

RULES
of
THE INSTITUTE OF ST. JOSEPH
FOR THE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OF POOR CHILDREN.

I. *Objects of the Institute.* – In the name of the glorious patriarch St. Joseph, this Institute has been erected for the pious education of children whose parents are in humble circumstances, and this its subjects may attain either by direct teaching, by the management and care of Seminaries taught by others, or by taking the charge of Orphanages, to which may be added, where circumstances allow, refuges for destitute persons. The Sisters shall, however, consider themselves principally bound to education, and more to the children of the poor than to others. So that, however, urgent other secondary objects of the Institute might be, the Schools must be the first care. In honor of their glorious patron they shall recognise in the children committed to their charge, the person of the Infant Jesus, and try to discharge the same holy office towards them, which St. Joseph did to his charge.

They must be poor, humble, and consider themselves the least among all religious orders, studying to keep themselves and their lives hidden in God as the life of St. Joseph was. They must give place and preference to the religious of every other Order, and their highest ambition must be to remain unknown and poor. They must always labor for their own sanctification, by devoting themselves entirely to saving the souls of the little ones of Christ's flock, losing no chance, and sparing no pains to plant in their young minds seeds of piety, knowledge and fear of the Lord, which will enable them, when they grow up, to live as good and pious Christians. But since those persons who enter religion do so, first of all for the salvation of their own souls, the Sisters of St. Joseph must never forget that they come to give themselves wholly to God. They must belong completely to Him. Their whole desire must be to love God and to love nothing else, neither friends, riches, comforts, worldly news, nor even worldly knowledge; and, finally, they must cease to love their own wills, and learn to be subject to all, for the love of God. They must not complain, therefore, of anything they have to bear, nor resist the commands of the little Sister, no matter how hard they are, as long as they are not sinful.

II. *Of the houses.* – The houses shall be absolutely without revenue, and the Sisters shall derive their support entirely from either the Schools, the Institutions over which they have charge, or from alms. This support shall be no more than sufficient to provide them with food, clothing, and other necessary expenses of their house or School, and all that is in excess shall be applied either to the support of houses of the Institute which have not sufficient, or for the maintenance of Schools in very poor parishes, or for works of charity, as the Chapter shall decide. The houses shall be very poor, and fitted with furniture, such as poor people use. The chairs and tables shall be of common wood, no carpets on the floors. The hangings of the windows must be of plain cotton, without ornament. The beds must be of straw, with coverlets such as are used for the poor. The vessels of tin or earthenware of a common kind. The bedsteads of wood. The oratory shall be neatly furnished, as far as the altar is concerned, but with no expensive furniture. The benches for the choir must be plain forms or stools of wood, covered with coarse woollen blaize. The Sisters shall, where it is convenient, all sleep in one dormitory. The houses should contain besides, a community room, an oratory, a refectory, a kitchen, a scullery, and a parlor or reception room for strangers, which should be as near the door as

possible, so that there may be no necessity for having seculars in the house. The Sisters must be prepared to take charge of schools in any district, no matter how poor, and they must live in any house they can get no matter how small the rooms, nor how few, bare and dilapidated, even one room may be taken for a time, until better accommodation can be afforded. For the first object and beyond all others is the School, and the opportunities of training the children to piety. Silence shall be kept in every room, except during recreation in the community room. If necessity obliges, the Sisters may speak in other places, but in a whisper, and as briefly as possible. Plain pictures on pious subjects may be used upon the wall, as well as images and crucifixes, but they must not be gilded nor of costly painting, for the hearts of the Sisters should be fixed upon God, and every occasion removed which would keep them attracted to external things. The houses shall not be the property of the Sisters, but of the diocese. They must not have large gardens or grounds attached to them, for they must never forget that they are sisters of the poor and cannot consistently live with the advantages of riches around them, in the shape of pleasure-grounds and gardens.

