

THE INTEGRAL COPY
of the
ORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONS



of the
SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

written by the Foundress

M. LEOPOLDINA NAUDET

English translation by
Rev. Joseph Henchey, CSS

[2000]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foundress' Prayer4

**THE COMPENDIUM OF THE PLAN OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE SISTERS
of the HOLY FAMILY.....5**

First Part

Chapter 1: On receiving Candidates.....10
 Chapter 2: On dismissing those who have already been admitted
 for Formation12
 Chapter 3: Regarding the Novitiate14

Second Part

CONCERNING THE VIRTUES

Chapter 1: Concerning Charity toward God and its Exercise17
 Chapter 2: Concerning Charity and Mutual Union20
 Chapter 3: Concerning Humility22
 Chapter 4: Concerning Poverty24
 Chapter 5: Concerning Chastity and Modesty27
 Chapter 6: Concerning Obedience28
 Chapter 7: Concerning some Matters that ought to be observed,
 and which will assist in the Practice of Virtues
 already mentioned30
 Chapter 8: Concerning the Time of Illness.....33
 Chapter 9: Concerning the Cloister35

Third Part

**CONCERNING STUDY AND THE MEANS THAT THE INSTITUTE
USES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS NEIGHBORS**

Introduction37
 Chapter 1: Concerning that which the Sisters ought to do
 in order to make themselves suited for
 Study38
 Chapter 2: Times and Matters of Instruction39
 Chapter 3: Concerning the Means which the Institute employs
 for the Eternal Salvation of its Neighbors41

Part Four
CONCERNING THAT WHICH PERTAINS TO THE FIRST SUPERIOR
AND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE INSTITUTE

Chapter 1: Concerning the Superior44

Chapter 2: Concerning that which pertains to the First Superior....47

Chapter 3: Concerning the helps that are to be given to the
 First Superior50

Chapter 4: Concerning the Regime of the Houses52

Chapter 5: Concerning some Matters under closer scrutiny that
 Were considered in this Part55

Last Chapter: The Fact that these Constitutions do not oblige
 under sin.....57

COMMON RULES58

FORMULAE OF SIMPLE VOWS AND SOLEMN PROFESSION65

The Formula of Simple Vows65

The Formula of Solemn Profession65

The Formula for the Renewal of Vows65

SUMMARY of the Teachings that can maintain the Spirit of the
 Sisters of the Holy Family.....66

Concerning the Necessity of the Constitutions66

Concerning the end and the manner of life
 in the Institute.....66

Concerning the removal of disorderly affection for the
 World.....66

Concerning Genuine Self-Abnegation.....67

Concerning the Struggle for Perfection and Solid Virtue.....68

Concerning on the Care of the Interior Life.....69

Concerning Poverty.....70

Concerning Chastity and the Custody of the Senses.....70

Concerning Obedience.....71

Concerning our Union and Conformity73

Illness.....73

Eternal Father,

*I offer You the Passion, the Death, the Blood of
Jesus Christ*

*and whatever He suffered and accomplished in this
world.*

*I implore You in His name and for His infinite merits,
through the sorrows and merits of Mary Most Holy,*

and of St. Joseph

*and of all the men and women saints of Paradise,
for the protection and strengthening of the Institute.*

*Endow Your servants with grace, whom You have redeemed with
Your Precious Blood.*

Jesus most powerful, mercifully hear us.

Powerful Virgin, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

**THE COMPENDIUM of the PLAN
of the INSTITUTE of the
SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY.**

1. The Institute of the **Sisters of the Holy Family** is so named because of that special devotion practiced from the very beginning of our Union towards **Jesus, Mary and Joseph**. We desire that this be ever strengthened in our spirit, out of gratitude for the favor obtained in going forward in this institution, that we might render perennial the fruits of such an efficacious patronage, for the increase and the perfect establishment of the good that has been undertaken.

Therefore, all of us in this Union are together regarding the common purposes and our affections, almost in the very shadow of this devotion. We would like, therefore, to have this name, and to be called the **Devout Sisters of the Holy Family**, or more briefly, in the same understanding, the **Sisters of the Holy Family**.

2. The scope of this Institute, then, is the imitation of **Jesus Christ**, seeking to perfect those who accompany Him in the spirit of charity toward God and towards their neighbor. With this in mind, they study, as in their source, the activities and the affections of this most ardent charity toward God and human beings. They take as their guide the most glorious patriarch, St. Joseph. Because of his intimate union with those most sacred hearts, he occupied such a high grade in this school of charity.

From here we will learn to sanctify our souls through the exercise of all the virtues, and to procure the salvation of our neighbors, in so far as this is possible to our sex.

For this end are directed the rules that are observed in this Institute.

3. The spirit of this Institute is essentially based on the mortification of ourselves, on prayer and on interior recollection. From these, proceeds every good and fruitful activity. We are committed to studying the **Holy Family** most

profoundly, in order to unite our intentions to it and to conform our activities to it.

4. The means which are employed for the eternal salvation of our neighbors, are principally the four which follow:

1.] The education of the young girls who board in our houses.

2.] That tuition-free education of the young girls, whether poor or well off, who come as day students to our schools.

3.] Further, the teaching of the young girls of the Parish in which our Institute is established. This is especially so when they come to be prepared for the most holy sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

4.] The spiritual exercises [preached by suitable priests, approved by the Ordinary] which will be arranged during the course of the year for those persons who might wish to come to our houses for this purpose. These exercises will take place in a part of the house separated from the community, the convent and the school.

5. There are two classes of persons who make up this Institute. The first is comprised of those destined for the offices and to sustain the charges of education and instruction. The other is made up of those who take care of the temporal matters and the other needs of the house.

6. The young women who enter this Institute, following a careful scrutiny, will make three months of Postulancy, which will form their first probation. This time could be either prolonged or shortened by the Superior, according to the circumstances.

Following this, and when it has been judged that there is some probability that they are suitable for the Institute, they will be admitted to the Novitiate, which will last two years.

Then they will make the three customary simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. And to obviate every danger, and to give assurance of constancy as members of the Institute,

only after seven years will they make their final vows. (This time could be lengthened or shortened as noted above).

During this time, should any Sister, for grave and just reasons, be sent away, she will be free from the obligation of these vows that she made, as is stated in the Constitutions.

7. The Sisters of the **Holy Family** live a perfect common life. They wear a black habit, simple in style, modest in its uniformity, with silk being absolutely excluded. It is to be such that it serves for edification, reminding the people of the world that these Sisters with whom they are dealing, are consecrated to God.

8. The cloister, which brings with it so many advantages, will be maintained in this Institute in the best possible manner.

There will, therefore, be grates and turns; and no one will go out other than for new foundations of the Institute, or to develop these, in conformity to what is explained in the Constitutions.

Nor is it possible to bring anyone inside our houses, other than in those necessary cases as indicated in the Constitutions.

9. There are no obligatory corporal penances observed in the Institute.

The rule adds only what follows to those fasts those prescribed by the Church:

- the vigils of the feasts of the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

- that of the feast of the Most Holy Sorrowful Mother Mary, on the third Sunday of September,

- that of St. Michael, the Arch-angel,

- that of the patronage of St. Joseph.

10. All will attend in a particular manner to their spiritual exercises, the principal of which are:

Each day:

- one hour of meditation in the morning - Holy Mass - the two examinations of conscience - and a spiritual reading.

- There will be recited each day in choir those Psalms whose opening letters make up the most holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Every week, each will go to confession - and a special general confession every year.

As for Holy Communion, this may be received whenever the confessor will grant permission, with the assent also of the Superior.

Finally, the retreat will be made each year, in order to be renewed in fervor and in the spirit of our state of life.

11. There will be the adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, which it is hoped, would become perpetual. However, since the Sisters are impeded by their activities on behalf of their neighbor, it will be held at least on the day of the Most Blessed Sacrament, as well as through the entire octave, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, every first Friday of the month, and on all the Friday's of March. It will further be conducted on the anniversary of the date in which the Most Blessed Sacrament was placed for the first time in the church of the monastery, or of the house in which the Sisters live. In addition, it will be celebrated whenever the Superior judges that it might be held without any difficulty for the Sisters' health.

12. The purpose of the Institute is to give glory to God in imitation of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, keeping busy with genuine zeal promoting their own perfection and the sanctification of their neighbors. This scope should also be kept in mind when the community has to give attention to the choice of the subjects to be admitted.

Among the candidates, there will be accepted only virgins of unquestioned conduct, and those who have constantly enjoyed in the world a good reputation, and who have been born of a legitimate marriage.

They should have good health, good intelligence, a right spirit, be docile, just, and not subject to melancholy, or rapid changes of mood. They must have a sincere desire to consecrate themselves to God, and a willing disposition to submit

themselves to obedience. They will need good sense, or at least the aptitude to acquire whatever they might lack regarding instruction. Those born of Jewish parents, unless in the case that they will have embraced our holy faith prior to age seven.

13. Those who are admitted into this Institute to take care of the domestic duties, in addition to having been born of legitimate marriage, etc., as noted above, they must have sufficient strength, a good conscience, and yearn for virtue and the perfection of their state. They have to be content with their lot as Martha, and not aspire to higher services.

14. They may retain the ownership of their goods until the taking of their final vows. But from the moment of their entrance into the Institute, they cease enjoying the use of these. Should they be not accepted, then their goods will be restored to them.

15. There will be a first Superior elected for life by a Chapter, according to what is established in the Constitutions.

As the Institute spreads, she will be assisted by two sisters (and according to the extent of how the Institute will develop, the number of these assistants will be in accord with what is stated in the Constitutions) from among those who are judged to be the most prudent. The Superior will take their counsel in all the matters of any importance, to determine what will be considered to be the greater glory of God.

PART ONE
Chapter One
ON RECEIVING CANDIDATES

1. To have some idea of the importance is the choice of candidates to be admitted into the Institute, one could argue from reflecting on the fact that on this, rests the entire good of the Institute.

Therefore, the office of examining those who may present themselves is of such importance that the Superior will do this herself. And only serious duties can dispense her from this. In such a case, the Superior will commit the charge to one of the Sisters who is prudent, and truly permeated with the importance of this duty.

2. The Sister who might be chosen for this duty, should faithfully observe the particular regulations relative to it and to be efficaciously disposed for this responsibility with purity of intention and with recourse to prayer, to receive the lights of the Holy Spirit, so necessary in a matter of such importance.

She will not permit herself for any reason whatsoever be swayed from what she will judge to be of greater convenience for divine service, nor be concerned with any desire simply to admit candidates.

Rather, she will seek only the greater glory of God, which ought to be procured in this Institute.

