured. This, as well as the fact that the Marian shrine at Mentorella was the first permanent apostolate and property given to the Congregation in its own name, spoke clearly to our Founders and early members about the role of Mary in the life of the Congregation. She

is our collaborator, anxious to assist us as a loving mother. Peter Semenenko referred to Mary as the new Eve, the Mother of the new life that we acquire through living the Paschal Mystery.

195. Mary was not only the Mother of Jesus, She was also His first and perfect disciple and thus a model for our discipleship. She lived Her life as a totally faithful response to God's word and shared in the Paschal Mystery of Her Son. This openness to God's word and willingness to set aside Her own concerns is clearly manifested in the Gospel accounts of the annunciation and infancy narratives. Her presence at the crucifixion of Jesus is a confirmation of Her fidelity to Jesus and His mission.

II. THE PRINCIPLE & CONTEMPORARY MENTALITY

196. Candidates coming to the Community manifest the diverging opinions and practices of the Catholic people in regard to Marian devotion. In some countries, there is a widespread and deep popular devotion to Mary. Communal devotion to Mary is accepted and beloved by the people. It is not so clear whether the individual person always practices a Marian devotion in their own personal life. In other countries, Marian devotion is practised on a personal level more than in a communal context. Thus, only a small minority of candidates come to the Community with a knowledge and habits of Marian devotions such as the rosary. The fact that this minority may also have a very traditional approach to liturgy as well as to Catholic beliefs in general can discourage other candidates from accepting the practices of Marian devotions.

197. The focus of current preaching about Mary appears to differ in specific countries. In some countries, the focus is on

Mary as our intercessor; in other countries, the focus is on Mary as our model for discipleship.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES IN FORMATION

198. There is a need to stress within the formation programs both the communal and the private dimensions of Marian devotion, and both the model and intercessory roles that Mary has for us. Marian feasts, especially the three which the Congregation has adopted as community feasts, are times to communally celebrate Mary's role in the life of the Congregation. On these days, the liturgy receives special attention, the homily offers an occasion to speak of Mary, additional Marian devotions are celebrated, the community meal can have a festal quality, symposia or talks on Marian theology are held and profession of vows may be celebrated. As suggested by Art. 78 of the *Constitutions*, the vigils of these feasts are times of special mortification and all should be reminded of this as the feasts approach.

199. The three Marian feasts chosen by the Congregation to be celebrated in a special manner have a relatedness to the Paschal Mystery and Mary's personal sharing in that mystery. The feast of the Mother of Sorrows celebrates Mary's own acceptance of suffering which followed upon her total dedication to the Father and his Son, Jesus. It reminds us of Her willingness to surrender Herself into the hands of the Father despite the suffering and death incurred by doing so. In the Assumption, we celebrate the Father's acceptance of that self-giving and we celebrate Her sharing fully in Jesus' victory over death. She is drawn to the Father and united with Him. In the Immaculate Conception, we celebrate the new life that results from the Paschal Mystery and we celebrate Mary's sharing fully in Jesus' victory over sin. Mary

participated fully in that new life after Her assumption, but even from Her conception She had a share in the redemptive value of Her Son's Paschal Mystery. As we live out the Paschal Mystery, we too begin living a new life more and more fully until complete self-giving and total resurrection occur.

200. As an expression of our Marian devotion, each local community has a communal devotion to Mary on a daily basis, such as the *angelus*, a Marian hymn or the rosary. In addition, each individual is asked to develop a personal Marian devotion through reading, study and prayer. It is especially appropriate for members to have a devotion to Mary under the title of "*Our Lady of Mentorella - Mother of Grace*".

201. In the general chapter of 1857, Peter Semenenko spoke of the threats of evil in the world: deification of self-indulgent pleasures, self-sufficiency (secularism), and materialism (socialism). As a response against the first, he recommended "*an intensified devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary with its consequent elevation of the dignity of woman*" (J. IWICKI [ed.], *The Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection*, Romae 1960, 10). There are two important points here. First, the designation of Marian devotion as an antidote to self-indulgent pleasures. If our Marian devotion is to have a true intrinsic value in this regard, it needs to centre on Mary as our model of true discipleship as well as on Her intercessory role. Her trust in God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit allowed Her to forget Herself and to surrender to the Lord's loving invitation to die to self. The second point to notice in Semenko's statement is his association of Marian devotion with the elevation of the dignity of women. Many good things have occurred since these words were spoken to elevate the dignity accorded to women. However, more needs to be done. Formation programs need

to assist candidates to see the ways in which women may be victims of discrimination and injustice within society and the Church. Candidates should also learn how structures can be changed or programs initiated to assist women.

202. Marian devotion must not be a pious appendage to our lives but an integral part of our Resurrection spirituality and apostolate.

“Our fathers have told us”

1

ANTHROPOLOGICAL/THEOLOGICAL BASES OF FORMATION

1.1 NATURE AND PERSON

P. Semenenko, *The Interior Life*, Lwów 1931.

[p. 6] So it is necessary that there be three spheres of human life. The first sphere is that of the flesh, senses and feelings; the second, that of the mind or intellect; the third, that of the will and actions, which unites the first two. All three together make up the one life of the whole person. Each of these spheres includes the fullness of human life, but each in its own way exhausts the full store of a person's talents and powers. Nevertheless, only the combination of all three constitutes the whole of human life, using all of these powers together.

[p. 7] Thus, the person, the Ego, is situated in the soul, which lives and acts by means of these faculties. Nature is what we have; the person is what we are. [*Natura est principium, quo vivit persona; persona vero principium quod vivit*.]

Therefore, besides human nature, there is also the human person, his Ego, the person himself. Of itself the human person is nothing. It is the ultimate limit of the soul, beyond which lies infinity – an infinite inner emptiness that draws upon what it takes from and through its nature. In turn, nature draws upon what it receives from the world or from God. Thus, the ultimate element and confirmation of hu-

man nature is the person. On the other hand, the person has nothing of itself; nature supplies what it requires to be completed and live. As a result, the life of nature and the life of the human person, that is, the human being, are one and the same.

[p. 8] The end and purpose of our human faculties, of an individual's entire nature and person, is to possess God.

God reveals himself to people in all of the ways that are proper for, and suited to, the faculties by which a person is capable of comprehending God. As a matter of fact, a person does not comprehend God in all His infinity. Neither, at the present time, do we have any adequate idea of the extent to which a person has the capacity and the ability to comprehend God. [...] In the meantime, however, God reveals Himself to us in a manner suited to our faculties. He reveals Himself to our emotions and heart as *good and beautiful*; to our intellect as *light and truth*; to our will as *law and precept*.

[p. 9] Of itself, nature as nature, is incapable of living this divine life.

The human heart is incapable of desiring anything unless it is perceived by the senses. The intellect cannot grasp, or even be in a position to think about, something that is not presented to it by the imagination. The will, and by means of the will, the person cannot love another person who is neither seen nor sensed, of whom neither intellect nor heart offer any knowledge. That is why God endowed the first person with a *supernature*; that is, he endowed the three natural faculties with a capacity for supernatural life: a capacity to desire, know, and love God in a manner appropriate to the divine nature; and finally, a capacity to fulfill God's will, as long as the end is supernatural.

[p. 10] Possessing a healthy nature, and also endowed with supernature, the human being freely and happily used all of his faculties to turn to God, finding in God his proper *good and beauty*, *truth and light*, *precept and law of life and activity*. In this final sphere of the will, the individual encountered and was united with God on a personal level, in a vital relationship of person to person. By means of this union, the individual as a human being became a child of God.

However, as a result of the fall, the first person suffered a total loss of supernature; he lost the capacity to turn to God in a manner appropriate to God's divine nature. He could no longer desire God, or know the Being who created him in such a supernatural fashion. Above all, the individual could no longer turn to his/her proper beginning and end, for, as a result of sin, the human being became an end unto self, and the will was turned away from its true beginning. [...]

As a result of sin, the human being not only forfeited supernature, but also contaminated nature itself. Moreover, the sinner suffered the greatest loss in his own person, since in sinning he ceased to be a child of God and became a child of wrath, a child of doom: *Filius irae, filius perditionis*. His nature was corrupted. Thus, when he fell, and thereby broke the bond of union with God, he also lost sight of his goal. The natural faculties were deprived of their mistress, that is, supernature, which was intended to direct them to their designated end, and so provide them with life and nourishment. These faculties then rebelled against the sinner, just as he had rebelled against God, and so gained dominion over him. As a result, the individual became a slave of his passions and natural life, without any capacity to raise himself up. There was nothing left for him but despair. And this is the end result to which a purely natural life, deprived of God, leads.

1.2 ORIGINAL SIN

P. Semenenko, *Credo*, Lwów 1885.

[p. 201s] In truth, there can be no doubt that it was God's plan to create man in his own image and likeness. Yet the work of creation had to begin with the image, and only after the human being proceeded to participate in and cooperate with God's plan was creation to end in God's likeness.

This is the best explanation: it gets to the heart of the matter; at the same time, it offers us the key to a deeper understanding of the subject. Image refers immediately and exclusively to nature: to what a person possesses, along with his faculties and talents. Thus, when a human enters this world, he brings with him immediately his complete nature as well as all of his faculties. These are all already present in the new-born child. The same is true of the image.

But the situation is different when it comes to the likeness. The likeness is a further stage of the person. Indeed, although its seed is already present in the image, the likeness is realized only in the further and final activity of the image. It is accomplished by the person's use of free will and with its cooperation. Consequently, the likeness cannot be present from the beginning. Just as a child does not bring this likeness into the world with himself, neither could Adam possess it from the very beginning, even though God intended that he should possess it in the end.

From this we can understand immediately that when it came to God's intention, (the divine idea which was to result in the creation of the human being), it was not enough that the person be created only in God's image, but with the likeness as part of a further plan. Both image and likeness had to be united in order to embrace the whole person so that both the person and the nature of the individual would be a part of God's scheme.

However, it was necessary in the realization of that scheme, that in action, the individual be created first in the image only. The image was to be completed by future action, and become a likeness by means of the individual's cooperation.

[p. 215] From this we see that in the individual, the image of God rests in human nature – nature is that image. On the other hand, the likeness of God is to be realized in the individual person: the person is to be the ultimate likeness of God. It further flows from this that the task of human life is the passage from its beginning to the intended end: from the image of God to the likeness of God.

This is the work of love. Only love can accomplish this. An individual's entire life is to be one great work of love: the love of God in one's entire nature; the love of God in one's entire person.

