St. Anthony Mary Claret

THE CLOCK OF THE PASSION AND OTHER SHORT WRITINGS

Reloj de la pasión

From the Spanish of the leaflet of 1861 and other short pieces

English translation

Contributed to Mind of the Church by a friend of the library who wishes to remain anonymous

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About this translation

Translated from the *Reloj de la pasión de nuestro Señor Jesucristo* (1861; reprinted 1868), with the two pieces printed on the same leaflet, complete; Claret's introduction to the *Reglas del instituto de los clérigos seglares que viven en comunidad* (Barcelona, 1864), **an extract**, the Rules themselves not being translated; the constitutions of the Brotherhood of the Heart of Mary; and the *Plan de la Academia de San Miguel* (Barcelona, 1859), of which only part is translated — **an extract**.

The notes give the references to Claret's sources and the notes he printed himself; the modern editors' commentary and the translator's own remarks are not reproduced.

The Clock of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ

The Clock of the Passion

The *Clock of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* is used in this way: when one hears the clock strike the hour, one says: *Ave María purísima: Sin pecado concebida* \["Hail Mary most pure: conceived without sin," the traditional Spanish greeting and response\], and then one prays the Hail Mary.[1] Afterwards one makes a spiritual communion, saying: I love You, most sweet Jesus of my life! Oh, that I had always loved You, Jesus of my heart! Oh, that I had never offended You! I desire to receive You within me! Then the soul contemplates Jesus Christ within itself, like Martha and Mary, who received Him into their house,[2] and will contemplate Him as is marked for the hour.

At each hour it will contemplate Him as Redeemer and as Master. As Redeemer it will thank Him for all He has done and suffered to redeem and save us. And as Master it will listen to Him, learn His teaching and put it into practice.

Evening and Night

At 7. Jesus supped with His disciples and washed their feet. He taught and commanded them and us humility.[3]

At 8. Jesus Christ instituted the Most Holy Sacrament, to remain until the consummation of the ages. What love! Out of love and gratitude we ought to assist at Mass, visit the Sacrament and receive it in Communion with fervour. Love is repaid with love \[*Amor con amor se paga*, a Spanish proverb\].[4]

At 9. Jesus preached a sermon to the disciples.[5] We ought to delight in hearing the divine word and put it into practice.

At 10. Jesus Christ went to the garden with His disciples. He commands and teaches them and us to pray.[6]

At 11. Jesus Christ was comforted by an angel. And He taught us to do the will of God and not our own.[7]

At 12. Jesus Christ was taken prisoner.[8] And He taught us the patience with which we must suffer persecutions, imprisonments and all evils.

At 1. Jesus Christ was led to the house of Annas, where Malchus struck Him a blow in the face.[9] And He taught us the meekness with which we must suffer the dishonours and ingratitude of men.

At 2. Jesus Christ was presented to the council of the Jews, who condemned Him to death.[10] And He taught us the silence with which we must suffer the injustices and contempt done to us.

At 3. Jesus Christ was taken to a dungeon of the palace, and those who guarded Him blindfolded Him, struck Him and ill-treated Him.[11] And He taught us the endurance with which we must bear the insults of the wicked.

At 4. Jesus Christ was denied by St. Peter. Jesus looked at him, Peter was converted, and all his life he wept for this sin.[12] And He taught us that we must never put ourselves in the proximate occasion of sin, or else we shall fall like Peter; but that, if ever we fail, we must repent and confess, and always weep for our faults and sins, like Peter.

Morning and Afternoon

At 5. Jesus Christ was again presented before the Council, and once more was condemned and insulted.[13] And He taught us constancy in suffering.

At 6. Jesus Christ was led to Pilate.[14] And He taught us to recognize the authority of God in the authority of men.

At 7. Jesus Christ was sent to King Herod, who lived badly, whom St. John had rebuked and who for that reason had him put to death. Jesus would not speak to him.[15] And thus He taught us that we must not speak with the immodest and must flee from them.

At 8. Jesus Christ was led to Pilate and was set below Barabbas.[16] And He taught us the humility with which we must desire to be set below all, even the worst of men.

At 9. Jesus Christ was scourged.[17] And He taught us the love we must have for penance, to punish our sins and those of our neighbours.

At 10. Jesus Christ was crowned with thorns.[18] And He taught us the love of contempt and mockery.

