

## FIRST PART

### THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF REGNUM CHRISTI

#### CHAPTER I

##### A CATHOLIC MOVEMENT OF APOSTOLATE AT THE SERVICE OF THE UNIVERSAL AND LOCAL CHURCH

##### GOD'S INITIATIVE

1 "God is love." This is the true face of God the Father, revealed to man through Christ, "God's love made flesh". But God is not only love in himself. His love has overflowed, becoming a gift for mankind, a gift that reached its fullness on Pentecost, when He sent his Holy Spirit upon the first Christian community. The rest of the divine gifts spring from this self-gift of God to mankind as from their original source.

2 The purpose of God's gifts, which show us his love, is not only to give him glory but also to help each person to reach God, our final goal and the complete fulfillment of all our desires and aspirations. Therefore, each gift is also a call, an invitation from God who awaits in expectation our response of love and cooperation. Thus, through the gift of creation God calls mankind into being and to walk the path of love; through the gift of redemption God calls man to accept love as a deliverance and salvation from sin; through the gift of sanctifying grace God calls man to live and radiate love, sharing in his divine life already here on earth and later, completely and for all eternity in heaven.

3 The human person was not created to live in solitude. Love is mankind's essential calling or vocation. Only in love, that is to say in the gift of himself, can man discover the truth of his own being. As Pope John Paul II wonderfully declared, man "remains a mystery to himself; his life is without meaning unless love reveals itself to him, unless he encounters love, unless he experiences and assimilates it, unless he actively participates in it."

4 It is clear that man's first and most fundamental love must be his love for God, his Creator and Redeemer. To him we owe our natural and supernatural life, our salvation and all we possess. Our love for God, however, becomes real and concrete in our love for our neighbor, because "whoever does not love his brother whom he sees cannot love God whom he does not see." The human person lives to love God in his neighbor, and he loves his neighbor to live in God. Doing so, he is consistent with his human nature, which bears the image and likeness of God. Thus, man lives, becomes holy and achieves salvation by believing and loving in union with others.

5 The Church is, precisely, the community of believers in Christ. God "wills everyone to be saved and to come to full knowledge of the truth" and for this reason he instituted the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation, at once manifesting and actualizing the mystery of God's love for mankind." The Catholic Church "is a community composed of people united in Christ who are guided by the Holy Spirit in their pilgrim walk toward the kingdom of the Father, and who have received the good news of salvation so as to give it to everyone."

6 From the very beginnings of Christianity, in order to propel every believer along this path, God poured forth the gift of his Holy Spirit upon the Church. Impelled by the love instilled in their hearts, the first Christians would gather in small communities to pray and to receive the teachings of the Apostles, forming a single body in Christ. In their turn the Apostles and their successors began setting up local churches through which the Kingdom of God became increasingly present in the world. Christianity was like the yeast of which Christ spoke, and little by little it transformed society, it spread out among families, acquaintances and fellow workers. The good news of Christ spread with contagious hope and joy from person to person, wife to husband, parents to children, slave to master, and from these masters to their friends and acquaintances. Converting to the faith meant sharing it, beginning with your own family. Every Christian was an apostle; every Christian community a living flame of the Church. For the power of love cannot be contained.

7 Throughout history, the Holy Spirit has endowed his Church with splendid means to help Christians rekindle their faith and to answer the specific needs of each age in history. First the monastic orders emerge. Later, religious congregations appear. As time goes on, the Holy Spirit raises up a rich blossoming of new forms of consecrated and apostolic life. In the 20th and 21st centuries, ecclesial movements are an answer from the Holy Spirit to the hurdles we face in evangelizing a world subject to constant change, and which must come to grips with the challenge of secularization. In these movements, the faithful of every state and condition of life come together to live and transmit their faith in Jesus Christ, since no one can be a Christian in isolation. The ecclesial movements are a radiant sign of the vitality and beauty of Christ's Church and they belong to the "living structure of the Church."

8 The Church is bearer of the Father's love fully revealed through the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Church is always in "missionary mode", bringing Christ's saving message to the people of every age and every region of the world. And, on the other hand the Church is also the bearer of man's "movement" as he responds to divine love: moving toward God, in the first place, as a turning to his merciful love; moving toward others in the form of brotherly love and care for our brother's needs; moving toward one's own heart and conscience to discover in them the depth of the divine image and likeness; and finally, moving toward the world in order to build and transform it according to the Father's purpose.

9 The variety and beauty of the paths God offers to mankind in the Catholic Church in order to reach him and cooperate in this salvific plan are a reflection of his wise pedagogy. He knows each one's heart and innermost needs, and thus he offers each one the type and style of Christian life best suited to his personality and circumstances as history unfolds.

10 This is not, however, God's only purpose in raising up the various ecclesial movements in the Church. Their presence and action in the Church can also be taken by those who are called to them as an invitation and a demand to rekindle the drive of early Christianity, steeped in the ardor of the Apostles' preaching after Pentecost. In fact, ecclesial movements are generally characterized by a strong missionary dynamism, rooted in the evangelizing vocation of the faithful, principally the laity, just as the Church under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has recognized, especially since the Second Vatican Council.

### SERVING THE CHURCH AND PEOPLE

11 The Regnum Christi Movement is one of these ecclesial movements. The only justification for its existence lies in serving the Church and its shepherds, and in serving people FROM the Church, rooted in the human and supernatural mission of the Church.

12 In the heart of the Church, Regnum Christi in all simplicity wants to contribute its fresh energy, spirituality and methodology, which bear the ever-new seal of the Holy Spirit. It wishes to make its contribution to the great mission of the Church in deep communion and a cooperative spirit with the other living forces in the Church, with the nuances proper to the gift it has received from God, a gift the Church has examined and accepted in its bosom as an authentic charism.

13 The Regnum Christi name and the motto of its members, "Thy Kingdom Come!" mean above all that we aspire to cooperate with the Church in establishing Christ's Kingdom and making it a reality in the world. This kingdom is Christ himself, when he is known, loved and imitated by every person. It is his Gospel of love when it becomes the rule of life in every heart. It is the Kingdom of God "prepared for in the Old Testament, brought about by Christ and in Christ, and proclaimed to all peoples by the Church, which works and prays for its perfect and definitive realization." Its members, through their lives and activity, seek to extend and bring to maturity Christ's Kingdom here on earth as a "kingdom of truth and life, holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace."

14 The Church is additionally "the seed, sign and instrument" of this kingdom. Therefore, serving the Church is how Regnum Christi fulfills its mission at the service of Christ's Kingdom, and how it lives out fully its identity as "Regnum Christi". This awareness gives rise to a profound sense of filial love that suffers, watches over and hears the heartbeats of the Church as our Mother.

15 The local Church is the community in which the life and mission of the universal Church is institutionally expressed. In it "Christ's one, holy catholic and apostolic Church is truly present and active." Thus, the local Church constitutes the ordinary means through which Christ makes himself present in the personal life of Christians; in it, he gives us his teaching and example as our path to life, and a living community of faith and charity as our home. Hence, Regnum Christi fulfills in practice its desire and aspiration to serve the Church through its communion with bishops and priests, and its insertion into the life of dioceses and parishes, as its members humbly contribute the charism we have received as a gift from God, serving the new evangelization and missionary activity.

16 Regnum Christi shares this deep concern for every human person, "the first and fundamental path of the Church." With the Church and through the channels established by her, Regnum Christi desires to serve the whole person and every person, giving them Christ, who alone is man's savior in all of the dimensions and realities of his being.

17 In keeping with the Church's thoroughly realistic and wise understanding of human nature, the Movement recognizes in

man a mystery of greatness and misery, holiness and sinfulness, strength and weakness. It leans neither to fatalistic pessimism nor naïve optimism. It wishes to offer this human person, often burdened with deep internal contradictions, a path of constant improvement, one full of hope in spite of man's stumbling and falls. For we are convinced that God's love is stronger than man's weakness.

18 In this sense, Regnum Christi is open to all people, weak and in need of help, and invites them to enter the path that leads to salvation in Christ. As a Movement it welcomes those who want to undertake the journey toward Christ and to distinguish themselves in following him. It is a narrow and demanding path where you often progress in small steps, and it requires patience, courage and support to accept the reality and conditions of Christ's Kingdom.

19 In virtue of the catholicity of the Church to which it belongs, Regnum Christi transcends any boundary of culture, language, race or nationality. By the same token, and aware that it is an instrument of the eminently supernatural cause of Christ's Kingdom, it does not identify with any national or international political party or group, and it does not adopt as its own any particular ideology or political system. On the other hand, it encourages its members as private individuals and members of the social community to take an active part in the whole gamut of civic life, either as individuals or forming associations, with full civic and juridical responsibility.

## A STYLE OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

20 The Regnum Christi Movement proposes a Christian way of life. 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 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.

21 The way of life Regnum Christi offers its members is one of faithful adherence to Christ and his Church. It is an active Christianity enthusiastic in its love, promoting communion in the Church, with a deep sense of mission, capable of transmitting faith and hope to the world by preaching the Word and practicing gospel solidarity. Regnum Christi is convinced that as an ecclesial movement it cannot dispense with these characteristics, which are distinctive of the perennial youth of the Church, sustained by the constant influence of the Holy Spirit upon her.

22 While it is true that it always takes a certain amount of time to cultivate our spiritual life and personal formation and to do apostolate, it is important to emphasize that in order to be a member of Regnum Christi you do not need to have particularly abundant 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 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 in so far as they contribute to the fulfillment of its mission.

## CHAPTER II

### OUR MISSION: TO KNOW, LIVE AND MAKE KNOWN CHRIST'S LOVE

24 The mission of the individual works and institutions that God has brought forth over the centuries cannot be any other than the essential mission of the Church—the salvation of mankind in Christ by establishing his Kingdom. In fact, quoting our founder, "Regnum Christi makes sense only in the Church, for the sake of the Church, and rooted in the human and supernatural mission of the Church." Nevertheless, as it serves this mission each institution possesses its own characteristics and approaches, which beautify and renew the Church's activity, each

stressing a particular aspect or nuance of the gospel. Thus, the variety of spiritualities and forms of apostolate in the Church in no way fractures its unity, but rather expresses the variegated richness of Christ's life and mission.

25 In accordance with the divine inspiration received through our founder, the mission of the Regnum Christi Movement can be summed up in one word: love. Its mission consists in bringing the greatest number of people *to know God's love* deeply, as the ultimate explanation of the redemption wrought by Christ; in bringing them *to live in love* by practicing the authentic and generous charity Christ preached and demanded; and in striving *to make God's merciful love known* to all mankind by tirelessly preaching the gospel, so as to achieve the conversion of hearts and build a civilization of Christian justice and love.

26 Since love entails ardently seeking the good of the one you love, the Movement strives to undertake the most effective actions, both in depth and scope, to establish Christ's Kingdom in individuals and in society at large, in the strictest fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church and in full communion with her pastors. The Movement understands that for this action to be most effective it must give Christian formation to and apostolically mobilize the men and women that exercise greater leadership in society, in its religious, cultural, intellectual, social, economical, human, artistic and other sectors.

27 The Movement's mission is not born of a passing need nor is it based on currently fashionable ideas, but on the Church's urgent concern to make Christ's love known to mankind—for love is ultimately the essence of Christianity. And love is at one and the same time a joyful announcement and a binding commandment, reality and hope, a gift from God and a human task. Christ's Kingdom becomes present in the world to the degree to which God's love is known, lived and transmitted to each heart and to society as a whole. As its specific service, Regnum Christi wishes to offer the Church and the world at large its endeavor to make Christ's love an increasingly present and effective reality among people.

## KNOWING CHRIST'S LOVE

28 To understand Regnum Christi's mission you must begin with a need deeply rooted in the heart of each individual—the need for a personal encounter with Christ and his merciful and life-giving love. For Christ alone is the definitive and complete answer to man's most dearly held desires and aspirations, his thirst for transcendence, and his insatiable hunger for happiness.

29 Some are blessed with having known and faithfully followed Christ from their childhood. Others unintentionally express their deepest desires in their hectic and misguided pursuit of superficial comfort or empty illusions. Often they find that at a given point the road becomes uncertain, gradually they are let down in their false hopes, and disillusion, apathy and abandonment set in—a type of spiritual winter. Sometimes a special circumstance, a providential meeting or simply the knocks of life become the opportunity to change course. Suddenly Christ appears on the horizon in all his goodness and beauty, his outstretched hand inviting us to a new life. If we allow Christ to touch our heart we will begin to experience God's love as a transforming power that cures and restores what was sick. It is the experience of a new, gratuitous, unlimited and unconditional love, which fills our soul with joy and security.

30. The mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God is the historical and tangible expression of this love. God chose to reveal himself to mankind in the person of Jesus Christ his Son made man. Therefore, to experience God's love, we must fix our eyes on the face of Christ, at once human and divine, suffering and transfigured, just and merciful. We must contemplate that face, which enlightens and strengthens the steps of all those who approach him.

31. If we are to discover Christ's face we must have faith; a faith that is open in simplicity and trust to the person, word and work of Christ; a faith nourished on the Eucharist, the Gospels and our contemplation of the mysteries of his life. Frequent and patient contact with the living Christ in his word and the sacraments, through personal prayer and participating in the liturgy have always been the best school to achieve the experiential knowledge of his love.

32. At the same time, and paradoxically, to know Christ we must love him, because love is the key to people's innermost lives. While it is true that we cannot love what we do not know, in the arena of interpersonal relationships

we need to love a person if we are to get to know him deeply. Only through love can a believer enter into the depths of Christ's Heart and detect his deepest feelings, his liveliest desires and the intensity of his love, and live the truth that love is this: not that we have loved God but that he has loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.

#### LIVING IN GOD'S LOVE

33. Our experience of God's love in Christ necessarily tends to become something living. For a Christian, experiencing Christ deeply means living in love, living to love, and nourishing our life on love. Our life can now have no other motivation, meaning or goal than Christian love.

34. This love is directed first and foremost toward God himself, in a personal relationship that comes down to living the life of grace. We will return to this point later. Nevertheless, the authenticity of our love for God is tested in our love for our neighbor. St. John expresses this strongly in his well-known words, "If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."

35. Living in Christ's love means making Christ's commandment your own by giving yourself to others. If our heart has experienced Christ's love we have only one path to follow as regards our neighbor: the path of meekness and kindness, service and abnegation, understanding and forgiveness—in a word, the path of gospel charity.

36. Gospel charity, unlike mere philanthropy, consists in loving our neighbor with the same love with which we love Christ. And the only authentic way to love Christ is by fulfilling his commandments, especially the greatest, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." Living in his love means discovering and serving Christ in our neighbor. Living in his love means giving yourself to others in the Christian way.

37. For this reason charity is the seal of authenticity of every Christian life. In his famous hymn to charity St Paul emphasizes that a Christian without charity loses his essence; and he gives the list of the most characteristic traits of Christian charity: it is a love that forgives, is patient, serves, is understanding and generous, the bond and the hallmark of the Christian community.

38. Charity is the belt that binds together Christ's Mystical Body; it is the soul that breathes life into it until it becomes a living and harmonious body. Unity and understanding are priorities for Christ's disciples. Every member of the Movement experiences the urgent need to guard and foster its unity and harmony above any personal interest.

39. To live the ideal of charity maturely, we must bear the inevitable burdens and even tensions that daily living gives rise to, especially when the tasks we have to do together with others are difficult and subject to human error and failure. No one ought to nourish the false hope of living an imaginary, disembodied charity. Loving is giving. And so this virtue is practiced and forged every day, in every instant. You are a Christian by loving here and now.

#### MAKING CHRIST'S LOVE KNOWN

40. Before he ascended into heaven, Christ urged his apostles, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Good News to every creature." Since then, the Church has always lived in mission mode, going out to all the peoples of the world so that nobody will be deprived of the transforming knowledge of Christ's love. The Church never tires of traveling the world over, raising her voice time and again so that the proclamation of love will continue to echo in every corner and every new era of human history.

41. Christ's missionary commandment must echo just as strongly and urgently in the heart of every Christian. Since the Christian vocation and mission have love as their origin and objective, it is a call to love, it is a mission of love.

42. The service *Regnum Christi* renders to the Church and society consists in forming apostles who will build

the civilization of Christian justice and love. Our mission crystallizes when each one of our members makes God's love known to others in any life situation whatsoever, and in any sector of society. Therefore, wherever a member of the Movement lives and preaches love, there the mission of the Movement is being carried out. With the Church and rooted in the Church, Regnum Christi seeks to be a flame that sets the whole world ablaze with Christ's love.

43 To fulfill this mission, each member must allow his heart to burn with the fire of the same missionary zeal that inflamed the lives of so many Christians throughout the Church's history—Christians who understood that love is the essence of Christianity and that the soul of the apostolate consists in spreading the love we experience and live in Christ, especially in our relationship with him in the Eucharist.

44 Words alone are not enough to make Christ's love known. It requires the witness of a life that is consistent with the demands of love. And love demands works. And so we ask our members not to be bystanders looking on, but to strive to inject into events the power and dynamism that are proper to Christianity. Just as faith without works is dead, so also love without works is locked in a pipedream. Nothing can take the place of the concrete help we give our brother or sister in their most acute needs as a way to transmit Christ's love and show the authenticity of my own faith, "Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith through my works."

45 Christ became man for the complete salvation of the human person. He is concerned for every human person in both his dimensions, the spiritual and the material. And so, in his public life, Christ went about not only teaching and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom but also curing the sick, feeding the crowds, taking care of the needs of those who came to him. His apostolic activity served the entire person. Even on the hill of Calvary, Christ's cross with its vertical and horizontal beams was an eloquent image of this twofold meaning of redemption. Regnum Christi's activity, in tune and in cooperation with the Church, is no different; it always "uses both hands": with one it satisfies the spiritual hunger of the human being by giving the bread of the Word and the sacraments; with the other it works to take care of the hunger of the body, cooperating with the Church and society in the enormous task of satisfying people's material needs, especially the most disadvantaged. The Movement recognizes that material aid is also a means to evangelize.

46 A human being can find fulfillment only by loving; by giving himself generously and trustingly to others. Our daily experience constantly confirms this truth. Therefore, when Regnum Christi commits its members apostolically in the Church's great mission, it offers them a tried and true road to profound joy, and an effective means to live and bring others to live an integral Christianity, and to set the world ablaze with the fire of love.

## **SECOND PART VOCATION AND SPIRITUALITY OF MEMBERS OF THE REGNUM CHRISTI MOVEMENT**

### **CHAPTER I**

#### **REGNUM CHRISTI: A VOCATION WITHIN THE CHURCH**

##### **A MOVEMENT OPEN TO EVERYONE**

47 Regnum Christi is open to all the Catholic faithful without exception, men and women, youth and adults, of whatever state of life and social condition. God uses a great variety of means and avenues to invite those he wants, offering them the Movement as a resource and a way to live Christian life within the Church, and thus contribute to the sanctification of the world and fulfill the vocation for which he has chosen us in Christ before the creation of the world, so that we might be holy and spotless through love, and be imitators of God.

48 To aspire to be a member of Regnum Christi all you need is the will 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 progress along the path of Christian life by growing in your fidelity to the commitments that stem from your faith and love.

49 The Movement is also available as a spiritual and pastoral aid to any diocesan priest who in agreement with his bishop, wishes to join it and avail himself of its means of sanctification and its formative and apostolic resources.

50 Regnum Christi has a special bond with the religious congregation of the Legionaries of Christ since both have the same founder and share the same spirituality and mission in the Church. The priests of the Legion especially help the members of the Movement to live their specific charism by offering them the sacraments, spiritual direction, preaching, Christian formation, constant encouragement, promoting charity and apostolic projection.

51 The joint work of priests and laity immensely enriches the life of the Church and the Movement. Priests contribute their priestly charism, formation, experience, sense of the Church and their pastoral heart. With their love for Christ and their adherence to the Church, the laity contribute their presence in the world and their knowledge of temporal realities, and their efforts to sanctify and imbue these same realities with the gospel spirit.

52 Any member of Regnum Christi who wants to share the gift he has received, may invite others to join the Movement, bearing in mind the characteristics of each person.

53 To join the Movement, a person must be a Catholic and at least 16 years of age. Leaving Regnum Christi requires no more than the mutual agreement between the individual member and the section director. It is preferable but not necessary to express this decision in writing. Such a step is best taken after reflection before God and with one's spiritual director.

54 Out of respect for the spirit and mission of other Church organizations, the Movement invites and encourages those who already belong to other ecclesial realities that imply a formal commitment of their members to persevere in the path they have chosen, and to avoid overlapping commitments and lifestyles.

55 Regnum Christi considers as friends and supporters those who do not formally join the Movement but nevertheless share in its spiritual benefits and support it through their prayers, esteem, moral support and financial contributions, and through whatever work they are in a position to do in those areas for which they are suited. These friends may be non-Catholics and even non-Christians or non-believers, to whom we ought to offer the light of the gospel so that, if God grants them the grace they might freely and willingly accept the Catholic faith.

#### THE CALLING TO REGNUM CHRISTI

56 Christ is behind every Christian vocation. It is he who calls. Vocation means precisely a call. Christ's first and fundamental call to every person is to follow his footsteps in the way of love. This vocation implies a call to be holy and to commit to the apostolate. So it was in Christ's earthly life: "he called those he wanted, for them to be with him and to send them out to preach"; and so it is today, in the era of the Church, when Christ in a mysterious way continues to cross paths with every person, and in the depths of their conscience he invites them to follow him.

