

## (1941) Regulations (English version)<sup>1</sup>

### I REGULATIONS

#### WHAT IS OPUS DEI: ITS AIMS AND MEANS

##### Art. 1.

1. The Work of God —Opus Dei—is a Catholic Association of women and men who, living in the midst of the world, seek the Christian perfection through the sanctification of the ordinary work.

Because of the conviction that the man was created “ut operaretur” (Genesis 2:15)<sup>2</sup>, Opus Dei associates are obliged not to abandon their professional work or some equivalent activity, even if they hold a good economic position.

2. The means for reaching the supernatural end are, first, an interior prayer life and a life of sacrifice, according to the Regime and Spirit approved<sup>3</sup> by the Holy Church and second, to carry out its professional and social activities with the highest right intention.

#### CATEGORIES OF MEMBERS<sup>4</sup>

##### Art. 2.

1. There are three categories of members in Opus Dei: Inscript, Supernumeraries, and Numeraries.
2. Inscript associates are obliged to practice daily examination of conscience and mental prayer (half an hour).
3. Supernumerary associates are obliged to practice daily one hour of mental prayer.
4. Numerary associates are obliged to practice daily one hour of mental prayer and to fill positions on the government of Opus Dei.

##### Art. 3.

1. Neither secular priest<sup>5</sup>, nor male or female religious can be admitted as associates of Opus Dei under any pretext whatsoever.
2. In the same way, will likewise not be accepted as associates, under any pretext, those who either are or were pupils of a Seminary or Apostolic School, or have been religious, even if they were just novices or postulants.

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Gervasio and E.B.E. The Caeremoniale is not translated. We are very aware that this translation can be improved. However, it should be noted that these Regulations of 1941 are written sometimes in a confused language. Then, it is not easy to translate them into English. It is as if the author of these Regulations was in a rush, without enough time to improve the draft. Finally, the footnotes are not part of the Regulations.

<sup>2</sup> «The LORD God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it»

<sup>3</sup> Part II and V of these Regulations.

<sup>4</sup> These categories correspond roughly to the current nomenclature: *inscript* = the current supernumerary; *supernumerary* = the current numerary; *numerary* = the current “inscript”, numerary members who are entrusted with particular task in Opus Dei’s government (cf. Catechism, nro. 49, 2010 Edition); *elector* = elector (those who are able to elect a new Father or prelate). It is not included here the “associate” category (in Spanish, *oblato* or *agregado*), which will appear for the first time in the Constitutions of 1950.

<sup>5</sup> It refers to diocesan priest. That changed after 1943, with the creation of the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross.

3. Those who take ecclesiastical studies and reach the priesthood after being Opus Dei associates do not cease of being part of the Work.

## **GOVERNING BODIES**

### Art. 4.

1. The governing national bodies of Opus Dei are the Board and the Assembly<sup>6</sup>.
2. The Board consists of a President, a Secretary and three Vocals.
3. The Assembly is formed by numerary associates and among them are ordinarily elected the members of the Board.

### Art. 5.

1. The Board shall hold one ordinary meeting every three months and extraordinary ones when at least three of its members request it.
2. Missions competing the Board are:
  - 1) To ensure that Opus Dei complies with the legal conditions required by law.
  - 2) To provide the necessary funds to pay for annual expenses of Opus Dei.
  - 3) To offer suffrages for departed associates

### Art. 6.

1. Vacancies occurring in the Board during the nine years term of the mandate — owing to death or resignation— are filled in accordance with the remaining members of the Board.
2. The members of the Board can be reelected in the same position one or more terms.

### Art. 7.

The Assembly shall meet every nine years, only for the purpose of electing members of the Board. It shall meet extraordinarily, convened by three numerary associates, in the case that all members of the Board were missing, for the purpose of appointing a new Board.

### Art. 8.

In the Assembly and the Board, agreements are established by an absolute majority vote.

## **SUFFRAGE AND BURIALS**

### Art. 9.

1. Opus Dei members will endeavor to take into legal form their last will. They are obliged to arrange a modest burial for themselves, without vanities of any kind.
2. The President shall provide that Gregorian Masses be celebrated immediately after knowing the decease of an associate. He shall communicate the demise to the rest of associates so that they can offer suffrages according with their zeal.

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<sup>6</sup> It seems that the Board and the Assembly do not correspond to any current structure of Opus Dei. The President of the Board must not be confused with the Father. The Board could probably be the current “patronage” (in Spanish, *patronatos*), whose functions are established in the next art. 5.

## **INCOME AND EXPENSES**

Art.10.

1. Opus Dei is supported financially by the handouts of its members.
2. The installments fees will be of little consideration, since the expenses, as a result of a purely spiritual labor, should always be very little.
3. The Board will not have any capital.
4. If, after having paid the expenses, the fiscal year ended with surplus, it will be given as installments subsidy to the Bishop of the diocese where The Work has its domicile.
5. Opus Dei cannot receive legacies of any kind, nor can admit pious foundations under any pretext whatsoever, nor to own real estate.<sup>7</sup>

## **DOMICILE**

Art. 11.

1. Opus Dei has only one national domicile.

## **COLLECTIVE HUMILITY**

Art. 12.

1. An essential feature of Opus Dei is the collective humility of its members.
2. To this humility do not be damage,
  - 1) It is forbidden to edit booklet or publications, of any kind, on behalf of The Work.
  - 2) It is forbidden also for members to create and wearing a distinctive or badge.
  - 3) We advise members against talking about The Work to people outside this undertaking, that for being supernatural, it should be quiet and modest.

## **DISOLUTION**

Art. 13.

In the case of dissolution, Opus Dei and its assets, if there were any, would be handed over to the most Reverend Bishop of the diocese where The Work has its domicile.

## **II REGIME**

### **AIMS AND MEANS**

Art. 1

1. Opus Dei seeks the sanctification of its members and the salvation of every soul.
2. Members exercise apostolate ordinarily holding offices in public Administration<sup>8</sup>, offices that they have to serve with exemplar loyalty.
3. Interior life and intellectual formation are the means used by Opus Dei members for achieving theirs goals.

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<sup>7</sup> Civil societies (called here Auxiliary Societies, cf. Regime, Art. 33) works as figurehead of Opus Dei.