At 11. Jesus Christ was condemned to death and carried the cross.[19] And He taught us the love with which we must carry the cross and follow Him.[20]

At 12. Jesus Christ was crucified.[21] And He taught us how we must be crucified to the world, and the world to us.[22]

At 1. Jesus Christ asked the eternal Father to forgive those who were crucifying Him.[23] And He taught us how we must forgive and love our enemies.[24]

At 2. Jesus Christ gave us Mary Most Holy as our Mother. And He charged us to hold her as mother, and her to look upon us as children.[25]

At 3. Jesus Christ expired.[26] And He taught us how we must suffer death rather than sin, and that we must accept death in satisfaction for our sins and to render this homage to the supreme dominion of God.

At 4. Jesus Christ received the lance-thrust in His heart, from which came out blood and water, of which the seven sacraments of the Church were formed.[27] And He taught us the love He had for us, the esteem in which we must hold the sacraments, and the fervour with which we must receive them.

At 5. Jesus Christ was taken down from the cross.[28] And He taught us how He likes to be unnailed by means of a good confession; for whoever sins nails Him, and whoever confesses well unnails Him.

At 6. Jesus Christ was laid in a new tomb of stone.[29] And He taught us how He likes us to lay Him, by means of Communion, in our heart, which must be new through confession, of stone through constancy, and with the spices of virtues.

Signs of True Penance

1. The sinner must have as much sorrow and grief for having sinned as he had pleasure and delight in sinning (St. Jerome).

2. He must love contempt, because he despised God by sinning (St. Anselm).

3. He must ask God for pardon and for the punishment of his sin (Tauler). And while God does not punish him, he must mortify himself with interior and exterior penances, with the approval of his spiritual director.

Pius VII granted a plenary indulgence to those who prayed the following

Act of Purity

Lord, for love of You and for the purity which Your most holy Mother had, I reject and cast far from me all sensual tastes, pleasures and delights; and even if they were much greater than they are, I would despise them and cast them from me for my whole life. I will and embrace all ill-treatment of my body, which I wish to chastise and bridle with penances, fasts, a hard bed, vigils, disciplines and hair shirts; I make a true, firm and constant resolution to carry it out, however much it may cost me and however my bad nature may resist. Thus I say with the Apostle that I chastise and will chastise my body and will bring it into subjection to serve the spirit and You, my God, lest perhaps, while I am exhorting others to the practice of the virtues, I myself should become reprobate.[1]

His Excellency and Most Illustrious Lord Archbishop Claret grants eighty days of indulgence for each hour of this *Clock*.

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[2] Cf. *Aut.* n. 47. Cf. *Las glorias de María* \[LR, Barcelona 1870\] pp. 451–454.

[3] Cf. Lk 10:38–42; Jn 12:1–3. *Escritos autobiográficos* \[BAC, Madrid 1981\] pp. 548–549.

[4] Cf. Jn 13:1–17.

[5] Cf. Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:22–25; Lk 22:14–23; 1 Cor 11:23–25.

[6] Cf. Jn chs. 13–16.

[7] Cf. Mt 26:36–46; Mk 14:32–42; Lk 22:39–46; Jn 18:1.

[8] Cf. Lk 22:43 and the places cited in the previous note.

[9] Cf. Mt 26:47–56; Mk 14:43–52; Lk 22:47–53; Jn 18:12.

[10] Jn 18:10.

[11] Cf. Mt 26:57–66; Mk 14:53–64; Lk 22:66–71.

[12] Cf. Mt 26:67–68; Lk 22:63–65.

[13] Cf. Mt 26:69–75; Mk 14:53–65; Lk 22:54–62.

[14] Cf. Mt 27:1–2; Mk 15:1; Lk 22:66–71.

[15] Cf. Mt 27:1–2; Mk 15:2–5; Lk 23:2–7; Jn 18:29–38.

[16] Mk 6:17–28.

[17] Cf. Mt 27:11–26; Mk 15:1–15; Lk 23:13–24; Jn 18:28–40.

[18] Cf. Mt 27:26; Mk 15:15; Jn 19:1.

[19] Cf. Mt 27:27–31; Mk 15:16–20; Jn 19:1–3.

[20] Cf. Mt 27:20–26.31–32; Mk 15:6–15.20–22; Lk 23:13–32; Jn 19:12–17.

[21] Cf. Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23.

[22] Cf. Mt 27:35–38; Mk 15:24–27; Lk 23:33; Jn 19:18.

[23] Cf. Gal 6:14.

[24] Cf. Lk 23:34.

[25] Cf. Mt 5:44; Lk 6:27.

[26] Cf. Jn 19:25–27. Cf. *Aut.* n. 270.