[p. 217] There are two actions that are a part of the individual's work in this garden – two actions of the person in his nature: the first is to guard; the second, to cultivate.

Therefore, the individual must first guard nature. Nature here is equivalent to mind, heart, and will. Let the person guard them well from every sort of unhealthy vapors, all filthy insects, all vicious serpents, all fierce beasts. The person's mind must be clear, the heart pure, and the will free and eager. This is the negative aspect of the individual's task.

The positive aspect of the task comes next. The individual must then set about cultivating the garden, that is, his/her nature. The individual must sow, water, cultivate, and gather the fruit. At this stage, it is primarily love that leads and does all the work.

Therefore, out of love, let the individual first offer God all of the soil in this garden. Next, let him proceed to the garden for the Lord, diligently and lovingly planting nothing

but God's seed: In the field of the intellect let him sow the eternal truths; in the field of the heart, heavenly hopes and desires; in the field of the will and divine commands, holy intentions and actions.

[p. 242] Yet, one might say that there is almost no other dogma that is so little, or so wrongly, understood. Considering its consequences, almost no other dogma is so lightly considered, passed over, or neglected in a person's life on earth.

It will be our obligation to remedy this evil, and to show that original sin is first on the list of the great truths. It can be said that the whole of Christian religion turns on it as if on hinges. It is the key opening the way to all other mysteries. It removes difficulties and clarifies uncertainties. It is both the historical and dogmatic foundation on which the Christian religion rests, of itself demonstrating that this religion is true, holy, and divine – the one religion that offers salvation.

1.3 SELF-ACTIVITY

P. Semenenko, *Spiritual Letters*, Kraków 1924.

[p. 10] We must not set to work all by ourselves. Instead, we should pray for grace, that is, pray that the Lord Jesus might work in us, and that we might cooperate with him. I have explained before that the rule presented in this way should not be understood wrongly, as if there were two types of activity, and that the proper character of each type required that we act differently in each case. The first type of activity is directed against evil, while the other is concerned with the acquisition of good. Grace is always available for the struggle with evil; that is to say, it is available to us where the commandment is urgent, where transgression of the precept

leads to sin. In that case the Lord Jesus is definitely with us. Yet, even though it is also necessary to pray for assistance, we should proceed to act immediately, with the assurance that the Lord's grace is available to us.

On the other hand, in what concerns the acquisition of good – and for souls dedicated to perfection this is usually the case – we do not have grace at our disposal. Neither does the Lord Jesus in every case accommodate Himself to our wishes; rather, He acts as He chooses – in a single moment, over a longer period of time, in different circumstances - and we must accommodate ourselves to this. Therefore, for heaven's sake, do not begin to act all by yourself! Rather, pray! First of all, pray for an understanding of what the Lord Jesus wishes; then pray that you may desire, will, and finally do, what the Lord wishes done.

[p. 29] Therefore, it is necessary to cooperate; it is necessary to work in such a way that virtue might be the result of grace. We need to begin with our nothingness, a sense of total impotence, and so with a sense of our need to obtain grace by means of prayer, and then an increase of grace, also by means of prayer. Such is the necessary work of our cooperation.

And so we begin with our nothingness. As a matter of fact, this nothingness must always be accepted knowingly and willingly, that is, absolutely freely, as did the Blessed Virgin. Unfortunately, we fail to understand this. As a result, when God wishes to elevate a soul to a higher state of virtue and perfection, He forces the individual to experience that nothingness – as He did with you recently with regard to faith.

Have you finally understood this? If you have, then you will also understand the reason for your outcry: "**What must I do to emerge from this nothingness?**" While this nothingness was natural and good in part, it was, on the other hand, unintelligible. In that case, now you will under-

stand the true meaning of my response if I tell you: **In order to emerge from your nothingness, you must remain in it** – remain in it knowingly and willingly, take it to heart and experience it, with the conviction that "I do not and cannot have faith of myself" – and then bow to God in profound adoration. It is only in this way, by freely acknowledging and accepting our nothingness, that we worship the fullness of the Divine Being; and especially in this case, by acknowledging that the fullness of truth is to be found in God, and that faith has its origin in Him.

[p. 31s] When an individual (that 'I') lives by virtue of supernature, in union with God, he continues to deny his former self ever more fully. He renounces it, and confirms the 'I' of Jesus in Himself (He in me, and I in Him). As a result, the 'I' of Jesus is confirmed, and continues to be confirmed, in the individual. It becomes his new self, along with the strength of Jesus. The Holy Spirit becomes his strength. By virtue of the cooperation of this new 'I', the person's own activity and that of Jesus become one. Jesus becomes the beginning and end, the first and the last, the alpha and the omega of this new 'I'.

[p. 32] Within us there is our old 'I' (the old man), forever focused on self, and revolving about this self. But there is also a new 'I' that is focused on and immersed in God. The ultimate depth of our being, where what is properly called the "ego" resides at the very center, is engaged in a continuous struggle waged by the two forces present there. At one time the 'I' is old, and then again it is new, depending on whether it lives by nature in union with a false good, or by supernature in union with God.

[p. 32] In this transition (from old to new), the 'I' had to renounce its old nature, otherwise the transition could never

have begun. However, it had not yet renounced the old ego: focused on, and revolving around self; seeking to do everything by its own power. Therefore, if the 'I' wishes to move toward God and to unite with Him by virtue of supernature, the ego must recognize three factors within itself that resist this: 1) The 'I' would like to use God, all the while retaining its own ego; that is, it would like to use God for its own advantage. 2) The 'I' would like to initiate activity of itself, and use supernature on its own, as if it were its own property, (whereas it belongs to the nature of the Lord Jesus, who graciously lends it to the individual). 3) The 'I' would like to think that it always has the necessary power at its disposal (which is God's power and grace, the Holy Spirit, and not its own), and that the 'I' has only to will something in order to do it (and even need to do it) immediately.

[p. 36s] There are two reasons for this: 1) In supernatural matters you begin to act on your own, relying on yourself, on your own 'I'; you proceed to act on your own initiative without having humbled yourself, without calling upon the Lord Jesus to ask that He initiate the activity in you and act in union with you. 2) You think that you have the necessary strength, and act as though you really did have it; in other words, in supernatural matters you have recourse to the natural powers at your disposal, even when the Lord Jesus forbids this. What is more, you persist in your error, judging, or rather without sufficient reflection, feeling that you are acting on your own strength. This is **your** will, **your** activity, and not a union of yours and His, when in fact, it is His will and activity primarily and essentially; yours secondarily, and only by participation in His activity.

These two errors and disorders in the practice of the interior life, where the primary concern is union with the Lord Jesus, are a continual hindrance to your ultimate union with Him.

[p. 38] The most important point is this: You have confused misery with sin, and material evil (which is not true evil, and can even be an occasion and matter for the good that is realized in us) with moral evil, the one true evil. You cannot abide material evil in yourself. Your misery angers you. When that misery is revealed, when it shows signs of life and demonstrates its ugliness, you consider that you are already lost! Yet, morally or spiritually, this is nothing – absolutely nothing! In fact, it is a condition for the opposite good: the activity of grace, the work of God, and His love in us. Therefore, if morally this material evil is nothing, why does it make you angry? Why do you consider yourself unfortunate, lost, more or less destined for condemnation?

[p. 41] There is one further distinction to be made. You should not despise and fear your **misery** to such an extent. In its own category, and within its own limits, it is innocent. Instead, you should despise and fear the **miserable one**, that is, your ego that savors this misery and is ready to accept it if the grace of God does not prevent this from happening. Our ego should awaken within us a threefold sensation: 1) disgust, repugnance; for of itself, by reason of the flesh, it is unclean; 2) contempt; for in its spirit it is false, vain, and proud; 3) abomination; for in its soul, in its will, it is egotistical and death-dealing.

Such is the ego of this **miserable one**. As for the misery itself, in itself it is indifferent (as it is, for example, in animals), and we need not portray it to ourselves as a sin, which alone merits abomination and fear.

[p. 43] There can be no doubt that the ultimate end of Christ's activity in each of us is the transformation of our person into His person. However, the degree of this transformation, its kind and limits, and, further, the suitability of this transformation, the relationship of one transformation

to another – all of this is a divine mystery, and there is no need for us to be overly curious on this account. Rather, what we should do is surrender faithfully to the Lord's activity, without searching for, or conjecturing about what this will bring us in the end.

1.4 CONCRETE APPLICATION

P. Smolikowski, from the chapter "On Formation" (CRR, Mss 31602).

In formation, we must take the individual as he is; therefore, we cannot fail to take into account what the Church teaches about the effects of original sin, free will, and the activity of God's grace in each individual. However, here it is not a question of the principles themselves, for they are universally accepted. The primary concern here is to see to it that each of these has its own proper place. Thus, in formation, what is meant to be a means should not become an end. Yet this often happens and that without necessity. What is meant to play a secondary role should not become the main and most important point; a secondary means should never be regarded as the primary goal or the sole means.

Therefore, first, let us attempt to set down some general principles that should govern formation; and then let us go on to consider what is to be regarded as primary and what as secondary.

We feel that **in theory** all formation should accept the following assertions as true:

1. As a result of original sin, individuals in formation have within themselves the seeds of all evil. This evil cannot be uprooted or destroyed since according to the Council of Trent, it remains in us until death. However, by means of mortifying its manifestations,

we can and should curb this evil and render it harmless.

2. Besides these evil inclinations, individuals in formation also have within themselves seeds of all the good that God wishes to realize in them, and which He requires of them. This constitutes the character proper to each one, that is, his individuality as well as his specific vocation, and certain innate gifts and talents. Finally, God also always provides the graces people need to combat the evil with which they are forced to struggle as well as to accomplish the good that God intends.
3. In spite of the inclinations to evil experienced by individuals in formation, they can become – even from the very beginning - very good. In spite of all their inclination toward good, they can be – even from the very beginning –very bad. This will depend on either the good or the bad use of their free will.

Corresponding to the above-mentioned truths, **in practice** all formation should include the following basic elements:

1. It should make those who are being formed aware of the evil that is in them, and at the same time teach them that they can, and even are obliged to, fight against it.
2. It should rely on the good present in those who are in the process of formation, in order to combat the evil that is also there.
3. It should involve those in formation to work on themselves, inviting them to participate in their own moral formation.

From the above, it follows that:

1. It is necessary to protect people in formation from scandal and to guard them against dangerous periodi-

cals and companions. Although this is necessary, formation does not depend on this either alone or especially. The scandalizer and seducer within the individual himself is the most dangerous, precisely because he is internal.