57 Normally, Regnum Christi members can point to a defining moment when Christ appeared on the shore of their life and invited them, "Come, follow me." The first response was perhaps hesitant, subject to a certain uneasiness typical of so many of those addressed by God, as we find in Sacred Scripture and in the experience of so many men and women over the centuries. Accepting the call opens a new chapter in the personal history of salvation of each member of the Movement, a history begun at baptism and whose design is woven with each new "yes" we give to Christ's love.

58 If the human response to the divine call is to be authentic it must be given in freedom—a mature, responsible freedom that is conscious of the gift that God is offering. Belonging to the Movement would be emptied of meaning if its members were not free as they adhered to it and participated in its activities.

59 The act by which people bind themselves to Regnum Christi is called incorporation or association. Those wishing to become part of this family in the Church may do so in several ways: through a written note to their team leader, section director or the general director of the Movement to express their desire to follow Christ more closely using the spirituality and means offered by Regnum Christi; by making a personal offering to Christ in the Eucharist,

in the presence of one of the members of their section's directive team; by expressing verbally to any one of these their desire to take part in the life and activities of Regnum Christi. Once they have expressed their decision to become part of the Movement in any of these ways, the Movement considers them members, whereby they can benefit from the spiritual graces granted by the Church to its members.

60 Since incorporation into Regnum Christi is a free response given to Christ out of love, it is very advisable for new members to participate at a later date in a spiritual retreat. Ordinarily, it will be a two or three day spiritual retreat, though there are other formats depending on each one's circumstances and possibilities. The retreat ends with the new member accepting the Movement's goals and means of perseverance in the presence of an authorized representative, normally within the celebration of the Eucharist.

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.

62 The new member begins a process of formation to gain a greater knowledge of his Catholic faith and to live it with increasing love. This is done through the Regnum Christi formation program for its members. In many instances, this journey brings the member to a greater awareness of the value of "being Church" and "building Church", through his own parish and diocese. The Movement wants all its members to live the ecclesial dimension of their calling and to understand the importance of their insertion into the local Church.

63 By making the decision to increase their knowledge of the Catholic faith and to follow Christ more closely, new members also set out on a path of conversion and personal growth. This process normally begins in a simple way and develops gradually. It also implies a growing identification with Regnum Christi, which entails accepting its way of life and methodology as their own, nourishing themselves on its spirituality and participating in its formative and apostolic activities, each according to his possibilities and personal generosity.

64 Ordinarily, you do not live your calling and membership in Regnum Christi in isolation. 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.

65 Within Regnum Christi and as a part of its charism, there are several degrees of commitment open to its members. Their purpose is to allow each member to attain the fullness of his calling in the Movement, humbly and gratefully embracing the degree of commitment to which he feels called by God:

A. In the first degree, the member makes use of the means of sanctification and apostolate that Regnum Christi offers, as a way to live the demands of Christian life according to the gospel. The first degree is open to diocesan priests and married or single lay people, male or female who are seeking help to live their Christian faith and are willing to undertake an apostolate. First degree members invoke Mary Immaculate as their protector. She ought to be their model chiefly because of her authenticity in living the demands of her faith, her submission to God's will, her piety, humility, service to her neighbor, gratitude, fortitude in her times of sorrow, her freedom regarding material things as seen in her purity and simplicity of life, and her joyful dedication to her family duties.

B. The second degree means more intense dedication to the Christian life by deeper devotion to prayer and the practice of the virtues, and by being more available for the apostolate. The second degree is open to diocesan priests and married or single lay people, male or female who, after adequate spiritual discernment, agree to give themselves more fully to God in the forms contained in this degree of commitment. Second degree members invoke as their protector St. Paul who understood deeply God's salvific plan, loved Christ personally and was a tireless apostle of his Kingdom.

C. The third degree is a state of total consecration to God, following Christ closely and serving the Church within the Movement. Members enter this state of life by making the evangelical promises which commit them to: a true detachment from material goods, in poverty; a renunciation of the benefits of family and marriage, in chastity; and



the oblation to God of the ability to organize their own life autonomously, in obedience. Vocations to the consecrated life are a gift to the Church. All members are therefore invited to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will bring them forth in abundance, and to promote them by means of timely activities, since consecrated men and women make an irreplaceable contribution to the extension of Christ's Kingdom in the world.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SPIRITUALITY OF REGNUM CHRISTI MEMBERS

66 By spirituality we mean a way of living the faith. A spirituality offers concrete ways to grow and mature in our relationship with God and to respond to our own Christian vocation.

67 The Regnum Christi Movement proposes to its members a spirituality whose main elements are drawn from the Gospel and which set a very high ideal of Christian life. Each member is invited to interiorize and live this spirituality in his own state and condition of life, until reaching the measure of Christ's fullness. For the holiness to which God calls us in baptism is nothing other than reproducing in ourselves the spiritual and moral features of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

68 By living the spirituality of Regnum Christi, recognized and approved by the Church, its members benefit from its means of sanctification and apostolate, and can experience the joy of building the Church and serving people by responding generously to their vocation.

### A SPIRITUALITY ROOTED IN THE FATHER'S LOVE

69 The spirituality of a Regnum Christi member stems from a deep experience and conviction, namely God's eternal love—an overflowing love that is at the origin of the creation of man and the cosmos, which he placed at man's service.

70 God's love is also his decisive response to man's sin, which is the denial of love—a persistent and faithful response of love by which God does not abandon wayward man but full of pity seeks him out and offers his embrace as the Father rich in mercy, an embrace which in his infinite kindness is also full of loving motherly tenderness, "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you" (Isaiah 49:15).

71 This indescribable love became tangible in an historical and concrete way in the unfathomable mystery of the mission and Incarnation of the Son of God, and it reached unimaginable extremes at the time of his passion, death and resurrection. Regnum Christi's spirituality stems from the intimate experience of God's love revealed in the person of Christ.

72 The experience of God's love is at the center of the Christian life. Only God's love can provide an anchor for the gamut of man's realities, allowing him to live with meaning and confidence. God's love is the point of departure and the only valid motivation that allows man to see his Christian vocation through to the end.

73 The Regnum Christi members' vocation and mission consist in assimilating the reality and dynamism of this love, which is both sublime and concrete. It means knowing, living and spreading it until God's love reaches every human being.

### A SPIRITUALITY CENTERED IN CHRIST

74 The spirituality of Regnum Christi, being a Christian spirituality, is centered on the person of Christ. Full of conviction and enthusiasm, the Movement presents the person of Christ as the supreme model, standard and inspiration for their Christian life to the men and women who approach its spirituality. It exhorts them to know him, love him, follow him and make him known to others. These four aspects of our relationship with Christ are the reference points shaping a members' life, giving them a precise fundamental orientation toward holiness and an enthusiastic impulse to do apostolate.

a. **Knowing Christ.** Our first spiritual need is to know Christ more, to the point of attaining a deep experience of his person and his love. Therefore, it is not a knowledge based exclusively on academic study, but rather an interior

knowledge, that comes from faith and love. It is knowledge based on experience more than theory, knowing more with our heart than our mind. It is not a feeling –though it doesn't exclude feelings and is grateful for those that are helpful– but the gift of self. The optimal places to receive this experience of Christ are prayer, the sacraments and in particular the Eucharist, the Gospel, and the contemplation of the mysteries of Christ's life, especially his Incarnation, Passion, Death and Resurrection.

b. **Loving Christ.** Love is the natural consequence of knowing Christ. *Genuine love* that shows itself not only in our words and desires but above all in our decisions and behavior. *Personal love*, in so far as it implies a deep and total relationship, from heart to heart. *Passionate love* because it touches the inmost fibers of our entire being in such a way that Christ becomes the passion of our lives. *Faithful love* because it is a love that must be renewed and deepened every day. Love that must gradually mature and grow strong through the trials of life.

c. **Following Christ:** Following Christ relates to the doctrine that the life of grace is a participation in the divine life itself. As Christians we do not follow a Christ who is external to us but rather a Christ in whose divine and filial life we participate. The Christ we follow is not only out in front of us, but in his infinite goodness he also follows us and seeks us out until he finds us, to pick us up like lost sheep and guide us as our Good Shepherd. He is not a merely historical but a living Christ, more present to us than our innermost self. By means of the life of grace, we are united to Christ like the branch to the vine and his life is manifested in us. Granted, the life of grace entails our constant battle against sin. The life of grace, however, is much more than the mere absence of grave sin. The life of grace demands that we imitate Christ, that we be coherent with his presence in our soul by acting and behaving as Christ himself would, that we identify with him so that we think as he thinks, feel as he feels, love as he loves, and live as he lives. Following Christ in this way is a superhuman task. The Holy Spirit alone can bring this about, since only he can stamp the image of Christ on each soul. But to do so, the Holy Spirit needs our human cooperation. He needs us to allow ourselves to be shaped by his expert hand, allow ourselves to be guided and driven by the powerful wind of his wings.

d. **Making Christ known.** We cannot reduce our relationship with Christ to something individualistic, directed only toward our own salvation. The Movement's spirituality includes the deeply held conviction that every person needs to meet Christ's redeeming love. Hence, Regnum Christi members strive to be witnesses before all people of his love. Making Jesus Christ known makes us heralds of the core message of the Gospel: love. A love received, experienced and valued as a pledge of salvation in this life and in the next, and which at the same time drives us to promote solidarity with everyone, especially those who suffer greatest need.

75 As an essential part of this Christ-centered spirituality, the Movement instills in its members a true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which consists in the worship of God's infinite and merciful love for all people expressed in Jesus Christ. We show this devotion through the exercise of two virtues: meekness and humility. Christ embodied these in an eminent way during his life and he himself told his disciples to imitate him in them. Part and parcel of our devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is also our ability to offer ourselves generously to spread Christ's love to everyone by word and deed, trying to be for others an image of Jesus' merciful face.

76 A Regnum Christi member has to commit himself heart and soul so that the experience of Christ's love becomes the decisive factor in his life. "Anyone who wishes to give love must also receive love as a gift. It is true, as the Lord tells us, that man can become a source from which rivers of living water flow (cf. *Jn 7:37-38*). Yet, to become such a source you have to drink over and over from the first and original source, which is Jesus Christ, from whose pierced heart the love of God flows (cf. *Jn 19:34*)."

#### A SPIRITUALITY GIVEN LIFE BY THE SPIRIT

77 As he drew to the end of his earthly life, Jesus promised to send man the Consoler, the Spirit of love that would lead them to the whole truth. The Holy Spirit is the transcendent protagonist behind every work of holiness and apostolate in every person and in the entire world. He is the one sent by the Father and the Son to continue the work of redemption through the Church. Regnum Christi, with the whole Church, acknowledges that the Holy Spirit is the guide and author of holiness, the one who enlightens man's heart, strengthens him in his weakness and makes his apostolate bear fruit that lasts. And we invoke him as Father of the poor, Giver of gifts and the light of man's heart.

In addition, the Holy Spirit is the one who raises up new movements and ecclesial communities as a response to the spiritual needs of each age of history, with its challenges to evangelization. The Regnum Christi Movement acknowledges the Holy Spirit as the source and origin of her very life and spirituality, the One whose initiative it was to give birth to her in the Church, and the One who drives, guides and shapes all her sanctifying and apostolic activity. She also acknowledges him as the builder of her unity, which is essential to the effectiveness of her apostolic mission and which bears witness to the love and joy that the Holy Spirit instills in the hearts of believers.

78 Bearing in mind this truth of faith, the Movement offers its members a spirituality animated by the Holy Spirit and open to his powerful action. It invites them to increase in their lives their faith in and love for the third person of the Blessed Trinity, and to be docile and faithful to his inspirations so that, enlightened and strengthened by his grace, they will walk faithfully the path of God's will and, following Christ's example, live their Christian vocation to the full in the practical living of love.

#### A SPIRITUALITY IN THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

79 The Movement's spirituality sinks its roots in the Church's spirituality. The Church is Mother and Teacher of Christ's disciples whom she instructs by preaching the Word, tenderly nourishes with the sacraments and guides to the Father's house by her pastoral action. She received a twofold mission from Christ her Founder: "to give life to her children, and to teach and guide them—both as individuals and as nations—with maternal care."

80 The Church as Christ's Mystical Body gives Regnum Christi members their true identity, their authentic filiation and the purpose of their existence. As children and members of the Church, they share in her responsibility for the mission she received when God placed in her the fullness of the means of salvation. The Church's Shepherds are the successors of the apostles and as such have the mission of teaching, sanctifying and governing with Christ's authority. Therefore, in full cooperation with the bishops, our members strive to build up the Church by means of their own holiness and by extending her influence in the world. They do so by the witness of their Christian integrity, their apostolate, and by actively participating in secular enterprises with a gospel spirit, thus making the Church present and active everywhere and in every situation, where she is called to be the salt of the earth.

81 One of the principal elements of the ecclesial spirituality of the Movement is our adherence in mind, heart and will to the Supreme Pontiff, universal shepherd of the Church. Our adherence to the Pope springs from our faith in Christ's words as he announced to Peter that he would be the principle of the Church's unity, and its visible and lasting foundation, "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," (Mt. 16:18), entrusting to him the keys of the Kingdom to determine what is best for her life and mission. This conviction of faith is the motive behind our prayer for the Vicar of Christ, our acceptance of and interest in his teachings, our filial and reverent submission to his decisions, our enthusiastic and active support for his initiatives, and our respect and esteem for his person .

82 The members of the Movement ought to have these same attitudes toward all bishops as successors of the apostles and witnesses of divine and Catholic truth.

83 Additionally, the members of the Movement are grafted into the life of the local Church to which they belong, recognizing in it the embodiment of the Church universal. In a special way, they cooperate actively in their parish life: by participating in its liturgies, especially Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation; by generously supporting their parish priests in their needs and projects; and by placing all their effort and apostolic initiative at the service of the local Church, following the directives of their bishop and parish priest.

84 Regnum Christi rejoices in the diversity of charisms with which the Holy Spirit adorns the Church, and it seeks to contribute to the increase of ecclesial unity. Therefore, it encourages its members, rooted in our charism, to foster support, esteem and cooperation with the other movements and ecclesial realities that work in the Lord's vineyard. Furthermore, it instills the conviction that those who are united by baptism and the common commitment to follow Christ, as branches of one Vine must reflect the fullness of the Gospel of love by building up the one Body of Christ.

85 Regnum Christi also takes to heart the call of the Second Vatican Council and the Roman Pontiffs to reestablish the visible unity among Christ's followers. Hence, it exhorts its members to constant prayer, hope, respectful dialogue and in a special way, to an exquisite charity and cooperation in seeking the common good.

86 The promotion of new vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life is one of the most valuable contributions that members of the Movement make to the Church. Aware of the urgency of praying “to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest”, they offer continuous prayer for the increase of those vocations that imply a special dedication to God and neighbor. They actively take part in the Church’s initiatives in this area, and they welcome and support as a special gift from God the vocations that he sees fit to raise up in their own families.

87 For Regnum Christi members, the activities and events convened by the Pope or bishops such as the World Youth Day, Family Encounters and such, are a golden opportunity to express their faith, love and adherence to their shepherds, and an opportunity to intensify ecclesial unity with other Church movements and institutions.

#### A SPIRITUALITY ROOTED IN CHARITY

88 “Love is the watershed of history, from the moment Jesus, the Word Incarnate and second Person of the Blessed Trinity came to the world to love and teach us to love.” Regnum Christi adopts as the core of its spirituality Christ’s new commandment, “love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another” (Jn. 13:34). Inspired by the witness of the first Christians who lived charity with the tang of Gospel novelty, Regnum Christi wants always to put charity forward as the essence of Christianity, so that today too the world can say of Christians and learn from them, “See how they love one another!”

89 Without charity there is no true piety or virtue, since charity is the soul and essence of every virtue. Likewise, charity is the seal of authenticity of every apostolate since it contains all the evangelizing vitality of Christianity, like an uncontainable force driving us to serve all people, especially those suffering most need. “There can be no true Christian holiness in a Christian life whose essence is not living charity.”

90 An additional and fundamental reason to live charity is the mystical identification of Christ with my neighbor. Faith teaches us that by becoming man Christ has mystically united himself with all humanity, in such a way that if we do not love those who are or could become part of Christ’s mystical Body we do not love Christ himself.

91 We express charity in the Movement through a deep sense of solidarity. As in the dogma of the communion of saints, its members recognize that they are united in a special way with all the members of the Church in faith and love, that they share the same lot in Christ and are bound in solidarity with each other in their spiritual and material needs. It requires humility and self-detachment in imitation of Christ crucified to live this virtue, but it is the path to the new life brought about by Christ with his Resurrection.

92 Scripture says of the early Christian community, “They were of one heart and one mind” (Acts 4:32). The Movement aspires to be a united family within the great family of the Church. A family made up of many members where no one ought to feel left out, where each one is called to contribute the gift of his own self and his availability to build unity in love, modeled on the Church. There, if one member suffers all suffer with him, and if one is honored, all share in his joy. Therefore, charity must be the Movement’s true “family resemblance”.

93 Our exercise of charity comprises our thoughts, heart, words and actions. It involves the generous and constant practice of a wide range of virtues such as warmth, respect, service, mutual support, and sincere and fraternal esteem. It also requires us to bear our brother’s burden, praise his talents and virtues, share in his successes and failures, and when necessary prudently, nobly and firmly to defend him. And since our heart is the true source of our intentions and actions, we must seek to have a kind heart in order always to think and speak positively of others.

94 Charity in speech is one of the most beautiful and fruitful expressions of charity, and it consists in showing our love in the way we speak. Not speaking badly of others can never be enough for a Christian. We must rather strive

always to speak well of them, praising whatever good there is in them, highlighting their virtues and achievements, never unnecessarily mentioning their limitations and defects so as to create a climate of esteem toward them, increase their good name and allow them the better to develop all their potential. Likewise, he must make sure to safeguard his neighbor's good name by believing all the good we hear and only the evil we see.

95 For its part, slander is one of the sins that most destroy charity. It is a genuine cancer for our Christian life. Due to an evil inclination we have—be it envy, human respect, vanity, self-love, revenge, rancor or rashness— we easily speak ill of others and what's more, we even justify this behavior. Guarding our tongue is a very serious spiritual commitment in the daily plan of a Regnum Christi member, as St. James warns us, "If anyone does not sin with his speech, he is a perfect man" (Jam. 3:2). Slander is an especially grave sin against charity and against our neighbor for it seriously damages his reputation and is radically contrary to the spirit of Christ and his Gospel. Similarly, detraction is also a sin to be rejected and avoided by every means since, even though the negative matter or facts might be true, it also has the sad consequence of gravely injuring the reputation of individuals or of institutions.

96 As in every family, selfishness and individualism are the enemies of our unity and charity. Individualism is a deeply rooted tendency in the human person that makes us want to satisfy our own desires and achieve our own goals by our own devices, independently of or in open opposition to the good of others. In contrast, St. Paul presents Christ as one who did not seek his own good but stripped himself of his divine privileges and gave himself up for all people. Christ's example sets a high standard of detachment and renunciation of our self-centered individualism, and it represents the fundamental attitude that best defines the Christian way of life.

#### A MISSIONARY SPIRITUALITY

97 The centrality of Christ and his love, which is the very heart of the Movement's spirituality, leads us to another highly important characteristic: missionary dynamism.

98 God the Father, moved by love, sent his son into the world to save mankind. Christ in turn sent the apostles to the ends of the earth to preach the joyful news that God is love and the time of salvation has come.

99 The Church faces the permanent challenge of effectively passing on this Gospel to each new generation. Filled with Christ's charity, she too feels the urgency of fulfilling her missionary mandate, of bringing the Gospel to every person, overcoming all the boundaries of time, culture and place.

100 With the Church and rooted in the Church, Regnum Christi shares in this mission, seeking to bring God's love to the heart of every man and woman. Therefore, the Movement's spirituality is strongly marked with a deep missionary sense. "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1Cor 9:16) must always echo in the heart of every Regnum Christi member. Each one has to be a flame that sets Christ's love ablaze in his surroundings. Christ needs arms! Christ needs feet! Christ needs tongues! The apostles of the Kingdom must offer theirs unconditionally so as to work for the interests of Christ and his Church.

101 The mission stems from a deep, personal experience: your living and life-changing encounter with Christ. The apostle extracts not only the content but also the certainty and enthusiasm of his missionary activity from this encounter, which he matures in faith, nourishes in hope and gives life to in love. More than structures and programs, the mission needs men and women who have experienced God's love in their own lives and feel called to work tirelessly to proclaim and extend his Kingdom using every licit and good means until Jesus Christ reigns in the hearts of men and societies.

102 The Movement proposes the example of St. Paul as the model of a missionary to help its members better understand this trait of our spirituality. He defined himself as an "apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (2Cor. 1:1). He traveled extensively, he was tireless in his journeying, he preached in the Jewish synagogues, he organized

small groups of Christian converts from Judaism and paganism. He also preached the Gospel from house to house, systematically approaching individuals. The strength of his proclamation and his tenacious formation of new disciples and missionaries became the key to the true success of his mission. All this, however, could only come from a vivid experience of Christ that took place for him on the road to Damascus. This encounter radically transformed his life and definitively infused him with an astonishing apostolic zeal.

103 The mission has two additional conditions. Each member of the Movement must allow himself to be permeated by Christ's love for each person, the source that inspires every vocation and mission in the Church. And each one with the power of the Holy Spirit must be able to love every person with the very heart of Christ. Only thus will our self-giving take on the same characteristics as Christ's: total, generous, unselfish, seeking only the good of those we serve.