[27] Cf. Mt 27:50; Mk 15:37; Lk 23:46; Jn 19:30.

[28] Cf. Jn 19:34.

[29] Cf. Mt 27:57–58; Mk 15:42–45; Lk 23:50–53; Jn 19:38.

[30] Cf. Mt 27:59–60; Mk 15:45–46; Lk 23:53; Jn 19:41–42.

[1] Cf. 1 Cor 9:27.

The Secular Clergy Living in Community: Introduction to the Rules

\[EXTRACT: only Claret's Introduction is translated; the Rules themselves are not.\]

Who is she that goes forth with the majesty of the rising dawn, fair as the moon, chosen as the sun, terrible as an army well ordered and set in battle array?[1]

This is Mary. She is a full moon for sinners, who gives light in the night of sin so that they may not fall into hell. She is dawn for the newly converted, since with her help they go on withdrawing from the darkness of sin and its occasions and growing from virtue to virtue, like the light of early morning. Mary is sun for the perfect, whom she illuminates with her special grace and inflames with her most ardent charity.

Finally, Mary is, for the enemies of our souls, like an army well ordered and set in battle array. The armies of the kings of the earth are made up of soldiers; but the army of Mary, Queen of heaven and earth, is made up of angels and of the devotees of her Immaculate Heart, enlisted in her Archconfraternity. In an army there are soldiers of different corps, for example cavalry, artillery and infantry.

In the Archconfraternity there are three distinct orders, and each one has its special rule, which it fulfils exactly; and united in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, they form an admirable whole and a perfect unity, formidable to the enemies, the world, the devil and the flesh; so that, with the help of Mary, with their prayers, good example and the works of holy zeal with which they fight, heresies are destroyed, sinners are converted, the just persevere in grace, and very many souls are saved. Moreover, through them many temporal graces are obtained: fruits in the fields, health in bodies, happiness in families, peace in kingdoms, prosperity and good fortune everywhere; so that what is written is fulfilled to the letter, namely, that her household, those who are her devotees, are furnished with double garments: garments for the body, garments for the soul, for time and for eternity.[2]

We have said that in the Archconfraternity there are three orders. In the first order are those who form the Congregation called of the Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; they are priests and brothers wholly consecrated to God and to Mary Most Holy, and continually occupied in missions, in giving spiritual exercises to the clergy, to nuns, etc., according to their rules.[3]

In the second order are those who form the institute of secular clerics who live in community, according to their special rule.

In the third order are all the other faithful devotees of Mary who, enrolled in her Archconfraternity, have as their principal rule the holy law of God, which they try to keep with the greatest exactness; and besides, they take pains to fulfil faithfully the obligations of their state and to pray the devotions prescribed in the Archconfraternity and a part of the Rosary each day out of devotion to Mary Most Holy.

Do you wish to know, most beloved reader, in what these first two orders of which we have just spoken agree and in what they differ? We shall tell you.

They agree in three things:

1. In that all their members seek the greater glory of God and devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary Most Holy.

2. In the sanctification and perfection of their own souls and in the salvation of the souls of their neighbours.[4]

3. In the careful performance of the functions of their sacred ministry.

In these three things all agree and all pursue them with equal zeal; but they differ in that those of the first order have fixed houses in which to live and reside, yet they remain there only for as long as their superior disposes, or he sends them to another town, to another diocese, to another nation, as the greater glory of God and the good of souls require. For this reason their members possess no benefices, nor dignities, nor anything

else; so that they are entirely given over into the arms of divine Providence, like the holy apostles, and up to now they have lacked nothing, nor will they lack anything in future.

Those of the second, on the contrary, are fixed in the diocese, and they are the ones who hold the offices, benefices, parishes, canonries, dignities, professorships, etc.; and they are also those who have no vocation to enter the first order, or are prevented by some insuperable obstacle that hinders them from doing so; and so they occupy themselves in a holy way until the opportune hour and the happy moment come for consecrating themselves as a perpetual holocaust to Jesus and to Mary Most Holy.

\[End of the extract.]

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[1] Song 6:10 \[Vulgate 6:9\].

[2] Cf. Prov 31:21.

[3] *Const. 1857* n. 2.

[4] Cf. *Constitutions CMF 1857* n. 2.