2. Formation depends on developing a right conscience and a sense of responsibility in the individuals being formed. This is achieved by influencing their convictions, while leaving them with the widest possible measure of freedom. For formation is not concerned with accustoming or training people to do something – like animals. Neither is it concerned with producing automatons or machines. It is concerned with forming individuals endowed with an intellect and free will, who can be formed with their own cooperation.

External order is very important in every institute of formation, so important that a serious effort must be made to establish it. However, it is only a means, and not the end. It is not even the principal means – and never the only means – of formation. Rigor and severity may be necessary so that authority might be strong. We Poles do not know how to command. As a result, our governing bodies are usually weak. We tend to counsel subordinates rather than command, and we practically always offer a rationale for our commands.

Therefore, if we were concerned with maintaining exemplary order, a truly strong authority within an institution, we would have to abandon efforts to develop convictions, for this weakens authority. However, in formation, strong authority and exemplary order can only be a means and not the end. This means that they are necessary only insofar as they can contribute to the formation of our students.

On the other hand, if we are more concerned with forming individuals than with governing them, and if we are con-

cerned not only with how our students behave while they are members of the institute, and especially how they will behave when they leave the institute, then formation of inner convictions is more important than external order. This indicates the need to develop their convictions.

2
VOCATION

2.1 NATURE

P. Semenenko, *Spiritual Letters*, Kraków 1924.

[p. 57] On the one hand, vocation is a call from God; on the other hand, it involves an understanding and perception on the part of the individual that he should respond to this call. This includes a perception of the meaning of the call and of the need to follow it.

To what does God call? The individual is called to give himself to God completely, without restriction, and since this is a most sublime act, it must also be completely free.

[p. 58] We need to remember that two things are necessary:

1) Faith in the Divine call;
2) The understanding, desire and will to respond to that call. Let us consider these two points.
3) Faith is required since it is the foundation of everything divine. "**Justus meus ex fide vivit**" [The just man shall live by faith.] A vocation without faith is like a building without a foundation. One great impediment to religious vocations is the fact that often they do not rest on this foundation. I am not speaking here of vocations that are completely defective and unfounded, or those based on unworthy motives, such as assuring a convenient life for oneself; attraction to persons; a change in social status; finally, with some, a matter of taste or fancy. Unfortunately, there are many such muddied streams.

I am speaking of vocations that have at least a semblance of genuineness, that seem to be supernatural, and yet are not based on supernatural faith in a vocation, but rather on human discernment and decision, the ultimate goal of which is always our ego and its confirmation. Such vocations, may God have mercy, are a house built on sand!

[p. 59] From this follows the simple conclusion that the person who is called should understand and desire what is being proposed. True, in ordinary normal vocations, the person called understands this, at least to some extent. Unfortunately, the desire that accompanies this understanding is often quite weak. From time to time it is stimulated, a little spark is added, but then it dies.
Therefore, the person called must set about doing two things: First, he should pray for faith in the call. Next, he should pray for greater acceptance of, consent to, and familiarity with the call, and even when these are granted, the person should continue to pray, for we must pray constantly: "**petite etaccipietis**" [Ask, and you shall receive]. The measure of our fidelity corresponding to the call is to pray for a true and strong will. In relation to the original foundation, such a will is like the glue or cement that binds and holds everything together.

[p. 60] Once a person understands what it means to give oneself to God completely, and knows how much happiness is to be found in doing so, the vocation is practically certain. The reason for this is simple. Such an attraction can come from nowhere else but from God, and God does not provide such an attraction without a purpose. His purpose is that the goal to which one is attracted be achieved.

2.2 DISCERNMENT AND ACCEPTANCE

B. Jański, *Under the Standard of the Risen Savior*, Statements of the Founder on the Theme of the New Community, selected and arranged by Fr. Bolesław Micewski, C.R., Rome 1978.

[p. 43] The superior is responsible for the admission of new members and their formation. When accepting a new member, "the superior should keep in mind the good and accomplishments of the community as God's work [...] and that by accepting this person he is doing him a favor. He should not accept just anyone" (CRR, Mss 8627; *Diary*, 238). He should even make it difficult for people to enter; above all, he should not pressure people to join (CRR, Mss 8562, 336). "On the other hand, when a person does enter the community, not only is it permitted, but we should actually consider it an obligation to rejoice" (CRR, Mss 8627; *Diary*, 838).

Before acceptance it is necessary to examine the candidate carefully. "Is he qualified to live our common life? Is he sincerely interested in sacrificing himself for the truth, for the good of his neighbor? Does he want to work towards a life of Christian perfection for himself and others? Many enter the seminary out of a mixture of personal pressures, pressures of the moment; sometimes for very strange reasons, not excluding material security (bread)" (CRR, Mss 8649, 1033n). "We can only count on those who renounce the world and their own personal happiness" (CRR, Mss 8592, 1157).

P. Semenenko, *Letters concerning the Congregation of the Resurrection and the interior life - about himself - various statements*, vol. III, Rome 1986.

[p. 2] Coming to us and accepting us as brothers, you know what you should bring with you. **Love is the law that is to**

govern our lives. Bring this with you. Our purpose here on earth is to become one heart and one spirit in Christ – what he asked his Father to give us: *ut sint consummati in unum* [that they may all be one].

This is what we require of you. It seems to me that God has placed the need for this in your heart, and that you will not find it difficult. Naturally, our further goal is to propagate this law of love as widely as possible (CRR, Mss 1295, I, 1843 to Bentkowski).

[p. 3s] First, the common characteristic of a vocation, which we must always keep before our eyes is the following question: **Am I doing this for God, motivated by faith?** A vocation consists of the desire and the will to lead such a life, but always for God, motivated by faith. The primary obstacle to a vocation is the lack of such a will. The obstacle becomes definite when there are other outstanding reasons.

Further obstacles are related to character, *e.g.*: 1. a character that has too much of the natural about it; that is totally caught up in sympathies and antipathies without knowing how to master these, and not even thinking about doing so; one that is totally immersed in the senses, totally external; one that seeks comforts etc., and is thereby incapable of self-sacrifice, self-denial, and mortification; a chatterbox, etc. 2. a character that is secretive, closed in upon itself, depressed, concerned only about self, incapable of openness and self-revelation; one that cannot be governed and is incapable of love [...]

My dear Jerome, I am not at all concerned about external growth, as long as we grow internally, and that all of us may become saints. In this way, we will accomplish more for ourselves and for others. And if our Lord wishes us to multiply, he will send us candidates according to His own heart. Our only task is the following: with His help, to distinguish those

He sends us from those the devil sends. For, if this is God's work, the devil will send candidates. It is inevitable that he will send them if, as I have said, we are the wheat.

But since we sift what we sow, let it be good wheat. Since we protect our fields by a fence, let it be spiked and impregnable. Let us guard against the unknown seed, lest it give rise to weeds. My dear Jerome, let us allow into our field only what truly offers us hope that it will in fact **become with us one heart and one spirit** (Mss 423, II, 1844. to J. Kajsiewicz).

[p. 4s] We cannot expose the Congregation to the danger of harboring infected members, especially those who know how to hide their contagiousness. I would so endanger the Congregation if, contrary to previous evidence and new indications, contrary to the opinion of a conscientious judge, I would accept an unsafe person in the hope that he will change.

We are not a correctional institution, a home for the sick. We should accept only healthy and certain people so that we might be a healthy organism and a moral force for the glory of God and the welfare of others (Mss 370, I 1883, do V. Kalinka).

[p. 5] With regard to accepting further clerics, do not be discouraged if one or another does not prove to be a success. I urge you strongly not to be discouraged. Besides, experience is a good teacher; it has taught you.

The main point in this matter is to exhaust all the possible sources that can shed any light on the candidate's past (Mss 370, I, 1883, to V. Kalinka).

[p. 5] I have become thoroughly convinced that a retreat is absolutely necessary at the very beginning, even before accepting the candidate. Nothing, except perhaps an immedi-

ate revelation from God, can take the place of this retreat when it comes to discerning a vocation, and a retreat simplifies the process.

The usual method of receiving postulants – the way we were receiving them – is totally inadequate. Therefore, from now on we should definitely require such a retreat (Mss 199, VIII, 1872, to V. Przewłocki).

[p. 10ss] I return to the question of vocations. On this matter, I have one more thing to say, and it is of great importance. My dear Father, unless we are absolutely sure, we have an obligation in conscience not to hurry when it comes to the formation of new members, their ordination, and making use of them as soon as possible. [...] For lack of funds, we were attracted by the combination of accepting priests or theologians who were already formed, and putting them to work as soon as possible. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that this will be successful only by way of exception, and that we have to exert even greater efforts than what might appear to be necessary. In the normal order of things, our wish should be to accept candidates as early as possible, and that younger ones would apply, for it is only these young people that we can form fully in our own way.

It is my opinion that people already formed will remain who they were, and that we can do little to change them; except perhaps if they themselves have adopted a method of formation, or if the Lord has led them along a path similar to what He expects of us, but this is the exception and not the rule.

Dearest Father, we should use the last years of our lives in such a way as to leave a whole generation that is one in mind, heart, and spirit. And that is difficult, even impossible, with people who come to us from anywhere and everywhere – people who have already reached maturity else-

where. Consequently, it will be in our interest and greater benefit to accept young people, and then form them in our own way [...]

Therefore, all of those people who have already reached maturity on their own are a risk for the congregation, and all the more dangerous if they are older or more famous, for then their influence will prevail. Hence, it is better to form the young. The comfort that they will bring us will be longer in coming, but in the end, it will be the quickest and always the best.

[p. 15s] As for our young people, the problems are always the same. Right now the greatest problem is N., not because he is difficult or contrary, but precisely because he is so passive. As yet there is no sign of any spiritual awakening in him – no light, no spark, no breath. He's a lump! I have begun asking him to see me every evening, and he has to report on what is going on inside him. I have been asking him especially what he prays for. I am convinced that the best way to investigate and get to know a person's interior is to ask about his prayer. Such a question does not allow for any false or tricky responses since such deception will be immediately evident [...] I have had great success using this method, and consider it to be the best way to obtain information about souls I am directing. (Mss 618, II, 1861, to J. Kajsiewicz).

[p. 19] We arrive at a critical stage when the candidate requests permission to profess vows. The vows are the greatest grace that one can achieve in the Congregation – it is the reward for proven fidelity to the grace of one's vocation; it is an honor accorded to a servant and chosen one of God, a brother in the family of God. Therefore, we should offer this opportunity only to those who have been tested and found worthy (Mss 791, IX, 1868, to J. Kajsiewicz).

