

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SOCIETY

Part I : Our Missionary Apostolate

- C1** We are an international fellowship of missionaries, named St. Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill.
- C2** We are a Society of Apostolic Life and Pontifical Right, consisting of ordained and lay Members, dedicated to the missionary apostolate.
- C3** Alongside its Members, the Society values the collaboration of Associates, ordained and lay people who make a temporary commitment to share in our missionary apostolate. Associates are governed by their own Statutes.
- C4** As a Society we are committed to acting on these words of Christ: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations...", and we are ready to leave our country and our own culture. (Cf. Prologue and C 8)
- C5** In determining our fields of labour we look for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which comes to us through the inspiration of Herbert Vaughan, through relevant instructions of the Church, the discernment of our General Chapters and the General Council, and through reading the signs of the times.
- C6** Jesus brought the Good News to the poor. Our Founder asked us to go where the need is greatest, to the people "most abandoned and poorest in the means of grace". Therefore we still go by preference to the poor, to the oppressed and to those in greatest need.

- C7** In evangelisation, our preference is for pioneering work: to open up new fields, to respond boldly to fresh needs and face unfamiliar challenges.
- C8** We approach people of different races and religions, seeking, in a spirit of dialogue, to listen to the Spirit speaking in their cultures and traditions. We do this within the context of the Local Church, under the leadership of the Ordinary, striving to build up the Christian community as a signpost of the Kingdom, and helping it to realise its missionary calling.
- C9** We are conscious of a special obligation to serve the people with whom we have worked in the past and with whom we have established firm ties. However, as missionaries, we always remain ready to move to where the need is greater.
- C10** We strive to evaluate our work from time to time in terms of the Gospel and our apostolic mission, and, in dialogue with the local church and others, seek to make it more effective. In a spirit of service we are ready, according to local need, to accept positions of responsibility and to withdraw from them, so as to facilitate the passing on of leadership to the local Church.
- C11** We are also present as missionaries in our churches of origin, carrying out our missionary apostolate there in various ways.
- D12** It does not fall within the scope of the Society to have long-term parish commitments except when this is thought to be essential to the furthering of the proper

aim of the Society. However, when parish commitments are arranged, preference is given to parishes with a missionary character or with a poorer population.

- C13** Members who are sick or retired continue to participate in the mission of the Society by following its way of life, sharing its missionary concern, and offering their prayers and sacrifices for the good of all.

Part II: Our Way of Life

- C14** Our apostolic mission determines our spirituality. Through our apostolic zeal, our prayer, our faithful dedication to given tasks, our readiness for steady and hard work as missionaries, we strive to become like Christ, growing in holiness and fervour of spirit. Through the Missionary Oath we dedicate ourselves for life, to be available for the work of the Society and its mission. (Cf. Prologue – Our Identity)
- C15** In view of our life-long dedication to missionary service, we commit ourselves to live in chastity and celibacy, for the sake of God's kingdom. We also commit ourselves to observe the Society's Code of Conduct.
- C16** Our Founder was deeply convinced that the spirit and practice of evangelical poverty is the foundation of the apostolic life. Our work for the Society and mission is given freely, and any money or recompense for our work belongs to the apostolate of the Society.
- C17** Our missionary vocation brings us together as one

community of faith and love, especially in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which is central to our lives and work. We are, accordingly, committed to following Christ through a life of prayer both personal and common, to living and working with each other and with our co-workers, supporting and encouraging one another. (Cf. Prologue, Our Foundation)

- D18** We call upon our patron saints to intercede for us and inspire us on our missionary journey:
- MARY IMMACULATE, Mother of the Church and Queen of the Apostles (DEC.8TH)
 - ST. JOSEPH, Protector of the Church and Principal Patron of our Society (MAR. 19TH)
 - ST. PETER, first of the Apostles and head of the Church (JUNE 29TH)
 - ST. PAUL, chosen instrument for the conversion of the nations (JUNE 29TH)
 - ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, proclaimer of Christ in the simplicity of his life (OCT.4TH)
 - ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, model of missionary zeal and ministry (DEC.3RD)
 - ST. TERESA OF AVILA, missionary by desire in her spiritual journey (OCT 15TH)
 - STS. PAUL MIKI AND HIS COMPANIONS, missionary martyrs of Japan (FEB. 6TH)
 - STS. LORENZO RUIS AND HIS COMPANIONS, missionary martyrs of Japan (SEPT. 28TH)
 - ST. PETER CLAVER, apostle of the enslaved in the Americas (SEPT. 9TH)
 - ST. TERESA OF LISIEUX, patroness of missionaries and missions (OCT. 1ST)
 - STS. CHARLES LWANGA AND HIS COMPANIONS, first martyrs of Uganda (JUNE 3RD)

- C19** In charity we pray for one another, both for those who are living and for those who have died. We also pray in gratitude for all those who help and support us in our missionary apostolate. In our communities we pray for living Members, Associates and benefactors during the month of June, and in November we pray for deceased Members, Associates and benefactors. We also pray during the Holy Eucharist, in accordance with our status, for any Member or Associate who has died.
- C20** We have a special concern for sick, elderly and retired missionaries. We express this concern through our houses of retirement, through ensuring timely and competent medical care, and through personal kindness, attention and visits.
- C21** As a Society, we value self-reliance, personal initiative and creativity, and respect for each other's individuality, always balanced with a concern for the community.
- C22** Together with the Eucharist, spiritual direction, regular recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Recollection Days, and annual Retreats, are our strength and support in our active apostolate.