III. *Of the Habit.* – The Sisters shall wear a brown woollen dress; brown in winter - but in summer where the heat of the climate would make such a color oppressive, a mantle of holland. The habit should not be made with an ample skirt, but economical of material, and gathered in at the waist by a leathern girdle, from which shall hang a strong chaplet of wood or bone beads joined with iron wire, and terminated by a small cross. They shall wear a small crucifix in their belt. The band, neck, and head-dress shall be of calico, surmounted by a brown veil. They may wear a brown bonnet and veil in winter. In winter they may wear also a black woollen mantle. All these things must be of poor material, even though a more expensive kind would wear better, and last longer, for the poor must endure the consequences of poverty, and the Sisters must try to correct the inconveniences of this, by extra care. The body linen shall be of unbleached calico, which shall also be the material of house linen. The stockings should be dark, and of wool. Flannel under garments may be worn when required, but of the coarser kind of material, not, however, of the coarsest, because of the heat of the climate. They shall wear strong black leather boots and should have two pairs in case of wet weather. The habit shall be blessed by the bishop, or one deputed by him, who invests the postulant with it. The professed Sisters shall wear upon their breasts a large blue monogram of the blessed Virgin, between three letters J. in honor of Jesus, St. Joseph, and St. John the Baptist, thus typifying the holy family. This monogram shall be made of plain blue woollen braid.

IV. *Of the Sisters.* – The Sisters shall be persons of good pious life, and unblemished reputation. When applying to enter the Order, they shall teach under the Sisters in one of their schools for a time, a month or even three, as the Sisters shall think desirable, and during this preliminary probation, they shall be exercised with all charity in obedience and prudence, by the Sister in charge of the School. If at the end of that time they still wish to enter the Institute, and if approved in Chapter by the Sisters, they shall be received into the house for some weeks as postulants, during which period they shall follow the same rule as the Sisters. When the Local Community thinks fit, but not before three months, the Sisters shall elect the postulant in Chapter, and if approved, she shall, after receiving the Blessed Eucharist at Mass, be invested with the habit by the Bishop or a Priest, delegated by him for the purpose. But as it may happen that Postulants coming from a distance may not be able to teach under the Sisters and live out of the house; if they be persons of pious and grave disposition, they may be received into the Convent at once. At first, they must live as Externs under the Extern Sister, and it shall depend upon the Local Superior how long it shall be before they are received into the house as Sisters, and follow the rule in all respects. In any case three months must elapse before they can receive the habit. After being clothed in the habit they shall serve one year in the discharge of their

duties, under the Sister in charge of the Noviciate, and then if elected by a Chapter, called the night previously, be allowed to make vows for one year. At the end of that year, if elected again, they shall make vows for two years, and at the end of that time, if still persevering, they shall be allowed to make simple vows for life. The vows shall consist of poverty, chastity, and obedience, with a vow to do all in their power to promote the love of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, in the hearts of the little children. At the Chapter none but professed Sisters shall vote on the election of any Sister for profession. A majority of votes must be obtained to elect any Novice or Postulant. The voting shall be by ballot, and no Sister can speak to another about the way in which she has voted, for the proceedings of the Chapter shall be entirely secret. Chapters shall be held in the oratory, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, so that our Blessed Lord shall as it were, preside over them, and, therefore, all directions shall be carried on in a low tone, and with all charity. The Sisters shall give an account of their spiritual state at least three times in the year to a regular spiritual director appointed by the Bishop for the whole province, which director should not be the local pastor.

