

## Chapter 1

### The Sisters of the Queenship of Mary

*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
before you were born I set you apart;  
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." (Jer. 1:5)*

#### 1. Birth of the Congregation

The SQM Congregation is the fruit of a special gift the Holy Spirit bestows upon the Church through Rev. Fr. Carlo della Torre, the founder,<sup>1</sup> to gather girls who are generous in dedicating their whole lives in answering God's call by making vows to observe the evangelical counsels, namely: chastity, poverty and obedience, in order to collaborate with the Church for the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.

#### 2. Status of the Congregation

The name of this Congregation is "**The Sisters of the Queenship of Mary**"<sup>2</sup> with S.Q.M as its abbreviation under the special jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Bangkok.<sup>3</sup> Members make freely the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience in response to the call of God and live a life in communion.

#### 3. Charism of the Congregation

A group of religious person coming together to live a fraternal life in order to serve God and the Church by imitating the Holy Family of Nazareth is the charism given by Fr. Carlo della Torre, the founder.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. Spirituality of the Congregation

The spirituality of the Congregation derives from the outstanding model that the founder had been trying to cultivate into the heart of each member. This is clearly manifested in the fervent love to the Holy Eucharist, prayers and work, special love and devotion to the Blessed Mother Mary, cheerfulness and close fraternal relationship under the atmosphere of love, humble and mutual respect. In order to achieve these objectives they must imitate the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Such spirituality is the spiritual treasure that the congregation has inherited from the founder. All must faithfully maintain this heritage and perseveringly make them ever greater progress.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. PC 1

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Prot. n. I.s. 5621/04, Prot. n. DD 2782-1/2008 Vatican City, 11 January 2011 signed by Joseph W. Tobin C.Ss.R. Archbishop Secretary

<sup>3</sup> Cf. CIC 594-595

<sup>4</sup> Cf. MR 11, VC 36, ET 11

<sup>5</sup> Cf. MR 11, VC 36

## **5. Mission of the Congregation**

The SQM Congregation is founded with the objectives to renew and extend the Kingdom of God through prayers and activities under the guidance of Our Blessed Mother Mary amidst the non-Christians and Christian families including the young, especially the poor, through a close collaboration with the local Church.

## **6. Patroness of the Congregation<sup>6</sup>**

The SQM Congregation began under the patronage and guidance of the Immaculate Mary. Hence, each sister must be convinced that she is Mary's daughter by holding her the Patroness of the congregation and must faithfully live her life as Mary did. Besides, the sisters will have special devotion to St. Joseph and follow his life of honesty and hard-working spirit, and imitate the life of Father Carlo della Torre, the founder.

## **7. Relationship with the Salesian Congregation**

Since the SQM Congregation has had special relationship with the Salesians both through the founder and the spirituality inherited from him, the SQM congregation therefore desires to receive formation from the Salesian priests as much as possible in order to maintain the spirit of the founder.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. a souvenir of love that Father gives to his children, n. 253. CDR 13

## Chapter 2 The Consecrated Life

*“I beseech you therefore, brethren,  
by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,  
holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Rm. 12: 1)*

### 8. Vocation of a Religious

God calls some persons with love and provides them with individual gifts so that they may respond by dedicating their total selves to God whom they love with all their hearts.

The consecrated life of a religious is the manifestation of the Covenant and mysterious matrimony between God and the one who is called,<sup>7</sup> and a clear symbol of the next life. The sisters, therefore, accept this calling with gratitude and respond to the call with generosity<sup>8</sup> and loyalty, so that their lives will become an act of worship in the love of God.

### 9. Life of a Religious

In order to answer God’s call as a religious, a sister decides to commit oneself totally before the Church by dedicating her whole self to God by professing the Evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience in the presence of the Mother Superior or her representative.

By professing the vows she is entirely consecrated to serve God and gives herself in an attempt to reach perfection and to do everything for the glory of God.<sup>9</sup>

By making profession she makes a sincere commitment that she will be open to the assistance and graces of the Holy Spirit to grow in the love of God and her neighbor.<sup>10</sup>

### 10. Being Witness of Christ

A sister must be witness to Christ and His Church before all,<sup>11</sup> by living in a community and observing the Evangelical counsels which demand perfect love of God and neighbor through living the Gospel in ones’ own way of life.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. CIC 607§1

<sup>8</sup> Cf. SAC 8

<sup>9</sup> Cf. CIC 573§1

<sup>10</sup> Cf. PC 1

<sup>11</sup> Cf. CIC 607§3

## **11. Formula of profession in the SQM Congregation**

God the Father, through the Son and the Holy Spirit, you have already consecrated me for yourself on the day of my baptism. Now, I, sister..... (Christian name, first name, family name) desire to totally offer myself to you in response to the love of Jesus who calls me to follow Him more closely in the SQM Congregation with my complete freedom. I will carry out my duties in the spirit of the congregation in communion with my co-members to announce the Kingdom of God and to strive towards holiness by the grace of God through the intercession of Blessed Mary Immaculate, St. Joseph, St. John Bosco and all the Saints.

**(For Sisters with Temporary Vows)**

Though I have determined to dedicate myself for the whole life and yet, to abide by the customs of the Church, I profess to live a life of chastity, poverty and obedience according to the constitutions and regulations of the congregation for a period of.....year/s (one year, three years)in the hands of.....(SQM Mother Superior General).

**(For Sisters with Perpetual Vows)**

I make my perpetual vow to live the life of chastity, poverty and obedience in the custodial hands of ..... (SQM Mother Superior General) in accord with the SQM constitutions and regulations.

### **Response from President of the Ceremony**

In the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, I, Sister..... (Christian name, first name, family name) accept you to be a SQM member as a temporary sister (or perpetually professed) and to live together as sisters in the SQM community forever.

### **Formula of Renewal**

In the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, I, sister..... (Christian name, first name, family name) wish to renew my vow to live the life of chastity, poverty and obedience according to the constitutions and regulations of the SQM congregation with my trust in the intercession of Blessed Immaculate Mary, St. Joseph, all the Saints and with the assistance of my superiors.

## **Life of Chastity**

*“Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see God”  
(Mt. 5: 8)*

### **12. Value of a Chaste Life**

Living a life of chastity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven is a supreme gift of God the Father who invites us to offer our whole life to love Him with an undivided heart<sup>12</sup> by following the path of Jesus within the Church, His chaste spouse.

### **13. Essence of Living a Life of Chastity**

Though Jesus approves and defends the dignity and sanctity of marriage, He chooses to live a chaste life in order to show the unusual value and unfathomable spiritual richness of chastity.<sup>13</sup> Hence, the SQM sisters willingly profess to live the life of chastity in order to love other persons freely and generously imitating God who is the Lord of love.<sup>14</sup>

### **14. Demand of a Life of Chastity**

Life of chastity demands a life of spiritual growth in maturity<sup>15</sup> which must be the foundation of living a chaste life for the heavenly Kingdom. The congregation’s mission to the young also calls for the intensiveness of this virtue through deeds, words and spirit, in order to bring genuine happiness to them by living amidst them with firmness and gentleness.

### **15. Growth and Perseverance in Chastity**

A chaste life is a precious gift of God, the Father, given to some individuals. This gift is delicate and fragile because of our human weakness.<sup>16</sup> To live a chaste life then, a sister must have recourse to supernatural means: prayer, frequent Holy Communion and Confession, devotion to the Blessed Mother Mary, St. Joseph and her guardian angel, remembering that God always sees us everywhere. Furthermore, she accepts self-sacrificing work, exercises self-control, keeps herself intact with the grace of God, nourishes a genuine fraternal love in community,<sup>17</sup> and guards herself from contacts which might be a danger to her chastity and her vocation.

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. CIC 599

<sup>13</sup> Cf. VC 22

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ET 13

<sup>15</sup> Cf. VC 88

<sup>16</sup> Cf. ET 15

<sup>17</sup> Cf. PC 12, Ps 133:1

## Life of Poverty

*“Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor,  
that you through His poverty might become rich”*  
(2 Cor. 8: 9)

### 16. Christ’s authentic Poverty

Though Jesus was rich, he came as a poor man for our sake.<sup>18</sup> Through the vow of poverty, a sister freely commits herself to live a life of poverty in the footsteps of Jesus. She will closely follow Him by leaving her material goods behind in order to serve others. Her own life will witness that her lasting treasure lies in Him who is her one desire.<sup>19</sup>

### 17. Demand of the vow of Poverty

The vow of poverty requires that a sister depend upon her superior and follow the rules of the congregation regarding her expenses, her acquisitions and their administration, either for herself or for others,<sup>20</sup> and she must consider that all material goods acquired by her belong to the congregation for the use of the congregation’s mission.<sup>21</sup> She also realizes that it is not enough to make use of the material things with approval of her superior, but she must be truly poor in spirit.

Therefore, everything that she receives, whether gifts or the fruit of her labor, belongs to the congregation. If she has to use those things she will ask permission from her superior with humility.

### 18. Administration of Goods

A sister, though with the vow of poverty, has rights to material goods in accordance with the civil law and can possess other property in the future, but she must give the power of attorney to other people to keep and manage her assets before she makes her first vows. She will make her last will and testament according to civil law concerning her personal assets only before making perpetual vows.<sup>22</sup> Before changing or making a transaction concerning her temporal assets, she will first obtain permission from the Superior General.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. CIC 600, 2 Cor 8:9

<sup>19</sup> Cf. ET 15

<sup>20</sup> Cf. CIC 600

<sup>21</sup> Cf. CIC 668§3

<sup>22</sup> Cf. CIC 668§1

<sup>23</sup> Cf. CIC 668§2

## 19. Spirit of Poverty

The spirit of poverty demands that a sister be poor in spirit and, in her concrete life, be satisfied with what is necessary, detaching herself from temporal goods.<sup>24</sup> If she in some cases, lacks what is necessary, she will accept it with joy and a generous heart for the sake of God.

## 20. Poverty and Work

A sister has to follow the law of having to earn a living<sup>25</sup> and must always remember that it is the heritage left by Father Carlo, our father and founder of our congregation. Sisters, therefore, will be willing to work joyfully and with diligence, as poor people, who usually earn their living by doing their assigned tasks with responsibility and in the spirit of self-sacrifice.

## Life of Obedience

*“Behold the maidservant of the Lord!  
Let it be done to me according to your word”  
(Lk 1: 38)*

## 21. Christ’s Obedience

By taking the vow of obedience, a sister offers her free will to follow God’s will in the footsteps of Christ who obeyed until His death on the Cross, following the will of the Father for the fulfillment of redemption.<sup>26</sup>

## 22. Obedience to the Voice of the Holy Spirit

A sister will be docile to the voice of the Holy Spirit who guides her in the light of the Gospel, with the teachings of the Church and the congregation’s rules and regulations, and with the guidance of her superior including all the members who live in the community –with this she finds the will of God in her daily living.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. CIC 600, Mt 6:20-21, Jn 17:7, 10

<sup>25</sup> Cf. PC 13, Intention of the founder

<sup>26</sup> Cf. PC 14, Phil 2:8-9, Lk 1:38

<sup>27</sup> Cf. PC 14, Mt 20:28, Jn 10:14-18, Eph 4:13

### **23. Demand of the Vow of Obedience**

The spirit of obedience demands that a sister, willingly performs her duty, assigned by her superior, with responsibility, using all her intelligence, assisted by natural and supernatural gifts, to carry out her own assignment.