MEMBERSHIP

ADMISSION INTO THE SOCIETY	(23 – 25)
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Admission into the Society

- C23** Members of the Society are those who, wishing to dedicate themselves for life to the service of mission, pledge themselves by oath to the Society.
- C24** We invite, and admit to membership in St. Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill, suitable candidates who desire to work for the aims and scope of the Society as ordained or lay Members. Admission to permanent membership is preceded by a period of Temporary Membership, as a time of preparation and formation. Candidates become Temporary Members by taking the Temporary Oath.
- C25** The Missionary Oath is taken in the presence of the General Superior or his delegate. A copy of the Oath is signed by the Member, the General Superior or his delegate, and by two witnesses, and is kept in the archives of the Society.

Formation

- C26** The Society takes on itself responsibility for the formation of all who wish to join it. The purpose

of the formation programme is to enable candidates to develop a deep relationship with Christ, to discern their missionary vocation and to be suitably prepared for the mission and way of life of the Society. Directly responsible for formation are those who have been entrusted with it by the General Council.

C27 Before an applicant is admitted to the Society's formation programme, the following papers are required: certificates of Baptism and Confirmation; a medical report of good health; an adequate report and good references from the Parish Priest and Parish Council, and, where applicable, from employers.

C28 The formation programme emphasises our common tradition and fellowship, our missionary spirit and the international character of the Society. Special attention is given to policies and guidelines laid down by the Society. With regard to training for the priesthood, the relevant documents of the Church and instructions of the Holy See are adhered to.

Temporary Membership

C29 Before any candidate is admitted to Temporary Membership, all concerned are consulted as to his suitability, including the members of the community to which he belongs. The Regional or Society Representative with the consent of his Council, and in consultation with the General Council, makes the decision concerning admission. With regard to the suitability of candidates, Cans. 642 – 645 of C.I.C. also apply.

C30 The duration of Temporary Membership will normally

be a period of three years, which can be extended annually at the discretion of the General Superior with the consent of his Council and in consultation with the relevant Regional or Area Council and the Formation Staff concerned. After this period the candidate will either be accepted, or refused admission to the Society. Should a Temporary Member decide, or be asked, for a just reason, to leave the Formation programme, the General Superior, after consultation with the Formation staff, and with the consent of his Council, will issue a letter dispensing him from the Temporary Oath.

C31 Through his Temporary Missionary Oath, a candidate expresses his sincere desire and free resolve to become a full Member of the Society. He commits himself to living and working under the authority of his leaders and according to the Constitutions as they apply to himself. In particular, he has the following obligations:

- a. to apply himself to the best of his ability to the programme of formation, community life and service, which prepare him for the missionary apostolate;
- b. to become a man of prayer, to grow in the knowledge of Christ, to be generous in service, to grow in the spirituality of the Society as expressed in the Constitutions, and to accept guidance in personal and spiritual growth from the formation staff;
- c. to cooperate loyally and without remuneration in promoting the work and mission of the Society;
- d. to pray for living and deceased missionaries.

C32 A Temporary Member of the Society has the following rights:

- a. to training and formation which will enable him to realise his desire to become an ordained or lay Member in the Society;
- b. to board and lodging, and to temporal support, appropriate to his status;
- c. to spiritual support and prayers from fellow missionaries.

Perpetual membership

C33 At the appropriate stage, a Temporary Member will present himself to the General Superior for acceptance as a Perpetual Member. After the usual procedure of consultation governing admission (cf. C 29), the General Superior, with the consent of his Council, will make a decision about his acceptance. If the decision is positive, the candidate will be invited to take the Perpetual Oath. This will be followed by ordination to the Diaconate in the case of candidates for priesthood.

C34 By the Perpetual Oath the candidate is granted permanent membership in the Society. If he is ordained, he is incardinated into the Society. (Cf. C 24)

C35 Through the Perpetual Missionary Oath, a Member commits himself:

- a. to a life-long dedication to the missionary

apostolate of the Society, in obedience to the General Superior;

b. To living an apostolic life according to the Constitutions and Directives of the Society (cf. C 14 & C 15);

c. to giving his work freely, without payment, throughout his life (cf. C 16);

d. 'to a generous loyalty to the Society, serving it and promoting its efficiency to the best of his powers' (Cardinal Vaughan).

C36 A Perpetual Member of the Society has the following rights:

a. to board and lodging, and to a personal allowance;

b. to companionship, to hospitality, and the support of an apostolic community in fulfilling his missionary task (cf. C 17);

c. to periodic holidays (cf. D 40); to care in sickness and in old age; and to provision of such needs as have been recognised by the Society;

d. to spiritual support from fellow missionaries during his life as well as prayers for him after death;

e. to an active and passive vote in the election of delegates to the General Chapter, and to participation in other appropriate electoral procedures (cf. C 59).