<sup>8</sup> Only in Public Administration? That is very curious. What about the manual workers? Here, Opus Dei seems to be only for white-collar workers.

## CATEGORIES OF MEMBERS

### Art. 2

1. There are three categories of members in Opus Dei: 1) Inscriptis 2) Supernumeraries, and 3) Numeraries.
2. In the first category may be admitted men and women married or single<sup>9</sup>. As long as they remain unmarried, men and women may be part of the second category. For the third category only can be elected men being part of the second category<sup>10</sup>.

### Art. 3

Supernumerary women generally may dedicate themselves to specific Opus Dei apostolate. In that case they are called just supernumeraries. In case they dedicate exclusively to domestic service in activities run by Opus Dei members, they are and they are called servants.<sup>11</sup>

### Art. 4

Supernumerary members —men and women—can consecrate<sup>12</sup> themselves to the service of The Work temporary, in which case it is said that they made the Oblation, or perpetually<sup>13</sup>, in which case it is said that they made the Fidelity.

## ADMISSION AND DEMISSION OF MEMBERS

### Art. 5

1. Nobody will be admitted in Opus Dei without having previously collaborated during a certain period of time with some of the apostolates developed by members.
2. Cannot be admitted in The Work those who have not in their immediate ancestry three generations of Catholics, at least in one of the maternal or paternal lineage.
3. Neither can be admitted those who have received baptism being adults.

### Art. 6

1. Superiors of The Work will seek not to expel any of the members.
2. The dismissal of those who have lost the spirit will be facilitated.
3. If they have lost the spirit and do not want voluntarily to go out of The Work, one must proceed to demise them with great charity.

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<sup>9</sup> This confirm that Inscriptis are the current Supernumeraries.

<sup>10</sup> Nothing here has changed: only Numeraries can be part of the Opus Dei government.

<sup>11</sup> The current Auxiliary or Assistant Numeraries.

<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to notice that Escrivá uses the word «consecrate» instead of «incorporation». In 1941, inscript associate (the current supernumeraries) did not consecrate to Opus Dei (neither by Oblation, nor by Fidelity). Here, «consecrate» only refers to the current numeraries and inscripts.

<sup>13</sup> Temporary and perpetual are terms proper to religious regime (temporary profession and perpetual profession).

## ABOUT PRIESTS

### Art. 7

1. Members of Opus Dei receiving priestly ordination<sup>14</sup> will engage specially in spiritual formation of the other members of The Work.
2. They will observe in their interior life and apostolic work the Regulation, Regime, Order, Customs, Spirit and Ceremonial of Opus Dei and special norms.

## CHARACTERISTICS

### Art. 8

1. Opus Dei has no external activities of any kind; it only cares about formation of its members.
2. All the apostolic activities of Opus Dei members will be exercised immediately through public official activities or mediate legal associations opportunely constituted by members, adapted always to the circumstances of time and place without uniformity.

### Art. 9

1. Notwithstanding the sweet duties of fourth commandment, supernumerary or numerary members are obliged to stay respect theirs consanguineous families as if they were religious<sup>15</sup> and will live generally separated from their families<sup>16</sup> so that they can involve more intensively in apostolate.
2. Opus Dei will take care of the parents of supernumerary and numerary members generously with economic support, as far as they need it<sup>17</sup>. That does not imply a juridical obligation.

### Art. 10

Members of Opus Dei with their behaviour, at any time, will display their affection, obedience and reverence to the Rev. Ordinary of the diocese where they have their personal residency.<sup>18</sup>

## PATRONS

### Art. 11

1. Archangels Saint Michael, Saint Michael and Saint Raphael; the Apostles Saint Peter, Saint Paul and Saint John are patrons of Opus Dei.
2. The whole work of Opus Dei associates with youths is under the patronage of Saint Raphael and Saint John.
3. Under the patronage of Saint Gabriel and Saint Paul are the activities aimed to keep as collaborators in apostolic enterprises those who, having received their formation from Opus Dei associates, do not consider themselves called to consecrate their lives to Opus Dei.

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<sup>14</sup> G. Rocca observes, «the structure of pious union did not allow the incardination of its own priests» (cf. o.c., Chapter II). Conscious of such limitation, the Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá —the one who approved these 1941 norms— suggested creating *lay chaplaincies*, so that Opus Dei members could be ordained as chaplains of Opus Dei. Escrivá did not like such a solution. That is why Opus Dei was transformed in 1943 into a *society of common life without vows*. First priests were ordained in 1944 *at the service* —that is the ordination title— of the society.

<sup>15</sup> The analogy is repeated frequently throughout the Regulations.

<sup>16</sup> It is highlighted the “separation from the family” rather than the “constitution of a new family”.

<sup>17</sup> In my twenty-two years as a member, I never knew that Opus Dei had economically helped the parents of a numerary. On the contrary, parents had to help their numeraries children.

<sup>18</sup> This article seems to be written just to make the bishop happy.

4. Under the patronage of Saint Michael and Saint Peter are specially commended the very<sup>19</sup> associates of Opus Dei.

#### Art. 12

1. In the case of men, the Work of Saint Raphael is oriented to young university students or students of “Escuelas Superiores” (High Engineering Schools). That is the most powerful work environment and, so to speak, the seedbed of the Work.
2. The Work of Saint Gabriel, by employing collaborators who receive [from Opus Dei] catholic professional criteria, etc., acts in the different social strata ramifying into them.
3. The Work of Saint Michael<sup>20</sup> educates numerary and supernumerary associates and seeks solving particular problems in educational, professional, social, etc. fields.

#### Art. 13

1. In the case of women, the Work of Saint Raphael operates with the immediate goal of forming good Christian family mothers. It develops its activities in rural areas, through farming, etc., and in towns, with homes, residencies, etc.
2. The Work of Saint Gabriel employs collaborators who were part of the Work of Saint Raphael and are dedicated to the apostolate of propaganda (both written and oral formats) with publishing, libraries, etc.; they also practice, in particular, the effective and quiet apostolate of conversations, without drawing attention, creating small groups among different social classes and providing them Catholic criteria.
3. The Work of Saint Michael ensures the formation of female supernumerary associates<sup>21</sup> and the domestic service of the several activities developed by the associates of Opus Dei.

