

Commission for the Rereading of the OCD Constitutions

A Lamp for my Feet

Rereading the Constitutions for a Renewal of Life

Study Guide 7

Constitutions 87-103 (Ch. I.6)

Our Order's Apostolic Role



General House
Discalced Carmelites
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1-A. Text of the Constitutions

Part I: Our Life

CHAPTER 6: OUR ORDER'S APOSTOLIC ROLE

C-087. Christ, sent into the world by the Father, is the source and exemplar of every apostolic mission¹. We must identify with him both in our hearts and in our behavior, so that our life itself bears witness to the Gospel and brings its joyful message to people, especially to the poor.

C-088. By living our profession of the evangelical counsels we grow in charity and become more vitally involved in the mystery of the Church². This impels us to share with other things spiritual and temporal, so that all may experience the freedom won for us by Christ [cf. Gal 5:1], and grow together in faith to full maturity in Christ.

C-089. Our Holy Mother St Teresa's deep experience of the mystery of the Church, coupled with her ardent zeal for the glory of God, led her to give a definitely apostolic incentive to

¹ Cfr. AA 4.

² Cfr. LG 44.

our whole Carmelite life of prayer and self-denial³. When she set about establishing a new family of friars, she also intended that they should be learned and experienced in the ways of God and be actively engaged in manifold service to the Church⁴, by their teaching and example, with the emphasis on the latter⁵.

True to this ideal, we try to imbue our whole life of prayer with an apostolic spirit and ensure that our apostolic activity stems from and is constantly sustained by our close union with God.

C-090. Through assiduous reading and study we must be well versed in the Scriptures and acquire a surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ [cf. Phil 3:8], so that we are able to share with others the treasures of the word of God⁶.

We try too to discern the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of God's word. We keep up our ongoing formation and try to develop those virtuous qualities that are highly valued in human relations.

C-091. Each of the brethren, according to the grace given him [cf. Rom 12:6], should strive to build up the whole Body of Christ and to promote the welfare of the local churches. All the brethren, under the guidance of the superiors, should cooperate wholeheartedly in the work of evangelization, not only by carrying out the tasks and duties of fraternal life with apostolic charity, but also by engaging in other appropriate

³ Cfr. W 1 and 3; F 1,7.

⁴ Cfr. F 14,8; R 3,7; Lt 2 March 1578 to Fr Gracian; Lt 12 Dec 1576 to Fr A. Mariano.

⁵ Cfr. FOUR COUNSELS of the Holy Mother to the Discalced Friars, of which the last reads: 'that they teach more through deeds than through words'.

⁶ Cfr. DV 25; L 13,18.



ministries under the authority of the diocesan Bishop according to the norms of universal law⁷.

C-092. We should be readily available whenever we are legitimately commissioned by Bishops to meet the pressing needs of the Church or of the people. In doing so, we should have due regard for the culture and traditions of the people to whom we minister⁸.

C-093. Individual religious whose services are required for the good of the Church should give themselves generously to the apostolic work assigned to them, while maintaining close bonds with their community and superior. All our apostolic undertakings should be marked with a true Carmelite spirit; in this way our communities will themselves be continually evangelized, and exercise a truly evangelizing influence.

C-094. The evangelization of the world, so intimately part of the very nature of the Church⁹, in as much as it is to be accomplished primarily through love and prayer, has always been a priority in our Order's apostolic work¹⁰. Our Holy Mother St Teresa passed on to the Order the ardent missionary zeal that burned within her heart¹¹, and it was her wish that her friars should also undertake missionary activity. This missionary zeal should be faithfully fostered; all should have the missions very much at heart, and vocations to the missions should be encouraged throughout the Order.

⁷ Cfr. CIC can. 678. 680-683.

⁸ Cfr. MUT.REL. 18; GS 1.

⁹ Cfr. AG 1-2.

¹⁰ Cfr. decisions of General Chapter of the Italian Congregation 1605, ACTA CAP. GEN. ms I (1605-1642) f.3v; cfr. also General Chapter of 1630, ib., f.143r.

¹¹ Cfr. R 1 and Pius XI, QUAMQUAM HAUD SANE, Doc 879-884.



