

Thy Kingdom Come!

ABBREVIATIONS

- RCMH Regnum Christi Member Handbook (Manual del Miembro del Movimiento Regnum Christi) published by the general director in 2008
- RCH Regnum Christi Handbook (Manual del Regnum Christi) published by the general director in 1990
- SRC Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement (Estatutos del Movimiento Regnum Christi), approved by the Holy See in 2004
- SRC (1988) Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement (Estatutos del Movimiento de Apostolado Regnum Christi) published by the general director in 1988
- SRRC Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement (Estatutos y Reglamentos del Movimiento Regnum Christi) approved by the general director in 2006

Presentation of the Working Document and the Methodology of Group Discernment

Introduction

In his letter dated October 2, 2014, Father Eduardo Robles Gil, LC, the general director of the Regnum Christi Movement, announced the start of the process of revision of the *Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement*. This process is intended to respond to the Holy See's request to update the statutes for the entire Movement. The statutes of an ecclesiastical entity are supposed to express, promote and protect its charism, the authenticity of which has to be guaranteed by the authority of the Church. All the members of the Movement are invited to participate in this process of discerning God's will for Regnum Christi by listening to the voice of the Lord who speaks through prayer, what the Church's representatives, our brothers and sisters in the Movement and our own life experience. This path should help us to delve deeper into our identity and our spirituality, and rekindle our correspondence to the gift which God has given us.

The first stage of the process began with having the first and second degree members study what the Magisterium of the Church teaches about the identity and mission of the laity, with the help of study packets prepared by the Central Commission.¹ We now begin the next phase, in which the members of the first and

¹ The Central Commission for the Review of the Statutes of Regnum Christi was established by Fr. Eduardo Robles Gil on March 19, 2014. The list of members can be found at the website <http://www.regnumchristi.org/comissione/facilitators/central-comission/>

second degree in all localities will discern about their identity, spirituality and life in the Movement, reflecting on these themes in their groups. They will also elect delegates for the territorial conventions.

This stage will conclude with an international convention which will present the general director with the results of the members' discernment, in order to shed light on the drafting of the future statutes from the perspective of the first and second degree.

The complete description of the process for the revision of the *Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement* can be found on the official website under the following link: <http://www.regnumchristi.org/comissione/resources/overview-of-the-revision-process/>

II. The *Working Document*

This document you have in your hands is a rough draft of those numbers in the statutes that contain the elements that refer to the members of the first and second degree of Regnum Christi. Based on this draft we will reflect and discern in groups on the aspects proper to the identity and mission of the members of the first and second degree, such as their spirituality, commitments, team life, and life in the section, etc.

In this document you will find commentaries on specific numbers of the statutes that explain the central commission's proposal. You will also find questions designed to help guide reflections and facilitate the exchange of ideas in the group. There are also appendices presenting themes that require special in-depth consideration. Finally there is a form where the results of the reflections can be recorded.

A) Structure of the *Working Document*:

Chapter I: Identity, goal and spirituality of the members of the first and second degree

Chapter II: Apostolic activity

Chapter III: Spiritual life

Chapter IV: Formation of the members

Chapter V: Members, admission and departure

Chapter VI: Structure

Chapter VII: Government and place of the members of the first and second degree in the canonical structure of Regnum Christi

Appendix 1: Apostolic effectiveness and leadership in the Regnum Christi mission

Appendix 2: Encounter with Christ

Appendix 3: Belonging to Regnum Christi

Appendix 4: Identity of the teams and sections

B) To Better Understand this Document:

1. Rough draft of statutes

The main content of this document is the rough draft of the numbers in the

statutes that refer to the members of the first and second degree of the Regnum Christi Movement. They do not refer to Regnum Christi as a whole.

These numbers are presented to the members essentially to reflect on one question: Do you think that these numbers adequately express the charism of Regnum Christi as the first and second members ought to live it, and do they establish suitable and sufficient norms to promote and protect it?

As numbers of a statute, they should contain only essential and universally applicable elements, those which all of us at this moment find indispensable for the living out of the charism in every time and place. In addition they should be written in plain language. Due to these characteristics the numbers of a statute express a lot in few words. A prayerful and meditative reading is required in order to discover and fathom all the richness they contain.

The numbers presented here are a proposal of the Central Commission based on the current Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement approved in 2004. The Commission also took into account the normative texts that form part of the tradition of the Movement (the handbooks and the earlier version of the statutes) as well as the minutes of the meeting of the 38 members of the first and second degree who met in Rome in June 2013 to undertake a first revision of the statutes, as well as the proposals made by a commission of members of the first and second degree.² In the text proposed here, the content of the current Statutes has been preserved in the great majority of cases. Whenever the commission proposes a change in content it gives an explanation in a commentary following the number in question. The actual text of the statute is in red, for clarity, while commentaries are in black. Proposed textual changes have not been marked in order to avoid making the texts unnecessarily difficult to read. Anyone who wants to compare the proposed text with the original can find a translation of the statutes in effect on the website³ of the Central Commission.

Until the competent authority promulgates changes, the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement of 2004 remain in effect.

It helps to be aware of the existence of other so-called secondary documents (handbooks, rules, guidelines), of diverse nature. Some develop the essential contents of the statutes in a more pedagogical and motivational way, e.g. the Regnum Christi Member Handbook. Others define methodologies and procedures which are too subject to change according to differences in time and place to be defined in the text of statutes.

² Cardinal Velasio de Paolis, then the Papal Delegate for the Legion and Regnum Christi, asked that the first and second degree members review their statutes. The first stage of this process consisted of 38 members, chosen from around the world met in Rome in June of 2013. At the end of the gathering, these 38 elected four from amongst themselves to form a stable commission of representatives from the first and second degrees. This commission served as member/consultants of the Papal Delegate and the general governance of both branches of consecrated members and of the Legion until the provisional framework for cooperation in Regnum Christi was approved in March of 2014.

³ <http://www.regnumchristi.org/comissione/resources/statutes-2004/>

2. Appendices

The appendices are intended to shed light on certain themes, either because they have been at the center of some confusion or because certain possible new elements deserve closer analysis.

In any case the statute numbers themselves contain many other themes of great depth and relevance for the Movement, such as, its mission, spirituality, formation, etc. Even though the document does not contain specific appendices related to these themes it highly recommended that groups delve deeper into these topics.

3. Questions

At the end of each chapter there are two types of questions:

Questions for in-depth study and sharing: seek to stimulate reflection and to help members to study the contents of the chapter in-depth and to discern how they can be lived out ever better.

Questions whose answers should be included in the minutes: seek to gather the judgment of the members concerning the statute numbers. The replies are recorded in the minutes which are sent to the territorial commission.

In each chapter the first of these questions asks if any idea is either unnecessary or missing in the proposed numbers. The answer to this question should be given taking into account the nature and characteristics of a statute: is there an element missing which would be necessary to protect and promote the charism? Is there something which is not necessary to include in the statute, either because it is not universally applicable or because experience has shown that it is unnecessary or even harmful?

Why discern and how to go about it

We are engaged in a process that is spiritual in nature. The members are invited to participate in the discernment of what God wants for the Movement in this moment. We are undertaking this journey in order to understand how to live out better the gift we have received and to fulfill our mission better.

Although there are moments to vote on texts, neither the process itself nor a simple democratic majority is the definitive criterion being sought. The votes help to show the consensus and views of the members on the various themes once they have prayed, thought them over and exchanged ideas among themselves. Through this procedure, which begins with the members at the local level and moves up through the territorial conventions to the international convention, we are trying to understand what the will of God is for us. In the end, the competent authorities, which in this case are the general director and ultimately, the Holy See, will decide. But, in order to do this, need to know what the reflections and proposals of the members are.

Guidelines for the reflections on the local level

We need to invoke the help of the Holy Spirit frequently since he plays the main role in the discernment process.

To ensure that the exchange of opinions proves fruitful, all are invited to live these moments with a sincere desire to seek God's will. They should leave aside their personal preferences, be open and attentive to the Holy Spirit, who speaks within one's own heart and through others; all in a spirit of communion and respect for each other.

The richness of the exchange of opinions depends on allowing each participant to express his personal point of view clearly and freely. It is not about refuting others' opinions or trying to win them over, but rather about expressing one's own opinion and listening attentively to what others have to say.

While reflecting upon the texts the most important thing to do is to focus on the ideas they contain rather than to get caught up in the exact wording, since the wording is not definitive.

B. Methodology of group discernment

It is recommended to begin the session with a prayer.

A few minutes should be taken to go over the content of the chapter.

Go around the group one-by-one so that all have the chance to speak without interruptions.

The discussion begins by answering the questions for in-depth study and sharing.

You then proceed to the questions to be included in the minutes. Each contribution should be written on a separate line and be voted upon.

At the end of the minutes the secretary can jot down any other observations regarding the *Working Document*, together with the results of the votes held on each of these.

C. Guidelines for organizing the process

The members of the first and second degree will be organized into groups to carry out the discernment process on the Working Document, The person responsible for the process on the local level, together with the section directors, should determine the most suitable way to organize the members according to the characteristics of the locality.

Each group should have a moderator and a secretary to ensure that the meetings run smoothly.

As in the first phase of the process, Legionaries and consecrated members of both branches of consecrated life in Regnum Christi are invited to participate in these sessions but cannot vote. They can listen, understand, lend support and share their own experience with the members of the first and second degree.

The moderators convoke the members of their group to the discernment sessions. They should chair the meeting and ensure that everyone who wants to has a chance to share his reflections. They should keep the group focused on the theme at hand. The moderator can establish a time limit for individual contributions.

The secretary writes up the minutes of the meeting and sends them in, following the methodology described below.

D. Sending in minutes and responses

The minutes should contain the responses to the numbered questions using the attached excel form. It is not necessary to send in the minutes containing the reflections about the questions for in-depth study and sharing, but if a team so desires, it may do so on a separate document.

The secretary sends the minutes to the person responsible for the process on the local level, who in turn sends it on to the territorial commission and to the local delegates so that they can assimilate the reflections, opinions and concerns expressed by the members of the electoral college. The territorial commission compiles the minutes and presents them to the territorial convention.

If any Movement member desires to make a personal contribution, he can send it in to the territorial commission anytime up to a month before the territorial convention in his territory begins and if he wishes it to be presented to the delegates rcstatutes_na@regnumchrsti.net. In any case, any member can get in touch with any of the delegates to present his views to them individually.

Chapter I: Identity, goal and spirituality of the first and second degree members.

Topics this chapter addresses

Who are the first and second degree members of the Regnum Christi Movement? What is their mission? What is their driving force and their motivations? What are the characteristic elements of their spirituality?

Identity of the first and second degree members

1. § 1. The first and second degree members of the Regnum Christi Movement are Christian faithful who accept a god-given vocation to live their baptismal commitment in the midst of temporal realities according to the charism of Regnum Christi.⁴

§ 2. They form part of the Regnum Christi Movement together with other faithful who share the same charism according to their own state of life and in accord with their own rule.

§ 1. The term *vocation* is used to express the fact that belonging to Regnum Christi is an attempt to respond to a divine invitation that a person discovers in their heart. It does not mean that becoming a member implies a bond with the same consequences as those produced by the sacred bonds of those who profess the evangelical counsels for a consecration of their life. For each first and second degree member the call to belong to Regnum Christi is obviously ordered to the living out of their principal vocation as a Christian in accord with their state in life.

§2. These other faithful are the Legionaries of Christ, the Regnum Christi consecrated women and the Regnum Christi consecrated men.

Their own rule refers to the norms particular to a certain group. In the case of Regnum Christi it refers to the norms related to each branch.

General goal

2. The goal to which the first and second degree members of the Regnum Christi Movement aspire is that Christ reign in their hearts, in the hearts of others and in society through the living out of their baptismal commitments and the spreading of the light of the Gospel in their family, professional and social life. In order to do this, always attentive to the signs of the times in order to respond to the needs of the world and of the Church, they seek to collaborate in the building up the civilization of Christian justice and love, especially through prayer, witness and personal and communal apostolate, in accord with their state of life and their possibilities.⁵

In this number the first sentence expresses the goal with which the first and second degree members are joined to the Movement is the same goal as that of all the

⁴ SRC 6; RCMH 57

⁵ Cf. SRC 2 §1

members of *Regnum Christi* (*that Christ reign in their hearts, in the hearts of others and in society*) but through that which is more proper to them due their secular character (*through the living out of their baptismal commitments and the spreading of the light of the Gospel in their family, professional and social life*). The second sentence explains how they try to reach this goal: they build *the civilization of Christian justice and love* with the essential means of prayer, witness and apostolate – which in the Movement is personal and communal -, paying special attention to those needs which the signs of the times show to have priority.

In mentioning the means, this number speaks of personal and communal apostolate. In the Statutes of 2004 the phrase used is *personal and organized apostolic action* (SRC 1). Here, the commission proposes to underline the two dimensions of a member's apostolate: the personal and the communal, since what is expressed in the Statutes as *organized apostolate* corresponds to that which is expressed in the *Regnum Christi Handbook* (1990), 58.c: *the Movement offers the opportunity to transcend individual apostolic action, in order to join up with organized apostolate of thousands of people in diverse cities and countries who live the same spirituality and work with the same methodology*; therefore, it refers to the fact that not only personal action, but also *communal action*, is sought. This action, whether personal or communal, should not be merely spontaneous, but organized. However this is explained more clearly in Chapter II on apostolic activity.

Specific mission

3. Following the example of the apostles, who experienced the love of Christ, the first and second degree members feel the urgent need to seek out, form and apostolically engage men and women, especially those who have greater influence in the different sectors of society, so that Christ might transform the personal, family, professional and social life of all people.⁶

Following our tradition, the mission is expressed in three steps or tasks: seek people out, form them and help them become apostolically active.

Furthermore, the evangelization of leaders is mentioned (“especially those who have greater influence in the different sectors of society”). Given the importance of this topic Appendix 1 is dedicated to a reflection on it.

Foundation of the spirituality

4. *Regnum Christi* finds its spirituality on the contemplation of Christ and on following him, who with his Incarnation, life, death and resurrection announces and brings to fulfillment the Kingdom of God.

All Christian spirituality is founded on the contemplation of Christ and the Word of God is its main source. This number indicates which mystery of Christ inspires the

⁶ Cf. SRC 2 §3 y 3

spirituality of Regnum Christi.

Christ-centeredness

5. Christ-centeredness constitutes the fundamental and specific characteristic of Regnum Christi spirituality. The members encounter, experience and love Christ in the Gospel, the Eucharist, the cross and the apostolate. Through the action of the Holy Spirit they put on Christ so that he might be the criterion, center and model of their life.⁷

In this number the commission proposes adding to the text found in the Statutes of 2004 (from now on referred to as SRC), #34, that the apostolate is also a place to encounter, experience and love Christ. In addition, it emphasizes that putting on Christ is a fruit of the action of the Holy Spirit, which demands the person's free collaboration.

Lay spirituality

6. Conscious of the gift of divine filiation in Christ received in baptism, the first and second degree members in the Movement live their condition as priest, prophet and king in the midst of temporal realities, aspiring to make the Kingdom of God present in this world so that it might be a worthy home for the children of God in which all things contribute to giving him glory.

This number expressed the specific spirituality of the lay faithful, who live in the world, based on *Lumen Gentium* 34-37, and with a reference to the Kingdom. It synthesizes the content found in SRC 57-82 and the *Regnum Christi Member Handbook* (from now on referred to as RCMH), 277-311, where the spirituality of the lay members is developed. Such a full development of the theme is more suited to a handbook than to Statutes.

The spirituality of the Kingdom

7. The establishment of the Kingdom of Christ is the ideal which inspires and directs the Movement. Its motto, "Thy Kingdom Come!" (Mt 6:10), expresses this desire. Therefore the members:

1. Should delve deeper into the richness of their baptismal consecration so that Christ might reign in their lives by means of the progressive transformation into him;
2. Should let themselves be penetrated by the love of Christ towards humanity, and seek that he reign in the heart of all people;
3. Should ponder the value of each person and the urgency of the mission in light of eternity and considering the brevity of life.⁸

This number is a variation of no. 11 of the present Constitutions of the Legion of

⁷ Cf. SRC 34

⁸ Cf. SRC n.36 y 41, y SRRC 94

Christ and of SRC 36 y 41, incorporating into it the idea of the value of time in the face of eternity.

Contemplative and evangelizing spirit

8. The spirit of the first and second degree members is contemplative and evangelizing:
1. By its contemplative character the members seek to be men and women of deep interior life, who love prayer and give priority to the action of God in their own sanctification and in their apostolate;
 2. By its evangelizing character the members surrender themselves with great love and zeal to the task of extending the Kingdom of Christ in society and of bearing the light of the Gospel to all people.⁹

In this number, the commission proposes employing the terms used in the Statutes of both consecrated branches and in the Constitution of the Legion¹⁰, in place of the former expression “contemplative and conquering”. Although “evangelizing” and “conquering” might have different connotations, “evangelizing” seems theologically richer and better complements the contemplative aspect of the spirituality. The term “conquering” can be misunderstood.