C37 The welfare of Perpetual Members is primarily the obligation of the Society, which fulfils it either directly through its own resources and structures, through State assistance or, indirectly, through agreements with the local Church where the Members serve.

Perpetual Members and Associates

C38 Members and Associates all share responsibility for the Society's overall task. As a consequence, every missionary is prepared to do Society work anywhere for a determined period of time.

C39 Members and Associates have a right to holidays which are arranged in consultation with the appropriate superiors. While at home or on sabbatical, they receive a personal allowance from their Region of origin. If they reside with relatives or friends, they may claim a living allowance.

D40 The General Council, in consultation with local superiors, may issue guidelines on holidays and compassionate leave, and long-distance travel for reasons other than assignment, in accordance with guidelines laid down by General Chapters and local Assemblies. (Cf. Chapter 2005 Documents)

C41 Members and Associates have a right to retirement. It is the special concern of the Society authorities that they do not continue in active service longer than their age or health allows. The General Council releases a person for retirement, as a rule, in their Region of origin.

D42 At the age of 65, in dialogue with the local

representative, Members and Associates begin the process of handing over their responsibilities. At the age of 70, they submit in writing, to the local Representative, their willingness to retire from their positions. Thereafter the situation is reviewed annually, in consultation with the General Council. By the age of 75, they are normally resident in their Regions of origin.

- C43** The General Council encourages Members and Associates to avail themselves of opportunities for education, renewal, professional supervision, and personal and spiritual development. Regional and Area authorities endeavour to provide and organise specific programmes for on-going formation. This can be done in collaboration with other Societies and the Local Church.

Separation from the Society

- C44** The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, can dispense a Temporary Member from his Missionary Oath. The rights and obligations deriving from his Temporary Membership thereby cease. (Cf. C. 30)
- C45** A Temporary Member is free to leave the Society after completing the term of his Temporary Oath. Similarly, for a just reason, a Temporary Member can be refused the Perpetual Oath by the General Superior with the consent of his Council (cf. Can.689,§1 of C.I.C).
- C46** If a Perpetual Member, after due discernment, desires to leave the Society, he can obtain an indult to do so

from the General Superior with the consent of his Council (cf. Can.743 of C.I.C.). This indult entails that the rights and obligations deriving from his Perpetual Membership cease, without prejudice to Can. 693.

C47 A Member requires the permission of the General Superior, with the consent of his Council, in order to join another Society of the Apostolic Life. In such cases of transfer, the obligations of the Society Oath are suspended, but the Member has the right to return until definitely incorporated into the other Society (cf. Can.744,§1 of C.I.C.). To transfer to an Institute of Consecrated Life the permission of the Holy See is required (cf. Can.744,§2).

C48 Members are liable to be dismissed for serious reasons, as laid down in Cans.649 – 703 of C.I.C.

1. In cases mentioned in Can. 694 of C.I.C., dismissal is automatic, and the General Superior shall make a declaration of fact, as laid down in the canon mentioned.

2. Members are to be dismissed for certain offences mentioned in Can.695 of C.I.C..

3. Members can be dismissed for other causes also, such as those mentioned in Can.696,§1 of C.I.C., provided they are grave, imputable and juridically established.

4. In the case of Perpetual Members, the procedure to be followed in cases 2 and 3 above is that laid down in Cans.695, 697-700 of C.I.C.. The decision is made by the General Superior and his Council in a collegial

manner, as laid down in Can.699.

5. If a Member is bound only by a Temporary Oath, dismissal can be decreed by the General Superior with the consent of his Council

6. In all cases of dismissal the Member has the right to know the reasons and every facility must be granted to him to present his case to the General Superior, by word of mouth or in writing, in person or by proxy.

C49 The obligation of the Oath ceases for any Member who lawfully leaves, or is lawfully dismissed from, the Society. Such a Member cannot claim anything from the Society for any work done while a Member. (Cf. Cans.701,702§1 of C.I.C.)

D50 A Member who leaves may be offered some assistance by the Society, in accordance with the practise in the Region or Area, to enable him to settle in his new life.

ORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

INTRODUCTORY	(51-53)
THE GENERAL CHAPTER	(54-75)
THE GENERAL SUPERIOR & THE GENERAL COUNCIL	(76-88)
THE SOCIETY ASSEMBLY	(89-91)

C51 The Society is governed by the various Superiors and Representatives, assisted by their Councils and operating at their respective levels. The Superior has a real personal authority for the task entrusted to him, and responsibility for decision making. He shares the task with the members of his Council, delegating to them specific functions and responsibilities, and endeavouring to reach a consensus with them when making decisions. Together they adopt and exercise a collaborative model of leadership and ministry. In certain cases the law lays down that the Superior, in order to act validly, can act only with the consent of his Council. In a few instances the Superior (as *primus inter pares*) and his Council, act collegially (cf. Can. 746 of C.I.C.).

C52 Where certain offices and functions are determined by electoral procedures, all those concerned seek to fulfil God's purpose, both those who vote and those who are elected. If there is an initial consultation, the views of Associates are elicited separately. Voting for candidates is by secret ballot. The election officers are bound to secrecy about the way individuals have cast their votes. As a general principle the results are made known to the electorate, and to the Associates.