All our communities and provinces should sustain our missionaries by their brotherly concern, by their prayers, and also with financial aid; and all should contribute to the best of their ability to promoting the growth and expansion of our Order in mission lands as well.

C-095. It pertains to the General Chapter, or otherwise to the Definitory, to accept missions, to change or terminate them, to entrust a mission to a particular province, to give suitable instructions, and take the necessary steps to promote and coordinate missionary activity in the Order.

C-096. Those engaged in missionary activity should keep up their commitment to a life of fraternal sharing. This will ensure both their spiritual growth as religious and the success of their missionary work. For this purpose each mission should have a central house where our missionaries can meet and live together from time to time.

C-097. When charity and the needs of the Church urge it, and after taking local circumstances into consideration, we take on the care of parishes for the sake of serving the People of God. It is for the Definitory, in consultation with the Provincial Council, to accept a parish or to withdraw from an existing one, while observing the norms of universal law and respecting the terms of n. 100 of these Constitutions¹².

C-098. Where parish ministry has been entrusted to us we must do our best to ensure that our parish reflects faithfully the mystery of the whole Church, and that all our pastoral work is imbued with the Teresian Carmelite spirit¹³.

¹² Cfr. CIC can. 520. 682.

¹³ Cfr. INSTR. PRO PAROEC. O.N., AOCD 16-18 (1971-1973) 162.



C-099. While providing a manifold service in the Church, we give priority to that special apostolate of the Order which, as it were, grows out of the nature of its charism. In this way we present ourselves with our true identity and are faithful to our own specific mission¹⁴.

C-100. Our Holy Parents are acclaimed in the church as masters and models of intimacy with God. This impels us too to characterize our role in the Church by a special apostolic involvement in promoting a deeper spiritual life among the faithful. That is how we serve the Church according to our charism, and faithfully carry on the spiritual tradition of the Order. Great care must therefore be taken to ensure that a proper balance is maintained in our apostolic commitments, so that adequate provision is always made for the kind of witness and apostolate that our vocation as Carmelites demands of us.

C-101. Down the centuries our Order has fulfilled this special mission in a variety of ways, by the spoken and written word. We must continue this and update our methods so that we can more fully and successfully share with others the treasures of our rich spiritual heritage. We should strive to be well grounded in theology and Carmelite spirituality, and to equip ourselves both as individuals and as communities for our mission of leading people to a deeper knowledge and experience of intimacy with God.

C-102. We must show special apostolic concern for those closest to us, especially for our brother religious during their formation years.

C-103. In accordance with our Holy Mother St Teresa's express wish, our apostolic mission in the Church obliges us to

¹⁴ Cfr. MUT. REL. 22.



be available for the spiritual guidance and formation of the nuns of the Order. This should be a prime concern to all, and superiors, especially Major Superiors, should make adequate provision for this in an organized way within their respective jurisdictions. We have a similar fraternal duty towards the members of our Secular Order, also towards those religious families who share in our life and spirit.

1-B. Norms

Part I: Our Life

CHAPTER 5: OUR ORDER'S APOSTOLIC ROLE

N-047. Provincial Councils, in collaboration with Conferences of Superiors, are responsible for deciding concrete ways to achieve a more effective training for the apostolate.

N-048. Coordination of the apostolate within the Order should be fostered especially by:

[a] information, whereby all the religious may be kept abreast of the apostolic activity of the community, the province and the Order. To accomplish this, some sort of information bulletin should, if possible, be published for the whole Order under the supervision of the Major Superiors;

[b] planning, whereby individualism and a scattering of forces in the apostolate may be avoided and communion and participation fostered among the religious of the community, the province and the Order. This is especially recommended in setting up new foundations to which a specific function is to be assigned in the Order's apostolate according to the needs of the local church.

[c] Likewise, a method of accomplishing work on various levels, not separately, but by the teaming up of many religious



working at the same tasks, rendering the labor more fruitful and giving a witness of evangelical unity, is highly recommended. When there is an opportunity, apostolic works should be coordinated on an inter-provincial level, making the plans and undertakings of each of the provinces more effective.