Spirit of militancy

9. Movement members characteristically live their vocation and mission with a spirit of fight, understood in the Gospel and Pauline sense. They therefore personally commit themselves to give the best of themselves in their spiritual life and in the apostolate.

⁹ Cf. SRRC 45., RCMH 106-112

¹⁰ Cf. Statutes of the Regnum Christi Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi 9., Statutes of the Regnum Christi Consecrated Men 11., Constitutions of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ 12. The Regnum Christi consecrated men supported their choice of the term “evangelizing” with the following argument: «The General Assembly [...]:

- Considers that it is a rich and precise term which adequately expresses our vocation of apostles called by the Lord to share his mission, which is precisely that of evangelization.
- Considers that authentic evangelizing zeal is always driven by love, with respect for others and with the enthusiasm typical of someone who is communicating an experience of God.
- A good description which clearly expresses quite completely the nuance proper to the spirituality of the Movement is the following: “the experience of the love of Christ, which calls him to share the mission, generates in him an ardent desire to correspond with decision as a passionate apostle of the Lord”.
- The term “conquering” has seemed inadequate because:
 - o It can be interpreted in a voluntaristic way, without giving grace its due place as the first principle.
 - o It can make the apostolic mission seem to be a one-way type of movement, as if the one evangelizing is the only person who brings something to bear in the mission, obscuring the fact that evangelization always has the structure of a dialogue since it also enriches the one evangelizing.
 - o It can lead one to forget that the Gospel is always freely accepted”.

The commission proposes this new number to express more clearly the militant aspect which has been present in the spirituality. The following considerations should help to understand better what militancy in the Christian sense is and what the number is trying to express:

By “militant style” we understand that we live our Christian life seeking to correspond to the love of Christ with a sincere, committed, generous, thankful and joyful effort in order to give the best of ourselves in the fulfillment of the mission to which he calls us.

A militant person is one who fights for a cause.

Biblical elements: Christ says that he did not come to bring peace to the world but a sword (cf. Mt 10:34), “the Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent are taking it by force (Mt 11:12). Saint Paul exhorts Timothy to be a “faithful soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:3), and describes in detail the spiritual weapons for this battle (Eph 6:10-17).

The battle referred to is essentially supernatural and is waged with supernatural weapons such as prayer, fasting and abnegation, penance in the personal life of every Christian and in the work of evangelization.

Charity

10. The heart of the spirituality of Regnum Christi is the charity that Christ lived and preached in the Gospel. Therefore members seek to identify themselves with his way of thinking and with his way of dealing with and speaking about people. They express it especially through respect, trust, acceptance, forgiveness and joy, and through living communion with everyone.¹¹

The Loves of Regnum Christi

11. Regnum Christi proposes to its members that they particularly cultivate five supernatural loves: personal, real, passionate and faithful love of Christ; tender and filial love of the Blessed Virgin Mary; love towards all people; love for the Pope; love for the Church and, as a part of it, love for Regnum Christi as the path for the living out of one’s own vocation.¹²

These five loves have served as a compendium of our spirituality. Since the Statutes are supposed to be synthetic, it is proposed that they be expressed in just one number.

¹¹ Cf. SRC 40, 57 §3 y §4 y 60

¹² Cf. SRC 34,36,37 y 38

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing¹³:

It is recommended to look over the study packets 1, 2 and 5 from the prior phase of study (<http://www.regnumchristi.org/comissione/resources/>) so that the discussion can be more fruitful.

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

How do these numbers reflect the specific lay vocation?

How is the contemplative and evangelizing character of our spirituality reflected in our life and in our way of living the mission?

How can we improve our evangelization of those who have greater influence in the diverse sectors of society? (cf. Appendix 1)

Questions to be answered in the minutes:

1. The numbers of this chapter try to reflect succinctly the identity, mission and spirituality of the first and second degree members of Regnum Christi.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

¹³These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of these responses.

Chapter II: Apostolic Activity

Topics this chapter addresses

What do we understand by apostolate? How do we carry out the mission described in the previous chapter? What criteria guide us when deciding which apostolic initiatives we will undertake and how we will implement them?

The dimensions of the mission in the life of the members

12. Members of the Movement feel the urgency of making the love of Christ known and they orient all of their apostolic activity towards this goal. They therefore freely put their talents at the service of the Kingdom of Christ guided by a sense of effectiveness. Thus:

1. they place a special emphasis on encountering Christ daily in prayer and in bearing witness to him in the diverse circumstances of their lives;
2. in the living out of their lay vocation they give top priority to their family life and the duties of their state in life, enlightened by the Gospel and the teachings of the Church;
3. undertake and participate in initiatives and apostolic works of the Movement.
4. seek to participate in the life of their parish and diocese, enriching the local church with the charism of Regnum Christi.

This number speaks of the dimensions of the mission in the life of the members. It was proposed by the commission of the first and second degree members. The central commission proposes this text with some modifications in phrasing.

In the introductory paragraph, the commission proposes combining the gratuity and the sense of efficacy since they consider that in this way we preserve our charism from interpretations focused on “efficiency at all costs” which can deform it. However, authentic charity demands that we seek effectiveness as we act in favor of our neighbor and not to be satisfied with just good intentions; in this way we will really be giving the best of ourselves.¹⁴

¹⁴ In 2004 the future Pope Francis urged efficiency in order to place its results at the service of the good of others without recompense. cf. Card. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Message to the educational communities, April 21, 2004: «the history of salvation follows the logic of gratuitousness. [...] We must be efficient in our mission because we are dealing principally with the Lord’s work and not our own. The Word which is sown bears fruit in accord with its own inner force and the earth where it falls. This does not allow the sower to work lazily and carelessly. [...] Let us not become confused: efficiency as a value in itself, as the ultimate criterion cannot be justified in any way. When the emphasis is placed on efficiency these days in a business environment, it is clear that this is a means to maximize profit. Well, we have to be efficient so that the “profit” can be produced gratuitously. Efficiency at the service of a task [...] that it might be truly gratuitous. [...] It is not enough to be “good” and “generous”; we have to be intelligent, capable, effective. We Christians have emphasized the rectitude and sincerity of our love and the conversion of heart so much so that at times we have given less attention to the objective result of our fraternal charity. As if the intention was the only thing that mattered... and the actions themselves have been neglected. This is not enough; it is not enough for our brothers and sisters in most need, victims of injustice and exclusion. The “goodness of our hearts” does not remedy their need needs. It doesn’t even satisfy us: a useless solidarity only serves to quiet a little our feelings of guilt. We need to have high goals... and employ the appropriate means”

The fields of apostolic action

13. In collaboration with other members they undertake initiatives and apostolic works primarily aimed at announcing the faith and spreading catholic doctrine, at promoting the family, at the formation of children and youth. at education, at the media, at works of Christian charity, at the promotion of social justice and at evangelizing the professional spheres and evangelizing culture.¹⁵

Criteria for apostolic action

14. All Movement members should pay special attention to the following criteria for apostolic action:

1. person to person;
2. team work and the sense of communion;
3. sense of effectiveness, scope and depth in apostolic initiatives;
4. continuous adaptation to the circumstances of time and place;
- 5.º “Do; Help do; Let do” “hacer, hacer hacer y dejar hacer”;
- 6.º forming Christian leaders for society.¹⁶

This number presents the criteria for apostolic action. In point 2 the term “sense of communion” seeks to express what we have always understood by “esprit de corps”, using a terminology which is theologically richer and very present in the Magisterium in our time. Point 5 is like a slogan which expresses a criterion in language proper to the Movement. It is explained in the RCMH 351-353. Point 6 is a proposal which substitutes the expression “from the top-to-bottom” with one that is more direct and complete.

The ECYD

15. Regnum Christi members should consider ECYD as a priority apostolate as they work with and evangelize adolescents since the youth are the future and the hope of the Church, of the Movement and of society.¹⁷

Networks

16. In order to imbue diverse social and cultural environments with the Christian spirit, and in order to further the apostolates, national and international networks of people can be set up among those who have a common profession or field of interest.¹⁸

(English translation of the Spanish original found in Armando Rubén Puente (coord.), *Papa Francisco, Cómo piensa el nuevo Pontífice*, Libros Libres 2013, pp. 176-179).

¹⁵ Cf. SRC 2 §5 y 49

¹⁶ Cf. SRRC 104 y SRC 3

¹⁷ Cf. SRRC 113 y 876

¹⁸ Cf. SRC 20

The Movement was born to evangelize society in its diverse sectors and therefore from the very beginning it was thought that those of us who share the same profession or social interests could, in our apostolic endeavors, join together with other members of the Movement and even with other Catholics active in our area of interest in order to evangelize this social sector. Thus, all the versions of the Statutes and the handbooks of the Movement have mentioned “networks”. Although in general these networks have not been institutionalized, the commission feels that it is important that the Movement be able to attract and support the apostolic initiatives of those members who feel called to evangelize the world from within their own professional or social sector.

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing:

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

How should we understand the “search for the most effective action” in our apostolate? What supernatural and human elements can help us to live the mission with true effectiveness? (cf. Appendix 1)

Questions to be answered in the minutes of the meeting¹⁹:

1. The numbers of this chapter try to reflect the apostolic activity of the first and second degree members of Regnum Christi.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

¹⁹These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of the responses.

Chapter III: Spiritual Life

Topic this chapter addresses

How do we understand spiritual life in the Movement?

What are the practices of piety proper to a first or second degree member?

What means does the Movement offer the first and second degree members to foster their interior life?

Orientation of the spiritual life

17. The members of the Movement believe and trust in the personal love of God and are convinced that holiness and apostolic fruitfulness depend on their union with him through the theological virtue of charity. They therefore seek to nourish their love for God and others through the sacraments, liturgical life and prayer, also taking advantage of the other means that the Movement proposes.²⁰

The spiritual practices of first degree members

18. The spiritual practices of the first degree members are the following:
1. Daily:
 - a. offering of the day to God;
 - b. personal mental prayer (meditation);
 - c. a time dedicated to reading the Gospel;
 - d. the recitation of the Angelus;
 - e. praying a mystery of the Rosary in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
 - f. making a visit to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist or a spiritual communion;
 - g. at the end of the day: an examination of conscience and an Our Father, a Hail Mary and the Creed.
 2. Eucharistic celebration on one or more occasions during the weekdays
 3. Weekly:
 - a. Eucharistic hour, preferably on Thursday;
 - b. Spiritual reading.
 4. Frequent reception of the sacrament of Reconciliation.
 5. Monthly: half-day retreat.
 6. Annually:
 - a. Triduum of renovation or spiritual exercises;
 - b. Renewal of our commitment to God in the Movement.²¹

In this number, in addition to simplifying the text, the commission proposes some changes to the list of the spiritual practices found in the Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement 235-238 y a la del RCMH 217:

- the reading of the Gospel and personal mental prayer on a daily basis, and weekly spiritual reading.

²⁰ Cf. SRC 45

²¹ Cf. SRRC 235

- the term “balance” has been replaced by “examination of conscience” since this is the term which is more universally used.
- participating in the Eucharistic celebration on one or more occasions during the weekdays in place of recommending daily participation.

In the SRRC other means of formation, such as the Encounter with Christ and spiritual dialogue with the team responsible, appeared in this part. The commission proposes that these means be listed in the chapter on formation.

The spiritual practices of second degree members

19. In addition to the spiritual practices of first degree members, members of the second degree on a daily basis:

- a. participate in the Eucharistic celebration;
- b. engage in mental prayer for a half hour;
- c. pray the entire Rosary.²²

Here the additional practices of the second degree members are mentioned. The commission proposes a half hour of mental prayer without determining in which moment of the day it is to be done. The weekly spiritual balance lasting half an hour and dedicated to the principal virtues of Christian life and of life in the Movement has been removed since this commitment has also been removed from the weekly commitments of the consecrated branches. It is proposed that it be done during the monthly retreat.

Spiritual direction

20. Members seek to take advantage of periodic spiritual direction to the extent that this is possible.²³

In this number it is recommended that the members have spiritual direction as a means which is ordinarily desirable and helpful for one who wants to grow in his relationship with God. Nothing is prescribed as to its frequency or regarding the person of the spiritual director so that in this area each person seeks what is most benefit personally.

²² Cf. SRRC 237

²³ Cf. SRRC 35 y 236

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing²⁴:

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

Questions to be answered in the minutes:

3. The numbers of this chapter try to reflect the spiritual life of the first and second degree members of Regnum Christi.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

²⁴These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of the responses.

Chapter IV: Formation

Topics this chapter addresses

What do we seek in the formation in the Movement?
What are our principal means of formation?

The Concept of formation

21. Throughout their entire life Movement members seek to correspond to God's grace until they reach the maturity of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph 4:13). Therefore, in their formation they seek to grow in human and Christian maturity and to become qualified to collaborate effectively in the apostolate of the Church and the Movement in accordance with their specific mission to shed light on the problems and to transform the realities of the world in which they live. This formation should integrate the spiritual, intellectual, apostolic and human dimensions.²⁵

In this number the general objective and the dimensions of formation in the Movement are indicated. The objectives for the various areas of formation are not developed here since this matter pertains more to a handbook and not the Statutes.

Means of formation

22. In addition to the previously mentioned means of formation for the spiritual life, members periodically have these recurring means of formation:

1. the *Encounter with Christ* with their team, in which, as a faith community, they confront themselves with the Word of God and with the real-life situation that surrounds them, encourage each other in the following of Christ and embolden their apostolic zeal;
2. dialogue with the team leader;
3. activities dedicated to intellectual, doctrinal and apostolic formation, such as study circles or other courses.²⁶

The Encounter with Christ is mentioned here as a means of formation in Regnum Christi although it also has a spiritual and apostolic dimension. Through reading the Gospel and reflecting upon it, the case study and reviewing the apostolic commitment, the Encounter with Christ is a very efficacious means to grow and mature in spiritual sensitivity, the knowledge of the Gospel, the Christian meaning of life, generosity when facing of the needs of others, a sense of communion in the Church and team life. (cf. RCMH 404-406). In some places and at certain times this activity has been abandoned for various reasons. Today we need to understand better where the value of this team activity lies and in what ways it can be renewed to be profitable. A reading of Appendix 2 is recommended when thinking over this topic.

²⁵ Cf. SRC 33

²⁶ Cf. SRC 54, SRRC 35, 236 y 238

Training

23. Those members destined to take on responsibilities at the service of the other members should receive adequate training.

This is a new number proposed by the commission in line with the proposal made by the 38 representatives of the first and second degree.

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing²⁷:

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

How can we renew and improve the dynamics of the *Encounter with Christ?* (cf. Appendix 2)

Questions to be answered in the minutes:

The numbers of this chapter try to reflect the formation of the first and second degree members of Regnum Christi.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

²⁷ These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of these responses.

Chapter V: Members, incorporation and leaving

Topics this chapter addresses

Who can be a member of *Regnum Christi*? How does one become a member? At what point do we consider someone a member? What specific personal and community commitments does one undertake by being incorporated? Is incorporation a permanent or temporary commitment? What are the consequences of failing to fulfill the commitments? How does one stop being a member? Are there different kinds of members?

Members

24. Depending on their commitment to the Movement and their availability for its apostolates, members had different modes of dedication.

1st - Laity desiring to live the spirit of the Movement, to use its means of sanctification and to contribute to its apostolic actions belong to the first degree.
2nd - The second degree is comprised of members who are willing to serve God in their state of life and personal situation with greater availability and dedication of themselves, their time and resources.²⁸

Priests and Diocesan Seminarians

25. Clergy and diocesan seminarians, with the permission of their bishop, can belong to *Regnum Christi* and participate in its means of sanctification and its formative and apostolic resources.²⁹

Regnum Christi Mission Corps

26. Those members who dedicate themselves as full-time volunteers to the apostolate of the *Regnum Christi* Movement and live according to its rules for one or more years of their lives are known as *Regnum Christi Mission Corps*.³⁰

Supporters of the Movement

27. §1. Those who, without joining *Regnum Christi*, participate in its spiritual goods and cooperate through their prayers, esteem and moral support, economic contributions and insofar as is possible, through their personal efforts in those works appropriate for them are known as supporters.

§2. Non-Christians or non-believers can be considered supporters. Attempt to offer them respectfully the light of the faith.³¹

²⁸ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 12.

²⁹ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 8.

³⁰ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 13.

³¹ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 14.

Requirements for Membership

28. §1. Any Catholic, who is at least sixteen years of age, who shares the goals and spirit of the Movement, is moved by the proper intentions and is capable of living the corresponding commitments can be admitted to the first degree.

§2. Any member of the first degree who is at least eighteen years of age, is moved by the proper intentions and who has been in the Movement long enough to be known by the section director, may be admitted to the second degree.³²

Following the example of other associations, the commission chose to use only positive requirements. What were formerly listed as impediments are now listed as causes for expulsion (cf. number 36).