V. Of Employments. - The Sisters must hold themselves in readiness to go wherever they are sent in the Diocese where they are established. The Bishops shall be in every case the Superior, and each house shall be under the management and control of the Sister in charge. They are never to go alone into any parish, but they may in extreme cases go in a community of two. Three or four is the desirable number for a mission, but unless the school be large, all the four need not be employed in teaching. They can in turn, as the Little Sister shall decide, visit the sick or attend the poor, prisoners, afflicted persons, or in other ways as described in the Chapter on daily duties. They are to be guided by the advice or suggestion of the Local Pastor, and look up to him with the utmost docility for guidance and advice in all things which do not absolutely interfere with the observance of their rule. When, however, the community consists of no more than two or three, Postulants may be received by them, but not Novices, and when such subjects are considered fit to commence the Noviciate, they should do so in houses with larger communities. In cities or wherever the schools are not removed at a great distance from each other, they shall all live in one house, and walk from thence to the school in the morning in twos and threes and return in the same manner in the evening, taking care that as they are thus without the precious advantages of enclosure, to avoid speaking to anyone in the street, even to each other, and to proceed with downcast eyes and grave deportment to keep themselves in the presence of God as they go along, and this they can best do by beseeching God to help them. They must not loiter nor call at any place, but walk at a moderate pace in the shortest way to their destination. In leaving the house at any other time, either for recreation or to visit any sick child belonging to the schools, they shall observe the same rule, and try to place before their minds Jesus crucified, and offer his precious blood for the conversion of sinners. The Sisters shall not make or receive visits, and considering how much their occupations in the school will tend to distract them, their Convent shall be their retreat, where, if lay persons enter, they shall be received by the Little Sister, who, after answering them, shall, if their presence be a cause of the interruption of any observance, inform them that the rule does not allow them to receive unnecessary visits in the house. They shall, however, be accessible to the children at all times in imitation of Our Blessed Lord, who has said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." Persons who come on business, or the parents of children, shall be seen at the school either before or after school hours. The local pastor may be received at any reasonable time, indeed the Sisters should be honored by a visit from one who holds the place of Jesus Christ, in their regard, but they must never invite the Local Pastor to their refectory, or accept invitations to meals from him. Any person can, as charity or hospitality requires, be provided with a meal in the recreation room or parlor; but the Sisters must

not remain with them while they partake of it. The Sisters shall perform all the offices of their household for themselves. To one shall be allotted the preparation of the food, to another the refectory and recreation room, kitchen, or scullery. The Sister who has care of the oratory or dormitory shall wash the dishes. Each in turn shall have these offices for a week at a time, but where the work is heavy, they shall be ready to help each other in all charity, as in the Holy Family over which our glorious patriarch and patron St. Joseph ruled. All shall be obedient to the Little Sister, who shall preside in chapter in the oratory, and shall take charge of the accounts, or appoint another to do so. In large communities the Little Sister shall appoint assistants in the scullery, kitchen, and other offices, and all may assist as the Little Sister may think fit in preparing the dinner after school hours, but with silence and recollection. All accounts must be made up at the end of the week and paid at least every month. Longer than this the Sisters should not allow debts to accumulate. The Little Sister may be assisted in her duties by a Mistress of the Externs and a Bursar. She may also appoint a Mistress of the Novices where such an office is required by the number of novices. The duties of each of these Sisters will be hereafter described. It being of the first importance that the Sisters should be perfectly detached from their own wills, obedient to the rule, and submissive to the Little Sister, they should be exercised in these virtues during the noviciate. But either in these cases, or any other, no exercise shall be made which would be likely to wound charity. If the Little Sister sees that any command gives pain, or causes distress, she should withdraw it until a more favorable occasion, for like the Holy Family, they must love and cherish each other, and bear with one another's weaknesses. Prudent use should be made of occasions to teach the religious, especially the novices, not to be too much attached to their own wills, but never in such a way as to exasperate them, or under circumstances more likely to provoke irritation than submission. If the subjects of the institute are found to be self-opinionated, and impatient of direction and control, then the Mistress of the Novices shall modestly make known these defects in Chapter, and the religious formally and charitably admonished, and if without fruit, it shall be for the community to decide whether such defects should exclude the novice from profession. The profession may be deferred from this cause from month to month, but at the end of six months if no permanent amendment has taken place, then the novice shall be quietly withdrawn from the Institute, and never be readmitted. For obedience and charity must reign in the houses, and even correction must be obtained without the sacrifice of the peace of the Sisters. If novices are found to have bad health they should not be easily dismissed on that account. Some light employment may be found them, and as long as they do not impede the observance they shall be kept as charity shall dictate; in order that the prayers and afflictions of such may benefit the whole Institute.