The vow of obedience requires that a sister obey her superior in consonance with the congregation's constitutions and regulations. Should the Superior General desire to give an order, she exercises her power carefully and only in the case of necessity. She must give it in writing or by clear words in front of 2 sisters as witnesses.<sup>28</sup>

### **24. Spirit of Obedience**

Due to the vow of obedience, every sister must have a share in the same mission. With the different roles they all must be united in seeking the will of God. In matters of importance there should be dialogue under the guidance of the superiors in order to foresee consequences. This must be done with a sense of mutual respect and everyone must accept the final decision of the superior, though such a decision may not satisfy one's own opinion, and in the spirit of faith, love and communion they should all do what their superior has decided responsibly.<sup>29</sup>

The spirit of obedience further demands that they abstain from complaining, from mere external obedience or obeying for a selfish purpose. Rather they will humbly deny their own will and offer all in sacrifice, taking the Blessed Virgin Mary as their model.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. CIC 601, 697§2, Heb 10:7

<sup>29</sup> Cf. ET 25, Heb 13:17



## Chapter 3 Living a Community Life

*“A new commandment I give to you,  
that you love one another; as I have loved you,  
that you also love one another”  
(Jn 13: 34-35)*

### 25. Community Life is the Life of Faith

God calls each of us to live in a community in order to reflect the unity in the mystery of the Holy Trinity which enables us to go beyond our human relationship. It unites faith and the grace of God into one and becomes the witness of the life in the eternal Kingdom of God which has already started in the Church and in a community.<sup>30</sup>

### 26. The Use of Individual’s Gift to build up the Community Life

Community life demands that the sisters “continue together in close relationship and share their gifts with one another”. (Acts 2: 44) Therefore, they will accept and acknowledge both their gifts and limitations and those of others with respect and sincerity. They will help one another, sharing the various gifts that each one has received in building up the life and mission of the community toward perfection.<sup>31</sup>

### 27. Characteristics of the Family Spirit

The family spirit must be the core of the sisters’ living together. It results from understanding and respect, meekness and sincere friendship, working in mutual collaboration and with responsibility. Each one tries to overcome her own ego and personal feelings, to be patient and forgiving, seeking the good of others before her own, holding fast in harmonious unity, to promote love with kind words that come from the heart, and extend mutual love even in the “daily minute things.”<sup>32</sup>

### 28. Recreation in Common Helps Promote the Family Spirit

Recreation in common during free time will help promote joy and mutual friendship in the atmosphere of a family among the sisters as is well said by a verse in the Psalm “How good it is, and how pleasant, where brethren dwell as one.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. VC 41

<sup>31</sup> Cf. VC 14

<sup>32</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 13:4-7, PC 15, ET 39, FLC 26, Tradition of the Congregation

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Ps 133:1

## **29. Everybody has a Role in Promoting Community Life**

Every sister must be aware of her role and duty to promote community life with dialogue, joy of sharing, fraternal correction, support and mutual help. The superior will help conciliate personal differences among the sisters when there is conflict. Other than keeping good governance of the community, the superior will also be the leader who helps each sister and the community towards growth in both mission and spiritual welfare.<sup>34</sup>

## **30. Religious Boundary for the Sisters**

Residence of the sisters should be a place conducive to promoting community life without interference of outsiders in order to maintain the atmosphere of union with God and closeness among the sisters. But they should not forget to welcome visitors with hospitality.<sup>35</sup>

## **31. Community Piety helps promote the Community Life**

Joining together in the Eucharistic celebration, which is the font of unity,<sup>36</sup> the Sacrament of Confession, which is reconciliation with God and community members,<sup>37</sup> and the community prayers, which show that we are all children of God – all these help build and strengthen community life each day. The sisters, therefore, must always try to participate in all spiritual exercises, not allowing themselves to be often excused, which will give offence to herself and the community.

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. PC 15, CDR 16

<sup>35</sup> Cf. CIC 667§1

<sup>36</sup> Cf. CDR 9

<sup>37</sup> Cf. CDR 10

### **32. Sick or Elderly Members**

The professed sisters, regardless of what status they are in, can participate in the life and mission of the congregation according to each one's ability and assigned task. The congregation, will take special care of the sick and the elderly with utmost attention and love, paying frequent visits, helping and giving encouragement with respect and gratitude as each one is a member of Christ's suffering Body. The sick members will offer their lives in the mystery of the suffering and redemption of Jesus and His Mother for the needs of the Church and salvation of mankind.

### **33. Dialogue with Superior**

Dialogue with the superior is an important key for life in community. It is the way to cultivate good understanding between superior and the sisters, which will help the superior to make decisions for the benefit of all, while the sisters, who go to meet the superior, will receive good advice and encouragement. Hence, they must keep in mind the importance of this mutual contact. They should meet her with a simple heart and with confidence; whereas the superior, in confidence, will respect the personal rights of each sister, especially what pertains to her conscience.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. CIC 630§5

## Chapter 4 Life of Prayer

*“Where two or three are gathered together in My name,  
I am there in the midst of them”  
(Mt 18: 20)*

### 34. Prayers Sustain Spiritual Life

Sisters should develop their spiritual life with the help of personal and community prayer in accordance with the constitutions and regulations of the congregation.<sup>39</sup> At the same time they will deepen awareness of intimate and personal relationship with God by recalling the need for unceasing prayer.

### 35. Listening to the Word in order to Imitate Christ

God loves man so much that He sent His only Son to be the Way, the Truth and the Life.<sup>40</sup> The sisters, therefore, will regularly listen to the Word of God in order to grow in their spiritual life by imitating the life of Christ who is the origin of all spiritual life,<sup>41</sup> as in the case of Mary, His Mother, who kept all that she heard in her heart.<sup>42</sup> They will be loyal to daily spiritual reading.<sup>43</sup>

### 36. The Eucharist and the Eucharistic Celebration are the Summit and Font of Life

The sisters will make the Eucharist and the Eucharistic celebration, which Jesus bestows on the life of the Church, the center and font of their lives. They are the strength of their consecrated lives and the nourishment of both their community life and mission. The members are to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice daily as much as possible.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. CIC 663§1, PC 6, SAC 16,25

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Jn 14:6

<sup>41</sup> Cf. CDR 8, SAC 24

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Lk 2:51

<sup>43</sup> Cf. CIC 663§3

<sup>44</sup> Cf. CIC 663§2

### **37. Devotion to Mary as Children and other piety**

As members of SQM congregation, each sister will have filial devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary by following her example and praying the rosary while meditating the mystery of Christ's redemption. Each and every day they must follow the footsteps of Mary by imitating her simple life and willingness to do God's will in accordance with the spirit of the founder.<sup>45</sup>

They must also celebrate morning, afternoon and evening prayer, spend time for meditation on the Word of God together every morning and evening, recite the rosary, make visits to Jesus in the tabernacle and receive Holy Communion with desire as suggested by the founder.<sup>46</sup>

Besides, in the house where there are sick and elderly sisters who are unable to join in the daily community prayers, the superior must regularly bring them Holy Communion, and at the last stage the Sacrament of Unction and a good preparation to return to God, the Father.

### **38. Confession and Spiritual Direction**

With awareness of one's weakness, a sister will make frequent confession in order to be reconciled to God and her sisters. She will make an examination of conscience every day. It is the superior's responsibility to assure that there is a regular confessor, so that members have easy access to the Sacrament,<sup>47</sup> in accordance with the Church's teaching. The superior will respect the freedom of her subjects regarding the rights pertaining to the Sacrament of Confession and spiritual direction.<sup>48</sup>

### **39. Time for Intensive Spiritual Renewal**

The time for monthly and annual retreat for a sister is an occasion for serious meditation and intensive self examination<sup>49</sup> in order that she will encounter with God and make herself more and more like Christ. She must value this period of time and participate in this communitarian activity with seriousness and great piety.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. CDR 13, CIC 663§4

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Enc. Rosarium Virginis Mariae 2002, 160 Souvenir of love given by the Father to his children, p. 77, 240

<sup>47</sup> Cf. CIC 630§2, CDR 11

<sup>48</sup> Cf. CIC 630§1, PC 14

<sup>49</sup> Cf. CDR 5, ET 35

<sup>50</sup> Cf. CIC 663§5

#### **40. “Ora et Labora” must be linked together<sup>51</sup>**

The sisters will carry out their daily work while living in close contact with God by praying ejaculations. Besides, they will find time to recite the rosary in private, make frequent visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and remain recollected in the presence of God. They will grow in the spiritual life with delight as God’s loving daughters who accomplish their mission fruitfully according to God’s will.

#### **41. Personal and Communitarian Penance<sup>52</sup>**

Doing penance with generosity is a *sine qua non* act which a sister must do regularly in order to renew her conversion to the life of the gospel. Therefore, she will look for opportunities to make both individual and communitarian penance frequently, especially by denying herself. Besides, during important liturgical seasons and special occasions the sisters will also do penance collectively as a community.

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. CDR 45

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Lk 9:23-24, Mt 10:38, CDR 14

## Chapter 5

### General Aspects of our Mission

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father  
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”  
(Mt.28: 19)*

#### 42. Our Apostolic Mission

The apostolic mission of our congregation is a gift. God in His providence has chosen us to “go and bear fruit that will remain”.<sup>53</sup> Each sister will accept the gift of vocation with filial gratitude in order to bring the fruit of redemption to the people of God through her obedience to God and to the Holy Spirit, by working in the name of the congregation<sup>54</sup> and the Church.

#### 43. The First Apostolate of a Religious

The first apostolate of each religious is to witness by their consecrated life which makes Christ present in the world, through their own personal lives, seeking always to develop a close relationship with Jesus<sup>55</sup> in order to fill her life with the spirit of evangelization. All pastoral activities must be the consequence of our close relationship with God.<sup>56</sup>

As religious, a sister will wear the habit designed by the general chapter<sup>57</sup> for use in religious functions, activities in the Congregation and other important ceremonies. However, according to the tradition of the congregation, she may wear other clothing as well. Nonetheless, she should always wear proper attire suitable to religious decorum.

#### 44. Criteria in the Choice of the Congregation’s Mission<sup>58</sup>

In choosing the congregation’s mission, the congregation will follow the special charism of Father Carlo della Torre - our founder; based on the needs of society, the requirements of the Church and the pastoral planning of the diocese, especially when starting a new project. At the same time, we are to be aware of the differences of each local situation and be ready to adjust our methods accordingly.

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. Jn 15:16

<sup>54</sup> Cf. MR 15

<sup>55</sup> Cf. VC 72

<sup>56</sup> Cf. CIC 675§1-2, PC 9

<sup>57</sup> Cf. CIC 669§1

<sup>58</sup> Cf. ET 50, CIC 677§1

#### **45. Teaching Catechism and Proclaiming the Kingdom of God<sup>59</sup>**

Father Carlo della Torre, the founder of our congregation, urgently desired to expand the Kingdom of God and teach catechism to all. He always taught his spiritual children to look for the opportunity to teach catechism and announce the Kingdom of God wherever they live and whatever tasks they might have. Hence, the SQM sisters must consider that teaching catechism and announcing the Kingdom of God will be their first priority. The congregation will form each member to be capable, to be ready and willing to carry out this mandate either in schools or parishes, in different places and on different occasions. We will evaluate our activities periodically at various levels to see whether this principal mandate has been carried out in all the activities that we are doing.