L. Funcken, Letter to Feliński, dated November 9, 1873, (CRR 13407).

I rely on the following: 1. the recruitment of young men of neutral character of which one has proofs; 2. who have received a true clerical and, nota bene, simple education of the sort that they think about their countryman instead of thinking about the restoration of Poland; 3. on good conduct, having a solid supernaturalism as a base, as it is seen in general amoung good priests; 4. if a higher degree of spiritual insight can be added, nota bene, without neglecting what will be required by their practical position, then, yes, I will respect them more and accept them as confessor.

3
PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION

3.1 WITH TRUTH AND CHARITY

P. SMOLIKOWSKI, Beginnings of St. Stanislaus Kostka College in Chicago, in *The Jubilee Book of St. Stanislaus Kostka College in Chicago 1914–1915*, Chicago 1915.

[p. 88] At the beginning of its Constitutions, the **Love of God** is established as the ultimate mission of the Congregation of the Resurrection. This love is **our resurrection** because it gives birth to **new life**, which St. Paul speaks of as resurrection (#8.5). The love of God should also animate our external activity (#4). Further, the Constitutions place great emphasis on accurate knowledge of our nothingness and misery (#36), because if we know ourselves well, our lives will be guided by **truth** and we will persevere in **simplicity**. Everything in us should correspond to the truth: "**everything should be consistent with the truth** (#313). Therefore, we are not all to fit into a single mold; rather, each one should retain his own individuality. We need to apply **truth and charity** to formation as well. We should stand before our students in all truth.

[p. 89] Love of God requires that there be nothing servile or mercenary about our relationship with God; rather, our relationship should be marked by filial love. This same relationship should be maintained with superiors, as representatives of God. As a result, the Congregation recommends a **non-blind** obedience, in order that a superior might reach a correct understanding with his subjects, and subjects with

their superior. Likewise, in school, we should strive to achieve a correct understanding with the students and to guide them along the way of conviction.

Therefore, we should avoid severity and strive to give our students as much freedom as possible. Thus, we will be slow to punish, and we will take care not to leave the students with a feeling that they are being watched constantly. Consequently, we will not use such means of supervision as gathering information from their companions, spying, or stealthy approaches; rather, we will encourage the students to act always not out of constraint or for appearance, but out of conviction and a sense of responsibility so that once they leave the College, and are no longer supervised, they might be guided by conscience.

We will strive to develop within the student a well-formed conscience that will serve him as a norm of action, provide him with a sense of responsibility, and prompt him to fulfill his responsiblities with love. We do this so that our young people might acquire a true and stable foundation for their lives, along with the strength that comes from God: the strength that will enable them to overcome and master all things, and at the same time will not permit anything to shake them (#66). We will endeavor to lead our students to God, not by imposing a great number of spiritual exercises, but rather by providing them with a deeper knowledge of God and the truths of faith [...]. Therefore, as our students grow in knowledge, we will also make every effort to provide them with a corresponding knowledge of religion [...].

[p. 90] We should not hide from the students any problems in religion, any objections against it, any human weaknesses in the Church. On the contrary, when the need arises, we should make an effort to present these in a true light, especially when teaching a more serious and comprehensive course in history. It is better that our students learn all of this

in school and from us, than later, after they have left the College, for then, they may not find the correct explanation, and so begin to doubt the sincerity of their instructors and teachers.

B. Jańsk, *Under the Standard of the Risen Christ*, Statements of the Founder on the theme of the new community, selected and arranged by Fr. Bolesław Micewski, C.R., Rome 1978.

[p. 11] We should use all permissible means to achieve the greatest glory of God and the greatest good of our neighbor. Each of us will be called to account if he did not do as much as he could. We accomplish more by love of the good than we do by the logic of ideas. (CRR, Mss 8627; *Diary*, 826)

[p. 16ff] We are to be apostles of God's love and spiritual resurrection. We must take account of the fact that to change the spiritual face of man, we must affect man's will since the perfection of the human person takes place by training the will. Consequently, Christian interior perfection is a system of training the will.

Christianity recognizes that the human will is corrupted [...] This is responsible for the continued conflict between conscience (moral instinct) and the individual's corrupted will [...] Now evil always reveals itself in a perverted love of self rather than of God. It can be said that egotism is the triumph of evil in our human nature [...]

Christianity strives to effect a radical improvement of the corrupted will of man, and claims that it is capable of making man like God [...] It is necessary to find the model and principle for man's will in the will of God. Christianity points to this as a living reality in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God revealed in human flesh, divine perfec-

tion in human nature. **The human being thus knows who he was, and who he must become anew**. For this reason, Christ proclaims the need for interior change; he calls for conversion [...]

There is a power in man which continually urges him to seek some goal [...] It is precisely this force which must be given new support. We must fix within the soul a stong concern that is able to take hold of the person. When this happens, his interior conversion follows. Thus, the essence of Christian rebirth is **the change of one's dominant concern** [...] But what type of concern is able to separate man from his own ego? The love of God! [...]

This must be proclaimed to sinful man – something which he was unable to find out for himself: God loves him! [...] This fact found confirmation in the historical event of Jesus' coming to earth and his freely willed death for sinners [...] The renewing power of God's love affects all the powers of the human being. This renovating power of love reaches all the faculties of the soul, and becomes their indispensible nourishment. It strengthens intelligence, imagination, and moral sensibility. This happens because the fulfillment of this great mystery unites the faithful soul with the Depths of Existence from which it derives. The person who does penance with the aim of sacrificing himself completely, discovers the Eternal One in this very act of expiation. His entire present and future become a work of reconciliation.

Once love establishes itself in the soul, it produces three results: 1) it leads the person to the Subject of his love; 2) the person surrenders to Him; 3) it leads the person to seek what is loved by the Subject of his love. Thus, this love is most active and influential in our life. Its immediate effect is an obedience inspired by love and increasing in strength.

The love of God depends on this: that we love Him in spite of all. This is not just a love of some type of Divine Providence. It is, at the same time, a love of all the moral

virtues, from which we are deterred by our present earthly orientation. It has the characteristics of a love that takes nothing, and leaves in us only what is in complete harmony with God.

To overcome this obstacle (earthly orientation and egotism), Christ himself makes use of our human nature. He leads it to unselfishness! Christ takes control of our desire for happiness and separates it from human passion, which until now was the fortress of our ego. He draws the individual to Himself by the strength of attraction and the desire for happiness, promising the person happiness without end [...] Only love succeeds in withdrawing the person from what constitutes the foundation of his existence – freeing him from his ego and making him unselfish so that he might become absorbed by something other than himself.

Uprooting our egotism, love carries us beyond ourselves; it identifies us with the Beloved. It communicates to us the characteristics of His Being. And so, it is only love that is capable of renewing the foundation of a person's entire moral life and giving him new existence. When love effects this change in a person, it does not take away his freedom. When a person falls in love, he is conscious of the fact that he is influenced in some way, but now this influence is actually none other than he himself. Thus, all feelings that constitute the personal dignity of man are related to love. (CRR, Mss 8618/2, a conference by B. Jański)

The person who wishes to teach religion must consider it his first obligation to give witness to the truth, holiness, and goodness of religion. He does this by his way of life, his own respect for religion, his fear of profaning its sanctity, and by his personal regard for the effectiveness of its teaching. If one has not improved and sanctified his own life, he is unworthy to teach others. His first efforts should be concerned with self-improvement: putting his conscience, thoughts, and whole life in order. (CRR, Mss 8628; 1001)

The following should be the main principle governing all social projects: Be less concerned with social structures and more concerned with people. Work with a will that is one with the will of God. Thus united with Christ the Lord, your will becomes strong, wise, and loving. In this way you will be able to exert an influence upon the will of others, and create a new people – it stands to reason, after you have become a new man yourself. (CRR, Mss 8562, 324)

Always lovingly do what you expect will achieve the greatest good for the glory of God and the benefit of your neighbor [...] Before every action ask yourself: Is this necessary? Only a spirit free of the flesh and the world can be completely turned to God. (CRR, Mss 8627; *Diary*, 536)

[p. 51] "Guard against forcing every good work [...] into a single general form in accord with your preference [...] Rather, let each one observe carefully what he is capable of doing, and what the Lord is calling him to do." (CRR, Mss 8562, 325)

Our work of formation should be a reflection and continuation of "individual, family, maternal, traditional education – which is the most effective" (CRR, Mss 8559, p.40). "A love that is patient, humble and zealous, and that acts with simplicity and prudence, will conquer all." (CRR, Mss 8649, 290n)

The Association for the Support of the Russian Boarding School of the Congregation of the Resurrection in Lwów (Report of Fr. Smolikowski, C.R., Lwów 1887).

[p. 18] [...] Our system of formation does not depend on glossing over or blotting out evil. Consequently, in our system, that evil must surface more often than it does in other systems of formation. Besides, if we have achieved a certain

result, we have done so after a great struggle. That struggle goes on continuously, and it is possible that one or another will fall in the course of the struggle. The final result of our work is this: Each person recognizes the evil that is in him, is aware of the responsibility to war against it, and possesses all the help he needs – but he also has a free will. On the other hand, God is certainly the best teacher, and yet, in spite of his will to do so, He cannot save everyone.

3.2 OF THE WHOLE PERSON

From past reports of the College (1907-1908). In *The Jubilee Book 1914–1915*, St. Stanislaus Kostka College in Chicago, Illinois, Chicago 1915.

[p. 222s] Fr. Smolikowski writes: "To educate is not the same as to train or accustom to what is good, because in this case we are not concerned with an animal, but with a person, and it is impossible to educate that person without his cooperation, for everything in him is determined by his free will. To educate is to perfect a person's will, to build character."

Therefore, it is not enough to develop good habits and customs in a person; above all, one must form his intellect and will, the faculties by which he is distinguished from unintelligent creatures; the intellect, if formed by instruction, by acquiring useful information, and by enriching the mind with a variety of truths. However, this does yet not constitute the whole of education. It is only one part the person's education – and not even the most important part. But this is what is properly called education. A true and complete education requires the development of a strong will, or character, in a person.

What is character? We conceive of character as an added quality of the human soul – as something stable, beautiful,

noble. Hence, we meet with expressions such as a person of spotless, upright, unyielding character. When we want to say that this is a person who can be trusted, on whom one can safely rely, we say simply: "He is a man of character."