Constitutions of the Brotherhood of the Heart of Mary

Brief Account of the Constitutions of the Brotherhood of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary

\[1\] In order the better to seek and the more easily to attain the greater glory of God and the spiritual and bodily good of our neighbours,[1] we have thought to unite ourselves in a brotherhood in the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of Charity,[2] so that, being under her most holy protection and all observing the same maxims of humility and Christian charity, we may better attain our end.[3]

Constitutions of the Brotherhood of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary and Lovers of Humanity

\[2\] This Brotherhood shall be composed of persons desirous of the spiritual and bodily good of their neighbours. These persons shall be priests, lay people and deaconesses.

\[3\] The object of these persons is none other than the greater glory of God, the good of their own souls and the spiritual good of their neighbours. In order better to fulfil their object, all shall have a director, who shall be elected by the votes of the Brotherhood; he shall be the one who has most votes, and he shall be obliged to accept however much he may be reluctant; if he alleges reasons for not being director, they shall be heard, and votes shall be cast on whether he shall serve or not, and it shall be done according to the majority of votes.

The director shall be perpetual, and if for some physical or moral cause he cannot serve, the majority of votes shall decide.

\[4\] The director shall take care to exhort the brothers publicly or privately, as opportunity offers, to the fulfilment of their duties.

\[5\] The director shall inform himself whether each one fulfils his obligation, and if not, he shall be warned a first and a second time, and the third time he shall be proposed to the Brotherhood for dismissal if they consider it necessary, and it shall be done according to the majority of votes.

\[6\] Each member or brother shall provide for his own livelihood in the best way he can, lawfully and soundly; and in case he is in need, he shall be the first claimant on the charity of the Brotherhood; of all of which the director shall be informed, and care shall be taken to relieve him.[4]

\[7\] When anyone seeks to be admitted to the Brotherhood, the director shall inform himself well about him, and if he finds him worthy, he shall propose him to the Brotherhood, and the majority of votes shall decide; bearing in mind that it is better to be few, hard-working and well united than many, lazy and careless.

\[8\] The director shall have four assistants, two priests and two lay people, who likewise shall be elected or removed by vote. These shall take care to help the director, as far as they can, with counsel and deeds.

\[9\] Each of the members of the Brotherhood shall have three relationships, namely, with God, with himself and with his neighbours.

Obligations towards God

\[10\] He shall strive that God be not offended, but rather that He be loved and served by all.[5] Moreover, he shall see to the cleanliness of the churches and vestments, silence in the churches, sacristies and choirs, gravity in the sacred functions and the observance of the rubrics; he shall take care to instruct and admonish the altar boys and acolytes so that they serve Masses and the other sacred functions well, and that they do not play, run or shout in the churches and sacristies.

Obligations towards Oneself

\[11\] Each of the members of the Brotherhood shall practise mental prayer and spiritual reading, and shall make every day the particular examen on some virtue; he shall frequent the holy sacraments, strive to walk always in the presence of God, do all things with the greatest purity of intention, and be entirely disinterested, chaste, humble, patient and zealous for the glory of God and the good of his neighbours; he shall strive by good example to edify all, so that he may say: *Imitatores mei estote, sicut et ego Christi*.[6]

Obligations towards One's Neighbours

\[12\] With regard to his neighbours, each shall try to occupy himself in preaching and hearing confessions, administering Holy Communion, catechizing and instructing all, but especially children, so that they may turn from evil and practise good; he shall give spiritual exercises to priests and lay people. In familiar conversations he shall speak of death and of contempt for the things of the world, praising virtue and heavenly things. He shall teach, with the greatest simplicity and brevity, the way to make mental prayer.

\[13\] He shall try to write or have written good books; he shall collect obscene prints and bad books in order to burn them. He shall distribute good books and edifying prints; to this end he shall collect what alms he can to buy good books and give them away free.

\[14\] He shall try to stir people up to receive the holy sacraments frequently. He shall exhort them to visit the Most Blessed Sacrament and to have devotion to it.[7] He shall teach them to pray the holy Rosary well and to commend themselves to Mary Most Holy morning, night and during the day.[8]

\[15\] He shall promote devotion to the holy angels and the holy patrons.[9] He shall exhort people to pray for the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just and the souls in purgatory.[10] He shall seek peace and union in families and with all.