N-049. So that cooperation may extend even outside the Order:

[a] our friars should strive to take part in diocesan conferences for the coordination of the apostolate and carry it out in cooperation with the local Ordinary¹.

[b] Cooperation in the work of the apostolate with other religious families should be promoted by participating in a spirit of willingness in conferences that unite the various religious of the same area.

[c] Genuine cooperation with the laity should be established by arranging for timely dialogue with them as to what forms collaboration might take to render apostolic activity more fruitful and also by promoting among them a spirit of unity and corresponsibility.

N-050. The Superior General, along with the Definitory, will see to the coordination of apostolic activity by apt means throughout the entire Order. Provincials in their provinces, local superiors in the houses and Conferences of Superiors in their areas will do the same.

N-051. It is the right and duty of Provincials in their respective provinces to promote the forms of apostolic activity deemed more suitable as well as to coordinate them in keeping with

¹ Cfr. CIC can. 680.

their own resources and needs. To accomplish this more effectively, Provincials with their Councils should keep the following points in view:

[a] by themselves or through others (for example, through a provincial commission for the apostolate) they should consider special pastoral needs and effectively provide for them;

[b] they should take care that the religious are adequately trained, in accord with recent Church norms, for the various ministries they are to be assigned to;

[c] a sufficient number of religious should be provided for each house according to pastoral needs, lest the spirit of prayer and the common life suffer detriment;

[d] if any of our own, after the requirements of law are satisfied, should be assigned to carry out a special apostolic work, care must be taken that he be truly equal to the task, with the necessary human and pastoral qualities;

[e] they should, with special care, look after the spiritual and material needs of the friars who devote themselves to the service of the people. By counsel and brotherly visits they must watch and see that while they toil for the good of the Church, they remain faithful to the spirit of the Order.

N-052. It is for the Superior General with the Definitory and the Provincial with his Council to maintain a balance amid the varied activities and undertakings. For the good of the Church itself², the special character of the Order must be preserved by holding on to our spiritual patrimony and effectively providing for the specific apostolate entrusted to us by the Church.

² CD 35,1; PC 2.b.

N-053. Our Order should, as far as possible, foster the advancement of the spiritual life in every way and among everyone. Moreover, superiors should take care that by using appropriate means, the friars, each in his own way, be educated in what concerns the knowledge of the spiritual life and that they be trained to advance progressively in its practice.

N-054. We should cultivate a doctrinal apostolate, paying special attention to spreading the writings of our Parents, adapting them to our own times and making use of the communications media:

[a] by the dissemination of books and periodicals and through public lectures, that the doctrine on prayer and the spiritual life may be spread among different social groups;

[b] by fostering a mutual coordination and association of our publications throughout the entire Order, so that with meager means, e.g. through translations into other languages, great fruits may be reaped.

N-055. Certain forms of the specific apostolate should be established in our houses according to possibilities (e.g. 'schools of prayer') where those attending might be taught about the things of the spiritual life and the practice of prayer. In carrying out this apostolate our friars should spend special efforts on young people, also for the sake of fostering vocations. Furthermore, some house suitable for extern retreats is recommended for each province.

N-056. In order to promote the apostolate to our Secular Order:

[a] a Secular Order should be set up in every house wherever possible;

[b] our religious should support the Secular Order with prayer and the example of a fervent life; they should foster vocations to it and offer to take on the spiritual care of the members;

[c] special care should be used in training those members who are put in charge of the Secular Order;

[d] in regions where there are several provinces of the Order, coordination of Secular Order activities should be promoted by the Provincial Superiors.

The care of the Confraternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel must be counted among the apostolic works most consonant with the Order. Its members belong to one and the same family of the Blessed Mother as we do³.

N-057. Special attention is to be given to the movements and undertakings by which the Holy Spirit perpetually renews the life of the Church through the pursuit of deeper prayer and through zealous works, that these may have a sure basis in the doctrine of the saints of Carmel, constantly presented in a new way by friars who are specialists.

N-058. That our family may fulfill its missionary task as it should, suitable projects should be thought of in every province and followed up. The result will be that the missionary vocation will flourish and grow among us.