#### **46. Pastoral Care of Youth**

The SQM congregation also holds that youth pastoral is another way of evangelizing which derives from Father Carlo della Torre's charism which he inherited from the Salesian Congregation. He started by opening a school for his sisters to do pastoral work in the fields of education, spiritual formation and promotion of Christian life. Meanwhile, it was also a good opportunity to announce Christ, who is Himself the Good News, to the young who came to the school.

Furthermore, we deem it our duty to initiate some activities for the young to help the work of formation to be more fruitful. In doing so we help the young directly and indirectly.

#### **47. Youth Formation in the Spirit of St. John Bosco<sup>60</sup>**

The SQM congregation will adhere to the spirit of St. John Bosco and the intention of Father Carlo della Torre, our founder and a Salesian priest, to work for the young, especially those who come from poor and middleclass families, in the field of education and ethics, by using the methodology which is based upon reason, religion and kindness, as a pastor among the sheep, who takes care that no harm will be inflicted upon his sheep.<sup>61</sup>

#### **48. Propagation of the Rosary Recitation**

The sisters will propagate the recitation of the rosary on every occasion and by all means according to the spirit of Father Carlo della Torre, our founder,<sup>62</sup> who deeply loved and continually promoted this devotion. This is a good way to cultivate the Christian life by meditating upon the redemptive mysteries of Christ and at the same time is a sign of devotion to our Blessed Mother Mary who is Co-Redemtrix.

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. CIC 677§1

<sup>60</sup> Cf. souvenir of love given by the Father to his children, p. 253

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Jn 10:14

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Enc. Rosarium Virginis Mariae 2002, 16, Souvenir of love given by Father to his children



#### **49. Being Witness through Labor**

Father Carlo della Torre always taught the sisters to be ready to work in any assignment which is not contrary to our spirit and charism. The sisters then will be witnesses to the value of work and collaboration with God in the building of a better world and society.<sup>63</sup>

#### **50. Collaboration with the Local Church**

The SQM congregation was approved by the Church for the benefit of the Church. The congregation, therefore, deems its special responsibility is to collaborate with the local Church in various activities initiated or proposed by the local ordinary, especially concerning the evangelization of the people.<sup>64</sup>

#### **51. Mission in other Dioceses**

Though the SQM congregation is approved by the local ordinary of the Bangkok Archdiocese, it can be inserted in other dioceses upon the request of the Bishops of those dioceses, and does not go against the spirit of the congregation. An agreement in writing will be made with the Archbishop of Bangkok which will be regularly evaluated.<sup>65</sup>

#### **52. Relationship with the Former Members, Alumni and the Concerned Christian Community**

The congregation will maintain good relationship with former members, foster collaboration with alumni and provide support to various Christian Communities related to us with fraternal love. This is to provide good counseling and spiritual help in order to sustain the fruit of the formation in their lives.<sup>66</sup>

#### **53. Promotion of Vocations in the Church**

The sisters will try to promote vocations to the priesthood, religious orders and the lay apostolate, at least by good example and prayer to God, the owner of the vineyard, to send laborers into his harvest.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Cf. Intention of Fr. Carlo, ET 20

<sup>64</sup> Cf. CIC 573, 574§2, 680

<sup>65</sup> Cf. CIC 681§2

<sup>66</sup> Cf. CIC 677§2

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Lk 10:2

## Chapter 6

### Formation in the Congregation

*“You are in my hands  
as clay in the hands of a potter”  
(Jer. 18: 6)*

#### General Principles of Formation

##### 54. Formation is Cooperation with the Holy Spirit

Jesus calls the apostles to be with Him, preparing and enabling them to carry out the mission He has given them.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, both the formators and those in formation stages should realize in the first place that it is the work of the Holy Spirit who, little by little, brings those in formation to become more and more Christlike. Hence, it is necessary that the sisters always pray for God’s light and help.

##### 55. Qualifications of Candidates

The SQM congregation should be aware of the importance of selecting the candidates for the congregation. Each sister has the duty to search for persons who have the right intention and basic physical and mental qualifications, to be open to the formation and live a religious life in accordance with the congregation’s rules and regulations. Attention should be made about the various impediments set up by the Church under Canon Law.<sup>69</sup>

##### 56. Spirit and Specific Mission of the Congregation in Formation

The specific spirit and mission of the congregation is the charism of the founder, received from the Holy Spirit for the benefit of God’s people.<sup>70</sup> Hence the congregation must keep it as a spiritual heritage and put it into practice faithfully by all.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, the formation of the members at various stages, that is from the beginning until perpetual vows, including on-going formation, must hold firm to the charism, the spirit and mission of the congregation as the criteria in the curriculum of the formation, in order that the formation will be unified and effective in accordance with the spirit of the Church.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. Mk 3:13-19, DFRI 1

<sup>69</sup> Cf. CIC 597§1

<sup>70</sup> Cf. MR 11

<sup>71</sup> Cf. CIC 578, DFRI 3

<sup>72</sup> Cf. CIC 659§2, DFRI 91

## 57. Role and Qualifications of Formators

During the formative process, the formator has an important role to play in helping the candidates to reflect on their vocation and respond to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that they can entirely and willingly dedicate themselves to God. She will help the candidates to live in the likeness of Jesus and be able to perform their duties in the spirit of the congregation. She must have a certain knowledge of psychology, possess a character that attracts the candidates, be familiar with the Church's teachings, and live the religious life devoutly. On the other hand, the congregation has an important duty to prepare a suitable member to do this task by sending her to study the various subjects, both temporal and moral, especially the methodology of formation.<sup>73</sup>

## 58. Duty of the Candidates Who Receive Formation

Each candidate receives a call and is given adequate grace to be able to answer her call.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, a candidate, who is being trained to be a future sister, must be the first person to collaborate with God who has first called her,<sup>75</sup> by obeying the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, sincerely collaborating with the formator and being responsible for her personal formation, so that she can develop all the various gifts which she has received in order to learn and understand better her vocation. Furthermore, she will learn about the mission of the congregation in order to experience living her life and performing her duty in the congregation in accordance with spirit of the founder.<sup>76</sup>

## 59. Stages of the Formation

Stages of formation in the congregation are divided into: preparation for the novitiate, the novitiate, formation of young sisters and on-going formation. Each period has its special objective as given in the constitutions and regulations, and in the curriculum of formation through focusing the candidates and the sisters to live their vocation to the full as called by God. In the formation at various stages the formator must consider unity in forming a person, respect the limitation of each one and pay attention to the spiritual conditions of the trainees in different stages of formation which will continue to be developed.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. DFRI 30-31

<sup>74</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 7:17

<sup>75</sup> Cf. DFRI 53

<sup>76</sup> Cf. CIC 646

<sup>77</sup> Cf. CIC 660§1

## **60. Location for Formation**

The location is also important in matter of formation. Hence, the congregation should find suitable places specially designed for the candidates in different stages. The superior general and other formators will have to take joint responsibility in this area. This is to make sure that those in different stages of formation will be able to live and receive the formation proper to their levels of life in consonance with the stipulation of the constitutions and regulations of the congregation.<sup>78</sup>

## **61. Role of Community in the Formation**

The community has an important role in the process of formation. Therefore, the superior general will see to it that the members in a formation house live a life of witness to religious life, united in creating the atmosphere of the Holy Family of Nazareth which is conducive to personal formation and strive towards holiness as in the life of Father Carlo della Torre, the founder and father of our congregation.

## **62. Pastoral Care of Vocation and the Formation Program**

Vocation is a gift of God. The sisters, therefore, must seriously pray and zealously live the religious life in order that God will increase the number vocations to the congregation. They must also consider as their duty to help one another to preserve each vocation through good example and mutual correction.

Besides, in order to properly prepare candidates for the congregation, the congregation must set up a clear formation process. Such a process will clearly lay out the curriculum and the various stages of formation<sup>79</sup> which cover human formation, that enables the candidates to reach maturity in life and work within the community, and formation of Christian life.

The candidates will be trained in basic catechetics, the teachings of the Church, liturgy and spirituality. In formation for religious life they will learn about the history and spirit of the congregation, rules and regulations, and lastly, formation in other fields which will help them to carry out their mission efficiently.

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. RC 2.16-1

<sup>79</sup> Cf. CIC 659§2

## **Formation in Preparation for the Novitiate**

### **63. Acceptance of Preparatory Candidates Prior to the novitiate**

The superior general is authorized to accept candidates in the immediate preparation for the novitiate through consultation of her council after having carefully studied the candidate's family background, personality, intention and free will. The candidate must present the following documents:

- 63.1 Letter of recommendation from the parish priest or the spiritual advisor.
- 63.2 Copy of the house registration or identity card.
- 63.3 Copy of the certificate of Baptism and Confirmation.
- 63.4 Health certificate not older than 1 month.
- 63.5 Certificate from a previous religious order where the candidate had been admitted and was later dismissed with no obligation whatsoever.

### **64. Objectives of the Formation in the Immediate Preparation for the Novitiate**

The preparatory formation is the first stage before going to the novitiate. Its objective is to help the candidate to familiarize herself with religious life in general, knowledge of self, understanding of the mission of the congregation and to be trained in depth in spirituality and Christian life. This helps her to understand that she is called to a life of sanctity by continually searching for the will of God in her life and being able to follow His will.<sup>80</sup>

## **Formation of the Novitiate**

### **65. The Novitiate**

The Novitiate is the time of beginning preparation for religious life in the SDM congregation. It is a time for the novices to study, reflect and ponder their vocation, experience the way of living in community, and undergo intensive formation in both intellectual and spiritual dimensions, and be filled with the spirit of Christ in the footsteps of the founder. Thus, the novices will be able to attest their pure intention and suitability in making their choice with freedom.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. DFRI 1

<sup>81</sup> Cf. CIC 646, 652§2, DFRI 46

## 66. The House of Novitiate

Novices will live in the novitiate house approved by order of the superior general who gives consent in writing with her council,<sup>82</sup> appointing the use of this house for this purpose.<sup>83</sup>

The novices will live under the supervision of a novice mistress. However, with the exception approved by the superior general, they may have apostolic experiences outside the novitiate.<sup>84</sup>

In special circumstances, which are only exceptions, the superior general with the approval of her council, may allow a novice to spend her novitiate period in another community of the congregation under the guidance of a sister who is authorized to undertake this duty, or the superior general may allow the novice to spend a short period of time in any community which she finds appropriate.<sup>85</sup>

## 67. Admission of Candidates into the Novitiate

At least 2 months before entering the novitiate, the superior will prepare all the details of the candidate's suitability with the approval of the house council and submit the report to the superior general. The letter of application indicating the candidate's intention to enter the novitiate must also be enclosed for the superior general's consideration, and the final decision will be made through secret ballot of the superior general and her council.<sup>86</sup>

## 68. Qualifications of a Novice

The superior general will accept a candidate who is in good health with a suitable character for the religious spirit and that of the SQM congregation, together with other characteristics which indicate her maturity to live the life of the congregation.<sup>87</sup> The necessary qualifications are:

1. At least 17 years of age.
2. No marriage obligation.
3. Under no sacred obligation in any other congregation.
4. She is not under pressure, threatened by grave fear or fraud.
5. Not being a person who hides her status from an institute of consecrated life or any apostolic institute.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Cf. CIC 647§1, DFRI 45

<sup>83</sup> Cf. CIC 647§2

<sup>84</sup> Cf. CIC 648§2, DFRI 47-48

<sup>85</sup> Cf. CIC 647§3

<sup>86</sup> Cf. CIC 641

<sup>87</sup> Cf. CIC 642

<sup>88</sup> Cf. CIC 643§1

## **69. Objectives of Formation in the Novitiate**<sup>89</sup>

The objectives of formation in the novitiate stage are to assist novices to live the religious life by practicing the evangelical counsels as stated in the rules of the congregation, and to study our uniqueness and spirit, our constitutions and regulations, the life of Father Carlo della Torre, our Father and Founder of the congregation, including our history and community life. They will be taught about the spiritual life, prayer and self-renunciation, and the contemplation of the mystery of redemption, through readings and meditation on the gospel, learning how to praise God in the liturgical celebrations and how to love the Church, and respecting their formators.