104 The Christian mission is not easy. Normally, we are enthusiastic, generous and dedicated as we begin. Nevertheless, it can happen that gradually the difficulties, failures and the apparently slow pace discourage us and even cause us to give up. To persevere, we need to believe firmly in our mission, in God's help and our ultimate success, trusting in God's power rather than our own strength or ability .

105 Giving ourselves and persevering in the mission is one of the most fruitful, enriching and unforgettable Christian experiences, as our Lord said: "There is more happiness in giving than receiving". Being an apostle is not only a duty of Christian life, it is an extraordinary way to discover the full meaning of your own life as you serve others.

#### A SPIRITUALITY OF PRAYER AND ACTION

106 Prayer is a loving, heart to heart dialogue with God. It is a privileged time in our personal relationship with him. In this loving dialogue God takes the initiative of going out to meet us, placing himself at our service in a listening, forgiving, welcoming and giving way. In its various expressions –liturgical or devotional, vocal or mental, personal or community– prayer is an exceptional opportunity for union with God so as to experience his love.

107 Contact with God through prayer is a source of certainties and convictions, attitudes and particular behavior. The praying person senses the need to adapt his mind, heart, will and activity to the most holy will of God who has come to meet him, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (Acts 22:10). Therefore, besides giving glory to God, the primary fruit of prayer in man is that he listens to and accepts God's will serenely, joyfully and lovingly.

108 A Regnum Christi member should keep alive in his life every day the spirit of the prayer: "Holy Spirit, inspire all my thoughts, what I should say or leave unsaid, what I should write and all I should do. Teach me how to act so as to bring about the good of all people, the fulfillment of my mission and the triumph of Christ's Kingdom."

109 The Church has always understood that prayer is an essential part of the apostolate, as in the beautiful words of St. Thomas Aquinas: "Giving to others what you have first gazed upon in prayer". Prayer, insofar as it is an experience of God's love, is central to proclaiming the Gospel.

110 Prayer is also a condition for the apostolate. According to the principle of the primacy of grace, God is the only source of fruitfulness and effectiveness in the supernatural order. The Christian will be an instrument of salvation for his brothers and sisters only to the degree that he is united with Christ, "for without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). So often it is prayer alone that is able to open hearts to Christ's love, give grace its victory over sin and get people to accept the demands of the Kingdom.

111 To pray, we must exercise the theological virtues. Faith, hope and charity are the greatest means we have to express our relationship with God. They are the source of our interior and apostolic life. Regnum Christi members should humbly pray to God for these virtues and practice them so as to follow always a threefold path: a living, active, and luminous faith, which sheds the light of God on all the events of our life and helps us remain faithful amid the difficulties and struggles that God's will demands from us. A joyous, unbreakable hope, which fills us with the certainty that only God can give. An ardent, generous love, which enables us to understand God's goodness and leads us to correspond to this love by faithfully fulfilling our human and Christian duties and by giving ourselves to others.

112 In the daily grind of every Christian, prayer and work are essential commitments if he is to bear any fruit. We must neither pray without working nor work without praying. If you pray without working God may be deprived of the channel he needs to communicate his graces. If you work without praying it is not likely that your work will bear fruit for Christ's Kingdom. Therefore a Movement member seeks to strike up friendly conversations with Christ as he goes about his ordinary activities: he needs to be contemplative in order to achieve the goals that his love for Christ and mankind set for him.

#### A SPIRITUALITY OF THE CROSS AND SELF-DENIAL BASED ON LOVE

113 To follow Christ, we must walk the way of the cross: "If anyone wishes to be my disciple he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." A rough and narrow way, yet one that contains the Christian paradox of happiness and fruitfulness through sacrifice.

114 Self-denial is a Christian virtue by which we renounce our egotism and everything that is a hindrance to our greater love for God and our neighbor. Far from meaning that we despise, hate or have no interest in material realities, abnegation frees our heart from selfishness, and purifies it of disordered inclinations that close us to the love of God and our neighbor.

115 Abnegation has no appeal to our human nature, which is wounded by sin and frequently inclined to grant itself every possible gratification. But viewed in the light of Christ's cross and with the strength that stems from there, it becomes a necessary avenue to holiness and apostolic effectiveness. It is the path Christ chose to fulfill his work of redemption and to bear abundant fruit: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn 12:24). Besides, human experience proves that only by denying ourselves can we master our passions and disordered inclinations, and persevere in our faithful and personal love for Christ.

116 St. Paul compares the Christian's life to training so as to win first place in the stadium. He himself tells us that he exerted himself not as one wasting blows on the air but that he punished his body and subdued it so as not to be disqualified. This shows us that self-denial is not an end in itself but instead a necessary means to achieve our goal, which is to grow in our personal holiness and spread Christ's Kingdom. When self-denial emerges as something demanded by our love for Christ and others, then it finds its true meaning and justification.

117 There is quite a variety of ways to practice self-denial: faithfully and carefully fulfilling our duties; developing a strong will against all the fickleness of our feelings and emotions; mastering and tempering our character; controlling our disordered emotional reactions; and renouncing anything that might hinder our giving ourselves to God and others. Sometimes this rejection is necessary because it is at one and the same time the rejection of sin; other times, as the Holy Spirit inspires us, it is may be very helpful for our personal purification and self-improvement, or to create harmony in our relationships with others.

118 Self-denial is also necessary when it comes to the apostolate, since our mission requires great personal detachment in order fruitfully to undertake any apostolic initiative, and to brave fatigue, setbacks and misunderstandings for the cause of Christ without ever losing heart.

#### A SPIRITUALITY OF THE NEW MAN AND THE NEW WOMAN

119 Christ, true God and true man, is the pattern of human plenitude. He is perfect man, he is the answer to man's

deep desires and aspirations, and he reveals to man the sense and meaning of his own humanity.

120 By baptism the Christian is clothed with Christ and participates in the newness of his life. The baptized person is already a new man but he has before him the task of cooperating with God's grace to attain "the stature of the perfect man, the maturity of Christ's fullness" (Eph 4:13). For this, the Christian must work to strip himself of the old man, with his disordered inclinations of sensuality and pride, and to appropriate for himself the new heart that God has given him in baptism, by means of his communion with Christ and the Church. In this way, by the action of the Holy Spirit, he gradually acquires a heart that is open to his Creator and the vocation God has given him; a pure heart, inscribed with God's law, the law of love; a meek and humble heart, like Christ's.

121 In order to become a new man in Christ, on the one hand we need to meditate on the richness and depth of the gift of our own baptism and the commitment it involves. We must continually seek the interior renewal that is the fruit of divine grace, living the Gospel, participating in the liturgy and the sacraments, prayer, moral and ascetic effort, and our dedication to our neighbor out of love for the Lord. On the other hand, we need to prepare our nature as best we can so that the Holy Spirit can elevate it with his grace: "first the man, then the saint".

122 The principal enemy of our new life in Christ is our egotism. As the sorry legacy of original sin, egotism consists in giving preference to our own self—with our interests, passions, occupations, likes and whims—over our love for God and our neighbor. Egotism is not only the root of moral disorder in each human being, it is also the real source of countless evils the world suffers, such as social injustice, violence and moral deterioration. Therefore, Regnum Christi is convinced that the true means to transform the world and society is the interior transformation of the human person, achieved by grace. The degree to which man—every human person—is converted to Christ in the depths of his heart, will determine the degree to which an authentic civilization of justice and love, peace, stability and genuine progress will arise, according to God's design.

123 On the other hand, the Movement is well aware that we need continual conversion since in this life the Christian has not yet crossed the finish line. The road after our initial conversion is still one that requires our effort to clothe ourselves with the new man. It is not without its great joys and lights from the Lord, but it also has its dark valleys in which we must persevere with trust, relying on the goodness of the Lord who died and rose again.

#### A SPIRITUALITY WITH MARY, OUR MOTHER

124 One creature, the Blessed Virgin Mary, occupies a completely special place in the plan of mankind's salvation laid down by God from all eternity. Because of her singular union with Christ her Son, and her cooperation in the spiritual regeneration of humanity in Christ, she is the Mother of all men in the order of grace.

125 Mary's life is a hymn of faith in God and his loving providence. Her life also offers a constant witness of trust and filial abandonment to God's will, above all in the difficult and dark moments she lived. In addition to her faith and trust, the Blessed Virgin lived a heroic degree of charity. Second to her Son, she was the creature of whom God demanded the most love; a limitless love, up to the supreme sacrifice she made on Calvary as she gave her own Son over for all mankind, and opened her heart to receive them all as their Mother. Mary is at the same time an eloquent and simple model of the daily living of the theological virtues.

126 The most typical fruit of her life of faith, trust and love was her prompt, loving and heroic obedience to God's will. Through her practice of this virtue, Mary freely and actively linked her life to her Son in his work for mankind's justification and eternal salvation. Thus, the Blessed Virgin is every man and woman's most perfect example of love for Jesus Christ, dedication to his service and cooperation in his work of redemption.

127 Mary is a model of fidelity. The Church proclaims her as the faithful Virgin because throughout the various and oftentimes difficult circumstances of her life, she kept her soul in the disposition of the Lord's handmaid. Thus she ratified her initial "yes" in every new decision and was docile in her embrace of God's plan, which became more mysterious and surprising every step of the way.



128 Once assumed body and soul into heaven, Mary does not cease to exercise her spiritual motherhood over mankind, interceding for us before God in order to obtain the necessary graces for our salvation.

129 The same Divine providence that deigned to grant Mary such a prominent place in the history of salvation is admirably in tune with the deepest and most lively sentiments of us Christians, with our deeply felt need for a mother in our spiritual life; a mother who accompanies, educates, guides and sustains us on our pilgrim path to the Father's house.

130 The Church translates the multiple links that join her with Mary into a variety of devotional attitudes:  
Profound veneration, as she meditates on Mary's singular dignity, made Mother of the Word Incarnate by the work of the Holy Spirit;  
Ardent love, as she reflects on Mary's spiritual motherhood of all the members of the Mystical Body;  
Confident supplication, as she experiences the intercession of her advocate and helper;  
Loving service, as she discovers in the humble handmaid of the Lord the queen of mercy and mother of all grace;  
Diligent imitation as she contemplates the holiness and virtues of the one full of grace;  
Moving admiration, as she contemplates in Mary, as in a flawless reflection, all that she desires and hopes to become;  
Attentive study, recognizing in the co-operator of the Redeemer, already fully participating in the fruits of the Paschal Mystery, the prophetic fulfillment of her own future, until the day on which, purified of every wrinkle and stain, she will become the Bride adorned for her spouse Jesus Christ.

131 An important element of our devotion to the Blessed Virgin is to foster toward her the same love and trust we have for a true mother —love and trust based on God's providence, Mary's fidelity and her closeness to her Son, which makes her closer to mankind. When she accepted us as her children, Mary committed her love: a perfect love, breathing tenderness and compassion for her children, especially for sinners; a demanding and authentic love that seeks the good of her children; a merciful love that intercedes for all before God to obtain the graces each one needs for their sanctification, daily life and apostolic activity. Our love for Mary and our trust in her find their strongest and most moving motive in these truths, in which we can see clearly Mary's role in the life of the Church and in the life of each one of her members, according to the plan of salvation laid down by God from all eternity.

132 Devotion to the Blessed Virgin as the Church understands it would not be complete without our sincere effort to imitate her virtues, especially her faith, hope, love, humility, obedience and cooperation in Christ's redemptive plan. She is the way to Christ, and with our hand in hers it is easier to progress surely, rapidly and objectively toward holiness.

### CHAPTER III

#### CORE CONVICTIONS OF A REGNUM CHRISTI MEMBER

133 Every authentic and complete human life is rooted in deep convictions. A conviction is more than simply a belief, it is a vital certainty. Convictions are fundamental principles: we judge our life in their light and thus they determine and shape our decisions and free acts.

134 The core convictions of Regnum Christi members are certainties that stem from our faith and love. They guide, drive, inspire and nourish our life in harmony with the truth revealed by Jesus Christ and transmitted by the Church, so that we live with absolute clarity and decisiveness, free from any ambiguity or indecision. In fact, we are dealing here with solid convictions that nourish every Christian life, for they are the roots that nourish the essential attitudes of a follower of Christ.

135 We explain here eight core convictions based on the gospel, which influence the behavior of a member of the Movement with regards to the most basic realities of our existence: God, the Church, the world, our neighbor and our own freedom.

## GOD MY FATHER LOVES ME WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE

136 God is absolutely the first of all realities. He is the beginning and the end of all things. We were created by him in order to know him and love him, “to live in communion with him” as the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches (n. 45). Our relationship with God depends upon our idea of *who* he is and *what* he is like. This first fundamental conviction matches the truth that Jesus revealed to us about God: he is a provident and loving Father, very close to us and interested in our good.

137 God is love, and out of this love he made us his children. This is the most marvelous reality of our human existence. He is the Father who creates each person because he loves us and wants to make us happy, now and in eternity. The beauty of creation that surrounds us, from the vastness of the heavens to the lively colors of a little flower, speaks of God the Father’s loving and provident presence.

138 Above all, God’s infinite love is revealed to us in the unfathomable mystery of the Incarnation of his Son: “God so loved the world that he sent us his only Son”. In Christ, God the Father expresses every truth and all his love, and he allows us to discover that he is our Father. Therefore, all Christian spirituality has its origin and foundation in this love of God the Father for mankind and this divine filiation.

139 This is where we nourish our faith and hope. In the midst of the world’s problems and his own personal difficulties, a Regnum Christi member keeps his eyes and heart focused on this certainty. The Father’s merciful love is stronger than all the evil present in the world and any misery that wounds our souls. The life of the person who nourishes himself on this conviction radiates certainty, peace and joy, even in the midst of pain and darkness. The light of God’s love lights up our path through life and allows us to move forward with serenity and trust.

## BECAUSE I LOVE GOD, I LOVE HIS WILL ABOVE ALL ELSE

140 When you experience God’s love, you spontaneously want to respond to his love with yours. Loving God above all things is not only the first of the Ten Commandments, it is also the highest aspiration inscribed on the heart of the human person. The paramount task for a Christian and every human person is to respond with the obedience of faith and filial love to God’s love which has been revealed to us.

141 Love always seeks the greatest union between those in love. And our filial union with God, as St. John says, manifests itself and grows in the measure that we fulfill his will (Cf. Jn 15: 10,14). For this reason, our love for God moves us at all times to know and fulfill his divine will, even if it is costly, but always out of love: doing whatever God wants and wanting whatever he allows for our good, fusing our will with his.

142 Therefore, responding to God’s love means doing all that is pleasing to him and rejecting all that offends him, —in other words, sin. Thus, even in this life we experience the joy of loving God and we prepare ourselves to be united with him forever in heaven.

143 God’s will is not nebulous. We find it laid out in the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, the Ten Commandments and the Commandments of the Church, natural law, the obligations of each one’s state in life, the voice of our rightly formed conscience and in the signs of the times. In all of these manifestations we find the just will of God the Father, full of wisdom and tenderness, guiding us along the path of his loving, eternal designs. Loving God and fulfilling his will are one and the same.

144 Knowing that God is his Father, a Christian embraces the divine will. He welcomes it with love, not as something foreign imposed on him from without but as an invitation to live in communion with God. We need to know God and his love intimately (see conviction n. 1) so as not to fear his will and welcome it with total trust and gratitude no matter what the cost, leaving aside any other interest, hankering or personal desire. The person who is well grounded in and firmly follows God’s will can be truly happy even now in this life because he has made God’s love the focus of his life.

## MY PASSION IS CHRIST

145 At the beginning of creation, man spontaneously lived in intimate communion with God. Adam and Eve knew the love God had for them and responded to this love by fulfilling his holy will. But then, tempted by the evil one, they disobeyed. By severing their communion with God through sin, they opened the door to evil and death, and above all, they lost their filial and trusting relationship with their Creator.

146 It was impossible for men to rebuild their intimacy and friendship with God. They were lost. Only God could overcome sin and evil, offering once again his grace, winning back the love of fallen man's heart by means of his divine mercy. All of this he brought about through the Incarnation, Passion, Death and Resurrection of his only Son. Thus, Christ the Redeemer presents himself as the only path to that communion with God for which the human being so deeply longs. Intimate friendship with Christ is the door which again gives us access to the exchange of love for which we have been created. Through his filial obedience, Christ overcomes sin and reestablishes man's communion with God. Furthermore, by his words and the example of his life Christ teaches us how to fulfill God's will, and he provides us the grace to do so.

147 Jesus Christ is not some distant historical figure, an inspiring ethical role model or a sentimental consolation for our times of difficulty. No! Christ is a real, living person. Christ is our brother and friend, our best friend who became man and died on the cross out of love to save every person. True God and true man, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. And the risen Christ remains alive and active in his Church. Through our baptism, the power of the Holy Spirit grafted us into Christ and made us partakers in his sonship. We are sons of God in the Son. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

148 Communion of life with Christ is what the Church calls the life of grace. The Christian ought not only to remain faithful to it by avoiding sin, but we must increase it by cooperating with the Sanctifying Spirit. How? By growing continually in our knowledge, love and imitation of Christ through prayer, the sacraments, and living in charity. Christ is, therefore, every Christian's ideal and source of life. We meet Christ in the Gospel, on the cross and above all in the Eucharist, where the Christian learns just how much God loves him and how he wants to be loved by men.

149 St. Paul provides us with the example of a genuine Christian. Christ was not an idea for him, not even a memory; he was a living experience —the experience of a personal encounter, full of love. The grace of discovering the love of Christ the Redeemer in Damascus was for Paul the beginning of a new life in Christ. He found himself captivated by Christ's love, "He loved me and gave himself up for me". From then on, Christ was the only strength, the only passion of love that gave him courage and sustained him in his struggles, sufferings and dedication to his mission. So, he was able to say, "My life is Christ" and "If I live, it is no longer I, but Christ who lives in me". Faithful until death, he dedicated himself to loving and proclaiming Christ with all the passion of his heart.

## BECAUSE I LOVE CHRIST, I FULFILL MY MISSION IN THE CHURCH

150 The following core convictions stem from this passion for Christ and his Kingdom, because love requires us to orient our entire lives toward imitating the One we love, loving what he loves and wanting what he wants. We have a share in his mission as glorifier of the Father and savior of souls, which demands that we do everything in our power to leave a clear mark of God's love in our lives.

151 Christ loves his Church "and handed himself over for her". In order to fulfill his Father's design to save all mankind from sin, Christ established a new people of God, which is the Church. The Church, founded on the rock of Peter and guided by the apostles and their successors, is the universal sacrament of salvation. In her and through her Christ continues to gather together into one body all mankind scattered by sin. The Church is his Mystical Body, the Kingdom of God made present in human history, the Mother who engenders us for eternal life.

152 Through the Church and in the Church we receive our faith in Christ, the sacraments that give us grace, and the fullness of truth about God and his plans for salvation. Christ gives himself to us by means of the Church. Consequently, if we don't passionately love the Church, love and obey the Pope with the bishops that Christ has put there to guide her, and faithfully adhere to the doctrine she transmits to us, we do not love Christ himself.

153 The most authentic expression of our love for Christ and his Church is our faithful and active cooperation in the

mission of living and proclaiming the gospel. That is to say, we show that we love the Church by cooperating with the bishops and the rest of the faithful in the enormous task of bringing all men to know Christ, receive his divine life and attain salvation. Once we understand by faith that the salvation of a single soul is worth Christ's blood poured out on the cross, the fire of love that burns in the bosom of the Church begins to burn in our soul too, and it moves us to write, preach and teach Christ. Every Christian shares in the Church's mission and has his own role to play in it by the fact that he was incorporated into Christ through baptism.

154 Therefore, the Regnum Christi member places every available means—his person, time, all his potential—at the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church, contributing the riches of Regnum Christi's specific charism. He seeks to know, love and nobly defend the Church.

#### BECAUSE I LOVE CHRIST, I CONTRIBUTE TO A CIVILIZATION OF CHRISTIAN JUSTICE AND LOVE

155 The Christian who loves the Church feels as she does the urgency of fulfilling Christ's command: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." A fire burns in his breast. It is the passion to proclaim Christ, make his redeeming love known to everyone, convince them of the transforming power of the gospel, and transmit to them the same passion that burns in his heart. Being a good Christian is not enough for him. He is an apostle committed to the never-completed task of evangelization.

156 This evangelization is the proclamation of the salvation Jesus Christ brought us: freedom from sin and death, and thus freedom from the many types of slavery that keep mankind distant from God, hostile towards his neighbor and interiorly divided. It is a salvation that seeks to redeem and elevate the entire person, in every facet of his personality and being, —corporal and spiritual, individual and social. And it is a salvation destined for all people, without distinction of race, gender, nationality, social or cultural condition.

157 If you love Christ you not only love the Church but you also share in the love that Christ and the Church have for every person. The Christian salvation that the Church proclaims aims to transform people interiorly and have them establish the necessary conditions for harmony among all. By the same token, for a Regnum Christi member the commitment to evangelize includes the commitment to establish the civilization of Christian justice and charity. We give ourselves to this task by proclaiming verbally the Gospel of Jesus Christ, exercising fraternal charity in our daily life, and transforming our immediate circle and society through our apostolic activity.

158 A Christian loves Christ in his neighbor and he loves his neighbor out of love for Christ. An apostle is more than a mere do-gooder. We do apostolate in the spirit of Christian charity, seeking to save the human person in all his dimensions and providing for him "the very thing the suffering person—any person—needs: namely, loving personal concern" (Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Deus caritas est*, n. 28,b). A Regnum Christi member is driven and guided by supernatural love, the same love with which Christ loves us and gave himself up for our salvation.