\[16\] He shall visit the sick in the hospitals, and also in private houses, as opportunity offers. He shall visit prisoners. He shall succour the poor, especially the shame-faced poor \[*pobres vergonzantes*: people of good standing fallen into poverty who are ashamed to beg\], with alms which he shall ask of the rich for that purpose. He shall take care of the old, widows, and orphan boys and girls. As far as he can, he shall try to take in or reform lost and scandalous women. He shall reunite the separated \[*divorciados*: in 1847, spouses living apart, not civilly divorced\].[11]

\[17\] Each of the members shall tell the director to which of these works he feels most inclined, and the director, if he thinks it fitting, shall have the person occupy himself *per se et principaliter* \[by himself and

principally\] in that work, and *per accidens* \[incidentally\] in all the rest; nevertheless, he must obey the director, and whoever will not obey, let him leave; for at times what looks like zeal is passion, and by obedience the truth of what it is becomes known.[12]

The Deaconesses

\[18\] The deaconesses shall be women wholly irreproachable, practised in mental prayer, the frequent reception of the sacraments, silence and recollection, with all the other virtues.

\[19\] Each shall tell her confessor or director to what works of charity she has an inclination or opportunity to practise, without failing in the obligations of her state. Besides the works mentioned above, some of which are already compatible with her state, they shall be occupied in instructing girls in Christian doctrine; teaching them to read and to make mental prayer, not only the girls but also other women.

\[20\] She shall teach them to turn away from evil, such as vanity in dress; to keep away from theatres, dances, dealings and bad company; to practise the virtues, for example obedience to their parents and superiors, humility, patience, piety and charity towards the poor; to frequent the holy sacraments and to have devotion to the Most Holy Virgin, the angels and the saints.

Notice

\[21\] Whoever reads these Constitutions, let him know that he is authorized to set up this Brotherhood in his parish; and even if they are few, let them not be dismayed; even if he is alone, let him do what he can, for God our Lord will reward him for all he does for the poor little ones, just as if he had done it for Him.[13]

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam

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[1] *Las bibliotecas populares y parroquiales* \[Madrid 1864\] p. 18. Cf. *Constitutions CMF 1857* n. 2.

[2] Cf. *Aut.* n. 447. Cf. *Aut.* n. 270.

[3] Cf. *Aut.* nn. 340–356. *Aut.* n. 438; cf. nn. 439–448.

[4] Cf. Acts 2:44; 4:34–35.

[5] Cf. *Aut.* n. 641.

[6] "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1; cf. 4:16).

[7] Cf. *Aut.* n. 265.

[8] Cf. *Aut.* nn. 266, 337.

[9] Cf. *Aut.* nn. 267–268.

[10] Cf. *Aut.* n. 265.

[11] Cf. *Aut.* nn. 562–572.

[12] *Constitutions CMF 1857* n. 65.

[13] Cf. Mt 25:40.

Plan of the Academy of St. Michael

Title Page of 1859

PLAN OF THE ACADEMY OF ST. MICHAEL, FOUNDED by His Excellency and Most Illustrious Lord Don ANTONIO MARÍA CLARET Y CLARÁ, Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF HER MAJESTY AND RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPREME PONTIFF PIUS IX. With the approval of the Ordinary. BARCELONA, 1859. Librería Religiosa, Press of Pablo Riera.

Regulations of the Academy of St. Michael

\[EXTRACT: only pp. 3–15 and 39–40 of the 1859 booklet and pp. 44–45 of the 1862 edition are translated; the detailed regulations are not.\]

Idea of Its Organization and Object

Every day we see new societies and companies formed with the merely earthly aim of fostering the arts, industry and commerce. Men of letters likewise meet in boards and academies with the laudable purpose of making progress in letters and the human sciences. In their turn, the Protestants have associated in order to publish and spread everywhere their adulterated Bibles and other books, with which they try to propagate their errors and infest Catholic countries. It is necessary that men devoted to the study of the ecclesiastical sciences, lovers of the Catholic religion and desirous of the spiritual good of their brethren, should also strive, as children of light,[1] to associate in order to foster the sciences and the arts under their religious aspect and for the attainment of such holy and lofty ends. United in a literary and artistic society, they will be able to join their efforts to combat errors, to spread good books and with them good doctrines, making war on vice along the way, defending and practising sound morals, and making use, for the attainment of such holy aims, of all the means that their zeal, prudence and charity suggest to them.

Such is the object that this Academy, entitled of St. Michael, sets itself. Its project was conceived by His Excellency and Most Illustrious Lord Don Antonio María Claret, Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, while he lay prostrate in bed because of the wounds he had just received in the city of Holguín on 1 February 1856 at the hands of the enemies of the Catholic religion and of sound morals.

Since its idea is to associate learned and upright men in order to praise God in this life by means of truth and to walk towards Him by means of virtue, the organization of the Academy is modelled on that of the angelic hierarchies, which praise the Lord and carry out His commands. To this end the Academy shall be divided into three hierarchies, which are to watch over truth and virtue, each in its respective sphere.