N-059. [a] It is above all by the witness of their life that our missionaries should carry out their activity of announcing the Gospel and planting the Church among peoples and groups where it has not yet taken root⁴.

³ Cfr. Pius XII, Ep. NEMINEM PROPECTO, Feb. 11, 1950, doc. 904.

⁴ Paul VI, EVANGELII NUNTIANDI, 8 Dec. 1975, nn. 21, 41.

[b] And because a mission is not a permanent but a transitory institution, the missionaries should, in their activity, strive to raise up and form christian communities that can provide for their own needs. So let them foster priestly and religious vocations especially, in order that these new churches may make their contribution to the good of the Church universal⁵.

[c] Various attempts aimed at making the contemplative life take root are worthy of special mention. Therefore, our Order should take care that in regions where ascetical and mystical traditions are held in honor, our life should be established adapting it to the genuine religious and cultural traditions of the people⁶.

N-060. It is earnestly recommended that several religious live habitually in every house or mission station to carry on a fraternal and, as far as possible, a common life, even in the planning and performance of the ministry.

N-061. To foster fraternal cooperation and communion among the missionaries, according to norms laid down by the General Definitory, inter-regional meetings of missionaries should be promoted as occasion offers, either for neighboring missions or for a specific region.

N-062. After some years spent in mission work (the Provincial Council will decide how many) each missionary has the right and duty, with due regard for the needs of the mission, to spend a suitable amount of time (again the Provincial Superiors will say how long) in a house outside the mission, for the purpose of renewal and to share with others his missionary experience.

⁵ AG 16.

⁶ IBID. 18.

N-063. [a] A Secretary for the Missions of the Order will be designated by the General Definitory and reside at the Generalate, but his mandate is to be confirmed by the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

[b] It is his duty to look after the missions and deal with their affairs under the direction of and in subordination to the General and his Definitory.

N-064. In all provinces and semiprovinces the Provincial, with the deliberative vote of his Council, will name a Zelator for the Missions. His office will last for the triennium and his duty, under the Provincial's direction, is to foster union between the province and the missions, promote the missionary spirit and obtain personnel and material resources for our missions.

N-065. Every province and community should have it at heart to collaborate, even financially, out of their own resources with the work of the missions.

N-066. [a] It pertains to the Provincial, after consultation with his council, to present a religious suited for the office of Pastor to the local Ordinary⁷. [b] The Provincial also has the authority to inquire carefully into the faithful fulfillment of pastoral obligations as well as the preservation and cultivation of the spirit of the Order⁸.

N-067. [a] It is for the Provincial Council to consider the suitability and conditions for the acceptance of new parishes offered by the local Ordinary and then, leaving the question open, accurately to inform the General Definitory and abide by its decisions.

⁷ Cfr. CIC can. 682.1.

⁸ Cfr. CIC can. 678.2; 681.1.

[b] It is also the Council's responsibility to judge, case by case, whether it will be suitable or not for the same religious to exercise the offices of Pastor and superior of the house, as well as to safeguard pastoral continuity in our parishes.

[c] The Provincial Council shall carefully define the rights and obligations attached to the offices of superior and pastor according to the prescriptions of Canon Law, the particular laws of the Order, and the agreement entered into with the local Ordinary⁹.

N-068. Ecumenical zeal is a special note marking the Church's whole way of thinking and acting today. Also, the fervent study of the teachings of our Parents by our separated brothers affects our Teresian family in a special way. Therefore, it is only fitting that our religious have adequate training and zeal both to take part in the ecumenical apostolate and to rouse and foster the same zeal in the faithful.

⁹ Cfr. INSTR. PRO PAROECIIS O.N., AOCD 16-19 (1971-73), 167.

2. Instructions for Personal and Communal Rereading

I. **Lectio** (Reading)

Personal Reading of the Text

1. Notice how the text indicates the Christological and ecclesial basis of our apostolic task (CC 87-90). Take note of the particular Teresian flavour of our apostolic service to the Church (CC 89).
2. Observe what it says about our dedication to the apostolate in the Church on both a universal and local level (CC 91-93).
3. How does the text present the missions *ad gentes*, so desired by our Holy Mother Foundress (CC 94-96; NA 58-65)?
4. Make a list of the various forms of apostolate indicated in the text and their characteristics (CC 97-103; NA 54-57. 66-68).
5. What does the text recommend for the promotion of apostolic formation, as well as coordination and cooperation in apostolic activity within and outside the Order (NA 47-53)?