## **70. Duty of a Novice**

A novice should show her responsibility by sincere collaboration with her novice mistress, so that she may faithfully respond to her vocation which is a gift of God.<sup>90</sup> She will try to pray, work and do some apostolic work, in order to encounter God in the various events of life and in the life of the people with whom and for whom she will work in the future.

## **71. The Novice Mistress**

The novice mistress has responsibility of forming the novices in accordance with the rules and regulations, and details of different stages of formation of the congregation. She must be a perpetually professed member,<sup>91</sup> no less than 30 years of age and is appointed by the superior general with the approval of her council.<sup>92</sup> She will work for a term of 3 years which can always be extended.

## **72. Qualifications of the Novice Mistress**

In order to be qualified in giving formation to the novices, the novice mistress should possess the following qualities: prudence, piety, patience,<sup>93</sup> knowledge and experience in the spiritual and religious life, love of liturgy and understanding of her own role in spiritual formation and ecclesiology,<sup>94</sup> readiness to listen to the novices' problems, and the ability to build harmony which will create mutual trust, kindness and discipline.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. CIC 652§2

<sup>90</sup> Cf. CIC 652§3

<sup>91</sup> Cf. CIC 651§1

<sup>92</sup> Constitution, n.101.3

<sup>93</sup> Cf. CDR 20

<sup>94</sup> Cf. DFR1 31

<sup>95</sup> Cf. RC 2,32.1-2

### 73. Roles of the Novice Mistress

Supervision and care of novices are the right and duty proper to the novice mistress<sup>96</sup> who will carry out this role with others if it is necessary,<sup>97</sup> with the understanding of the superior general and her council.<sup>98</sup> The novice mistress must, from time to time, report the progress of each novice to the superior general.

She has the responsibility to supervise novices with love and compassion like a mother, explain the congregation's rules and regulations with prudence, give advice on everything concerning the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience along with the virtues related to those vows, show how to live the spiritual life by meditating on the Word and by praying, and to cultivate their lives in connection with other virtues.

She also has the duty, with assistance of others, in selecting and testing the vocation of novices with caution.<sup>99</sup>

### 74. Duration of Formation at the Novitiate

Duration of formation at this stage will last 2 years. The first year will be the period constituted by Canon Law,<sup>100</sup> while another year is the time period designed and enforced by the congregation.

In order that the formation during the novitiate will bring about the desired results, each novice must spend the first year in the house of novitiate. During such time anyone who is absent more than 3 months for any reason, either consecutively or with intervals, will have to start the novitiate all over again, while anyone who is absent from the novitiate more than 15 days but not exceeding 3 months, must compensate accordingly, with the exception provided by the constitutions, No. 66.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Cf. CIC 650§2

<sup>97</sup> Cf. CIC 651§2

<sup>98</sup> Cf. CIC 650§2

<sup>99</sup> Cf. CIC 652§1

<sup>100</sup> Cf. CIC 648§1

<sup>101</sup> Cf. CIC 649§1



## **75. Apostolic Training during the Novitiate**

In order to make the formation more holistic during the second year of novitiate, the novice will be given the opportunity to help work in the various houses of the congregation for a scholastic semester under the supervision of the superior. Each novice has the duty to contact and report faithfully her life situation to her novice mistress in order to get proper advice<sup>102</sup> and the novice mistress, in turn, must give a summary report to the superior general.

## **76. Role and Duty of the Community on Formation**

The novitiate stage is the time for novices to begin living their lives in the SQM congregation. Each professed sister, therefore, will take part in this period of formation of the novices by living an exemplary life and supporting them by prayers.<sup>103</sup>

## **77. The First Profession of a Novice**

A novice, after going through the novitiate stage and having been sufficiently formed with a guarantee that she has enough maturity to carry out her commitment to live a religious life, will be permitted to take the vows, otherwise she will be invited to leave. In case the superior general deems that she has not been well-prepared, more time should be extended for an additional period of formation, but not to exceed 6 months.<sup>104</sup>

Each novice has to submit a letter to the superior general 2 months before the end of the novitiate asking, with her own free will, to make her vows. The superior general will then consider her request upon hearing the report of the novice mistress before giving the approval. The majority of the secret votes of her council is definitely required.

Before the first profession the novices will make an 8 day retreat.

## **78. Conditions for Making the Vows**

In order to validate the vows the following conditions must be met:

1. A candidate must be at least 18 years old.
2. A candidate must go through the novitiate at least 2 years.
3. The superior general has the authority to accept the profession of a candidate with the consent of her council.
4. The vow must be clearly expressed and not be made under pressure, threat or deception.
5. The superior general will preside over the profession or may appoint a representative.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Cf. RC 2,19

<sup>103</sup> Cf. CIC 652§4, DFRI 45, RC 5

<sup>104</sup> Cf. CIC 653§2

<sup>105</sup> Cf. CIC 656

## **Juniorate Formation**

### **79. Duration of First Profession**

After making first profession a novice is in the status of ‘junior’ which normally lasts for 6 years.<sup>106</sup> During the first 3 years, she will renew her vows annually, but then renew her vows for the next 3 years. However, she may submit a request in writing to renew annually again, with the approval of the superior general and with the consent of her council.

After the completion of 6 years she will make her perpetual vows. In case a junior needs more time to ascertain her vocation, or when the superior considers it opportune, she may prolong this period with the approval of the superior general, provided the probation is not beyond 9 years.<sup>107</sup>

### **80. Objectives of Juniorate Formation**

After first profession the juniors will continue to lead more fully the life of the institute and to carry out its mission.<sup>108</sup> The formation must answer the needs of the Church, social circumstances, the signs of the times, and the demands of the mission, spirit and identity of the congregation’s mission.<sup>109</sup> They will live their spiritual life and proclaim the Good News, gaining knowledge in theory and experience, and being formed in both secular and religious dimensions to be qualified in the mission of the congregation.<sup>110</sup>

### **81. Responsibility of Juniors in the Process of Formation**

During this stage juniors should be aware of their responsibility in living their religious life with zeal and determination, and collaborating with their formators, in order to live in a higher degree of human maturity, Christian formation and religious life, while realizing that religious who dedicate their lives to God must try to live their vocation towards perfection which they have chosen.

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<sup>106</sup> Cf. CIC 655

<sup>107</sup> Cf. 657§2

<sup>108</sup> Cf. CIC 659§1

<sup>109</sup> Cf. CIC 659§2

<sup>110</sup> Cf. CIC 660§1

## **82. Formation of Juniors in the Initial Stage<sup>111</sup>**

After formation in the novitiate which ends with first profession, each sister will undergo a further period of 2 years in an assigned house in order to deepen her understanding about the evangelical counsels, the spirit of the congregation and religious life experiences through different courses organized by the person in charge. Impetus should be given to the study of theology, Scripture, basic philosophy, spirituality, pastoral work and the charism of the congregation,<sup>112</sup> by sending them to study in institutes which teach these subjects. Meanwhile they will be given the opportunity to experience the congregation's mission under the supervision of a sister assigned to them.

## **83. Formation of Juniors at the Second Stage**

After going through the first stage of formation the young sisters start living in houses of the congregation or other places where the SQM sisters are working, as assigned by the superior general and her council. They may be given the responsibility to carry out the congregation's mission under the care and supervision of their superior who will take care of them like an elder sister, so that they will learn about the real life in the SDM community and will be able to make a correct decision before applying for perpetual vows. During this period the congregation should allow them to study about religious and apostolic life, or other study which is suitable.

## **84. Renewal of the Vows**

A junior will submit in writing, with her own free will, a request to renew her vows or an application to make perpetual vows, 2 months in advance. The superior general will consider the request after hearing from the superior of that house where she resides, and after the consent, through secret vote, of her council and will grant permission for the renewal of the vows or admission to perpetual profession.<sup>113</sup>

## **85. The Perpetual Profession**

The superior general may admit a young sister to her perpetual profession before completing her tentative vows only with a just reason, but it must not be beyond 3 months.<sup>114</sup>

Before making perpetual vows, the congregation will allow a junior a period of 1 year in order to reflect deeply on the religious life, and have more time for meditation, prayer and self examination, so that she will be able to make this important decision with real freedom.

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<sup>111</sup> Cf. CIC 659§1

<sup>112</sup> Cf. DFRI 61, 62

<sup>113</sup> Cf. CIC 607§2, 657§1

<sup>114</sup> Cf. CIC 657§3

## **On – Going Formation**

### **86. The Importance of On-going Formation**

The on-going formation in the religious life is a very important factor, due to the fact that the conditions of society are constantly changing with the consequence that we must always develop ourselves. Therefore, the SQM congregation and the sisters themselves will join hands in revitalizing spiritual life, accumulating new knowledge, experience and initiatives, in order that our religious life and mission will be effective and up-to-date.<sup>115</sup>

### **87. Perseverance in the Vocation**

Sisters should carefully nourish their vocation, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit; through prayer they ask for the grace to persevere each day, and through self-formation they ask for readiness to respond to the call of God.

### **88. The Last Stage of Life**

A sister who has carried out her duties and lived a good religious life till her last breath will be able to say with hope: “Jesus Christ, my Spouse, please come!” Whereas, other sisters, after having helped console the elderly sister in her advanced age or during her sickness with love, should pray for the soul of the sister who is called back to God.

### **89. Exclaustration**

In the case of grave and serious reasons, the superior general may permit a perpetually professed sister to live outside the congregation, but not beyond 3 years. This must be decided by secret ballot of her council. However, the extension over 3 years of exclaustration pertains to the right of the local ordinary where the Mother House of the congregation is located.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. CIC 661, DFR1 66

<sup>116</sup> Cf. CIC 686,687

## Chapter 7 Governance of the Congregation

*“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?  
He said to Him, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You,”  
He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”  
(Jn 21: 15)*

### Principles and Criteria in Governance of the Congregation

#### 90. Structure of the Governance

The SQM congregation is made up of sisters coming to live together as a religious community. They are registered under a governance unit which is called “House”.

The governance of the congregation has 2 levels, namely: the Congregation Level and the House Level. The superior general has supreme power over all the houses and all the sisters.<sup>117</sup> In the governance at the congregational level she works with her council per jurisdiction of the congregation’s constitutions and regulations, per motion of the general chapter. As for the house level is concerned, the house superior is directly responsible with the house council<sup>118</sup> and is invested with the authority within the framework of her duty as stated in the constitutions and regulations.<sup>119</sup>

#### 91. Spirit of the Congregational Governance<sup>120</sup>

Governance at the congregational level is the use of authority, given by God, through the ministry of the Church in the spirit of service for others.