The First Hierarchy: Writers

To the first hierarchy belong men of letters. As such, the academicians of St. Michael must bear in mind that the earth is God's and all that is in it,[2] and that God contains in Himself all that is sublime, pure, beautiful and excellent. Their motto must be that of St. Michael in combating Lucifer: *Quis sicut Deus*, "Who is like God?"[3], a motto which the valiant Maccabees put on their standards to fight the enemies of their religion and their country.[4]

Bearing in mind the nobility and dignity of man, whom God created in His image and likeness and made a little less than the angels,[5] the academicians of the first hierarchy will never forget that the highest angel and the most favoured by God would not submit to Him, claimed to be sufficient to himself, aspired to obtain by himself what could come to him only from God, and pronounced that haughty phrase: *Similis ero Altissimo*, "I will be like the Most High."[6] But the Archangel St. Michael went out to meet him at the head of the loyal angels, pronounced that phrase of humility and submission, *Quis sicut Deus*, which is diametrically opposed to the proud words of Lucifer, and defeated him with his apostate and haughty hosts. This is the great and terrible struggle joined in the heavenly regions (*praelium magnum in caelo*, "a great battle in heaven"),[7] of which St. John speaks, in which Michael and Lucifer fought at the head of their respective angelic armies, a struggle in which the dragon fell with all his followers, cast out of heaven for his pride.

But this struggle, ended in heaven, has not ended on earth, and mankind is its victim. The dragon came out of the abyss to ruin the first human beings. The words he said to them were like those he had pronounced in his haughty pride: You shall be as gods (*Eritis sicut dii*).[8] Even today it happens to wretched mortals who let themselves be dazzled by words as vain as they are criminal. Hence comes contempt for the word of God and for revelation, the chimerical deification of reason. Hence that proud spirit of independence, that contempt for the will of God and for the commands issued by legitimately constituted authorities, which represent on

earth God, from whom they receive their power, according to St. Paul.[9] Hence that continual war between truth and error, virtue and vice, which makes the life of man a continual warfare while he lives on earth, according to Job's beautiful expression.[10] This ceaseless struggle of truth and virtue against error and vice is nothing other than the continuation of the first, personified in St. Michael and Lucifer.

The academicians of the first hierarchy in the Academy of St. Michael, their chief, must strive to make themselves like, on earth, the angelic spirits of the first heavenly hierarchy, the cherubim, seraphim and thrones, who uphold the Lord. They will try to receive Him frequently in the Holy Eucharist, making of their breast a throne in which He may dwell, and above all when they have to write on religious subjects; for they will hardly find the truth if they do not seek it in God, who is the truth and the life,[11] and they could hardly communicate to their fellow men love for God and fondness for virtue if they themselves are not inflamed with both.

To encourage themselves, then, in this struggle against error and vice, they will take the following words of St. Paul: "Put on the armour of God, that you may be able to defend yourselves against the snares of the devil; for we have not to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spirits of wickedness in the air. Therefore take, all of you, the arms of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day and to stand perfect in all things. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and clothed with the breastplate of justice, and having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Take also the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying at all times with all supplication and entreaty in the spirit, and watching for this very thing with all fervour, and praying for all the saints."[12]

The Second Hierarchy: Artists

The fine arts contribute not a little to instructing the understanding usefully and moving the will in a holy way. The Catholic religion has not only always favoured them, but has protected them, and still protects them today according to its strength. The Protestants have gone so far as to make a charge against the Catholic Church for the decided protection it gave them in the sixteenth century for their rebirth. But this absurd and unfounded charge, like all those they direct against the Church, has already been refuted and does little honour to the good taste of whoever made it.

The best artists in the world have always been Catholics; and there is a reason of aesthetic philosophy why they should be. Error, after seducing the understanding, perverts the will, and then depraves the imagination and good taste. The philosophers who have written best on aesthetics agree that one cannot speak of the ideal of beauty, nor conceive it, unless there is an archetypal idea of a supreme good and of a surpassing beauty; so that the more a work of art approaches this supreme idea of beauty, the more beautiful it will be, and the further it withdraws from it, the uglier and more deformed. This supreme beauty is God, whatever name is given to Him. Whoever has his understanding and will blinded by error and vice, and his imagination clouded by lewdness and subjected to other low and mean passions, how will he be able to rise to that most pure idea of beauty which must shine in his imagination, and which he will not be able to impress on his works without having first beheld it in his soul with sovereign and pleasing intuition? A sensual artist who continually has before his eyes lustful and lewd objects, how will he be able to express the holy and most pure image of modesty, simply noble, demurely beautiful, loftily humble, timidly chaste, modestly resolute, and revealing firmness in the midst of its holy reserve?