II. Meditatio (Meditation)

First Community Meeting

1. You are now invited to read the Introduction, which is to be found in Part 3 of the Study Guide.

Being aware of the context in which it arose will aid understanding. If you can, compare the text in the *Constitutions*, Ch. 6 (n. 87-103) and the *Norms*, Ch. 5 (n. 47-68) on the apostolic mission of the Order with Ch. III (the Apostolate) of the *Decrees of the Special General Chapter OCD* of 1968.

2. Community discussion in order to deepen practical understanding of the text. Some questions follow to assist with this:

a. Comparison with our life

1. Is there a balance and fair allocation between the different forms of apostolate and the 'particular apostolate' of the Order? How is collaboration with the laity of the Order articulated? What is the nature of integration with pastoral aspects of the local Church?
2. How is participation by religious in missions entrusted to the Province and to the Order, through love, prayer, and economic resources?
3. How is your life of prayer and fraternal life integrated into your apostolate, especially at the parish level? How do we make the apostolate a truly community activity?

b. Comparison with the situation of the world and the Church

1. We have received a call today to live evangelisation at all levels of the Church (cf. EG 21-24), to "go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel" (EG 20). Equally, there are certain signs of the times which demand a new missionary stance. How do these calls by

the Church and the world effect the life of your community and Province?

2. In EG, Pope Francis presents some reflections with regard to the spirit of the new evangelisation (chap. V; cf. 260), bringing to the fore, amongst other matters, the need for united prayer in pastoral work (cf. 262), where the encounter of the love of Jesus forms the foundation which sustains the evangeliser (cf. 264). From this point of view, what apostolic contribution should the Order be making to the new evangelisation (cf. NMI 33)?
3. There is also a call to live out spiritual accompaniment today (cf. EG 169-173). As it is a specific part of our particular apostolate, how do you exercise this ministry with regard to the doctrine of our saints? Do we experience/live out - or at least seek - a new way of relating to our sister nuns and to secular Carmelites in our accompanying of them?

III. Oratio-Contemplatio (Prayer-Contemplation)

Personal Prayer

1. Edit CC 87 in the first person. Be aware of and contemplate the work of Christ in your person and in your works. Consider union with Christ to be your prime and essential apostolic task. The grace of the apostolate is enormous... bless God for your apostolic vocation, as someone cooperating in work of redemption and in the Gospel.
2. Do you feel the flame of missionary zeal burning within you as it blazed within our and Holy Mother? In what direction do you feel you are being propelled? Are you listening to the voice which is sending you out to men

- and women of the world? How ready do you really feel you are in your conscience?
3. Think back over the apostolates which have been entrusted to you through your life. Bless the Lord for your participation in Christ's mission. Have you lived as one who has been sent out by Christ?
 4. Go over your 'apostolic' temptations and sins: inertia, lack of zeal or preparation, excess of wanting to run the show, selfish sloth, sterile pessimism, worldly spirituality, warring among ourselves, etc. (cf. EG 76-109).

Actio (Action)

Second Community Meeting

1. *From the Constitutions to life:*
 - a. To what extent are our prayer, activity, study, etc. driven by apostolic intentions? By what means could we encourage a maturing of this dimension of the spiritual life?
 - b. The Constitutions tell us that 'all our apostolic undertakings should be marked with a true Carmelite spirit'. Are we satisfied with this? How can we ensure that our charism has a greater influence on our apostolate? What specific content should characterize it?
 - c. What are the apostolic options that as Teresian Carmelites should have greater emphasis from the perspective of the new evangelisation? What have we to say about the missions in our own country (peripheries, home missions) and missionary activity in a secularized society?

