

THE RULE OF THE
BROTHERHOOD
OF SAINT JOSEPH



**PRAYER FOR
THE BROTHERHOOD
OF SAINT JOSEPH**

In union with the Holy Trinity, the Holy Family,
the Saints and Martyrs, and the whole Church,
I commit myself and the fellow members
of the Brotherhood of Saint Joseph
to the Heart of Christ.

Imbue us with clarity of mind, wisdom in
governance, strength of limb, endurance in
our labors, and joy in pursuit of holiness.

Draw the Brotherhood and
its mission closer to you.

Glory Be to the Father, and to the
Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

*Opposite: Jusepe de Ribera
Saint Joseph and the Christ Child, 1630 - 1635*

THIS EDITION FIRST PUBLISHED IN 2021

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SAINT JOSEPH, 2021

FIRST EDITION, SECOND PRINTING - 2022

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I. LIFE IN THE BROTHERHOOD

It is recognized that men who live in communion with one another, building up one another and working together in the service of God and their fellow man, provide for one another a bulwark and a flame so that all are stronger. A small flame alone is easily extinguished, but many flames together grow hot and unquenchable, igniting a whole forest. It is good and necessary for men to join together in the service of God. How especially good it is for men to unite in purpose and mutual support their work and prayer. Therefore, let there be a Brotherhood of lay men, married and unmarried, working and praying together for the good of all.

II. SPIRIT OF THE BROTHERHOOD

Let every brother keep in his heart the spirit of the Brotherhood, a spirit of masculine love and acceptance for every brother, a spirit of love and submission to God, a spirit of love and acceptance of himself. Let brothers invest themselves joyfully and vigorously in their work together and let them daily accept their limitations and inabilities. Let them forget their task list when

it is not time to work and accept their inability to complete more. Let each come to the aid of his brother. Let the brother teach and form his brother in faith and virtue and seek always his brother's good, thinking first of heaven.

A true brother's concern is for his brother. His concern is for his family and his brother and all the beloved of God, including his own soul. He values not needless things. His loyalty is his honor. The foolish man strives first to advantage himself in money and power. A true brother gives his life for his family, his brothers, and the world. He uses all his strength of spirit and body for the sake of these loves. His love is a loyal love and his loyalty is guided by love. If he were not loyal, he would lose his understanding of himself. His service and loyalty are his purpose.

III. SPIRIT OF THE RULE

This rule is intended as a guide for those who wish to live in the spirit of the Brotherhood. In ordinary circumstances, it should be followed. But let the guide of love for God and brother be first in the heart so that the rule should never keep one from his true purpose, but only serve the Good.

It is acceptable that the rule may be changed, in keeping with the purpose of the Brotherhood.

IV. ORDER OF THE DAY

Let each day begin in prayer. On workdays, let the brothers gather in the morning, pray Lauds together, and then converse silently with God for a time. If Lauds and Silence cannot be prayed together, let it be prayed apart. If it cannot be prayed apart, let the brother say a prayer in his heart dedicating the day to God.

Next, let the brothers gather to spend at least fifteen minutes in conversation with one another for the sake of fraternity and friendship.

Then, let the brothers begin their daily work. In ordinary times let a complete day of work be seven hours, not including the time for prayer and formation. And let a complete week of work be five days. A monk may spend all his hours in work and prayer, but a married man must care for his family.

At midday, let the brothers pray the Angelus. If a priest is available, let Holy Mass be celebrated at

this hour. Effort should be made to celebrate Holy Mass at least one day per workweek. If Holy Mass is not available at midday, let the brothers put down their work at whatever time of day Holy Mass is available at least once per workweek.

In the final hour of the workday, the brothers should care for their souls and their bodies with vigorous exercise, prayer, faith formation, intellectual formation, and training in all manner of skills and crafts. This hour is to build up the brothers and not to complete more work. In this hour, also, the brothers should pray the Prayer for the Brotherhood.

I. MORNING PRAYER

In the mornings on workdays the brothers should first gather in the chapel for prayer. Let them keep silence until the time for Lauds.

Then, the brother in charge of the liturgy will give a signal and all will stand to pray Lauds, according to the Ordinary. When Lauds is complete, the brothers will begin Morning Silence.

II. MORNING SILENCE

Let the brothers remain in silence in the chapel after Lauds. Let them put before their minds the presence of God and remember the calling of Him who loves each one as a son and converse with Him in their hearts. Let each brother open his heart to God about all that concerns him or is dear to him. Let him listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit in his heart. Let him consider the wisdom of God and all that God has done for him and called him to be. It may benefit a brother to read a little from the Scriptures or some spiritual work. Let the time of silence be at least fifteen minutes and no more than forty-five minutes.

When the time for silence is complete, the brother leading prayer will give a signal and sing or say a call of faith and all will reply the response. Let there be established many such calls and responses, taken from the words of Christ, the doctrines of the faith, or the prayers of the saints. For example, the call may be “Christ is risen” and the response “Indeed He is risen.” If the response is new or not well known, it should be written for all to see. Then all leave the chapel.

III. MORNING FRATERNITY

Let the brothers spend time in conversation after morning silence. Let there be fomented true friendship. It is good that the brothers should speak together about whatever interests them. The time for conversation should be at least fifteen minutes and no more than thirty minutes.

IV. HOLY MASS

Let the participation of the brothers in the Holy Mass be united, wholehearted, and expressive of their love for Jesus Christ, at least in heart if not in words and motions. If it is allowed by the bishops, let the brothers establish liturgical practices that may be done in common to express the unity of their adoration.