#### BECAUSE I LOVE CHRIST, I LOVINGLY EMBRACE MY CALLING TO REGNUM CHRISTI

159 The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, lives and acts under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit enlightens the Pope and the bishops in their task of guiding God's people, and pours out countless gifts and charisms throughout history. Thus, the Spirit has raised up religious communities and ecclesial movements which, in communion with their shepherds, enrich the life of the Church and are called to cooperate, each according to its specific charism, in the one mission of evangelization.

160 This constant emergence of movements and communities in the bosom of the Church is an expression of God's untiring love for mankind, a love that constantly seeks and creates new ways to have redemption reach every person. Regnum Christi is one of these ways that have providentially emerged in the Church through the action of the Holy Spirit.

161 Those called by God to be part of the Movement find in it a concrete expression of God's love for their soul and a means to respond to this love. Aware that their baptism makes them part of the Church, they cooperate with her shepherds and the rest of the faithful in the Church's evangelizing mission, by faithfully living our charism of charity and transmitting it humbly and with conviction.

162 Not through any human merit but by God's gift and choice, it was our founder's role to be the authentic instrument to convey to us the charism of Regnum Christi. The members of the Movement are called to guard, live and share this gift from the Lord, in service to the Church and people. Since every gift of Christ's Spirit is given in order to build up the Church, each member is called to make it available to the greatest number of people, becoming thus a sower of love.

163 The vocation to Regnum Christi is a call from God, a loving initiative born in his divine heart and in his inscrutable plan of salvation. If you value this vocation as an invitation and a very personal gift from Christ you will respond with faithful love and authentic freedom, above and beyond your emotional swings and the ups and downs of life.

#### MY LIFE IS SHORT; MY DESTINATION, ETERNITY

164 We have but one life and one chance to live it. God gives each one of us a fixed, short, very short amount of time in which to love him by becoming like Christ and fulfilling our mission in the Church.

165 Given the brevity of life, Christians must feel the urgency of making the most of the time God gives us. Therefore, a member of the Movement has no room for attitudes of indolence, idleness or sloth. There is no room either for sterile inactivity. Like St. Paul, we forget what we have left behind and strain forward, running to the finish line so as to win the reward to which God calls us from on high.

166 Therefore, we feel the urgency of working in the most effective way to help as many people as possible encounter Christ and share in his divine life. Building up Christ's Kingdom means pouring out our life minute by minute, without holding anything back, out of love for Christ and others.

167 Time slips by and as it does, the eternal fate of souls is at stake. For the true apostle, the fleeting history of every human life is the stage on which a constant struggle between good and evil, truth and lies, love and selfishness is played out. Thus there is no time to waste when it is a question of securing every person's eternal destiny in goodness, truth and love.

#### MARY MY MOTHER ACCOMPANIES, INSPIRES AND UPHOLDS ME

168 The Blessed Virgin Mary is Christ's mother. Her mystery is inseparable from the mystery of her Son and the Church. Mary is the mother of all. Likewise, Mary is the mother of every vocation. At the foot of the cross she was given as mother to all people, and this gift which issues from the very heart of Jesus contains every secret for fidelity and eternal joy. From that moment, no Christian can feel lonely, unprotected or forsaken. Mary accompanies us and encourages us with her support and motherly warmth. We have recourse to her in times of danger, she strengthens us in our difficulties and she encourages us with the simplicity and majesty of her witness. She always comes to our aid with her powerful intercession.

169 The greatest way to show our love and gratitude to Mary consists in our joyful and trusting effort to imitate her virtues, for a child shows his greater closeness to his mother by better resembling her in the way he thinks, wants and acts.

170 In our life and apostolate there is the temptation to trust too much in our own strength and too little in God's grace. The truth is, without him we can achieve nothing substantial and lasting for Christ and the Church. We always need God's help and light in order to live our vocation.

171 Mary's loving and unconditional yes to God's grace is the beacon that guides the life of a Christian in his daily journey towards the eternal goal. She teaches us that joined to God's grace we can overcome any difficulty. Mary, full of grace, is the most perfect model of the new life in Christ. By her example and powerful intercession, she forever reminds us of the primacy of grace in the Christian life.

172 An apostle of Jesus Christ can rely on Mary as he undertakes any personal or apostolic project, as he faces the struggles of life or overcomes the obstacles that hinder him on the road to holiness. Mary inspires, encourages and effectively helps her children: with her, everything is possible.

## CHAPTER IV

### HIGHLY RECOMMENDED VIRTUES

173 True love for Christ entails imitating the virtues he lived to the highest degree. Therefore, the Movement proposes to its members certain Christian virtues that are particularly necessary, to lead them to love Christ, follow him and fulfill their vocation and mission in the Church. The road is narrow and demanding, as Christ himself warned us, but it is also full of light and joy since it leads us to live in the truth of who we are, and it is the road to our natural and supernatural maturity.

### HUMILITY

174 Rarely does Christ refer to himself as the model of a virtue, yet he did not hesitate to offer himself as an example of humility: “Learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart” (Mt. 11:29). St. Paul, for his part, summarizing the mystery of Christ writes, “Have among you the same attitude as Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.” Christ’s example sheds light on this virtue and gives it meaning and importance, rescuing it from all distortion.

175 Humility is the virtue by which the human person accepts the truth about himself in his dealings with God, with others and with himself. It is the true spiritual poverty that leads you to recognize the reality of being a creature: you are radically dependent on God in your being and actions, you received everything from your Creator’s love and, injured by sin, you are in need of mercy and redemption.

176 Humility is the opposite to pride, an inclination deeply rooted in man’s heart since original sin. Pride has many manifestations, at times quite subtle, such as arrogance, vanity, self-sufficiency, touchiness and rebelliousness.

177 The sin of pride, being contrary to truth and justice, creates a gulf between man and God. According to an infallible law of his disposition, God rejects the proud and reveals himself to the humble. The proud person can neither be God’s friend nor united to him. God and the proud soul don’t mix, like water and oil or night and day.

178 Pride also creates a sharp division between man and his neighbor. The proud person cannot live in harmony or communion with others; he is incapable of serving them, cooperating with them, recognizing their achievements, understanding their limitations and weaknesses, or forgiving their mistakes. No one is as isolated as the proud person. Pride, the bitter fruit of egotism, is a radical enemy of charity.

179 All progress in our knowledge and experience of God is related to humility. The more humble you are, the more you can be filled with God and share in his divine life, for this is what genuine holiness is. Only the humble can be saints.

180 A person that experiences God in prayer will not easily be prey to pride. So, to cultivate humility it is important to contemplate God frequently in prayer and meditate on his divine attributes: his perfection, infinite greatness, omnipotence, etc. On the other hand, the Gospel records the image of Christ permanently engaged in giving himself to others. Christ’s every act when he walked this earth, and now his silent presence in the Eucharist are a magnificent school of humility.

181 As regards human relations, the humble person wears the badge of a Christian by serving others, after the example of Christ who did not come to be served but to serve. He does not vainly chase after honor, esteem or recognition by others; instead, he gives himself selflessly to his neighbor, seeking his genuine good, doing what he can to win him the respect of others, and serving him with true love.

182 The humble person is able to look at himself with truth and serenity in order to recognize the gifts he has received from God and also his personal limitations and misery. In this regard, regular self-examination in God's light is a very effective means to grow in humility.

183 Authentic Christian humility does not create inferior beings nor does it lessen your dedication to personal, professional or social responsibilities. The humble person in all simplicity recognizes and is grateful for his achievements and talents, knowing that they are gifts from God, and he strives to increase and develop them, knowing that he will have to give an account of them at the end of his life.

184 In harmony with this genuine gospel spirit, Regnum Christi strives to instill in its members the "useless servants" mindset (see Lk. 17:10): serve always, serve without expecting anything in return, avoid any presumption. Let all your works and actions bear the seal of discretion, applying the principle, "speak little and do much".

## CHASTITY

185 Every Christian is to live chastely according to his state and condition in life, following the commandments of God's law and Christ's teachings, "Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8). Chastity is to be seen in the framework of our love for God and for our neighbor.

186 When we understand it correctly, this virtue leads us to give sexuality its proper value, within the context of the dignity of the human person and God's plan for every human being.

187 In order to live out the ideal of chastity in their own state in life, the members of the Movement apply the gospel precept of prayer and watchfulness (see Mt. 26:41). They approach the Lord, source of all grace and giver of all gifts, in a filial spirit. They strengthen their souls with the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. They also apply the natural means recommended by Christian asceticism, such as physical and mental rest, sports, the contemplation of nature, the good use of time and avoiding idleness.

188 Given the strong inclinations of our nature wounded by sin and the constant stimulation around us, we have to keep careful and diligent watch so as to order our instinctive drives according to God's will, be decisive in avoiding the occasions of sin, and control our internal and external senses in all serenity and sincerity. It is likewise important to pay attention to our conduct, the movies and shows we go to and our readings, realizing that a person's maturity does not consist in his ability to grant himself his every desire, but rather in his personal control and his consistency with his convictions.

189 As an aid toward living the virtue of chastity, we should nourish a sincere appreciation and love for this virtue and also for consecrated virginity, seeing in them values that enrich the human person, free us from the selfish pursuit of pleasure and make it easier to acquire the rest of the Christian virtues.

190 The human body is a work of God and a temple of the Holy Spirit. The Christian should bestow on it all the care and respect it deserves by exercising Christian modesty. Do not despise it by thinking of it as something sinful, nor make an idol of it by pursuing its development, beauty or exposure with a devotion that replaces the worship of God. A concrete expression of our sense of the value and dignity of our body is the way we dress. Depending on the particular circumstances of where we are and what we are doing, we should combine distinction and modesty with simplicity and good taste in our choice of clothing, independently of the changing fashions that are frequently dictated by what is most comfortable and appealing to the senses.

191 In regulating their sexuality and procreative faculties, Christians must act according to their rightly formed conscience, conforming to God's law, proclaimed and interpreted by the legitimate Magisterium of the Church.

They should acquire the necessary formation and conviction in order to explain Catholic doctrine and defend it in the face of errors that are all too common.

192 Aware of their responsibility in the integral education of their children, parents must provide them with a balanced, serene, clear and suitable education for love. This should be enlightened by faith so that with the help of God's grace and their own personal effort their children will practice the virtue of chastity, channeling their sexual tendencies, respecting and helping others to live this beautiful virtue.

#### POVERTY

193 Gospel poverty is inspired in Christ's example and teaching, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3). When you contemplate Christ's life, his freedom of spirit is obvious. Christ, also as a man, enjoyed a total interior freedom because in his heart there was only one Lord, the Father, and he did not become attached to any creature. Christ became poor to enrich us with this poverty and to teach us that our true food is fulfilling the Father's will.

194 Similarly, everyone is called to foster true Christian poverty by seeking the detachment of our heart from creatures, rejecting all ambition, avarice or vain ostentation, and recognizing that we are pilgrims on the road to the place where we will possess God for all eternity. If this interior detachment is to be genuine we must exercise a certain degree of material detachment, which each one has to discern by listening to his conscience and the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. In this, the advice of a spiritual director can be of valuable help.

195 Poverty of spirit is an essential condition for the growth of the human person and the development of a host of virtues. It maintains our soul open to God and our neighbor; it creates a spiritual climate favorable to interior docility, prayer, dialogue and cooperation; it nurtures hope; it begets justice and mercy; it increases love and it brings us serenity, peace and freedom of spirit.

196 Christian poverty entails an eminently positive view of creatures; it does not despise them, but rather it recognizes their true worth. They are means that God places at our disposal to achieve the essential goals of life, they make more bearable our passage through the world toward eternity, and they are talents that we must make bear fruit. While he did not set his heart on the goods of this world, Christ himself did not despise them either. When there was occasion to, he used them with the same freedom of spirit with which at other times he did without them.

197 Material goods, even those obtained as a result of our personal work, are a gift from God and we should receive them with a thankful spirit. We should use them with moderation, responsibility and an awareness of the demands of Christian justice and charity.

198 Every Christian as a member of human society is subject to the common law of work, with the duty of contributing his effort to build up and improve the world. Therefore, a Regnum Christi member must be as effective and competent as possible in the way he carries out the duties of his profession or employment, obtaining what he needs for his personal and family life and contributing his resources and talents to the common good and the construction of a civilization more in accord with God's plan. Furthermore, those to whom God has granted more resources have the particular responsibility of making them bear fruit intelligently, honestly and coherently — acknowledging that this wealth has a social function since it makes it possible to create jobs and contribute to the welfare of society.

199 Christian poverty involves also an habitual attitude of generosity and personal detachment so as to alleviate the misery and hardship of others, accompanying our material help with our sincere esteem, respect and understanding. The works of apostolate of the Movement, as also many parishes, dioceses and Christian institutions, have organized mechanisms to properly channel such aid; it is very good to take advantage of these when making your own contributions.

200 Time has a value all its own among the many talents God gives man. For every human person, time and the



flow of his own life are one and the same. Time is journey and opportunity; time is the occasion of grace. Being essentially something passing, it is relentless in its flow. Time is the chance we have to fulfill our mission. If you want to use it well you have to take upon yourself the means that will help you work in a demanding, methodical and organized manner, working from a program you set for yourself based on a concrete plan, guide, and calendar. The apostle who feels the urgency of the mission to proclaim Christ must master the art of work. This is the art of being effective, seeing things through, gaining time and doing more in less time, never ever acquiescing and allowing your talents and potential to be spent fruitlessly day after day because you improvise, are lazy, superficial or disorganized.

201 Filial and utter trust in God's providence is a beautiful and enlightening teaching of Christ. There is a natural tendency in the human person that leads him to place his trust in himself, his talents and achievements, or in the material goods he amasses, forgetting that his one, true security is God himself. It is therefore necessary to reject an excessive trust in passing things or the inordinate concern for storing up material wealth, knowing for certain that man will never be without God's help in his true needs.

202 As a concrete expression of this spiritual poverty, Regnum Christi recommends to its members that they maintain in their workplace the order, dignity and conditions required by their social and professional responsibilities, and that their homes be characterized by their good taste, simplicity and restraint, seeking to avoid the superfluous.

#### CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE

203 Obedience was one of the virtues Christ exercised to a heroic degree as he carried out his redeeming mission. He lived this virtue as an answer to man's disobedience, which he came to redeem. His openness and docility to his Father's will formed the framework of his life from the first instant of his Incarnation until the supreme hour in which he commended his spirit into the Father's hands as he died on the cross. The disciples of Christ are called to take up in their heart this same attitude of obedience and docility to God, an attitude steeped in faith and seeking to express itself in concrete actions.

204 When speaking of obedience of faith, we must take this word in the full Catholic sense: the assent of the intellect to divine, revealed truth just as it is preserved and transmitted by the Church. By this assent the Christian, under the promptings of grace and by reason of God's authority and absolute truthfulness, believes in God himself and all that God has revealed. This is the source from which spring the certainties and convictions that guide the Christian's moral conduct, in harmony with God's will. In this sense, the obedience of faith constitutes the first rung in Christian obedience.

205 The person who wants to live the gospel ideal of obedience seeks to discover and then consciously and lovingly fulfill God's will, expressed above all in the natural law, the commandments of God and the duties of his state in life. Likewise, he learns to discover and interpret the divine will in the favorable or adverse circumstances of life, convinced that all things work for good for those who love God. This obedience to the Lord must be like Christ's: prompt, joyful, motivated by faith and if necessary, heroic.

206 As a central element in their Christian obedience, Regnum Christi members recognize the Holy Father as the overall superior of the Movement and they submit to his authority with filial reverence and love, striving to fulfill not only his orders but also his desires. We also extend this respectful and cordial obedience to the bishops of the dioceses and their priests, as members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the shepherds of each local Church.

207 By reason of their vocation to Regnum Christi, its members are invited to readily embrace our own charism, to observe its principles and guidelines, identify with its methodology and particular style of formation and apostolate, and to adhere in heart and mind to the directives and priorities that the Movement offers them through its directors.

208 Lastly, and also as a trait of Christian obedience, the members of the Movement should acknowledge the important contribution of their Christian witness and their cooperation toward the proper functioning of society, and

be noted for their respect and observance of the laws and legitimate decisions of the civil authorities, whose charge it is to regulate the life of society and secure the common good.

## CHAPTER V

### MEANS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

209 All growth in holiness and every apostolic achievement is directly linked to God's grace and God's: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build" (Ps 127:1). Therefore, the Movement invites its members to foster a constant and fervent union with God, above all by means of prayer, the worthy reception of the sacraments and the loving fulfillment of God's will. This effort forms the context of all the means to grow and persevere that Regnum Christi recommends to its members.

210 These are means by which we grow and persevere in the Christian life and our specific vocation within Regnum Christi, **since** they help us to develop and mature our interior life by exercising faith, hope and love. They are also an incentive for the members to grow as persons and carry out with greater perfection and success their mission in their families, their professional world and as members of the Church and society.

211 The means the Movement recommends are by no means something strange or extra to a normal Christian life. Rather, they are traditional expressions of a healthy spiritual life and the authentic living of Christianity. They are a form of entering into contact with and nourishing our souls on the very sources of Christian life, namely, the Word of God, prayer and the sacraments.

212 Liturgical and sacramental life are among the most important of the means for spiritual growth. "The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the font from which all her power flows." Aware of the liturgy's value, all the members of the Movement should actively and fervently participate in it so that it becomes the main nourishment of their Christian life and their apostolic zeal. In communion of faith with the life of the Church, they should participate at their own parish in the celebration of the mysteries of redemption according to the different liturgical seasons, and especially Sunday Mass.

213 The Movement suggests to its members that when they apply these spiritual means they choose the time, place and personal attitude that will most help their personal relationship with God, even if it takes effort, foresight and at times also courage. This does not exclude taking a break during work or house chores, or taking advantage of a trip or a class-break to raise their heart to God using one or another of these spiritual means, but as a rule it is best to set aside the choicest times of day for them, above all to show God our loving homage to him.

214 One of the most fruitful and consoling habits for the soul is to cultivate the presence of God throughout the day. Though our mind might need to be busy with many tasks, our heart maintains as its fundamental orientation our desire to please God at all times and to remain in his presence. This same habit allows you to discover easily and promptly God's loving hand in every circumstance, and to maintain great peace and serenity amid any difficulty or affliction. This also helps us to perceive Christ alive and close to us, behind the face of every person, and to love him in a concrete and real manner through some charitable attitude or action.

215 In order for our spiritual life to be solid, it must be grounded in a deep and robust faith, and an attitude of filial love, trust and adoration of God. Since feelings and emotions are elements of our human nature, they may contribute to a more lively and heartfelt prayer, but they are not the determining factor of a good spiritual life. In contrast, we get a good sense of the authenticity of our spiritual life by checking to see up to what point it translates into action, resulting in concrete attitudes and behavior, especially with regards to the way we accept and generously fulfill God's will.

216 No act of worshipping God is strictly private. True prayer is an act of communion in faith and love with the entire Church. Consequently, even though frequently a member might have to apply these spiritual means on his own,

whenever possible he will try to fulfill some of them together with others, either in his home, at his parish, in some center of the Movement or any other place suitable for prayer.

217 If our practice of each of these means for spiritual growth is to bear fruit, we must learn to live them according to the mind of the Church and the Movement, moved by love, 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 agreement with your spiritual director, until you form a firm habit of interior life. In other words, new members are not asked to live all the means of growth and perseverance right from the start, but rather each one works out with their spiritual director what is most advisable given their own possibilities. Spiritual directors need to discern what is best for each one, starting from where they are at, and helping them to grow and progress, and reach the height to which God is calling them. The following are the means that the Movement ordinarily suggests for its members to grow spiritually:

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- On rising: morning offering of your day to God.
- Ten or fifteen minutes of personal meditation.
- Visit to Christ in the Eucharist, or spiritual communion, or Eucharistic Celebration and Communion if possible.
- Angelus and a mystery of the rosary in honor of the Blessed Virgin
- Ten-minute gospel reflection except when there is a homily during Mass, or the team does the Eucharistic hour together.
- Our Father, Hail Mary and Creed before going to bed, with a brief examination of conscience.

B.:

- Eucharistic Hour of adoration and reparation, and a sacrifice or prayer for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

C.Regular use of the sacrament of reconciliation.

D.: evening or morning retreat, which may take the place of the Encounter with Christ for that week.

E.: triduum of renewal or spiritual exercises; renewal of your commitment to God in the Movement.

## MORNING OFFERING

218 For a Christian, offering up our actions to God in union with Christ is a means to become holy that is both simple and motivating. Therefore, Regnum Christi recommends that its members begin their day by raising their hearts to God to offer him the entire day with all its events —its joys and pains, work and rest, prayer and camaraderie — thus making it a pleasing and holy offering in God's eyes.

219 The Movement's morning prayers have the purpose of helping its members set their hearts and minds in tune with the heart of the Church, joining her in a single voice that is lifted up to the Father to offer him the new day.

## MEDITATION

220 The meditation is a personal dialogue with God in an atmosphere of faith and love. It enlightens and strengthens in our heart and soul our decision to identify ourselves with the *raison d'être* of our life —God's most holy will. It is a renewal in and from God that embraces our standards, affections, motivations and personal decisions. Prayer is oxygen for our soul.

221 Many people turn to God through spontaneous prayer, at times motivated by difficulties or suffering, or simply because they want to raise their hearts to God as they begin or end their day. Without in any way belittling the very high value of this type of prayer, the Movement also invites its members to exercise a methodical, assiduous and programmed type of prayer, dedicating themselves to it generously and constantly.