D53 When the terms 'General Council', 'Regional Council' or 'Society Council' are used, they mean in each case the Superior in question, (General Superior, Regional Representative, Society Representative) assisted by his Council. The Superior's personal authority goes hand in hand with consultation.

The General Chapter

C54 The General Chapter is the representative body of the Society's Members. When in session, it assumes supreme authority in the Society, whilst the General Superior and his Council carry out the ordinary administration of the Society. It is competent to change the Directives and the Constitutions, but, in the case of the latter, only with permission of the Holy See, as provided in Can.202 of C.I.C.. (Cf. C144)

C55 The General Chapter seeks to lead the Society to renewed dedication to its missionary calling:

1. It receives a report on the state of the Society from the General Superior and Councillors on the Society's activities within their area or sphere of work.
2. It reviews the life and activities of the Society and establishes policy guidelines.
3. It elects the General Superior and the members of his Council.
4. It decides on the composition of the next General Chapter and of the Society Assembly.

C56 The Chapter is composed of *ex officio*, elected and

co-opted members.

The General Superior and the members of his Council are *ex officio* members.

Elected members are the Members chosen as delegates by the electoral body, according to the guidelines of the preceding General Chapter.

- D57** There shall be a General Chapter every five years, without prejudice to C 86.
- D58** At least one year before the Chapter is to take place, the General Superior convokes the General Chapter, sending formal notice to all the Members of the Society. In this notice he indicates the exact place and date of the Chapter, notifies the Members of the details of the procedure to elect delegates, and calls for reflection and discussion on topics and issues to be placed before it. The election of delegates will also be initiated one year before the Chapter is due to open.
- C59** For the election of a delegate to the General Chapter, each Perpetual Member has an active and passive vote.
- D60** The election shall consist of three ballots. After the first ballot, the number of nominees is reduced, on the basis of the highest number of votes obtained, to three times the number of delegates to be elected, and after the second ballot to twice the number of delegates to be elected. The representation of student members will be arranged in accordance with the guidelines issued by the previous General Chapter.
- D61** A Member exercises his active vote by sending it in a sealed envelope or by email to the election officers appointed in each Region and Area. On the ballot

paper or email, he writes the name of the Mission, or the Region or Area to which he belongs and the name(s) of the delegate(s) he chooses. The runner(s)-up shall be the substitute(s) of elected delegate(s). The ballot paper is dated and signed by the voter, except where an email is sent from a personal address. The election officers examine these votes and determine the delegates and their substitutes in accordance with the prescribed procedure. They then communicate the election results to the General Council and to the electorate without delay.

- D62** Observers shall also be invited to the General Chapter, at the discretion of the General Council.
- D63** The General Council appoints a committee to collate suggestions and proposals made by the Members and Associates, individually or in groups, for submission to the Chapter.
- C64** The members of the General Chapter will elect 1) the General Superior and 2) the Councillors, one by one. After this they will elect one of the Councillors to be Vicar General. Canon Law provides that only priest-Members may be elected to the offices of General Superior and Vicar General (cf. Can.588). To be eligible, a priest must have been a Perpetual Member for at least ten years (cf. Can. 623).
- C65** The General Superior whose term of office expires presides at the election of the General Superior.
- C66** Before the election of the General Superior, the members of the Chapter choose two scrutineers who, together with the President, pledge themselves to

fulfil their office faithfully. A secretary is chosen who shall write a report of the election, which must be signed by himself, the President, and the two scrutineers, and kept in the archives of the Society.

- C67** The election of the General Superior takes place by secret ballot, and in order to be elected during the first three ballots, a priest-Member must have two-thirds of the votes of the electors present. If, after the third ballot, no one has obtained the required number of votes, there shall be a fourth ballot in which those two alone shall be eligible who in the third ballot obtained the largest number of votes. In the fourth ballot, a relative majority will suffice. Should the number of votes be equal for both, the one who is senior by membership, or, should they be equal in this respect, the one who is senior by age, shall be declared elected by the President. If the President himself is elected he shall be proclaimed General Superior by the first scrutineer.
- C68** If a candidate for General Superior who is a *postulandus* fails to obtain a two-thirds majority by the second ballot, his name is removed from the list of candidates and the election is resumed from the beginning.
- C69** A General Superior who has served for two terms cannot be elected for a third consecutive term.
- C70** The General Superior at once informs the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples of his election. He also sends notice of his election to all the Members and Associates of the Society.

- C71** The newly elected General Superior or, in his absence, the Vicar General whose term of office expires, presides at the election of the Councillors and the new Vicar General.
- D72** While the newly elected General Superior may present three nominations for each of the offices of Councillor, Chapter delegates retain the right to vote for whomsoever they wish. (Cf. Principles of Leadership in C 77)
- D73** To be elected a Councillor or Vicar General, a member must have an absolute majority of the votes of the electors present but, after two ballots, a relative majority is sufficient for an election. Should two Members have an equal number of votes in the third ballot, seniority by membership or, if they are equal in this respect, by age, will decide the election.
- C74** After the Chapter the General Superior and his Council will draw up a general account of the transactions of the Chapter and send it to all the Members and Associates.
- D75** The newly elected General Superior and his Council may request members of the outgoing General Council to assist them in the transition for a period not exceeding three months. This will also allow newly elected members to withdraw from their commitments.