### DIRECTIVE ORGANS

#### Art. 14

1. Ordinarily, Opus Dei President is a priest, just called Father, with prohibition of using any kind of special treatment.
2. The office is for life.

#### Art. 15

For his counselling, the Father has the Senate<sup>22</sup>, composed by the General Secretary, three Vice-secretaries and at least one Vocal —*Missus*— for each Territory.

#### Art. 16

1. The General Secretary is the associate with more authority in the Work after the Father and the Vice-president, if there is one.

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<sup>19</sup> The “very associates” are numeraries. That is confirmed in the Constitutions of 1950, which exclude the current supernumerary as members, in the strict sense of the term.

<sup>20</sup> Today is very different: «Numeraries are those clerics and laity who, by a special motion and gift of God live apostolic celibacy (cf. Matthew 19:11). They devote themselves to the particular apostolic undertakings of the Prelature, with all their strength and with maximum personal availability to work. Ordinarily, they live in Centers of Opus Dei in order to care for the apostolic undertakings and to dedicate themselves to the formation of the other faithful of the Prelature» (cf. Statutes, n. 8 §1).

<sup>21</sup> Auxiliary Numeraries.

<sup>22</sup> This is the current General Council.

2. He attends along with the Father to all the meetings referring to the three branches<sup>23</sup> of the Work, the General Technical Advisory (Asesoría General Técnica) and the Central Advisory (Asesoría Central).
3. After hearing the Senate, he is freely appointed and removed by the Father among the electors.
4. He ceases after nine years.

Art. 17

1. Every Vice-secretary cares about the activities of the associates in every branch of the Work. They are named Vice-secretary of the Work of Saint Michael, Vice-secretary of the Work of Saint Gabriel and Vice-secretary of the Work of Saint Raphael.
2. The Father freely appoints and dismisses the Vice-secretaries, among the elector members, after hearing the Senate.
3. The Vice-secretaries cease every three years.

Art. 18

1. *Missi* study specially the issues concerning their Territory and those other questions entrusted to them by the Father or by the Senate.
2. They are usually in charge of the inspection of the associates' activities of their Territory.
3. *Missi* are freely appointed by the Father among the elector associates, after hearing the Senate.
4. They cease every five years.

Art. 19

1. Habitually two *Custodes* must live with the Father as a family.<sup>24</sup>
2. The *Custos Dignior* will care about everything referring to the interior life of the Father and will warn him [the Father] with respectful freedom whatever he considers appropriate in that order of things.
3. The other *Custos* will care about everything referring Father's body health, nutrition, clothes, etc. and will has as well the duty of warning him whatever he considers [relevant].
4. The *Custodes*, apart from the case considered in Art. 22, 3, do not play any role in the Senate, unless they hold an office conferring such a right.
5. They are appointed by the Father, from a list of nine names of elector associates proposed by the Senate.
6. They cease every five years.

Art. 20

1. Being vacant the office of President by death or resignation, the government of the Work passes extraordinarily to the General Secretary or, in his absence, to the Senate's *Dignior*.
2. The General Secretary will gather the Senate in three days' time since the vacant was produced, and will call the elector associates in order to elect the new father in fifteen days' time, computed from the day when the call was made.

Art. 21

1. Every elector associate participates with voice and vote.
2. Ordinarily the elector Priests are eligible.

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Art. 11.

<sup>24</sup> This is in force. The *Custodes* appear in the Constitutions of 1950 (art. 33), and in the Statutes of 1982 (art. 132 § 6). The term was probably taken from religious.

3. In case the elector priests were less than nine, a lay<sup>25</sup> associate could be elected President.
4. Those who for whatever reason were not present at the election meeting have no right to vote.
5. The election is held by an absolute majority of the votes.

#### Art. 22

1. For reasons of sickness or old age of the Father, or for other serious cause, it could be necessary to appoint a Vice President.
2. This appointment will be made either at request of the Father, with the favorable vote of the Senate, or at request of the Senate.
3. In order to force the General Secretary to call Vice-President elections, the Senate's request has to be signed at least by two-thirds of those who compose the Senate and by one of the *Custodes*.
4. The request, with the terms indicated in the precedent paragraph, is equivalent to declare the inability of the President, unless, after a change of circumstances, under the request of one of the *Custodes*, the Senate by an absolute majority determines another thing.
5. If the election takes place at Father's request, the electors associate will choose Vice-president from a list of three candidates made by the Father.
6. If the request comes from the Senate, the process will be the same as in President's election.

#### Art. 23

1. The conditions for being President are the same as those for being elected Vice-President.
2. If the President is completely disabled, the Vice-President has all the rights of the President. Otherwise, he has the rights and duties determined by the President, after hearing the Senate.
3. The Vice-president becomes President the moment the presidency is vacant.

#### Art. 24

1. To inform the Father about the apostolic activities of the associated women, there is a Central Advisory (*Asesoría Central*).
2. Along with the Father and the General Secretary, are part of the Advisory three Vice-Secretary females and at least one Vocal woman –*Missa*- for each Territory.

#### Art. 25.

1. Every Vice-Secretary deals with the activities of the associate women in one of the Work branches, as indicated in Art.17.1.
2. The Vice-Secretaries are freely appointed by the Father among the associated women consecrated to the Work, aged more than forty and having held some charge in Territorial Advisories.
3. They cease every three years.

#### Art. 26

1. The *Missae* study the issues concerning their Territory and those other questions entrusted to them by the Father or by the Senate.
2. They are usually in charge of the inspection of the completely apostolic activities of associate women of their Territory.

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<sup>25</sup> This is surprising. Today, however, a lay cannot be chosen to lead Opus Dei since the Statutes specifies that, «the government of the Prelature is entrusted to the Prelate» (125 §1). A noun or a religious can be prelate, but a lay cannot.



3. They are appointed among the associated women consecrated to the Work, aged more than forty and having held some charge in Territorial Advisories.
4. They cease every five years.

Art. 27

1. The Territorial Commissions are organisms depending directly on the Father and the Senate.
2. They are composed by one Counselor, one Defender and three Vocals.
3. The territorial *Missus* may join the Commission and take part in the deliberations, having his rank of precedence immediately after the Counselor.