The requirements for admission to the second degree are taken from those established in the Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement, 165, raising the age requirement to eighteen.

Commitments of the Members

29. The commitments that the member takes on by incorporating into the Movement are:

- a. living of the prayer commitments listed in number 18;
- b. participation in the life and activities proper to the team and the section to which one belongs;
- c. participation in the apostolic activity of the Movement;
- d. supporting the material needs of the Movement in the measure of one's possibilities.

The commission wanted to gather in one number the commitments of the members, since in the previous statutes they were dispersed. Appendix 3 offers elements of discernment concerning the commitments.

Respect for other Charisms in the Church

30. Out of respect for the different charisms with which God has enriched his Church, those belonging to any institute of consecrated life, to a society of apostolic life, to a personal prelature or those who are consecrated or seriously committed in another movement or new community cannot be admitted to Regnum Christi.³³

³² Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 27, *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 21, 23, 24, 25, 154, 155, 165 and 166.

³³ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 29.

The Decision to be Incorporated

31. The decision to solicit admission to the *Regnum Christi* Movement in any of its degrees has to be the fruit of an adequate discernment and a free response to the call of God.³⁴

Admission

32. §1. Admission to the first degree of the Movement is the responsibility of the section director, in response to a written request from the interested person and with the recommendation of the team leader, following an adequate period of participation in the life of the Movement.

§2. Admission to the second degree of the Movement is the responsibility of the *Regnum Christi* territorial director in response to a written request from the interested person and with the recommendation of the section director.³⁵

A majority of the 38 representatives of the members of the first and second degree that met in Rome in June 2013 thought that it was necessary to introduce a period of discernment and formation of the person before incorporation into the Movement. The Central Commission does not propose a specific duration for this period, considering that this can be left up to the judgment of the section director.

Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement, 169 defines the competent authority for admission to the second degree as the territorial director. In current practice, the section directors also admit people to the second degree.

Incorporation and Renewal

33. §1. Incorporation into the Movement in any of its degrees takes place through a formal act or ceremony, as established in the *Ritual of the Movement*.

§2. Membership in the Movement is renewed annually with the renewal of commitments in the presence of the section director.³⁶

In this number the commission proposes a change in the practice of incorporation as described in numbers 59-61 of the *Regnum Christi Member Handbook*. The proposal is that to begin to be a member it is not enough to write the letter asking for admission and to be accepted, but that it is also necessary to have an act of incorporation in which the commitments of the Movement are accepted in the presence of its representative. Paragraph 2 is a proposal of the commission that seeks to give clarity and formality to

³⁴ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 6 and 27.

³⁵ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 28 and *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 156, 158 and 167.

³⁶ Cf. *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 160-164, 170-172, 233, 235 and 237.

membership, since the renewal of commitments as practiced are devotional only and don't imply renewal of membership.

Leaving the Movement

34. Any member of the first or second degrees of the Movement, after having reflected before God, is free to leave it by informing the section director in writing.³⁷

It seems appropriate that the decision of the member to leave the Movement be formal so that there is certainty about this.

Ipsa facto Loss of Membership

35. §1. One ceases to be a member of the Movement *ipso facto* when one enters any institute of consecrated life, any society of apostolic life, any personal prelature or any other movement or new community.³⁸

§2. Those who publicly abandon the Catholic faith also, *ipso facto*, abandon the Movement.³⁹

Removal and its Causes

36. §1. The section director, with the approval of the team leader and with the consent of the territorial director of Regnum Christi can, for just causes, remove any member if it is considered necessary for their spiritual good or to avoid harm to others. Before deciding to remove anyone, that person has the right to defend themselves before the section director. Removal should be communicated to the member in writing and be done with justice and charity.⁴⁰

§2. To publically and obstinately uphold ideas or customs that are contrary to the faith and discipline of the Church is considered sufficient cause for removal from the Movement.⁴¹

Concerning Economic Compensation

37. Owing to the nature of their commitment which is personal, totally voluntary and disinterested, the member who leaves the Movement in any manner, has no right to economic compensation for the services rendered nor to any revenue that was gained through personal efforts.⁴²

Before responding to the questions for this chapter, it is recommended to read Appendix 3.

³⁷ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 30.

³⁸ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 29.

³⁹ Cf. *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 299.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 31.

⁴¹ Cf. *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 23 and 299.

⁴² Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 32.

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing⁴³

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

Do you feel your participation in the Movement as a vocation and gift from God that commits you and helps in all the aspects of your life? Or is it rather a help that you receive and a limited cooperation that you give to some activities?

When you incorporate in the Movement, do you make a commitment with God alone or also with all the other members of the Movement?

What has it meant to the members of the second degree to accept this definition of self-giving? What are their rights and duties in regard to the Movement?

What makes the second degree different from the first?

Should this difference be formalized with a stable, distinct commitment?

Questions to respond to in the minutes:

5. The numbers of this chapter try to reflect who the members of the first and second degrees of *Regnum Christi* are, the requirements and process of incorporation and leaving.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

6. Do you think that any prayer commitments should be among the commitments we acquire with the incorporation?

- a. If yes, why?
- b. If no, why?
- c. Which ones?

⁴³These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of the responses.

Chapter VI: Structure

Topics this chapter addresses

How should the members of the first and second degree be organized? What is a team and a group? Who directs them? What is a section? What kinds of sections are there? Who can be the section director? Who names them? What is the process for choosing team, group and section leaders? How long is a “term” for each position?

Teams

38. §1. A team consists of eight to fifteen individuals united for the purpose of helping each other mutually in journey of holiness, in their formation and in their apostolic work, following the example of the first Christian communities. Ordinarily they are composed of people of the same sex and stage of life, bound together by friendship, like-mindedness or common interests.

§2. The team is directed by a leader, designated by the section director, for a term of a year, renewable, taking into account the opinions of the members of the team.⁴⁴

§3. The team leader has the mission of enlivening the life of the team and supporting each member in formation and apostolate.

Groups

39. §1. When the number of teams calls for it, they can form a group, which makes team support and coordination easier.

§2. Heading each group is a leader, designated by the section director, for a term of a year, renewable, taking into account the opinions of the team leaders.⁴⁵

Sections

40. §1. The section is a group of teams and groups that promotes the life of prayer, integral formation, family spirit, the welcoming of new members, apostolic action and economy.⁴⁶

§2. Ordinarily there are four sections in a locality: Men, women, young men and young women.⁴⁷

The functions mentioned in §1 reflect the functions of AFIRE although they are presented with the new terminology. The mode of attending to these dimensions can be adapted to the degree of development of each section.

In §2 the commission proposes to introduce the adverb ‘ordinarily’ to open the possibility of configuring the sections in a different manner from the four that are

⁴⁴ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 15, 16 and 22, §1 and §3

⁴⁵ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 18, 22, §1 and §3

⁴⁶ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 19

⁴⁷ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes* (1988) 247

traditional if the circumstances require it, for example: a single section, or a section of adults and a section of young people, etc. (cf. Appendix 4 on the identity of the team and of the section).

The Section director

41. §1. At the head of each section there is a director designated by the territorial director of Regnum Christi for a term of three years, renewable, with the consent of his council. This position can be occupied by a Legionary of Christ, a consecrated member, or a member of the first and second degree of Regnum Christi who has been incorporated for at least three years.⁴⁸

§2. It is the responsibility of the section director, subject to the territorial director and supported by the local coordinator, to direct the section and promote the goals mentioned in 40 §1.

§3. In the direction of the section they should try to take into account the opinions of the members that exercise responsibilities in it.

The commission, in agreement with the vote of the 38 representatives, proposes to open the possibility that the section director be a member of any branch of the Movement, as is already the practice.

Formators

42. The formators are members of the Movement of the first and second degrees that are gifted with the aptitudes necessary to sustain, encourage and enliven the Movement and its action.⁴⁹

Questions for Group Reflection and Sharing:⁵⁰

What gifts, values and virtues are reflected in this chapter for which we are grateful and want to conserve?

How can we better live the ideals God calls members of the movement to in these numbers of the statutes?

Based on your experience, what values and challenges does team life present? What is the meaning and the need to belong to a team as a member of Regnum Christi?

What values and challenges does the organization of teams according to sex and ages present?

What is the value that belonging to a section brings?

⁴⁸ Cf. *Regnum Christi Statutes*, 22 §2

⁴⁹ Cf. *Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement*, 965 §1

⁵⁰ These questions seek to stimulate reflection and to help to go deeper into the contents of the chapter and into how we can live ever better according to them. It is not necessary to send in a record of the responses.

What has been the role of formators in your section? Is it necessary to distinguish some members as 'formators'? What purpose would this position have?

Questions to respond to in the minutes:

7. The numbers of this chapter try to reflect the structure and guidance of the members of first and second degrees of *Regnum Christi*.

- a. Are any ideas missing?
- b. Are any ideas unnecessary?

8. Besides the teams of men and women, could there be teams of *Regnum Christi* made up of married couples? (for the activities proper to team life in *Regnum Christi*)

- a. If yes, why?
- b. If no, why?

9. Would it be necessary to establish some guidelines for this kind of team? What would they be?

Chapter 7: Government and the Placement of the 1st and 2nd Degree Members within the Canonical Structure of Regnum Christi

| | |
|---|----|
| Chapter 7: Government and the Placement of the 1 st and 2 nd Degree Members within the Canonical Structure of Regnum Christi..... | 29 |
| 1. Why and how to address the topic of this chapter? | 29 |
| The topic..... | 29 |
| Within the Process of Renewal of the Statutes..... | 30 |
| A “technical” topic by nature but with important consequences | 31 |
| 2. A Brief History of the associative life of Regnum Christi from the Foundation to Present Day | 32 |
| 3. Description of the canonical situation in vigor according to the 2004 Statutes and the need to rewrite this statute | 33 |
| 4. Two juridical models of membership of the 1st and 2nd degree members of Regnum Christi | 34 |
| Association or Affiliation? | 34 |
| Association among themselves or with the whole of Regnum Christi..... | 35 |

1. Why and how to address the topic of this chapter?

The topic

The reflection we have been doing in this stage of the review of the Regnum Christi Statutes is centered on the way in which the 1st and 2nd degree members live out the gift they have received from God through the charism of Regnum Christi. Though this reflection is predominantly of a spiritual nature, it also has a juridical dimension that we must deal with in response to the Holy See’s instruction to present for their approval an updated version of the statutes of the Movement.

As a Movement must find the juridical model that best fits our reality, best contributes to helping the Movement maintain its unity, carry out its evangelizing mission, and helps the members reach the plenitude of their vocation and equip the governing bodies with the necessary tools to govern properly.

To take the next step in this search we need to answer the following questions:

- What should the juridical bond with Regnum Christi be for the 1st and 2nd degree members?
- How should 1st and 2nd degree members be governed?
- What should be the role, presence and responsibility of the 1st and 2nd degree members in the governance of what is common to the entire Regnum Christi Movement?

Until now, ordinarily, the 1st and 2nd degree members of Regnum Christi have been incorporated into the Movement by a formal act, a letter in which they solicit admission and being accepted by an authorized director. Frequently this is followed by a rite of incorporation.

In Regnum Christi the lay members have truly participated in team life, their local sections and the

apostolates, performing different functions and striving to achieve the ideal of holiness that the Movement proposes. Some members have received a specific formation preparing them to be team and group leaders, coordinators of the different sectors (AFIRE) within the section, directors of apostolates and assistants to the section directors. At the same time, especially in these past few years, 1st and 2nd degree members have assumed the office of section director or local Regnum Christi director, frequently with positive results.

On the other hand, how Movement members participate in the rights and responsibilities that come with their incorporation has not yet been laid out. Thus, the 1st and 2nd degree members have not had elected representatives with full powers in the local, territorial and general governments nor has the juridical possibility even been properly addressed. The many members who have served the Movement in some of the above mentioned offices have done so on appointment of the authorized directors, not because they were elected by the members themselves.

As part of this process of reflection we face the question of the degree of participation in the governance of the Movement that the 1st and 2nd degree members should have. As established in the document "The Framework of Collaboration", we now have 1st and 2nd degree members in the territorial and general committees of Regnum Christi. According to the prescriptions of the "Framework", they have been appointed and ratified by the respective territorial and general directors.

In the rough draft of the numbers of the Statutes proposed here, the 1st and 2nd degree members can participate in the government of the sections and localities, without excluding the possibility of them being named apostolic directors of consecrated members of both branches, taking into account what is best in each case.

It is up to the 1st and 2nd degree members to express what kind of responsibility they believe that God is asking them to undertake in the governance of the Movement: regarding the life in the 1st and 2nd degree, and regarding the life of the Regnum Christi Movement as a whole.

While seeking the juridical-canonical framework for the entire Movement and for each of its branches, we must base ourselves in the concepts that already exist in the Code of Canon Law (CCL) to describe the forms of participation of the individuals within a group approved by the Church. For this reason, in this chapter we will employ the conceptual distinction between "associates" and "affiliates" further explained below.

Within the Process of Renewal of the Statutes

We are still within the context of the first stage of the review of the Statutes which seeks to offer the 1st and 2nd degree members sufficient knowledge and adequate forums to discern their identity and mission.

This chapter presents the members with a few questions that when answered will assist the members of the central commission to prepare several juridical alternatives to present to the international convention for their consideration and which will be adapted to the life of the 1st and 2nd degree members and the canonical configuration of the entire Movement.

With the proposals of the international convention the second stage will begin. In it, the central commission for the review of the Statutes will elaborate a proposal of the canonical model for the entire Movement. In the third stage, the proposal of the central commission will be submitted to the different branches of the Movement seeking their ratification, according to a process yet to be established. Finally, as a fourth stage of the process, the necessary adjustments will be made in order to present the Statutes to the Holy See for review and eventual approval.

| Process of the review of the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Movement | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1st Stage | 2nd Stage | 3rd Stage | 4th Stage |
| Reflection on the vocation and mission of the 1st and 2nd degree members. Concludes with the proposal to the central commission | Draft of a proposal of the general Statutes done by the central commission. | Ratification of the canonical configuration by each of the branches of the Movement. | Adjustments and submission to the Holy See for approval. ¹ |

The majority of the movements and new ecclesial realities that the Holy Spirit is raising up in our time have already undergone or are presently engaged in similar processes of finding an appropriate canonical structure.

A “technical” topic by nature but with important consequences

It isn't easy to tackle topics of a juridical nature because they can become grueling and apparently of little relevance to our daily life in the Movement, even though, in truth, they might be very important for life in the Movement and for the protection and furthering of the charism.

A difference of opinions that might even cause some frictions is inevitable. It can also be uncomfortable to be faced with an important decision, weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the different options, doubting about which is the most appropriate.

However, if this challenge is faced with responsibility and in a context of faith, it can become an opportunity for growth in our trust in the Lord of life and history, who accompanies and guides us, leading all things to the good of those who love him. It can also bring us to a more mature understanding of God's plan over the Movement at this present moment and for years to come. If we reflect, dialogue, seek counsel, pray and choose with purity of intention, humbly seeking to live out our vocation to Regnum Christi in the new circumstances that Divine Providence has allowed, the Lord will not cease to enlighten those who participate in this journey, especially those who have the grave responsibility in making the final decisions.

Furthermore, a legitimate objection could arise; that of breaching this topic with all of the members of the Movement, given its technical nature. One could think that it would be more appropriately analyzed by a handful of experts together with the general director, and ultimately the Holy See. However, because it is a topic that concerns everyone, everyone should be given the opportunity to participate in the discernment so that later the competent authorities can make a more prudent decision.

It is also important to ensure that the resolutions adopted answer the real needs and the life of the Regnum Christi members and not just abstract principles. For this reason, the central commission, presided by the general director and accompanied by the pontifical advisor, decided to make the effort to reach out to all of those members of Regnum Christi who so desire, so that they can participate in the grave discernment about what might be the best form of organization for all of us.

As in any spiritual discernment done in the Church, it isn't simply a question of choosing the most practical solution, nor the most common, nor the easiest to understand; it is rather to try to understand,

¹ THIS TABLE WILL BE SUBSTITUTED BY THE “TIME LINE” THAT IS IN THE WORKING DRAFT ALREADY PUBLISHED.

by means of study, reflection, discussion and prayer, the implications that the different proposals have for the 1st and 2nd degree and for the entire Movement so that we can later give our opinion on what is best for the identity and mission of Regnum Christi in the present circumstances.

2. A Brief History of the associative life of Regnum Christi from the Foundation to Present Day

As explained in theme 5 of the group study stage, the Regnum Christi Movement was born on January 3, 1968 as a movement of lay people, supported and led by the Legionaries of Christ, to form themselves as authentic Christians; to respond to the invitation made by Jesus to be apostles in our milieu and to bring the Gospel to everyone; to engage, in an organized fashion, in the evangelization of the different sectors of society until Christ is known, loved and until everyone finds their fullness in Him. From the beginning, Fr. Marcial Maciel, as he said on different occasions, always thought of Regnum Christi and the Legion of Christ as two, complimentary realities (a lay movement and a clerical, religious congregation), united by the same spirit, mission and leadership and whose members should consider themselves as equals regarding their belonging to this charismatic body.