The General Superior and the General Council

- C76** The ordinary government of the Society is conducted by the General Superior and his Council, who together form the 'General Council'. One of the Councillors will

be the Vicar General. Their number is determined by the General Chapter, but there shall be at least three councillors. When Canon Law requires at least four councillors (cf. Can.699,§1), another Member who is easily available will be appointed as the fourth councillor. In extraordinary situations, not foreseen in the Constitutions and Chapter decisions, the General Superior has recourse to the Holy See.

C77 The members of the General Council will endeavour to carry out their task in a spirit of co-responsibility and with effective teamwork. In general their task is:

a. to lead the Society in accordance with the Constitutions and Directives, and the decisions of the General Chapters, and to inspire its Members and Associates in their mission;

b. to represent the Society officially.

C78 The General Superior has direct and personal authority over the Society as a whole, over Regions, Areas, Houses, Members and Associates. He has a personal responsibility for the welfare of all the Members and Associates, who have the right of direct access to him, just as he has to them. He convokes and presides at the General Chapter, the Society Assembly and the General Council meetings.

C79 The Vicar General takes the place of the General Superior when the latter is absent or prevented from discharging his office. The General Superior may entrust him, as well as the other Councillors, with special tasks.

- D80** The General Chapter allocates to the Councillors specific areas of responsibility. The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, can make adjustments to these allocations, either in particular situations or on a more permanent basis.
- C81** The General Superior is to seek the advice of his Councillors in all important matters. For certain decisions and acts to be valid the General Superior requires the consent of his Council. In this case the consent must be obtained from a majority of the Councillors present, provided a majority of the General Council are present and have taken part in the deliberations. Such acts are:
- a. decisions to end or decrease existing Society commitments or to accept new commitments;
 - b. decisions to establish or redefine regions of Areas, to found new houses or to close existing houses;
 - c. the appointment of Regional Representatives, Society Representatives and Group Leaders, after due consultation with the Members (cf. D 99-102 and C 109);
 - d. the appointment of personnel who serve the General Council, Regional Bursars, Rectors and Administrators, Formation and Recruitment Staff and Heads of Department;
 - e. the acceptance of the resignation, or the removal from office, of a Councillor and any of the officers mentioned above;

f. the admission of candidates to Perpetual Membership or Association, and the recommendation of students for ordination (cf. C30);

g. the approval of annual budgets and financial statements of the Central, Regional and Area Accounts, of the First and Second Cycle Formation Houses, and of all major financial transactions;

h. the appointment of Members and Associates to Regions or Areas, in consultation with the local Representative;

i. the choice of place for the General Chapter (cf. C56);

j. all grave matters, financial and otherwise, and extraordinary affairs of the Society, and those which require the consent of The Holy See, as well as those acts for which Canon Law, or Society law, explicitly requires the consent of the Council.

D82 The General Council shall appoint administrative staff as circumstances require. Their duties are determined by the General Council. The General Council makes any other provisions necessary for the efficient organisation and administration of the office of the General Council.

D83 The Society has its own Procurator General in Rome. He transacts all the business of the Society with the Holy See in accordance with the directions of the General Superior. He maintains contact with the various missionary Societies and Institutions in Rome and takes part in activities concerning Mission

organised there. He keeps the General Council informed of all pertinent developments.

- D84** The General Council takes care that the General Superior, or his Councillors, visit all the Members and Associates of the Society on a regular basis. On the occasion of a visitation the Members and Associates are met individually and as a group. Visitations are normally arranged in consultation with the Regional or Society Representative, or the Group Leader.
- D85** The General Council may appoint Central Coordinators for a particular task and for a specified period, to assist them in their work.
- C86** Upon the death, resignation or removal from office of the General Superior, the Vicar General governs the Society until the election of the new General Superior. He at once informs the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and awaits his instructions concerning the election. When these have arrived, he informs all the Members and Associates.
- C87** If the Vicar General ceases to hold office, the General Superior and the remainder of his Council, acting collegially, elect a new Councillor and then proceed to elect a Vicar General from among the Councillors, in accordance with C 76.
- C88** If a Councillor dies or ceases to hold office, the General Superior and the remainder of the Council, acting collegially, elect a new Councillor in accordance with C 76.

The Society Assembly

- D89** There shall be one Society Assembly between General Chapters. The General Superior may, with the consent of his Council, convoke another Assembly if he deems it necessary.
- D90** The functions of the Society Assembly are:
- a. to assess the life and work of the Members and Associates in the light of the vision and the decisions of the previous General Chapter;
 - b. to deal with topics or issues placed before it by the General Council, the Members and Associates, or the Assembly itself.
- D91** The preceding Chapter shall decide the composition, venue, and duration of the Society Assembly.