As we look more closely, character seems to be a quality, strength, force of the will. However, if the will is to be strong and forceful, it must rely on the intellect and on healthy ethical principles. Why do we say ethical? Are not intellectual, rational principles sufficient to form character? [...] Only ethical principles can contribute to the formation of character, for it is only such principles that form a strong will in us; and ethical principles must be based on strong religious principles. Consequently, religion and the ethical principles that flow from it are extremely important factors in education.

Religion enables us to understand our relationship with God and other people. It sheds light on and clarifies our entire spiritual life. It indicates to us what our supreme end is, and provides us with a proper outlook on the world as well as on temporal and eternal life. Ethics provides us with the means that lead us to our end. It indicates the paths and ways by which we are to walk, and offers us laws that regulate the entire course of our life.

P. Smolikowski, *An Explanation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Provincial House, Poznań 1964.

[p. 152] Above all, to the extent that God permits, the Brothers will make an effort to ensure that the entire elementary education of the boys is guided by such reasoning and follows such a path that, along with secular subjects, they will plant Christian truth deep in their young minds so that, as a result, the ineffable beauty of divine truth

might absorb their imagination and enkindle their heart, while love for the good and truth that is to be found in Christianity might take possession of their will. That is, it shall be the task of the Congregation to educate the youth entrusted to its care in such a way that harmony is maintained between instruction of the mind and formation of the heart. This, in order that unity might be established between the object that nourishes the minds of these young people daily and the true objects of our worship, love and will; but also that, in this way, all the faculties of the soul might be focused on what they are to believe, look forward to, and love. (#64)

[p. 153ss] In directing students, let the Rector pay close attention not only to how they apply themselves to their studies, but also to their progress in spiritual life so that while these young people are occupied with studies, they may not turn their minds away from God, their one end, and that their vocation might become more mature.

Therefore, the Rector will teach them to think and reach decisions in such a way that they do not accept anything without reflection, lightly, and merely on the surface, but that they weigh everything according to the truth. He will teach them to guide their life and activity by truth and love so that in them everything might be well-considered, agreeable, consistent, and faultless. (#317)

That they might more surely achieve this goal, the Brothers shall not exert as much effort in impressing the imagination of the students, as rather in developing their intellect. In this way, the Rectors will lead them to a fuller and more profound understanding of things and to sound convictions. In which case, as a result of their efforts, the truth of God will be implanted so deeply in the minds of these young people that thereafter they will never allow it to be snatched away. (#65)

Finally, while instructing their intellect, the Brothers will also make diligent efforts to develop their will, and teach them good manners. They will strive especially to develop within the students a due awareness and exercise of conscience, along with a proper sense of, and taste for, responsibility. They will do all this in order to help these young people acquire a true and sound life-foundation, along with strength that comes from God alone – strength which makes it possible for a person to fear nothing, while mastering and conquering all things. (#66)

P. Smolikowski, *Directorium of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection*, Lwów 1932.

[p. 258] "How are we to form the **hearts** of students? To form the heart means to make it tender, sensitive to the good, to God. [Callousness of heart is certainly a defect. But affection for evil, *i.e.*, for vice, is something a hundred times worse]. Hence, the heart must be purified, *i.e.*, it must be fortified against evil: against corruption, perverted affections, and oversensitiveness.

How protect the heart against corruption? Usually educators do not take into account the corruption of human nature due to original sin. Consequently, they conclude that as long as the child is shielded from evil companionship, his heart will remain undefiled. In point of fact, the evil is within us; and so the child bears within himself the most dangerous scandalizer and seducer. Therefore, he must be forewarned and acquainted with the fact, and be made aware that he is obliged to combat and oppose this misery.

God forbid that we should acquaint youth with misery as it is falsely understood today, and so rob our young people of their strongest defense against human weakness - namely, the **sense of modesty**. On the contrary, we should make

them aware of the fact that the human being is prone to evil inclinations, to seek personal pleasure, ease, and delight in all things.

However, it is not sufficient to stress this in a negative way. We should train our students how to contend with evil in a positive way, from their early years instructing them concerning the real object of life. If we wish to be effective in securing the heart against perversion, it is imperative that we provide it with the true ideal, which might so inflame the heart as to detach it from worldly ideals, for the true ideal can be so alluring that even we ourselves at times pay homage to them. And how subversive they are of true love of God, everyone can perceive for himself.

[p. 262s] How form the **intellect** of the students?

This is something more than a matter of acquiring skill in correct and logical thinking; it also involves forming the mind to accept truth instead of falsehood. [...] It is of paramount importance to free the mind from the influence of emotions.

The mind, trained to be inquisitive, will not be restrained. It will inevitably be confronted by vital problems of religion, which must be faced and cannot be left unanswered. It requires a deeper understanding of such problems, and if this is not offered, the mind of the student will endeavor to solve these problems in its own way. Teachers must not gloss over difficulties in religion, disregard the objections against it, or try to conceal the weak, human side in the history of the Church. Instead, whenever necessary, teachers will present everything in its true light. It is better for our young people to gain this knowledge from us rather than later, after leaving school. Otherwise, ignorant of the true state of affairs, they may lose confidence in the sincerity of their former teachers, who they perceive as concealing the facts from them.

However, helping students to acquire convictions is not the same thing as imposing these upon them. Teachers must show every consideration for the views of their charges even though these are contrary to their own. As teachers, we should never display indignation and displeasure towards those who do not think as we do. Instead, we should calmly enlighten them. If we fail to do this, they will prove unresponsive in our presence, and they will lose confidence in our impartiality. The educator's task is immeasurably eased if the young mind in its formative stage will permit itself to be guided. Of what use is education if the student's latent capabilities are aroused only after he has left the institution?

It is necessary that we associate with our students so that they may acquire more mature judgments by mingling with older persons. We must rouse them to deeper and more noble thinking, constantly keep them occupied with studies, and develop in them a facility for independent writing. More capable students should be encouraged to undertake extra-curricular studies.

[p. 266ss] How are we to work at forming the **will**?

Forming the will is salutary, but only when the will comes to desire what God desires, for it is certain that God's will is good. Moreover, such desire unites us with God, and it is in this union that we find all our happiness. Therefore, it is not enough to know how to will; we must also desire God and his will. And so, the Sisters will educate their students to perform all their tasks from a sense of duty and conviction for God, and not mechanically, out of fear, or guided by motives of human respect. [...] It is wrong to keep students under constant surveillance, or accustom them to have us (the teachers) always do their thinking for them. They must learn to think on their own, and shift for themselves – understandably, where this is possible, and within proper limits. Furthermore, in their studies, they are to be discouraged from thoughtlessly learning simply by rote.

Fr. Kalinka says: "**The first task of a young student in school is to learn to work**. That is far more important than acquiring one or another skill and passing examinations. It is a trait impressed upon the soul for all time, an accomplishment for life. While supervision in education is necessary, there are times when it can be superfluous and even harmful; *e.g.*, if the student grows accustomed to doing nothing unless he is supervised. A student must be taught to work even when there is no strict supervision on the part of the Superior. He must be taught to work, not out of fear, or even for the sake of progress in studies, but solely out of a sense of duty. This alone is an accomplishment worthy of Christian education. This sense of duty is a monitor that nothing can supersede, and only the student who heeds the voice of this monitor within his soul can be said to be truly educated." However, in order to become expert in this, the student must first learn to reflect, take conscience into account, be capable of self-judgment, and, where this is needed, of self-condamnation, but above all, to be vigilant, and know how to cope with adversity. [...]

"Avoid severity," wrote Father Funcken, an eminent educator among the Resurrectionists. "What will you gain by educating an automaton, a machine? Allow each student to retain his own character, and only strive to refine it. Severity is required only when there is a question of immorality, or when dealing with a base or mean character."

On the one hand, the Sisters should be patient with the evil manifestations of corrupt human nature so that these may be combatted more easily. On the other hand, they should never justify such irregularities. Sisters must **have recourse to punishment only rarely (never, if possible), but observe strict order. They must forgive often, but call the student's attention to violations.** [...]

Just as blind obedience is not recommended in our Congregation, so in school, in educating the students, let us

strive **to understand our students and appeal to their convictions.** Let us strive to allow them as much freedom as possible, avoiding constant supervision, as was already mentioned, in order to develop in them an awareness of conscience, and a devotion to duty that will enable them to govern their actiions.

To achieve this goal, we must **manifest complete confidence in the students**, and not entertain groundless suspicions. We should forgive ten minor transgressions, and punish only the eleventh. This will result in less harm than one might imagine. We will never know about some things, but serious infractions will always come to our attention. To teach the students to act out of conviction, sometimes it is good to deliberately not check a disorder immediately, but rather permit it to continue for a time in order that the students themselves may come to realize how much they lose as a result of disorder, and what trouble it causes.

3.3 OF EACH ONE INDIVIDUALLY

Excerpts from former College reports (1907-1908), in *The Jubilee Book 1914-1915*, St. Stanislaus Kostka College in Chicago, Illinois, Chicago 1915.

[p. 224] A second important factor in good education is a definite freedom from the constraint that results in eliminating certain of the person's individual characteristics and qualities. Just as no two grains of sand are entirely identical, so also do individual students differ one from the other. Not everyone can be formed or shaped in the same mold. The individual qualities of each individual should be respected and preserved – understandably, to the extent that these are not evil in themselves or the cause of ruin to the person himself or others.

Every person, every student, has his/her own individual qualities, his good sides. These need to be discovered; once

discovered, they need to be developed, or rather directed in such a way that they can develop freely. Every student also has certain evil tendencies and habits. We cannot close our eyes to these; they must be corrected. We need to call the students' attention to such faults so that they might recognize them and make an effort to eliminate them. Therefore, education depends on a sincere relationship between teacher and student. The teacher, using the student's good qualities as a basis, tries to purify, elevate, and perfect these, thus establishing a solid foundation for the edifice of knowledge and virtue that is in the process of construction.

The goal of such education is to preserve the individuality of the student, while teaching him to be sincere and open. In such a system of education, the students should always be themselves, have a sense of their own dignity, and avoid dissimulation or posturing; in a word, avoid all insincerity, whether in word or in action. How few people there are who know how to be themselves! And how many there are who know only how to feel, think, desire, with someone else's thoughts, feelings and desires! Such people never live their own lives, but only a life that is borrowed from others. How many twisted characters, how much insincerity and pretence in life, how much duplicity and hypocrisy result from such situations! Hence the need to awaken in every student the dormant spirit, to bring to the surface his individuality and make him aware of it.