222 Prayer presupposes the underlying dispositions of a pure intention and our complete trust in God. In contrast with a certain short term, utilitarian mentality, a person who prays with true love does not seek primarily an immediate and tangible favor or benefit. The fundamental goal of prayer is to offer God the homage of our faith and love. Spiritual or material needs are legitimate reasons for praying, as Christ himself taught us; yet, at the same time, if we pray with faith and love we will leave what we think we need in God's all-wise hands, as the Blessed Virgin taught us at the wedding feast in Cana —she let her Son know about the need and left it up to him to decide the best course of action.

223 One of the first requirements for prayer is recollection, which is the ability of the spirit to enter into itself, create an atmosphere of silence and shake off the swirl of ideas, sensations and external stimuli that at times engulfs our life. We need recollection in order to discover and foster the presence of God at every moment of our life, and to renew the deeper meaning of our activities and the events of our life.

224 For prayer to be deep and transforming, our whole person has to participate in it, all we are and our circumstances —our mind, will, affections, imagination, sentiments, problems, weaknesses, desires and concerns— so that this time of contact with God will be an expression of our life and a source of renewal, direction and correction coming from God.

225 As you begin your meditation, revive your faith in the action of the Holy Spirit, remembering that he is “Sweet Guest of the soul” and without him we can achieve nothing firm or lasting. Next, we should renew our awareness of God's presence, reflecting on what we are about to do and with whom we are about to speak. Then, we renew the fundamental attitudes of faith, hope, love for God, thanksgiving and humility in his presence. Another element of these preambles is to place our meditation under the Blessed Virgin's maternal care, asking her to accompany and sustain this important act of our day with her maternal intercession. Finally, in all trust we should place before God the spiritual grace we wish to obtain as fruit of our meditation.

226 You may use the discursive/affective method to do your meditation. This means applying our mind to examine the content of an idea or principle in order to strike up a loving and fruitful dialogue with God. It is not a purely intellectual exercise; it is a heartfelt reflection illuminated by faith and love on the mystery of your own life in God's eyes. This deeper understanding leads us to an experience of God's love and to an act of the will by which we unite our soul to God, express our love for him, thank him for his benefits, ask him for help, recognize our position as sinful creatures and abandon ourselves trustingly to him. This culminates in the conversion of our heart or our decision to live henceforth in accordance with the truth we have contemplated in the light of God.

227 You may also use the contemplative method. This means contemplating a mystery or an event in the life of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, or salvation history —looking at the people, listening to their words, considering their actions— and its implications for your own life, until you reach the affections and movements of your will that will bring you to a greater adherence to God.

228 In prayer, reflecting or contemplating are not enough. Meditation, as we said, is more than anything a dialogue with God. Therefore it is necessary to develop a heart-to-Heart relationship, listening to God in the depth of our soul and speaking freely to him a true conversation full of faith and love. This is the meaning and purpose of the exchanges or dialogues that we should weave into the discursive or contemplative exercise throughout our prayer.

229 Doing the meditation well is a grace from God, but it also requires personal effort. We need to put effort into it, dedicate ourselves earnestly and fully to it, and set aside whatever distraction, sleepiness or moods might hinder our relationship with God.

230 Try to do your meditation at the beginning of the day if you can, so that it will set the focus of your whole day.

231 One of the simplest and most effective practices that keeps us habitually in God's presence is praying brief one-phrase prayers, raising our mind to God. These brief prayers are like spontaneous throbs of our soul which, coupled with our regular and longer prayer-times, keep the fire of the interior life ablaze in us.

## EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AND COMMUNION

232 The Eucharistic sacrifice is the source and the pinnacle of the entire Christian life: “sacrament of piety, sign of unity, bond of charity, paschal banquet in which we receive Christ as our food, grace fills our hearts and we receive a pledge of the glory to come”. Therefore, the Movement recommends to its members, if they are able, that they consciously, fervently and actively participate in the Eucharistic Celebration every day, and receive holy Communion with a purified and thankful heart.

233 “The Eucharist is always the hour of love.” The faithful should approach the Eucharistic celebration with the awareness that it is the central moment of their day, the high point to which every activity tends, and the wellspring of all power to sanctify and do apostolate.

234 To participate deeply and actively in the Eucharistic Celebration, we have to treasure and live all the rites of the celebration, entering into their meaning and applying the interior dispositions of repentance, supplication, praise and thanksgiving.

A. The opening and penitential rites introduce the celebration. We have to apply our faith, and with a contrite and grateful heart prepare ourselves to participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice, remembering that we are debtors giving thanks, beggars seeking help, sinners offering reparation with Christ, redeemed creatures adoring the Lord, and apostles praying for the salvation of mankind.

B. During the Liturgy of the Word, the bread of Sacred Scripture is offered to the faithful to enlighten our minds and nourish our hearts with the knowledge and light of Christ. Following the example of Mary who kept and meditated in her heart the word revealed to her by the Lord, we should participate in the Liturgy of the Word with dispositions of meditative recollection, attention and openness to the action of the Holy Spirit.

C. The offertory is an especially meaningful moment since it is the time to offer ourselves to the Father in union with Christ and the entire Church, in an attitude of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and supplication. We also place our entire lives, especially all our sacrifices and toil, on the priest’s paten so that they can be transformed, together with Christ, into a pleasing offering to the Father.

D. The consecration is the central moment of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Christ in person, Priest, Victim and Altar, offers his Body and Blood for the glory of the Father and the salvation of all, recalling and reliving the same sacrifice of the Last Supper and Calvary. For the soul that draws close to these mysteries with true faith, it is a moment of awe, adoration and gratitude; an opportunity to identify ourselves with Christ’s sentiments in his immolation, and to unite ourselves with the universal prayer of the Church as she prays for herself, the Pope, bishops, the faithful living and dead, and for those participating in the celebration.

E. The Eucharistic prayer culminates with the doxology (“*Through Him, with Him, in Him...*”). Here, we renew our conviction that only through Christ do we render to the Father the glory and honor he is owed. The “*Amen*” of the faithful is particularly meaningful since it implies the decision to identify themselves with Christ for the glory of the Father, and to join themselves to his sacrifice by making up in themselves what is lacking in the passion of Christ for his Body which is the Church.

F. Communion signifies and brings about the most intimate union with Christ possible in this world. As we receive Christ truly and really present in the host, we should do so with attitudes of living faith, charity, humility, gratitude and full awareness of his infinite love, —saying “yes” to his sacrifice, purifying our soul and imploring the necessary strength to be faithful to the gospel. Sacramental Communion also signifies and brings about the unity of all believers in Christ, making them one single body in him.

G. Thanksgiving after Communion is an especially suitable time to thank Christ for the gift of his Body and his presence in the Eucharist, to present to him our own unworthiness in order to obtain special graces from him, and to pray for the intentions closest to our heart.

235 When the sacrifice of the Eucharist ends, ours begins. As we leave the Eucharistic Celebration we should make

the firm resolution to give continuity to Christ's sacrifice especially by fulfilling God's will, dedicating ourselves unreservedly to the extension of his Kingdom among people, and building up the Church by living charity.

#### THE ANGELUS

236 Members of the Movement make sure to lift up their heart to Mary in the morning, at midday and in the evening by praying the Angelus, or the Regina Coeli during the Easter season.

237 These prayers provide an opportunity to unite ourselves to Mary with a filial heart, recall her privileges and her greatness, invoke her protection and aid, admire her embrace of God's will, and renew our decision to imitate her most distinctive virtues.

#### ROSARY

238 In the Movement, we honor the Blessed Virgin in a special way by praying the holy Rosary, following a long tradition of the Church and the constant exhortations of the popes.

239 In reciting the Rosary we contemplate with love, recollection and reflection the principal mysteries of Christ's life from his virginal Conception, through his public life up to his Passion, Death and Resurrection. We view them through the heart of the one who accompanied him most closely. "Reciting the Rosary is actually *contemplating with Mary the face of Christ.*"

240 As we recite the Rosary, we combine our contemplation of the mysteries with a grateful and filial attitude, with our praise as we recite the *Hail Mary*, our adoration in the *Glory be*, our admiration and petition in the *Litany*, all the time giving meaning to the prayers as we pray from our heart. Thus we make the entire prayer overflow with love and praise of Christ, and cordial homage to his beloved Mother.

241 Each member may place before Mary the personal, family or apostolic intentions closest to his heart, remembering that those who place their trust in her will never be forsaken.

#### GOSPEL REFLECTION

242 St. Jerome says, "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." For this reason, the Movement urges its members to grow in the sublime knowledge of Christ by reading and meditating upon the word of God, especially the Gospels.

243 In order for your gospel reading and reflection to become solid nourishment for your life, you have to explore the text deeply and savor it interiorly, keeping your heart open to the lights of the Holy Spirit in an atmosphere of peace and serenity.

#### VISIT TO JESUS CHRIST PRESENT IN THE EUCHARIST

244 Visiting the tabernacle means going to speak from your heart with Christ, your unconditional friend who is faithful to his promise. With his loving presence, he walks with each of us in our earthly pilgrimage. In those intimate moments before the Eucharist, Christ, full of grace and truth, corrects our behavior, forms our character, nourishes virtue, consoles the afflicted, strengthens the weak, invites those who draw near to him to imitate him, and he fills us with graces to increase and sanctify his Mystical Body.

245 The tabernacle has to be the point of reference for the mind and heart of every Regnum Christi member, the privileged place to encounter Christ. Our universal and considerate charity and our esprit de corps are a practical consequences that have their source here. These visits are also the opportunity to place before Christ our desires, pain, regrets, sufferings and concerns, and to receive light, strength and consolation from his Heart.

246 A means that is always available to renew our faith, trust and love, is our union with Christ through spiritual communions spread throughout the day in the form of short conversations with him. Our soul emerges from this habitual contact with Christ consoled and strengthened to continue the day with joy and dedication.

#### DAILY EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

247 The balance or daily examination of conscience is a sincere and trusting encounter with God and oneself. Its focuses on our personal life before God, and its purpose is to grow every day in our fidelity to God's will, especially as regards the way we live love.

248 The daily balance helps us to correct, confirm or enrich our attitudes, decisions and personal behavior so that they will always be in line with a life that seeks its total fulfillment in love for God and our neighbor. Once you become used to examining your conscience, as you look at the various options before you and those things that tug at you, you can distinguish those that will help you to achieve your fundamental option for love from those that will head you off or distract you from it. Hence, the daily balance produces mature and coherent people on the constant ascent toward maturity in their love.

249 The daily balance is above all a prayer. You begin it invoking the help of the Holy Spirit and placing yourself in God's presence. Next, we thank God for the graces and benefits received throughout the day. We then go on to examine the positives and negatives of the day, but keeping in mind that what is most important is our trusting and loving dialogue with God. Therefore, it is not about making a list of faults or shortcomings, but rather about encountering the Lord, with his love and mercy. We end the balance by thanking God for any progress, humbly admitting our failures, imploring forgiveness and formulating a resolution that will help us continue our journey without discouragement.

#### NIGHT PRAYERS

250 The day begins in God and should end in God. At day's end, the Movement invites its members to lift up their heart and mind to God and the Blessed Virgin by praying an Our Father and a Hail Mary, and to renew their profession of faith by praying the Creed.

251 The Our Father places on our lips the prayer Christ taught us. Reciting it fervently and attentively allows us to penetrate and increase the interior attitudes that are behind the various petitions. The Hail Mary is like the good night any child says to his mother. It is a prayer to ask her for our final perseverance in God's grace and in our Catholic faith. The Creed recalls God's action in salvation history and in our own lives, and it strengthens in our heart the security and certainty of our faith.

252 These short prayers, saturated with adoration, thanksgiving, love and openness, renew our intention to live solely through and for God, offering him all that we are and have.

#### EUCCHARISTIC HOUR

253 Every week, preferably on Thursday, Regnum Christi members offer an hour of Eucharistic Adoration as a tribute of faith and love to Christ in the Eucharist, in remembrance of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and to accompany Christ in his supreme hour of agony in Gethsemane. The Eucharistic Hour is an opportunity to dialogue personally with Christ, to get to know and love him more intimately, to make reparation for our sins and those of mankind, to thank him for his testimony of self-giving and love, to offer our own struggles in favor of his Kingdom, and to pray for the needs of the Church, our own family, the world and ourselves.

254 Preferably, the Eucharistic Hour is to be done with others, in your parish church or at a center of the Movement.

It is good to do it with your own team at least once a month.

255 The outline to follow in the Eucharistic Hour is given in the *Regnum Christi* prayer book.

256 If ever it is not possible to set aside a specific time to do the Eucharistic Hour, you may offer Christ an hour of your work or study in the same spirit, interiorly recollecting yourself and if possible, keeping silence during this time.

## THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION OR PENANCE

257 In keeping with the Church's teaching, the Movement strongly recommends frequent confession to its members. This increases our self knowledge, makes us grow in Christian humility, helps us uproot vices, heightens the sensitivity of our conscience, strengthens our will and leads our soul to make a constant effort to perfect the grace of Baptism in itself and to identify more intimately with Christ. It also helps us to confirm the experience of our personal weakness, and it leads us to trust more fully in God's grace.

258 Sacramental confession is a living and personal encounter with Christ and the Church in an atmosphere of faith and simplicity, to ask forgiveness for our sins, recover or increase the life of grace and to turn back to the Father who is rich in mercy. This sacrament presupposes an attitude of deep appreciation for the life of grace. It supposes a willingness to work to make it grow so that it will produce the fruit of a Christian life and good works, and the desire to defend it as our greatest treasure and recover it quickly, with a contrite heart, if we ever lose it.

259 We must give the necessary time to the examination of conscience that precedes confession so as to be accurate in recalling our sins. Then, we must approach the sacrament with an ardent desire to purify and renew ourselves, and with filial love that generates contrition of heart and a purpose of amendment.

260 In the sacrament, we must declare our faults to the priest in an orderly, brief, and clear manner; accept his guidance with faith, and fulfill the penance in a spirit of reparation.

261 The sacrament concludes with the priest granting absolution and inviting us to give thanks and share the joy of the forgiveness we have received. The Christian reconciled with God knows that there is no room in his heart for bitterness or discouragement. We set out again with renewed confidence in God's grace and the firm decision to rely on the strength that comes from him.

## MONTHLY RETREAT

262 The monthly retreat is a break we take from our everyday activities to spend time in prayer and personal reflection in an environment of silence and serenity. The principal purpose of the retreat is to dialogue with God by hearing his Word, doing the guided meditations and examining our life.

263 The monthly retreat is an especially good time to confirm or reenter the path of spiritual progress, since it allows each member to compare his life with the gospel, assimilate and penetrate the fundamental truths of faith and morals, and check to see if his personal attitudes and behavior correspond to the fundamental principles and convictions of the Christian life.

264 This forges you as a human person, a Christian and an apostle. You bring to maturity in your heart your openness to God and your neighbor, you bring order to your psyche and emotions, you establish a scale of values, and you forge a sense of the supernatural and the eternal.

265 The sacraments are an especially important and valuable element in any spiritual retreat. If there are priests available, the participants usually are offered the opportunity to approach the sacrament of confession and the retreat ends with Holy Mass and Eucharistic Communion.



266 To make the retreat more fruitful, it has to be done in an atmosphere of external and internal recollection, setting aside all distraction and your ordinary concerns, and opening yourself to the lights and interior movements that God wishes to grant you individually through the preaching or your personal prayer.

#### TRIDUUM OF RENEWAL OR SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

267 Once a year, the members of the Movement should reserve a longer amount of time for their contact with God through a triduum of renewal or spiritual exercises. The triduum of renewal is three days long, while spiritual exercises may last as long as six to eight days. Spiritual exercises have a specific internal dynamism which, counting on the help of divine grace, leads the earnest retreatant to a strong spiritual experience of conversion and identification with Christ.

268 These days of particular dedication to the spirit are an excellent opportunity for members to experience a fruitful and refreshing encounter with God and themselves. During them, you mature and strengthen your faith, you gain a deeper knowledge of yourself, your Christian and apostolic spirit is reinforced, you serenely seek God's will and you bring the profound decisions of your life into line with the Gospel, or you reaffirm them in that line.

269 In going to the triduum of renewal you need to be strongly motivated by faith, ready to work and get the most from it, deeply wanting to encounter God in prayer and ready to use the silence and recollection to receive God's grace into your heart with the best possible dispositions.

270 It is also recommended that you use these days of peace and serenity to compare your life with God's will, acknowledging your personal weaknesses and limitations, and beginning anew the road to conversion and reconciliation with God. In this regard, if it is the prudent judgment of your confessor or spiritual director, the triduum or spiritual exercises are a good time to make a general confession of the sins committed during the past year.

271 As an additional fruit of the triduum of renewal or spiritual exercises, it is good to draw up or revise your program of spiritual life, and renew your incorporation promises during the concluding Eucharistic Celebration.

#### CHAPTER VI

##### HOLINESS IN DAILY LIFE.

##### GENERAL GUIDELINES

272 One of our first duties as Christians is to realize the treasure of our baptismal commitment, which implies God's call to perfect our love through holiness and dedication to the apostolate. Rather than a task, the Christian vocation is a gift which is intended to grow and develop through its own intrinsic power, until it reaches full maturity.

273 Holiness is the goal of Christian life, and at the same time its most beautiful and exciting reality. Beyond all pseudo-spiritualism, true holiness consists in our habitual union with God in the ordinary circumstances of life by participating in the life of grace and living his will generously and faithfully. Since his will is summed up in the precept of love, holiness is living in and for love.

274 Holiness is essentially one and the same for everyone, though the paths to holiness are many. As the Second Vatican Council teaches: "All the faithful, whatever their condition or state are individually called by the Lord to the perfection of holiness by which the Father himself is perfect."

275 The Movement invites all its members to strive to live holiness in their state of life and in the personal, family and professional responsibilities they have. Thus, it offers them some guidelines or indications to help them turn the various circumstances and situations in their lives into a path to holiness.

276 A disciple of Christ learns to discover God's provident and loving hand in every circumstance, to look at the positive side of people and situations, and to use even adverse situations to grow and mature interiorly. Conversely, when we lack faith and a supernatural spirit our life often becomes is a chain of lamentations, complaints or pessimistic attitudes that weaken our spirit and paralyze our action. It is true that many evils afflict humanity, especially the evil of sin and its deplorable effects on the world. A true Christian cannot retreat into a shell of naive optimism, closing his eyes to these evils. Instead, he must acknowledge their existence and take action to mitigate them, but doing so always with his eyes and heart set on God, the Lord of history, with absolute trust in his love, power and wisdom. He governs the world and all people in ways that are often paradoxical and incomprehensible, and while respecting their freedom, he leads them toward the fulfillment of his divine plan.

#### SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR VARIOUS STAGES AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE

277 Everyone in the Church is called to be holy, according to St. Paul's words, "This is the will of God, your holiness". This holiness is shown in the fruits of grace that the Holy Spirit produces in the faithful. As a member of the Movement, seek to cooperate with God's grace by humbly beseeching him for it in prayer, increasing or recovering it by the fervent reception of the sacraments, exercising the Christian virtues, and by offering up in the morning the activities of each day. Foster friendship with the Holy Spirit, faithfully following his inspirations so as to accomplish the mission entrusted to you and fulfill the duties of your state in life. Keep always in mind that the exercise of gospel charity in your thoughts, words and deeds is the essence of Christ's message, and without it there can be no authentic Christian holiness.

278 If you are young, remember the impact that your youth has on the world and take upon yourself your twofold responsibility as a Christian apostle and a member of society. Therefore, assert your faith, and give reasons for your hope in life and in what gives it true meaning —your certainty of God's love. Strive to work generously to build a better world based on the freedom, dignity and rights of every person. This will require of you to be magnanimous, pure, respectful and sincere, and to escape the seduction of the mindsets of selfishness, hedonism, despair or skepticism.

279 Knowing that God's will is the only path that guarantees the complete fulfillment of the individual and his life project, be always open and attentive to God's voice in order to hear his call and follow him by means of the vocation, state in life and profession which he has in mind for each one. Answering this call requires not only fostering prayer and interior recollection, but also an attitude of generosity and magnanimity, recognizing in our own vocation a loving and eternal plan of God to walk toward him by serving the Church and society, setting aside our personal likes and whims which are so unstable and relative.

280 Given the Church's needs, the Movement encourages its members to give God some years of their life as full-time volunteers in the Regnum Christi Mission Corps. Besides the enormous service you render to the Church, these years are a privileged time of personal, spiritual and apostolic maturing, and a once-in-a-lifetime experience of giving yourself fully to others.

281 Dating and engagement is a very important stage in the life of a man and a woman as they try find their way toward the best choice of the person with whom they will share their married and family life. The young people of Regnum Christi must live it maturely, understanding its importance. Bring Christ into your relationship and find inspiration in his love so that in your engagement you will be witnesses of Christian life through your mutual esteem and respect, your responsible and serious commitment, your common search for God's will, your mutual kindness and affection, and the support you give each other in living your relationship according to the will of God, the Lord of life and love. To this end, it is very important that you pray and examine your lives together, help each other

discipline and channel your passions, work for your mutual spiritual and human development, and ask your spiritual directors for light and advice. Do not let hedonistic and sensual standards cloud your conscience, since eroticism and permissiveness are a betrayal of the truth of authentic human love.