Art. 28

1. The Counselor chairs the Commission and is responsible for the regime of the associates and their apostolic activities in his respective Territory.
2. He is freely appointed and dismissed by the Father, after hearing the Senate, among the associate electors, or among the numeraries, taking into account what is said in number 5 of this Art.
3. Ordinarily he should be a Priest.
4. He ceases every seven years.
5. In the same Territory, the Counselor and the Defender will be indistinctly one elector and the other numerary.

Art. 29

1. Defender missions are:
  - 1) To preserve and improve the spirit and observance among the associates in the Territory.
  - 2) To care about selection, examining the circumstances of the aspirants and informing the Counselor before they are admitted as supernumerary associates, and informing the Father before they are chosen as numerary associates.
2. He is appointed and demised freely by the Father, after hearing the Senate, among the elector associates or among the numeraries, as indicated in n.5, Art. 28.
3. Ordinarily will be a priest.
4. He is the *Dignior* in the Commission.
5. He ceases every nine years.

Art. 30

1. Each Vocal deals with the activities of the Territory associates in one of the branches of the Work, the way indicated in Art.17, 1.
2. The Vocals are freely appointed and demised by the Father, after hearing the correspondent Counselor and Defender, among numerary associates.
3. They cease every three years.

Art. 31

1. In order to report the Counselor on the activities of the associated women in the Territory, there is a Territorial Advisory.
2. Along with the Counselor and the Defender, three women are part of the Territorial Advisory as Vocals.
3. The *Missae* may assist the Advisory of their respective Territory and take part in the deliberations. They take precedence over the Vocals.

Art. 32

1. Every Vocal of the Advisory cares about the activities of the associates in every branch of the Work, as indicated in Art. 17,1.
2. After hearing the respective Counselor and Defender and the Central Advisory, they are freely appointed by the Father, among the associated women consecrated to the Work being more than thirty years old and who had been local Directors.
3. They cease every three years.

Art. 33

1. Those who in every country lead the government of the Auxiliary Associations through which the associate act, must be numeraries.
2. The directors of such Associations depend directly on the Counselor and, at request of the Counselor with the unanimous<sup>26</sup> opinion of the Defender; the Father may appoint them as extraordinary members of the Commission or of the respective Technical Advisory.
3. All Opus Dei members taking part in Auxiliary Associations are obliged to vote<sup>27</sup> for the directive charges the individuals proposed by the Counselor, who will proceed for the appointment in accordance with the Defender, after hearing the Territorial Commission.

Art. 34

1. The National Boards immediately depend on the Counselor and on the Commission of the Territory where they are located.
2. They are regulated by Art. 5 and following of the Regulations.
3. Usually it has to be attempted the President to be a married inscript associate<sup>28</sup>.
4. The other members composing the Board and those forming part of the Assembly are obliged<sup>29</sup> to appoint the associates indicated by the Territory's Counselor to fill vacancies produced in the Board.
5. The Counselor will hear the Territorial Commission and will proceed to make a designation in accordance with the Defender.

Art. 35

1. The Directors –men and women- of the different local activities of the associates are appointed by the Counselor with the unanimous opinion of the Defender, after hearing the Commission or the Advisory. They depend on the Counselor.
2. The local Directors –men and women- may not take extraordinary decisions without agreeing with the *Dignior* associate –man or woman- of the house.

Art. 36

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<sup>26</sup> That text sounds odd. What it means is that both, the opinions of the Counselor *and* the Defender, must be unanimous.

<sup>27</sup> The entire Art. 33 is significant, since it explains how is the relationship between Opus Dei and the Auxiliary Associations (or societies). The members of these societies are not independent but subordinated to the Counselor (the current Regional Vicar), they “are obliged to vote” the candidates proposed by the Counselor. Then, what is the sense of voting? The Auxiliar Association seems to be a façade. This subject appears again in the Constitutions of 1950, art. 9: «The members of Opus Dei can act individually or through associations which may be cultural, artistic or economic etc., and which are called Auxiliary Societies. All of these societies, equally, are subject in their activities to the authority of the hierarchy of the Institute.»

<sup>28</sup> The current supernumeraries.

<sup>29</sup> Once again, members of the Board are subordinated to the Counselor, as it happens in Art. 33.

1. The elector<sup>30</sup> associates are appointed directly by the Father. This appointment does not carry to cease as numerary associates.
2. Usually the associates will know their appointment through an autographic letter from the Father that the Counselor will deliver to them.
3. The Counselor will command orally that the associate will be discharged by the National Board of the respective country.<sup>31</sup>
4. In a three months' time as maximum, in accordance with the Counselor, who will provide all kind of facilities, the new elector member will call personally on the Father, for receiving his benediction and doing retreat during eight days in the place indicated by the Father.

Art. 37

For being appointed as elector is required: 1) to be numerary associate; 2) being aged at least thirty years; 3) knowing the history, spirit, customs and traditions of the Work; 4) having been at least nine years in Opus Dei; 5) having provided eminent services to the Work; 6) solid piety; 7) religious and professional culture; 8) being reserved and prudent; and 9) being considered in the Work as a good adviser.

Art. 38

1. The Father, after hearing the Senate, may dispose some numerary associates to be dependent on him.
2. These associates will not be subject to local Directors obedience concerning his personal apostolate, but they will be subject to whatever concerning external behavior and internal regime of the Centre where they reside.

Art. 39

1. In every Territory, there will be at least a Study Centre<sup>32</sup> for associate men and another one for women, with the goal of providing them the formation needed for their apostolates.
2. The studies program will include Dogma, Moral, Holy Scripture, Ecclesiastical History, Liturgy, Ascetics, Gregorian singing and knowledge of the Work.

Art. 40

1. The Counselor, in accordance with the Defender and after hearing the Commission or the Territorial Advisory, will designate the associates going to the Study Centre.
2. The associate will never go to the Study Centre immediately after the admission as supernumeraries. It is necessary waiting until they have done the consecration to the Work and have experience in apostolic activities.
3. All the activities of the Centre will be carried out without pulling the associates out of their living environment.