As founder and general director, during a course held in July 1971 in Monticchio, Italy, Fr. Maciel verbally declared that from that moment on, all of the Legionaries of Christ became members of the 3rd degree of the Regnum Christi Movement. He explained that he had made that decision because it seemed to him to be a good way, though perhaps not the ideal way, to avoid divisions between the Legion and Regnum Christi. In consonance with this decision of the founder, the statutes and handbooks of Regnum Christi presented the Movement as consisting of members of the 1st degree (laity and eventually diocesan priests), of the 2nd degree (laity and eventually diocesan priests) and of the 3rd degree (lay consecrated men and women and Legionaries of Christ). This is the way it is described in the Statutes of 1979 and 1988 and in the handbooks of 1971 and 1990. This is the way it was taught and lived. In the Constitutions of the Legion of Christ of 1983, however, no mention was made of the Legionaries belonging to the Regnum Christi Movement; likewise in the amended version of 1994 and published in 1998. Nevertheless, these Constitutions presented the appointments of the section directors and the local Regnum Christi leaders and other posts that could only be understood in relation to the unity of life and action with the entire Regnum Christi.

In accordance with the statutes and handbooks, the people who incorporated into Regnum Christi since 1971 joined a movement that gathered laity of the three degrees and the Legionaries of Christ indistinctly. Thus, people of different states and conditions of life (laity, diocesan priests, consecrated men and women, religious priests and religious brothers) were gathered into one movement.

At the same time, the religious priests and brothers, the Legionaries of Christ, formed a religious congregation. In this way the Regnum Christi Movement was an ensemble of all while the Legion of Christ was a religious congregation consisting only of legionary fathers and brothers. The major directors of the Movement and of the Legion were the same people and they governed according to the norms described in the Statutes of Regnum Christi and at the same time governed the congregation according to the stipulations contained in the Constitutions of the Legion of Christ.

The Statutes of Regnum Christi approved by the Holy See in November of 2004 did not include the Legionaries of Christ among the Regnum Christi members. Furthermore, in the decree of pontifical approval, the Movement is presented as “the specific instrument of apostolate of the Legion of Christ, to which it is inseparably united”.

On June 9, 2010, Archbishop Velasio de Paolis, (on November 20 of the same year he was elevated to Cardinal) as Papal Delegate appointed by Benedict XVI, began accompanying the Movement in the renewal process which culminated in the celebration of the Extraordinary General Chapter of 2014. During his exercise of pontifical authority, Cardinal De Paolis gave the consecrated men and women of

the 3rd degree their own respective governments (2012), he led them to the celebration of their respective general assemblies and provisionally approved the statutes that came from these assemblies (2013). With these measures the Papal Delegate sought to give the lay consecrated life of Regnum Christi the ability of having their members assume the responsibility for their consecrated life without being directed by the superiors of the Legionaries of Christ in those matters that were proper to them alone (the living of their vows, community life, the formation of their members, etc.). In this way the consecrated women of Regnum Christi and the lay consecrated men of Regnum Christi have acquired their own organization in which the members are associated with each other to live their specific vocation within the family of the Regnum Christi Movement and at the service of the Movement's mission. The respective general assemblies have clearly declared that they consider themselves part of Regnum Christi.

The Extraordinary General Chapter of the Legion of Christ of 2014 has declared that the congregation understands itself as part of the Regnum Christi Movement, though it still has to determine the exact juridical form of this "belonging".

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life pointed out the need of defining the juridical nature of Regnum Christi and of each of its parts. In the meantime, the numbers of the constitution of the Legion of Christ that declare that the congregation forms part of Regnum Christi are suspended. This issue must be resolved for the Holy See to be able to definitively approve the associations of lay consecrated men and consecrated women.

Since March of 2014, in accordance with the provisional "Framework of Collaboration", the common apostolic work of the Movement is led by the general directive committee of Regnum Christi, with its see in Rome, and by the territorial directive committees in each territory. These committees are comprised of the superiors of the Legion of Christ, of the consecrated women and the consecrated men and several 1st and 2nd degree members appointed by the committee.

3. Description of the current canonical situation according to the 2004 Statutes and the need to rewrite this statute

The association that currently defines the 1st and 2nd degree members juridically is that of a private, international association of laity and diocesan priests, without juridic personality, under the direction of the Legion of Christ. It is considered an apostolate of the Legion of Christ (see Decree of Approval of the Statutes, November 26, 2004). It thus falls under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which is the same ecclesiastical authority that supervises the Legion of Christ and the branches of consecrated men and women.

Why is it necessary to rewrite this statute? Why can't we just leave things as they are right now? There are two basic reasons which are related: The current statute is outdated and it is incomplete.

The 2004 Statute sees the consecrated women and the consecrated men as individual members of the private association of faithful called "Regnum Christi". Today they belong to two new associations: "The Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi" and the "Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi". Upon approval of the Holy See, both groups are waiting to be able to specify, in coordination with the other groups of members of Regnum Christi, the juridical form by which each group "belongs" or "fits into" the broader reality of Regnum Christi. In their general assemblies they reaffirmed their awareness of belonging to Regnum Christi. The Legionaries also, in their extraordinary general chapter, have affirmed

their “belonging” to Regnum Christi, which was not expressed in the Statutes of 2004. They also need to find the correct juridical way to express their membership. For these reasons, the 2004 Statute is insufficient as a common juridical document for all of the vocations that comprise the Movement.

The current Statute is also incomplete because it doesn’t foresee the representative bodies by which the members formally participate in the governance of their association. Thus, according to the 2004 Statute, the authority over the association is held personally by the general director of the Legion of Christ, and by the territorial directors in their respective territories, without moderation or advice from a council and without being subject to an assembly. This is not the common practice in the Church for associations of faithful, which should have their own governments made up of their own members.

Furthermore, the associations that fall under the higher direction of religious institutes (see canons 303-304 of CCL) have governing bodies made up of members of the association and they have directors who are members of the association. The higher direction can be exercised in different ways but that doesn’t mean that the governing bodies of the congregation are the same as the governing bodies of the association. Every association should have its own proper governing bodies.

4. Two juridical models of membership of the 1st and 2nd degree members of Regnum Christi

The Regnum Christi Movement today contains members called to different states of life: the laity and some diocesan priests to the 1st and 2nd degree² and the members belonging to the three branches of consecrated life: the consecrated women, the lay consecrated men and the Legionaries of Christ. The ways that the members of the Association of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, the Association of Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi and the Legionaries of Christ are bound to each group are clearly established in their statutes and constitutions. We need to reflect on the type of membership of the 1st and 2nd degree members because their way of belonging to the Movement necessarily conditions the way this is juridically expressed in the whole of Regnum Christi.

Association or Affiliation?

Here we can consider fundamentally two juridical models of membership to an ecclesial group: association and affiliation.

To belong to a group by ‘association’ means that the laity of the 1st and 2nd degree see themselves as an essential part of the Movement and thus acquire a full responsibility for the safeguarding of the charism and the life of the Movement, juridically assuming the rights and responsibilities proper to a full-fledged member as established in their statutes³.

As far as the governance of the Movement is concerned, the most relevant juridical consequences of membership as associates are:

- The bond by which a person is associated with the Movement unites them with the other members in a stable way of equality of basic rights and responsibilities.
- The associates can participate in the election processes defined in the statutes.

² The diocesan priests incorporated to Regnum Christi are also members of the 1st and 2nd degree and as such can participate in this review process.

³ In this draft document, each time reference is made to the statutes, we are referring to a document that still needs to be drawn up. So that the central commission can prepare a draft of the statutes, we must determine the model of membership of the 1st and 2nd degree members.

- The associates can exercise positions of authority in the association.
- The associates assume the responsibility of electing representatives that constitute the different governing bodies defined in the statutes.
- The representatives of the associates assume the responsibility of having a deliberative vote in those matters that define the statute of the Movement.

To participate as 'affiliates' means that the laity of the 1st and 2nd degree regard their membership to the Regnum Christi Movement as a personal commitment to live according to the charism and collaborate in the apostolate but without considering themselves directly responsible for conserving the charism nor for the leadership of the Movement. Thus, an affiliate, while belonging to the Movement in as far as one maintains a relationship to it in a stable manner, juridically assumes no rights or responsibilities proper to an associated member.

As far as the leadership of the Movement is concerned, the most relevant juridical consequences of membership as affiliates are:

- The commitment an affiliate assumes is simply a personal intention to live according to the life-style as far as possible, without assuming the rights and responsibilities of the associate members.
- An affiliate does not participate in the election process within the Movement, neither as a voter nor as a candidate, though their opinion could be consulted.
- The definition of a possible *Statute of affiliation*, that lays out in detail the commitments that an affiliate assumes and the means that the Movement offers them, would be drawn up by the authorities of the Movement and not by the affiliates, though they could be consulted beforehand.
- The *Statute of affiliation* could permit the affiliate members to have representatives in the governing bodies of the Movement. These representatives would only have a consultative or advisory vote.

The greater or lesser responsibility in the juridical realm does not bear with it nor imply a greater or lesser generosity in the living of the charism. It does imply a greater or lesser commitment and participation in the conservation of the charism and in the life of the Movement itself.

There also exists the possibility of the Movement having both affiliate and associate members. Each one would assume the consequences, rights and obligations that derive from their condition as affiliates or associates.

The present Statute (of 2004) is unclear in determining the members as associates or affiliates. On the one hand it states that the members "associate among themselves" (see SRC 6); on the other hand, no governing body is established for the participation of the associate members in the leadership of the Movement, so that in reality their situation is that of an affiliate.

Association among themselves or with the whole of Regnum Christi

If the association option is chosen, do the 1st and 2nd degree members first associate among themselves thus creating a group with its own structures or are they associated as individuals directly with Regnum Christi as a whole body?

In the case that the association model is chosen as the most appropriate explanation of their vocation and mission, there is still the question as to whether the 1st and 2nd degree members first associate among themselves thus creating a group with its own structures and comprised solely of like members

and then this group integrates itself with the other branches of Regnum Christi, or if it is more appropriate to its identity to say that as individuals they are associated directly to the whole of Regnum Christi constituted by its four branches.

The most important consequences that flow from the forming their own group comprised solely of members of the 1st and 2nd degree are as follows:

- They must establish an association of faithful comprised exclusively of members of the 1st and 2nd degree and they have to build up their association, which includes creating and managing their own governing bodies, representation and participation, as well as the election process for the establishment of these bodies.
- They assume full responsibility for the way they live the Regnum Christi charism, for example the definition of their own statute, the commitments, the formation of their members, the admission of new members, the departure of members, etc.
- The leaders of this association are elected by and from among the 1st and 2nd degree members (which means that they cannot be Legionaries of Christ, nor Consecrated Women, nor Consecrated Men).
- The 1st and 2nd degree members are responsible for covering all of the costs for the operation of their own association.
- The Legionaries and consecrated members can help the life of this association to the degree that this is defined in the statute of the association. However, they will not have any responsibility for the association of the 1st and 2nd degree members. This could lead to a lesser involvement of the consecrated branches in the life of the sections of the Movement.
- The representatives of the association of the 1st and 2nd degree members would be responsible for discussing with the representatives of the other three branches to find the proper juridical structure to integrate the four juridical realities into one reality that guarantees the unity of the Movement.

The most important consequences that flow from the members associating themselves as individuals directly with Regnum Christi as a whole, together with the Legionaries of Christ, the consecrated women and the consecrated men are as follows:

- The Legionaries of Christ, the consecrated women, the lay consecrated men and the 1st and 2nd degree members are all equally members of Regnum Christi. Thus, the governing bodies of the whole Movement are comprised in such a way that all of these vocations would be represented.
- The 1st and 2nd degree members would not have their own governing bodies, representation and participation comprised solely of their own members. They would be governed completely by the governing body of the entire Regnum Christi.
- The statute proper to Regnum Christi would have to define how the governing bodies of the Movement are established, who would integrate them and what matters would be decided by each body.
- The 1st and 2nd degree members, the Legionaries of Christ, consecrated women, the lay consecrated men all participate with voice and vote in the governing bodies, with representation and participation as would be established in their own rule.

Glossary of general concepts from the right of association in the Church that are used in this chapter

Juridic Person (see CCL 113-123): It is a group of physical people (corporation) or of goods and things directed by physical people (foundation) directed toward a goal that is congruent with the mission of the Church that transcends the goals of the individuals and endowed with rights and duties conferred to it by the proper ecclesiastical authority. The juridic persons are responsible for their acts since they are able to act on their own behalf and establish relations with one another.

Associations of Christian faithful (see CCL 298-329): It is a group of Christian faithful who freely decide to gather together in a stable organization for the purpose of pursuing together the goals of Christian life such as “to foster a more perfect life, to promote public worship or Christian doctrine, or to exercise other works of apostolate such as initiatives of evangelization, works of piety or charity, and those which animate the temporal order with a Christian spirit” (Canon 298 §1).

The initiative to create these association can come from anyone (laity or clergy) who make a private agreement among themselves (299 §1) or from the ecclesiastical authority (generally the bishop).

These associations can be private or public according to their origin and goals. All should have some statutes duly reviewed (if they are private) or approved (if they are public) by the proper ecclesiastical authority. The private associations act on their own behalf while the public associations act in the name of the Church. Thus, private associations are usually born of the initiative of the lay faithful to do works of lay apostolate. The associations established by the ecclesiastical authority are public and generally are dedicated to promote pastoral ends that depend on the ecclesiastical authority such as public cult, the teaching of Catholic doctrine in the name of the Church.

At the same time, the private associations could not have a juridical personality. If they have it, they are subject to the rights and obligations of the Church, being able to make juridical actions as a group. If they don't have it, the members of the group have the rights and obligations common to any faithful of the Church, but not as a group, so that they act only in their own name and not in the name of the association.

The associations of Christian faithful are governed by their own members, according to their statute.

Representation: The right to have representatives is proper to the members of an association and consists in the faculty to elect delegates (representatives) for the collective bodies of the association. This is the ordinary way for the members to intervene in the leadership or government of the association. The governing bodies of an association should contain at least a general assembly and a general moderator, with his council.

Individual affiliation: In this text we understand affiliation as the act by which a person puts him or herself under the dependence of an ecclesial organization in order benefit from its spiritual goods and collaborate in its mission, without however attempting to intervene in its internal constitution and leadership.

The ecclesial organization can establish a statute of affiliation that defines the commitments that the affiliate assumes. The statute of affiliation can envisage the possibility for the affiliates to have representatives in the governing bodies; in this case, these representatives would only have a consultative vote, not deliberative.

The affiliate is distinguished from the friends and supporters in the fact that he/she makes a public act that formalizes their membership and their commitment. An affiliate is truly a member, though not possessing “full rights”.

Questions for Group Reflection

The answers to the questions posed in this chapter will shed light on the development of the canonical framework that best serves the purpose of safeguarding and spreading the charism. In light of the responses from the territorial conventions, the central commission will eventually round out the draft of the numbers of the statutes presenting one or several canonical models on which the international convention must pronounce. Nevertheless, the Holy See has the final word on this matter.

a. Question for reflection and discussion

What values should we protect and promote as we discern the place and role of the members in the governance of the Movement?

b. Questions whose answers should be included in the minutes

The questions should be posed to all of the members of the group, regardless of the answer each one gives to the first question. The members can abstain from comment.

1. Membership (Belonging)

1.a. Do I see my “belonging” to Regnum Christi as an associate or affiliate? Why?

- Number of members that are inclined to membership as an “associate”⁴
- Principal reasons of these members
- Number of members that are inclined to membership as an “affiliate”
- Principal reasons of these members
- Number of abstentions

1.b. If membership is understood in terms of association, do the 1st and 2nd degree members first associate among themselves or are they associated directly with all of the other members of Regnum Christi?

2. Are there issues of the 1st and 2nd degree that should be discussed and decided solely among the members of the 1st and 2nd degree? What would they be?

- Number of members that think there are some issues
- Number of members that think there aren’t any issues
- Number of abstentions
- List the issues that the members think need to be discussed and decided and the number of votes in favor (those who previously voted “no” can also vote here)

3. Are there decisions in the life of Regnum Christi as a whole in which the 1st and 2nd degree members should participate? What would they be?

- Number of members that think there are decisions in which they should participate
- Number of members that think there aren’t any decisions in which they should participate
- Number of abstentions
- List of the issues in which the members think they should be allowed to participate

⁴ These hash marks will not be found in the edited document; only in the format of the minutes.