282 If you are married, treasure the gift of matrimony as a path to holiness, and joyfully live the grace of the sacrament which makes your spiritual and physical union a source of charity and a sign of Christ's union with his Church. Create, therefore a holy union in charity and fidelity. Build each other up with the example of your faith, piety and concern for the common good of your family. Thank God for the children you have received from him and maintain an attitude of generous openness to welcome new children joyfully, with a sense of faith, responsibility and trust in God. Educate your children in faith, respect and love for God, giving them your help, guidance and support so that they can discover and fulfill God's plan for their lives. Make sure to pray together and communicate, especially when you face difficulties, and use your spiritual directors as a means to help you discover what God expects of your family.

283 For a Christian family it is an entirely special gift and grace to have the possibility of giving life to children that may be called by God to serve him and their neighbor in a life of special consecration. Therefore, be sure to maintain an attitude of generous openness in your home, to embrace and foster with particular care the possible vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life of any of your children. Give them your full support, and offer joyfully whatever sacrifice it implies for you, knowing that it will bring about a greater good for the Church and your own family.

284 Make your family life a true "domestic church", a school of evangelization for complete and upright Christians, the place where your children learn to love God, assimilate and live his laws, view life with kind eyes full of hope, appreciate their neighbor, and embody true human and Christian values. To this end, nourish your prayer and sacramental life together as a family, being witnesses of your faith before others.

285 Parents, do not forget that you both share the task of your children's education, and your mutual agreement in this sensitive area is indispensable if you are to achieve the objective. Learn to organize your professional and social responsibilities, your recreation and vacation times in order to be able to spend time with your children, so that each of you will contribute your own part in the development and maturing of their personality.

286 Children learn more from the witness and example of their parents than from their words, advice and correction. Therefore, be especially faithful in fulfilling your Christian, family and civic duties so that your good example will effectively influence the formation of your children.

287 As you educate your children, prudently balance gentleness and motivation with the proper strictness. Don't give into their whims to avoid difficulty and bother. Motivate them prudently and kindly, keeping in mind their age and development, so as to form in them the internal convictions that will help them conduct themselves freely and responsibly in fulfilling their duties as Christians and members of society.

288 In order to make every home a school of the faith that instills true piety and a sense of the supernatural, Regnum Christi suggests the following means to its members:

A. Reserve a space in your home as an oratory, with an image of Christ crucified and the Blessed Virgin, and a copy of the Sacred Scriptures, to provide a place where you can pray either personally or as a family.

B. Keep an image of Christ crucified, the Blessed Virgin and the Pope on your desk or in a visible place in your room, as a way of motivating you to be faithful to Christ and the Church, love Mary and fight for the Kingdom. There should always be a reminder of the Movement's great loves in the home of a member of the Movement.

289 In order to intensify their marriage spirituality, Regnum Christi invites its married members to renew their

marriage vows annually, even if one of the spouses is not a member. The renewal is done in small groups after a brief retreat. In it they are exhorted to be apostles of marital fidelity in their words and especially in their actions, finding support in their common prayer and their generous exercise of marital charity.

290 The women of the Movement, as wives and mothers, have a unique mission in the care of their families. With their close and affectionate presence and their firm and prudent action, they are their children's primary formators, teachers and collaborators, helping them build a future grounded on faith and love. Furthermore, they have the very important responsibility in the family of guarding and passing on its living traditions; and in the home, at school and in social life, that of spreading faith and trust in God, love for the sources of life, esteem for family values and compassion for our neighbor, especially the most needy.

291 The life of charity, the unmistakable sign of the presence of Christ's spirit, finds its first expression in your family circle. It takes greater effort to live in peace and harmony in the home, since the interpersonal exchanges are many and close. Therefore, as members of the Movement:

A. Create within your family an atmosphere of trust, understanding, joy, shared interests, forgiveness, openness and availability. In this way, imbue the relations among all the members of your family with genuine and reciprocal love, that is enlightened and sustained by Christ's example and his presence in the home.

B. Children must understand and help their parents, looking after them, showing them respect, affection and understanding, and cooperating with them to make everything go well in the home. Be obedient and docile to them, especially regarding your own formation and the good of the family. When they are elderly, ill or in need, care for them with special closeness and gratitude .

C. Try to resolve your problems and disagreements through constructive dialogue. Be open to others' viewpoints, weigh them thoughtfully, and make an effort to adjust your personal interests to those of the family, generously sacrificing yourself for the good of the others.

292 Aware that the Christian spirit should imbue and be evident in every expression of our life, make sure that for your relaxation you choose those shows and leisure activities that respect and promote authentic human and Christian values. Look for the type of relaxation that most helps you get the necessary rest, nurture friendships with others, and preserve your fidelity to Christ. When you share these activities with others, never forget that your active participation, thinking of others, warmth and joy can be a light for them, and help them discover the possibility of genuine rest and wholesome recreation without having to forfeit their integrity or offend God.

293 Since physical and moral suffering are an unavoidable reality in human life, accept them with faith, hope and patience, as a means of interior purification. In them, unite yourself to Christ crucified, who took upon himself all human suffering and gave it dignity and meaning. Through suffering the Christian associates himself with Christ's redemptive sacrifice and stores up merits for eternal life. Offer it up with love to build and sanctify the Church, your own family and the Movement.

294 In illness and old-age, strive to unite your sufferings and limitations to Christ's redemptive sacrifice, and try to live in peace and serenity, with a spirit of faith, acceptance and oblation of your whole being to the Lord. The natural weakening of physical strength coupled with the body's progressive decline is an opportunity to cultivate your interior life and grow in intimacy with God. Reject the temptation to egotism that leads a person to think only of himself and his situation, embittering his heart and making him harsh, demanding and blind to the needs, desires or joys of others. Transform your pain and limitations into a source of merit for yourself and others. Share your wisdom and experience of life with the younger generations, and do your best to be a faithful transmitter of the Christian traditions that so enrich the home. For their part, the family members of the elderly and ill should make sure to treat them with patience, kindness and understanding. Give them every attention and esteem. Don't let them feel like an unbearable burden or useless people. Cater for them as best you can and never omit any effort to make them feel accepted, loved and taken into consideration.

295 The death of our loved ones is one of the most painful events in human life, and it has a profound and intimate effect on people's hearts. At such times, moved by the hope that springs from the resurrection of Christ, the Lord of life and death, live your pain in a context of faith, offering it up to the Lord and accepting his will. Offer your prayers and sacrifices for the eternal repose of your loved ones; and offer to others the witness of our hope in the life to come, where the bonds of blood will be resumed in a singular and glorious way in the visible presence of the heavenly Father. Strive to live and reflect these attitudes of Christian faith and hope especially when death comes unexpectedly.

296 Have no qualms about letting relatives who are in danger of death know the reality of their situation, in a discreet yet truthful manner. Help them to prepare for their definitive encounter with the Lord through contrition of heart and the devout reception of the sacraments.

#### GUIDELINES FOR SANCTIFYING YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE

297 It is not only the various circumstances of life that have the potential to become a path to holiness. The exercise of the various occupations and professions are also an ordinary means of interior growth for a Christian, allowing him to increase his love for God and his neighbor, and to contribute to the perfecting of divine creation. For a Christian who lives his faith consciously and coherently, his work links him to the redemptive work of Christ, who gave work an elevated dignity by submitting himself to its law out of love for mankind. Therefore, the Movement does not hesitate to offer its members some guidelines regarding the sanctification of their professional life.

298 As you fulfill your professional duties in service to society, be always honest, fair and just, never allowing the pursuit of personal interests to damage the demands of justice, charity or truth. Never forget that you are an apostle of Christ; try to share the gift the Movement has meant for your life with the people with whom you deal, especially your fellow professionals.

299 If you are studying or in professional training:

A. Dedicate yourself to this task with an eye to the future and a sense of responsibility; study earnestly and methodically; organize and program your time taking into account your spiritual commitments and studies as well as your family, social and apostolic duties, and your rest.

B. Turn your effort to form yourself into a means of apostolate, which will enable you to influence your classmates and professors positively now, and afterwards in your professional life. Your effort will project a truthful and attractive image of a Christian who, while he is faithful to God, can discover, appreciate and assimilate the authentic human values of each science and profession.

C. Put to good use whatever talents and opportunities the Lord grants you. Knowing that one day you will have to give an account to God of how you used them, do not allow superficiality, laziness or lack of organization lead you to waste your time or to a mediocre or inadequate professional preparation.

300 If you are called to hold public office and responsibilities in government, view your work as an act of service and an eminent manifestation of charity towards your neighbor, convinced that your path to holiness is through the honest and responsible fulfillment of your functions. Act with utmost honesty and dedication. Strive to increase your knowledge and seek the company of responsible and competent people. Seek and promote the common good by every means, and in the measure of your power and possibilities cooperate so that in civil life, both the goals and the means respect the dignity and the Christian view of the human person.

301 If your calling is to study and scientific research, take up and carry out your task within the framework of the understanding of creation that your Christian faith gives you. Seek the truth passionately, objectively, tenaciously and modestly, knowing that God is the source both of the truth of faith and the truth of science. Raise your spirit to

him, cause of every created wonder, and strive to have your contact with the laws and phenomena of nature strengthen your sense of admiration, adoration and gratitude to the Creator. Openly accept your own limits as well as those placed on your investigation by the dignity of the human person and the moral order, which must always be respected. Be a promoter of culture, progress and development among people.

302 If your calling is to teach and form children and young people, keep in mind the importance and transcendence of your mission, since you are helping to forge the future of the family, society and the Church. As an imitator of Christ, the supreme teacher, fulfill this service with deep love and sincere dedication to your students. Know that you are a close collaborator with parents, who have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. Be responsible, diligent and mature in fulfilling your task. Keep constantly up to date on the subjects you teach and the most tried and tested teaching methods. Be aware of the influence you exercise over your students and the power of your example and advice. As the goal of your educational activity, seek not only to transmit knowledge, but to work for the human and social maturity of your students, the formation of their moral conscience, their love for truth and that they acquire a correct scale of values.

303 if your calling is to the field of healthcare, understand your profession as a highly dignified, delicate and demanding task at the service of human life and above all, of those who are experiencing in their bodies the reality of sickness and suffering. Frequently contemplate Christ's example of exquisite and loving care for the sick, to whom he dedicated much of his time, words and actions. As you fulfill your functions, look upon the ill as suffering members of Christ's Mystical Body, in need of relief and comfort. Always treat them with the care, respect and kindness they require. Remember that, because of the privileged situation you are in, your work can extend beyond the healing of the body, and open the sick to the values of the spirit and the Gospel. Keep your knowledge and technical abilities up to date, and as you exercise your profession be guided by the principles of natural ethics and the moral norms taught by the authentic Magisterium of the Church.

304 If you work in or direct mass media, infuse a genuine Christian inspiration in them so that they will effectively promote the true good of society. Make Christ, the Father's Word communicated to mankind, the fundamental standard of your work, imitating his truthfulness, charm and charity in his every word and gesture. Observe faithfully the norms of the moral order, especially objectivity, sacred respect for the truth, people's right to their good name and the safeguard of family values. Remember the powerful influence that the media exert on the mind and behavior of people, and do all you can to contribute through them to the humanity and the moral formation of your audience.

305 If your calling is to the legal professions, consider your work as a service to people and society, and as an exercise of Christian justice and charity. Let Christ, who worked the truth in love and admirably blended justice and charity, be the model of your work. Be sure to keep constantly up to date on your profession. Be dedicated and work diligently to close your cases. Do not let laziness, inactivity, irresponsibility or the lack of economic incentives make you delay the resolution of your cases. Be always on guard so as to never voluntarily commit an injustice or use illicit means as you fulfill your functions. When you have to apply an unjust civil law, try always to find the solution that is most in conformity with the moral order, and act in the light of Christian principles in making the necessary decisions.

306 If you own or direct businesses, consider your work as a service to society and a source of the country's progress and welfare. Recognize that the work of your people is the greatest asset of your company, and provide for them working conditions that truly respect the dignity of the person and the demands of their legitimate development. Act intelligently, responsibly and competently to expand and make your company productive. Heed the just demands of your subordinates and observe the laws of social justice and Christian charity.

307 If you spend your life working in a factory, business, trade, office or some other profession in society, turn your activity into an avenue of personal fulfillment and cooperation with God the Creator in mastering all things and building a more human world. Inspire yourself in Christ who wished to submit himself to the common law of work, taking him as your model of dedication and effort in serving others.. Remember not only your rights but also your duties. Work responsibly, competently and honestly. Never allow outside interests to manipulate your actions for other purposes, and always regulate your dealings with everyone by the standards of Christian justice and charity.

308 If your calling is to the world of art and entertainment, exercise your talent in a spirit of service, aware of the importance of the esthetic values and healthy entertainment for the relaxation and enrichment of people and society. Strive to ensure that the various media you use to express yourself are inspired by the Christian view of man and life, are a true reflection of uncreated beauty and serve to elevate, enrich and cheer the heart of man.

309 If your calling is professional sports, realize that your activity is an excellent means to spread authentic humanism. Undoubtedly, sports are a major public forum in the midst of the world, and the focus of the attention of a good part of humanity. As an athlete you are therefore called to exercise a positive influence on society, especially on children and young people, through your personal witness of coherence and integrity in your faith, charity, uprightness and persevering effort to achieve higher goals.

310 The Movement believes that women have to contribute their specific gifts and particular sensibility toward the growth of a more just and human society, within the family circle and also in the public and social arenas. Work outside the home is also for her a path to holiness and apostolate. Nevertheless, mothers should try to bring their professional work into line with their irreplaceable role in the home.

311 If you are invited by the Movement to work professionally in some area of its institutional life or in some of its apostolates, take on this task responsibly, aware of the privilege implied in having the opportunity to place your professional expertise at the service of the Church and society.

## CONCLUSION

312 This is the path and these are the spiritual goals that the Regnum Christi Movement sets before its members, in order to reach Christian holiness and contribute effectively toward extending Christ's Kingdom in the world. All will not advance at equal depth and speed. God leads each soul at his own pace, according to his mysterious will and also according to each one's cooperation with his grace. In any case, it is a question of using this set of means to cooperate with God in building our own spiritual edifice and thus love Christ, build the Church and serve people.

## THIRD PART

### LIFE IN THE REGNUM CHRISTI MOVEMENT

#### CHAPTER I

##### STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

313 In order to fulfill more fully its vocation at the service of the Church, Regnum Christi has a structure and an organization that drive, coordinate and regulate its internal life and apostolic action, for the purpose of promoting above all the holiness of its members and their cooperation with the Church. It is important to emphasize in this regard that the vitality of Regnum Christi derives from each member's acceptance of God's plan, his belief in the cause of Christ, and his interest in serving the Church. Structures and apostolic plans would be of little use if the

Movement's members weren't holy and well prepared for their mission.

314 All the members of Regnum Christi form a true family in Christ, united by one and the same charism and joined together in an organic way with a variety of degrees of commitment, operative units and apostolic tasks. In this family, each one can grow and mature in his faith and love, freely accept the demands of his Christian vocation and contribute his talents and abilities to the Church's evangelizing mission.

315 As a sign of its adherence to the Vicar of Christ and his Magisterium, the general directorate of Regnum Christi is located in Rome.

316 Geographically, the Movement is divided into territories depending on its growth and development. A territory can cover several countries, a single country or part of a country.

317 Territories are divided into localities, which normally correspond to cities or districts. Each locality has a local coordinator of apostolate as a reference point for the various sections and works of the Movement.

18 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.

319 In their turn, the sections of the Movement are broken into groups and these into teams, so that each member can receive immediate support and the necessary guidance for his spiritual work and his dedication to the apostolate. Each group is led by a group leader, and likewise each team by a team leader, assisted by a secretary and a treasurer.

320 A group is the sum of several teams, no more than ten, and it emerges as the teams multiply by incorporating new members. Groups allow the Movement to organize the members into more functional operative units, give more personal attention to each member, coordinate the activities of the section and offer each member the atmosphere most suited to him. Likewise, the group makes it possible to take on wider-reaching apostolates that one team alone could never do.

321 A team is a number of members that come together to help each other in their holiness and perseverance, formation and apostolate, like the first Christian communities. Ideally, the team is made up of eight to fifteen members so that it facilitates everyone's participation and fosters interpersonal relationships. It comes together in a natural way through friendship, affinity or common interests. The team is not an end in itself, but rather a means for the members to help each other carry out fully their vocation in the Church, through the Movement. Team life teaches us to work in collaboration with others leaving aside individualism, and it enhances the possibilities of each member by utilizing and combining their individual qualities and abilities.

322 For a team to be able to fulfill its purpose, its members must keep in mind —and strive to acquire, promote and strengthen— the following attitudes, which contribute greatly to the team's activity and internal cohesion:

A. True esprit de corps that brings each member to accept the others, cooperate with, support and help them in every way possible, and which creates an atmosphere of appreciation and esteem around them by speaking highly of their qualities, successes and virtues, and never unnecessarily mentioning their defects and shortcomings.

B. Work full of optimism; maintaining a joyful, sincere and positive climate both in our internal activities and on the apostolate, and fostering a balanced and healthy joviality.

C. Concern and interest for those members who temporarily need to withdraw from team life due to work, studies or travel. This same attitude should motivate you to invite back those members who for one reason or another may have distanced themselves from the life of the Movement.



D. An attitude of openness and growth, avoiding all cliquishness. By reason of its very vitality, the team must always be seeking new members and multiplying itself.

E. A healthy realism regarding the diversity of temperaments and dispositions of the team's members. The team is a human group, made up of people different in temperament, reactions, formation and skills. All this enriches the team, but it can also be a source of friction and difficulties. You must always keep this in mind, and strive to harmonize this diversity with charity.

F. A sincere wish to foster friendship among the members, expanding it into other areas and activities by spending time together, family gatherings, spontaneous meetings and mutual support.

323 The Movement may also organize its members as networks. A network is a grouping of people by their profession, occupation or responsibility. A network is not an operative unit in the hierarchical sense of team, group or section. It is, rather, an instrument for the apostolate whose immediate purpose is to imbue social and cultural structures with a Christian spirit, and to promote long-range apostolates in the various branches and professions of society. The members of these networks still belong to their original teams. Nevertheless, if it seems advisable, it is possible to form teams of members from the same network, as long as they are in the same section. People who are not yet members of Regnum Christi can also participate in a network.

## **Chapter II**

### **PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES**

324 Among the many and fruitful forms of apostolate there are in the Church, Regnum Christi has its own specific methodology of apostolate. It is a particular way of working whose principles are of such value and importance that they constitute part of its very essence. These principles guide the Movement's activity, they express the interaction of its members and determine the influence and reach of its apostolates.

325 The principles that govern Regnum Christi's action are: Be effective; Work person-to-person; Live team life; Rise to challenges out of love; Inspire others for the mission; Be flexible; Form the whole person.

#### **BE EFFECTIVE**

326 The Movement understands the urgency of the Church's mission and is driven in its core by love for Christ and mankind; therefore it adopts the principle of effectiveness as a means to cooperate in the best possible way in the evangelizing work of the Church.

327 Adopting this principle does not mean that the Movement disregards the absolute primacy of grace in matters of holiness and the apostolate, for no human action, no matter how efficient, can produce genuine apostolic fruit unless it is accompanied by the supernatural action of God in people's hearts. Hence, the principle of effectiveness is always understood as being intrinsically linked to the preeminent action of God and human cooperation, above all through prayer and personal sacrifice.

328 Thanks to the principle of effectiveness the Movement understands that it is called to undertake those activities and apostolates that are particularly conducive to answering the most urgent and current needs of the Church and the world, and which have the potential to further the Kingdom of Christ as broadly and deeply as possible, taking into account the circumstances of time and place.

329 Being effective takes a deep and lively sense of what is essential. Not all apostolic activities are of equal importance. Therefore, when choosing which apostolic action and works to undertake, the Movement also takes into consideration the following criteria:

- a. Reach: those works and actions which, due to their magnitude and importance, contribute to the extension of Christ's Kingdom in the broadest and quickest way possible.
- b. Depth: those works and actions that yield a deep and lasting transformation of people and society, not just passing enthusiasm.
- c. Timeliness: those works and actions that respond to the Church's needs and challenges at each point in time.
- d. Supernatural nature: works and actions that are spiritual and apostolic in nature, not merely philanthropic or humanitarian.

330 Effectiveness also requires unity in our action so that it will be constructive and apostolically more incisive. Even though we must necessarily have a multiplicity of apostolates, this should not hinder unity and synergy. We achieve these especially by applying the directives we receive, coordinating our work, and being faithful to our apostolic methodology as part of our specific charism. All because we are of one heart thanks to our love for Christ, the Church and souls.

331 Planning helps us to be effective in our action. First, you outline a program that is in line with the mission and vision of Regnum Christi, setting challenging, precise and realistic goals. Based on this program, you draw up the guide, which specifies clearly and in detail the more specific objectives, the means, who is responsible for fulfilling each item, resources you need, possible difficulties and their solutions. Finally, you work out the calendar, specifying your intermediate and overall deadlines to carry out your plan.

332 To develop rapidly, in depth and effectively, Regnum Christi needs the assistance of qualified and formed people, who in their turn will convoke, form, guide and motivate the other members. These we call "formators", and they are an essential and indispensable aid to the directors of the Movement. Formators also guarantee the application of another key methodological principle about which we will speak later, namely, personalized attention to all members.

333 Formators can take care of various responsibilities within the Regnum Christi section of which they are members. They can be spiritual guides, team leaders, group leaders, coordinators of the different areas of the section, assistants to the section director, and so on.