3. The intention of this Institute is to give glory to God and to sanctify ourselves with the imitation of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, by committing ourselves with genuine zeal to one's own sanctification as well as to that of our neighbor. These purposes are those which ought to regulate the choice of subjects to be admitted, and to take into consideration what needs to be examined, by the Sister who examines the candidate.

4. Only virgins of unquestioned conduct will be admitted, and those who have constantly enjoyed in the world a good reputation, and have been born of a legitimate marriage.

They ought to have good health, and not be afflicted with bad humor, from which one might morally fear that such individuals could contract some more serious malady, that would render them unable to support the fatigue and the different duties of the Institute.

They ought to have a good education, to be gifted with a good mind, a right spirit, docile and even tempered, not subjected to melancholy, nor rapid changes of mood. Rather, the candidates should be constant and inclined to harmony of spirit and mutual charity. They should be endowed with a sincere desire of consecrating themselves to God, and a ready disposition to be submitted to obedience.

Finally, they should have that knowledge that would fit them for the purpose that the Institute sets for itself. They should be gifted for the christian instruction of the youth, and have at least the attitude and good will to acquire whatever it is that may be lacking to them in this regard.

Those who have been in other Institutes or Congregations will not be admitted. The reason is that in such instances there may be a well founded fear of a wavering and inconstant character. However, those cases would be excepted when they might be some moral assurance to the contrary.

Nor can those candidates be admitted who have been born of Jewish parents, unless in the case that they have embraced our holy faith prior to having reached seven years of age.

5. Concerning vocations, it is right to examine what the motives are that move candidates to seek entrance into the Institute. This is needed in order to know whether their purpose is correct, and whether they are truly motivated by a genuine desire to consecrate themselves to the divine service. It has to be known whether they truly wish to tend toward their own perfection and to the sanctification of their neighbor. It must be declared to the candidates what total abnegation of themselves will be asked of them, to which they will have to submit themselves in whatever obedience will be prescribed for them in the Lord.

CHAPTER TWO
ON DISMISSING THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN
ADMITTED FOR FORMATION.

1. No matter what level of prudence and circumspection has been exercised in the admission of subjects, not always will all correspond to the vocation received. With the passing of time, it might be discovered that some candidates who have remained may not be suited for the good of the Institute. Should someone have to be dismissed, this should be done in a mature way, thinking the matter over well before the Lord.

2. Candidates may be dismissed not only during the course of the novitiate, but for serious reasons, also during that time which precedes final vows. Nonetheless, every effort should be taken during the novitiate to know the character and the qualities of those who have been admitted. And whenever certain defects might become known from which little hope may be expressed for a correction, it will be far better to make known that they are not suited for this institute, prior to admitting them to simple vows.

3. The principal reasons for dismissing candidates are the following:

1. - A serious illness that had not appeared earlier, or commitments contracted in the world, which had not been made known upon entrance.

2. - Defects of temperament through which it can be judged that such individuals would be a real burden for the Institute, and that charity might in some way be disturbed.

3. - There comes to be noted in a candidate a lack of ability to achieve the purpose of the Institute which are part of the personality of the individual, who may not choose to submit her own judgment, and to subject herself to obedience.

4. Only with great prudence and charity should the community proceed to the dismissal of candidate, particularly observing what follows here:

1. - To have recourse to God with humble and fervent prayer, in begging of Him the light to make the decision, and to know what His most holy will is. This is also to despoil oneself of all personal reasons, and placing before oneself only the greater glory of God, and the greater good to be achieved. In this spirit should the decision to dismiss be deliberated.

2. - Once the decision has been reached the greatest charity should be manifested toward the candidate to be dismissed, so that she might know that no prejudice or subjective reason entered into the decision. She should be informed that she simply is not suited for this vocation. And should she have already pronounced her simple vows, by her being dismissed she is absolved from any obligation that she would have contracted with these.

3. - There should be restored to her any movable goods that she brought to the convent. Care should be taken also to assist her, if she should find herself in need.

This is the procedure that should be followed that she might remain still well disposed toward the Institute, that outsiders might be edified, and that charity be not disturbed, for the just decision that has been made to send those away who do not have a vocation.

5. Should a Sister have voluntarily left the Institute, and then later should apply for re-admission, this should not be permitted, except in certain rare cases, where it might seem that this would be pleasing to God. This would be especially true where one may have left because of some very strong temptation, or had been deceived by others. However, once again it should be discerned whether she is suitable to serve the Lord in this vocation - whether she has the genuine will to persevere - and whether she is ready to undergo a certain penance or period of trial.

CHAPTER THREE
REGARDING THE NOVITIATE

1. Once it is recognized that the person who presents herself does have the qualities proper to the Institute, she is admitted to the First Probation. This will last three months, for those who are destined for further studies, and it will be a period of six months for those who are to take care of the needs of the house.

This time can be lengthened, or shortened, according to the Superior's judgment.

Then, the Sister will be admitted to the Second Probation, or the Novitiate, that will last two years.

2. In this time of Novitiate, care will be taken that the Novices will be formed and adjust to the spirit of the Institute, as they control their passions and inclinations.

Care will likewise be taken to form them to a strong, vigorous devotion, having God Alone as the principle and purpose of their activities. They will learn to desire God Alone as their only reward, both in time as well as in eternity, with a perfect abnegation of themselves.

3. Among the duties proper to the Novices, particular care will be given to instruct them in the practice of the religious virtues, founded on the truth of our holy faith and on the duties of our holy religion. In all these, it is all the more pressing that the Sisters be well trained, when they are called into an Institute dedicated to teaching and instructing the youth.

4. After two years of Novitiate, when the Superior will have judged that a subject has the qualities suited for the purpose of the Institute, she will admit her to the customary simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The formula of the vows (which will have to be deeply considered well beforehand) will be pronounced out loud, before

the Most Blessed Sacrament, immediately before receiving Holy Communion and in the presence solely of the members of the house.

5. When she will be bound by these vows to the Institute, the Sister will remain another year in the Novitiate. Then, up until her final vows, she will be under the vigilance of the Mistress of the Novices.

Throughout this time, however, she may be employed in accord with what the Superior will judge best. And if she does not have those qualifications that are needed to satisfy the purpose of the Institute, she will be able to acquire these in terminating those studies that might be seemed the most opportune, to assist in bringing glory to God in it.

6. After seven years, a period that might be shortened in the Superior's judgment, she will pronounce those final vows, or the Profession (after having obtained the approval of His Excellency, the Bishop). These will be pronounced before the Most Blessed Sacrament, into the hands of the First Superior, or of the one who might have received the faculty from her, in the presence of the others of the house, or of those who might not belong to it, but might be present in Church.

7. After she has received this profession, the name of the person who has made the Profession, will be written in a book that will be kept for this purpose. The name of the one who received the Profession will also be inscribed, noting the day, month and year. And there will be conserved a written copy of the vows she has made, so that it might all be for the glory of God.

8. Both in these simple vows, as well as in the Solemn Profession, everything ought to be done in accord with the spirit of the Church. Everything that might indicate a worldly spirit must be scrupulously avoided, such as invited guests, refreshments, visits, or anything of this nature. All such things serve more for the dissipation of the spirit, and for

little edification for our neighbors. In all matters, we need to be concerned about the greater glory of God.

9. From the moment of their entrance into the Institute, they will hand over the administration of their personal goods to the Superior. Divesting themselves of all their possessions, and of what might come to them later, they will give all of this over into the hands of the Superior.

SECOND PART
CONCERNING THE VIRTUES

Chapter One

Concerning Charity toward God and its Exercise

1. Since charity toward God is that virtue which ought particularly to reign in the heart of the Sisters of the Holy Family, it is also the soul of all their activities, and of the practice of charity for our neighbor, they will apply themselves to the tireless study of this virtue, taking as their model the heart of Jesus Christ, which was totally inflamed with love for His Divine Father, and with zeal for the salvation of souls.

2. In all their actions, they will aim for God, and with purity of intention they seek to please Him Alone. They desire Him Alone as the only reward for whatever they will accomplish in behalf of their neighbor.

And so, in order to achieve greater perfection they will not receive any gift, nor anything as a kind of recompense or in recognition for what has been accomplished for the advantage and well-being of their neighbor.

3. In order to inflame their own hearts with charity toward God, a most efficacious incitement will be their frequent visiting of the most Holy Sacrament, to adore Him, to thank Him; and thus making reparation in some way for the outrages and the ingratitude that the most lovable heart of Jesus receives there.

Therefore (since there will often be experienced an impediment in maintaining the perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament because of our duties in behalf of our neighbor, then in the Novitiate, or in those houses where the number of Sisters would be sufficient for this) it will be conducted at least on the Feast of the Most Blessed Sacrament, with its entire Octave, and on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as well as on the First Friday of the month, and on all the Friday's of March; the anniversary date on which the Most

Blessed Sacrament was placed in the church of the monastery, or the house in which the Institute resides. Furthermore, any other time the Superior might judge that this adoration can be held, without any harm being suffered either to the health or duties of the Sisters.

4. Silence, as the faithful guardian of the interior and recollected spirit, and also of good order and of charity, will be exactly observed, at all times, other than the two recreations which immediately follow dinner and supper.

5. In the morning, at the sound of the bell, each one will arise immediately, thinking that she has been called by the Lord to begin that day, totally committed as each one should be to His Divine Service. With fervor, each will offer herself to God for this purpose, begging Him that that day that lies before her about to begin, will be full before Him.

6. When they are dressed, they will go to the choir to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Then there is read a brief morning offering and the point of the meditation, each will make mental prayer for the space of one hour.

7. They will assist at Holy Mass every day with greater devotion, and they will make spiritual reading, as well as two examinations of conscience, in that period that will be assigned for them. They will further recite each day in Choir those Psalms whose initial letters make up the most holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. No other duty will be undertaken as it would be incompatible with the continuous pledge of the Institute in behalf of its neighbors.

8. Every week, they will approach the Sacrament of Penance, to the same Confessor, chosen by the Superior from among those approved by the Ordinary.

The Superior will take care also that the Sisters, in accord with the spirit of the Church, might have available to them during the year, the Extraordinary Confessor.

9. All the Sisters will make the annual retreat, and in that time, make their annual General Confession.

As far as Holy Communion is concerned, there will not be established set days. However, each Sister will go whenever this is granted by her Confessor, with the Superior's assent. The desire is that each one go to Holy Communion frequently, in conformity with the profit that she receives from It, and the effect It will have on her spirit, whether she receives, or is deprived of It. All of this needs to be weighed by the Superior before God, for the greater advancement of souls.

Let there be one Confessor for all the Sisters, as was stated above. No one, without the permission of the Superior, should get spiritual advice from others. She will be open to this, as the needs of the Sisters may dictate.