That is why the most eminent Christian artists would not proceed to paint, or even sketch, the faces of the Saviour and of Mary Most Holy without having purified their souls and enhanced them with the holy sacraments. So did Juan de Juanes, the divine Morales and many other painters and sculptors, both Spanish and foreign. Hence their pictures have that *no sé qué* \[that "I-know-not-what," an indefinable charm\], so

difficult to copy and reproduce, all the more so for artists who have nothing of their piety. That is why, as morals declined, the fine arts declined also, and, leaving the service of God, they placed themselves at the orders of Lucifer, serving to represent scenes of gallantry, orgies, vanity and even of the most abject obscenity.

Against this abuse of the fine arts Catholic artists have to work, striving by their works and by their example to do good and combat evil, to excite piety and to teach the unlettered people through the eyes what they would not well understand through the ear. For this they shall enter the second hierarchy, making themselves like the dominations, virtues and powers which make up its three choirs, drawing souls to virtue, mastering them by the gentle power of the beauty expressed in their works. To achieve this they shall unite prayer to work, and not only shall they abstain from engraving or painting anything obscene, impious or even slightly immodest, but they shall strive that all their works bear the seal of piety, decency and decorum.

Besides painting and sculpture, music shall have a place in this hierarchy: that cult which certain temperaments have for tones and harmony in general; that kind of divine intuition embodied in all hearts that are deeply sensitive and, being sensitive, tender, sweet and affectionate. Therefore learned and pious musicians and singers may have a place in this hierarchy, abstaining from impious or immoral compositions, songs and pieces, and occupying themselves solely with those of good taste, piety and religion.

Neither the academicians of this hierarchy nor those of the first shall hold any meeting, for meetings might become harmful because of the drawbacks that discussion usually brings among men of letters, however pious they may be. Among artists they would be useless. On the other hand, since neither the one nor the other is to contribute any sum, and the Academy has no funds, there is not even the pretext of inspecting the use of funds for them to meet.

The Third Hierarchy: Collaborators

But if the first two hierarchies hold no meetings and have no funds, the third must hold them and have them, for otherwise it could not fulfil its mission well; its members make themselves like the principalities, archangels and angels who, placed in immediate contact with men, communicate to them the commands of the divinity, defend them from the snares of their enemies, and strengthen them continually with holy inspirations in the ceaseless struggle between good and evil, between Satan and those chosen by God.

To form this third hierarchy, Catholics of recognized piety and zeal are called. The good they can do in it is incalculable and of the greatest consequence. An upright man burning with zeal and living faith, says St. John Chrysostom, is capable of correcting a whole people. If the academicians of this third hierarchy are all animated by a holy zeal and full of Christian charity, they will not only seek their mutual good, but will try to spread it among all their fellow men, whether by good words and wholesome counsel, or by spiritual books, lending or giving them, according to their means or the opportunity they have for it. Thus they will do with their own brethren the very office of the angels with men.

Books are for the soul what food and medicine are for the body. Not every food pleases everyone, nor does the medicine that perhaps cured one suit another. The same happens with books, which, however good they may be, do not serve everyone indiscriminately. Great tact and discretion are required in distributing or lending them, and to do it well one must know thoroughly the books one gives and the persons to whom one gives them. Only thus can they produce the desired effect.

It is recognized that to do good with much fruit small books are preferable. Voluminous works are hardly read, above all in Spain, whereas small ones are read and reread, are acquired more easily, and their content is better retained. If the Academy comes to prosper, as we hope from the mercy of God, each country will have a press to which each hierarchy may go to supply itself with the books it respectively needs. Besides, the bookshops united to them will administer the funds necessary for the editions of books independently of

the Academy, which, by its special organization, has neither funds nor meetings.

Patronage and Spirit of the Academy

Thus is set down the thought that is to preside over the formation of the Academy of St. Michael and the reason for placing it under his title. It is placed, moreover, under the protection and special patronage of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, since it was she who crushed the head of the infernal dragon, and to her was given the glorious and irresistible power to put an end to heresies throughout the world.