VI. *Of the Daily Duties.* – The Sisters shall rise at five in the morning, at the call of the Little Sister (who shall bear that name to avoid the use of the word Superior), who shall say aloud, “Now is the hour to rise from sleep, for our salvation is nearer than when we believed.” To which the Sisters shall answer, “Thanks be to God.” The Little Sister—“O! Sacred Heart of Jesus.” All—“Make us love Thee daily more and more. To Thee we offer all our actions of this day in union with the intentions of Thy Sacred Heart.” They shall then rise without any delay, making the first sacrifice to God of their actions by rising with promptitude, and not giving way to indulgence by lying for a moment in bed after they are called. If any Sister neglects this she shall accuse herself of it in the refectory upon her knees before dinner. Having dressed and washed themselves they shall go at once to the Oratory. When all are assembled, the Little Sister, or one appointed every week in turn, shall read the morning prayer, the daily offering, and the meditation. They shall then continue in pious meditation for about an hour. They shall then hear Mass, and then go to their daily offices of cleaning the house, preparing the meal, &c. Mass, however, may be heard at six in the morning, and their meditation terminate at the end, or on

Holy Communion days, at the end of their thanksgiving, which shall last at least twenty minutes. They shall breakfast between seven and eight, and then read their office, Prime and Terce, and prepare for their classes. At the proper time they shall proceed to the school, and when arrived, they may occupy themselves with the children as they arrive in encouraging them and exciting their hearts to Piety by little pious conversations and instructions, never losing an opportunity of impressing upon their young minds religious maxims and rules of conduct. Let them in these and all other exercises remember that the conversation of St. Joseph and Jesus is to be their model, and so they are to make use even of their recreations to form the character of God's little ones.

They are to make themselves the companions of the children, and not assume the authority of superiors except in the most gentle manner. They are to be moderately grave, yet cheerful, making their children happy by the way in which they show in practice that the service of the Lord is sweet. Let them remember that children will be attracted to Jesus by a bright smiling exterior, but would be repelled by too much gloom, or spoiled by boisterous hilarity. The Sisters must not allow themselves to be irritated by the noise or perverseness of the children, but should speak gently, remembering what a holy office it is to form all those tender souls to virtue. They should talk cheerfully to their charges, so as to gain their young hearts, and, bearing in mind that the besetting sins of children in school are the germs of sloth, jealousy, vanity, and want of charity one towards another, they should try by word and example to eradicate these defects from them. They should also speak much to them of devotion to the glorious Mother of God, to St. Joseph, and St. John the Baptist, the companions of our dear Lord's infancy, and the members of the Holy Family. Even in their most tender age they should begin to prepare their young minds for the reception of the Blessed Sacrament, speaking of it so as to get them to form a high idea of it beforehand. In short; they should do their utmost to make the little ones of the Church the means of drawing God's blessing upon all, and the seeds of the future perfection of their generation. In teaching they should take every pains, leaving nothing untried as a matter of justice to the parents, that the children may progress in worldly learning. To this they are bound as a duty they owe to God and their neighbor, and they should remember that the Church can only keep its hold against the wicked, secular instruction of the world, by offering a superior education, which it is their mission to accomplish. No matter, therefore, how tiresome, or how tedious it may be, or how difficult, they must patiently use every effort to make the children learn and see that they understand what they learn. They must, however, rely more upon God than themselves to effect this, and so let them continually raise their hearts and minds to God while they are teaching, and ask St. Joseph to assist them when they are in any difficulty, and that glorious Patriarch will presently so help them, that even dull children will learn better under the Sisters than elsewhere. The Sisters must strictly adhere to the order and method laid down for them, and not follow their own caprice or wishes however much better they may seem, for the devil often causes disorder and confusion by representing things to be more advantageous than they are. Every hour a hymn should be sung, and the Sisters should impress on the children the necessity of visiting the Blessed Sacrament every day. To promote devotion they shall teach singing, but no instrumental music, nor foreign language. Where it is possible the children should assist at Mass before school, but if this cannot be done, some little pious reading, adapted to children, shall be made instead; and the Sisters may from time to time interrupt their teaching for the purpose of telling the little ones some pious history, which may move their hearts to devotion. At the Angelus the school shall be closed for luncheon and midday recreation, This should last an hour. The children should be encouraged not to go home for this refreshment, but to take it at school, and to make their recreation together. This will avoid an excessive wandering or loitering through the streets. One of the Sisters must always remain with the children during this recreation, join in their amusements, and see that charity and good feeling reign over all. The