10. Charity toward our God proceeds from charity toward our neighbor. The Sisters, therefore, animated by this charity, and on their reflection regarding the cost these souls were to our most lovable Redeemer, they will work with genuine zeal, under the guidance of obedience, to direct them to the path of salvation, according to the end of the Institute and the means used to reach this goal.

Chapter Two

Concerning Charity and Mutual Union

1. Since the Lord, out of His infinite mercy and goodness, has called to one and the same vocation, all who are in this Institute, for the purpose of honoring in it His Holy Family and to work for the sanctification of their neighbors, the Sisters are joined by this vocation, will also be united by a love among them that is truly special. They will love each other with a mutual charity, that has God Alone as its principle and goal.

2. In accord with the precept of the Apostle, they will 'love one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honor preventing one another' (cf. Rm 12:10, considering others more worthy of honor) with manifestations of esteem and benevolence.

They will give in to the wishes of their Sisters in whatever is just and reasonable, having compassion on one another, offering mutual support. And should there arise among them some difference of opinion, and should they express their position, they will propose their reasons with modesty and charity, with the desire only that truth win out, and not just so that one's own view prevail.

3. There should be no partiality shown among the Sisters, neither by reason of family relationship, nor because of nationality. Generally, all will guard against particular friendships, that destroy fraternal charity which should reign in singular manner among them.

4. In order that this charity might be better maintained, no occasion should be allowed to arise that would offend it. No one should ever say a word that might displease another, nor should anyone contradict another, nor interfere in the offices of another, without a particular order from the Superior, observing what the Apostle says: 'Take heed to thyself' (1 Tm 4:16).

When this is faithfully observed, it will contribute mightily to preserving charity.

5. If, through human frailty, it should happen that one Sister upset another, she should not let the day pass without making this up.

Chapter Three

Concerning Humility

1. Since humility is the foundation of all the other virtues, the **Sisters of the Holy Family** will study it carefully in the most lovable heart of **Jesus**. He chose in a special manner to be the teacher of this virtue, saying in the holy Gospel: 'Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart.' (Mt 11:29).

And from within their own nothingness, each will think very lowly of herself, each one considering herself to be the least of all.

2. Since by their very vocation, the Sisters are called to cooperate in the eternal salvation of their neighbors, with all the more reason they should be humble, and penetrated with the sentiment of their own wretchedness and unworthiness. They consider it a special grace that they have been chosen by the Lord for such a great good.

And with all their spirit the Sisters ought to give totally of themselves to the divine service. At the same time, they need to think of themselves as useless servants in the Lord's House, in accord with what our Divine Redeemer said in his holy Gospel: *Cum feceritis omnia quae praecepta sunt vobis dicite: Servi inutiles sumus: quod debuimus facere, fecimus.* This means: 'So you also, when you have done all these things that are commanded, you say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.' (Lk 17:10).

3. Each one will accept humbly whatever has been decided by the Superior regarding duties, as well as whatever else has been commanded by her. And with true humility of heart each Sister will be ready to take care of the most humble and abject services, as far as the world would judge these remembering **Jesus Christ** who out of love for us, submitted Himself to every humiliation.

4. For the greater abnegation of themselves and progress in the virtues, the Sisters will be content when their defects are

made known to the Superior, no matter who may have seen her commit these, and makes them known to the Superior.

5. All those who in the judgment of the Superior are not impeded by occupations of greater importance, or by some indisposition because of illness, should make their own beds and tidy their own rooms. Each one should take full advantage in every encounter to avoid making themselves served, remembering that our Divine Redeemer said of Himself: *Non veni ministrari, sed ministrare*. 'I have not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give my life a redemption for many.' (cf. Mt 20:28).

Chapter Four

Concerning Poverty

1. Since Jesus Christ and our Lord states in the holy Gospel that 'blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5:3), the Sisters of the **Holy Family** will strive first of all, as a result of this, to achieve this poverty so necessary for the acquisition of the reign of heaven. And they will love it tenderly also in its effects, since it was the virtue that stood out so sublimely in the **Holy Family. Jesus Christ**, our Lord, also chose it for His own inseparable companion from His birth in a stable until His death on a cross.

2. They should remember that poverty is the most secure foundation of the state of religion, and that it keeps religious discipline alive. And just as the desire of money, as St. Paul says, is the root of all evil (cf. 1 Tm 6:10), so poverty is the root and foundation of all the virtues and of every good.

3. Let them make known at the proper occasions, their esteem and love for this virtue, and the disdain they have for all that the world loves and looks for, as wealth, honors, and the like. And let all watch over their own hearts to keep them always detached from that which self love might incline them to desire, and also from all that which from obedience will be granted to them for their own use.

4. Even though the churches and the houses can have and possess in ownership certain goods as their own, the spirit of poverty must not be in the least lessened because of this, our goods belong to the Community.

And no Sister can ever, under any pretext, have the least possession as her own. And she will receive as a gesture of charity whatever will be dispensed to her by the community.

5. Regarding the use of goods, the Sisters ought to have the Superior's permission. It pertains to her to determine and permit for use whatever is necessary for each one. And she will

be advised not to grant general permission, as these open the way for many abuses in this matter.

6. Whatever money may be received, will be put into the common account. And if anything else should come to be given for any Sister, either from her family, or from some other source, it will be disposed of by the Superior as she judges the matter as best before the Lord.

7. For the greater exercise of this virtue, the Sisters will not only not possess anything as their own, but neither will they be able to give away, to loan, or to receive goods in any manner, either from the members of the house or from others. And no one will take anything of the house either for her own use, or to reserve it for others, without the Superior's permission.

8. No one will keep her room locked, so that it cannot be opened from the outside, or with any other closure, without the Superior's permission. The exception would be if there was some reason because of one's work, as might then be deemed necessary.

9. Regarding the meals, clothing and all else, any effort will be made that it all be according to poverty. And the Sisters will be content with what has been administered to them by the community, according to one's needs. They will never have discussions about these matters.

The habit will be black, simple style, modest and uniform, and absolutely excluding silk.

In the room there will only be the bed, a small table, a small kneeler and two straw chairs.

The food, which has to be the same for all, in accord with the method already prescribed, will be different only out of necessity (which will be judged by the Superior) as is read in the Acts of the Apostles: that among the members of the early Church, everything was held in common, and distribution was made according to the necessities and needs of each one (Ac 4:35,f.).

10. Authentic poverty is exercised better in the lack of some necessities. This thought should come to the Sisters when at times, there may not be immediately granted what they have requested. And they will not manifest that concern that might be defective, whenever the denial of their requests might not bring harm to their health. In such a case, they should make the matter known to the Superior.

11. So that holy poverty be maintained at all times and with ever greater perfection, and there will not gradually be introduced those abuses which often occur from an abundance of goods, each house will have an established budget. And whatever is left over, should be used for receiving some who with true vocation and qualities suited for the Institute, might not have the required dowry, and for using it for the extension of the Institute itself to some city, where it might be established, for the glory of God and the good of souls.

Chapter Five

Concerning Chastity and Modesty

1. Our most beloved Jesus, having wished to be born of a virgin, as also having chosen for His foster-father, St. **Joseph** who was also a virgin, the Sisters of the **Holy Family** ought to esteem this virtue and to imitate as far as they can, the purity of the angels. To arrive at this height, they must act always with purity of intention, having only for their scope in the actions the greater glory of God, their own perfection, and the sanctification of their neighbors.

2. Regarding the vow of chastity, it is quite evident with what perfection the Sisters ought to observe it, both with the purity of their own spirit and of their heart, as with the vigilance over their sentiments.

3. They will keep careful custody at all times and in every meeting, and with every caution possible, over their senses, which are the gates of their soul. Let modesty shine forth in all their actions. Let them be guarded in their speech, cautious with their eyes, and sober in eating. And in all their external conduct that this be joined to their humility and modesty with a religious maturity.

They should not touch one another, even in jest, keeping before their minds that edification that ought to be given by one who is dedicated to the divine service.

4. They will flee laziness, the origin of every evil, and will practice that holy internal mortification, in so far as this will be possible in everything, and the greater abnegation of themselves.

As for external mortification, they will depend on the Superior's permission.

Chapter Six

Concerning Obedience

1. **Jesus Christ**, our Lord, being obedient to His divine Father even unto death, and death on the Cross, also exercised this obedience for thirty years toward **Mary** most holy, and to **St. Joseph**. So, the Sisters of the **Holy Family** will seek the greater perfection in this virtue which will be their characteristic.

1 - out of love and special devotion that they profess toward the **Holy Family**,

2 - because the sacrifice of themselves would be quite imperfect if it lacked the most noble faculty, which is their will,

3 - because the means which they employ for the salvation of their neighbors are varied, this virtue of obedience that subjects the whole person to God, and for love of this same God and for Superiors, is all the more necessary to allow oneself to be regulated in the exercise of these external operations.

2. The Sisters will not be content in obeying only with their external actions, but they will submit their intellects, and will bring into uniformity their wills to the Superior's.

They will regulate themselves within by their obedience, under which the more easily will the illusions of the common enemy disguise themselves, which under the aspect of virtue, deceives souls.

They will consider the Superior, whoever she may be, as taking the place of Jesus Christ our Lord. With the accompaniment of faith, they will receive her orders and her every disposition as the expressed will of God. They will carry out orders lovingly and with subjection of spirit and heart.

3. Animated with this faith, they will conduct themselves with utmost reverence and respect toward the Superior, considering in her **Jesus Christ** our Lord. And at the same time, they will love

her as a mother; and whenever she will speak to them, or correct them, they will listen humbly without interrupting her.

And should one of them ever be denied something by her, they will not speak of it to another who might have received from her some authority, unless they manifest to her the denial of their request, for their greater submission.

4. For the greater exercise in obedience, the Sisters will not be content in obeying only the Superior, but also they extend this to another Sister of the house who might have received from her some authority. The Sisters will also obey the Sister in charge of the work to which they may be assigned. They will likewise submit to the Sisters entrusted with the temporal needs of the house, whenever they might be sent to help them in their work. In all this, they will see in each of these Sisters Christ our Lord, for the love of Whom, they obey.

5. To facilitate for them the more the practice of obedience in every meeting and occasion, they will have great esteem and love for this. And they will keep themselves from certain devotions and practices suggested by their own taste and inclination, which might distract them from the common acts, and lead them to prefer their own to those of the community. The merit of obedience makes even the smallest deed done all the more valuable than one greater undertaking that is done out of one's own will.

6. They will bring a supreme exactness to the common observances, and they will hasten to go wherever they may be called, immediately on hearing sound the usual signals, which ought to be considered to be the Superior's voice.