4. In what levels of government of the Movement should the 1st and 2nd degree members be able to participate?
- Number of members that think they should be able to participate in the local government
 - Number of members that think they should be able to participate in the territorial government
 - Number of members that think they should be able to participate in the general government
 - Number of abstentions

Appendix 1

Apostolic effectiveness and leadership in the mission of Regnum Christi

As we have read in Theme 5 of the study and reflection phase, the Movement considers its apostolic mission to be the evangelization of those who exercise the greatest influence on their milieu in such a way that they themselves become apostles who put their talents at the service of the evangelization of society and their sphere of influence.⁵¹

Make the Kingdom present today

All Christians are called to the apostolate by reason of their baptism and confirmation. The Movement feels itself called to contribute to the mission of the Church by seeking to enkindle in the faithful the awareness of the apostolic dimension of their Christian vocation. The mission of Regnum Christi to intercede for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ in the heart of all people and the whole of society includes the desire that all will experience the love of Christ and join their possibilities to the task of evangelizing society. It also includes the desire that those who have the greatest possibilities of influencing social life commit themselves to this task so that the human community is articulated and developed in such a way that people can live according to their dignity as children of God and so can give him glory through their community life. Our objective is not to restore any model of Christian society of the past, idealizing times already left behind,⁵² nor to establish a new social model that establishes the Christian ideal in a perfect and definitive form in history, embracing the utopia of a political theology that fails to take into account the perfectibility of temporal things and the historical condition of humanity and human freedom.⁵³ To establish the Kingdom of Christ on earth – in the way already explained in Theme 2 of the study and reflection phase – is to accept and live the Gospel values in the personal and social realms, witnessing to Christ and incarnate these values in the dynamic culture of all peoples, establishing with the people of our times a dialog that is salvific and enriching for all. Globalization demands living the mission in multicultural, inclusive societies, manifesting the universality of the Church and therefore, represents a valuable opportunity for evangelization and

⁵¹ “Since Regnum Christi feels itself called to cooperate with the evangelical renewal of societies, it also tries to evangelize those persons of greatest influence in the different spheres of society, in order that they will put their talents at the service of the Kingdom of God. “If we evangelize and form people deeply, we also help them to evangelize their surroundings and society, putting their leadership at the service of the Church.”: Central Commission for the Review of the Statues of Regnum Christi, *Charism and History of Regnum Christi*, Theme 5 for study and reflection p. 17 (English Edition). The quote is from the Extraordinary General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ, *Comunicado y decretos, “Identidad carismática de la Legion de Cristo”*, Rome 2014, n. 11.

⁵² Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo millennio ineunte*, 40: ‘Even in countries evangelized many centuries ago, the reality of a “Christian society” which, amid all the frailties which have always marked human life, measured itself explicitly on Gospel values, is now gone. Today we must courageously face a situation which is becoming increasingly diversified and demanding, in the context of “globalization” and of the consequent new and uncertain mingling of peoples and cultures.’”

⁵³ Cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Spe Salvi*, 20-21 and 30; Idem, Encyclical *Deus caritas est*, 28a, and John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptoris missio*, 17.

enrichment. The apostle of the twenty-first century has to be ready to give reasons for his or her faith in this global and culturally diverse situation.⁵⁴

Knowing that ‘the men and women of our own day — often perhaps unconsciously — ask believers not only to "speak" of Christ, but in a certain sense to "show" him to them.’⁵⁵ Saint John Paul II underlined the importance of witness and charity:

For Christian witness to be effective, especially in these delicate and controversial areas, it is important that special efforts be made to explain properly the reasons for the Church's position, stressing that it is not a case of imposing on non-believers a vision based on faith, but of interpreting and defending the values rooted in the very nature of the human person. In this way charity will necessarily become service to culture, politics, the economy and the family, so that the fundamental principles upon which depend the destiny of human beings and the future of civilization will be everywhere respected.⁵⁶

Along this same line, Benedict XVI reminded us that “Those who practice charity in the Church's name will never seek to impose the Church's faith upon others. They realize that a pure and generous love is the best witness to the God in whom we believe and by whom we are driven to love. A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love alone speak. [...] the best defense of God and man consists precisely in love. It is the responsibility of the Church's charitable organizations to reinforce this awareness in their members, so that by their activity—as well as their words, their silence, their example—they may be credible witnesses to Christ.”⁵⁷

The Kingdom of Service

“The kingdom of God is the kingdom of Christ; the kingdom of heaven that has opened to the earth to allow men to enter this new world of spirituality and eternity. [...] It is a kingdom that consists in an expansion of Christ himself in the world, in the history of humanity, as a new life that is taken from him and that is communicated to believers in virtue of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, sent by him;”⁵⁸ a kingdom of which the Church is seed, symbol and instrument.⁵⁹ It is a kingdom that begins already here on the earth, but will have its fulfillment in heaven.”⁶⁰ Certainly, “the Kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but it brings to fulfillment all the good that, thank God, exists in man and in history. If we put love for our neighbor into practice in accordance with the Gospel message, we make room for God's dominion and his Kingdom is actualized among

⁵⁴ Cf. *Novo millennio ineunte*, 40: “This should be done however with the respect due to the different paths of different people and with sensitivity to the diversity of cultures in which the Christian message must be planted, in such a way that the particular values of each people will not be rejected but purified and brought to their fullness.”

Also *Ibid.* 56

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 16

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 51

⁵⁷ *Deus Caritas Est*, 31c.

⁵⁸ John Paul II, General Audience, September 4, 1991 [Our translation – No English translation on the Vatican website]

⁵⁹ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Lumen gentium*, 3 and 5.

⁶⁰ John Paul II, Angelus, November 22, 1992 [Our translation – No English translation on the Vatican website].

us.”⁶¹ It is a kingdom of service acting under the impulse of charity that the Holy Spirit brings to life in peoples’ hearts. “Let us think of the Lord; the royalty and kingship of Christ is interwoven with humility, service and love. It is above all serving, helping and loving.”⁶² “The kingdom aims at transforming human relationships; it grows gradually as people slowly learn to love, forgive and serve one another. [...] Working for the kingdom means acknowledging and promoting God's activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. Building the kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its forms. In a word, the kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness.”⁶³ Therefore, for the Christian, serving is reigning.⁶⁴ Missionary activity “has but one purpose: to serve man by revealing to him the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ.”⁶⁵ Thus, apostolate is fundamentally giving witness to Christ through charity.

God has distributed “talents” (qualities, capacities, opportunities, charisms, etc.) among men in an unequal way so that we might serve each other, imitating him, who freely serves everyone; and his Son who emptied himself for our sake (cf. Philippians 2:7). In the Kingdom of Christ, all are called to place their talents – specifically one’s own person in all its individuality – at the service of others: thus, for example, the healthy help the sick; the wise, the ignorant; the powerful, the weak; the rich, the poor; and at the same time each one also receives much from those they serve. We all have been gifted by God with personal talents for the building up of the Kingdom of Christ, in which we are called to be living stones. No one can say that he or she has nothing to give, since those “talents” are not something outside ourselves, but which hearken to the possibilities for good contained in our personal identity, that is, to the expressions of love that the Lord expects of us. We all have been gifted with a heart capable of loving and we have received a call from God to live that love in a personal and unique way: the “talents” received from God are thus the capacities that permit us to respond, with God’s grace, to his will for us, to our personal call to love.

Watch out for activism

Saint John Paul II encouraged us to respect an essential principle of the Christian view of life: the primacy of grace. There is a temptation that threatens every spiritual journey and pastoral action itself: thinking that results depend on our capacity for planning and action. Certainly, God asks us for a real cooperation with his grace and therefore, invites us to use all the resources of intelligence and operational capabilities at our service for the cause of the Kingdom. But never forget that without Christ, “We can do nothing.” (Cf. John 15:5)⁶⁶

⁶¹ Benedict XVI, Angelus, November 23, 2008.

⁶² Idem, General Audience, August 22, 2012.

⁶³ *Redemptoris missio*, 15.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 36, and Benedict XVI, General audience, August 22, 2012.

⁶⁵ *Redemptoris missio*, 2 (the reference is specifically about the mission *ad gentes*, but is also valid for all Church apostolate).

⁶⁶ *Novo millennio ineunte*, 38.

“Ours is a time of continual movement which often leads to restlessness, with the risk of ‘doing for the sake of doing’. We must resist this temptation by trying ‘to be’ before trying ‘to do.’”⁶⁷ Therefore, all that which we propose apostolically should be based on contemplation and prayer. The apostle of our times needs to be a person of profound prayer,⁶⁸ capable of discerning in it the will of God for oneself and of receiving the grace to carry it out. Doing the will of God in one’s own life is the most efficient way of evangelizing, of making present the Kingdom of God.

Apostolic effectiveness

“Certainly we cannot ‘build’ the Kingdom of God by our own efforts—what we build will always be the kingdom of man with all the limitations proper to our human nature. The Kingdom of God is a gift, and precisely because of this, it is great and beautiful, and constitutes the response to our hope. And we cannot—to use the classical expression—‘merit’ Heaven through our works. Heaven is always more than we could merit, just as being loved is never something ‘merited’, but always a gift. However, even when we are fully aware that Heaven far exceeds what we can merit, it will always be true that our behavior is not indifferent before God and therefore is not indifferent for the unfolding of history. We can open ourselves and the world and allow God to enter: we can open ourselves to truth, to love, to what is good. This is what the saints did, those who, as ‘God’s fellow workers’, contributed to the world’s salvation (cf. 1st Corinthians 3:9; 1st Thessalonians 3:2). We can free our life and the world from the poisons and contaminations that could destroy the present and the future. We can uncover the sources of creation and keep them unsullied, and in this way we can make a right use of creation, which comes to us as a gift, according to its intrinsic requirements and ultimate purpose. This makes sense even if outwardly we achieve nothing or seem powerless in the face of overwhelming hostile forces. So on the one hand, our actions engender hope for us and for others; but at the same time, it is the great hope based upon God’s promises that gives us courage and directs our action in good times and bad.”⁶⁹

We want our apostolic activity to be a manifestation of our love for God and our neighbor made with faith and childlike confidence in the goodness and power of God, in whom we hope and ask for the blessings that will produce the spiritual fruit that cannot, in any way, be produced our activity alone. It needs to be above all a prayer in action, made with works, for the good of others and of all. We affirm categorically: human means cannot by themselves accomplish anything worthwhile for evangelization, which consist in “making the Kingdom of God present in our world.”⁷⁰ It is a work of collaboration with divine action, and not a purely sociological work; the Gospel is not spread by mere human activity, like advertising, opinions or material things. The only really effective way to evangelize and extend the Kingdom of Christ is through the grace of God. Therefore, the best means for evangelizing are those that attempt to cooperate with grace, that favor correspondence with grace, that favor the fulfillment of God’s will, holiness and charity; things like prayer, the authentic witness of a life that reflects Christ, personal sacrifice out of love, and the works of charity in the fullness of all its possible

⁶⁷ Ibid, 15.

⁶⁸ Cf. Ibid, 34.

⁶⁹ *Spe salvi*, 35.

⁷⁰ Francis, Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 176.

expressions. In order to truly be apostolically effective, we should discern and fulfill the will of God for our life, that is, to live charity according to God's plan for us.

Human means as resources for evangelization

In our response to God's salvific initiative, there is also a proper place for the natural, human means we can use as we make a sincere and generous effort to give the best of ourselves to the fulfillment of what we believe that God is asking us, while also being aware that "no human action, no matter how efficient, can produce genuine apostolic fruit unless it is accompanied by God's supernatural action in people's hearts."⁷¹ In fact, all creation groans hoping for the manifestation of the sons of God because all created beings are ordered through humanity to the glory of God (cf. Romans 8:19-23), and Christ has redeemed all that is human, making it possible that it all serve for the building up of the Kingdom.

"Effectiveness" is the capacity to achieve the effect desired or hoped for and "efficiency" is the capacity to make use of someone or something in order to achieve a determined effect.⁷² In this way, knowing that the usefulness of the natural means for evangelization is always in dependence on their service to the supernatural means of grace, which are efficacious, having recourse to such natural means in our desire to efficaciously support the evangelizing strength of grace manifests that for our part we place ourselves and created realities at the service of the Kingdom of God. Only when redeemed by grace can the natural, human means contribute to making present the Kingdom of God. How are they redeemed? Through charity, that is, by converting themselves into the channels through which Christian love is transmitted. Riches, science, power, vigor, capacities and qualities can and should all be at the service of charity thus making them useful for evangelization and achieving their *raison d'être* in the plan of God. The Lord is pleased with our cooperation since, in his mercy, "he who created us without us will not want to save us without us" (Saint Augustine). Therefore, the Christian wisdom, contained in these words attributed to Saint Augustine, exhorts us to pray and hope knowing that everything depends on God and at the same time, working as everything depended on us.

On the apostolate, our confidence has to be placed in Christ and his grace; not in human resources because while every human means can be efficient for evangelization if we use it as a means to activate love, none has in itself the capacity to make the Kingdom of God present. When we are choosing the means to evangelize, Jesus and the Church chose humanly poor means because: "The "poor means" are strictly bound up with the primacy of the spiritual. They are sure signs of the presence of the Spirit in the history of mankind."⁷³ They make the strength of God's grace and the freeness of the gift of salvation more evident.

⁷¹ *Regnum Christi Member Handbook*, 327.

⁷² Real Academia Espanola, *Diccionario de la lengua Espanola* ["Eficacia" es la capacidad de lograr el efecto que se desea o espera, y "eficiencia" es la capacidad de disponer de alguien o de algo para conseguir un efecto determinado" – Our Translation]

⁷³ John Paul II, Address to the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See, January 12, 1979.

The Church's nets are weak, perhaps patched; the Church's barque is not as powerful as the great transatlantic liners that cross the ocean. And yet God wants to be seen precisely through our resources, scanty resources, because he is always the one who acts.

Dear brothers, the results of our pastoral work do not depend on a wealth of resources, but on the creativity of love. To be sure, perseverance, effort, hard work, planning and organization all have their place, but first and foremost we must realize that the Church's power does not reside in herself; it is hidden in the deep waters of God, into which she is called to cast her nets.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, this does not mean that we have to omit applying just and licit human means that may be necessary and apt for achieving truly useful results for the goals of charity that we propose in our apostolic action. True love is not limited to good intentions but seeks an objective effect with its effort with the sense of effectiveness that is also human: "it is not enough to be "good" and "generous": it is necessary to be intelligent, capable, efficacious," such that our commitment in the Christian transformation of the world will be sincere and not fall into the omission of the servant who buried his talent (cf. Matthew 25:25)⁷⁵ "Once sowed, the Word gives fruit according to its own virtue and according to the soil into which it falls. Nevertheless, the sower isn't lazy or carelessness when doing his work."⁷⁶ Therefore, in our apostolic charity we can also have recourse to humanly 'rich' means, and at times we should make the effort to do so. In order to do good for our neighbor, love is an absolute necessity; but frequently professional competence, skill and material resources are also practically necessary in order to bring about the good we seek with our works of service.⁷⁷ Making natural and human goods work efficaciously generates benefits that we can put at the service of the needs of others. The important thing is that love be given freely and does not become a means to other ends, not even to promote the faith through proselytism.⁷⁸ Therefore, gratuitousness must be added to the efficiency of the human means with which we fulfill

⁷⁴ Francis, Address to the Bishops of Brazil, July 27, 2013.

⁷⁵ Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Message to Educative Communities, April 21, 2004, in Armando Ruben Puente (editor), *Papa Francisco, Como piensa el Nuevo Pontifice*, Libros Libres 2013, pp. 176-179. Ibid: "We Christians have emphasized the rectitude and sincerity of our love and the conversion of heart so much so that at times we have given less attention to the objective result of our fraternal charity; As if the intention was the only thing that mattered... and the actions themselves have been neglected. This is not enough; it is not enough for our brothers and sisters in most need, victims of injustice and exclusion. The "goodness of our hearts" does not remedy their need needs. It doesn't even satisfy us: a useless solidarity only serves to quiet a little our feelings of guilt. We need to have high goals... and employ the appropriate means." [Our Translation, both in the main text and here – this book has not been translated into English.]

⁷⁶ Ibid. [Our Translation]

⁷⁷ Cf. *Deus caritas est*, 31a (explaining that human resources are not enough, but that what is needed is love; while recognizing at the same time their role).

⁷⁸ Cf. Ibid, 31c and 33.

our charitable and apostolic activity:⁷⁹ “We should be efficient so that the ‘profits’ will be gratuitous.”⁸⁰

Love for the poor in evangelization

Free and disinterested service to the poor, the outcast, the sick and the needy is an especially effective way of establishing the Kingdom of God in the world. This is done through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy⁸¹ and through a generous, practical commitment to the common good which springs from solidarity with others⁸². The Church has a preferential love for those who suffer under any one of the diverse forms of human misery, for Christ is especially present in them⁸³. Recent Popes have indicated that love for the poor and service to them is an essential and unavoidable path of evangelization for the third millennium. They have explained its theological dimension and laid out its practical implications⁸⁴. “Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected members.”⁸⁵ The poor teach us who Christ is, he who made himself poor to make us rich (cf. *Matt* 25:35-45; *2 Cor* 8:9; *Phil* 2:5-8). They also teach us who we are, namely, in need of God. Theologically speaking, the poor is mankind contemplated from the perspective of his necessity, and in this sense would include those who lack material resources, affection, education, health, liberty, faith, etc. The Kingdom belongs to the poor. Evangelization is directed firstly towards them, and their liberation makes the Gospel understandable⁸⁶ (cf. *Luke* 6:20 y *Luke* 4:18). In this sense, lack of spiritual attention to the poor can well be seen as yet another form of discrimination.⁸⁷ The poor and the outcast of our time and in our society are real persons at the shores of our lives. In them Christ Himself waits for us in order to receive our love and to fill us with his love.