P. Smolikowski, *An Explanation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, the Provincial House, Poznań 1964.

[p. 146ss] They say of us that **individualism** is too strongly preserved among us: no two members are alike. It is not the same as in other communities, where individualism is erased

in favor of community so that it is possible to recognize immediately the members of a single congregation by the bearing, movements, and even the voice of individual members. All of the members have the same make-up.

Our position is based on principle. We are not all formed in one and the same mold. Is this good? It is said that the exterior form influences the interior; it forms a person internally. For example, it is said that humble behavior, speaking humbly about oneself [...] influences one's formation in humility. On the other hand, we say: "As long as the interior is formed, the external will follow. Otherwise, the formation will be artificial, purely external." Let people sense, see, that we are religious. However, this must flow from the interior; it must be the truth.

On the other hand, what if it does not flow from the interior? "Then let us accept the blame, allowing ourselves to be seen for what we are." What does it mean to "allow ourselves to be seen for what we are? For example, is it permissible to appear to be meek even though we are internally agitated, etc.? Yes, it is permissible if our person desires this virtue, *e.g.*, meekness, for then the person is definitely in earnest. What is truly ours is what our person desires, not what may be happening in our nature, in spite of ourselves. However, we must also make an effort to change ourselves internally, and at the same time not act in a disorderly manner, for in doing so, we confirm the disorderly dispositions which we ought to combat.

Therefore, we need to restrain ourselves, settle down, in order not to offend or irritate others. In a word, we should observe the laws of good behavior. In this there will be no falsity, no desire to show off, to draw other people's attention to ourselves, or to stand out. Rather, this will flow from our intention, our will. We should desire to behave in such a way because love for our neighbor requires it. Therefore, we ought to have consideration for others. We need to mortify

ourselves, and not surrender to self-love and our own independent nature.

In the world, people are very eager to **leave a good impression** but not necessarily to be good. As a result, the world lives a lie. People shower others with compliments, and then laugh about it. We too should wish to leave a good impression; however, our motive must be good, and so demonstrate that we are what we appear to be.

Some people say: "I say what I think!" Thank you very much! That's beautiful! "I don't beat around the bush!" Nevertheless, it is necessary to speak properly, with respect for others. We should watch our words and never stop doing so. Moreover, we should avoid seeking applause [...]

Are we then not allowed to use the ordinary means that others use? Not only are we allowed, we must do so! Whenever God comes to our assistance, He does so through others; He uses them as His instruments. Further, He commands us to work, *i.e.*, to make an effort, to keep busy, to take precautions. Therefore, we can use human resources. However, these must be **pure**, from God. Neither should we seek these out **feverishly**, anxiously. One who seeks anxiously is seeking self and not God. One who seeks God knows that what God wishes, He accomplishes. Hence, such a person calmly uses the means that God provides – human means, for it is such that the Lord usually provides: friends, benefactors, opportunities, etc. On the other hand, in using such means, we depend upon God, seek God, and follow God's lead.

L. Funcken, in: P. Smolikowski, "The Spirit of Father Louis and his Views on Christian Education," as found in his Correspondence, *The Schoolman*, vol. XVII, n. 4, 203.

Avoid severity. What will you attain if you bring up automatons? Let everyone retain his characteristic individuality but

endeavour to purify it. Only in matters of immorality or when dealing with a low, mean character must one be severe.

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100p] In undertaking the education of youth, we need to have a good knowledge of the national character and traits with which we will have to deal – and therefore their weaknesses and faults – in order that the young people committed to our care may be directed properly.

3.4 THE SUBJECTIVE CHARACTER OF THOSE IN FORMATION

The Society for the support of the Institute of the Fathers of the Resurrectionin Lwów (Report of Fr. Smolikowski, C.R.), Lwów 1889.

[p. 14s] There is nothing easier than to accustom children to a set order and piety, especially in an institute in which a set program and a good spirit have already been firmly established. It is possible to accustom young people to certain practices, a way of thinking and speaking, to the extent that for them to live, think, and speak in such a way becomes almost second nature. However, as with everything that is only superficial, if these habits are not firmly rooted in the soul, they will quickly disappear after the student has left the institute. On the other hand, for something good to take root in a soul – which may be innocent, but still bears the stain of original sin – the person must pass through a definite trial, and thus become confirmed in that good, fully aware of what is happening. What the students do mechanically, at

the sound of a bell, they usually do without reflection, growing accustomed to the action itself, but only in certain given circumstances. When these circumstances are absent, and they will be absent when students leaves the institute, the habit will not be of much avail. [...]

To educate is not the same thing as to train, to accustom a person to what is good. Here we are not concerned with an animal. Moreover, it is impossible to educate a person without their active participation, for in a person everything is determined by free will. To educate means to perfect the person's free will, to develop character. And how can we perfect the will if it does not have the capacity for free choice; if order is prescribed from above and must be fulfilled; if students do not have to think for themselves, because others do the thinking for them? Fr. Kalinka used to say that "if a child who has always been carried in someone's arms is put down, he will begin to cry, and will go no further." However, a child will quite willingly allow himself to be led, and in our present state of society, there are those who will surely lead the child astray.

The Society for the support of the Russian Boarding School directed by the Priests of the Congregation of the Resurrection in Lwów, (Report of Fr. Smolikowski, C.R.), Lwów 1887.

[p. 13ss] In education we must always keep this truth in mind: Even the best order, the best spirit among the students, and the most frequent reception of the sacraments, will safeguard them from evil only for the time of their stay in the Institute, but will offer no certain guarantee for the future. I repeat, keeping the students away from anything that might scandalize them or that might arouse various doubts in them, can keep them good, but only while they are

with us. They will have to undergo the ultimate test when they leave us, when we can no longer keep an eye on them, when we can no longer come to their assistance, and direct the life which only then will begin to awaken in them.

Keeping these truths in mind, we strive above all to base the whole of our students' education on **conscience**. We seek to direct them in such a way that they will do everything out of a sense of responsibility – with conviction, rather than out of fear, or for appearance – so that when they leave the Institute, and have no one to oversee them, they will be guided by conscience in all that they do. Therefore, we never let them feel that they are constantly subject to supervision. We do not use extraordinary, much less underhanded, means of surveillance. We do not spy on them, or accept denunciations against them. Even when it comes to powerful aids such as frequent confession and communion, we encourage them and present the need for such help, but we do not insist, nor do we set a definite time for such practices. We do this so that each student might learn to think about such things himself, and might not grow accustomed to having others do the thinking for him. Then, when the student leaves the Institute, he will remember his spiritual needs. [...]

However, it is difficult to base all of education and order within the institute solely on the conscientiousness of the students. It is impossible to expect all of them to arrive immediately at such a delicate conscience. Therefore, we teach them not only that this is what God wants, but also that it is their duty to keep all of the rules that pertain to them, and to obey their superiors, and that this is even in their best interest.

Further, we base our education on a sense of **mutual interest**. Let them participate in government and understand the benefit of order, and they will immediately learn many other things, becoming alert to every detail, and reflecting on every action. Hence, to insure the observance of good or-

der, we involve the students themselves. As a result, the whole business is so arranged that everything moves along in an orderly fashion and peacefully, without the necessity of a superior's presence.

The presence of **seniors,** who are their fellow students, among them, is easier for them to bear and more effective than superiors, for in that case they feel that they are left to their own conscience. Such a system of education forces them to control themselves, and helps them to develop character. Students become accustomed to respecting and obeying authority, even when it is from their peers or even those beneath them. At the same time, they learn to direct others, how to be superiors, and how to bear the burden and the responsibility. In this way, we involve them in common work upon themselves, and strive to encourage them to sincerity by granting them complete freedom.

P. Smolikowski, *An Explanation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Provincial House, Poznań 1964.

[p. 158ss] The influence to which young people are subject during their years in school is not the only one that can prove harmful to them; They are subject to other influences once they leave school. Indeed, the atmosphere in which young people find themselves later, while they are still growing up, will affect them all the more to the degree that they did not experience anything like it during their school years. Experience teaches that if a young person who has received a proper Catholic education, but in comparative isolation, later encounters colleagues other than those they previously had, and witnesses their bad example – to which they are now exposed for the first time – they can all too easily submit. At best, even if they preserve their own solid

principles, they will not have the courage to react against this evil when it confronts them, or to manifest their clear and definite disgust.

In our opinion, it is better for young people to grow up and mature in an atmosphere in which they are destined to live and work. It will be better especially when they are destined for public service – and above all service as a priest, or some other form of divine service. Bad example will not disturb their soul quite so easily, for they have already met with such before. It will not attract them with its novelty, since they have known already for some time how to judge it. No one can safeguard virtue which does not safeguard itself. External control alone is clearly insufficient. Such control is necessary; however, it can only be effective when it serves to strengthen and complement the internal control which the young person maintains over themselves [...] Private education all too often produces weak characters, not sufficiently tempered to stand fast in the battle of principles which awaits everyone today.

4
FORMATORS

4.1 LOVE/CHARITY

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100a] Let us ask God that in our relationship with our students, our ego would not dominate; that the Lord would consent to work through us, make up for our own shortcomings, and eliminate our failings. We approach our work with children as a most holy activity, attentively, and with a prayer in our heart, with fear lest we spoil God's work.

[p. 100g] If the children do not regard us as their best friends, to whom they can turn with complete freedom – if they do not depend on us and trust us – our whole work of education will not be of much use. We may pour some knowledge into their heads, but we will damage the heart and the will. Moreover, they will not trust us if we command them, for it is impossible to prescribe or command trust. They will trust us only when they detect no hint of self-interest, either our own or that of the Congregation, but only concern for their good.

[p. 100k] Scripture says: "The Lord loves a cheerful giver." Let us give ourselves to the children cheerfully, for this goes hand in hand with love. Without love we will not penetrate their souls; we will not attract them to ourselves. They may hold us in high esteem, but they will still fear us. Cheerfulness is honey for children. They cling to it, for they feel that

it flows from a loving heart. A gloomy teacher or supervisor will not exert a good influence upon the children, for he or she will not gain their trust. They will avoid such a teacher rightly so, for they detect no love in that person.

[p. 100l] With the exception of ill health and differences in diet, it is important to see to it that all of the children receive the same food. Any distinction in this regard is harmful. In some, it will arouse egotism, in others envy.

[p. 100[3]] Certainly anyone who is indifferent to children, will be equally indifferent to all children. They will not betray themselves by preferring one child over another, but neither will they exert a greater influence upon any one of the children.

The situation is more difficult for individuals with a warmer heart. In this case, how is it possible not to love more than others a pious, obedient, and attentive student, who may one day bring greater glory to God, and greater benefit to people? And loving such a student more, how is it possible not to be partial to that student, drawing him/her closer to oneself, and showing him/her greater consideration?