Sisters must take some refectation during the same time which they should bring from the Convent for the purpose. They must take sufficient nourishment, and this meal should be ample, of simple material, such as bread and butter, cheese, honey, and fruit. They shall also at this time pray in private Sext and None of the Little Office. In the afternoon the school shall close with prayer and having seen that all is left in perfect order and cleanliness, in which monitors shall assist, the Sisters take home the children in bands, according to the various quarters of the town, and not leave them until they have dispersed separately somewhat near their own homes. Then they shall visit the Blessed Sacrament, and return home, silence commencing immediately after leaving the school. Their first care on reaching the Convent shall be to say the Little Office, Vespers and Compline, and the Rosary . They shall then take some exercise, if required, or to serve the purposes of the Institute, such as to visit parents whose children have missed their attendance at school, to visit sick children, and such like occupations. As soon as possible they shall return home, and the Sister who has charge of the kitchen, and who shall have remained at home for the purpose, shall then serve dinner.

VII. *Sunday Observance.* – Sunday is the day on which the Sisters should consider that their sole during is to devote themselves to the spiritual interests of their holy charges. The Sisters in charge of schools shall on that day hear Mass and communicate at an early hour, so as to devote themselves to the children more effectually. As, however, in most instances the Sisters will have to hear Mass and communicate at the parish Church, they shall arrange beforehand at the weekly school with those of their scholars who are going to receive our Lord for them to meet at a convenient hour before Mass at the Convent. When they are assembled, or when it is time, they shall proceed two and two, accompanied by the Sisters, to the church, and they shall remain together, and communicate together, and make their thanksgiving together, the Sisters having every care that they perform this great act with the utmost reverence and devotion and to the spiritual profit of their souls. One quarter of an hour after Mass shall be spent in thanksgiving, and then the children shall go to the Convent with the Sisters and partake of a plain refectation in the community room with the Sisters; or, if they are too many, shall return to their own homes, though the Sisters should make an effort to keep them with them on that day. After breakfast, all the children whose parents consent to it, and to this they should be exhorted, should assemble again at the Convent, where the Sisters at the proper time shall accompany them to Mass. They shall take care to watch over these children during this august Sacrifice, and see that they are devout and attentive, being very careful to allow no faults in these things to grow up in their young days, to the ruin of their Piety in after life. After Mass they shall accompany them to their homes as on the school days. They shall then take lunch and say their office, and after a visit to the Blessed Sacrament shall go to the church to await the children for instruction in Christian Doctrine. They shall then, with the assistance of teachers, give out the lessons, hymns, &c., from two until four, and at the end shall conduct the children home again in the usual manner. The remaining time, until Vespers and Benediction, the Sisters shall spend either in visiting parents whose children have not attended school, sick children, prisoners, or those sick in the hospitals. They shall not conduct the children to Vespers but if any who have made their First Communion shall come to them before Benediction, the Sisters may make recreation with them, taking care to make those moments occasions for filling the children with love of God ; without, however, wearying them, but in a sweet and affectionate manner calculated to win their hearts.