From the perspective of this preferential love for the most needy, the evangelization of culture, politics, social life and economics becomes to be a particularly effective way to ensure that those who have more responsibility and resources truly practice love and charity towards those who are most in need.

Reasons for evangelizing persons with greater influence and evangelizing through them

⁷⁹ Cf. Working document of our statutes, 12: “The member of the Movement feels the urgency of making known the love of Christ and orients toward it all apostolic activity. Therefore all should place their talents at the service of the Kingdom of Christ freely and with a sense of effectiveness. [...]”. [Our Translation]

⁸⁰ Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Message to Educative Communities, April 21, 2004. [Our Translation]

⁸¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2447.

⁸² Cf. BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, 7, 21 and 76.

⁸³ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2448-2449.

⁸⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 42; IDEM, Apostolic Letter *Novo millennio ineunte*, 49-50; BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical *Deus caritas est*, 30-36, y FRANCISC, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 186-216.

⁸⁵ *Evangelii gaudium*, 186.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Novo millennio ineunte*, 50, and *Evangelii gaudium*, 199.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Evangelii gaudium*, 200.

1. The principal reason for evangelizing the people who have greatest influence in the various spheres of society is that, like everyone else, they are called to communion with Christ. We do not evangelize them in order to take advantage of their human, social and material resources for apostolic activities. Rather, in them we discover people who need God. We want to help them to encounter Christ and to participate in the mission of the Son of God. Each human being is always an end in himself. Therefore an apostle has to approach each person with purity of intention and with personal disinterest.

2. The second reason for evangelizing through people of influence is that the Kingdom demands our commitment.⁸⁸ The Kingdom of God demands that social structures correspond to the dignity of the children of God. Evangelization necessarily has a social dimension and all evangelizing action has to lead to human advancement: "Accepting the first proclamation, which invites us to receive God's love and to love him in return with the very love which is his gift, brings forth in our lives and actions a primary and fundamental response: to desire, seek and protect the good of others."⁸⁹ We all have to look after each other. We have a common responsibility to create a just society, but each in his own way. We do not all have the same talents to contribute nor the same obligations, nor do we have the same possibilities to promote social justice. Each one of us has received certain talents. Those who have received more talents have a greater responsibility and have to make sure they bear fruit for the good of others, in particular for the most fragile, poor and needy⁹⁰. Human talents are redeemed through charity and thus become valuable for evangelization. We live fraternity, build up communion and make the Kingdom of God present in this world by taking care of each other in a spirit of solidarity and gratitude, each according to his possibilities.⁹¹ When people of influence are evangelized, it makes them commit themselves to transform this world actively in accordance with the Gospel, and that in itself is an important service to the Kingdom. But their contribution to the evangelization of society is sought especially because they give greater glory to God. The fact that they put their talents to use for the Kingdom, is much more important than successes and visible and measureable results, which are external changes, since the Kingdom is neither here nor there but within us (cf. *Luke 17:20-21*).⁹² Furthermore, given the current rupture between faith and culture, it remains urgent that the Church evangelize leaders in society.⁹³

⁸⁸ Cf. *Evangelii gaudium*, 180-181.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 178; cf. 176-179.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 197-216.

⁹¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 176, and BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, 34 y 38.

⁹² *Evangelii gaudium*, 279: "We may be sure that none of our acts of love will be lost, [...]. All of these encircle our world like a vital force. Sometimes it seems that our work is fruitless, but mission is not like a business transaction or investment, or even a humanitarian activity. It is not a show where we count how many people come as a result of our publicity; it is something much deeper, which escapes all measurement. [...]The Holy Spirit works as he wills, when he wills and where he wills; we entrust ourselves without pretending to see striking results. We know only that our commitment is necessary."

⁹³ Saint John Paul II urged that lay people be formed so that they could evangelize the earthly realities, since "the renewal of the Church in America will not be possible without the active presence of the laity". He also expressed the need for the Church "to prepare leaders in society for public life at all levels" (JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America*, 54, 44 y 56). CELAM organized a meeting for the formation of political leaders in Santiago de Chile from September 27 to 30, 2004, indicating that "forming these current or potential leaders is a

The Synod Fathers observed that it was in part because of an approach to the pastoral care of the poor marked by a certain exclusiveness that the pastoral care for the leading sectors of society has been neglected and many people have thus been estranged from the Church... The damage done by the spread of secularism in these sectors — political or economic, union-related, military, social or cultural — shows how urgent it is that they be evangelized, with the encouragement and guidance of the Church's Pastors, who are called by God to care for everyone. They will be able to count on the help of those who — fortunately still numerous — have remained faithful to Christian values. With their support, Pastors will face the not so easy task of evangelizing these sectors of society. With renewed fervor and updated methods, they will announce Christ to leaders, men and women alike, insisting especially on the formation of consciences on the basis of the Church's social doctrine. This formation will act as the best antidote to the not infrequent cases of inconsistency and even corruption marking socio-political structures. Conversely, if this evangelization of the leadership sector is neglected, it should not come as a surprise that many who are a part of it will be guided by criteria alien to the Gospel and at times openly contrary to it.⁹⁴

The apostle who evangelizes influential people has to have interiorized the Church's option for the poor, though.⁹⁵ The very presence of those who evangelize the influential in society must be prophetic; by their way of life they should call others to give of their talents as a demand of justice and charity. The apostle has to live the virtue of poverty so as not to undermine this prophetic character. While evangelizing the rich or powerful he has to avoid benefitting from their resources for his own gain.

3. Finally, in the third place, we want to give the best of ourselves in all aspects of our apostolic mission, and this is the context in which our commitment to evangelize

challenge of the highest priority for our Latinamerican churches" (Letter of Convocation for the meeting, undated Cf. ZENIT.org September 2, 2004). During the Congress on the evangelization of the whole American continent organized by the Pontifical Commission for Latin America in December, 2012, it was noted that "we have not managed to evangelize effectively our members in the business, political and financial world", and that the Christian renewal of the temporal order requires that the laity assume their responsibility for the evangelization of society, putting the talents which they have received from God at the service of the good of their neighbor and of society, in addition through participation in politics" (PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA y KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, *International Congress on Ecclesia in America, December 9 to 12, 2012*. Acta, with the collaboration of the Superior Institute of Guadalupan Studies, Libreria Editrice Vaticana [2013?], pp. 186 and 142-144, and cf. pp. 84-87). On this occasion, Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley said, "If we do not succeed in preparing Catholic leaders, we will see the continuing erosion of religious liberty, of social justice and of public morals". Therefore we have to "form a group of Catholic men and women who carry the voice of the Church into the public forum" (ibid., pp. 106 and 107; cf. similar ideas to be found, e.g. on pp. 105-108 and 196). "Living out Christian values in today's world requires heroism. Formation in the faith and in the social doctrine of the Church has to be offered to the laity, so that they know better which rational and supernatural means they have at their disposal". The formation offered should be integral because "we need to recover this Christian, human and intellectual treasure" among the laity (ibid., p. 147).

⁹⁴ JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America*, 67.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 42, and *Evangelii gaudium*, 197-201.

society through the influential must be understood. When seeking to respond totally and sincerely to the call of the Lord and to collaborate in the mission of evangelization, we give the very best of ourselves and our abilities. Of course we know that our human effort alone is incapable of producing the fruit of grace. At the same time we hope that the Lord will take pleasure in this sign of our love for him and of our commitment to his Kingdom and bless it by giving his grace and granting supernatural fruits. We give our best in all aspects of our life: prayer, the living desire for conversion, personal self-denial, the search for truth, our personal formation, and our commitment to justice and charity. We give our best as we put our human resources at the service of the Kingdom of Christ and try to make them bear fruit. One of the resources God gives us is our social relations and our capacity to influence others. In summary, each apostle of the Kingdom tries to develop his spiritual and human capacities to serve the cause of the Kingdom of God in this world as best he can. He tries to reach out to as many people as the duties of his state in life permit, for if we have encountered Jesus and his salvation, "how could we not try to help the greatest possible number of people to participate in this Way, this Truth and this Life?"⁹⁶. Each person has an infinite value in the eyes of God, who gave up his Son for all, without exception. Every Christian is a missionary disciple who goes out to meet others in order to communicate the *kerygma*⁹⁷. Obviously some have the capacity to meet more people than others due to the degree and extent of the influence they have--or could have--on others. The Gospel is for all, and not just for an exclusive group, small or large. In the desire to reach every person, we must approach as many as possible.

Putting human influence at the service of evangelization in Regnum Christi

A leader is one whom others follow. In the Movement we have defined it as "any person with the quality or capacity to influence others."⁹⁸ However, the term "leader" has a certain ambiguity, partly because we have used it with such frequency. In addition, the concepts of "leader" and "leadership" contain different shades of meaning within the various languages, mentalities, environments and cultures. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion and given that in the texts of the Movement the explanation for the term "leader" refers to "influence" over others,⁹⁹ the Commission has chosen to refer broadly to people "who have great influence in the various spheres of society" (draft, n. 3).

Regnum Christi aims "to form lay people who transform their milieu and who become evangelizers of others themselves. In this way it seeks that each one spread the light of the Gospel in their natural environment, like salt of the earth and yeast in the dough: parents in the home, the doctor in the hospital, the teacher in the school, the young student at the university, the worker in the factory, the shopkeeper in his store,

⁹⁶ Deyanira FLORES GONZÁLEZ, Introduction to the work group on charity and solidarity, in PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA and KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, *International Congress on America, December 9 to 12, 2012*. Acta, with the collaboration of the Superior Institute of Guadalupan Studies, Libreria Editrice Vaticana [2013?], p. 183.

⁹⁷ *Evangelii gaudium*, 120 and 164.

⁹⁸ *Regnum Christi Handbook* (1990), 28.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 28-30.

the businessman in his company”¹⁰⁰. Indeed, we must admit that Jesus asks us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and the yeast in the dough; we must make our talents yield a profit in the mission of evangelization (*Matthew* 5:13-14 and 25:14-30). To be salt in the Gospel sense, does not necessarily require qualities of human leadership but rather authentic holiness which includes a responsible commitment to the mission of evangelizing our social surroundings in accordance with our state of life. The degree of personal leadership one has does not necessarily indicate the degree of influence one has in society, and the degree of influence one has in society does not necessarily indicate the degree of evangelizing influence. It is not necessarily the person who has most followers who will influence society most profoundly, nor is it the one with the most influence in society who has the most evangelizing potential. Only when leadership and social influence are put at the service of Christian charity do they become useful for evangelization, since charity draws down the blessing of God which makes human works apostolically effective. In this regard, it is important for us to realize that Jesus does not ask us to strive to have as many followers as possible, the more the better. Rather, he asks us to follow him and to be his messengers so that others might follow HIM. He asks us to enlighten people and be his witnesses to them, to call, instruct and even shepherd them, but always in such a way that they have Christ, and not us, as their guide and goal.

The Movement directs its apostolic activity primarily towards people who have influence in the diverse sectors of society simply because it desires that the Kingdom of Christ be established in society. Influential people have a special responsibility to make their talents bear fruit at the service of others. As they act according to the plan of God, they themselves find personal fulfillment and they contribute to the well-being of those who surround them and to the common good. Moreover, in modern-day societies and in the entire international community there is a notable gulf between Christian faith and mainstream culture, and therefore people who have influence frequently do not know the love of Christ and are very much in need of God. We must be careful to avoid interpretations that are reductionist, elitist, exclusive or based on class struggle, and thus deform this aspect of our way of living the mission to evangelize. Our interest in evangelizing the most influential people in society is born of the supernatural love for them and by the desire to help establish the civilization of justice and love in favor of all, beginning with most underprivileged and fragile members of society.

The Commission has included “the formation of Christian leaders for society” in the draft (at n. 14), as the sixth criterion for apostolic action. With this phrase, it tries to express two basic ideas. On the one hand, we want to evangelize leaders in various social sectors, as well as the environments in which they move, so that they invest their talents according to God’s plan to the benefit both of themselves and all of society. On the other hand, we want to offer an excellent formation to believers so that some of them might be able to assume a positive leadership role in society. This benefits the

¹⁰⁰ *Regnum Christi Member Handbook*, 335.

people themselves, since they grow personally, and helps to multiply the effect their talents have in the service of society and in the task of evangelization.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Interpreted in this way, this criteria is in line with what the *Regnum Christi Handbook* (1990), 225 expressed as “the authentic Christian leader, a guide for his brothers, effective in his work, attentive to opportunities, magnanimous of heart, a tireless fighter, realistic in his objectives, tenacious in the face of difficulties, supernatural in his aspirations.” This criteria is expressed as “forming leaders to be apostles and apostles to be leaders” in OWEN KEARNS, LC, and PATRICK LANGAN, LC, *The Quest for the Core of the Regnum Christi Charism*, Legion of Christ, Cheshire, CT, 2014, p. 151.

Appendix 2

The Encounter with Christ: What it is and the significance of each part.

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:20). The team meeting called the *Encounter with Christ* is a means of ongoing formation typical of the Regnum Christi Movement. Its objective is to enrich the spiritual and apostolic life that the team members share. It fosters mutual help that they offer each other on their road to holiness, in their formation and in their apostolic activities (see *Draft 22,1*). We need to better understand where the value of this meeting resides and the ways in which it can be tweaked to make it more fruitful.

In line with what Vatican II asked of the laity, the first *Regnum Christi Handbook* (1969) framed the *Encounter with Christ* within the objective of “helping the Gospel virtues shine the everyday, family and social life of the members.”¹⁰² It explained that in the Encounter, “the members, gathered in small groups together with their friends and acquaintances, examine the methods and results of their apostolic action and compare their daily activity with the Gospel.”¹⁰³

At the Movements inception (1968), the team meetings consisted of a Gospel reading and reflection and in the explanation of a theme of Christian formation. Late in 1968 the review of “My Commitments to Christ” and the case study were introduced; thus, as the *Regnum Christi Handbook* of 1969 states, the structure of the *Encounter with Christ* included the Gospel reading and reflection, the review of “My Commitments to Christ” and a case study, leaving the formation theme for the study circle. In the *Regnum Christi Handbook* of December 1971 the review of the apostolic commitment was added. From then on, just as it is structured today, the *Encounter with Christ* consists of four parts: the Gospel reading and reflection, the review of “My Commitments to Christ”, the case study and the review of the apostolic commitment.

1. Gospel Reading and Reflection

This part includes the first two steps of a community *lectio divina*; as Pope-Emeritus Benedict XVI explained, we ask ourselves, “*What does the text itself say?*” (*lectio*) and “*What does this text say to us?*” (*meditatio*).¹⁰⁴ An appropriate Gospel passage is

¹⁰² Referring to *Lumen gentium* 35, 1: Christ “made [the laity] His witnesses and to whom He gave understanding of the faith (*sensus fidei*) and an attractiveness in speech (cf. Acts 2:17-18; Rev 19:10) so that the power of the Gospel might shine forth in their daily social and family life”.

¹⁰³ Citing *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 30: “Lay groups and associations dedicated to the apostolate or other supernatural goals, should carefully and assiduously promote formation for the apostolate in keeping with their purpose and condition (cf. John XXIII, encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, art. 31). Frequently, these groups are the ordinary vehicle for harmonious formation for the apostolate inasmuch as they provide doctrinal, spiritual, and practical formation. Their members meet in small groups with their associates or friends, examine the methods and results of their apostolic activity, and compare their daily way of life with the Gospel.”

¹⁰⁴ Cf. BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic exhortation *Verbum Domini*, 87.

selected according to the liturgical season and the situation of the participants. The text is read and commented on as a team by way of spontaneous remarks of a spiritual and experiential nature. The members are thus open to listening to the Holy Spirit, allowing themselves to be interpellated by the Word of God both personally and as a community so as to make progress in their personal conversion of life and they also prepare themselves for the remainder of the meeting in a climate of faith and docility to the Spirit.

2. Review of “My Commitments to Christ” and spontaneous prayer

Traditionally, a few minutes of the *Encounter* were dedicated to a review of the personal fulfillment of the commitments taken on by the members when they were incorporated, to which could also be added some extra points agreed upon as a team. The traditional mode, in which each participant would state aloud if they had fulfilled, not fulfilled or partially fulfilled each one of the commitments, has been questioned in some countries, at times, because there seemed to be no reason to give account of this fulfillment to the others.