Hence, according to the spirit of Father Carlo della Torre, our Father and Founder, who closely took care of us with love and compassion as a father by encouraging us to live together in fraternal love, all superiors at every level will exercise their authority towards the members as they are children of God by respecting each person, supporting them to work together for the benefit of the community and the Church, and loving each one as Christ did.

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<sup>117</sup> Cf. CIC 622

<sup>118</sup> Cf. CIC 627§1

<sup>119</sup> Cf. CIC 622

<sup>120</sup> Cf. CIC 618

## 92. Use of Authority in the Governance

Superiors at every level should be docile to the will of God in carrying out their duties of helping the sisters to show their obedience willingly.<sup>121</sup> Bound by this duty they act as both leaders and members at the same time.<sup>122</sup> Therefore, the exercise of authority and the freedom of each individual are not contrary, but go hand in hand to fulfill the will of God sought by both in fraternal contribution.<sup>123</sup>

## 93. Goal and Uniformity in the Governance

In the governance at every level the goal that a superior and sisters wish to achieve is to do the will of God.<sup>124</sup> Hence, the superior has the role of making the community lively and active, both spiritually and in pastoral activities, according to the talents and gifts of the individual.<sup>125</sup> All the sisters, meanwhile, should faithfully observe the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, live one's life in consonance with the SQM constitutions and regulations, and aspire toward holiness according to each individual status.<sup>126</sup> They should faithfully maintain the structure, mission, spirit, charism and all good traditions which we receive as our heritage.<sup>127</sup>

## 94. Shared Responsibility of the Members

The sisters should be convinced that they are part of the community, therefore, they will be interested in the well-being and take responsibility for the congregation. Hence, the superior will listen to her sisters, promote harmony among them, encourage them to collaborate in the spirit of obedience and with a sense of responsibility, take the initiative in new projects and faithfully complete the mission given to them.<sup>128</sup> The sisters will be ready to accept their assignments and be willing to make sacrifices in carrying them out.

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. CIC 618

<sup>122</sup> Cf. MR 9d

<sup>123</sup> Cf. ET 25

<sup>124</sup> Cf. ET 25

<sup>125</sup> Cf. CDR 16

<sup>126</sup> Cf. CIC 598§2

<sup>127</sup> Cf. CIC 578

<sup>128</sup> Cf. PC 14

## 95. Supreme Authority in the Congregation before the Church

The Holy Father holds the supreme authority in the congregation, whereby the sisters must obey<sup>129</sup> under the vow of obedience. The Archbishop of Bangkok archdiocese is the lawful ordinary on whom the congregation directly depends.<sup>130</sup> He is authorized to deal with certain important issues which are beyond the power of the congregation to handle.<sup>131</sup> The Bishop of a particular diocese where the SQM sisters are working has the authority over them with the jurisdiction stated in Canon Law.<sup>132</sup>

## Governance at the Congregational Level

### 96. The Body of Authority

The body of authority consists of the superior general and her council which are made up of:

1. Superior general of the congregation.
2. Vicar general.
3. Advisor for formation.
4. Treasurer
5. Advisor for evangelization and education.

The superior general and her council will choose a secretary from the selected council members who will be on duty for a duration of a specific period.

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<sup>129</sup> Cf. CIC 590§1-2

<sup>130</sup> Cf. CIC 594-595

<sup>131</sup> Cf. CIC 595, 586

<sup>132</sup> Cf. CIC 595, 611, 628§2, 688§2, 691§2

## 97. The Superior General

The superior general has absolute authority over all activities and sisters as stated in Canon Law and the constitutions and regulations.

She is the center who unifies all into one body in the congregation by giving directives to the members to live a true religious life and be properly formed in each stage.<sup>133</sup>

She is the immediate person responsible in leading the community to carry out the mission of the congregation with her advisors who share in different areas according to the spirit of the congregation and the directives of the general chapter.

Besides, she is the official representative of the SQM congregation and will determine with the local ordinary the mission of the SQM members in his diocese. She will be responsible to report on matters relating to the congregation to the Ordinary in whose territory the SQM headquarters is located.<sup>134</sup>

## 98. Qualifications of the Superior General

A candidate, for this position, must be a perpetual professed sister of no less than 15 years.<sup>135</sup> She must be a person who strictly lives the rules and regulations of the congregation, has long experience in the life of prayer and is close to God. She cultivates good human relationships and is determined to dedicate herself to care for the members both individually and as a community.<sup>136</sup> She will love the Church and the congregation, and is prudent in its administration.

## 99. Duties of the Superior General

The superior general will diligently dedicate herself, with the collaboration of her sisters, to zealously build a community in Christ seeking and loving God as its priority. Hence, she will provide time for the sisters to regularly listen and share the Word of God among themselves; lead the community in learning how to enjoy celebrating the sacred liturgy; be a good example in the practice of virtue, and faithfully follow the constitutions and traditions of the congregation.

She will attend to the personal needs of the sisters with love as a good mother, visit the sick with concern, console the depressed with patience,<sup>137</sup> visit each of the houses at least once a year.<sup>138</sup>

Members will approach superiors with trust, to whom they can express their minds freely and willingly. However, superiors are forbidden to induce their subjects in any way whatever to make a manifestation of conscience to them.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Cf. CIC 619

<sup>134</sup> Cf. CIC 594

<sup>135</sup> Cf. CIC 623

<sup>136</sup> Cf. CDR 20, DFRI 21

<sup>137</sup> Cf. CIC 617-619

<sup>138</sup> Cf. CIC 628§1

<sup>139</sup> Cf. CIC 630



## 100. Superior General and the Positive Consent of her Council

The superior general must listen to the consent of her council either through open or secret ballots as deemed appropriate in the following cases:

1. Admission of a candidate into the novitiate.<sup>140</sup>
2. Permission for a novice to spend her novitiate period in another house of the congregation.<sup>141</sup>
3. Permission for a sister to make temporary vows,<sup>142</sup> and perpetual vows<sup>143</sup> after hearing the report from the novice mistress or the superior.
4. Permission for a sister to stay outside the congregation not over 1 year, except for reasons of health, education and the mission of the congregation.<sup>144</sup>
5. Permission for a sister in perpetual vows to live outside the congregation not exceeding 3 years when the reason is grave and serious.<sup>145</sup>
6. Permission for a sister in perpetual vows to transfer to another congregation with approval of the superior general and the consent of the councils of both congregations.<sup>146</sup>
7. Permission for a sister in temporary vows to leave the congregation when there is sufficient reason and with the approval of the local ordinary where the Mother House of the congregation is located.<sup>147</sup>
8. Permission to transfer, purchase, sell, exchange, mortgage non-movable assets and lend money.<sup>148</sup>
9. Permission to open/close a house or change important objectives of the house with an approval, in writing, from the local ordinary whose territory the house is located.<sup>149</sup>
10. A new establishment, a transfer and closure of the novitiate.<sup>150</sup>
11. Approval of the budget which is beyond the authority of the superior general or the superior, including the withdrawal of reserved funds for an ordinary expense.
12. After hearing the consent of her council, the superior general may seek the permission from the Holy See or the local Ordinary, in whose territory the Mother House is situated, concerning important matters beyond the authority of the Congregation's administration.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Cf. CIC 641

<sup>141</sup> Cf. CIC 647§2

<sup>142</sup> Cf. CIC 656,3°

<sup>143</sup> Cf. CIC 657§1

<sup>144</sup> Cf. CIC 665§1

<sup>145</sup> Cf. CIC 686§1

<sup>146</sup> Cf. CIC 684§1

<sup>147</sup> Cf. CIC 688§2

<sup>148</sup> Cf. CIC 634§1 638§3-4

<sup>149</sup> Cf. CIC 609§1, 616§1, 612

<sup>150</sup> Cf. CIC 647§1

<sup>151</sup> Cf. CIC 594, 595§1-2

Nevertheless, after a positive consent of her council, the superior general, only when there is a grave reason, may exercise her authority to stop a particular action, but if her council proposes a negative consent, the action of the superior general is considered to be illicit.<sup>152</sup>

### **101. Superior General and the Consent of her Council**

In all important activities of the congregation, the superior general will consult her council in the following areas:

1. Approval of the congregation's formation project.<sup>153</sup>
2. Approval of a request which is beyond the authority of a superior to decide.
3. Approval of the nomination or request to retire of a secretary, novice mistress, superior and house councilor. In the case of the house councilor, the opinion of the superior must be sought.
4. New assignment and transfer of sisters.
5. Approval of the report which must be sent to the ordinary in whose territory the Mother House is located.
6. Decision on the dates of the general chapter, extra-ordinary meetings, and the appointment of the director of the general chapter.
7. Decision concerning the house where the superior general will reside in special cases.

### **102. Qualifications of the Council**

Members of the council must be perpetually professed not fewer than 10 years, be religious who are devout, humble, prudent. They must be able to help the superior in proposing ideas, giving advice and deciding on various issues for the benefit and progress of the Church and the Congregation.

### **103. Duties of the Council**

The members of the council are to work with the superior general, helping her in the administration, seeking together the will of God and making decisions on various matters with prudence,<sup>154</sup> organizing a more efficient work system as stipulated by the general chapter and superior general, offering critical suggestions concerning the situations and problems of the congregation, and taking joint responsibility for the resolutions of the meeting in order to promote the work of the Congregation.

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<sup>152</sup> Cf. CIC 127§1

<sup>153</sup> Cf. CIC 650§1, 659§2

<sup>154</sup> Cf. CIC 127§3

#### **104. Duties of the Vicar General**

The vicar general has the duty to see that each house acts according to the rules and regulations of the congregation. If there is anything inappropriate, she will give advice to correct it immediately. Besides, she will also carry out any duty assigned by the superior general.

She also takes charge on behalf of the superior general when the latter is absent or incapable of carrying out her normal duties.

Furthermore, she gives assistance to the sisters who need advice concerning spiritual life and guidance about their vocation, pointing out the advantage of being faithful to God.

#### **105. Duties of the Councilor for Formation**

The formation councilors have the duty to support and promote the spiritual life and education of the sisters to grow in both holiness and knowledge. They will follow-up all the stages of formation according to the curriculum of the congregation.

#### **106. Duties of the Treasurer**

The treasurer has the duty to keep and administer temporal goods under supervision of the superior general and her council<sup>155</sup> by keeping a record of transactions and updating all the documents pertaining to the assets of the congregation. She will do this with responsibility and prudence. She will make a quarterly financial report to the general council.<sup>156</sup> The treasurer will deposit money in a bank in the name of the congregation or its mission signed by the superior general, vicar general and the treasurer. Withdrawals can be made only with the above-mentioned 3 signatures. Besides, she also has the duty to supervise the construction, repairs and renovation of all the houses belonging to the congregation. She will make a monthly auditing of all accounts of the houses and schools, and will update the accounts of the congregation so that they will always be ready to be presented to the superior general.

The treasurer will also perform the duty of managing personal assets of the members confided to the congregation. She must report in writing about the income derived from those assets to the superior general once a year,<sup>157</sup> by separating it from the congregation's assets. She must prepare a report regarding the administration of temporal goods which the superior general will propose to the general chapter. Besides, she will give training to the treasurers in various houses of the congregation, so that the administration will be carried out the same way.