Art. 41

1. The Directors -men and women- of the Study Centers depend directly on the respective territorial Counselor.
2. They are appointed by the Father, after hearing the Counselor and the Defender of the Territory, among the elector associates and the associated women consecrated to the Work,

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<sup>30</sup> This has not changed. Electors participate in the election of the President or Father.

<sup>31</sup> It is not clear the sense of this paragraph. Maybe it suggests the incompatibility between being elector and member of the National Board.

<sup>32</sup> This has not changed. The novitiate proper to religious is the equivalent to the Study Center. During two years, the current numeraries receive an intensive formation.

being more than thirty years old and having held a charge in the Central or Territorial Advisory.

3. They cease every five years.

Art. 42

The remaining charges of the Study Centers are appointed by the Counselor, in accordance with the Defender, after hearing the directors –men or women- of the respective Centers.

Art. 43

All the associates holding charges in the Work, once the term of the charge is over, can be re-elected for the same charge once or several times.

### III ORDO

#### LIFE NORMS OF SUPERNUMERARY AND NUMERARY ASSOCIATES

Art. 1

Daily: Offering the day to God. Mental prayer (half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening). Holy Mass. Communion. Visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Reading of the Holy Gospel and some spiritual book. Preces. Holy Rosary (fifteen mysteries). Examination of conscience. Angelus or Regina Coeli.

#### SHORT CIRCLE

Art. 2

1. The Short Circle<sup>33</sup>, which is held every week in Opus Dei centers where the activities of the associates take place, is aimed to identify and improve the spirit of Opus Dei in their components.
2. There is one Short Circle for numeraries and supernumeraries,<sup>34</sup> and a different one for the supernumeraries who have not yet done their consecration to the Work, and a special one for the female servants.
3. If the Director —male or female— in accordance with the Dignior considers it necessary, there will be a third Short Circle for some supernumeraries.

Art. 3

1. The President<sup>35</sup> –or the woman President– directing the Short Circles takes notes to inform the immediate authority.
2. The associates should not speak about the faults manifested<sup>36</sup> by other associates during the Circles. It is prohibited critical commentaries about what was dealt in those acts. One must report the local Director if that obligation is not fulfilled.

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<sup>33</sup> It is the equivalent of the *Chapter*, proper to religious.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. footnote 4.

<sup>35</sup> This is not the President of the Board (Art. 4 of the Regulations) but a numerary in charge of the Circle.

<sup>36</sup> That is characteristic of the *Chapter of faults*, the public manifestation of some faults, prior consultation with the director in charge of the Circle. « The Chapter of Faults is another monastic practice that evolved during the era. The term chapter originally referred to a gathering of religious where some part—or chapter—of the

## VISITS

### Art. 4

1. There are two kinds of visits<sup>37</sup>: ordinary and extraordinary. The first ones takes place every three years; the second ones whenever the Father deems it appropriate.
2. During the visits, it is studied the interior life of associates, their religious culture, their professional formation, their attachment with the spirit of the Work, their apostolic works and the economic situation of the centers, etc., reviewing the files related to the works of Saint Raphael and Saint Gabriel, etc.
3. In Centers, there will not be visitor's book, nor will be put on record the pass of the Visitor.<sup>38</sup>

### Art. 5

1. The Father or individuals he delegates make the visits.
2. He who makes the visit hears every associate, gets informed by all means, gets evidences; advises, warns, rebukes, encourages.
3. He takes notes in order to report on the result of his visit and communicates to the Senate in writing his judgment, with the considerations, warnings and whatever remedies he deems suitable.

### Art. 6

The visitors always take the precedence over other associates, in both ordinary and extraordinary visits.

## SUFFRAGES AND BURIAL

### Art. 7

1. The supernumerary and numerary associates leave absolutely in the hands of their co-associates everything referring to the modality and place of their burial.
2. When a supernumerary or numerary associate dies, the Director of the Center to which he belonged, ensures that he will be shrouded with a sheet.
3. The National President<sup>39</sup> communicates the decease to all the associates depending on him, so that they will offer for the deceased as many charity acts as their zeal will suggest to them, as well as to the Commission who will send an obituary note to the Works archive.
4. Funerals will be celebrated in the associate's Parish.<sup>40</sup>
5. In every Territory Center, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered once for his or her soul. The Gregorian Masses generally will be said in the deceased's Center. Moreover, in this Center the day of the anniversary Mass will be celebrated.

### Art. 8

When the father or the mother of an associate passes away, one novena of Masses is celebrated in the Center in which the associate works.

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rule was read. Eventually the term was expanded to include any formal monastic gathering» (cf. Edward Wynne, *Traditional Catholic Religious Orders: Living in Community*, 1988, Transaction Books, p. 139).

<sup>37</sup> It seems that the Visits are the *Canonical Visitation* of the religious (cf. Haenobarbo, *Religiosos Disfrazados*, Opuslibros.org, May 1, 2006). This practice is in force, even though Opus Dei is now a personal prelature (since 1982).

<sup>38</sup> The visitor's book is proper to the Canonical Visitation. However, Escrivá decided not to copy that practice because in the visitor's book is registered all kind of comment, especially negative ones. Escrivá always wanted to control the institutional history of Opus Dei.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. footnote 6.

<sup>40</sup> Currently, that is the exception.

## PRECEDENCE

### Art. 9

1. If there is not an express nomination falling on other particular associate, who takes precedence over the rest in all kind of activities is the oldest elector associate in his class or, in his absence, a numerary or supernumerary having done the perpetual consecration<sup>41</sup> to the Work or having done only a temporary consecration, always oldest in his class.
2. He is called *Dignior*, and considered as such, after the Center's Director.
3. He holds the government when the Director is absent, in which case automatically becomes *Dignior* the associate indicated in n. 1 of this article.
4. *Dignior's* mission, if there is Director in the Center, is only advisory.

## COMPETENCES

### Art. 10

Every associate may freely write to the Father. No one can stop this right.