Today, in some teams the traditional mode is followed; in others each commitment is read aloud and followed by a moment of silence in which each member privately examines himself; and in still other teams no review is done. The review of “My commitments to Christ” should be optional, freely dispensing with it as the section director and the team leader see fit. It’s imperative that we guarantee that nobody feels obliged against their will to make a public review, perhaps forced by their peers; thus, in those teams where the review is done aloud, it should always be optional for the members in such a way that nobody feels the intimacy of their conscience violated. Instead of the personal commitments or together with them, it is possible, if deemed advantageous, for them to review the fulfillment of the team commitments that have been freely taken on.

The spontaneous prayer is said allowed by one of the participants after the review of commitments or after the Gospel reflection if commitments are not reviewed. It is a brief moment of community prayer. It is always recommended because it unites all of the participants in God and to God.

3. Case Study - Reading the signs of the times with the eyes of faith

This is the longest segment of the *Encounter with Christ*. In it, the members seek to interpret with the eyes of faith the reality in which the members live and work.¹⁰⁵ In all

¹⁰⁵ “The faith-filled reading of reality is an action of the individual and of the community. One looks at reality, starting with the concrete events, going into their deepest interrelations and causes, to diagnose if it is moving in the direction of the God’s project for history. Once the diagnosis is done, the consequence is to transform the concrete reality through action, contemplation and celebration” (English translation of Ramón PRAT I PONS, *Tratado de Teología Pastoral. Compartir la alegría de la fe*, Secretariado Trinitario, Salamanca 2005, pp. 472-473). „Evangelization also demands observing reality in its complexity and multidimensionality. [...] This act of observing reality is not only looking at it from the humanistic perspective, but also and simultaneously looking at it

three versions of the Regnum Christi Handbook (1969, 1971 and 1990), we read that the members try to consider current events not only from the human point of view but also “with the light of faith in order to discover in them God’s saving plan, even in those events where evil is present. They thus prepare themselves to accept God’s invitation to cooperate in his plan of salvation.” It is an effort made by the community to seek God’s will and accept his call to apostolic action “for the benefit of a world where we must make Christ present and build up his kingdom.”¹⁰⁶

To do this faith-filled analysis, the ordinary method offered is the Case Study. Nevertheless, with the help of the section directors, it is plausible to use other methodologies to do this analysis if the idiosyncrasy of the team requires it, since not everyone can profitably use this methodology. Here we will explain the method of the Case Study to help each team discern when it would be appropriate to use it and how to adapt it to their circumstances.¹⁰⁷

It was conceived somewhere between 1925 and 1936 and evolved to its present form after World War II within the Young Christian Workers movement (YCW) whose founder, the Belgian priest, Fr. Joseph Leo Cardijn, wanted to offer young workers a simple method of Christian self-training that helped them discover, with the eyes of faith, the meaning of their existence and mission in society and made them into apostles among their acquaintances in the secularized environment of the factories.¹⁰⁸ The method had three steps: look, judge and act. Its uniqueness consisted in its capacity to educate and evangelize in life, from life and for life, uniting reflection and action and having the young people themselves as the protagonists, who, with life and the Gospel, and with reciprocal enlightening and support could grow in their formation and in the Christian transformation of their milieu.

with the a gaze of faith, looking at creation from the perspective of the profession of faith” (English translation of *ibid.*, p. 471).

¹⁰⁶ *HRC* (1990), 680. In the earlier handbooks only the first idea is found, with a slight difference in phrasing: «[...] and open themselves in this way to accept God’s invitation to collaborate in his plans of salvation” (1969: pp. 104-105, y 1971: pp. 117; the *RCMH*, 40 expresses it in less precise form).

¹⁰⁷ The objectives, convictions and conditions related to the case study as well as an explanation of the three-step method (see-judge-act) are well explained in: *Identidad de la JOC*, Secretariado General de la JOC, Madrid 1995, y José María RUBIO, *Para vivir la Revisión de Vida. Un método para la acción y la espiritualidad cristiana*, Verbo Divino, Estella (Navarra) 2006. Also useful is: Raúl BIODR CASTILLO, sdb, *Ponderación teológica del método ver-juzgar-actuar*, Conferencia de XXII Jornadas de Teología y Reflexión “Criterios para efectuar un discernimiento cristiano de una situación histórica” (23 de marzo de 2004), in *Revista ITER* 34 (2004), pp. 19-52 (consultable en: <http://raulbiordcastillo.com/?p=4> y <http://www.communityofsttherese.org/resources/verjuzgaractuar.pdf>). A short explanation of the see-judge-act method in English can be found at <http://www.seejudgeact.org/sja-in-nine-questions>.

¹⁰⁸ Synthesizing the thought of Cardijn on the laity’s task of integrating the temporal and the spiritual realms: „The apostolate of Christians is essentially an evangelizing action in life, in the milieux and real problems of life. [...] They have to have *parresía* (Greek for „freedom in speech”) to bring about and inspire an evolution of the temporal. This requires that they live out a strong, enlightened, well-formed, experiential faith, and that they intensely live out their belonging to Jesus and consciously live out his Gospel, in their whole personal life, with all its demands. Christians who are conscious that they have an explicit mission: called to extend His Kingdom. [...] The militant Christian has the task of communicating the faith to the world in all its dimensions and in every field: work, education, science, technology, international action, family, culture, economy, public affairs. Everything is the *consecratio mundi* (consecration of the world)” (Engl translation of Juan Antonio DELGADO DE LA ROSA, *En el corazón de la JOC*, ADG-N Libros, Valencia 2010, pp. 61-62).

From the YCW, this method (look-judge-act) has spread to other apostolic movements¹⁰⁹ and has established itself as a particularly useful means of apostolic formation for the laity. Even the universal Church has welcomed it. Vatican II –that defined itself as an “extraordinary review of life”¹¹⁰- alluded to this method when it underlined the principles for the formation of laity for the apostolate.¹¹¹ Later, St. John Paul II recommended it also for the pastoral discernment of the priests.¹¹² The social doctrine of the Church –that aspires to offer “principles for reflection, criteria for judgment and directives for action”¹¹³- has decisively embraced it. St. John XXIII and Blessed Paul VI both made reference to this method;¹¹⁴ even the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) structured its content into three parts that seem to evoke the three steps of the method: presentation of anthropological truths, ethical norms of social life as criteria for evaluation and applications of the norms to specific situations according to the prudent judgment of the conscience.

a. Goals to which the method aspires:

In short, it aims to the interior transformation of the member into an apostle and the evangelical transformation of the member’s milieu by means of his commitment.

It is an educational method since it forms the conscience, helping the participants discover and experience the contribution and leadership that they are called to exercise in their milieu.

It evangelizes because it elicits the personal encounter with Christ, the synthesis between faith and life-style of the participants and their commitment with their faith. It helps them mature in the faith. It forms Christians who truly live their faith.

It gives rise to communities of believers for the Church because it fosters the communion of the participants among themselves, with Christ and with the Church.

It is missionary because it leads them to become aware of the need for

¹⁰⁹ Above all to those that form part of Catholic Action.

¹¹⁰ VATICAN II, *Message of the Council to all of humanity*, 7 (December 7, 1965).

¹¹¹ IDEM, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 29: “Since formation for the apostolate cannot consist in merely theoretical instruction, from the beginning of their formation the laity should gradually and prudently learn how to view, judge and do all things in the light of faith as well as to develop and improve themselves along with others through doing, thereby entering into active service to the Church (cf. 2. cf. Pius XII, allocution to the first international Boy Scouts congress, June 6, 1952).”

¹¹² JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, 10.

¹¹³ IDEM, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 8 and *Ecclesia in Asia*, 32 (citing CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Instruction *Libertatis conscientia*, 72 and PAUL VI, *Octogesima adveniens*, 4).

¹¹⁴ JOHN XXIII, Encíclica *Mater et Magistra*, 236: “There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: see, judge, act”; and PAUL VI, Apostolic letter *Octogesima adveniens*, 4: “it is up to the Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel’s unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgment and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church.”

evangelization of their milieu and of their personal responsibility; it also moves them to devise and perform actions that reconcile faith and culture. It triggers the missionary dimension of our Christian faith. It forms responsible apostles.

b. Underlying theological convictions of this method:

God is at work in salvation history: God is at work in the world through his Incarnation –Christ enlightens every situation since he has united Himself in some fashion with every man (see *Gaudium et spes* 22)- and through divine providence –Jesus is the cornerstone and in this light we must read the signs of the times in history (see Acts 4:11 and Rev. 1:8)- in the world the seed of the Kingdom grows of its own accord, the sower knows not how (Mk 4:26-27 & Lk 17:21). This shows the value of our daily life for the Kingdom.

God interpellates us from within the life of the world and he trusts us: He calls us to collaborate with him in the work he is already doing and awaits our generous response. This shows the importance of our personal conversion and of our transforming action so that each person might experience God's love, discover their dignity, and live out their calling. Radical faith in the dignity of each person because they are a child of God.

The wheat and the weeds grow together (see Mt 13:24-30): Good and evil are entwined in the framework of every situation. We must expect life to be complex, especially social life, if we wish to uphold God's action.

"The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword." (Heb 4:12): The Word is living. Today it renews and bears fruit in the life of those who nurture it.

We are God's people, God's family: Through our team we assume our ecclesial responsibility, we take part in the Church's mission, we are a communion of missionaries.

A lay spirituality of the Incarnation, of the day-to-day salvific action, of the Christian mission, of the cross in the world, of being one of God's people, of the contemplative dimension of life and of action as a path of conversion and fount of spirituality: It sets us in motion to encounter Christ in our lives and to an encounter with others so that they too are set in motion and encounter Christ.

c. Necessary conditions for this method to bear the desired fruits:

A team must exist: The participants should be a group that knows each other well, have solid relationships, care about and trust each other and, by faith, feel united in a common mission with shared objectives. It should be a stable not casual group because it is important to develop emotional bonds that engender a climate of fraternity, trust, sincere dialogue and freedom to express oneself. It should be small; from 8-12 people.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Between eight and twelve is what the experts in the YCW method recommend. Some members of *Regnum Christi* consider that between five and ten people can do it better. The most suitable number depends to a large

An attitude of openness: You need people who are open to the Gospel, to the faith, to change and commitment; people who effectively want to live their faith in the world by means of witness, promoting justice and announcing Jesus Christ.

Being in the world: This method seeks to help a team discern how to collaborate with God's activity in their surrounding world. It requires the participants to be inserted into normal and natural environments of life in the world: family, work, profession, studies, friendship. Those who live isolated or in artificial environments will not be in the best conditions for this method; the same can be said of those who are distressed by a personal problem or extraordinary, difficult cases since they would need to overcome their anguish in order to be able to calmly contribute to the discernment being sought here.

Frequent and patient dedication: This method needs to be done with a certain frequency so that it begins to take root in the daily life of the participants, which is where it is supposed to bear fruit. The fruit is gradual, progressive, it shows itself better long-term; the goal is to generate and develop an evangelical and evangelizing mind-set and attitude. If it is reduced to a sporadic exercise, it will not produce the desired fruits.

Supplemented by other means: To form missionary disciples the Case Study method is not sufficient. The team must have other activities such as community prayer and sacramental life (without these there is no Christian community), doctrinal formation (without intellectual enrichment this method becomes stagnate), social activities as a team (without which friendships get cold), apostolate (so that the members can share their mission) and communion with other teams, communities and other groups in the Church (without which there is a danger of enclosure and exclusivity).

d. Significance of the three steps:

The fundamental question of the Case Study is, "How should we combine forces with God's action in our milieu?" "God is making his Kingdom grow in the environment where we live and evangelize; what are we called to do to collaborate in this growth?" We respond by focusing on one event or case following the three steps: see-judge-act. Although each step has its own character, in practice, they can overlap since there is a logical, natural flow to them.

Choosing a case: we are looking for an event which challenges us in some aspect of what we consider our common mission and our identity as a team of missionary disciples. Preferably the chosen case is accessible to all, at best drawn from personal experience and taken from daily life, for even though

extent on the personality of the participants and on the time available. It should be noted that we ordinarily use less time than is recommended in the YCW.

nothing which happens in the world is foreign to us and everything can be reviewed, we are seeking above all what can help us to collaborate better with God's action in our surroundings according to the mission we share.

Look: We want to see the case as God sees it, and learn to see objectively and deeply, by means of reason and faith; we want to contemplate life and God's presence in it. What is truly happening in my life on the deepest level? What is God already doing in the heart of people and in the core of society? How should I live and react in light of this? We should look at the case:

- from the outside: analyzing it with our reason to understand what is happening, not every little detail but rather in that aspect which most speaks to us or is relevant to our analysis;
- from the inside: empathizing with the protagonists;
- from the depths of faith: looking from the perspective God's will; seeing the signs of good and evil in the case as it speaks to us.

Judge: It is not about us judging the moral value of the people involved in the case nor the simple event itself, but rather discovering how Jesus judges my life and my response to his invitation to follow him (an encounter with Him). In order to discover this, besides using our own capacity to judge, we have recourse to the Word of God, since the Gospel judgment is the nucleus of the *review of my commitments to Christ*. We are not simply trying to shed light on a case by using Gospel texts, but rather trying to put our life into the Gospel context by reflecting on one or more passages. To what extent do the situation I have analyzed and my way of relating to it foster or hinder me living as Jesus lived? What is God calling me to do through these events and through his Word?

Act: we take action in response to our encounter with Jesus, not out of some sort of voluntarism. With him we take on a commitment which will transform us and our lives. How can we collaborate with God in his work of making the Kingdom grow?

4. The apostolic commitment

The *Encounter with Christ* is a moment to look over how the team is contributing to the apostolic mission of Regnum Christi in its present situation. It is also a moment to renew apostolic commitments. The specific make-up of the team will determine how it collaborates in the apostolate of the Movement and therefore how to focus this part of the meeting.

Some ways to adapt the Encounter with Christ to the situation of the teams

Relationship between the Parts

It is important that each team harmonize the relationship between the four parts of the *Encounter*. For example, it has to be decided whether to review the

commitments or not, and if so in what form; whether or not to vote for a short-term commitment which differs from the apostolic commitment; whether to do the Gospel reflection at the beginning of the *Encounter* or within the "Judge" stage, etc. All of this will depend on the nature of each team and its circumstances; for example, if the members all share the same apostolate or not, etc.

Review of "My Commitments to Christ"

If this method does not seem to fit the needs of the team members, it would be good to find one's own way of a Christian reading of life which helps them; avoid making this methodology a straitjacket.

Length of the Encounter

Traditionally the *Encounter with Christ* lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Each team can decide on how long it should last depending on the preferences and possibilities of the members. Factors to be taken into account are how often the meeting is held and how many participants there are. In any case, it is important that the participants know beforehand how long the Encounter will last.

Generally, the Gospel reading and reflection lasts about fifteen minutes, the review of commitments about five, the *Case Study* about forty-five, and the review of the apostolic commitment about ten. However, the proportion can change according to the needs of the team. For example, some may lengthen the first part into a complete *lectio divina*, while others may replace the *review of commitments* with another way of looking at real life events in a Christian light which might be less demanding or shorter.

In the books of the YCW it says that the case study should not be unendingly drawn out, but that with ten people it can also be difficult to delve deeply into a case if less than an hour and a half or two hours are employed.¹¹⁶ If sufficient time is not spent on the case study the Encounter can mutate into a mere conversation which ends up being boring and ultimately irrelevant to one's life. We have generally spent forty-five minutes on the *Case Study*. Some teams may want to dedicate a little more time to it or even use two *Encounters* to analyze the same case. Others might want to choose the case in advance of the actual *Encounter* so that members can prepare themselves beforehand. All of this depends on the needs of the members of each team.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *Identidad de la JOC*, p. 118, and José María RUBIO, *Para vivir la Revisión de Vida*, p. 49.

Appendix 3

Belonging to Regnum Christi

This appendix seeks to shed light on the topic of what it means to belong to Regnum Christi. The main questions are: The various ways of participating in the charism; the types of members; the commitments of the members; the process of admission and incorporation?

A. Ways of participating in the charism of the Movement

There are various ways of participating in and benefitting from the charism of any ecclesial group. In Regnum Christi we find three general forms:

1. Without formally being a member: All those who feel identified with the charism of the Movement and participate in some of its activities but prefer not to enter so as to avoid taking on a formal commitment. They are supporters of the Movement.
2. First or second degree members: All those who intentionally join the Movement and fulfill the commitments that go along with being a first or second degree member and participate in the life of the Movement.
3. Consecrated members: All the Legionaries of Christ, the consecrated men and consecrated women of Regnum Christi.

B. Types of Members

In a movement there are different types of members, according to their state of life and the degree of commitment to which God calls them. All are called to live the same charism but in different ways.