VIII. *Of the Meals.* – Everything about the table shall breathe the poverty of the House of Nazareth. The drinking Cups shall be of tin, or earthenware. The knives and forks of steel, the delf of the commonest earthenware, or tin. The Sisters shall use no tablecloth, but a table-napkin

for each, and no unnecessary condiments. Meat will be allowed on all days except the fasts of the Church, and Wednesdays and Saturdays; the former in honor of St. Joseph; the latter in honor of the glorious Mother of God. In addition to meat or fish some little preserves or soup may be allowed, and fruit. They shall not however, eat fruit during the novena before the feast of St. Joseph, and that preceding the feast of the Immaculate Conception. They shall never, under any circumstances, speak at meals, but at the commencement the Sister in charge shall read one chapter of one of the four gospels in succession or the Acts of the Apostles, and then each in turn shall read aloud out of the life of some Saint, or other pious book, that so their minds may be directed to heavenly things while refreshing the body. After dinner they shall visit the Oratory for a few minutes, and then have recreation for about an hour. They shall then have meditation, or an instruction, and then study for about two hours, or attend to a night class, or work room, as the Little Sister shall arrange. They shall then recite Matins and Lauds in the Oratory, and night prayers, with meditation until 10, when they shall retire to rest. Should any Sister wish to continue her prayer for an hour or half an hour after the community, the Little Sister may give her permission provided such exercise does not interfere either with her health or daily duties. Great caution should, however, be exercised in according this permission to novices, as they are apt to be led away by their fervor. The best rule in their case is not to accord such a privilege to those who show a tendency to vanity or self-will.

IX. *Of Poverty.* –The Sisters must be contented with the poorest houses, fare, and habits. They can keep no money nor property, beyond a second habit and breviary. The books shall be all in common, and the clothing as well. They ought not to require a habit oftener than once in six months, and they must not be ashamed to wear one that is patched and darned. They must not accept property for their houses, and they should not easily receive rich postulants, as abuses in this most beautiful portion of the Institute easily creep in. They must not wish for good materials in their habits or furniture, even on the plea that such things last longer, but only what poor people can afford. Let them have no confidence at all in money, but remember that poverty is the ornament of their Institute, and should be worn by them as the brightest gem which they can wear in the word, as the badge of their Divine Spouse. If postulants, who are rich, wish to join the Institute, they must resign the use of their property entirely while they are with the Sisters, and the Institute must benefit, in no way by it, for God will have his work subsist without the aid of men, and it is to Him alone the Sisters must look for aid, otherwise it would folly to enter into a struggle with the world, which has so much more money than they.

X *Of Obedience.* – The Sisters must learn to submit themselves absolutely to the Little Sister, never refusing any command which is not sinful. The only record which we have of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph is that “He was subject to them.” This must be their guide. The Local Pastor may make suggestions to them, but these suggestions must always come through the Little Sister. In case he should ask anything inconsistent with the rules the Little Sister may write to the Bishop, or to the person to whom the Bishop has confided the direction of the Institute, and accept his decision as final, provided that it does not violate the rule, for then an appeal should be made to a General Chapter composed of delegated Little Sisters from every diocese held under sanction of the Bishop where the Sister Guardian-General resides. The Sister Guardian-General shall be elected by the Sisters. She shall be assisted in her office by two Sisters as Consultors. They shall have authority over all the houses of the Institute, and be elected every six years at a General Chapter. All the professed religious shall vote, and can send in their votes to the General Chapter in writing. Neither the Sister Guardian-General nor the Consultors shall be entitled to the least exemption from the rule on account of their offices. A Province should