334 Those who are invited to serve their section or apostolates as formators should accept this important responsibility generously and with dedication, knowing that the reach of the Movement and its service to the Church depend in great measure upon their performance.

335 To reach all people, the Movement chooses as its apostolic methodology to work from vertex to base. This consists in forming lay people to transform the circles in which they move, to be themselves evangelizers of others. The purpose of this is for people to spread the light of the Gospel in their natural surroundings, as salt of the earth and yeast in the dough: parents in their homes, doctors in their hospitals, teachers in their schools, students in their universities, workers in their factories, merchants in their shops and businessmen in their businesses.

336 The Gospel shows us that Christ used a similar method. Though he spoke to the multitudes and took pity on them, he chose twelve apostles and a group of disciples who later became formators and guides of the rest. St. Paul, for his part, driven by love and the mission the Lord entrusted to him, formed leaders and ordained presbyters whom he left at the head of the new Christian communities as he moved on to new places to preach the Good News. In this way, the Movement also seeks to multiply its impact and be effective, following the example of Christ and the first Christians.

337 Today, too, the Church needs Catholic leaders, that is to say, people who are motivated, formed and capable of exercising a positive influence in every sector of social life, through their personal witness, their word and their gospel charity. In this sense, and in virtue of the power of their own baptism, every Christian can and must become a leader in his milieu, and help his neighbor to have a personal experience of Christ and the vitality of the Church.

#### WORK PERSON-TO-PERSON

338 The Gospel speaks of personal, unique encounters with Christ. It speaks of true, face-to-face communication with the Lord. Jesus knows how to speak to and look after the multitudes, but at the same time he always seeks the heart of every man and woman.

339 In addition, faith is an event that touches the innermost core of each person. Man's response to redemption and Christ's call can only proceed from the very depths of who he is, from where he expresses his unique originality and his capacity to perceive and welcome the loving gaze of the Master.

340 The person-to-person principle is an expression of charity. The degree to which we love people is the degree to which we feel concern and take a sincere interest in each one, in their well-being and personal fulfillment, their formation and holiness and generally speaking, in their overall good.

341 In keeping with this principle, the Movement adopts into its methodology all those means that contribute to personalized attention such as spiritual direction, personal dialogue and support for each member in their personal and family needs. Also, as far as possible it tries to have each one participate in the apostolates that are best suited to his state of life, nature and circumstances, thus allowing him to develop his personal qualities and talents.

342 Lastly, it is important not to let the organizational tasks and the institutional structures stifle our attentiveness, cordiality and family spirit in our interaction with others.

#### LIVE TEAM LIFE

343 Christianity was born and spread throughout the world in the form of prayerful, charitable, apostolically effervescent, small communities. In these, Christians encouraged each other to grow and persevere in the faith, sharing Christian joy and swapping news of the Gospel's progress as it spread. This community life of faith and love intensified even more as the dangers and persecutions against Christians grew more severe. It became the fertile earth from which sprang the first martyrs of the Church, as its mature fruit, and it has also been the source of Christian renewal during times of crisis and darkness in the practice of faith and morals.

344 Team life is how Regnum Christi seeks to perpetuate this same historical and lasting condition of Christianity in the vocation and mission of its members. That is why team life is not simply a style of work; more importantly it is grounded in a reality proper to Christianity, which is a community of faith, hope and love in Christ. Today, just as at the dawn of Christianity, the Christian renewal of society will come from small groups of prayer and action which, like sparks spread throughout the world, will be capable of creating a great blaze. Small groups which, by encountering Christ, being in communion with their Shepherds and by being there for the neighbor in need of love, will discover the precious pearl of the Gospel and live their Christian life in a convincing and contagious way.

345 For each member, the team is a tangible and immediate reality that helps you to understand and live in a practical and effective way your co-responsibility and solidarity in relation to the Church and the Movement. Furthermore, it is meant to help you to live a life coherent with the demands of the Gospel, and to commit yourself to some missionary and apostolic activity.

346 Moreover, the team is an effective formation tool for its members. It is a catalyst for your dedication to holiness, it helps awaken your creativity and apostolic initiative, and it is a means to promote and accomplish works of apostolate by combining the efforts, talents and abilities of every member.

## RISE TO CHALLENGES OUT OF LOVE

347 Regnum Christi is a dynamic and enterprising reality, a path of crosses and sacrifice; it dares you to climb the heights of love. The reason is simple: “Great challenges beget heroic responses.” Regnum Christi is not afraid to place before its members the reality that the challenges of Christian life are part of your life and vocation. Belonging to the Movement requires your willingness to sacrifice and be generous, rooted in a heart that deeply yearns to give itself to Christ and the Church.

348 This principle finds its justification in Sacred Scripture. The Christian faith is the risk of giving a total “yes” to Christ. It is the acceptance of a Christ who makes demands out of love. It is the radical choice of a way of life contrary to mediocrity and tepidity. In word and action Christ was always clear on this point: “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”

349 Regnum Christi members follow Christ on the path of the cross by faithfully living the commandments of God, giving themselves generously to the duties of their state in life, and fulfilling the spiritual, formative and apostolic commitments proper to every baptized person.

350 Accepting the demands of Christianity can only be the fruit of freedom full of love, and of a deep sense of personal responsibility toward God, the Church and your conscience. In addition, experience tells us that even on the merely human level, the path to happiness and fruitfulness consists precisely in responding nobly to the challenges inherent to every human and Christian life. This is the narrow but sure way that Christ proposed to his disciples from the outset.

## INSPIRE OTHERS FOR THE MISSION

351 In its apostolic activity, the Movement applies the principle of inspiring others for the mission. In a certain sense, this principle combines all the previous ones because it makes us enormously effective, it requires contact and personalized formation, it fosters organized top-to-bottom action, it encourages co-responsibility and personal conviction in our self-giving, and it bolsters team life.

352 This is one of the most important principles in our Movement’s apostolic methodology and it is expressed in three interconnected aspects, “Do, Get, Let.”

- a. “Do”: Means effectively and responsibly doing your part in fulfilling the mission.
- b. “Get”: Means getting people active, delegating and making them jointly responsible, creating convinced and generous partners, encouraging their apostolic zeal and fostering their effective participation in the common task of spreading Christ’s Kingdom.
- c. “Let”: Means letting people do things, encouraging and provoking their initiative, supporting and encouraging them in their suggestions and projects rather than curbing or hindering them.

353 The Movement pins a great measure of its effectiveness on this principle, which allows it to multiply its apostolic reach by involving all members. Each one shoulders his specific responsibility and joins his efforts to everyone else’s in a coordinated and organized fashion, and thus the efforts of all converge on the single and unanimous mission of extending Christ’s Kingdom and serving the Church.

## BE FLEXIBLE

354 Love is an inexhaustible source of initiative and creativity. For this reason and in order more effectively to respond to the new challenges caused by the natural development of the world and societies, Regnum Christi applies as part of its methodology the principle of flexibility, by which it seeks continually to renew, adapt and perfect its apostolates. Although its essential goal does not change, nor do the basic principles of its methodology and apostolate, this continual updating constitutes a vital element, keeping in step with the Church, so that its apostolic action is also characterized by the novelty of its zeal, methods and expressions, adapting itself to the circumstances

of time and place.

355 By reason of this same principle, the Movement strives to be completely docile and open in accepting the indications and petitions of the shepherds of each local Church, as well as maintaining an habitual attitude of collaboration with the other charisms and methodologies of apostolate present in the Church.

#### FORM THE WHOLE PERSON

356 In order to be able to offer an effective service to the Church, Regnum Christi knows that it must have well-formed members, motivated and trained to take on the great challenges of the apostolate in today's world. This is an unavoidable demand since nothing can take the place of formation.

357 The formation the Movement offers its members seeks to be as well-rounded as possible, addressing their spiritual, intellectual, human and apostolic preparation. This takes into account the need to prepare the person in all his dimensions so that God can forge him into a true apostle. Formation in Regnum Christi is formation for the mission.

### Chapter III

#### Participation in the life of the Movement

358 By reason of their baptismal commitment, all the faithful take upon themselves the beautiful task of transforming themselves day by day with the help of God's grace into authentic Christians of deep faith, unblemished hope and ardent love.

359 To achieve this, you ordinarily have to follow an interior path that takes effort and generosity, growing in your correspondence to divine grace, and forming solid habits and stable behavior, till your personal attitudes and behavior become a living reflection of the gospel's transforming power.

360 In order to help its members assimilate this ideal of Christian life and identify with its mission and way of life, Regnum Christi offers them various means to grow spiritually and to become one with their own Movement such as the means of perseverance, spiritual direction, our own specific activities, apostolate and the environment proper to the centers of the Movement.

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

362 The means for spiritual growth promote contact with the sources of Christian life, especially the sacraments, prayer and the Gospel. Furthermore, they draw us to God, shape our hearts, favor an openness to spiritual values, mold our spiritual sensibility and strengthen our will. That is to say, they form the personality of the Movement member, who is first and foremost a disciple of Jesus Christ and a child of the Church.

363 Spiritual direction given by a spiritual director or guide as a form of personalized attention, is an excellent resource for serious progress in our spiritual life, discerning God's will at each stage and circumstance of life, and discovering more clearly and deeply the riches and implications of our specific vocation so as to live it more fully.

364 You assimilate the traits and features of a Regnum Christi apostle by participating actively, punctually and

responsibly in the Movement's specific activities. The Encounter with Christ, monthly retreat, and annual triduum of renewal or spiritual exercises are all activities in which you absorb the Movement's spirituality in a serious, motivating and free atmosphere. Therefore, these events are indispensable if you are going to identify with the ideal of holiness and apostolate that your vocation puts before you. If there is a justifiable reason that you cannot be present at them all, try to take part at least in the monthly retreat and the annual triduum of renewal or spiritual exercises, and make use of the distance learning resources that the Movement offers for your formation and spiritual growth .

365 The Movement celebrates in a special way certain Church solemnities and significant anniversaries from its history. It also organizes regional, national or international encounters to promote the values of family and youth in a climate of prayer, community and healthy joy.

366 Every team, and even every group or section, may also organize its own activities for its members with the purpose of getting to know each other better and fostering unity and friendship.

367 Co-responsibility in the apostolate is a very enriching and fruitful experience for every Christian. Therefore, from the day he joins the Movement, every member is to have an apostolic responsibility to fulfill at the service of Christ and the Church, that is suited to his temperament and possibilities.

368 The centers of the Movement try to have a particular atmosphere of prayer, fraternal charity, apostolic vitality and healthy relaxation. Whenever possible, with the necessary permission from the local Ordinary, they ought to have a chapel so that members can converse with Christ in the Eucharist. The center also provides resources to learn about the life and situation of the Church, news of the works and growth of Regnum Christi, meeting rooms, a library and informal gathering areas.

369 To express our faith in and love for Christ and his Word, in every center of the Movement we display a Crucifix and Bible in a dignified and proper place for the members to venerate, so that as they enter or leave they can reverence them with a kiss or another appropriate gesture.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Growth**

370 Every member of the Movement feels in his heart the need to share the gift received from God, aware as we are that all charisms are in reality oriented toward the common work of the Church. It is an interior urge to spread to others the charism of Regnum Christi, sharing with them the love we experience in our relationship with Christ, our commitment with the Church and our service to the temporal and eternal good of people. In short, what we do is offer them a charism –a gift for others– so that they can discern if they are called. This obligation comes with the gift itself.

371 Apart from this, Christ's words are still relevant today: "The harvest is great but the laborers are few." There is a shortage of people ready to share God's love with a world that is complex and in need of love. We must increase the number of apostles to evangelize more, and to be of better service to the universal Church and every local Church. Regnum Christi wants to be a channel for more people to respond to God's invitation to go out to the world as heralds of his love. Such a way of life, demanding and committed yet at the same time fresh and joyful, has been and always is very persuasive.

372 Remembering that God frequently uses human instruments to give his grace to others, Regnum Christi members will be effective in transmitting the gift we have received in the measure that we give to others:

1. The witness of a life of service to Christ and the Church lived joyfully and responsibly. In and of itself, this

is an invitation and an attraction. People are not indifferent to the witness of an apostle, and it can be the first step in God's call to more people.

2. Our warm and charitable dealings with people, imitating Christ's example. Nothing is more contagious than authentic love manifested in helpfulness and service to others.
3. Our sincere and straightforward invitation to participate in the Movement's formative, spiritual or apostolic activities, according to the individual's interests, —inviting especially those among whom we live: family members, friends, co-workers or classmates.
4. Our prayer for all those people that God might want to invite to become part of the Movement, that he will grant them the grace to be open to discovering this gift for their lives.

373 It normally takes people a certain amount of time to get to know, appreciate and accept any invitation. The length of this time can be greater or lesser depending on their personal dispositions, the degree of knowledge they have of the Movement and their openness to God's grace. Meanwhile, they can begin to take part in activities of their team and the Movement in general. In any event, the decision to follow Christ more closely using the means Regnum Christi offers will always be the result of a free, spontaneous, personal choice made in a climate of peace and serenity. Such a decision, born of an interior conviction, will surely mature and strengthen over time, despite the natural difficulties that surface during life and militate against our fidelity to God's invitation. When the Samaritan woman encountered Christ, she went from an initially hostile attitude to an enthusiastic self-giving, convinced of the novelty of Christ's person and message, all in the course of a single conversation. The conviction, zeal and authenticity of life that flowed from Jesus' person and lips quickly brought her into tune with him and led her to change her life.

## **Chapter V**

### The apostolate of the members of the Regnum Christi Movement

374 Regnum Christi is an apostolic Movement. This means in practice that its members serve the Church not simply by giving personal witness in the world, but by committing themselves, as sons and daughters of the Church, to be the yeast and soul of society, transforming temporal realities according to the spirit of the Gospel through apostolate. It flows from here that each member needs to find his place in the Movement's apostolic action, to give himself by placing his talents, time and person at the service of the Church, and to form a generous, Christian heart as the driving force behind his apostolic activity.

375 "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature" is the great mission that Christ entrusted to his apostles before ascending into heaven, words that echo today with new urgency. Those to whom the Gospel must reach are today, as then, a great multitude. Numbered among them are not only those outside the Church, but also those who live in the Church but in a certain sense have themselves become missionary territory due to their ignorance of the faith, or their spiritual or moral neglect. The Gospel is for everyone who thirsts for God, —the child in need of catechesis, the tormented young person who cannot find the meaning to his life, the anguished couple on the brink of marital breakdown, for the hunger of the poor and the spiritual thirst of so many people.

376 Those who join to the Movement have the advantage of not being alone or deprived of the means to fulfill this mission. Regnum Christi teaches, guides, encourages and sustains them, stimulating their apostolic initiative and missionary zeal. It also seeks to coordinate its members with other people and ecclesial institutions to gain in continuity and effectiveness, thus achieving more abundant and lasting fruit.

377 Every Christian is called to be an apostle always, everywhere and in every circumstance, and therefore his every

moment and activity must have a missionary character. With this in mind, the apostolate of every Regnum Christi member begins with prayer, witness and the word.

a. The heart of a true apostle is prayerful. A Regnum Christi member must have recourse first of all to prayer for his own interior transformation, to conquer his own heart for Christ, and to bring Christian salvation to others. Due to the Holy Spirit's action, prayer silently and effectively reaches where sometimes other means do not.

b. Being a witness of Christian life is a privileged way to make Christ present in the world. Regnum Christi members seek to become a living Gospel, "Other Christs" among people. Our witness should extend equally to our personal, family, social and professional life. We should be Christians everywhere, twenty-four-seven.

c. For St. Paul, faith presupposes first of all the word: "Faith comes through preaching." Joyfully and enthusiastically revealing to others in planned or chance conversations the certainties and convictions that derive from our own faith is a magnificent means of apostolate. A Christian who truly loves Christ needs only to let his heart speak, rejecting any timidity or human respect.

378 Our own family is always our primary field of apostolate. And we evangelize our family by living charity generously, each one fulfilling their family duties, giving witness of personal integrity, and sharing with each other their personal spiritual experiences in all simplicity and candor.

379 The apostolate of Regnum Christi members is not limited to their personal and family life; they can also seek standardized ways to participate in a more effective way in the mission of the Church. To this effect, one of the first channels is to support and cooperate in the evangelizing efforts of your local Church, contributing your time, talent, formation and initiative. You can cooperate also by actively and enthusiastically participating in the apostolic activities of your diocesan and parish community.

380 Another channel for apostolate is by cooperating in the apostolates of the Movement, which in turn are at the service of the universal and local Church depending on each one's nature and purpose. Each member can find his personal field of apostolate among the variety of programs and activities that Regnum Christi carries out in the following areas: teaching and spreading the faith, family apostolate, youth work, aid to the poor and works of Christian charity, mass media or others. It is definitely best to participate in these apostolates together with the members of your own team, since this will make it easier to achieve your objectives and bring the team together.

381 Some members can carry out their apostolate by taking on a supportive role within the Movement itself, accepting a position or responsibility upon which the growth, strengthening and fruitfulness of Regnum Christi depend to a great degree. This is an effective but often hidden and sacrificial form of service to the cause of Christ and the Church.

382 In the youth sections of the Movement, —without however excluding the adult sections— there is a privileged form of apostolate which consists in giving one or more years of your life as a fulltime volunteer in the Regnum Christi Mission Corps. Volunteers are assigned to places and positions that are most suited for their individual formation and spiritual growth, and where their apostolic work is most needed. Their action is far-reaching and significant, and thus crucial to the development and strengthening of the Movement in the world. Therefore, Regnum Christi invites all its young men and women to be generous with the Lord, to be bold in their self-giving, to help the Church keep the world young, and to take advantage of this extraordinary means of spiritual, personal and apostolic growth.

383 Children and youth are the future and hope of the Church and society. For this reason, an organization for children and early teenagers (ages 11-16 years) called ECYD was established alongside Regnum Christi and depending on it for its organization and life. The acronym comes from its name in Spanish: *Educación, Cultura y Deporte*. ECYD members join Christ and each other in helping to build a better world. Following the example of Christ, their friend and highest ideal, they commit themselves to live the virtues of charity, sincerity, friendship,



purity, generosity and joy, and to be witnesses of these to their schoolmates and friends.

384 The Movement especially encourages its members to be generous and enthusiastic in participating in any work or apostolic activity that focuses on the Christian formation of children and young people. There are multiple ways to do this, from promoting and directing ECYD sections and teams, to serving as president of a club, cooperating in the organization of camps or in formative and recreational activities. In particular, it is of utmost importance to promote ECYD as an especially apt means for the Christian formation of children and youth, and for effectively channeling their great ideals and fresh energies towards the service of the Church and society.

## **Chapter VI**

### **The Formation of Regnum Christi Members**

385 The primacy of grace in the apostolate does not exclude but rather presupposes the need for apt instruments in order to touch individual hearts —first the man, then the saint. Christ himself dedicated a good portion of his time and his apostolic life to preparing those who would be his instruments at the dawn of the Church.

386 The Church's mission is arduous: to preach the Kingdom of Christ to every heart and the whole of society in the midst of complex circumstances and in sometimes hostile or indifferent environments. This requires men and women of character, well-formed and dedicated to Christ's cause. Hence, every member of the Movement must strive to acquire an integral formation that will enable him to fulfill effectively and responsibly his evangelizing mission.

387 This integral formation is articulated in four dimensions: spiritual, apostolic, intellectual and human.

A. The purpose of spiritual formation is to achieve in each Regnum Christi member a deep and solid spiritual life, built on the bedrock of their knowledge, love, imitation and following of Christ. It is sustained by the theological virtues, frequent reception of the sacraments, prayer, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, loyalty to the Church and a spirit of sacrifice.

B. The purpose of apostolic formation is to form in each member of the Movement the heart of an apostle, full of zeal for the salvation of mankind, and to provide each one with knowledge, skills and resources in order to be effective in some work of evangelization and Christian charity.

C. The purpose of intellectual formation is a broad and deep understanding of Catholic doctrine in perfect harmony with the Magisterium of the Church and in tune with the sensibilities of each time in history. By systematically and organically studying spiritual and doctrinal topics, as well as those of our specific charism, we want our members to be better able to live their faith, better answer the questions brought up by their contact with the world, and to be able to preach the Gospel more effectively.

D. The purpose of human formation is to acquire a rich and balanced personality, full of human virtues and values, which will serve as a solid base for the supernatural action of grace. To this end, the Movement first of all invites us to address the formation of a right conscience, following natural law and the gospel teachings, guided by the Magisterium of the Church. Members must also get to know themselves and accept their reality so as to work realistically and serenely to improve themselves. They should also work to maintain the proper order between the area of their instincts, sentiments and emotions on the one hand, and their intellect and will on the other; achieve strength of character and a tenacious will; and develop social virtues such as discretion, politeness, simplicity and openness to others.

388 In addition to their personal effort and the help of divine grace in acquiring their integral formation, the members of the Movement have at their disposal a program of formation that they receive through various means such as spiritual direction, the Encounter with Christ, study circles, monthly retreats, the triduum of renewal, spiritual exercises, conventions, seminars and conferences.

389 As a means to help members acquire more specialized knowledge in various current topics, Regnum Christi invites them, depending on each one's interests and talents, to take seminars given at or prepared by institutions and centers of the Movement, or other institutions known for their fidelity to the Church's Magisterium. These courses help the members face better and more competently the challenges of their apostolic work.

390 The members of the Movement must do all in their power to prepare themselves professionally and keep up to date in everything to do with the study and practice of their profession. This is a means of personal growth and will allow them to exert broader influence in society. Likewise, they must acquire a rich and appropriate cultural background that will give them a broad and deep understanding of man and the world, so as to cooperate more effectively in the Church's mission.