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<sup>155</sup> Cf. CIC 636§1

<sup>156</sup> Cf. CIC 636§2

<sup>157</sup> Cf. constitution, No. 18

### **107. Duties of Councilors for Evangelization and Education**

The duty of this councilor is to collaborate with the superior general in the work of evangelization. She will be responsible for coordinating apostolic activity, promoting and encouraging zeal and a strong spirit of evangelization in accordance with the Church's teaching. She should organize seminars in order that members will be better formed in teaching catechism, and prepare the sisters to be able to announce the Good News with various methods, so that the mission of the congregation will accomplish its objectives on the pastoral plan.

Besides, she will cooperate with the superior general by seeking ways to promote, encourage, organize activities and coordinate the work, so that the school activities, teaching and learning, evangelization in the school, spiritual formation for teachers, students and the young, will be more effective in line with the teaching of the Church and the spirit of the congregation. She will keep abreast of information about schools and update herself concerning education.

### **108. Duties of the Secretary**

The secretary has the duty of recording and reporting minutes of the meetings of the council, taking care of correspondence, circular letters of the superior general, recording the sisters' registrations, important events, writing the diary and updating the history of the congregation in collaboration with members in the various houses. She is responsible for compiling all the important papers of the congregation. She will not give documents to anybody without permission from the superior general and must keep secret by profession even when she is no longer secretary.

### **109. Term of Office of the Superior General and her Council**

The superior general is elected for 5 years. She can be re-elected for another 5-year term<sup>158</sup>, after which she cannot be re-elected, but will be eligible again for a future election.

The council members can likewise stay in their positions for a term of 5 years, but they can always be reelected as councilors.

The superior general and her council will stay at the Mother House or at another house as decided by the council members.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Cf. CIC 624§2

<sup>159</sup> Cf. CIC 629

### **110. Vacancy of the Office of Superior General and Her Council**

Should the superior general die or whenever a vacancy occurs, the vicar general will take charge immediately, but will not make any changes in the congregation. She will call for a general chapter within 3 months<sup>160</sup> to elect a new superior general. The council members will remain in office till the meeting of the general chapter.

If a position in the council becomes vacant because of death or inability to carry out the duty for a long period of time with grave reasons, the superior general, with the consent of her council will appoint a replacement, but if the vacancy is the position of the vicar general, the council members will elect, by secret ballot, the vicar general from among members of the council, and the elected person will stay in office until the completion of the remaining term.

## **The General Chapter of the Congregation**

### **111. The General Chapter**

The general chapter holds supreme authority in the congregation.<sup>161</sup> It is the meeting of representatives of all the sisters who seek the Will of God in matters of importance, in an atmosphere of love and unity, searching for ways to be faithful to the Gospel and to the spiritual heritage of the founder. The general chapter will be a time for renewal of the congregation both in spirituality and in mission, under guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>162</sup>

Sisters participating in the general chapter will be aware of their responsibility in this important task. They must study the various agenda which will be discussed, will pass judgment with utmost caution, and be ever ready to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit dwelling within them and in the other sisters who participate in the meeting. However, the decisions of the general chapter will be valid in regard to changes in the constitutions only with the approval, in writing, and signed by the local ordinary in whose territory the Mother House is located, with due consideration of the objectives and spirit of the congregation.

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<sup>160</sup> Cf. CIC 158§1

<sup>161</sup> Cf. CIC 596§1

<sup>162</sup> Cf. CIC 631§1

## 112. Meetings of the General Chapter

General chapter meetings are divided into:

1. The general chapter meeting is conducted once in 5 years to elect the superior general and the vicar general, or in the case when the superior general dies or there is a vacancy.
2. The special general chapter is convened when three-fourths of the council members request in writing to the superior general to change or amend the constitutions and regulations, or motions of important or urgent matters to prevent harm to the congregation.

## 113. Components of the Meeting

Components of the meeting are the sisters empowered with the right to vote in the meeting. They consist of:

1. Members by office:
  - 1.1 Superior general and her council.
  - 1.2 Secretary.
  - 1.3 Novice mistress
  - 1.4 Former superior generals
  - 1.5 House superiors (only a house of more than 5 members).
2. Representative members by election are:
  - 2.1 One house representative (only a house of more than 5 members)
  - 2.2 Member representatives at a ratio of one to 10. If the fraction is more than five, one more can be added. Voting is by secret ballot by the perpetually professed sisters. In case the number of the perpetually professed sisters is small, all of them may become members.<sup>163</sup>

The superior general, after consulting her council, will appoint a moderator for the meeting who will see that the meeting is carried out smoothly and is faithful to the objectives.

The superior general presides at the chapter.

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<sup>163</sup> Cf. CIC 631§1

## 114. Objectives of the General Chapter<sup>164</sup>

The meeting has the following objectives:

1. To examine, improve, amend the constitutions and regulations and way of living in order to be relevant to contemporary time, in line with the Church's teaching, objectives, spirit and the charism of the founder, including traditions which are the heritage of the congregation.<sup>165</sup>
2. Improve or correct deliberations of the previous general chapter.
3. Elect the superior general and the council members as stated in the constitutions and regulations of the congregation. The election can take place any day during the meeting.
4. Fix a limit to the amount of money that can be approved by the superior general for the congregation's mission in case of emergency without consulting her council.
5. Examine and make decisions on important issues of the congregation.
6. Specify rules and directives by which all members must abide.

In general the motion on any issue is by the majority of votes which should be more than half of the present members, while votes on the approval of the constitutions or in other cases stipulated by the constitution must be 2/3 of the members.

## 115. Preparation for the General Chapter

The superior general together with the council will decide the agenda, date, time, location of the chapter and appoint a committee to prepare the chapter. Notice of the meeting will be sent to the sisters no less than 6 months prior to the meeting. The local ordinary, in whose territory the congregation is located, will be informed.

The preparatory committee for the meeting has the right to ask that the sisters elect their representatives in due time and find ways to allow them to freely express their opinions, and prepare necessary papers needed for the meeting. The preparatory committee will ask the help of experts to advise concerning the agenda, so that the meeting will be appropriately and prudently carried out.<sup>166</sup> The superior general and her council will select the necessary documents for the meeting and choose experts after having received the report of the preparatory committee.

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<sup>164</sup> Cf. CIC 631§1

<sup>165</sup> Cf. CIC 578

<sup>166</sup> Cf. CIC 631§2, 632-633

### **116. Election of the Superior General**

In the meeting of the General Chapter a date will be fixed for the election of the superior general. The superior general will ask all the sisters to propose 3 names for candidates by secret ballot. After having the 3 names of the sisters with the highest votes, the members of the chapter will vote by secret ballot, nominating one of the 3 candidates to be the superior general.

After openly counting the number of votes, the candidate with two-thirds majority will legitimately be elected the superior general. The Bishop, in whose territory the Mother House is situated and who presides at the election, will announce the name of the new superior general and will ask for her consent. If she accepts she will be the legitimate superior general.<sup>167</sup> If the first, second and the third ballots are not successful, the sister who has received the highest votes in the fourth round will be considered as legitimately elected. In the fourth round, if the votes of 2 candidates are still equal, the one with longer years of profession will be elected. If the years of profession and age are equal, the candidate more advanced in age will be elected.

### **117. Process of Election of the Council Members**

After a successful election, the new superior general will take chairmanship of the meeting in the election of other positions by first reading the constitutions pertaining to the qualifications and duties of the council. Because of the importance of the position of the vicar general, the process of election will be the same as that for the superior general. Later, the election of the council members will be done one after the other, namely: councilor for formation, treasurer, and councilor for evangelization and education. Each position must gain more than half of the votes of the members present at the meeting. In case of failure in the first and second ballot, in the third ballot the sister who receives the highest votes will be considered to be legitimately elected. If in the third round 2 candidates are still equal, the one with longer years of profession will be elected. If the years of profession and age are equal, the candidate more advanced in age will be elected. .

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<sup>167</sup> Cf. CIC 625§2



## Governance at a Local Level

### 118. Establishment of a New House

A community is a group of sisters who live and work together in the same house or more than one house in the vicinity. The members of a community are not to be fewer than 5 persons. A superior is appointed by the superior general to be responsible and govern the community in accord with the constitutions and regulations of the congregation with close collaboration of the house council.

A house or a chapel is the place wherein the SQM sisters live. Responsibility for the houses falls on a sister appointed by the superior general.

Establishment of a new house must be first approved, in writing, by the local ordinary in whose territory the SQM sisters will be working. The bilateral agreement must be done in writing.<sup>168</sup>

### 119. Qualifications of a Superior

With consultation of her council, the superior general will appoint a perpetually professed sister, of no less than 3 years, to be the superior of a house. She should be well experienced in the life of prayer, close to God, generous in serving others, dedicating herself for the common good, and able to understand and welcome others.<sup>169</sup>

### 120. Appointment of a Superior

A superior is appointed by the superior general with concurrence of her council. Each superior will be appointed for a term of 3 years. However, she may be removed from her duty before completing the term.<sup>170</sup> A superior can be reappointed for a second term (6 years), after which she must be transferred for at least a period of time.<sup>171</sup>

### 121. Duty of a Superior<sup>172</sup>

The superior is the first person to be responsible for the well-being of all the sisters and activities in the house. She will assist, follow-up and encourage all the sisters to live a religious life according to the intention and spirit of the congregation as stated in the SDM constitutions and regulations.

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<sup>168</sup> Cf. CIC 609

<sup>169</sup> Cf. CDR 20

<sup>170</sup> Cf. CIC 624§3

<sup>171</sup> Cf. CIC 624§2

<sup>172</sup> Cf. CIC 619

## **122. Local Council**

Local council consists of 2 members:

1. Local superior.
2. Treasurer of the house who should not be also the local superior at the same time, although members are limited.

In the case of a houses where there are more than 5 members, more members of house may be added to the council, but should not be more than 4. House councilors must be appointed by the superior general with the approval of her council and the superior of the house. The term of the local councilor is 3 years. They can always be reappointed, or transferred for another assignment before the end of the term. Whenever there is a vacancy, it should be filled as soon as possible.

## **123. Authority in Decision Making of a Superior**

Cases when a superior may make a decision on her own are:

1. Approval to leave the house not exceeding 5 days.
2. Approval not to follow the daily rules in case of necessity.
3. Convocation for meetings of the council members.
4. Suggestion of names of the sisters for their temporary or perpetual profession.
5. Decisions concerning the rules, time-table and activities of the house in conformity with the spirit of the congregation.

In other important matters, the superior must always consult the superior general.

## **124. Duties of the Local Council**

The local councilors have the duty to express their opinions, make decisions, and take responsibility for all the activities of the house, so that they will be in accord with the constitutions and regulations of the congregation. They will carry out their duties as follows:

1. They will substitute for the superior when she is unable to carry out her duty. They will assure that the running of the house is in conformity with the constitutions and regulations. If any irregularity is found, they will suggest ways to rectify it.
2. The house treasurer has the duty to administer temporal goods, and provide what is necessary for the members, under the direction of the superior. She should keep a certain amount of cash according to the needs of the house with the agreement of the house council. Bank deposits must be made in the name of the superior and the treasurer. Book-keeping must be submitted to the treasurer of the congregation every month. At the end of each scholastic year the surplus money must be sent to the Mother House in order to be kept in the common fund.