REGIONAL/AREA ORGANISATION AND GOVERNMENT

INTRODUCTORY	(92-94)
REGIONS	(95-106)
SOCIETY AREAS	(107-110)
COMMUNITIES AND HOUSES	(111-115)

Introductory

- C92** The Society is divided into Regions and Areas. It is for the General Council to establish, redefine, or dissolve Regions or Areas, in accordance with guidelines laid down by the previous Chapter. (Cf. C 81 b.)
- C93** Members and Associates of a Region or Area are those who have been appointed to the particular Region or Area.
- C94** Each Region or Area has its Representative or Group Leader, who is assisted by his Council and works under the authority of the General Council.

Regions

- C95** A Region is defined as a section of the Society which, under the authority of the General Council, governs its own affairs in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.
- C96** The Regional Representative is assisted by a vice-Regional and at least two Councillors, who together make up the Regional Council

D97 The establishment of Regions is governed by the following criteria:

- a. that significant Society activities are carried out in the Region;
- b. that the number of those who originate from the Region together with those who work in the Region is not less than thirty in total;
- c. that there is a possibility of moving towards self-reliance.

C98 The Regional Representative acts on behalf of and in collaboration with the General Council in the Region. He likewise represents the Members and Associates in the Region in dealings with the General Council and with the local Ordinaries. He keeps the General Council informed of all important matters and likewise passes on communications by the General Council to the Members and Associates.

The Regional Representative and his Council lead and inspire the Members and Associates in their missionary task, and coordinate the activities of the Society in the Region. The Regional Representative or vice-Regional visit the Members and Associates regularly, and arrange an annual meeting in the various areas of the Region. He holds meetings with councils and contact persons in the various areas on a regular basis. The Regional Representative has personal care for the welfare of the Members and Associates, particularly the sick and retired, and those on leave.

In Regions where new Members and Associates are

appointed, the Regional Representative ensures that they receive ample time for learning the local language and culture. In dialogue with the Local Ordinary, and after consultation with his Council, he makes their appointments.

The Regional Representative seeks to establish and maintain good relations with the local church, and with other Societies and Religious Institutes.

Together with his Council, the Regional Representative makes the appointments of vice-Rectors and Bursars of houses within the Region, approves the annual budgets of the Society houses in the Region and extraordinary financial transactions in accordance with D130 .

The Regional Representative consults the members of his Council in all important matters and holds Council meetings on a regular basis.

C99 The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, appoints the Regional Representative, after a consultative vote of the Members of the Region, and after having obtained the opinion of the Associates operating in the Region.

D100 The consultation process for the appointment of Regional Representatives is initiated every three years by the General Council. The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, gives guidelines about the procedure to be followed. (Cf. Chapter 2005 documents)

D101 A Regional Representative is ineligible for a third consecutive term but may be appointed again for a

later term.

D102 The General Council appoints the Consultors after the new Regional Representative has been appointed. This is done after consultation with the new Regional Representative and taking into account the result of the consultative vote of the Members and the opinion of the Associates of the Region.

C103 The composition of the Regional Council should, as far as possible reflect the important areas of the Society's work in the Region.

C104 In all Regions a Bursar is appointed by the General Council in consultation with the new Regional Representative, and his Council. The Bursar is not an *ex officio* member of the Regional Council. (Cf. C81 d)

C105 In case of the death, resignation or removal from office of the Regional Representative, the vice Regional Representative acts in his place until a new Regional Representative takes up office.

D106 Regional authority extends to:

a. Members and Associates residing in the Region, excepting members of the General Council and the central administration;

b. the major formation programme and its personnel in accordance with guidelines laid down by the previous Chapter.

Society Areas

- C107** Whenever a particular Society unit clearly does not have the elements required for a Region, it is regarded as an Area in accordance with C 92. In an Area the structure and organisation may be more flexible and simple, depending on its size and extension.
- C108** The Society Representative of an Area is assisted by a Council of at least two and assumes responsibility for the Members and Associates in the Area and its tasks — responsibilities which are analogous to those of a Regional Representative (cf. C. 98).
- C109** The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, appoints the Society Representative, after consultation with the Members, and having obtained the opinion of the Associates of the Area, and with due regard to their wishes. The General Council also appoints the Consultors, in consultation with the Representative, and in view of the consultative vote of the Members and the opinion of the Associates.
- C110** In an Area where the number of Members and Associates is less than ten, the General Council, after consultation with the group, appoints a Group Leader, who is directly accountable to the General Council.

Communities and Houses

- C111** Every local community of the Society has its own Superior, entitled 'Rector'. The Rector has ordinary administrative authority within the purpose and function of the house.

- C112** He has a vice Rector, a Bursar, and is assisted also by a House Committee, chosen by the members of the house. Where the community is small, all constitute the House Committee.
- C113** The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, appoints Rectors, after consultation with the Regional or Society Council, the community, and the person concerned. The Regional/Society Representative, with the consent of his Council, appoints vice Rectors and Bursars.
- C114** The normal term of a Rector is three years. After consultation, his appointment may be renewed for a further period of three years. For the good of the Society, a Rector may be changed before his term is completed.
- C115** Rectors will arrange for regular house meetings to further community life and to give support to individual Members and Associates of the community.