### Art. 11

Matters pertaining to the Counselor, in accordance with the Defender, after hearing the Commission, in his respective Territory:

- 1) Admission of the inscripts associates (who request it) as supernumeraries and allow them to make the consecration, after a thorough examination conducted by de Defendant.
- 2) Archiving and carrying out the wills made by the associates at the time of their first consecration<sup>42</sup>, taking into account the legal norms of the respective country.
- 3) To communicate to the Senate the names of the supernumerary members when they make their consecration to the Work.
- 4) To grant or deny a dispensation of family life<sup>43</sup> to those supernumeraries who request it.
- 5) Approving the internal regulations of the Centers in which associates develop their apostolic activities.
- 6) Beginning new apostolic activities and create and suppress Centers so that they function regularly.
- 7) Conferring commissions of certain entity.
- 8) To impose severe penalties on his demarcation associates and to dismiss the inscripts and supernumeraries who must not stay in the Work.
- 9) To resolve issues related to ecclesiastical, civil and academic authorities that the Counselor, along with the Defender and the Commission, deemed sensitive or difficult.
- 10) To Propose the Father the board of collaborators necessary to ensure the good governance of the Territory. To designate the persons called on to collaborate with the Commission, filling the positions approved by the Father.
- 11) Granting the Directors of Auxiliary Associations permission for mortgaging or disposing whatever is valuable between one thousand and one hundred thousand pesetas.

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<sup>41</sup> Escrivá uses again religious terminology.

<sup>42</sup> Today the will is made at the time of the perpetual consecration.

<sup>43</sup> Religious needs dispensation of family life. This another element proves that Opus Dei celibate members are not ordinary Christians.

Art. 12

1. All issues to be decided by the Father generally will be sent to the Senate for its study.
2. The Senate's mission is just of advising, except what is ordered in articles 19, 5 and 22, 2 and 3 of the Regulations.

Art. 13.

Missions competing exclusively to the Father after hearing the Senate are:

- 1) Taking decisions implying changes in the Regulations and *Ordo* of Opus Dei. However, it should be noted that it cannot be modified, for any reasons, what the Founder establishes in Regulations and Spirit of Opus Dei.
- 2) Answering all kind of questions raised in the enforcement of Regulations, Regime, Spirit, etc. For this task, he will use de Founder's glosses<sup>44</sup>, if there are some.
- 3) Appointing the auxiliary staff of the Senate and Vice-presidencies.
- 4) To define the territorial districts and change of Territory those associates he deems convenient to transfer.
- 5) Selecting among the supernumerary associates those being able to become numeraries and, among them, electors.
- 6) Removing numerary or elector associates out of Opus Dei or out of their charges.
- 7) To exempt the conditions required for holding a charge or for being promoted to a different class.
- 8) Granting permission for mortgaging and selling, etc., about transactions worth more than one hundred thousand pesetas in all kind of associates' apostolic activities.
- 9) Give special permission to numerary associates of Opus Dei for exempting the family life, when their personal circumstances make it advisable.
- 10) Granting special permission to Opus Dei associates to exceptionally teach in private schools.

Art. 14

Whenever the Director of the Center and the *Dignior* have discordant views, they will raise a query, signed by both, to the pertinent Commission. If in this organism happens the same, they will raise a new query to the Senate.

## ADMINISTRATION

Art. 16<sup>45</sup>

1. The General Administrator centralizes the economic aspect of all the activities. He is appointed by the Father, after hearing the Senate, among the elector associates.
2. The General Administrator advises in economic matters the Father and the Senate and surveys, guides and directs the general accountings and the economic activities of the associates.
3. He ceases every seven years.

Art. 17

1. The General Administrator chairs the Technical General Advisory, composed by numerary associates, appointed by the Father, after hearing the Senate, at his request.

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<sup>44</sup> It is not clear what these documents are.

<sup>45</sup> The art. 15 is absent in the original.

2. Their members cease every five years.

#### Art. 18

1. The supernumerary and numerary associates give to the Technical General Advisory in unrestricted disposal the rents of their capitals and money incomes from their personal activities.<sup>46</sup>
2. If one of the Opus Dei associates abandons the Work, he or she has no right to claim the rents or incomes donated during his or her stay at the Work.<sup>47</sup>

#### Art. 19

1. In every Territory, there is one Administrator along with one Technical Advisory.
2. The territorial Administrator, who should be numerary, directs the accountings of the associates in the Territory and advises the Counselor.
3. He is appointed by the Father, after hearing the Senate.
4. He ceases every five years.
5. The *Missus*, in the Technical Advisory of his Territory, has the same powers provided for the territorial Commissions in article 37, n.3 of Regime.

#### Art. 20

1. The Territorial Advisors are appointed by the Counselor, (in accordance with the Defender, after hearing the Commission) from among the numerary associates of the Territory.
2. They cease every five years

#### Art. 21

All the Centers integrated by Opus Dei members must submit monthly to the Territorial Administrator duplicate accounts and balances of all the economic activities. The Administrator will review them diligently and will approve them if appropriate. One of the duplicates will be filed in the Technical Advisory and the other one, with the approval of the Administrator, will be sent to the General Technical Advisory.

#### Art. 22

The territorial Commission will submit every five months to the Senate a global report on the economic situation of the associates' activities in the Territory during the previous quarter.

### IV CUSTOMS

1. When three or more associates live a family life, it has to be placed in a decent place a wooden Cross, painted black and without its Crucified. Try to get from the respective Reverend Bishops the granting of indulgences each time the Cross is kissed and an aspiration is prayed.

2. The wooden Cross will be garnished with garlands of flowers at the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross.

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<sup>46</sup> Here the religious poverty is applied to celibate members.

<sup>47</sup> The same principle works for religious orders.