## Chapter 8

### Administration of Temporal Goods in the Congregation

*“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful in much;  
And he who is unjust in what is least  
is unjust also in much.”  
(Lk 16: 9-10)*

#### 125. Assets of the Congregation

Assets of a house, acquired by any means, do not belong to any particular house, but belong to the congregation, which must be considered belonging to the Church.<sup>173</sup> It should be understood that it is a gift from God for the care and formation of the sisters and the mission of the congregation.

As for the house of the diocese where the SQM sisters stay and work, the assets provided by the diocese belong to the diocese and they must be looked after with care and responsibility by the sisters.

On the other hand, the persons responsible for the goods of the congregation should carry out their duties with prudence and honesty before God, considering that they are only administrators and in no way owners of those things.

#### 126. Rights in the Management of the Congregation’s Assets

Though the congregation is a juridical person by law and is capable of managing the assets, the superior general will exercise her right in acquiring, managing and selling the assets in the name of the congregation with the consent of her council.<sup>174</sup> Nevertheless, they are to avoid all appearance of luxury, greed, immoderate wealth and amassing of goods.<sup>175</sup>

With regard to purchases, sales, exchanges and property mortgages which have a negative impact on the heritage of the congregation and have legal obligations, it is necessary to have affirmative documents in writing from the superior general with the consent of her council.

If it is a matter of business which goes beyond the amount limited by the Holy See for a particular region, or concerning various things donated to the Church by vows, or concerning articles of artistic or historical value, permission must be obtained, in writing,<sup>176</sup> from the Holy See and from the local ordinary of the archdiocese in whose territory the congregation is situated. The above-mentioned authorities will have the right to withhold permission when it is found, with serious reason, that it may cause grave damage to the congregation or go against the intention of the Church and the spirit of the congregation.

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<sup>173</sup> Cf. CIC 635§1

<sup>174</sup> Cf. CIC 634§1

<sup>175</sup> Cf. CIC 634§2

<sup>176</sup> Cf. CIC 638§3-4

### **127. Annual Budget Proposal for the Congregation and the House**

Persons responsible for the administration at every level will give their respective budget allocations for annual expenses to the superior general and her council before the end of each scholastic year.

### **128. Obligation of Responsibility Concerning**

Persons responsible for the administration at all levels should exercise utmost prudence in dealings with the assets of the congregation that are legitimate under civil law in order not to cause any damage to the goods of the congregation, and also not to be in contradiction with the norms of religious life.

If a sister creates a personal debt or a personal obligation, though permitted by the superior general or house superior, she must take responsibility for her own actions. But if she is asked to act in the name of the congregation and has been assigned by the superior general or the superior, the congregation will take responsibility.<sup>177</sup>

### **129. Keeping Reserved Funds of the Congregation**

The superior general and her council must be prudent in keeping and maintaining an amount of reserved funds to ensure the stability of the sisters in time of emergency. This is done through deducting a certain percentage of money surplus from various houses and depositing it in the name of the superior general, vicar general or treasurer with all the three signatures for the withdrawal when demanded by a just reason, and this must be done with the decision of the superior general and the consent of her council.

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<sup>177</sup> Cf. CIC 639§2

## Chapter 9

### Departure from the Congregation

#### 130. Departure

A sister should realize that her vocation is a precious gift from God and that she responds to it by profession, which is like a covenant between herself and God, to which she must be loyal until the end of her life. When a sister who has made temporary vows has serious reasons, after a proper discernment, prayer and advice from the superior and her spiritual priest director, she may submit her resignation in writing to the superior general and may leave the congregation after completing the period of her vows.<sup>178</sup> But if she wishes to leave the congregation prior to the completion of her vows, she must first obtain permission from the superior general with the consent of her council and a report must be submitted to the Bishop who is responsible for the congregation.<sup>179</sup> The congregation will take care of the sister with justice and compassion.<sup>180</sup>

If a sister in perpetual vows wishes to leave the congregation, she must submit a letter in writing to the superior general. After having the consent of the council, she must ask permission from the Bishop of the diocese in whose territory the Mother House is located.<sup>181</sup>

#### 131. Dismissal of a Sister in Temporary Vows

With a lawful reason and by way of secret vote the superior general and her council may not allow a sister who completes a period of temporary vows to renew her vows.<sup>182</sup>

#### 132. Dismissal of a Sister in Perpetual Vows

For grave reasons, such as scandal or behavior obviously contrary to the belief of the Church, e.g. registration for civil marriage or with the intention of disobeying the constitutions of the congregation in terms of the evangelical counsels which can be proved, and the opportunity has already been given for the explanation after warning by word and writing, the superior general with the consent of her council, may dismiss that sister from the congregation. This course of action must be in line with the admonition and time frame as stated in Can. 694-700.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Cf. CIC 688§1

<sup>179</sup> Cf. CIC 688§2

<sup>180</sup> Cf. CIC 702

<sup>181</sup> Cf. CIC 691§1-2

<sup>182</sup> Cf. CIC 657§1, 689§1

<sup>183</sup> Cf. CIC 694-700

### **133. Transfer to Another Congregation**

When a sister in perpetual vows wishes to transfer to another religious congregation, she needs an agreement given by the superior general and her council of both congregations. She will be on probation for at least 3 years before she is allowed to make her perpetual vows in the new congregation. If she is not accepted, she will return to her former congregation, unless she wishes to return to the laity status.

In the case of her transfer to a lay or secular institute, or a transfer from a lay or secular institute to a religious congregation, it is necessary for her to gain the permission from the Holy See and must strictly follow the decision of the Holy See.<sup>184</sup>

## **Chapter 10 Conclusion**

### **134. Constitutions: The Way Leading to God who is Love**

The constitutions are the compilation of the basic norms of the congregation which give direction to live a religious life in accordance with the charism of Father Carlo della Torre, Father and Founder of the SQM Congregation, in order to arrive at perfection and also to be signs and instruments of salvation given by Christ to the world.

Therefore, all the sisters will accept the constitutions as a most precious spiritual treasure given by the founder as the way toward God who is Love.

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<sup>184</sup> Cf. CIC 684§1-2,5

## Regulations of the “The Sisters of the Queenhip of Mary”

### Life of Chastity

1. When a sister feels that she is in danger of living in a way dangerous to a life of chastity, though the danger may come from the practice of her duty or the mission of the congregation, she must immediately, with a good intention, point it out to her superior, so that she will be helped by having recourse to prayer and mortification in the footsteps of the founder.<sup>185</sup>
2. In general, when a sister has to leave the house to go to her task or mission, she should go with at least one more sister and say the prayer, “Jesus, Mary and Joseph,” entrusting herself to the protection of her Guardian Angel.
3. A sister should be constantly at work and be moderate. She should take care of her health, taking some rest and leisure, promoting community life with love, which will make the community life a pleasant living, not seeking love and pleasure from other sources, which might be a risk for her consecration to God.<sup>186</sup>
4. A sister should be moderate in the use of all means of communication.<sup>187</sup>
5. To persevere in her vocation a sister should make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, desire to receive the Holy Communion as part the tradition of the congregation, have devotion to the Blessed Mary Virgin through devoutly praying the rosary and preparing her heart for the celebration of Marian feasts, as best she can, in the footsteps of Father Carlo della Torre, Father and Founder of the congregation.<sup>188</sup>

### Life of Poverty

6. In the spirit of a family, when a sister is in need of something, she will inform the superior directly with humble simplicity, and the superior will care for all in the community as sisters in Christ who seek and love God above all things. Nonetheless, she should provide what is necessary for the personal needs of the members, taking care of and making visits to the sick members with compassion.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 15

<sup>186</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 15

<sup>187</sup> Cf. CIC 666

<sup>188</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 15

<sup>189</sup> Cf. CIC 619

7. When a sister is assigned or asked to do some mission outside the S.Q.M, on her return she will give a report of all her expenses and return all extra money to her superior.<sup>190</sup>

8. The spirit of poverty requires that a sister will not receive special privileges, but will have what is necessary for health and work. The sisters will avoid seeking what is superfluous, even when given by their parents or relatives.<sup>191</sup>

## **Life of Obedience**

9. A sister must carry out her duty as assigned with the awareness that by doing so, she is really sharing in the redemptive work of Christ, whatever kind of work it may be. But if there is any obstacle, she should inform her superior general in order to seek advice and search for a solution to the problem together.<sup>192</sup>

10. When a sister would like to make a suggestion in any matter, she should present it to the superior with humility and will not demand that the superior accept her opinion. When a sister has good reason to start some activity which goes beyond her assignment, or which she deems to be important in the shared responsibility of the congregation, she should express her desire clearly to the superior and must always be ready to obey her superior.<sup>193</sup>

## **Community Life**

11. Each house must set an appropriate schedule which promotes community life whereby sisters come together in the house like a family. Besides, each sister should be careful not to get so immersed in her work, that she does not take time for relaxation with her sisters in community.<sup>194</sup>

12. Before the beginning and at the end of each scholastic year, the superior will organize meetings of the house members to study the working plan, projects of the congregation and set up a plan in conformity with that of the congregation, in order to make community evaluation of each important activity. This is to promote the spirit of collaboration and sharing of responsibility.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 17

<sup>191</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 17, 19

<sup>192</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 20, 23, 49

<sup>193</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 23 - 24

<sup>194</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 28 - 29

<sup>195</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 29



13. In order to promote an atmosphere of recollection, each house will select the time after night prayer to respect silence. This is to enable each member to do her personal work, to pray or to rest without disturbance.<sup>196</sup>

14. In each house, place will be set aside for the sisters where outsiders are not permitted. Before allowing an outsider to reside in the restricted area, permission must be first granted by the superior.<sup>197</sup>

15. Other than what is stipulated in the constitutions, the vicar has the duty to welcome everyone with hospitality and provide them with whatever is needed.<sup>198</sup>

16. Remembrance of the Deceased<sup>199</sup>

a. Sisters in all the houses will pray and have Masses offered upon the death of the Holy Father, the Bishop in whose territory the Mother House is located, the Bishop of the diocese in whose territory the SDM sisters are working, and all the sisters of the congregation and their parents. All the sisters join in praying in order to show solidarity. Every house will ask for a Requiem Mass as soon as possible, receive Holy Communion and say 3 rosaries for the departed soul.

b. On the occasion of the annual spiritual retreat, a Mass for the deceased sisters will be offered and 3 rosaries recited for them.

c. In the month of November of each year the superior of every house will ask for 3 Masses for:

- 1) The souls of the deceased sisters.
- 2) The souls of the deceased parents.
- 3) All souls.

## **17. On the Anniversary of the Death of the Founder<sup>200</sup>**

April 4 is the anniversary of the death of Father Carlo della Torre, our beloved Father and Founder. It is a very important day of the congregation. The sisters will come together to participate in Holy Mass in memory of him and as a token of gratitude to him. They will join together to renew their community life according to the tradition and spirit of the congregation.

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<sup>196</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 30

<sup>197</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 30

<sup>198</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 104

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Tradition

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Tradition

## Life of Prayer

18. The sisters will be faithful to daily prayer as follows:

1. Participate in the Eucharistic celebration.
2. Say the morning, evening and night prayers, spend 30 minutes of meditation in the morning and 10 minutes together in the evening.
3. Recite a complete rosary with meditation on all the 4 mysteries.
4. Make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to receive Holy Communion with desire.
5. Pray the pledge 3 times a day: “Mary, Immaculate Queen, I belong to you and all things and people that belong to me belong to you as well.”<sup>201</sup>

19. The sisters will recite together 1 rosary on week days and 3 rosaries on holidays. Every Saturday a special bouquet of prayers will be offered to the Immaculate Queen. When doing manual work which does not need much attention they can recite the rosary.<sup>202</sup>

### 20. Spiritual Renewal<sup>203</sup>

#### a. Monthly Renewal

The sisters will all come together on a specific day each month to join in a liturgical function, listen to a homily, make visits to the Blessed Sacrament, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, pray for a happy death, and participate in the Eucharistic celebration.