MATERIAL RESOURCES

ADMINISTRATION AND USE (116 – 142)

C116 Apostolic poverty characterises the lives and activities of individual Mill Hill Missionaries and communities. Individuals give their service freely and surrender to the Society all income received through their ministry and personal work, in return for maintenance and basic welfare. Both as individuals and in communities, they are committed to a simple lifestyle, good stewardship, a wise use of resources for the objectives and needs of the Society and its mission, and to identification with the poor in a world of stark contrast between wealth and poverty.

C117 The Society needs financial resources for every phase of its activities (promotion, formation, mission work), as well as to provide for the personal needs of its Members and Associates (board and lodging, travel, medical expenses, and retirement). Apart from income received through the ministry and personal work of its Members, the Society depends on donations from benefactors, pensions, and investments.

C118 To the common fund of the Society belong:

- a. all goods received through the regular sacred ministry and work of Members and Associates;
- b. all money, gifts, offerings, legacies, etc., acquired by Members and Associates in consideration of their belonging to the Society.

C119 On behalf of the Society, the General Council

supervises the administration of all Society property and funds throughout the world, in accordance with the prescriptions of Canon Law, the Society's Constitutions and Directives, and in accordance with the intention of the donor(s).

C120 Goods and property belonging to the Society are ecclesiastical property. They are invested in an advantageous, secure, and ethical way, and are not used for loans, standing security, or speculation. The General Council ensures that in particular countries civil law in this matter is adhered to.

C121 The General Superior, with the consent of his Council, defines which financial transactions require his approval, and regulates the conditions for the validity of such transactions in accordance with Canon Law. The General Council sets financial ceilings at each level, and seeks permission from the Holy See whenever a transaction exceeds the ceiling laid down for a particular country. (Cf. Can. 638 of C.I.C.)

D122 All Mass offerings belong to the common fund of the Society, to be used for the maintenance of Members and Associates - either directly by the Society or through contracts with the local Church. Every Society house must keep an exact account of all Mass Offerings to be exonerated by the house.

C123 As a member of the General Council, the Councillor for Finance is chiefly concerned with financial policy and planning. He also supervises the Finance Office.

D124 The Financial Secretary carries out the policies of the General Council.

- D125** The General Council establishes a Financial Council under the chairmanship of the Councillor for Finance which meets regularly to share information about Society finances, and learn about practices in the different Regions. It examines and analyses the Society's accounts in order to develop a global view of the Society's financial affairs, and it makes recommendations on financial matters to the General Council.
- D126** The principle of consultation with regard to budgets and financial statements holds good at every level of the Society.
- D127** The Central Society Account is maintained for the specific tasks of the General Council and the central administration of the Society. Its income derives partly from investments and partly from allocations made to it by the Regions. It is administered, on behalf of the General Council, by the Financial Secretary.
- D128** Each Regional Council administers its accounts through the Regional Bursar who advises and assists them. When the Regional Bursar is not a member of the Regional Council, one member is chosen to liaise with him. The accounts are normally audited each year.
- D129** In Society Areas, the Representative or Group Leader, together with his council, presents a budget to the General Council for the expenses of his office, and for an emergency fund for the assistance of Members and Associates in special need. A financial report is submitted annually to the General Council.

- D130** The houses and departments under the Regions and Areas make their annual budgets, which are submitted, via the Regional or Area Bursar, for approval by the Regional or Area Council, who then forward them to the General Council for final approval.
- D131** Any transactions which go substantially beyond the limit of the current budget are considered extraordinary financial transactions and require the prior approval of the higher authority.
- D132** Decisions on the sale of properties, acquisition of new buildings, disposal of funds from the sale of properties, and the amount to be retained by the Region or Area are taken by the General Council in consultation with the Regional or Area Council concerned.
- D133** The welfare of Members and Associates who work in the service of the Local Church is regulated by contract.
- D134** In matters of financial support, local communities are encouraged to provide the necessities of life for those who serve them, and to contribute towards parish and community services and institutions.
- D135** Since revenue from chaplaincies and other salaried posts and functions belong, in principle, to the Society. Members and Associates make an arrangement with the competent Society authorities about all financial arrangements, before taking up such posts. Where there is a contract between the Local Church and the Society, such revenues are regulated within this.
- C136** Members retain the ownership, administration and use

of goods they possessed before taking the Perpetual Oath of the Society; and also of those goods which come to them afterwards, by way of inheritance, from parents, relations, and guardians, or by any other similar title of a strictly personal and secular character. (Cf. D 138)

D137 Members and Associates who receive financial assistance from government sources, such as a pension or a disability allowance, pay these monies to the Society house in which they reside. Should they live in a house not belonging to the Society, then such monies are paid to the household responsible for their upkeep. When on mission, the same principle holds good, and Members and Associates in receipt of pensions discuss their usage with the local Society leadership.

D138 It is recognised that many members generously use their personal funds for missionary purposes. Whenever there is a considerable outlay, it is normal practice to seek the advice and agreement of fellow missionaries and the Local Ordinary. Where personal funds are used for a Member's own needs, the requirements of fraternal charity and apostolic simplicity are observed.