Chapter Seven

Concerning some Matters that ought to be observed, and which will assist in the Practice of the Virtues already mentioned.

1. The first such matter will be union with God, showing a particular diligence in bringing devotion to the exercises of piety. This is to obtain by means of prayer those graces and assistance from the Lord, for the observance of the duties of a vocation which aims at imitating at our Lord **Jesus Christ** in the best possible manner.

The Sisters will strive to unite themselves to the intentions of this divine Redeemer in their activities, placing all their desires to please him, and only with this intention above everything else.

And just as union with God consists principally in not wanting anything other than God wills, the Sisters will take care above all, from yearning for anything that would not be in conformity to the will of the Superior, the interpreter of the divine will over them.

2. They will maintain a great openness of heart toward the Superior, making known to her their soul with the greatest frankness. This they will do especially on retreat days, which will be conducted several times throughout the year.

They will keep nothing internal or external, hidden from her. Such information is necessary for her to direct them along the way they have undertaken, so that with her maternal care that she has for them, she will be able to direct them to reject the illusions of the common enemy, who often under the appearance of good, deceives souls.

Let them be persuaded that for that Sister who will practice exactly this rule, that it will be for her greater profit and she will more certainly be pleasing to God.

3. Each week the Superior will assemble the community in a suitable place. After having invoked the Holy Spirit, she will say whatever she will judge should be said, for the spiritual

good of the Sisters, and she will give them instruction on some points of the Constitutions, or on something else.

Following this, for their greater humility, the Sisters will state publicly whatever failings against the Constitutions or the rules they might have committed, as well as any fault contrary to the observance of the common life and of the religious discipline. And with a genuine desire for their own emendation and spiritual profit, they will receive from the Superior that correction which will be meted out to them.

4. All the Sisters will bring the greatest diligence to the acquisition of those genuine and solid virtues, holding these in higher esteem than knowledge, native abilities or other natural gifts. These are not to be valued other than in so far as they take from within their efficacy. And whenever for the ends proposed in this Institute study will be necessary, this will be of no benefit whatever to themselves nor to their neighbors if it is not accompanied by the spirit of **Jesus Christ**, and by genuine and solid virtues.

5. In His holy Gospel, Jesus Christ has stated: 'whoever hates not his father, mother... and yea, his own life, cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14:26). So, the Sisters of the **Holy Family** will strive to detach themselves from every merely human affection towards their relatives, converting this into a spiritual love for them.

And since the Sisters are dead to this world, they will consider **Jesus Christ** to be their father, mother, brothers, sisters, spouse - He will be everything for them.

6. The imitation of Jesus Christ, in His two lives, contemplative and active, is the principal end of this Institute. To realize this the better, the Sisters will abstain possibly from the visiting parlor, nor will they allow themselves to be distracted by the visits of seculars, whenever there is not a good reason for this, which in the Superior's judgment, would coincide with the end of the Institute.

7. The duties to which the Sisters are obliged for the divine service, require the exercise of many virtues and the abnegation of themselves, and even natural strength. Therefore, there is no austerity prescribed by the rule. To the fast days of the Church, the Sisters add only the five which follow:

- the vigils of the Feasts of the most holy Hearts of **Jesus** and **Mary**,

- that of the Feast of the Sorrowful Mother, Mary most holy, the third Sunday of September,

- the Feast of the Archangel Michael and of the Patronage of St. Joseph.

No one may perform mortifications or extraordinary penances without the Superior's permission. She will allow only that which she will judge to be of the greater usefulness to the spiritual profit of each one, without any harm coming to the Sister's health.

8. Excessive solicitude for those things that pertain to the body, since they are so lowly, should be avoided, and each should be on guard against whatever self love might suggest.

However, each one must take that moderate care of her health as may be necessary for the purpose of carrying out her duties and of maintaining strength for the service of God. When the Sisters know that something is harmful to them, or necessary for them, in food or in anything else, they will make this known (after having prayed the matter over before God) to the Superior, or to whoever is in charge of the matter. Each Sister will be content, however, always to accept whatever is determined.

9. Each one should make known to the Superior, or to the Sister whom she feels she should, in all simplicity, those indispositions that she experiences that are out of the ordinary. The Sister, then, will abandon herself with all confidence to the Superior's and infirmarian's vigilance and concern.

No one will take medicine, or choose a doctor, nor consult the house doctor without the Superior's permission.

Chapter Eight

Concerning the Time of Sickness

1. The Sisters of the **Holy Family**, faithful in time of health to the practice of the virtues proper to their vocation, and having built up the holy attitude of uniting themselves in all they meet with the sentiments of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, ought to accept illness with resignation, and consider it as the most suitable time to make progress in perfection. In this state of suffering, there will be afforded them a greater occasion to think about their Spouse, the **Crucified Jesus**, and to unite themselves to Him.

2. Those virtues that they should exercise particularly are the following:

1 - a humble submission to the divine will, which one is all the more certain of following in sickness as one enters this state all the less in accord with her own will.

2 - patience in supporting all the discomfort and painful consequences of the illness, offering experiences of this, and by bringing one to know that one receives this tribulation from the merciful hand of God for the good of the soul.

3 - obedience, not only to the Superior, but also to the infirmarian in all that pertains to the care of the body.

3 - mortification in taking those remedies that are prescribed, overcoming natural repugnance out of love for the most beloved **Jesus**.

3. The Sisters will exercise every care in rendering to their sick Sisters all those services that will depend on them. And having permission to visit them, they will speak in a low voice with them, so that they will not be a bother to them. They will treat of matters which can comfort them, console them, and above all, which will encourage them to support their sufferings with patience and joy.

4. For those who will be in convalescence for a long time, without any danger of death, the consolation will be obtained for them of receiving Holy Communion once a week.

5. Should the illness become more serious, all will double their supplications to the Lord so that He might grant to the dying Sister the efficacious graces to sustain her in this final moment. When she has rendered her soul back to God, all will have the great solicitude of obtaining for her every possible suffrage.

And afterwards the Superior will have a certain number of Masses celebrated for her, and each one in the house will offer nine Communion for her and the Way of the Cross thirty times. And by that charity that unites all the Sisters of this union, all will strive to recommend to God the deceased Sister, so that she will be admitted to the beatific vision.

Chapter Nine

Concerning the Cloister

1. The Sisters of the Holy Family will maintain the cloister in the best possible manner, the advantages of which are precious.

Therefore, they will not leave it: except for reasons of establishing new houses, or to bring assistance to those already founded. And it will not be permissible to introduce anyone into the cloister, except for those cases of necessity, which will be treated below.

2. The entrance doors will always be carefully closed; and they will be such that they can only be opened from the inside.

As it is necessary that one of the doors leading into the community dwelling will be connected with the Church, in order to clean it, both the sacristans as well as the other Sisters, will attend to this only when those doors from the outside are locked. This must always be the case, except for those times in which there are functions being conducted in the Church.

3. In case of illness, should the confessor need to come into the house, he will be accompanied by the Superior. If she is unable to attend to this, she may appoint someone else of her choice, and she will be accompanied by another Sister. The confessor will be led directly to the room of the sick Sister. The door will be left opened, and those Sisters who accompanied him, will stand nearby.

4. Should the doctor and the surgeon need to enter the sick Sister's room, they will always be accompanied. These regulations will be observed whenever handy-men come. They will always be accompanied by those Sisters of a certain age, who will remain with them wherever they go. And should these have to go from one place to another, the Sister will accompany them so that they will not be lost from sight.

5. Since the Sisters of the **Holy Family** are to occupy themselves not only with their own sanctification, but also, in accord with the end of this Institute, they need to be intent on working for the salvation and perfection of their neighbors, these following instances are exceptions to the cases here contemplated:

1. - the external schools conducted in their special places, into which only the students and the young girls may enter who come for instruction.

2. - the mothers of the students, may be admitted only into the interior visiting parlor, or in the case of a serious illness, these may be admitted into the room of the sick person.

3. - those persons who come for retreats.

4. - those Sisters who will go forth for the sake of establishing new houses, or assisting those already founded.

5. - for those who are sick, having Holy Mass celebrated in the house at times, for their spiritual comfort.

6. There will be one or two visiting parlors equipped with grates, to receive those persons who may come. The Sisters who are called to speak with their visitors will be accompanied, unless in the judgment of the Superior, it seems opportune to dispense from this regulation.

7. All that has to be provided for the community or for the individual offices of the monastery, or for those who help the convent from the outside, by the portress, or by some other whom the Superior deems suited for this.

And none of the Sisters will ever give any commission, nor undertake any intervention outside, nor will anyone ask the portress about her office. The portress, on her part, will not relate to anyone, other than the Superior, what she has learned from seculars.

THIRD PART
CONCERNING STUDY AND THE MEANS THAT THE INSTITUTE
USES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS NEIGHBORS

Introduction:

The scope of this Institute is not only the sanctification of the members which make it up, but also that of working to obtain the eternal salvation of our neighbors. This is achieved by assisting these souls, in so far as is proper to our sex, to obtain the ultimate end for which they were created. So, there are required also (in addition to the good example of the virtues of which we have already spoken, and which will greatly assist this purpose) study and that instruction necessary to be committed in the different ways with which the Institute is to work for the advantage of souls. This is all the more needed in that it has appeared to us as to be more fitting and proper that our youngsters in training be formed in every part of their education by our own teachers, rather than by outside instructresses.

We will treat in this part of that formation and about the means with which the Institute commits itself to the well-being of our neighbors.

CHAPTER ONE
CONCERNING WHAT THE SISTERS OUGHT TO DO IN ORDER
MAKE THEMSELVES SUITED FOR STUDY

1. The Sisters of the **Holy Family**, in assuming their studies and applying themselves to them for this purpose of assisting souls redeemed with the Most Precious Blood of **Jesus**, ought to renew often this right intention: they are to seek nothing in their studies other than the glory of God and that fruit that they will thereby achieve in souls, with the help of their studies.

Furthermore, through study there will be facilitated the good result of all they take up for the glory of God.

Since we can do nothing without the divine assistance: *sine me nihil potestis facere* 'without me you can do nothing' (Jn 15:5), they will often ask the Lord in prayer that they might make progress in study for this end.

2. Therefore, permeated with this purpose of the Institute, they will apply themselves with greater diligence and constantly to their studies, compensating for that time that will be taken occasionally from their spiritual exercises, with the practice of calling to mind the presence of God. This will render Him familiar to them in all their actions, even in their study, and often offering to the Lord the fatigue of their study to be pleasing to Him.

3. They will apply themselves with greater intensity in this period, to exercise themselves in humility, considering it better both for themselves and for their neighbors, to be deprived of study, rather than of virtue. Humility is that quality that can dispose them the more to receive from God the necessary lights for the acquisition of true wisdom.