The types of Regnum Christi members over the years

From the beginning the Regnum Christi Movement has distinguished three degrees or types of commitment of its members, according to their degree of attachment to the Movement and their availability for apostolate:

- First degree members collaborate in the apostolate of the Movement and nourish themselves from its spirituality and means of formation.
- Second degree members seek to live a greater spiritual commitment, are more available and have a greater degree of self-giving (of their abilities, time and resources) at the service of the Movement and its apostolate. This availability was expressed in three varying levels.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ SRRC 141 In the second degree there are three levels:

1.° to the first level belong those who, in addition to fulfilling the personal commitments of spiritual life proper to this level, make an effort to live an exemplary Christian life and have full spiritual openness to collaborate with the Movement in those tasks fitting to their personal situation and condition;

2.° to the second level belong all lay members that, in addition to fulfilling the personal commitments of spiritual life proper to this degree, have a real openness to serve the Movement in the tasks which might be entrusted to them, through the contribution of time and personal work to its works, and of support and material goods according to your personal generosity;

- Third degree members consecrate their entire lives to God in Regnum Christi by professing the evangelical counsels with private vows and dedicating themselves entirely to the apostolic mission of the Movement.¹¹⁸ The Legionaries of Christ were also put into this third degree from 1971 to 2004, although they consecrated themselves to God through religious profession in the Legion of Christ.

The three distinct degrees can be found in all the versions of the *Statutes of Regnum Christi* from its beginnings, and even in the draft of the Statutes of 1963. By “degrees” the Movement refers to different degrees in objective self-giving or in ways of living one’s own vocation and baptismal mission, all stemming from a free, personal and loving response to the call of God. The term “degrees” never was intended to refer to various “classes of members”. It also never implied a gradual progression towards perfection, by which one would pass from the first to the second degree as one progressed in holiness, and then eventually from the second to the third degree.

The step from first to second degree ordinarily resulted from of a free choice, motivated by love for Christ and the Movement and following a personal process of discernment. Normally one’s spiritual director or the director of the section accompanied him on this path of discernment, and at times issued the invitation to consider entering the second degree.

Membership in the second degree is not directly linked to any specific mission or apostolic task either within or outside of the Regnum Christi sections. In other words, a member does not have to be a second degree member to be a director of any particular work or to exercise any particular responsibility within the Movement, nor on the other hand does being a second degree member confer in itself any right to be appointed to any specific apostolate or task.

What a member is according to the *Regnum Christi Member Handbook*

The RCMH, published in 2008, presents belonging to the Movement in very open terms:

20 The Regnum Christ Movement proposes a Christian life-style. It presents itself as one way, among many, to respond to God’s invitation to live the faith of the Church in an integral, dynamic and enthusiastic way. Thus, rather than

3.° to the third level belong those lay members who, in addition to fulfilling the personal commitments of spiritual life proper to this degree, have a total openness to serve the Movement in the tasks it entrusts them with, with the person, his time and his goods, after have prudently secured the family patrimony, sufficiently but without excess.

¹¹⁸ The group that, in accord with the Statutes of 2004 and the earlier versions, was the third degree of the lay branch of the Movement has moved on to acquire a deeper consciousness of its specific identity. The members, under the guidance of the Pontifical Delegate, and after discussing the matter in their general assemblies held in 2013, have decided to request recognition from the Holy See as associations of faithful in order to conserve their identity from which they collaborate in the mission of the Movement in communion with all the members of the Movement. They are now called Consecrated women of Regnum Christi and Consecrated laymen of Regnum Christi respectively.

adding new commitments, it helps its members to live those that derive from their baptism. Far from being an additional demand to fit in alongside their marriage, family and social duties, it offers its members a unifying vehicle to live these duties in the conviction that through them they fulfill their mission of being Christian leaven in the world.

22 While it is true that nurturing our spiritual life, deepening our personal formation and doing apostolate do require a certain investment of time, it is important to emphasize that in order to be a member of Regnum Christi one does not need to have a lot of time available. Rather, the Movement's intention is to be an aid and a means to transform anyone's habitual activities and responsibilities into occasions of holiness and dedication to the apostolate – in other words, into a loving dedication to building Christ's Kingdom in the ordinary circumstances of life. This is a result of our conviction that for a member of the Movement, time is kingdom and at the end of our lives, all that remains is the good we did for God and for our neighbor, our brothers and sisters.

23 Though the Movement has structures and institutions to facilitate the formation and apostolate of its members, its true life is synonymous with the Christian life-style of its members. The degree to which they are authentic Christians, faithful sons and daughters of the Church and committed apostles, will determine the degree to which Regnum Christi will be a living reality and contribute to establishing Christ's Kingdom in the world. Everything else—centers, works, institutions, regulations—are only means, and therefore Regnum Christi uses them only insofar as they contribute to the fulfillment of its mission.

48 To aspire to be a member of Regnum Christi all you need is the desire to respond more fully to your Christian vocation, using the formative and apostolic resources the Movement offers. You do not need to have reached a particular degree of holiness or even a minimal fulfillment of particular Christian duties, because the idea of the Movement is rather to help you to progress along the path of Christian life by growing in fidelity to the commitments that stem from your faith and love.

In conformity with this vision, the Handbook presents a very simple form of admittance, by which it is enough to send in a letter which expresses the desire to enter and the Movement considers them members.¹¹⁹ The RCMH also introduces a new concept of a member's commitments by presenting them as "means of spiritual growth and integration".¹²⁰ It insists on graduality and on adapting to the circumstances and personal possibilities of each individual:

217 If fruitfully fulfill of each of these means for spiritual growth, we must learn to live them according to the mind of the Church and the Movement moved by love,

¹¹⁹ RCMH 59. See also RCMH 61: "One may also be incorporated into Regnum Christi at the conclusion of some event such as a Youth and Family Encounter, a mission of evangelization, spiritual exercises or a formation course."

¹²⁰ RCMH 360

with conviction, and not just fulfill them externally. This may require a more or less gradual process, depending on your own possibilities and the rhythm of grace in your soul, in accordance with your spiritual director, until you form a solid habit of interior life.

361 Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that life in Regnum Christi cannot be limited to a series of prayers, activities or regular meetings. It is above all a loving relationship with Christ in the Church that creates a particular Christian life-style and requires us to do apostolate according to each person's circumstances and possibilities, using the means that God gives each one.

The focus presented in the Handbook responded to a desire to help the members avoid falling into formalism and to make it easier to invite others to the Movement in a secularized world.

Today, in the context of the reflection on the Statutes, we have to ask ourselves if this very open way of understanding membership in the Movement and the commitments best reflects the identity and mission of Regnum Christi. In the meeting of the 38 members gathered in Rome in June 2013, it was said that it is necessary to define more clearly what belonging to the Movement means and what it implies, since to many it seemed that the identity of the member and of the sections had become fuzzy.

Degrees

In the meeting of the 38 representatives it was also mentioned that it is necessary to review the sense of the distinction between the members of the first two degrees. Some members thought that the present definition of the second degree based on availability does not offer a sufficiently clear and stable basis for distinguishing two clearly distinct ways of living Regnum Christi.

Proposal of the central commission

In number 29, 32 and 33 of this document the commission proposes making a clear distinction between those who identify with a certain style of Christian life in line with the charism of the Movement and actual membership. The commission envisions recovering a sense of the first degree member who has defined commitments and a clear sense of membership, and therefore proposes a period of prior discernment, the need for a more formal incorporation process and an annual renewal of membership. In this way, both directors and members could always know who is a member and who is not.

As to the distinction between the degrees, the central commission proposes to begin by discerning the nature of the first degree. It has to be clarified what the level of commitment of a member at the most basic level (something like the present first degree) is. Then there may be some who feel that God is not asking them for this level of commitment but still desire nonetheless to keep benefitting from the charism (as friends and supporters). There may also be others who feel that they are called to greater stable commitment than the first degree demands (something like the present second degree) and, in this case, it can be discerned in what exactly this greater

commitment would consist.

C) Commitments and Incorporation

God calls people to distinct paths within the Church, and some are called to participate in the charism of a specific ecclesial group. The individual concerned as well as the directors of the institution ought to discern if there is a genuine call. In order to do so the group has to define the conditions necessary to become a member. There should be a path of formation prior to the incorporation so that a person can prepare himself for the commitment which membership in the group entails. During this time he gets to know the charism and becomes familiar with its way of life. Then comes the step of incorporation or the moment in which one becomes a member. From this point on one begins to form part of the institution because he takes on its commitments. This step is not just a spiritual act, done before God. It also puts one in relation with the other members of the group, creating a certain juridical bond of which there has to be some proof. On the practical level it is only members who can exercise certain functions and participate in making decisions about the life of the association. The commitments which one assumes have to be clear and specific, not only those which are related to the spiritual life but also those which affect the life and the activity of the group. The institution also has to define the duration of this commitment, how to renew it and when one ceases to be a member, either through one's own initiative or for just causes which lead to separation.

1. Commitments

The purpose of the commitments regarding membership in an ecclesial group:

A person who feels himself called to live his Christian life according to the charism of an institution in the Church and who wants to adhere not only to the charism but to the institution as well, responds to the call by accepting the commitments that come with being a member of the institution. Commitments are the concrete expression of membership and a way of life shared with other members (there are certain practices of piety that all do, certain activities in which all participate, etc.) Commitments are also the ordinary means of living out the charism and achieving the goal of the institution.

Commitments in the Regnum Christi Movement

The former statutes and handbooks speak of the commitments as something which the person takes on at the moment of incorporation and in each annual renewal. The *Regnum Christi Handbook* of 1990 speaks in detail about the commitment sheet which is filled out in the triduum of incorporation and reviewed in the triduum of renewal (583, i). The *Statutes of Regnum Christi* are not specific on this point: only in number 45, speaking of the practices of piety, do they say that the members commit themselves at the moment of incorporation to live these.¹²¹ The *Regnum Christi Member Handbook* 217 presents the commitments of the spiritual life as something recommended and

¹²¹ Cf. SRC n. 45

proposes that one gradually presentation of them, accompanied by a spiritual director. In the second edition it is added that these commitments are a means of spiritual growth.

Proposal of the central commission

In this revision process we have to discern if at the moment of incorporation, the members should take on, before God and others, some specific commitments or if they can take advantage of the means which the Movement offers them at their own discretion, according to their personal needs.

A distinction has to be made between the ideal of Christian sanctity to which we are already committed through baptism and those specific commitments of a Movement member which serve as a concrete means to achieve this ideal.

The current commitment card presents the ideal of holiness to which a Regnum Christi member (and actually all Christians) ought to tend. However, the specific commitments of a movement should be concrete means shared by all who form a part of it. The Movement would be striving in vain to establish the Kingdom of Christ in the life of each individual and in society if its own members were not open to committing themselves to certain means in their spiritual life, their formation and their apostolate.

The commitments can be a good indication in discerning if someone is called to form part of Regnum Christi. During the proposed time of discernment prior to incorporation a person can check to see if he is capable of living the life of a Regnum Christi member; or if he prefers not to establish a formal bond with the Movement.

In the proposal for 29 the commission brings together the various commitments of the first and second degree members which were scattered throughout the normative texts formerly used.

Numbers 18 y 19 propose the practices of spiritual life of the first and second degree members respectively as commitments and not merely as recommended means. Now is the moment to discern regarding each one of these and to see which ones should form part of the official commitments and therefore become obligatory.

2. Incorporation

The process of adhesion to a stable group has to be sufficiently formalized to make clear who its members are.

Incorporation: past and present norms and practice

In the normative texts prior to the *Statutes of Regnum Christi* of 2004 and the *Regnum Christi Member Handbook*, there were two phases to becoming a member: the admission, which required sending a written petition to the general director and

receiving a positive response, and the incorporation, which normally took place during a retreat, in a ceremony during which a person declared the promises of incorporation according to the established rite. The moment from which a person was considered a member varies in these texts: some declared one becomes a member when he receives a positive response to the petition letter (SRC 1979) and others indicate this occurs in the moment when he submits the petition letter (SRC of 1988, 143 y RCH 1990 n. 550). In all documents it is indicated, though, that a person also has to formalize his membership by participating in a triduum and the rite of incorporation.

The *Statutes of Regnum Christi* of 2004 do not use the term incorporation nor do they speak of the emission of a promise. They only prescribe that: “To be admitted to the Movement it is required that the interested person writes a petition and be admitted by the competent director”.¹²² The RCMH uses the term “incorporation” to refer to the formal act of becoming a member in the Movement. At the same time it considers any person who has sent in his petition letter to be a member, mentioning that the incorporation retreat is recommended.¹²³ Currently it is not prescribed to document the incorporation.

Religious nature of the act of incorporation

A person who wants to form part of Regnum Christi understands that by incorporating he responds to a call of God and that he becomes a member of a particular group. In other words, he makes a commitment with the Lord and the other members.

Incorporation into the Movement has always been done by means of declaring promises. The Catechism explains promises and vows in numbers 2101 – 2102. By declaring the promises of incorporation a person publicly expresses that he accepts the invitation of God to follow him in Regnum Christi and to fulfill the commitments that come with membership.

Proposal of the central commission

To respond to the need to clarify who is a member and to convey the seriousness of the step of incorporation, the commission proposes that the incorporation process once again be formalized and unified. As expressed in numbers 30-32 of this document, it proposes following the traditional steps of membership, in which it is clear that a person begins to be a member in the moment he declares the promises.

The annual renewal of membership is above all meant to be an occasion to reaffirm one’s personal answer to God’s personal invitation.

A member who, without just cause, does not renew his membership would cease

¹²² Cf. SRC n. 28

¹²³ Cf. RCMH nn. 59 y 60

to be a member of the Movement. The possibility of asking to be re-incorporated would always remain open. Ordinarily the annual renewal would be held during a religious act of the section, although it could also be done by means of a letter to the section director.

Appendix 4

The identity of teams and sections

Regnum Christi members feel called to live their vocation to the Movement in a two-fold dimension. There is the personal life-style of one's commitment to God in conformity with a specific charism; and the communal aspect of living this commitment as part of a community. Team life is the way in which Regnum Christi members live out the communal dimension of their vocation. Sections, the locality and the territory are also dimensions of communion.

Principles on which team life is founded:

RCMH 64: "The Movement is above all a true, spiritual family in the Church. Therefore, the life of its members unfolds in the framework of spiritual communion and fraternal charity, as happens and has always happened in the Church since early Christianity. This reality takes concrete shape by belonging to a team, which is a small group of members who mutually help and encourage each other to live a better life, persevere in their Christian vocation and be more effective in their apostolic activity."

- 1) COMMUNION: Team life shows the dynamics of charity which is born in the Holy Trinity and it is a reflection of the ecclesial communion which animates the life of the Movement as an evangelizing community. The team also establishes a relationship with the rest of the Movement, integrating us into that spiritual body.
- 2) PERSEVERANCE IN THE FAITH: The team helps us to live the faith in community, to grow and persevere in it.
- 3) FORMATION: The natural environment of the team significantly contributes to personal and community formation and development.
- 4) FRIENDSHIP: The team responds to the human necessity to establish relationships of true friendship.
- 5) APOSTOLATE: The team strengthens evangelizing action by bringing together the qualities and capacities of each member, making possible apostolates that one person alone would not be capable of carrying out.

Principles on which section life is founded:

RCMH 318: "In each locality the members of the Movement form four sections: men, women, young men and young women. Each of these is headed by a section director who guides the members according to the spirit, purpose and methodology of Regnum Christi. By reason of its spiritual and apostolic dynamism, each section must aspire to become a close and concrete support for the local church and a transforming force in society."

- 1) INTEGRATE: The section transcends the life of the teams and fosters their mutual integration, reinforcing the sense of membership in Regnum Christi.
- 2) MAXIMIZE: The section strengthens and supports the formation and apostolic action

of the team in a way that would not be possible for an individual team alone.

Historical development and present situation

From the very beginning, the life of Regnum Christi has been organized and developed in the form of teams which were gathered under the direction of a local director. The team is mentioned in the very first handbooks and statutes. The division into four sections (men, women, young women and young men) appears in institutionalized form in 1988, even if in practice the teams had already been organized like this before. The Statutes of 1990 place the emphasis on the life of the section and speak of the team as the operative and dynamic unit between the cell and the group. The RCMH of 2008 develops team life more amply and compares it to the first Christian communities. (cf. RCMH 321, 343-346).

In those places where Regnum Christi is currently more firmly established there is more clarity, both in theory and in practice, about what teams and sections are. In those places where there is greater geographic dispersion of the members and where their numbers are reduced, members tend to get together as circumstances allow. Though, even in these places, it seems the members have a deeply rooted consciousness of the importance of belonging to a team, given its importance for perseverance in the faith and in the life of the Movement.

Due to the reduced number of members, in some places there are teams but no sections, and in others the men's and women's teams form part of one single section.

In general the division of team life according to sexes has been maintained. At the same time many activities common to men and women have been introduced, in order to better respond to the needs of families, to take better advantage of certain means of formation and to foster the spirit of communion in the whole of Regnum Christi. In response to the desire some have of sharing their faith and life in the Movement with their spouses and to the need of evangelizing the entire family, some have proposed creating teams of married couples.