2. *From Daily Life to the Constitutions*

- a. Do you think the text presents the apostolic mission of the Order adequately? Would you change or add anything?
- b. The theme of the *missio ad gentes* demands new developments and subject matter. What would you suggest?
- c. As life is at the present time, new fields are arising for evangelisation (poverty, new forms of poverty, internet, mass media, etc.). Do you think these should be dealt with in our legal text?

The contributions of this “Action” section must be written, collected, and sent to the contact person of the circumscription who will synthesize the work of the communities and send them to the international commission (email: constocd@gmail.com) in the month of July of 2017.

3. Introduction to Chapter I.6 of the Constitutions

STRUCTURE

The description of the charism and the way of life of the Teresian Carmel closes with the section on the apostolic mission of the Order. A total of 17 points are dedicated to this aspect (CC 87-103), as well as the corresponding points in the Norms (NA 47-68).

Numbers 87-93 put the subject forward in a general way, succinctly presenting the foundations for the apostolic mission in our life and the necessary readiness of all religious to do the same.

Going into different types of apostolic action, the specific theme of mission *ad gentes* from points 94-96 is broached, whilst points 97-98 make reference to the parishes. Finally, points 100-103 develop the question of the most characteristic - or specific - apostolate of the Order.

We note here that, in the Decrees of the Special Chapter of 1968, this subject matter constituted the third part of the same, with 93 points in which the underpinning of our apostolate were explained. Our own particular apostolate (the promotion of the spiritual life) was described in detail and the apostolate of the missions and other forms of the same were presented: pastoral, parochial and ecumenical ministry. The chapter ended with 10 points dedicated to the need for coordination of the apostolate.

Commentary

As has been said, this chapter opens with a brief introductory presentation, in which, in first place, the underpinning of the apostolic mission of the Teresian Carmel is explained to us from three points of view, each one of them addressed in separate points:

- CC 87 brings the Christological argument: we are called to the apostolate after the example of Christ, the one sent by the Father. A quote/citation from *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA 4; cf. LG 3) underpins this statement, although the document refers to lay people, perhaps with the intention of making the conciliar orientation explicit with regards to everything said in the Constitutions about the apostolate. The statement which follows is born from this same orientation: the apostolic mission is accomplished through witness in life, that is to say, in fidelity to our religious consecration as an expression of pure union with Christ and our desire to make him known to the world¹. There should be no negligence of the explicit reference which is made in relation to the preferential option for the poor.
- The second argument, put forward in CC 88, is intimately/closely linked to the first: as the evangelical counsels are the means by which we follow Christ more closely and commit ourselves into God's service (cf. CC 19), they convert into a fount of charity which calls us to mission in the Church (cf. LG 44).
- The third is truly charismatic, that is to say, Teresian. CC 89 recalls the effort of St. Teresa to endow her sons and

¹ Cf. ChD 33; PC 1, 5; CIC 573 § 1. Thus did St. Thérèse experience it, who understood her mission in terms of *knowing and loving Christ in order to make him known and loved*. The idea is fully developed in the Decrees and is to be found in the contemporary Magisterium of the Church (cf. VC 72; 76).

daughters with a deep apostolic spirit. The *Constitutions* emphasize the apostolic force of our witness of life as consecrated religious, thus deepening our life from a Teresian point of view. This ideal is in agreement with the Second Vatican Council. As praying fraternities, in the style of Teresa of Jesus, we already enjoy an apostolic potency which does not solely depend on the works we carry out. St. Teresa stated this at different stages, for example the one quoted by the *Constitutions: Relations* 67.

From this triple underpinning, CC 90 indicates the sources from which one should drink to sustain our apostolate: on the one hand, Sacred Scripture, a privileged area in which to come to know Christ, and in the light of this, the signs of the times. On the other hand, a fruitful apostolate will only be possible with a correct formation and should be developed in such a way that the more right it is the more we will cultivate human virtues in the exercise of the same.

The call to reading the Bible as an essential source of our apostolate is not only justified from the quote of the Vatican Council II document (cf. DV 25), but also recalls a text from St. Teresa: "Let not the spiritual person be misled by saying that learned men without prayer are unsuitable for those who practice it. I have consulted many learned men because for some years now, on account of a greater necessity, I have sought them out more; and I've always been a friend of men of learning. For though some don't have experience, they don't despise the Spirit nor do they ignore it, because in Sacred Scripture, which they study, they always find the truth of the good spirit" (L 13,18)².