CHAPTER TWO

TIMES AND MATTERS OF STUDY

1. Obedience, the characteristic virtue of the Institute, is what ought to determine, moderate and regulate the time and the quality of the studies of the Sisters who will be assigned to them.

Therefore, the Sister who will be destined by the Superior to attend to these studies, must keep before her in everything the greater glory of God and the good of souls.

The Sisters ought to be committed to this assignment in such a manner that they will make use of no book, nor will they do anything other than what has been prescribed or permitted by obedience.

2. The primary object of the study of all the Sisters will be christian doctrine, both regarding its text as well as its explanation. Therefore, a fitting and uniform manner will be employed in the manner of teaching christian doctrine. This must be accommodated to the capacity of the young girls and the unlettered women. All ought to learn it by heart, and have training in teaching it.

So, there will be an established time for this in the schedule of our duties.

They will also be exercised in all that is needed to dispose the young girls for the reception of the most holy sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.

3. As the Institute has embraced also the education of nobile and city girls within the Convent, those Sisters will be trained whom the Superior judges to be the most suited in other areas of teaching, such as: sacred and profane history, hand-writing, grammar, arithmetics, geography and languages.

4. Those who will be proven capable to be able to be employed in the various areas of the Institute's work, and those who by obedience will be assigned to these, in whatever field they work, will faithfully carry out the particular rules of their office. All need to operate according to the spirit of the Institute, which is the imitation of **Jesus Christ**, and to take this divine Teacher as our model in all that needs to be done for the well being of our neighbors. None should allow herself to be concerned with her own self love, nor by any particular talent and inclination.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCERNING THE MEANS WHICH THE INSTITUTE EMPLOYS FOR THE ETERNAL SALVATION OF ITS NEIGHBORS

1. Charity toward God must not have any limits. However, charity towards our neighbors needs to be ordered. Therefore, if the Sisters of the Holy Family, with all their hearts, should yearn for the salvation of all our neighbors, the means to be employed for this ought to be regulated in accord with the spirit of this Institute. In requiring the cloister, the Institute embraces those means that can be used in harmony with this.

2. In treating in this Chapter of the different means in which the Institute commits itself for the eternal salvation of our neighbors, the intention is only to make mention of them. The proper rules for the Sisters to be employed in the various works, the manner of exercising them, and the plan of studies, as well as the necessary disciplines, for each and every one, have already been formulated.

3. These means which the Institute of the Sisters of the **Holy Family** embraces for the eternal salvation of our neighbors, can be reduced principally to four:

1. - The education of the young girls boarding in our houses.

2. - The tuition free education of those young girls, whether they be poor or well off, who come daily to our schools.

3. - Further, to instruct the young girls of the parish in which a house of the Institute has been established, who do not attend our schools, when they have to prepare for the reception of the most holy sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

4. - The Spiritual Exercises that will be offered to girls and women who live in the world.

The first means, in that it presents such great advantages for the purpose which the Institute proposes for itself, is training of the young girls who board in our houses day and night, under the supervision of the members of the Institute. This requires further from the Sisters of the **Holy Family** that they think over well the importance of this matter, so that there might indeed be realized in fact that usefulness that is contemplated.

4. Among the studies to which the young girls are to be applied that of our holy religion, the essential and necessary foundation for every good education, will occupy the first place. And this will be taken into consideration not only in those matters that directly pertain to it (such as Christian Doctrine, the history of the Old and New Testaments, Church History) but also in the other studies.

And no occasion will be overlooked for pondering documents pertaining to it, and to refer all instruction back to it, instilling into the young students a holy fear of God. They should be led to understand their duties as christian women and daughters of the Holy Church, that respect and submission that is due to its Head, the Supreme Pontiff and to our ecclesiastical Superiors.

5. Nothing will ever be neglected that would supply them with knowledge which might serve them to keep them later on from laziness and from the countless frivolities into which women can so easily fall, when they have not received a culture sufficient to enable them to reject such things.

6. As for the tuition free schools for extern students, there will be a place entirely separate for this, from where the others are being trained. Into these extern schools will be accepted the greatest number possible, and it will be required that the students should always come to school accompanied, and that they return home in the same manner.

7. These pupils will be educated together with the holy fear of God, regarding the duties of our holy religion. They will

also be trained in those useful tasks so that they who belong to needy families will learn the means to support themselves in an honorable way, and to keep far away from vice.

And care will be taken that the girls frequent the most holy sacraments and that they fulfill all their duties.

8. Regarding the third means noted above, that is, the instruction of the extern girls, care will be taken that an understanding be reached with the Pastor of that parish in which the Institute is established, as to the proper time that these girls will be admitted to the most holy sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist, in order to lend to these pupils all possible assistance of which they might stand in need in order to prepare themselves.

9. Concerning the fourth means, which is that of affording the Spiritual Exercises given by suitable priests, fully accepted by the Ordinary, there will be a place set apart for this, separated from the community, from the convent and the schools. Those young girls will be admitted here who approach the most Holy Communion for the first time, as well as other persons who, in the course of the year, in a proper moment, wish to come aside for this purpose.

FOURTH PART
CONCERNING WHAT PERTAINS TO THE FIRST SUPERIOR
AND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE INSTITUTE
CHAPTER ONE
CONCERNING THE SUPERIOR

1. With the title of First Superior there is meant that Sister who will be set over the entire Institute. The experience of many years has shown in this Institute of the Sisters of the **Holy Family** that the Superior should be elected for life. There is no purpose in explaining here all the advantages that derive from this as these have been recognized also in other religious orders. We will make mention here only of the fact of those advantages that come to individuals from being governed and directed from the one who, in addition to having the qualities of which we will treat here, but she is one who joins to these experience in governing and her authority is for an entire lifetime and not for a limited period only, has more weight.

2. Among the qualities with which the First Superior should be endowed, there will be above all that she be joined to the highest degree with God our Lord and be truly familiar with Him. This should hold true in her prayer as well as in her activities. From Him she should take the ultimate norm of all her work, purifying in that light which from the Lord will be communicated to her, her intentions having as a goal the Lord alone, and seeking in everything the greater glory of God and the divine service. In this union with God which is so necessary for her she will be also for the entire body that opportune assistance, to further those means that in this Institute are utilized, for our own sanctification and for the eternal salvation of our neighbors.

3. Furthermore, she should have a special devotion toward the Holy Family, from whom she will learn every virtue, and the manner of governing and directing well all that is entrusted to her. And from the Heart of Jesus, center of all good, she will

receive those lights of which she stands in need in a task of such importance.

4. It is likewise necessary that she should be free from all disordered passions, which with the grace of God will be conquered and overcome, so that they will not disturb her judgment and reason.

She needs to be so forgetful of herself and of her own interests that she would seek God in everything, and that the rule of her every thought and act should be God's good pleasure and His divine will.

5. She needs to have a generous spirit and a great confidence in God in all her endeavors, so that she will not permit herself to be disheartened in doing good. With a spirit of faith, she will be supported in every adversity that might cross her path, trusting in God's infinite omnipotence, wisdom and goodness. With incessant prayer and with a firm confidence she can hope for that light and assistance for the success of all she undertakes. She should never distance herself from these if that help in which she hopes from our Lord may at times be delayed. Being constant in her faith, she must not let herself become discouraged by difficulties, nor overly joyed in success.

In her successes, thinking of the divine goodness, she will give praise for these to the Lord, taking from these an additional motive to find support in him always in her every effort.

6. Even though it should be self-evident that in the First Superior there should be present these qualities of which we have spoken thus far, there is still a further need to consider an additional characteristic that is most necessary for the Sister who is to govern the entire Institute. This must be kept uppermost in mind when she is elected. This is that excellent gift of intelligence, that clarity of thought, maturity in judgment. While all this is difficult to find, it is nonetheless indispensable for discerning what is best to be done, in the

many and varied undertakings that come up, both in the internal direction of the Institute, as well as in its external business.

This quality, then, should never be separated from what was stated above, but should combine in an outstanding manner, with the aforementioned and enlighten them.

7. Though knowledge is necessary in the Superior, considering the end which the Institute proposes for itself, even more necessary is prudence and the practice of spirituality and the interior life, in order to discern the various spirits and to apply the proper counsel and remedy for those matters which stand in need of them.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCERNING THAT WHICH PERTAINS TO THE FIRST SUPERIOR

1. In the first place, she will be zealous with every fiber of her being for the good and the perfection of the whole body of the Institute, in an obsequious service of God our Lord and for the edification of our neighbor.

Included in the perfection of an Institute, that justly holds as its founders **Jesus, Mary and Joseph**, she must be full of zeal and concern in her vigilance that nothing will ever happen that would be less worthy of such a sublime vocation.

2. She will attend with all solicitude so that the rules, constitutions and disciplines be exactly observed.

To her will pertain that faculty of dispensing in the various cases that occur, where a dispensation indeed is called for, keeping in mind the persons, the places, the times and other circumstances. She will accomplish all this with that light which will be communicated to her, keeping before her mind the end of the Constitutions, which is nothing other than the ever greater obsequious service of God and the good of those who follow this vocation.

3. While she must use every diligence in having observed everything that is proper to this Institute, the danger is that with the passing of time the spirit of poverty should come to be diminished. In this Institute of the **Holy Family**, poverty ought to be exactly maintained all its points. Thus, it has to be particularly recommended to the First Superior to maintain the observance of the perfection of this important vow.

4. To her will pertain the admitting of subjects into the Institute and, at the proper time, to the pronouncement of the first vows, as also the making of the Profession. It is also up to her to send those away whom she knows are not suited for this Institute.

5. It will also be her responsibility to name the local superiors to a three year term, as the Institute develops and grows. She must choose those whom she will consider to be the most suited to maintain the spirit of the Institute in their own houses. She will communicate to them those faculties which she will believe in the Lord that she ought to share, for the greater obsequious service of God. Through these superiors, she will exercise the administration in all that pertains to the buildings and their temporal goods.

Therefore, she will see to it to the extent that she will be able to know thoroughly those who are under her obedience, especially those to whom she commits responsibilities.

She will carefully see to it that the local superiors will render to her an account of their office, in the manner that she will judge the most opportune.

6. As she comes to know better the talents bestowed by God on the Sisters of the Institute, she will distribute all the offices. She will place in each position of responsibility those whom she will consider in the Lord to be the most suited to manage these tasks most fittingly in the divine service and for the salvation of souls.

7. It will also be her responsibility to administer correction and to impose those penances that might seem the more proper, to make up for any defect, always having in mind the proper regard for the persons and the circumstances. All this is committed to her charity and prudence, which she will employ for the glory of God and the spiritual advantage of the Sisters.