#### b. Annual Renewal

The sisters will come together for the annual renewal for a period of 6 days. The councilor for formation has the duty to organize the retreat which will be a special time for the sisters to pray in private, and review their lives in detail. A suitable time and place conducive to spiritual renewal will be chosen, so that each sister will gain full benefit for herself and bring advancement to the congregation. Personally, each sister will be faithful to this annual renewal.

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<sup>201</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 37

<sup>202</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 37

<sup>203</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 39

## Mission of the Congregation

21. With awareness and a sense of gratitude for the gift of the Holy Spirit and the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which the congregation received through the life of Father Carlo della Torre, the sisters will live the motto of the congregation which summarizes his life: “Expand the Kingdom of God through prayer and work under the guidance of the Blessed Virgin Mary”.<sup>204</sup>

22. As religious, the sisters will wear the habit decided by the General Chapter: white blouse with round collar and  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeves, navy blue suit, with brooch on the top left side.<sup>205</sup>

23. In the schools belonging to the congregation, the sisters will consider it as their special duty to teach catechism to the Catholic students and to non-Catholics who are interested in learning catechism. On Sundays and holidays the sisters will be willing to teach the young and other people.<sup>206</sup>

24. In the schools belonging to the congregation, the sisters are encouraged to be enrolled as teachers in order to evangelize through teaching and giving good example.<sup>207</sup>

25. In the schools belonging to both the congregation and the diocese, the sisters will realize that there are some activities which may become an obstacle to religious life. They should not be engaged directly in such activities, but delegate them to other personnel who will carry them out under the supervision of the sister who is in charge. The superior will see that the sisters who are engaged in those activities will have time to live fully the life they have chosen.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Cf. Tradition

<sup>205</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 43

<sup>206</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 45 -46, 50

<sup>207</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 45 -46

<sup>208</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 31, 37

## **General Principles for Formation**

26. A religious vocation is a gift of God. It is the duty of the congregation to find ways and means to attract young people to respond to God's calling. Hence, the councilors for evangelization and formation will organize vocation camps to provide opportunity for young Catholics who are interested in the religious life, to encounter this kind of life, in order to serve as a first step in the selection of candidates.

27. The sisters in the formation houses have the duty to arrange programs, organize formative activities, scrutinize and evaluate candidates periodically, under the guidance and responsibility of the superior the formation house, and prepare reports to send to the General Council.<sup>209</sup>

28. The councilor for formation will prepare the "Ratio" to be approved by the general council and based on the charism and the spirit of Father Carlo dell Torre, and the teachings and the needs of the Church.<sup>210</sup>

## **Formation at the Pre-Novitiate Stage**

29. All new candidates will go through the pre-novitiate and novitiate stages. In case a candidate has gone through the pre-stage at another congregation, she has to undergo a pre-novitiate stage again for at least 6 months but not beyond 2 years before she can be accepted into the novitiate. This is done in order that she will become familiar with the SQM congregation and can make a right decision freely later.<sup>211</sup>

30. The candidates in this stage will live in a house assigned by the congregation for the purpose of this particular formation period of at least 6 months but not exceeding 2 years before admission into the novitiate. This is to create an opportunity to live closely with the formators who will help them live a Christian life through individual and collective formation, knowing Jesus of the Gospel deeply, understanding the life and spirit of the congregation, living a deep spiritual life, and study that will help them understand themselves and be able to decide freely their own vocation. Besides this, they will also have the opportunity to learn the art of cooking, catechism, music, languages, and so on.

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<sup>209</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 67

<sup>210</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 62, 101

<sup>211</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 64, Rules, n. 30

## Formation at the Novitiate Stage

31. Before entering into the novitiate a candidate will make a 6-day retreat.

### Juniorate Formation

32. Young sisters should dialogue frequently with their superior in order to progress in spirituality and to better participate in activities of the congregation.<sup>212</sup>

Young sisters, prior to making perpetual vows, she will spend 1 year to discern their vocation, in order to be ready to make their decision. During this period they will not be given duty or work which might jeopardize their preparation.<sup>213</sup>

33. In the case of a sister in perpetual vows, who still has the obligation of the vows in another religious congregation and wishes to join the SQM congregation, she will first receive the consent from the superior general and the council of both congregations, and have a 3 year probation period<sup>214</sup> in a house belonging to the congregation under the care of the superior and other members of the community, so that she will know how to live in a community and deepen her understanding of the spirit of the congregation. After the probation, she will submit an official request to enter the congregation. The superior general, with the consent of the council, will then allow her to take perpetual vows without going through any further formation. But in case of refusal, she will leave the congregation.<sup>215</sup>

### On - Going Formation

34. The local superior will arrange for meetings periodically to see if the community is living in conformity with the constitutions and regulations of the congregation.<sup>216</sup>

35. Superiors at every level will make plans for the ongoing formation of the sisters, so that they will regularly be renewed in spirituality and their mission. Each sister will deem it her duty to follow courses organized either by the congregation or by other organizations. Furthermore, she will try always to be better equipped and will seek new experiences in order to be more effective in the pastoral activities of the congregation.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 33

<sup>213</sup> Cf. CIC 660, constitution, n. 85

<sup>214</sup> Cf. CIC 684§2

<sup>215</sup> Cf. CIC 684 – 685, constitution, n. 133

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Rules, n.12

<sup>217</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 86 - 87

## Governance at the Congregational Level

36. Normally the superior general will call a meeting of her council once a month. She will inform the councilors of the agenda in advance so that the members of the council will have sufficient time to study beforehand.<sup>218</sup>

37. The councilor for formation has the duty to follow up, give advice, and see that formation in all the communities is carried out according to the formation program of the congregation.<sup>219</sup>

38. The superior general has the right to allocate the budget for the congregation's mission in case of emergency as stipulated in the guidelines for the request and approval of the budget.

39. If the superior general wishes to resign from her duty for any important reason, permission will be obtained from the Bishop in whose territory the congregation is located.

40. If the superior general does not comply with the constitutions and regulations of the congregation, she will be verbally warned twice by the vicar general. If there is no change, a written warning will be given once. If the misconduct persists, the council members will vote by secret ballot. If according to the result of the secret ballot a majority of the vote calls for dismissal, she will be dismissed from office. A report will be submitted to the Bishop in whose territory the congregation is situated.<sup>220</sup>

41. All agreements made between the Bishops in whose territory the congregation is located and the superior general, will be renewed in writing every 5 years.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 90

<sup>219</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 105

<sup>220</sup> Cf. CIC 696

<sup>221</sup> Cf. CIC 681§2, constitution, n. 51

## General Chapter

42. When the local superior learns of the convocation of the general chapter she will call a meeting of the community in order to elect a representative who must have perpetual vows.

The election is made by secret ballot.<sup>222</sup>

The sister who receives the majority of votes is elected. If no one receives a majority, there will be a second ballot. If no one receives a majority in the second the ballot, a third ballot will take place.

If 2 persons receive the higher number of votes, the sister who has more years of profession will be the representative and the other sister will be the substitute.

The local superior will put her signature to the minutes of the meeting and forward it to the superior general as soon as possible.<sup>223</sup>

43. On the day and at the specific time designated by the preparatory committee, the superior general will call a meeting of all the members of the congregation to elect representatives from among the sisters of perpetual vows by secret ballot.<sup>224</sup> The preparatory committee will propose the number of representatives to be chosen. The members receiving more than half of the votes are elected. If the number of representatives is not yet complete, a second ballot will take place.

If the number of elected representatives, who receive equal number of votes, is more than what is required, a new election must be made among them. The one with highest votes (more than half) will be elected. If the number of representatives is still more than what is required, then priority will be given to the one with more years of profession and the one more advanced in age accordingly.

However, if an elected representative cannot attend the meeting, the sister with the next higher number of votes will replace her.<sup>225</sup>

44. Members of the general chapter will choose a working committee consisting of 2 secretaries and 3 tellers. The committee members will make a vow to carry out their duty with honesty and will keep everything as secret and confidential, even after the meeting.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Cf. CIC 631§2

<sup>223</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 31

<sup>224</sup> Cf. CIC 631§2

<sup>225</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 113

<sup>226</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 115

45. On the day of elections, after praying the “Veni Creator” the moderator of the meeting will read rules and regulations with regard to the qualifications and duties of the superior general, after which the procedure of proposing names for the office of the superior general will be carried out.

After nomination of the candidates, the sisters who are not members and those who do not take part in the election, leave the meeting room, so that the election of the superior general and the council members will be conducted through secret ballot. After the successful election of the superior general and the council members, the moderator of the meeting will have the ballots burnt in front of the participating members. It must be noted that every time there is a ballot, after the voting takes place, the moderator of the meeting must always have the ballots burnt.

If there is a sick member who has the right to vote in the meeting place, the two tellers go to receive her ballot.

## **Governance at the Local Level**

46. The superior will nourish the members with the heavenly food of the Word of God, always taking a lead in celebrating the liturgical functions, giving good example to others in practicing virtue, following faithfully the rules and regulations of the congregation, warning to the members when there is misconduct, consoling weak members and being patient toward everyone.<sup>227</sup> She will call a meeting of her local community council at least once a month.<sup>228</sup>

47. The superior will keep the members of the house informed concerning the activities of the congregation and of the community including all on-going projects.

48. The superior will be responsible for the local diary, including all the daily and historical events of the house and forward them to the secretary of the congregation every year.<sup>229</sup>

49. The superior will reside in her community and not leave without a just reason.<sup>230</sup>

50. The superior has the authority to approve the expenditures within the limits approved by the general chapter.

## **Administration of Goods in the Congregation**

51. The treasurer of the house where sisters are working in a diocese will make an inventory of the property and assets which belong to the diocese separately from the property and assets of the congregation.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Cf. CIC 619

<sup>228</sup> Cf. Rules, n. 12

<sup>229</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 108

<sup>230</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 120

<sup>231</sup> Cf. constitution, n. 125



## Abbreviations

<b>C</b>	Constitutions
<b>CIC</b>	CODEX JURIS CANONICAE, The Code of Canon Laws
<b>CDR</b>	The Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life
<b>DFRI</b>	Directives on Formation in Religious Institute
<b>ET</b>	Evangelica Testificatio, Revival of the Religious life per Teachings of Vatican Council II
<b>FLC</b>	Fraternal Life in Community
<b>MB</b>	Memoria Biografica
<b>MR</b>	Mutuae Relationes
<b>PC</b>	Perfectae Caritatis
<b>R</b>	Regulations
<b>RC</b>	Renovationis Causam
<b>RD</b>	Redemptionis Donum
<b>RVM</b>	Rosarium Virginis Mariae
<b>SAC</b>	Starting Afresh from Christ
<b>VC</b>	Vita Consecrata

## Appendices

- The Bible
- The Constitutions of 1961, 1982, 1986
- Some aspects of Fr. Carlo della Torre's Life
- Directives of the First Stage of Formation
- The Religious
- Challenges of Governance in the Religious Life and Responsibility and Mission