contain at least ten houses, unless it be at such a distance from other Provinces as to require a separate Provincial. Each Province shall be governed by a Sister Provincial, who shall, under the Bishop, or his representative, regulate the affairs of the communities of that Province, Out of Chapter time she may give her permission to the removal of Sisters from house to house, receive postulants, establish new foundations, and watch over the general observance of the rule throughout the Province. This Sister shall be appointed by the Sisters Guardian General. She shall be in all things obedient to the rule as the least of the Sisters, and shall in every matter inform and, when time allows it, consult the Sister Guardian-General. In the schools the Sisters should act with the submission, obedience, and readiness of soldiers in an army. They may in Chapter give the Sisters the benefit of their opinions, but with diffidence in their own judgment, and without vexation if the Little Sister should follow her own counsel. Let each Sister try to do what she is asked with cheerfulness and leave God to reward her if any duty is imposed which she does not like. Never let her refuse, but in case great inconvenience should arise from the observance of any command, let the Sister, modestly and with diffidence, make known what she thinks, and leave the rest to God. Either in Chapter, recreation, or any other occasion, never let the Sisters defend their opinions with haste or intemperance, for these things are destructive of the charity and holy peace which should reign in a Convent.

XI. *Of the Chapter.* – Once a week a Chapter should be held in the Oratory, when each Sister shall in turn accuse herself of some of her faults against the rule and receive any admonition that the Little Sister shall give. After this a Council shall be held on the general affairs of the school and the progress of the children, and the measures to be taken for remedying evils, if there be any. Every year the Sisters shall meet together for a retreat at the end of the vacation, and then Little Sisters shall be appointed for each house. A Provincial Chapter shall be held every three years, at which only the Little Sisters shall assist. They may add constitutions to the Institute for observance in the Province, but they shall not change the spirit of the rule. These constitutions must be submitted to the Sister Guardian-General and the Consultors for approval before adoption. A general Chapter shall be held every six years, at which a Sister Guardian-General shall be chosen. This Chapter shall frame constitutions, or approve of those framed by the provinces, and generally regulate the affairs of the Institute.

XII. *Of Vacations.* – About Christmas there shall be a vacation. At the end of that time, or at the beginning, a retreat of one week shall take place. During this vacation the Sisters shall try as much to recruit their piety as their strength. They must not pass it in the houses of seculars. Their object, however, should not be distraction but rather union with God, for that is the soul's true refreshment. If the Sisters become well possessed of the idea that the highest pleasure is in perfect abstraction from worldly things, and close communication with God by prayer and conformity of will with His divine will, there will be no danger from recreations to the Institute. At the end of the vacation there should be a Chapter, at the end of which the schools shall reopen. At Easter time a holiday shall be given from Palm Sunday to Low Sunday. All Saturdays, the Feasts of the Annunciation, Visitation, Help of Christians, Assumption, the Glorious Patriarch St. Joseph and St. John the Baptist, shall be holidays. The Sisters on those days shall make an extra visit to the Blessed Sacrament of half-an-hour, and visit the hospitals and prisons, besides giving up an extra hour to study in the morning and afternoon.

XIII. *Of Novices, Externs, etc.* – In every diocese there shall be Houses of Noviciate, where postulants shall be trained for the school. These shall be supported by the other houses of the diocese, or by alms. The Mistress of Novices shall be appointed by the Sister Guardian-General, and have power to send away or receive postulants, with the consent of the Sister Provincial and the local Chapter. In this house also shall live, if the Sister Guardian shall so