8. She might also accept foundations that might be offered to her, always, however, being careful to admit these according to the end that is suggested from the divine service, and that they do not prove to be a detriment.

Regarding the temporal administration of these, she will be careful to conduct herself according to those prescriptions stated in the Second Part of the Constitutions, in Chapter 4, on

Poverty. And she will provide these with subjects, and all else that is needed.

9. Invested in the First Superior likewise is the faculty of drawing up any contract of purchase and of sale, of any temporal good, or furniture pertaining to the houses, and of whatever belongs to the entire Institute.

However, to alienate the goods and the foundations of the Institute, and to close completely the houses of the Institute which would have already been established, she cannot do this without first hearing the entire body of the Institute, and to have the permission of the Holy See.

10. Concerning those valuables that might be left to the Institute, with the sole stipulation that she dispose of them according to her judgment (whether these be immovable goods, as a piece of property or something similar, not specifically applied and connected with a particular house of the Institute by the one who has left gifts of value, such as grain, money, furnishings, or something like these), the First Superior herself will be able to make disposition of these by selling, or retaining the gift, or by applying it to this or that place as she will see fit, and which will seem to be for the greater glory of God.

11. Generally speaking in all that for the glory of God is conducive to the end proposed for the Institute, for the perfection and assistance of our neighbors, and in every other matter, she has responsibility over it all. And even though she might have communicated to other subordinate superiors her faculties, she can nonetheless approve and rescind all that these have done, and to order all matters according to what she deems best. And always to her must obedience and reverence be shown, as to her who takes the place of Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER THREE
CONCERNING THE HELP THAT IS TO BE GIVEN
TO THE FIRST SUPERIOR

1. The office of the First Superior is to rule in a wise manner over the entire body of this Institute, so that it may be conserved, with the favor of divine grace, in its good state and its way of life, and that it increase further, for the greater glory of God our Lord. For this, she needs good subjects to fulfill particular duties.

And although she must be committed herself to it all, at times, it is necessary that she should have subordinate superiors, and that she should dedicate herself especially to give direction and assistance in this way, so that with the divine favor and assistance, they all might perfectly carry out their responsibilities.

2. First of all, she will have two Sister Assistants, who ought to help her in all the burdens of her office. Those selected for this must be judged to be the most prudent, and from whom she will take counsel in the matters of some importance, in order to determine what it is that seems to be for the greater glory of God.

These Assistants will be of help to the First Superior, while they must always defer to her for the final decision and conclusion of every undertaking. In accord with the way that the Institute might grow, the number of these Assistants will be increased, if it will be judged opportune and necessary for the greater good of the Institute itself.

3. There will also be an Economa, who will take care to assist the First Superior in the administration of all the goods of the Institute. She will keep a careful record of every transaction, to be able to inform the First Superior the state of her administration at any moment she might be asked.

The First Superior will also have someone to help her in her correspondence, which ought to be maintained with all the houses of the Institute.

4. She will also have near her another Sister, who approaching God in prayer, and after having consulted the divine goodness and considered the matter to be just, with due respect and humility (but with all frankness and evangelical freedom), is held to point out whatever she believes that in the same First Superior should be required for her greater service and glory of God, and not only for the good of the Institute, but also for her own perfection.

5. The Sisters who will be chosen for these offices of assisting the First Superior, ought to be elected by the Chapter from among those in whom there is a greater evidence of virtue, and who are endowed with spiritual gifts. There is also the need that they be gifted with a good intelligence, that they be suited to assist in the work for the good of the Institute, and they must be capable of helping the First Superior in whatever she herself is unable to accomplish.

They must furthermore truly love the Institute, and precede all the other Sisters with the good example of their lives, and with the respect and submission toward the First Superior.

CHAPTER FOUR
CONCERNING THE REGIME OF THE HOUSES

1. The First Superior will select, as has already been noted, the local Superior of each house of the Institute that it might please the Lord to establish. She will represent the First Superior for the good regime of the house.

The First Superior will choose for this office that Sister whom she judges to be the most suited to keep the observance of the rules and constitutions.

2. The local superiors ought to unite in themselves a high level of virtue with a sublime love for the Institute. They are to be zealous for the religious observance and cordially lend themselves to all the Sisters' needs, assisting them in the spirit according to the needs of each one. They are to provide for all the Sisters in their corporal necessities with a true sense of love, striving to respond in all this not through a sentiment of merely natural compassion, but rather through that love which each one should have for all the Sisters in our Lord.

3. The local Superior will have authority over the whole house, over all its works, over the schools, the place of training, and the like. And she will receive the reports from those Sisters who will be assigned to the offices, of all that takes place. These Sisters should depend on the Superior in all matters.

She might also impose certain penances for the transgressions of the rules, according to the method in use in the Institute, wherever there might be need, to maintain the vigor of the regular observance and for the greater spiritual good of the Sisters.

She will weigh everything before God, for these purposes to be achieved.

4. In each and every house there will be an Assistant, who, in addition to the responsibilities connected with her office, will represent the Superior, and will take her place as far as the Sisters are concerned, and also with externs, any time she might be impeded because of health, or for any other reason.

5. As the tasks of the Institute are varied, often matters come up that require some resolution. And for these decisions to be taken in a most mature manner, the local superiors will also have two other consulting Sisters, one of whom might be the Assistant. These Sisters should be endowed with virtue, and be of particularly refined intelligence and good judgment, in order to discern prudently which direction to take.

6. Every two weeks, and more often if this seems better, the Superior will meet with these three Sisters, who will form her Council, and she will treat with them of those matters that are for the benefit of the house. Each of these Sisters must exercise every care to take note of the agenda that will be proposed in the meetings.

7. To this meeting the Superior can invite at times, those Sisters who occupy these positions of responsibility described below, in so far as she feels this is necessary to hear them out regarding the areas of concern connected with their offices.

1. - The Mistress of Novices, to whom are entrusted the care and the training of the young sisters in formation.

2. - The Principal of the training school, who superintends the instruction and all the class room matters, and she attends immediately to all that pertains to the exact observance of good order.

3. - The First Teacher of the tuition-free schools, who has responsibility over these, and is charged with every detail pertaining to them.

8. The local Superior will be charged with rendering reports and sharing information with the First Superior of each and every concern of some importance that might arise that is out of

the ordinary, and which might seem to be beyond her ordinary faculties. She will refer all this to the First Superior to obtain direction for the manner of conducting herself in these matters. She is called to give to all that example of respect, love and perfect submission towards her. She should demonstrate this in every encounter, both by her words as well as by her actions, by manifesting these sentiments to the Sisters of the House over which she presides.

9. She will allow the Sisters the freedom of writing to the First Superior regarding any matter of importance that might come up that is out of the ordinary, and which seems to go beyond her faculties, and report to her to obtain the proper method in conducting herself in all this. She will give to all the example of respect, love and perfect submission to her, manifesting submission to her. She should demonstrate in every encounter, both by her words as by her deeds, showing these sentiments to those of the house over which she presides.

10. For all that is of importance for the well being of every house in particular, and for the development of this Institute, it can never be denied that there is available the powerful means of prayer. This prayer ought to be directed by its members particularly for this end: that this Institute, directed toward the glory of God our Lord, for the sanctification of its members who make it up, as for the benefit of our neighbors, should never diminish or waver from these ends. It is for this intention that there will be established in all those places where the community resides, those prayers that ought to be offered each month by every Sister.

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCERNING SOME MATTERS UNDER CLOSER SCRUTINY
THAT WERE CONSIDERED IN THIS PART

1. The First Superior will see to it that in the Dioceses where some houses of the Institute are established that the Bishop will be considered by the Sisters to be the Superior, and that to him there be rendered all respect and submission, venerating himself as such.

She herself will be outstanding in these sentiments, making known her deference as the occasions arise.

The local superiors ought to let him know whenever a Sister is to be transferred to another destination to establish a new foundation, or to be of assistance to those already founded – and vice versa, whenever a Sister is transferred into his diocese.

2. When the First Superior passes from this life, it will be the responsibility of the first assistant to make this known to His Excellency. She will, then, as soon as possible, assemble the Chapter to proceed to a new election. In the meantime, she will take the place of the deceased.

She will herself preside over the assembly for the election of the new Superior. This will be executed in accord with the norms and the method already prescribed in our regulations.

3. This Chapter, after having elected the First Superior, will proceed to the naming by ballot of those who are to assist her, that is, the two Assistants, the General Economa and the Admonitrix.

4. As it is recognized that the task of the First Superior is one that bears with it such responsibility before God – and further for the serious concerns and weighty thoughts that such a challenge presents, the position ought to be feared. And only through obedience and through submission to the divine will should one accept it. It might indeed happen that there be someone who does not appreciate the full weight of this office,

who might desire it. Should any of the Sisters come to know that there is one seeking this position, she is obliged in the Lord under very serious responsibility to make this known to one of the Assistants.

And should it ever be that one has by some words or signs desired this office for herself, she should be deprived of both active and passive voice, and be not admitted to that assembly, nor ever to any other.

5. If it should please the Lord to make use of this most insignificant Institute of the Sisters of the Holy Family, in more places through its development, the Sisters will beg of His Holiness a Cardinal Protector, so that the Institute which professes particular obedience and submission to the Supreme Pontiff, it might through means of His Eminence, in matters of importance, reflect the Holy Father's mind.

LAST CHAPTER**THE FACT THAT THESE CONSTITUTIONS****DO NOT OBLIGE UNDER SIN**

1. It is the law of charity that ought to animate the Sisters of the Holy Family to the perfect observance of these Constitutions.

And since the Sisters ought to be moved along their path of perfection more by love for God than by fear, it is thereby declared that the observance of these Constitutions, rules, declarations and particular regulations, which will be prescribed, do not oblige by themselves under sin, neither mortal nor venial.

However, it must be noted that one might incur sin when the matter against the rules or the constitutions might contain something that would pertain to any of the three essential vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, that are pronounced in this Institute, or which would be prohibited by the natural law.

2. Even though neither the rules, nor the constitutions, oblige under sin of themselves, as has been explained above, nonetheless the Sisters of the **Holy Family** will greatly fear violating them, keeping in mind that their vocation is a grace that is very special, for which they will have to render an account to God at their deaths.

Therefore, the Sisters will bear impressed in their minds and inscribed on their hearts, this statement of the Sage: *Qui custodi mandatum custodi animam suam; qui autem negligit viam suam mortificabitur.* 'He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own soul: he that neglecteth his own way, shall die.' (Pr 19:16)

The path, therefore, of the Sisters of the **Holy Family** is the observance of their constitutions and rules, as 'they shall go from virtue to virtue' (cf. Ps 83:8) wisely and with supreme diligence and attention, 'declining not to the right hand nor to the left' (cf. Pr 4:27), until they reach their heavenly Spouse in the blessed eternity.