D139 In principle, all Members and Associates have a right to a personal allowance in accordance with the standard of living in their country of residence. Where necessary, the General Council finances these allowances. In self-supporting Regions the personal allowance payable to the Members and Associates is periodically reviewed by the Regional Council which submits its recommendations to the General

Council for endorsement. In order to ensure a spirit of equality in the Society, financial arrangements in the different Regions and Areas, are reviewed regularly by the Financial Council (cf. D 125) and by the Councillor for Finance and the Regional or Society Representatives, the conclusions being presented to the General Council.

C140 Before a Member or Associate makes a large expenditure, or incurs a heavy debt, on behalf of the Society, he or she first obtains written permission from the competent Superior, and abides by the regulations laid down by the General Council. If this procedure is not adhered to, the individual is personally responsible and liable for any debts incurred.

D141 Superiors who allow Members and Associates to enter into contracts with Dioceses or other bodies, make sure that there is a clause which allows the persons in question to be released in the interests of the Society.

D142 Every Member and Associate has a Last Will and Testament in every country where he or she has possessions. Sealed copies of such wills are left with the Regional or Area Representative, or notice is given as to where they are deposited.

ARCHIVES

C143 The General Council, as well as Regional and Area Councils, maintain archives where important documents can be kept safely. These include important legal and financial documents, documents referring to the Society and its Members and Associates, and all important correspondence. Copies of important documents in the Regions and Areas are sent to the General Council.

CHANGES AND MODIFICATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTIVES

C144 Changes or modifications to the Constitutions can be effected by a two-thirds majority of a General Chapter, with the approval of the Holy See. Changes to Directives can be effected by a simple majority of a General Chapter, without recourse to the Holy See.

INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTIVES

C145 The General Superior, acting with the consent of his Council, is the ordinary interpreter of the Constitutions and Directives. However, their authentic interpretation belongs to the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

STATUTES FOR MILL HILL LAY ASSOCIATES

1. St. Joseph's Missionary Society wishes to promote the growing involvement of lay people in the missionary work of the Church, by offering them the opportunity to fulfil their missionary vocation through its programme of Association.
2. The Society invites the Associates to share its missionary way of life according to the appropriate Constitutions and Directives.
3. The Associate programme is under the authority of the General Council.
4. The Society provides for Association a standard Agreement approved by the General Council, and adjustable to their respective Region.
5. Associates make a commitment to share, as lay people, in the missionary apostolate of the Society.
6. Associates put their charisms, experiences and skills at the disposal of the Society, the local Church and the people they serve.
7. Associates belong to the Mill Hill family, and offer and receive support and companionship in whatever community they live in.
8. The conditions for acceptance of Associates are:
 - a. being a committed Christian in their professional and personal life;

- b. having a professional or technical qualification and some years of relevant working experience;
 - c. being over twenty-five years of age and in good health;
 - d. being able to adapt themselves to different cultures, and to work in isolated conditions;
 - e. being ready, potentially, to work in an international team;
 - f. being ready to serve anywhere, in consultation with the General Council;
 - g. having a working knowledge of the English language, and the willingness to learn another;
 - h. being ready to fulfil the obligations of the Contract of Association;
 - i. having successfully completed the respective formation programme.
9. Candidates become Associates of the Society when they enter into an Agreement of Association with the Society.
 10. A change in the Associate's state of life will necessitate a review of the Agreement of Association, which may be terminated by mutual agreement.
 11. In extraordinary circumstances, the Associate or the Society may decide upon premature termination of the Agreement.
 12. On completion of the Agreement, the Associate may request a renewal of the Agreement for another specified period of time. The Society also allows for the possibility of continuing Association.

13. When the Association with the Society comes to an end, it is hoped that the special ties of friendship and mutual concern will continue to exist between the Society and the former Associate.
14. After six years of Association, single men, who are ready to make a life-long commitment to the Society and its missionary work, can be accepted as permanent lay Members.
15. The authority of these Statutes derives from decisions made by the General Chapters and the General Council.

RENEWAL OF MISSIONARY COMMITMENT

The Presider prays for God's grace, saying

Lord,
in your providence you have called these servants
of yours to follow your Son more closely as
missionaries. Mercifully grant that they may persevere
to the end along the way of your love on which they
have set out with such joy. We ask this through Christ
our Lord. Amen.

*The Presider invites all Members present to recite with him
the renewal of their Missionary Oath.*

In the presence of the Most Blessed Trinity,
of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God,
of Saint Joseph our Patron,
and all the saints,
I publicly declare before this community,
that it is my sincere desire
to follow Christ as a missionary.
I solemnly consecrate myself
under oath for life
to this Apostolic work
as a Member of St. Joseph's Missionary Society.
I also promise obedience to the Superior General
in accordance with the Constitutions of the Society.

The presider invites all Associates present to renew their missionary commitment

I desire to share in the missionary task
of St. Joseph's Missionary Society,
and wish to dedicate myself,
in the spirit of the Gospel,
to the missionary apostolate.
I understand the meaning of Association,
and I am ready to accept the duties and privileges
of an Associate of the Society.
I entrust my work as a lay missionary
to the Lord of the harvest,
through the intercession of Our Lady,
Mother of the Church,
and St. Joseph, Patron of our Society.

The General Council recommends, where possible, the public renewal of missionary commitment at special Mill Hill gatherings, ceremonies of commitment, and on the Feast of the Sacred Heart each year.