From this perspective, the call to all religious can be understood, which the *Constitutions* put forward in the following points:

² 'I have always been very devoted to and been more recollected by the words of the Gospels which came from his most sacred mouth, as He said them, than by the most learned books' (WE 35, 4; cf. L 13, 6; 15, 7; 25, 13; 6M 3, 4, etc.).

- CC 91 asks each religious to place themselves at the service of the apostolic mission of the Church taking into account the graces received. Once again, there is an emphasis on the fact that our life intrinsically forms part of this mission and that 'other appropriate ministries under the authority of the diocesan bishop'³ can be added to it. And an important question is noted which will be developed further on: the necessity for the apostolate within the community to be coordinated, in this case making an allusion to the superiors.
- CC 92 restates the call to be readily available for mission, making explicit reference for the need for good formation in respect of the ambit in which the apostolate is being developed, thus referring specifically to the good instruction which was made in CC 90.
- CC 93 fully expresses the way in which we should exercise our apostolate: communitarian and imbued with our charisma. Let us look at this as stated by Fr. Rafael Zubieta: 'The religious takes on apostolic commitments in obedience to the superior and in communion with his community'⁴. It is about a principle guaranteed by CIC 678 § 2. NA 48 develops it in a very comprehensible and practical way (we recommend that this be read at this time).

³ As demanded by the principle with regard to the ultimate authority of the Bishop when organising the diocesan apostolate, explained in LG 27 and ChD 23 and which is developed in PC 1, ChD 34 etc. (cf. Note 7 to this point in the CC).

⁴ R. ZUBIETA, *El derecho.....*, 141.

CC 94-103

The second part of the chapter, dedicated to the presentation of the essential forms of apostolic activity, is first of all expanded in the presentation and study of the missionary apostolate in three points:

- The first, CC 94, situates the missionary action of Carmel within the evangelizing tension which belongs 'so intimately to the very nature of the Church', as the text quoted from *Ad Gentes* (AG 1-2) explains, with immediate reference to the specific missionary vocation which corresponds to the sons and daughters of St. Teresa. Having already overcome the sterile contentions of the past, it is possible to state that the call to mission *ad gentes* is an essential, indisputable characteristic of our charisma, which cannot be renounced. The statement carries with it an explicit commitment to the promotion of missions.
- Given the importance of the question, CC 95 reserves for the General Chapter - and for the Definitory outside the time of the General Chapter - admission, modification and abandonment of the missions, thus as the breath of missionary activity, which includes the possibility of entrusting a Province with the care of a particular territory.
- In conclusion, CC 95 calls missionaries to maintain their community life as an essential element of the charism.

Even taking into account what is stated in NA 58-65, the impression remains that the question of mission deserves a more extensive development, taking into account the ecclesial demands, new theology of mission, and socio-cultural changes⁵.

⁵ Cf. EN; RM; VC 78-82; EG 9ss., 27, 262ss; Pope Francis, *Letter to all consecrated people*, II, 4.

The apostolic activity which has second place in the Constitutions is parish mission, which is presented in two points:

- In CC 97 the conditions and circumstances in which a parish may be accepted by the Order are detailed. Leaving to one side the demands of universal law, it is for the Definitory to make the decision as to its acceptance or closure. The reference to CC 100 in some way proclaims the extent to which that has been stated in the following point.
- In fact, CC 98 calls on those entrusted with parish mission to imbue it with the Teresian charisma, without which there would be a diminishing of the particular identity of the parish, linked to the mystery of the Church.

Points 66 and 67 of the Norms complement what is stated in the Constitutions with regard to the parish.

One cannot but notice a certain reticence with regard to the admission of parishes on the part of the Order. This does not appear to be really consonant with the present, real situation, which brings at least two new and important facts in this regard: the number of parishes existing in the various conscriptions, which in many cases is high, and the reflection which, in global gatherings, whether by area or within the Province, the Order has carried out in recent years on the question of parish mission.

The last form of apostolic activity, presented by our Constitutions is referred to as a special or particular apostolate, to use the same expression used in the text.

