

CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTIVES
OF
ST. JOSEPH'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
OF
MILL HILL
&
STATUTES FOR LAY ASSOCIATES



Herbert Cardinal Vaughan
Founder of St. Joseph's Missionary Society



*St. Joseph's College
Mill Hill*



Mill Hill Missionaries

Dear Members and Associates,

I am happy to present to you the final and duly approved edition of our Society's Constitutions and Directives, and the Statutes of Lay Associates.

We are all thoroughly indebted to a wide group of people who have worked tirelessly over a period of several years to update these texts, seeking uniformity of wording and clarity of presentation as well as incorporating those changes recommended by Chapter 2006.

These documents do not merely constitute a list of rights and responsibilities concomitant with Society membership and association. In view of the rich diversity of our Members and Associates, they offer us the unifying means by which we may journey together, with common understanding and similar vision, in loving service of the Mission of Christ.

Within these pages may you find connection with our enduring traditions and the inspiration needed to face the future with hope.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Chantry". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Anthony Chantry MHM

General Superior

23rd June 2006



CONGREGATIO
PRO GENTIUM EVANGELIZATIONE

PROT. 1594/06

16 May 2006

Dear and Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Chantry,

I wish to gratefully acknowledge receipt of your letter of 21 March last, with which you sent to this Dicastery, for its approval, a copy of the Constitutions, duly revised by the General Chapter of the Society, celebrated in Nairobi last year.

This Congregation has carefully studied the text and hereby approves it, with the suggestions and recommendations, that you will find attached to this letter.

I request you to kindly send to this Dicastery two copies of the Constitutions and Directory, modified according to these suggestions and recommendations, and duly promulgated by you

While I pray that Almighty God may abundantly bless you and all the missionaries of Mill Hill, I take this opportunity to extend to you kind regards and prayerful best wishes.

Yours devotedly in Christ

Crescenzio Kard. Sepe
Ref.
+ Robert Sarah
Sec.

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PROLOGUE

Our Identity

We are a missionary fellowship of Members and Associates from different continents, cultures and races, united in our common faithful acceptance of a call to follow Jesus who invited the first disciples to: “Come and See”. Grateful to God, we acknowledge that this call places us on a path of ever increasing surrender to the mystery of Love as lived by Jesus, who called God ‘Abba’ and sent us his Spirit.

Jn 1: 39
RM 13

Our discipleship takes concrete shape in our radical commitment to mission, in our response to the many invitations of Christ: “Come and See”; “Go make disciples of all nations...”; “Go and do likewise”. We live this call, to be a leaven of the Kingdom of God and share the message of Jesus, in the wide variety of situations in which we find ourselves across the globe. Above all, it leads us to be present by preference wherever people are alienated from one another by the many lines of division — cultural, economic, religious, and ideological — that fracture present-day humanity. Aware of our own frailty, but emboldened by God’s gracious invitation, we witness together with Christ to the reconciling power of the Good News, by the faithful dedication of our lives to love and service.

Jn 1: 39
Mt 28:19
Lk 10:37
2 Cor 5:18

As missionaries, we are committed to gratuitous service, after the example of Jesus who washed the feet of his disciples, who did not have a stone

Jn 13: 1-20
Lk 9:58

Jn 15:10 on which to lay his head, who lived in total
Jn 12:49 obedience to the Father and spent his life in
loving.

As Members, we do this in radical faithfulness to the Gospel through the sharing of our gifts in a total life-long celibate commitment to Love and Serve. As Lay Associates, we live out a similar radical faithfulness to the Gospel, aware of our own unique contribution according to our state of life and length of commitment.

We respond in humility to the call of Christ, and discover in prayer the love of the Father that he reveals. This helps us to know when language ends and silence begins, when to proclaim and when to be quiet. The full realisation of the Kingdom of God for which we yearn can only be received as a gift in God's own time.

Our Foundation

Our missionary Society takes its origin from the inspiration of our Founder, Herbert Cardinal Vaughan, who was a man of vision, faith and action, powerfully aware of the urgency of mission. He was moved to great compassion for the plight of peoples in the world of his time who had not yet received the light of faith, and who lived in darkness, misery and fear – 'those furthest away from the means of grace'. He was restless until, in 1866, he realised his vision by founding a fellowship of missionary priests and brothers ready to be sent as Jesus was:

Lk 4:18 to bring the Good News to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to captives,

and to the blind new sight,
to set the downtrodden free.

With simple faith Herbert Vaughan, our Founder, pointed away from himself to Saint Joseph, our principal Patron. He saw in him a model of apostolic obedience, responding generously through steady quiet work in challenging faith situations, constantly on the move, and close to Jesus our Saviour and to Mary his Mother.

The ongoing history of our fellowship, from its origins till the present day — with its attendant symbols such as the red sash and missionary cross, its outstanding events and personalities, its struggles and triumphs, its projects and challenges — further shapes our identity. Together with our founding charism, all of this points to who we are and who we have become by the grace of God.