391 An apostle's formation never ends. In answer to the vast challenges facing the Church and the constant need to nourish our own spirit, every member of the Movement is faced with the task of ongoing formation with a deep sense of service to God and his neighbor.

## **Chapter VII**

Support for the economy and development  
of the Church and the Regnum Christi Movement

392 The spiritual, moral and material needs of their neighbor cry out to and find an echo in the life of the members of the Movement. Therefore, and moved also by a great sense of charity and justice, they have to understand that they are simply administrators, not the owners of God's gifts, including their material possessions. There is a social mortgage of justice and charity to pay on these possessions, according to the spirit of Christ in the Gospel. Regnum Christi therefore exhorts its members to be generous in collaborating financially with their diocese, parish and the Movement.

393 Even though Regnum Christi has fundamentally spiritual and religious goals, it is all the same a human institution situated in time and among the panoply of the realities of this world. It needs material means to develop, grow and fulfill its mission at the service of the Church. The need for these means speaks to the heart and interest of every member of the Movement.

394 The Movement as such does not establish a membership fee. The financial support that members are invited to give as good Christians is motivated by the need the world has of receiving the Gospel message through the apostolate. Nor does the Movement seek financial security for itself, for its only security is the crucified and risen Christ. Nevertheless, it does need the generous and constant contributions of its members in order to put its existing works on a firm footing and undertake new ones, as well as to help with the formation and support of the priests and consecrated members who look after them.

395 In this sense, the economy in Regnum Christi is a form of apostolate and the support its members give is a clear sign of their love for it. God is made present in the world thanks to the effort of those who offer material support to the works that are focused on spreading God's word and helping people experience Christ's charity. In addition, God also makes use of the sacrifice and detachment of our benefactors in order to make the action of those engaged in the apostolate bear fruit.

396 The following are concrete ways in which Regnum Christi members can help in the area of finances:

A. Personal contributions: to express their gratitude to God for the gift they have received, members periodically contribute some amount toward the development of the works of the Movement at the service of the Church. These contributions should not only be an act of generosity but also a reflection of their conscious recognition of how important it is to support with their person and their possessions the spreading of Christ's message, and bring eternal

salvation to the greatest number of people.

B. Collaborating in the fundraising activities promoted by their diocese, parish or the Movement.

C. Seeking donations to support vocations to the priesthood or the consecrated life, or to start up new works of apostolate or support existing ones, and approaching for this purpose individuals, institutions or foundations interested in supporting the Church.

D. Starting up revenue-generating entities, with their revenues earmarked either wholly or partially for works of apostolate or formation centers.

E. Donating stocks in a personal or family-owned business, including the Movement in their will, creating an endowment for the support of specific projects of the Movement, or other similar measures.

## **Chapter VIII**

Some Regnum Christi Activities.

### Spiritual Direction

397 Spiritual direction is one of the most recognized and proven elements in the Church's vast pedagogical tradition. Granted God's action in the soul, spiritual direction is an effective resource for a person's formation and interior growth. There, in serious and deep dialogue each person is valued for what he is, his individual richness and depth are recognized and he is helped to discover and channel all his potential according to God's plan, avoiding the pitfalls of subjectivism and short-sightedness.

398 Spiritual direction is a faith-filled search for God's will and its repercussions in our daily life. This search takes place within the framework of freedom, trust and respect, prayer and attentiveness to the Holy Spirit, with the aid of a priest or layperson who is qualified and experienced in the paths of the spiritual life.

399 Given how important and high its purpose is, spiritual direction must necessarily be deep, motivating, regular, demanding and concrete. It cannot be reduced to an empty chat or simply unburdening yourself. In it, you must dig deeply to discover the roots of your attitudes and behavior, and ground your spiritual life on deeply held convictions.

400 To get the most out of each session and avoid unnecessary digressions, it is good to follow a basic outline of the points about which you want to speak. Include especially your general situation and your relationship with God through prayer and interior life, your program of spiritual life, how you are living the Christian virtues and the duties of your state in life, your personal formation and dedication to the apostolate.

401 Review of your program of life is one of the central points in spiritual direction. In Christian pedagogy, the program of life sums up a person's efforts to become holy, the final goal of which is to become fully identified with Christ. Discovering your dominant defect and fostering its opposite virtue allows you to focus your spiritual work on a single front and to work in a specific direction. The program of life is a simple, clear and concrete resource, and regularly reviewing it in spiritual direction is a highly effective means to progress in your Christian life.

402 Spiritual direction also looks at the problems, difficulties and doubts that affect the person in his own particular circumstances, in order to offer him the light and support he needs. This is to make sure that your spiritual growth is not delayed by lingering, unresolved situations or problems, since there is a compact inner unity in the human person.

403 As a complement to spiritual direction, members have a personal monthly dialogue with their team leader in a cordial and mature atmosphere. This dialogue centers on some aspects of their life in Regnum Christi such as their

formation, apostolate, participation in activities, growth and inviting new members, team life and anything else the member wishes to talk about with his team leader.

### The Encounter with Christ

404 The Encounter with Christ is an activity that is spiritual, formative and apostolic in nature. Through the Gospel reading and reflection, and the review of a fact from life and of their apostolic commitment, the Encounter with Christ is an extraordinary means for members to grow and mature in their spiritual sensitivity, their knowledge of the Gospel, their Christian sense of life, their availability to the needs of others, their sense of the Church and their team life. It ought to be a true encounter with the person of Christ the Lord: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst" (Mt 18, 20)

405 Thanks to its own dynamism, the Encounter with Christ is also an apostolic springboard which stimulates enthusiasm, creativity and commitment in the face of the needs of the Church and mankind.

406 The Encounter with Christ implies the application of team life in one of its highest expressions, in a climate of support and reciprocity. The Regnum Christi center is the normal venue for the Encounter with Christ, but other appropriate places are not excluded. It lasts an hour or at most an hour-and-a-quarter. It is directed by a moderator who may be the team leader or one of the participants chosen by him. In agreement with the team leader, the members may occasionally invite friends to take part in the Encounter to give them the opportunity to see what it means to be part of a community of Christian life where people pray, receive formation and place their talents at the service of their neighbor and the Church.

### Gospel Reading

407 The first part of the Encounter with Christ is the gospel reading and reflection. The reading is ordinarily taken from the liturgy of the day or the Sunday previous to the Encounter.

408 The purpose of the gospel reading and reflection is to strengthen the team spiritually in preparation for the case study. In addition, the gospel reading and reflection are an excellent means to unite ourselves to Christ, to assimilate his standards and, enlightened by these, learn to view and evaluate every person, situation and event through Christ's eyes. The gospel reading and reflection also help us gain a deeper understanding of the apostolic dimension of our own commitment with Christ.

409 The participants take turns reading the gospel passage. All stand for the reading, and follow it in their own copy of the Gospels. When the reading is ended, all kiss their gospel and sit down.

410 The reading is followed by a few moments for personal reflection.

411 When the moderator gives the sign, participants freely and spontaneously, but briefly, share their reflections on the text.

412 The moderator ends this first part of the Encounter with Christ with a short summary by him or the secretary of the observations and commentaries that surfaced during the reflection.

413 This first part takes approximately 15 minutes.

### Review of "My Commitments to Christ"

414 The second part of the Encounter with Christ is the review of the commitment card.

415 The commitment card is the card members receive on their incorporation day. The members of individual teams may add to this card some extra means of their own, giving it a special character for each team.

416 The team's moderator or secretary may read out each point, leaving a moment of silence for members to reflect before God if they have fulfilled it.

417 Regularly reviewing the commitment card in Christ's presence moves you effectively to solidify your gains and make resolutions to remedy your weaknesses.

418 This second part ends with a brief, spontaneous prayer made in the name of the entire team by a participant previously chosen by the moderator. In it, we thank God, we implore his help, light and strength, and we place the intentions of each member in his hands.

419 This part takes approximately five minutes.

#### Case study

420 The third part of the Encounter with Christ is an examination of our lives and it takes the form of a case study: taking some event, viewing it in the light of the faith, examining its true causes and consequences and, above all, discovering God's plan there, even when it seems opposed by evil. The fruit of this part is the assimilation of a new view of life that is enlightened by human and gospel values, and a positive attitude of commitment and cooperation in the great work of redemption.

421 Each and every participant proposes briefly and spontaneously a fact or event taken from the social, economic, moral, political, family, religious, human or other arena of life. It should have a certain relevance because of its currency, significance, value or importance. The facts can be of a positive or negative nature. The resources Regnum Christi makes available to the moderators may be used to help make the Encounters more interesting, formative and relevant.

422 Participants choose by vote one of the cases proposed, and then study it following these steps: Look, Judge, Act.

A. Look: consists in studying the case: What problem does it bring up? What are its causes and consequences? How representative is it? What is its social impact? As you examine it, it is best to move right away from the individual and concrete context to a more universal and general view. You may also enrich the examination by referring to similar cases. You are not looking for an exhaustive analysis but rather to study the fact or situation through the prism of its principal implications.

B. Judge: this means turning over the case under the light of the Gospel, quoting the behavior or words of Christ that might help to interpret and evaluate the case. It is not about judging people or assuming attitudes contrary to gospel charity. The value of the gospel judgment is that it allows us to demonstrate or get a sense of Christ's attitudes regarding life's different situations. Moreover, it is also important to detect and judge the values and anti-values present in the case from the angle of Regnum Christi spirituality and from the human perspective.

C. Act: the purpose of this part is to align your conduct with the standards and values brought up as you examined the case, and to come to practical resolutions. To do so, it is good to follow three steps: take personal action, rectifying what you need to correct in the light of the Gospel; take action on the causes that are at the root of the case so as to foster good or combat evil; take action on the case itself whenever the participants are in a position to do so.

423 The case study takes around thirty minutes. It is very important for the moderator to help everyone take part, in

an atmosphere that is natural and spontaneous, allowing flexibility in each part and in the method.

#### Review of the Apostolic Commitment

424 The fourth part of the Encounter with Christ is the review of the team's apostolic commitment, in order to stimulate and promote apostolic zeal. It is done in two steps:

A. A team review of the resolutions made in the "Act" section of the previous Encounter with Christ.

. Check the progress of the team's apostolic commitment.

425 The review of the apostolic commitment takes approximately ten minutes.

#### Final Observations

426 The Encounter with Christ concludes with the thanksgiving prayer we use in Regnum Christi.

427 Given the high spiritual, formative and apostolic value of the Encounter with Christ, all the members ought to strive seriously to participate regularly and to live it in a climate of deep interest, cordiality and simplicity, in such a way that they can benefit from the insights and graces that Christ unfailingly grants to those who gather in his name.

#### Study Circle and Conventions

428 As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the formation of Regnum Christi members is to help them acquire, in the spiritual, apostolic, intellectual and human arenas, the virtues, knowledge and dispositions that they need in order to fulfill to the full their vocation and mission at the service of the Church and mankind.

429 The study circles and conventions are especially important among the various means of formation the Movement offers its members.

#### Study Circles

430 In the study circle, doctrinal and apostolic topics are explained for the purpose of forming and perfecting the personality of the Movement's members regarding all of those questions or topics that concern them as human beings and as Christians.

431 The study circle is based on the section's formation program, which has to take into account the circumstances of age, sex, place, time and the environment in which the members live.

432 The subject matter of the study circle is centered fundamentally, though not exclusively, on the understanding and assimilation of Catholic doctrine (the faith of the Church, Christian spirituality, morals, history of the Church, papal magisterium, social doctrine), the spirituality and methodology of the Movement, and the principle issues related to man and the world (family, education of their children, human virtues and values, current issues, etc.).

433 The study circle has to be related to experience, fitting the members' needs and shedding light on the problems they face daily. The moderator should use group dynamics to encourage everyone's active participation. Additionally, given the apostolic nature of the Movement, it must be made eminently motivational for their personal and apostolic life, opening new horizons of action to the participants.

434 The study circle can have a variety of formats and can be held either weekly or monthly.

435 In cities or places where trained formators are not yet available to give study circles, the members of the

Movement can receive this formation through distance learning.

## Conventions

436 Conventions are intense formation and integration activities aimed at going more deeply into spiritual, apostolic, human, cultural and social topics of special interest for the life and apostolate of Regnum Christi members.

437 Conventions also have as their purpose to form the conscience and apostolic personality of our members, contribute to their identification with the ideal of Christian life that the Movement offers them, trigger the exchange of experiences, promote personal enrichment and create a family atmosphere and unity among the participants.

438 These conventions are a time of profound spiritual and human experience. Joined in prayer with the Blessed Virgin Mary like the Apostles at Pentecost, the members open themselves to a new light and impulse from the Holy Spirit to know Christ more intimately and to prepare themselves to live and preach his love with renewed fervor and generosity. Thus, conventions are above all days of prayer and reflection, that is, days of dialogue with Christ and attentive listening to the Holy Spirit so as to discover and follow through on his inspirations.

439 Because of their formative importance and value, the Movement encourages its members to do everything possible to attend at least one convention a year.

440 Conventions may be local, national or territorial, and international, depending on where the participants are from: the same section, the same country or territory, or several countries respectively.

## CHAPTER IX

### Principal Traditions

441 Traditions are part of the life of every family and institution. They are like the soul of time. They help us not only to remember but also, in a certain sense, to relive the events that give life meaning.

442 Regnum Christi too has its traditions, whose purpose is to help its members to live enthusiastically and joyfully the standards of life, formation and action that the Movement offers them, and to foster their active and wholehearted participation in the life of the Church. This is the meaning of the traditions that are proposed below.

443 Sundays and the major feast days of the Church express in a special way the communion of the entire people of God. Therefore, on these days the members of the Movement make sure to attend the Eucharistic Celebration at their parish or cathedral, and in this way express their sense of communion and participation in the liturgical and community life of the Church.

444 The Movement celebrates with special care and solemnity the great Marian feasts marked in the Church's liturgical calendar, especially the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (December 8), being the feast of the patron of the first degree members of Regnum Christi. By celebrating and honoring the Blessed Virgin, following the mind of the Church, we intend not only to extol the singular privileges and graces of Mary as Mother of God and our Mother, and her very special participation in the mysteries of Christ's life, but also to instill in the members a tender and filial love for her and the effective resolution to imitate her virtues.

445 In addition, Regnum Christi celebrates the principal events of its history with deep gratitude to God, in a family atmosphere and a climate of ecclesial communion. These are: January 3, the foundation of the Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi; January 25, the conversion of St. Paul, patron saint of the second degree members of Regnum Christi; November 26, the official approval by the Holy See of the Statutes of Regnum Christi. On these occasions, the Movement organizes various commemorative acts, the most important being the Eucharistic Celebration, as well as special gatherings. In these events, the feast and its meaning in the life of the Movement are explained, and all are

invited to thank God for the gift of the charism we have received for the good of the Church.

446 The “Mardi Gras Triduum” consists in living the three days before Ash Wednesday with a special sense of personal austerity and reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus since, sadly, it is a time in which so many offences are committed against God. Regnum Christi invites its members during the Triduum to intensify their prayer, set aside special times for reparation before the Blessed Sacrament, and avoid participating in celebrations and public events which are contrary to the Christian spirit.

447 Lent is an intense liturgical season, a time of preparation for the celebration of the mysteries of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. The Movement invites its members to be more fully aware of the Christian meaning of this season and to live it by making a special spiritual and apostolic effort, basing themselves on the Lenten liturgy, papal catechesis and the particular circumstances the Church is living. As an aid in this sense, at the beginning of Lent the general director of Regnum Christi sends a letter to all the members of the Movement, offering a topic or general guideline for their consideration, prayer and personal action.

448 For a more intense and fruitful celebration of the mysteries that the Church relives during Holy Week, the Movement recommends to its members:

A. To read the Passion of our Lord during the time for daily Gospel reading, in the following sequence: Spy Wednesday, the Passion according to Matthew; Holy Thursday, according to Mark; Good Friday, according to John; Holy Saturday, according to Luke.

B. To try to recollect your spirit with sentiments of love, gratitude and a special closeness to Christ during the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday in the afternoon up to the Easter Vigil). Prefer to abstain from radio and television — except for religious programming— and from going to public performances or parties. While in many places people spend these days having a good time and indulging, members of our Movement ought to make the effort to accompany Christ in the supreme hour of his sacrifice for us.

C. A unique way to live Holy Week, from both a spiritual and apostolic perspective, is by actively participating in missions of evangelization for the duration, bringing the message of our redemption to the places that are most in need.

449 During the months of May and June, following the customs of the local Church, we honor in a special way the Blessed Virgin and the Sacred Heart, respectively. The members of the Movement should make these months very special by participating in the liturgical celebrations of the Church, praying the rosary together or doing more frequent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, among other means.

450 In accordance with the tradition of the Church, First Fridays are days of special love and reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is very important to make them an opportunity to grow in our knowledge of God’s love, to make reparation for our personal sins and those of mankind, and to foster true devotion to the Heart of Christ which consists especially in the imitation of his virtues, above all his meekness and humility.

451 The Movement encourages its members to pray often the Stations of the Cross, especially during Lent and Holy Week. As you pray, reawaken in your mind and heart the contemplation of Christ’s gift of himself on the Cross for each one of us, and foster intimate and sincere attitudes of compunction of heart, gratitude, trust and generosity.

452 Regnum Christi invites its members to honor the Immaculate Heart of Mary in a special way on the first Saturday of each month, praying the rosary with particular fervor. The contemplation of the mysteries of our Lord’s life through the eyes and heart of his Mother leads us as members of the Movement to fulfill our ordinary responsibilities with a sense of reparation and atonement for the sins of mankind, and to follow Mary’s example in her generous cooperation in the work of redemption.



453 The Movement celebrates in a special way the Solemnity of Christ the King, the last Sunday of ordinary time. It therefore invites us as members to renew spiritually our decision to dedicate our lives to the love of Christ and to do all we can to make Christ's Kingdom a forceful and ever-growing reality in society. To give its proper importance to this feast, try to participate in the Mass celebrated by the bishop of your diocese, in order to thank God for the gift of Regnum Christi in your life and to confirm your full adherence and service to the Church. Also, before the Eucharistic Celebration, some members give a testimonial of their vocation and mission within the Movement.

454 In order to give public witness of your love for Christ and the Blessed Virgin, try to make every year a pilgrimage to an officially recognized shrine of Christ or the Blessed Virgin.

455 As an expression of your adherence to the Pope, try to visit Rome at least once in your lifetime, and pray for the Pope daily, asking God to grant him the strength of soul to guide the Church along the path of faith, fidelity to Christ and gospel service to mankind. Likewise, try to visit the holy places in the Holy Land where Jesus lived and fulfilled his redemptive mission. We reflect this same adherence in our tradition of hanging a picture of the Pope and the local bishop in the centers of the Movement.

456 The Movement also asks its members to pray every day for our general director, that God will grant him fortitude, prudence and charity in order to direct and govern the Movement along the path of greater fidelity to the Church according to our specific charism.

457 The Movement encourages its members to participate in the Eucharistic Celebration offered every year for the eternal repose of all its deceased members. This Mass is celebrated in every Regnum Christi center during the octave of All Souls Day.

458 The lay members of Regnum Christi may gain a plenary indulgence on the following dates:

A. The Solemnity of Christ the King (last Sunday of ordinary time);

B. The Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15);

C. On the day of their incorporation to one of the degrees of the Movement;

D. At the end of your yearly spiritual exercises or triduum of renewal, when you renew, even if only privately, your intention to continue fulfilling the commitments you made when you incorporated.

The conditions established by the Holy See to gain a plenary indulgence are:

A. On all of the dates above: be free from all attachment to sin, make a sacramental confession (which can be done any day just before or after the date in question), receive Holy Communion and pray for the Holy Father's intentions;

B. On the Solemnity of Christ the King and the memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows: in addition to the conditions above, pray the Creed and an Our Father before the Blessed Sacrament or an image of the Blessed Virgin.

459 The activities to which the members are encouraged to invite their families and friends are among the most effective means of fostering mystique among the Regnum Christi members and of spreading the charism God has given us. At such times there is a great family spirit in the air, in a profound atmosphere of prayer. Avail yourself of these encounters to show and share with your bishops and priests, family members and friends, your experience of the gift you received from God through the Movement. These activities usually coincide with particularly intense times of prayer and grace in the life of the Church, and they are the following:

A. Mission Sunday and the World Day of Prayer for Vocations: on each of these days the Movement organizes a vocations week to promote missionary vocations as well as vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

B. Mass for the family and marriage renewal.

C. Spiritual exercises during Lent.

D. Holy Week: the commissioning Mass for the missionaries in each local Church, presided over by the bishop.

E. Vigil of Pentecost: special celebration of the members and friends of the Regnum Christi Movement, presided over by the bishop.

F. Solemnity of Christ the King: Regnum Christi Day.

## EPILOGUE

A true member of Regnum Christi, following in the footsteps of Christ, can only fulfill his mission in life by loving—getting going every day out of love, preferring “we” to “me”, favoring “being” over “having”, choosing service over being in charge, living for others rather than for himself.

This mission is personal and non-transferrable as well as urgent and far-reaching for society. If the world is to change and improve, it needs people to change in their heart, mind, attitudes and behavior. This deep, interior change, rooted in Christ, is what the Regnum Christi Movement seeks to achieve through the life and action of each of its members, as living cells in the bosom of the Church, and light and leaven in society.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, bless and accompany each and every Regnum Christi member and all those who, responding to God’s invitation, desire to undertake this mission of love made life, spirituality and apostolate.