LAUS DEO ET SACRAE FAMILIAE**COMMON RULES**

1. At the sound of the bell every morning, each Sister will arise immediately, thinking that she is being called by the Lord to begin that day, which ought to be entirely for His divine service. With fervor each Sister offers herself to God for this end, asking Him that that day she is just beginning will be full before Him.

As she dresses, she will offer some vocal prayers.

2. With great exactness, at the sound of the second bell all will go to choir to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and there, having read a brief offering and the point of the meditation, she will make her mental prayer for the space of one hour.

3. Every day, all the Sisters are to assist with the greatest devotion at Holy Mass. They will also attend to spiritual reading and to the two examinations of conscience in the time that will be assigned for these.

4. Every week, they will approach the Sacrament of Penance, to that Confessor assigned who ought to be the same for all.

They will receive Holy Communion whenever this will be permitted to them, with the Superior's assent.

5. Each year they will make an extraordinary confession, and at that time, or at some other that the Superior will judge opportune, all the Sisters will manifest to her their own hearts. They will also do this each time the Superior will decide.

6. Anyone who would like to perform some corporal work of penance, or some act of public humiliation, will first ask the permission of the Superior for this.

7. Silence will be continual, except for the two recreations that immediately follow dinner and supper.

If outside of these times it should be necessary to say something, whether because of one's duties or for some other reason, it should be done in a low voice, with few words, being careful also not to make any noise by slamming doors, or other disturbances that might upset the quiet and the recollection that ought to be observed as far as possible in the house.

8. All the Sisters will strive to acquire an angelic purity, and to achieve this, they will do everything with a pure intention, having for their sole purpose in their activities, the greater glory of God, their own sanctification and the salvation of their neighbors.

9. Modesty should be resplendent in all their actions. Let them be attentive in their speech, cautious in their looking about, sober in their eating, and in all their external conduct, let there be united humility and modesty with a religious maturity. They should not touch one another, even in jest, keeping in mind that edification that ought to be given by anyone dedicated to the divine service.

And no one should leave her room unless decently dressed, nor sleep with the windows opened, nor without covers.

10. Each one should commit an exactness to all the common observances. And immediately on hearing the customary signals sound, each should hasten to where she is being called, leaving even the letter she has begun unfinished.

11. Each Sister should conduct herself with great reverence toward the Superior. Whenever the Superior should speak to her or correct her, she should listen humbly, without interrupting her.

12. Should anyone be denied something by one Superior, she should not then seek to have this granted from someone who might have received some authority from her. Rather, if speaking, the Sister ought to tell her the response received from the Superior and the reasons given to her by the Superior for having denied her the permission.

13. All those assigned to certain works and duties, if there happens an impediment, ought to make this known to the Superior in good time.

14. Each one should attend to herself and to her own duty, in accord with the Apostle's advice: *Attendi tibi*. 'Take heed to thyself' (1 Tm 4:16), nor should anyone seek curiously to know from others those matters that pertain to the government of the house. No one should enter into any reflection on all this; but each other should humbly wait as from the hand of God, whatever will be determined concerning her and others.

15. No one, except those Sisters who have received authority from the Superior, should command anything of anyone else, nor correct anyone else, nor interfere in the office of anyone else, nor enter those places set aside for such offices, without the general or particular permission of the Superior.

16. No one should go into the room of another without the Superior's permission. And should anyone go to another's room, she should knock at the door, and not enter until she has heard a response from within, being careful to keep the door opened while they will be inside together.

17. No one shall bring into the house anything either for her own use, or for that of others; nor will anyone give, or receive, either from those within the house, as well as from externs, without the express permission of the Superior.

18. Should anything be sent to a Sister as a gift, it will be handed over to the Superior, which will dispose of it according to what she will judge best in the Lord.

19. For the observance of holy poverty, no one should in any manner hold on to money, nor of anything else, either for oneself or for others.

20. The Sisters will not make any particular markings in books that will be granted for their use.

21. No one shall keep her room locked in such a way that it cannot be opened from the outside - nor will anyone keep anything under lock and key, without the Superior's permission, who will not give it, unless because of special duties, and after having first examined also the need that there can be for such a request.

22. Each Sister will make her own bed, covering it over upon arising, until at the customary time together with the others, she will tidy it up. And at least twice a week the Sister will sweep her room.

Those Sisters are excepted from this who may have occupations of greater importance, or who suffer some indisposition, and whom, in the judgment of the Superior, need to be helped.

23. Each one will take care of her own neatness of her own person as well as in all else. This serves both for health and edification.

24. Each Sister will tell the Superior, or the one she has placed in charge of this, with all simplicity, whatever indispositions she may experience that are out of the ordinary. She should not discuss this with her companions.

No one will take any medicine, nor choose a doctor, nor ask counsel of the house doctor, without having first received the permission of the Superior.

25. In the time of illness, each Sister will obey with humility, not only the Superior, but also the Infirmarian, in all that pertains to the cure of her body.

26. Beyond this, the Sister will strive to give edification in the time of her sickness, bringing herself into harmony with the divine will.

27. On receiving permission to visit the sick, all will take care to speak with them in a low voice, in a manner that will not be bothersome to them, making every effort that the sick

will be happy and edified with what is said to them, and that those who are present will receive edification.

28. The Sisters will take care of one another. They shall not contradict each other. And should any diversity of opinions arise among them, and it does seem that the matter should be manifested, the reasons will be proposed with modesty and charity, in the desire that truth win out and not so that one's own personal view prevail.

29. If, through human frailty, it should happen that one upset another, she should not pass the day without making this up.

30. All should love each other in the Lord and there should never be any reason of blood relationship, or of nationality to use any partiality among the Sisters.

And they shall generally guard against particular friendships that destroy fraternal charity, which ought to reign in a singular manner in the Communities.

31. No one should eat or drink outside the time for meals, without permission of the Superior.

32. When something is missing at table for one of the Sisters, the one who is sitting closest to her will make this known to the one serving.

33. Food should be shared in common, without exception. The only differences in this will be for reasons of health, judged so by the Superior. And those Sisters who might have special needs, will submit to them, avoiding, however, all sensuality. The other Sisters who are able to maintain the common observance, both in this matter, as in all else, are to think of themselves as more fortunate, and will be careful that they do not enter into any judgments regarding the others.

34. Should anyone come to know of something that is troubling to another Sister, she should tell this to the Superior, so that through her maternal care that she has for the Sisters, might provide them a sufficient remedy.

35. For the greater abnegation of themselves and for their greater progress in virtue, the Sisters will be content if their defects are made known to the Superior, and these should be told to her by anyone who might have seen the Sister in question commit a fault.

36. Should anyone be called to the visiting parlor, she will first obtain the Superior's permission, who will assign a companion to her, unless for some reason she should judge otherwise. And the Sister will recollect herself for a few moments in prayer, asking the Lord for the grace to comport herself according to the holiness of her state. She will manifest that joyfulness that is proper to one who serves the Lord: *Servite Domino in laetitia* 'Serve ye the Lord with gladness' (Ps 99:2). She will skillfully turn aside every empty conversation, and always lead it to something that is useful and edifying.

37. The Sisters should not discuss with their visitors what has been done, or are to be done in the house, unless, however, one should know in some circumstances that this would be pleasing to the Superior.

They should not lend books of any kind, nor writings, without the express consent of the Superior.

38. The Sisters should not serve as intermediaries, nor share letters from the girls in the school, nor from persons outside, with others of the house, and vice versa. Neither should they discuss without reason and hoped for fruitfulness the news from the world that they may pick up, whether in the visiting parlor, or in the external school.

39. The Sisters will abstain from assuming any tasks, even those that are pious, nor promise their work, nor should they make it known that they are well disposed to taking on some duties, without the permission of the Superior. Without her permission, no Sister should seek counsel from an extern.

40. No one should write letters without having first obtained permission. And after having written them, each Sister will

bring her letters to the Superior, who having read them, will either forward them on to the one to whom they are addressed, or will hold them, as it will seem best to her in the Lord.

41. No one will keep birds, or any other pet, nor cultivate flowers. After having left everything out of love for God, no one shall become attached to these trifles.

42. Each one will keep these rules, as well as those that concern her own office. She should go over them often, and familiarize herself with them, reading them often, at least once a month.

FORMULA OF SIMPLE VOWS AND SOLEMN PROFESSION
[a literal rendition of the Venerated Foundress' words]

FORMULA OF SIMPLE VOWS

Omnipotent and eternal God, I, ... NN..., although most unworthy in Your sight, trusting nonetheless in Your infinite piety and mercy, and moved by the desire of serving You, of my own free and spontaneous will, I pronounce to Your divine majesty, in the presence of the Most Holy Virgin **Mary**, of the glorious **St. Joseph**, and of the entire heavenly court, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, in the Institute of the Sisters of the **Holy Family**, all in accord with the Constitutions of this Institute.

I ask, then, humbly of Your immense goodness and clemency, in the Blood of **Jesus Christ**, that You might deign to accept this as an acceptable holocaust; and as You have given me the grace to desire it and to offer it, so that you might abundantly grant me the graces to fulfill it.

FORMULA OF SOLEMN PROFESSION

I, ... NN..., make profession and promise to the omnipotent God, in the presence of His Virgin Mother, of the glorious **St. Joseph**, and of the entire heavenly court, and of all of you present, and to you, Reverend First Superior of the Institute of the Sisters of the **Holy Family**, who take the place of God, and to those who will succeed you, perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the form of life contained in the Constitutions of the above mentioned Institute.

FORMULA FOR THE RENOVATION OF VOWS: both for the Sisters as well as for the Coadjutrices

Omnipotent and eternal God, I, ... NN..., already bound to You by vows even though most unworthy in Your divine sight, but trusting nonetheless in your infinite piety and mercy, and moved by the desire of serving you, today, of my own free and spontaneous will, renew my vows to your divine Majesty, in the presence of the Most Holy Virgin **Mary**, of the glorious **St. Joseph**, and of the entire **Holy Family**, and I intend all this according to the Constitutions of this Institute.

SUMMARY
of the Teachings that can maintain the Spirit of
the Sisters of the Holy Family.

(This Summary was taken by our Venerable Foundress from the Company of Jesus, and she adapted it for us).