3. At night, after praying the Rosary<sup>48</sup> and before the examination of the conscience, the “comment” of Gospel is carried out.
4. Associates will have an image of the Our Lady in a visible place of their room, whom they greet when they enter and leave the room, even if only with the eyes.
5. Associates (male) will end all common acts with the following invocation to the Blessed Virgin: SANCTA MARIA SPES NOSTRA, SEDES SAPIENTIAE, ORA PRO NOBIS.  
And the female associates:  
SANCTA MARIA SPES NOSTRA, ANCILLA DOMINI, ORA PRO NOBIS.
6. Pilgrimage of May:  
As a manifestation of love to the Blessed Lady, they will make a pilgrimage every May to some sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin.
7. In every Center where our apostolates take place, every Saturday a collection will be taken to buy flowers to decorate the image of the Virgin the feast days of the Lady.
8. All associates wear the Holy Scapular of Carmel.
9. Daily, at sleep time, they pray three Hail Mary asking for purity, to their knees and with their arms outstretched in the form of a cross, where possible.
10. Oratio-saxum: daily they pray the "*Remember*", asking to the Virgin Mary for the associate most in need at that moment. It is not necessary to pray it if, at the time of the examination of the conscience at night, one realizes that one forgot to do it.
11. On the day of the Feast of our Father and Lord Saint Joseph, numerary and supernumerary associates will renew their consecration to the Work.<sup>49</sup>
12. All keys of the Tabernacle of the Work will carry a medal of Saint Joseph.
13. Associates will invoke Guardian Angel with an aspiration (orally or mentally) whenever they enter or leave the centers where they have their apostolic activities.
14. Before starting an activity related to the apostolates of the Work, the Saint Patrons will be invoked.
15. In addition to the feast of the Lord, the Holy Mary and Saint Joseph, it will be celebrated with particular devotion, the feast of Archangels, Apostles and Evangelists: October 2, feast of Guardian Angels and February 14, since both are thanksgiving days for Opus Dei.
16. Every Tuesday, after invoking their own Guardian Angel, associates will kiss the rosary as proof of love of Our Lady in a signal that the prayer is the best weapon. Then, they will pray the II Psalm, in Latin. In the afternoon, the text will be used for meditation.

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<sup>48</sup> At that time, the Rosary was prayed at night. Today, it is prayed after lunchtime, or whenever each member can.

<sup>49</sup> *Inscriptis* did not have to renew nothing because they were not consecrated to the Work.

17. A picture of Saint Nicholas of Bari will be placed in the administration or secretary, whenever the associates carry out apostolic activities, with the following inscription:

SANCTE NICOLAE, CURAM DOMUS AGE.

18. In addition to the prayers for the Roman Pontiff and the local Reverend Bishop included in the *preces* of the Work, every day all associates will pray the Lord for the person and intentions of the Roman Pontiff and the Local Reverend Bishop.

19. Every day, associates offer prayer and a special mortification for the Father. If during the day they forget to do it, they will pray a short vocal prayer for the Father and his intentions before bedtime.

20. Daily, before bedtime, the Father will pray the Psalm *Miserere*, prostrated. If he cannot pray it, he will order another associate to pray it for him.

21. Associate greet each other by saying PAX and answering IN AETERNUM, to sanctify their life with a continuum presence of God.

22. They will have holy water in their room to spray the bed before going to bed, using it also for making the sign of the Cross.

23. As an external manifestation of the desire of living the virtue of poverty, every year in the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, numerary and supernumerary associates will surrender all their things that are not for personal use to the Director (male or female) of the Center. This custom is named "*expolio*".

24. Associates are prohibited from exchanging gifts, however insignificant.

25. In order to practice the virtue of poverty, every month, numerary and supernumerary associates will give to the Director of the Center an expense account.

26. It is a healthy praiseworthy custom to preserve the letters that associates write each other, if appropriate to file them.

27. The spiritual relationship among the associates has not public manifestation in the social life.

28. Associates will try to have a monthly confidential conversation, full of simplicity, with the local Director (male or female) in order to identify their behavior with the spirit of the Work and improve their apostolic activities.

## V SPIRIT

1. Opus Dei members are not religious, but the life they live —with full dedication to Jesus Christ— is, essentially, not different from the religious life.

2. Buildings, furnishings and environments of the Centers where associate develop their apostolate will never have monastic aspect; it will be avoided in all cases to the smallest detail that may give the Work the appearance of a religious institute.

3. The full dedication to Jesus Christ that associates practices, is not temporary and common but definitive and of perfection.

4. The associate of the Work fulfil all the duties as an ordinary citizen and, at the same time, exercise all the rights.

5. Ours, because of their Catholic spirit, see with joy all manifestations of zeal that other people develop.

6. General reunions of Opus Dei collaborators will never take place. The work of apostolate is always carried out in small groups.

7. The associates of the Work are a selection of their social class, and try to exercise the apostolate of friendship and trust among the best of their environment.

8. A special feature of numerary associates is to live the Catholicity. That is, to avoid that the Work could serve interests incompatible with that spirit of the Roman Holy Church.

9. The Work passes unnoticed. That is why it cannot attend any act of social life, nor being represented. And, from the name of the Work, which is unknown to strangers, cannot result a common name for associate. Try to avoid those names, even in apostolic activities.

10. Because of that collective humility of the associates, who made possible for the Work to pass unnoticed, it will never be attributed to the Work the fame or merit of the associates' activities. All the glory is for God, and in human realities, for other associations.

That is why nobody knows when some of their associates make the consecration to the Work.

11. The same spirit of collective humility imposes the norm of not telling the number of associates who are part of the Work.

12. Ours will never talk about the Work with strangers, nor tell anyone that they are part of the Work.

13. For the same reason, the existence of Centers where numerary associates carry out their apostolic works —Work of Saint Michael— must be unknown, except for those who work there.

14. Opus Dei associates do not diverge in any way from other people of the same social class and profession. That is why it will never be allowed, under any pretext whatsoever, the use of uniform, nor the use of one particular symbol.

15. The Regulations, Instructions, etc., are numbered; there is absolute prohibition of showing them to strangers and even of translating them into vulgar language, if they are in Latin.

16. The Regulations of the Work shall be subject to the law on associations of each country.

17. Regime, Ordo, Customs, Spirit and Ceremonial, since they are internal norms of apostolate, will be subject only to the ecclesiastical authority; however, such a subordination will be unconditionally.

18. It is the obligation of our own people to cooperate, with all means, in the development and improvement of the apostolic activities of associates. From this obligation arises the duty of reporting

the authority of the Work everything about the behavior of associates or the progress of activities that could adversely affect the apostolic work.

19. Associates of the Work constitute a family of supernatural ties. For that reason, when three or more associates live together it is said that they live family life.

20. The Work is family and militia. It has all the benefit of a family life, without any disadvantage proper to exclusively human affection. And it has the completely combative effectiveness of the most severe military discipline.