Our Mission

- AG 2 - 4 In the vision of our Founder, our mission has its roots in God's loving plan for the world.
- Jn 20:20-23 "Receive the Holy Spirit,
Jn 15:9 -17 as the Father has sent me, so I send you".
- RM 28-29 Ultimately our mission has its source and
RM 60 foundation in the Trinity: the Father sends the Son and the Spirit, and through the Son in the Spirit God brings forth creation. The overall mission of the created universe is to be an expression, in the language of matter, motion, energy and beauty, of the eternal Word of God.
- LG 16-17 In this mission of creation, each particular being

has a share. God's varied gifts are so distributed that creatures need not only God, but also each other, within a web of interdependence, of giving and receiving, of mission and ministry. Love lies at the heart of mission and of the Christian vocation. Love rests at the core of what it means to be human.

1Jn 1:1-4

Mt 28:10

Our Christian mission needs to be placed within the larger horizons of interdependence and mutuality among cultures, religions, and all that exists within creation. Dialogue between cultures and religions is central to mission today. Thus our mission becomes a humble attempt to sense God's presence among the people to whom the missionary is sent, and to discern what the Spirit has been doing down the ages and continues to do now. The Risen Christ who went ahead of the Apostles to Galilee precedes us wherever we go. Mission is born in our contemplation of that Presence.

AG 11

RM 42

At the same time, we seek to discover and unite people committed to God's design for the world, to win more people for God's cause, to urge and aid people to practice what would change our hearts and our world into something beautifully human: a seed of the Kingdom of God. There can be no mission without *martyrion*: bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and in deed, by our lives and even by our death. Missionary discipleship is a participation in the Baptism that Jesus received when he was anointed with the Holy Spirit and called to commit Himself unconditionally to the cause of the Kingdom of God, even to the point of death.

We missionaries take every opportunity to proclaim Christ who expressed the meaning and goal of his mission by sitting at table with people, particularly outcasts and sinners. In the Eucharistic sharing of the ‘bread that is broken’ we remember him who is present in humanity’s sufferings, the seed of our resurrection. The Spirit of Christ urges us to be present, in all our weakness before God, on the side of the poor, and to place our resources at their disposal in the battle against evil in ourselves, in the environment, in the world. Prayer in its many forms — personal, intercessory, contemplative, communal — is a powerful means to enter ever more deeply into God’s designs. Our witness would be hopelessly inadequate if we ourselves had not first contemplated the face of the Risen One.

AG 11

NMI 16 -28

Mk 4:26–29
Mt 5: 13-16
Mt 13:1-23
2Cor2:14-16

Biblical symbols — light, salt, yeast, seed, and fragrance — give eloquent expression to the reality and the mystery of mission. They capture imaginatively the reality of God’s Kingdom breaking into the world right now and transforming it into a new creation. At the same time they point to its hidden reality and often imperceptible growth. God’s Kingdom will be missed unless there are people to notice it, respond to it, and witness to it.

The history of the Church’s response to the call to ‘go and do likewise’ offers many outstanding examples of missionary witness which continue to serve as an inspiration to us; for example, St. Francis Xavier and St Theresa of the Child Jesus are among our patrons. Others such as Saints

Lorenzo Ruiz and Joseph Freinademetz offer inspiring models. Oscar Romero and our own Mill Hill Missionaries who have given their lives for the sake of the Kingdom, even if not part of the Church's canon, are witnesses to the non-violent struggle for justice, peace and reconciliation.

Our Future

RM 13 With the modest intake of candidates from Africa and Asia, the face and composition of our Society is changing. Questions about sustainability remain as the challenges of integration and multicultural living come to the fore. We learn to be humble and profoundly aware of our dependence on the gentle power of the Spirit as we journey towards a transformed fellowship of men and women from a multiplicity of backgrounds, from different continents and cultures. The tentative contours of this new face of our Society become evident when young members gather to reflect, pray and share together. Collaborative small team ministry will play an important role in our missionary service in the future.

AG 11
RM 51

RM 14-15

We, Mill Hill Missionaries, at the beginning of the Third Millennium, will continue to make our modest contribution to the mission of the Church by:

- going out to be followers of Christ in dialogue with people different from ourselves, proclaiming in our daily lives, in Word and Sacrament, that the Kingdom of God, present in

all cultures, has been revealed in a unique way in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

- creating deeply spiritual, Christ-like communities everywhere, and offering our own spiritually rooted international fellowship, as a sign that the Kingdom is present and operative in our world today.
- challenging society as a whole, through dialogue, to be transformed by the Holy Spirit along the path of the basic values of the Kingdom: love, justice and peace, forgiveness and reconciliation, global solidarity and respect for human rights.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The text contains
Both ‘Constitutions’ [C] and ‘Directives’ [D]

CONSTITUTIONS

‘Constitutions’ contain basic, fundamental statements about the Society. They are seen to enshrine abiding elements and values that will not easily change with varying circumstances. They can be changed only by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Chapter, with the approval of the Holy See. [Cf. C. 144]

DIRECTIVES

‘Directives’ contain more day-to-day rules and regulations, more subject to change as time goes on. They can be changed by a simple majority vote of the General Chapter, without recourse to the Holy See. [Cf. C. 144]

ABBREVIATIONS

- AG *Ad Gentes*, Vatican II
Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity
- C Article of our Constitutions
(as distinct from a 'Directive')
- C.I.C. *Codex Iuris Canonici*,
The New Code of Canon Law
- D Directive
(as distinct from 'Constitution')
- LG *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II
Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
- NMI *Novo Millennio Inuente*
Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II, 2001
- RM *Redemptoris Missio*
Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, 1990