The Academy of St. Michael places itself under the auspices of the supreme head of the Church, to whose decisions it submits and will submit in all things, defending his authority and that of the Church. Entirely aloof from politics, it will abstain completely from taking part, directly or indirectly, in the disputes of the parties, or from becoming the instrument of any of them. Nor will it promote the publication or circulation of books which on any account might lead to the subversion of the social order, to contempt for the civil authorities, or to advocating one form of government over any other, even when the books are otherwise good and pious. The Academy of St. Michael seeks only the kingdom of God and His justice.[13]

On the other hand, the observance of its Regulations does not bind the members of the Academy under any fault or penalty, however slight. Nor does it separate from itself anyone, except whoever by his bad works or little aptitude has separated himself or is a stranger to it.

United among themselves, the academicians will strive to live with the simplicity and fervour of the first Christians, so that among them there is but one heart and one soul,[14] trying to draw into their bosom upright, zealous and prudent persons for the propagation and duration of the Academy, in order to achieve, for the good of the Catholic Church and of souls, what the Bible Society and various other Protestant boards do to their harm at such great expense.

Summary of the Principal Obligations of the Members of the Fortnightly Choirs of the Academy of St. Michael

The essential obligations of each member of the *quincena* \[the "fortnight," a group of fifteen members, each assigned one of the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary\] are the following:

Every day to pray one Our Father and ten Hail Marys to the mystery that has fallen to him by lot.

Every day to read a chapter of the Gospel.

Every month to receive Communion once or, at the latest, every three months.

Every month to attend without fail the session, which is to take place on the first Sunday.

At all times he must live well and holily, keeping the precepts of the holy law of God and of the Church, and fulfilling perfectly the obligations of his state, edifying by his good example, without ever giving scandal to anyone.

He must continually live devoured by holy zeal for the greater glory of God and for the good of souls, which God has created in His image and for Himself, and which Jesus Christ has redeemed with His precious blood. To this end he will make use of prayer and of holy cards, leaflets and books, which he will ask of the librarian, who will give them to him according to the zeal and prudence he sees in him.

The holy cards and leaflets he shall give away. Books of devotion and meditation he shall give or lend, as he judges prudent. But books of instruction it is better to lend than to give, for, remembering that they must return them, people read them; and if they are given them, trusting that they will read them on another occasion when they have more time, they never do so, and so the end is not achieved.

He shall never hand over a holy card, leaflet or book without having read it first, so as to know what he is giving and to whom; and besides, so as to be able to strike up a conversation with the one who receives it on that subject.

When he meets the person to whom he gave or lent a book, he shall ask him how far he has read, and take care to impress those subjects on him more and more, always taking the opportunity to spread holy doctrines, destroying errors and building up the truth, uprooting vices and planting virtues.

Moreover, when he sees or knows where there are obscene pictures or figures, bad books, etc., he must do all he prudently can to remove or destroy what he knows to be an offence to the Lord.

To Whom Books, Holy Cards, Leaflets, etc., Should Chiefly Be Given or Lent

1. To boys and girls.

2. To those who attend or have attended the free schools for workers.

3. To those who attend the Sunday schools.

4. To the poor who are visited for relief in their homes.

5. To the sick in their private homes and in the civil and military hospitals.

6. To those who live in or attend charitable institutions.

7. To students of seminaries, colleges, institutes and universities.

8. To soldiers.

9. To prisoners in jails and penitentiaries...

10. To those who are taking the baths or the waters \[at spas\], or are going to take them.

11. To travellers by sea or land.

12. To those met along the road.

13. To the idle, or those who do not know how to pass the time.

14. In the villages they shall be given or sent to the parish priest and other zealous priests, so that they may distribute them.

15. In the villages also they shall be given or sent to the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, the doctor, the surgeon and the apothecary; to the barber, blacksmith, innkeeper, tavern-keeper, shopkeeper, confectioner, tailor and other public persons.

16. To all persons, men or women, who have zeal and energy for doing good, even if they are not public persons.

17. To each and every one, individually, when the occasion of doing good presents itself.

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[1] Lk 16:8.

[2] Ps 23:1 \[Hebrew numbering 24:1\].

[3] Cf. Rev 12:7.

[4] Cf. 2 Macc 8:23.

[5] Ps 8:6 \[Hebrew 8:5\].

[6] Is 14:14.

[7] Rev 12:7.

[8] Gen 3:5.

[9] Cf. Rom 13:1.

[10] Cf. Job 7:1.

[11] Cf. Jn 14:6.

[12] Eph 6:11–18.

[13] Cf. Mt 6:36 \[*sic*; read Mt 6:33\].

[14] Cf. Acts 4:32.