choose, those Sisters who by long service or ill-health are incapable of working for the external interests of the Institute. The Sisters, however, should endeavor to labor to the last, and for this St. Joseph will give them strength. When old and incapable of teaching, they may help to keep order in the schools, or take charge of the children during recreation. It shall be the constant effort of the Sisters on all occasions to lighten each other's burdens, especially those of the old and feeble, striving to make each one's infirmities their own by their sympathy and kindness. The novices as well as postulants shall teach with the Sisters. They shall in all things conform to the rule as the Sisters and shall make their recreation together. The Mistress of the Novices must have great diffidence in her own strength, and great confidence in God, and for this end pray continually for aid to discharge her duties effectually. Those of whom she has charge are already chosen by their vocation for great things, and she must fit them for them. First of all, she must be careful to watch attentively their dispositions, so as to see are they really called to the life of sacrifice which they have embraced. This she may know best by their sincerity, simplicity, absence of human respect in performing their actions, charity, and fidelity to small things in their rule. If they are called she must remember that this is but the beginning of the work. They may observe the rule and be faithful to its external requirements, but she must try to make them dead to the world and belong completely to God. By advice, by example, and by exhorting them to the constant exercise of prayer, she must get them to learn that the true religious has no thought, no wish, and no desire except to love, and serve, and know God. She does not care for external pleasures; she does not take any delight in the beauties of the earth; she does not want to see and converse with relatives or friends, or even with creatures at all; she does not care to hear news; none of these things give her pleasure, because she delights in God alone. Such a spirit is not the result of mortification but of the purest love of God, which makes her see Him in all things and under every circumstance. The Mistress of the Novices must often speak of heavenly things to her charges; indeed she may hardly speak of anything else. She must make them love their duties, and take an interest in them besides trying to bear each other's burdens. She must point out to them especially that their duty is to do all the good they can, and never see an evil without trying how they may remedy it, and thus to take a most lively interest in every external work of charity in the gaols, poor-houses, and hospitals, so as to leave nothing untried, no matter how difficult, provided it may advance the glory of God, the good of souls, and the prevention of sin in the world. This is their mission, for though the Institute has its peculiar duties, yet the religious must do any good that they can and make their charity all-embracing. Let them, therefore, like our Blessed Lord, reject no one. He allowed even Judas to remain with Him, and so the Sisters must pay attention to all; and when importuned by even impostors let them not be rejected, as there may be a chance of doing them good.

XIV. *Of Boarders.* – Boarders may not be taken, except in the rarest and most exceptional cases. They must be the children of poor parents who have no other means of educating them – that is, no day schools to which they can send them. They must pay no more than is sufficient for their maintenance, so as to clear the Sisters of the cost of their charge, and no more. If, when the expenses are calculated, it is found that the house is making a profit out of the boarders, the sum must be reduced. Even under these conditions, seeing how much such impede the regular observance of a community, they must not be taken unless under the most urgent reasons, such as the salvation of children whose faith would be otherwise exposed to grave perils. The Sisters, may, however, take charge of Orphanages, or houses for the shelter of destitute persons, the sick, only they must take care to go from motives of the highest charity to be servants to the little ones of Jesus Christ. They may also take charge of poor and destitute orphans in the district where they have schools ; indeed they should never refuse such, provided they are destitute, and the Sisters should support them by begging the means to feed and clothe them. They must then take

no more than their food and clothing from the funds of any institutions over which they have charge, and they must, while there, follow their rule as closely as they can. In general, lay people may not be much in their houses, but when their Oratory is large they may assist at Mass there.

XV. Of the spirit of the Institute. – In addition to the objects of the Institute, the Sisters shall consider it their especial vocation to promote three things: 1st. Devotion to the Sacred Heart, getting Christians to unite their actions with those of His Divine Heart, and to obtain for Him love and reparation. 2nd. To light up a burning devotion to Mary, and to get men to honor her Divine Son through her Immaculate Heart, and to inflame all Christians with love for her and an ardent desire to make the world resound with her praises. 3rd. To obtain relief in every possible way for the holy souls in purgatory by the suffrages of Christians in their behalf. The spirit of the Institute is a spirit of poverty and prayer. Of poverty, over which the Sisters must watch so as never to admit any relaxation of the rule in this respect. Of prayer, in detachment from exterior things, thus leading to purity of heart and union with God. This spirit can only be obtained by a perfect mortification of the passions, and a renunciation of all unnecessary gratifications of the eyes, tongue, and other senses, which would take their hearts from God alone.

I approve of the above Rules for the Institute of the Sisterhood of St. Joseph for use in my Diocese.

December 17, 1868.

+ L. B. SHEIL,

Bishop of Adelaide.