21. Associates not living family life will be assigned to an apostolic center, upon which they depend.

22. As an exterior manifestation of affection for the biological family, our own people must keep, where possible, the domicile of their own family for all kind of identity documents, even if they have been acquired another quasi-domicile.

23. Make sure that only associates with the same biological family have the same domicile.

24. The family life of Opus Dei associates is not like the one of religious communities, but it has the same tone and environment proper to a Christian family home.

25. The human tone of Opus Dei, its environment, is the aristocracy of the intelligence (in the case of men) and an extreme finesse in treating each other.

26. Simplicity is proper to family life. It is absolutely forbidden the use of special treatments for directors of the Work. With the same simplicity, the President of Opus Dei has no other special treatment than calling him "Father" and our official documents are written in the same familiar way.

27. To extend the apostolic labor, it is necessary to act in all directions. In this way, it is avoided the formation of groups among associates, and each one of them exercises their influence in different zones.

28. The spirit of the Work is that its male members have official positions, and generally, leadership positions.

29. In order to have leadership positions, our people need solid scientific reputation. For that reason, associates cannot neglect their professional formation.

30. The female associates of Opus Dei should exercise, in particular, the apostolate of friendship and trust among the female collaborators, without being part of groups.

31. Auxiliary associations discussed in Regime (Art. 33) must be, in general, cultural, and even better, economic and commercial societies.

32. The female associates will ordinarily be employees (in the strict commercial sense of the term), according to the Art. 1, 2 of the Regulations, and will work in administrative positions in the auxiliary societies or associations used to facilitate the apostolic labor, which is its exclusive aim. It is well understood that they can only administrate the economic regime of the local Centers.

33. In an apostolic undertaking, the efficacy of the work relies upon the supernatural means. That is why the spirit of prayer and penance is the basis for any external activity of the associates of the Work.

34. The Work has not particular devotions, and never will.

35. The Holy Mass is the center of the spiritual life of the associates.

36. Our own people, in the Centers where they develop their apostolic activities, will request from Rev. Diocesan Bishop, in the name of the respective legal Association, the erection of a semi-public oratory with Tabernacle.

37. Because of the intimate character of the diverse apostolates developed by associates of the Work, it will never be celebrated religious ceremonies differing from the goals of Opus Dei.

38. Opus Dei is at the service of the Holy Church. Associates are loyal servants —*adhuc autem et animam suam* (Luke 14:26)— and never make use of the Church. Here, then, another particular characteristic of our people: their complete and unconditional adherence to the Hierarchy of the Church, to the ordinary ecclesiastical authority.

39. Opus Dei associates live with joy their personal apostolic life; their asceticism is a smiling one.

40. We have to practice with pleasure the collective humility of the Work. Never a false love to our supernatural undertaking could lead us to forget that the prestige of Opus Dei is to have no human prestige: to pass unnoticed. *Deo omnis gloria!*

41. We are friends -*vos autem dixi amicos!* (John 15:15)- and, by making supernatural that friendship, by placing Jesus Christ in the middle of that friendship, we feel like brothers.

42. We never look down on human virtues. They are a complement to supernatural virtues.

43. Fraternity, optimism, courage, intransigency, joy, simplicity, honesty, and sincerity are the virtues proper to Opus Dei associates.

44. *In hoc cognoscent omnes quia discipuli mei estis, si dilectionem habueritis ad invicem* (John 13:35). This charity obliges us to notice, teach, help and admonish to our own people, within the limits of the fraternal correction.

45. Our dream should be to live as the first Christian did, without hate of any kind (due to caste, border, or language).

We are children of the same Father, and soldiers of the same King: *non habemus hic manentem civitatem* (Hebrews 13:14).

46. Our own sick and our own elderlies are the treasure of Opus Dei.

47. The spirit of Opus Dei is penitent, but enemy of singularities; it drives to seek with love the mortification in the small and ordinary things, in the orderly and persevering work routine.

48. The supernatural lively and operative faith will give us also a supernatural conviction that will enable us to overcome all obstacles and to say as the Apostle: *omnia possum in eo qui me confortat* (Philippians 4:13).

49. Our perseverance relies on willfulness. There are no gendarmes in *Opus Dei*.

50. Let us be sincere, bravely sincere, with God, with ourselves and with those who govern; and we will have secured our perseverance.

51. The example! With our example, God builds, and the enemy destroys.

52. We are, with our supernatural full dedication, at the service of the Church. The whole dream of our soul must be this: to serve.

53. The zeal inflaming us has to have this ambition: *omnes cum Petro ad Jesum per Mariam*.

54. The heart —our heart— was born to love, it was said. Put these three loves inside it: Christ, Mary and the Pope, and the love will lead us to sacrifice, to purity and to abnegation, having as fruit the *gaudium cum pace*.

55. The obedience that we have to live is not a common virtue: our willingness has to be to obey *usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis* (Philippians, 2:8).

56. Fear no one and nothing: *Dominus illuminatio mea et salus mea, quem timebo?: Dominus protector vitae meae, a quo trepidabo? Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum* (Psalmus. 26, 1, 2, 5).

57. We cannot waste time building houses: we take them.

58. We must love the holy virtue of poverty. Do not forget, however, that our poverty never will be noticed in our external appearance, which has to be according to our social role and position.

59. In our virtues and our apostolates, avoid the spectacle. Without mystery or secrecy, let us be discreet: we must admire the fecundity of the thirty years of the hidden life of Jesus Christ.

60. Three are the points that determine our happiness in the earth and ensures us the eternal happiness: the Faith, the Purity and the Way.

61. Do not talk about our vocation, under any pretext, except with our brothers and with priests who intimately know and love the spirit of the Work.

One only indiscretion could be sufficient to damage the apostolic labor and even to lose the Way. How could they advise about a matter that they ignore or have a fragmentary knowledge and probably passionately, for reasons of curiosity or lack of spirit in the one who spoke with them?

This point should not be interpreted as a limitation of the full frankness required to open one's soul before a spiritual adviser; anyway, it must be remembered that it is not easy for a spiritual director to give advice about the Work if he does not know it.

62. The saving of our customs will give us, along with the spirit of the Work, family resemblance and features.