CONCERNING THE NECESSITY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

1. Although the supreme wisdom and goodness of God, the creator and our Lord, is what has conserved, governed and mandated in His holy service this insignificant Institute, as He has deigned to give it a beginning, and from our part, more than any other external constitution, it is the Holy Spirit of God Who assists this internal law of charity and love that He wants to write and impress on our hearts. Nonetheless, for the sweet disposition of the divine providence, He asks for the cooperation of His creatures. We warmly inculcate the necessity of the observance of our Constitutions, which assist us to proceed well to conform us to our Institute in the way undertaken in the divine service.

CONCERNING THE END AND THE MANNER OF LIFE OF THE INSTITUTE

2. The end of this Institute is not only to attend to one's own perfection and salvation with divine grace, but also with the same commitment to dedicate oneself with every effort to the perfection and salvation of our neighbors.

3. It is a characteristic of our vocation to go wherever God should deign to call one for the purposes of the Institute.

CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF DISORDERLY AFFECTION FOR THE WORLD

4. Everyone who enters into this Institute, following Christ's counsel: 'And everyone who hath left ... father ...', etc. (Mt 19:29) should keep in mind that she has to leave behind father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all that she had in the world. Further, she should repeat this sentence to herself: '...If

anyone... hate not his father, mother,...yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple' (Lk 14:26)

And thus each one has to make every effort to separate herself from all carnal affection for her relatives, and convert this into a spiritual bond, loving them only with that affection that ordered charity seeks, as that which is dead to this world and to self-love, and lives only for Christ our Lord, and holds Him in place of father, mother, family and everything else.

Concerning genuine self-abnegation.

5. Let them be ready to manifest one another to the Superior with that proper love and charity, for the sake of helping each other in the spirit, particularly when the superior, who has care of them, will so order, or when they will be requested by her, for the greater glory of God.

6. It is necessary to point out with all diligence, making great account of it, and considering it as something of supreme importance, in the sight of our Creator and Lord, how it assists and how it contributes to one's profit in the spiritual life, to abhor totally, and not only in part, all that the world loves and embraces; and with all one's strength to accept and desire that which Christ our Lord loved and embraced.

Thus, just as the people of the world follow its values, love and seek with great diligence the honors, the fame, to have a great name on earth, as the world teaches - so, those who walk according to the spirit, and truly follow Christ our Lord, will love and ardently desire all that is contrary to this, namely, to be vested in the same livery as their Lord out of love and reverence for Him.

And so, if it is possible without offending the divine Majesty and without sin for our neighbors, we would prefer to suffer injuries, wrongs, false witnesses, and to be held and considered imbalanced (however, without ever giving occasion for any such accusations), that we might the more be similar and imitate in some way our Creator and Lord, **Jesus Christ**, and to

put on his garments and livery. It was for our greater spiritual profit that He vested himself in this way, and He has given us the example in everything. Thus, in so far as it is possible with divine grace, we wish to follow and imitate Him, since He is the true way that leads human beings to life.

7. In order to reach this most precious degree of perfection in the spiritual life, each one ought to exercise the greatest and most efficacious diligence in seeking in the Lord the greatest abnegation of oneself, and continual mortification, in so far as will be possible, in everything.

8. In the exercise of the lowly and humble duties, the sisters ought to more readily take on those for which they might feel the greatest repugnance, if it should ever be imposed that one should be exercised in such duties.

9. They ought to prepare themselves ahead of time for temptations with remedies that oppose them, as when one realizes that she is inclined toward pride, she ought to exercise herself in the lowly and humble matters which would be thought of as more helpful for her humiliation. And the same needs to be understood in other evil inclinations of her spirit.

Concerning the Struggle of Perfection and Solid Virtues

10. Let us all constantly make every effort not to neglect any aspect of perfection which with God's help we can acquire, in carrying out whatever the proper manner of life our Institute demands.

11. Those who are dedicated to the divine service in the Institute, should give themselves to the acquisition of solid and perfect virtues and of those spiritual realities, considering this to be more important than knowledge and other natural and human gifts. The reason is that the internal values are those from which all externals take their worth, in order to obtain that end that we have proposed for ourselves.

12. All the Sisters should make every effort to have the right intention, not only in the state of their own lives, but also in

all particular matters. They ought to consider in sincerity the ideal of always serving and pleasing in this the divine goodness in itself, and for that charity and benefit that are so special, and which are placed before us, rather than serving out of fear of punishment, or even the hope of rewards: although these might be of use to us.

And let them seek in everything God our Lord, despoiling themselves in so far as this is possible from the love of creatures, in order to place their affection in the Creator of these, loving Him in them all, and everything in Him, in conformity with His most holy and divine will.

13. Let them aim particularly at union and at that fraternal and mutual charity.

14. It will help very much to carry out with devotion, in so far as this will be possible, those exercises in which one is the more exercised in humility and charity.

And generally speaking, the more one comes closer to God, and the more generous will she show herself toward His divine Majesty, so much the more will she find Him generous, and she will be from day to day the more disposed to receive from Him in ever greater abundance grace and spiritual gifts.

Concerning the Care of the Interior Life

15. All the Sisters should give the determined time for the spiritual duties, and strive for devotion according to the measure of grace communicated to them by God our Lord.

16. In the spiritual exercises, all will guard themselves from diabolical illusions, and will defend themselves against all temptations.

Let them learn the ways of overcoming these, by attending to the acquisition of true and solid virtues, or with the ever greater or less intense spiritual consolations. All, however, will learn more and more of moving ahead always along the path of the divine service.

Concerning Poverty

17. Poverty, as the solid buttress of the religious state, ought to be held as dear and be retained in all its purity, in so far as this will be possible with divine grace.

18. The Sisters will love poverty as their mother, and in conformity with the measure of holy discretion, in its time they will experience some effects of it, by simply not using anything as though it were their own.

19. Their manner of food, clothing and bedding will be as would be proper to the poor. And each Sister will be persuaded that of all the things that there are in the house, if she is given those in the worst condition this happens, for her own greater mortification and spiritual profit.

Concerning Chastity and the Custody of the Senses

20. That which pertains to the vow of chastity has no need to being presented here, since it is already manifest just how much perfection there needs to be observed here. Each must make the effort to imitate angelic purity, with cleanliness of body and of our minds.

21. The Sisters will strive with every diligence to keep from all disorder the doors of their sentiments, particularly their eyes, hearing and tongue. They will observe this in peace and genuine internal humility, and showing it in silence, when it is fitting to observe this;

- and when it is necessary to speak, let it be done with consideration and with edifying discourse;

- in modesty of expression - in maturity in one's gait and in all movements;

- without giving any sign of impatience of or pride;

- striving and desiring in all matters to give way to others;

- esteeming all others within her own spirit as superior to her;

- and in her exterior conduct, deferring to them with the reverence that the state of each one would demand, with religious simplicity and modesty;

- hence, it would follow that by mutual consideration they will grow in devotions, and they will praise God our Lord, Whom each one will strive to recognize in the others as in their proper image.

22. In their bodily refreshment, they will take steps to observe temperance, modesty and both internal as well as external decency, in all matters.

Before eating, all will offer the blessing, and afterwards, a thanksgiving, which all will render with due devotion and reverence.

And while the body is restored with food, the soul also is given its nourishment.

Concerning Obedience

23. Above all else, it is most helpful and is very necessary for their spiritual progress that all the Sisters surrender themselves to perfect obedience, recognizing in the Superior, whoever she may be, one taking the place of Christ our Lord, and manifest to her internal reverence and love.

And they will obey not only exteriorally with promptness, perfection and due humility, in the external carrying out of whatever will be imposed on them. They will do this without making excuses or offering complaints, whenever she may command difficult charges repugnant to their sensibility.

But in addition to this, they will make every effort to have interiorally a genuine resignation and abnegation of their own will and judgment, bringing this into conformity with whatever the Superior wills and feels, in all that does not enter any aspect of sin. They will take the will and judgment of

the Superior as the rule of their own opinions and feelings, so that they might most perfectly be in conformity with the first and supreme rule of every good will and judgment, which is the eternal goodness and wisdom.

24. Each one will make the free availability of herself and all she does to the Superior with authentic obedience. The Sisters will keep nothing hidden from her, nor bring her any unpleasantness, contradicting her, or in any way showing their own judgment to be contrary to the Superior's view, so that through such conformity of the same opinions and wills, and the due subjection be better maintained, and that they make profit in the divine service.

25. All the Sisters will commit themselves to observe obedience, and to be outstanding in it, obeying not only in the matters of necessity, but also in the others, at the slightest indication of the Superior's will, even without an express command.

And they ought to keep before their eyes God the Creator and our God, for whose love another human being is obeyed. And each will try to make progress in this with the spirit of love rather than the upsetment of fear.

26. Let them all be prompt at the Superior's voice, as if it were Christ our Lord, leaving behind anything else, even a letter that has been begun, and not finished.

27. We direct in the Lord our strengths and intentions to this end that holy obedience always be perfect in us, from every aspect, both in deeds as well as in the will and the intellect, with great readiness, spiritual joy and perseverance. Let each put into effect that which is commanded, persuading ourselves that all is just, by denying ourselves through a certain blind obedience, no matter to what extent our judgment and opinion might dictate to the contrary.

28. Each one should be persuaded that those who live under obedience ought to allow themselves to be guided and ruled by divine providence through the superiors, as if each were a dead

body, which allows itself to be turned at will - or rather, in comparison with the cane of an old person, which serves the one using it in every place and for whatever use.

29. Each Sister ought to perform all the penances which might be imposed for her defects and negligences or for any other reason. And she should accept those penances with a ready will and with genuine desire of her own emendation and spiritual profit, even if she is not really culpable and they should be imposed.

Concerning Our Union and Conformity

30. Diversity in judgment even of practical matters, which usually is the mother of discord and the enemy to union of wills, must be avoided in so far as this is possible.

Each one ought to strive for that encounter of union and conformity with one another in all diligence, not permitting anything to the contrary, so that the Sisters, united among themselves by the bond of fraternal charity, might the better and with great effectiveness be applied to the divine service and to be committed to the assistance of our neighbors.

31. There should not be, and there should not even be heard in the Institute any inclination of spirit for this or that thing or place. But, rather let there be in us a virtuous indifference, which embraces and leaves with equal love everything and place, even though they might be contrary and different from one another.

Concerning Illness

32. During the period of illness, not only should each one obey the Superior with great purity, but with like humility also the medical doctor and the infirmarian so that they may govern the body.

33. Periodically through the year, all will ask the Superior that she impose on them some penance for the defects committed in the observance of the rules, so that this shows the care that

each one has for her who has the responsibility of her spiritual profit of all along the path of God.

34. Finally, all will attend to the observance of the Constitutions, and so it is necessary that each one at least know those that pertain to her. Hence, it will be necessary each month to read them, or to hear them.