All of this flows from the nature of things and can easily be explained. However, once we enter upon that road, we will not even realize how far we have strayed. When temptation approaches, we will scarcely notice how many arguments it offers us to deceive our intellect, and to justify ever more obvious and disastrous favoritism of one over another. Where are we to seek the source of this evil? Precisely in nature, in our **ego** that seeks itself. Good and bad qualities, each in their own way, can contribute to this evil. If I am intellectual as well as sensitive, I may be attracted to a student who is handsome. If I am a person of refined manners, I may be drawn to a student of elegant disposition. If I am brusque and despotical, I will take delight in the docility with which

a student submits to my authority. If I am only slightly mortified in body, mind and will, I may be tempted by a student's intellectual abilities. Around such a student, I will build the plans and hopes that my will desires to realize all by itself. All of this is nothing more than seeking my own pleasure. For me the child is an instrument; and, perhaps even without realizing it, an end for myself and for the child.

[p. 100m] If in the secular state it would be an error to think that I can educate children without praying for them, in the religious state the neglect of prayer for our students would be a serious offense, a failure to understand our responsibility, a fatal blindness, and in some measure a sin.

P. Smolikowski, *Directorium of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection*, Lwów 1932.

[p. 257s] Students must never be treated with indifference; neither should their difficulties, desires, and wishes be ignored. We should listen to them patiently, never indicating that the students' problems bore us, waste our time, or simply amuse us. We owe them all the time they need.

Educators should refrain from making hasty decisions; neither should they mete out punishments at the slightest provocation. They should first carefully and seriously weigh the matter before God; secondly, they should assure the students that the decisions rendered were thoroughly considered beforehand.

L. Funcken, Letter to Fr. Kajsiewicz, dated July 1, 1867, (CRR 13369).

The chief points of discipline are charity, fraternity and a mutual trust. For example, I summon a certain one to my

room and speak to him/her. According to how the student appears, I raise or lower my voice. I reason with him or her. I appeal to the student's heart, and in the end, the little rascal leaves convinced I am his/her best friend; that student is not wrong. There are some students of a grouchy disposition; some who are impudent; still others of a melancholy temperament. There is no other means of conciliating them, so I show them more confidence and esteem. This is the whole secret.

4.2 PATIENCE

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100c] Patience is the touchstone of religious life and the corner stone of education. Everyone knows that in dealing with children, human patience alone is not sufficient; superhuman patience is required. Only God can give us the gentle strength that will overcome the student's impatience as well as the teacher's, and which, when evil threatens, immediately communicates what is good. We need to obtain that strength from God by means of persevering prayer.

Patience is needed in teaching in order not to become discouraged by thick-headedness or distractions. Only with the help of patience can we come to the student's level, note his intellectual difficulties, and remove those that prevent our instruction from sinking in.

Even greater patience is required in reprimanding and punishing. Both of these must have as their aim the child's improvement. However, improvement is possible only when the children themselves understands their fault, admits it, and is sorry. Therefore, we have to reach the child's mind and heart. Let us be severe when there is cause for severity,

but at the same time, let us allow the child to experience our love. Otherwise, there will be no justice, and the reprimand or the punishment will miss its mark.

[p. 100s] According to our Rule, the relationship between superior and subject should be a parental one, full of forbearance and compassion. We should avoid imposing obedience on the strength of authority, but rather try to reach an understanding, achieve conviction, and only in exceptional cases require blind obedience.

4.3 TRUST

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100f] Our Rule indicates that when a superior gives an order to a subject, he should also tell him the reason for such a command so that the action that is willed may also be accepted by the mind and heart.

The same principle should be applied in our dealings with the children. We should not direct them despotically, relying on compulsion or the strength of authority. Every despotic, martial, command – *sic voleo, sic jubeo* [I wish it to be so, I order it to be so] – especially one that is brusque, contemptuous, or impatient, will irritate the child and evoke in the child a desire to resist. Even though the command might have a good purpose, it gives rise to evil: animosity toward an elder, hypocrisy, the desire to escape from under the yoke.

On the contrary, we should strive to achieve obedience on the part of the students by means of respect, faith, and trust. Let them obey by following our counsel, and fulfilling the precepts **out of conviction** so that when they are no

longer subject to surveillance, they will continue to act in the same way. Let us remember that we, *of ourselves*, have no authority over these children except that which comes from God, whose representatives we are. Therefore, we should not seek to implement our own will in dealing with the children but rather the will of God – and that will always acts peacefully and gently, while securing the person's conviction. Let us not profane the will of God by giving it a form unworthy of it.

[p. 100i] A child who has been treated wrongly by another has a right to complain. This is better than seeking revenge. Although on the other hand, it is proper to accustom a child to forgive minor offenses.

Aside from the instance of wrongful treatment, and except for more serious offenses or scandal, generally it is not good for one student to accuse another. It is necessary to combat this habit, for it develops a cunning egotism in children, arouses vicious delight in another's misfortune, and breeds mutual distrust and dislike. We cannot prevent this by simply admonishing the students to make such accusations only with a good intention. The inevitable result is animosity in the heart of the accuser, ill-feeling in the accused, and suspicion in both. A school in which such accusations are accepted or tolerated is actually preparing a degenerate society.

[p. 100j] Let us beware of manifesting a lack of confidence in the students. Trust ennobles, and even raises the student up after a fall. On the other hand, suspicion embitters. Lack of confidence demeans; it causes one to become accustomed to and confirmed in evil. It is necessary to maintain constant vigilance when dealing with children, but in such a way that this is not obvious: We must let our behavior and our conversation with them be both friendly and trusting.

To trust another is half of the way toward gaining that person's trust. If we are to be severe with those who accuse others, on the other hand, it behooves us to receive graciously the accusations that students bring against themselves. Just as God requires the sinner to confess his faults freely, so let us encourage the students to accuse themselves, prompted by noble sentiments and with regard for the truth, moved by the need to rid themselves of guilt, and without any consideration for whether or not someone will accuse them before us. Make the child aware that this is the way to win our respect and trust, and that it is even the way to easier forgiveness, at least to the lessening of a punishment.

[p. 100n] It was God, not people, who created the nations. Every nation expresses some idea that God wishes to develop within the human race. God gives each nation qualities that correspond to its assigned task, qualities which constitute its proper character, and which, in the course of centuries, enable it to fulfill its mission on earth. We should have respect for each nation in view of its origin and its goal. To show contempt for any nation would be equivalent to showing contempt for the Divine idea present there, which is destined to flower some day.

P. Smolikowski, *An Explanation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Provincial House, Poznań 1964.

[p. 157] Our relationship with the students was based on mutual trust. Unnecessary scolding was avoided. The discipline was rather too lenient than too severe. In spite of this leniency, the entire program was administered in the best of order. Freedom was not curbed; on the other hand, those who did not understand this freedom were dismissed.

4.4 EXAMPLE

P. Smolikowski, *An Explanation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Provincial House, Poznań 1964.

[p. 157s] The teachers were required to be in the house at all times. If there was anyone who was not satisfied with work in the institute, or who had other occupations outside of the institute, he/she was dismissed [...]
The example teachers were to give to the students was considered to be the most effective means of education, but only when that example was not a pretence or sham, but it was natural and sincere.

P. Smolikowski, *Directorium of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection*, Lwów 1932.

[p. 254s] If we intend to educate our young people in such a way as to assure harmony between the education of the mind and that of the heart or emotions, above all, it is imperative that our students perceive that this harmony exists within ourselves: that our actions, conduct, and words correspond with our principles, convictions, and duties. The Constitutions of the Brothers of the Resurrection state: "Each and every Religious should strive to become a living example of a true Christian so as to be able to say with St. Paul: 'Imitate me as I imitate Christ' (*1 Corinthians 11:1*). Therefore, they shall respond to their vocation in a holy and perfect manner, and discharge the duties of their ministry with all care, diligence, and zeal."

Above all, it is imperative that we appear before our students as true and good Religious. Otherwise, they will say: "They teach us to fulfill our duties, but they do not attend to

their own;" and so our words will have no meaning. Therefore, let us not forget that we have obligated ourselves to observe **poverty**. Let us not seek comforts and exceptions, or desire to surround ourselves with superfluous objects. Let us neither accept gifts nor bestow them, nor demand any special service and honors. Let our students see in us examples of modesty as becomes those bound by the vow of **chastity**. Hence, we should not become attached to our students, seek affection, have any favorites, discriminate or single out anyone for special consideration and affection. Being bound by **obedience**, let us set an example for our students of obedience, punctuality, and promptness, edifying them by a diligent and faithful observance of all rules. [...]

"Woe to anyone who would scandalize one of these little ones" (*Matthew 19:5*). Students are scandalized by impatience, disregard, favoritism, boasting, vindictiveness, or carelessness. Superiors should be very careful to practice justice towards all. Anyone can make a mistake, and students will not be scandalized as long as they perceive that everything possible is done to inquire and investigate. If a superior has punished unjustly, she ought to admit her error once she becomes aware of it. Let her not fear that her authority will be diminished if she acknowledges her error, even to the extent of begging the injured one's pardon.

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100e] Along with the evil, in each child there dwells a better and nobler person. On every occasion, even when admonishing or punishing, let us strive to awaken this side of the child, and keep it before our eyes.

We should make an earnest effort to develop high-mindedness in our students, from their earliest years. The way to

achieve this is by **example**: the example we give them. Such example will enlighten, teach, and attract. This should come easily to a Religious who has died to self and lives in God.

[p. 100h] Not just our self-seeking, but also our faults alienate our students from us. We need to examine ourselves carefully: What are our faults in dealing with the students? Those that flow from our nature, that have become a part of us, are the most difficult to detect. They may repel others but not us.

[p. 100o] Children should be taught to regard as a sin the failure to fulfill one's responsibilities, not keeping one's promises, breaking resolutions, the violation of one's word, which binds an honest person like a vow. It is vain to think that someone who is unreliable in day by day relationships with people will be faithful to God and the Church.

Nevertheless, once again, the best reminder of this is our own example. Remonstrances and punishments for lack of diligence, application, or orderliness will have no effect if I myself do not prepare my lessons, come late, or miss class entirely. Living by example speaks louder than words.

V. Kalinka, *The Russian Boarding School and education outside of the classroom*, (Report read in Lwów, March 4, 1886), Kraków 1886.