- Despite being placed in third place, CC 99 makes it clear that it is dealing with the most important aspect, since it demands that 'we give priority and are faithful' to it. The main reason for its importance is due, as clarified in this same point, that '[it] grows out of the nature of its charisma'.

- In fact, C-100 clarifies that the Magisterium has recognized our holy Parents as teachers of the spiritual life⁶, which demands from us a particular dedication 'by a special apostolic involvement in promoting a deeper spiritual life⁷ among the faithful'.
- This can be undertaken through the spoken and written word, which requires appropriate/adequate formation (CC 101), directing our mission in this area, principally to our own brothers (CC 102), the nuns, and the OCDS (CC 103).

In conclusion, it is worth pointing out that ecumenism, considered in a relatively broad manner in the Decrees among the apostolic activities referenced, is reduced to one point at the present time, i.e. NA 68.

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⁶ This statement can undoubtedly be extended now to other brother and sisters who have gone before us in Carmel.

⁷ NMI 32-34, particularly n. 33 where explicit reference is made to the Holy Fathers, is evidence and proof of the actuality of these statements. It can also be seen in chap. V, EG.

4. Prayers

Each meeting will begin with an invocation to the Holy Spirit and will end with a prayer. Here we propose some models.

Apostolic prayer of St. Thérèse (PN 24)

Remember that on seeing the countryside,
Your Divine Heart anticipated the harvests.
Raising your eyes to the holy mountains,
You whispered the names of your elect....
So that your harvest may soon be gathered in,
Each day, O my God, I sacrifice myself and I pray
That my joys and my tears
Are for your Harvesters,
Remember.

Remember the Angels' feast,
Remember Heaven's harmony
And the joy of the sublime hosts
When a sinner raises his eyes to you.
Ah! I want to increase that great joy.
Jesus, I want to pray unceasingly for sinners.
That I came to Carmel
To fill your beautiful Heaven,
Remember.

Remember the ever gentle Flame
Which you wanted to enkindle in hearts.
You put this Fire of Heaven in my soul.
I also want to spread its intense heat.

One weak spark, O mystery of life,
Is enough to light a huge fire.
That I want, O my God,
To carry your Fire far and wide,
Remember.

Remember the loving moan
That escaped from your Heart on the cross.
Ah! Jesus, that moan is impressed in my heart,
And I share your burning thirst.
The more I feel myself burning with your divine flames,
The more I thirst to give you souls.
With love's thirst
I burn night and day,
Remember.

Remember, Jesus, Word of Life,
How you loved me and even died for me.
I also want to love you to folly.
I also want to live and die for You.
You know, O my God! all that I desire
Is to make you loved and one day be a martyr.
I want to die of love.
Lord, my desire,
Remember.

Prayer by St. Elizabeth of the Trinity

O my beloved Christ, crucified by love,
I wish to be a bride for Your Heart;
I wish to cover You with glory;
I wish to love You... even unto death!

But I feel my weakness,
and I ask You to "clothe me with Yourself,"

to identify my soul with all the movements of Your Soul,
to overwhelm me, to possess me,
to substitute Yourself for me
that my life may be but a radiance of Your Life.

Come into me as Adorer,
as Restorer, as Savior.

O Eternal Word, Word of my God,
I want to spend my life in listening to You,
to become wholly teachable
that I may learn all from You.

Then, through all nights,
all voids, all helplessness,
I want to gaze on You always
and remain in Your great light.
Amen.

Marian prayer from Evangelii Gaudium

Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life
in the depths of your humble faith:
as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own “yes”
to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ's presence,
you brought joy to John the Baptist,
making him exult in the womb of his mother.

Brimming over with joy,
you sang of the great things done by God.
Standing at the foot of the cross
with unyielding faith,
you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,
and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit
so that the evangelizing Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection,
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life
which triumphs over death.
Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
that the gift of unfading beauty
may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation,
Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast,
pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are,
that she may never be closed in on herself
or lose her passion for establishing God's kingdom.

Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.
Amen. Alleluia!

(EG 288)



OCD General House
Corso d'Italia, 38
ROME