[p. 8] We feel that ordinarily good education does not go hand in hand with holes in one's shoes, or with elbows showing in one's coat. While exerting the greatest prudence with regard to expenses, it is not a good idea to squeeze every cent in such a way that the young student will conclude that nothing is more important than money, or that money is all we need to care about. Moreover, it is the worst

kind of economy to cut down on food, especially at an age when a person is physically developing the most.

[p. 9] If one lives in dirt and disorder the whole year round, and grows so accustomed to such conditions that this does not disturb him, later, when he grows up and becomes a priest, such things will not disturb him in the house of God, or even on the altar. It will not so much as enter his mind that the situation could and should be better, for no one ever corrected him, and no one set an example for him.

[p. 11s] A school forms the mind; it develops and enriches the intellect. However, the character, principles, emotions, and customs of the student – these depend on the example of people who take the place of mother, father, and family for the student. [...] Here we speak only of those impressions and changes through which a youngster passes after he or she comes to us. The first thing that strikes the students is the order, neatness, and cleanliness that they find in the house. They may have never seen this before, and so it amazes them. Sometimes it makes them impatient, but they soon grow accustomed to it. It is more difficult for students to understand why they are commanded to be polite and helpful toward their fellow students, and to respect the superiors and professors [...].

4.5 REPRIMANDS

V. Kalinka, *Reflections on the Constitutions*, Adrianople, Winter 1874-1875, (CRR, Mss 22398).

[p. 100d] Never issue a reprimand when you are agitated, for then your own irritation will excite the students, even though they will not show their irritation because they are

afraid. Pause for a moment, say a prayer, and end the reprimand with an appeal to the higher and nobler feelings of the child under reprimand.

Also, never reprimand or punish a child when the child is irritated and angered. Wait a while until the child cools off, until reason and shame have had a chance to make themselves felt. Do not be quick to punish. Punishment ought to be the sanction of the verdict that the child him/herself renders. Public humiliation is never good, but reminding the student of faults already confessed and corrected is even worse. Do not try to motivate the student by self-love. [...] Neither should you encourage the student to do good out of self-interest or human respect.

P. Smolikowski, *Directorium of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Resurrection*, Lwów 1932.

[p. 256] Superiors should not reprimand and punish students when they themselves are agitated, or when the student is upset. A reprimand misses its mark when one or the other party is aroused. Therefore, the Sisters should seek to calm themselves through prayer, wait until the student has calmed down, and only then reprimand or punish. One who cannot control herself will never be able to exert a Christian, saving influence upon someone else. One should never shame or humble students in front of others; hence, a superior should not raise her voice or scold them loudly if they have committed an offense.

The Society for the Support of the Russian Boarding School directed by the Priests of the Congregation of the Resurrection in Lwów, (Report of Fr. Smolikowski, C.R.), Lwów 1889.

[p. 17] Fr. Kalinka writes in his note: From my many years of experience, I would say that if you are a true friend and companion to the students, if you live with them, you will learn everything. A supervisory eye, even that of a father, will not spot many things, but nothing will be hidden from the eye of a friend. In our boarding school we try to be fathers to our students; once they have left the school, we hope to be their friends and companions.

APPENDICES

R. Kurtz, *Circular Letter on the Occasion of the Conclusion of the 28th General Chapter of the Congregation of the Resurrection*, Rome 1987 (sections).

VOCATIONS

Several times during the general chapter, the question of new vocations to the Congregation was raised as a serious concern. While we praise and thank the Lord for the vocations which He has sent to our Community, the lack of vocations, especially in North America and Western Europe, is a source of anxiety and suffering for the whole Congregation. In the future planning documents, the chapter delegates expressed this concern in what might be described as classic understatement: "We need to promote vocations more enthusiastically"! In this context, the modification introduced into paragraph 172 of the Constitutions might be more indicative of the thinking of the chapter delegates: "Each member is charged with the serious obligation and responsibility of fostering and developing vocations for the Congregation. The vocation director will lead and animate these efforts."

The vocation question is complicated and difficult, yet it is one which affects each one of us personally. There are no easy answers, no simple solutions. But the question requires serious reflection and discussion. I would like to offer some initial thoughts and I say "initial" because we must return to this topic regularly and often, at every level of our Community life.

It appears to me that the crisis in vocations and the pain which accompanies it in our community life is a God-given

opportunity for each of us to reflect on our understanding and appreciation of our own religious vocation. We need to examine our conscience. I suggest it is not in order to assign guilt or to lay blame for the present lack of vocations, but to allow us to respond humbly to the grace of the moment. We need to find the Lord's love at the heart of the pain and problem. Serious reflection, personal prayer and fraternal dialogue on the vocation issue can be a means that the Lord will use to bring us closer to Himself, to enter more profoundly into the process of continual conversion. It may be that in the pain and problem of fewer vocations, the Lord is calling us to renewed appreciation of the radical values of our own religious vocation and a renewed acceptance of His personal call to each of us. I offer some questions for reflection and meditation:

1. How deeply do we really experience the value of our vocation to religious life? Do we see our vocation as a unique and personal expression of God's overwhelming love?
2. How important is it to us, in fact, that there be new vocations to our Congregation? Are we, perhaps, too busy to think about it, much less do anything about it?
3. How often do we personally pray for new vocations? Do we include public prayer for vocations in our CR gatherings? Do we ever organize prayer for vocations in our parishes and schools? Do we agree that prayer is necessary, essential, if there are to be new vocations to our Community?
4. When was the last time we made a personal effort to invite a serious candidate to consider joining our Congregation? Perhaps we need to examine the pattern of our life and ministry. It may be that we have little contact with young people or that, in fact, we take little interest in them. Should this be the case, the Congregation's call for a preferential option for ministry to youth takes an even

greater urgency. Young people need special attention and assistance in so many areas of life today. They especially need assistance in discerning the Lord's call in the midst of the noise and distractions of contemporary society.

5. Do we project an image of happy, enthusiastic and effective members of the Congregation? Do young people see us as religious men who have a sense of purpose and mission? Men who have something to say, something to offer the Church and the world today?

As suggested earlier, the vocation crisis can be an expression of the Lord's call to each of us to renew our lives and to reexamine the love and appreciation we have for our own vocation. If we project an image of authentic joy in our religious call to this Congregation of the Resurrection, we will certainly be attractive to others. In the meantime, we must consider awareness to vocation a priority for the entire Congregation. It must enter into our personal ministry and the life of our local houses. New vocations must also be a concern for the superiors of the Congregation at all levels.

Finally, our efforts must be based on the firm and humble conviction that it is the Lord who calls. Our task is to pray for vocations and be ready to serve as the Lord's ministers to young people who may be looking for vocational guidance.

The Circular Letter of the Extended General Council, Rome 1988 (sections about house meeting).

The basic materials on the house meeting which were discussed at the EGC meeting were provided by the local superiors of the Congregation. Of the nine local superiors selected by the provincial superiors, eight responded with descriptions of their house meetings and reflections on their experience. These responses included the following:

1. A brief description of similar experiences throughout the provinces regarding the house meeting.
2. The characteristics of a successful house meeting
3. The signs of an unsuccessful house meeting

SIMILAR EXPERIENCES

1. Even though the house meeting was a distinctive characteristic of the house of Jański, the practice disappeared in the Community after his death. Therefore, there is a general view in the Congregation that house meetings are something new to our everyday experience. At the same time, after the Second Vatican Council, many religious communities have come to see the need for regular house meetings as a means of ongoing formation.
2. Many houses in the Congregation are struggling to reach the goal of regular, effective house meetings. There is also a good deal of frustration involved in trying to achieve this ideal.
3. It appears that the more formal the approach to the house meeting (*e.g.*, serious planning as well as an established time, place, agenda and format), the more effective the house meeting.
4. Leadership of the superior is essential for successful house meetings, whether he conducts the meeting himself or through another.
5. Special planning and care must be exercised when the members of the religious house live in different residences.
6. Throughout the Congregation the regularity of house meetings varies from once a week to several times a year.
7. Education and practical experience in house meetings is needed in some houses of formation in the Community.
8. Generally speaking there is fear and hesitancy among the members regarding faith-sharing at house meetings.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL HOUSE MEETING

1. Leadership and effective planning by the local superior or some other designated person.
2. Some type of definite format to be followed, *e.g.*, faith-sharing with the use of Sacred Scriptures, reflection on the Constitutions or some other kind of agreed upon process.
3. Personal commitment and contribution to the house meeting by each member of the house. Each member must be willing to sacrifice for the good of the group, for example, by arranging his personal calendar and apostolic appointments in favour of the house meeting.

SIGNS OF AN UNSUCCESSFUL HOUSE MEETING

1. Domination of the meeting by one person in the group, be it the superior or one of the house members.
2. Limitation of the house meeting to business matters only, *e.g.*, house order or complaints.
3. Consistent absence from the meeting by certain house members.
4. Poor planning and irregular scheduling of the meetings.
5. Lack of any element of faith sharing, *i.e.*, the experience of our faith in God which takes into account our relationship to each other, to the Congregation and to the people we serve.

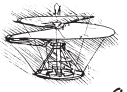
Certainly much more could and should be said about the local house meetings. General and Provincial visitations will be concerned with this question. Superiors' meetings should also review the practice of the house meeting. Further reflections will form part of the materials and practical suggestions for our celebration of Founders' Day in 1989. For those who have good house meetings, continue your practice and

share your experience with the rest of the Congregation; to those who are struggling, do not lose heart, be patient, house meetings are not easy; to those who have given up or have not yet begun, do not be afraid!

Let the words of Bogdan Jański guide us and encourage us to the goal of regular and effective house meetings: "*From the time of our coming together in this house we have often gathered together for house meetings on spiritual matters* [...] *after communion. We have found great value in this practice and often great joy. We have even considered this to be an obligatory practice*."

May the intercession of our Founder and the grace of God assist us in working towards more effective house meetings throughout the Congregation as a means of ongoing formation in our Resurrectionist Charism.

Realizzazione editoriale



Ingegno Grafico

SERVIZI INTEGRATI PER LA GRAFICA
LA STAMPA E L'EDITORIA
www.ingegnografico.com

O Risen Jesus,
You called Bogdan Jański,
Peter Semenenko, Jerome Kajsiewicz
and Paul Smolikowski
to proclaim Your unconditional love
for all people
and to witness to the resurrection
by dying to self
in order to live a new life
by the power of Your Spirit.
Glorify Your servants by way of beatification
so that the example of their lives
of constant conversion
may bring the hope of resurrection
to all who continue to struggle with sin,
error and their own human weakness.

Amen.


CONGREGATIO A RESURRECTIONE
A
Ω