For those who wish to receive the Blessed Sacrament, let them receive and thank God for His great gift. It would be honorable and generous if that brother would, on some occasions, offer his gratitude for the Brotherhood at that time and a prayer for its furtherance as an instrument of God's blessing.

Let no one make judgments about another brother if he does or does not decide to receive the Blessed Sacrament. It may be well to ask a brother about the state of his soul—as any brother may be concerned about his brother’s health or state of mind—yet let every conversation be born of humility and sincere charity. Let every soul honor the Body and Blood of Our Lord either by reception or abstention.

V. WORK

When it is time to work, let the brothers set about their tasks with steady vigor. Let them strive to practice effective organization, cooperation, openness, obedience, and fruitful ambition in their work. Let the leaders be humble and open. Let the workers be creative, ambitious, obedient, and cooperative. Let each keep in his heart the good of his brothers, the families, and God’s desire to bring all mankind to Himself, and let all ambition be directed to those ends. Let no brother seek first to enrich himself out of desire for worldly things or fear of insecurity but let him trust God to work for his good and trust his brothers to provide security for him and his family. Gold is easily wrested from the hand, and a digital hoard disappears with the stroke of a key, but the loyalty

of a brother endures through deadly danger.

Let a brother be paid for his work a wage that will allow him to keep his family in good health and security. It is acceptable that a brother would be paid less than he might otherwise find for the same work, so long as he and his family is kept well. It is better that all the brothers sacrifice a little so that one brother may keep his family from disaster. Let it never be acceptable that a brother or his family undergoes great hardship alone and without help. Let the brothers work to produce whatever goods they may use or sell for the provision of their families, taking special interest in the things that most help their fellow man. Let the brothers prefer producing a few more durable and beautiful goods over many cheaper goods. Whatever is not used for the families, let the brothers use for helping the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalized and in other good works, either in doing good works themselves or in giving to those in need.

VI. PRAYER FOR THE BROTHERHOOD

In the last hour of the day, let the brothers say the Prayer for the Brotherhood.

In union with the Holy Trinity, the Holy Family, the saints and martyrs, and the whole Church, I commit myself and the fellow members of the Brotherhood of St. Joseph to the heart of Christ.

Imbue us with clarity of mind, wisdom in governance, strength of limb, endurance in our labors, and joy in pursuit of holiness.

Draw the Brotherhood and its mission closer to you.

Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

VII. FORMATION AND EXERCISE

Let the last hour of the day be reserved for building up of the brothers in exercise, learning, training, and prayer. It is well for there to be some days in which all the brothers meet together to exercise, study the faith, or develop skills. It is also well

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for there to be some days in which the brothers may choose or may choose from limited options which activity to participate in, according to each one's knowledge of himself, for some may have greater need of exercise while others may have greater need of time for prayer or learning.

If it is chosen that all should meet together then let no brother complain about the choice of exercise or formation. Rather, let all follow obediently with full cooperation even in those activities which are not suited to his taste.

If it is a day wherein the brothers may choose according to their taste, let the brothers take care to use the time well in the rejuvenation and development of their minds and bodies. It is a common temptation among men to work whenever time allows, seeking to achieve more and complete more, but "in vain is your earlier rising, your going later to rest." The purpose of this hour is to help the brothers grow and keep healthy; let exceptions be rare.

It is well that the brothers would be instructed in the faith during this hour on some days. Let it never be found that brothers have been poorly formed in their understanding of the faith, years

after having been accepted into the Brotherhood. Let the brothers be encouraged to continue in the practice of the faith through acts of charity, self-discipline, and devotion. It is not sufficient that a brother prays only when gathered with the Brotherhood. He must listen to the voice of God always and give generously to He who has given the brother everything that he is. Let the importance of prayer and one's relationship with God be emphasized in the teaching of the faith. Let the brothers be taught and encouraged in the practices of devotion and virtue. Let the teachings of the Church on virtue, the demands of charity, man's responsibility in society, and the practical lessons of the saints and teachers be taught. Let there be great care taken to avoid teachings inconsistent with the Christian faith.

V. GROWTH OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The Rule and life of the Brotherhood is a font of innumerable untold graces for the brothers and the world around them. What is visible is obvious and welcomed by many: the works and community of the brothers. Graces invisible are far more numerous. They come like the sound of God on Elijah's mountain, imperceptible to the

ears and life-changing for the soul. Like the water and green grass of the psalm, their souls are fed and watered in safety from the wiles of the evil one.

Having drunk from such a font of silent grace, how can a brother love the world without desiring for it the continuance of the Brotherhood? Think then of future brothers in future ages. Think of your sons who may founder in the world without the arms of their brothers to lift them up to heaven. Let all brothers pray for the Brotherhood and seek its growth. Let them guard it from corruption and strengthen it with the waters of renewal. Let them work to ensure it for future ages.

VI. CHARITABLE WORKS

It is integral to the Christian life to respond with love to the needs of the world, particularly those neediest and closest and for whom there is the greatest opportunity to give. Let the Brotherhood work together with vigor to relieve the suffering of those whom they might, bringing hope wherever they go. Let the brothers go out to meet the needs of those outcast from society, setting aside any reluctance to associate with those seen by the worldly as unworthy of friendship and charity, just as Christ Himself

sought the company of sinners and lepers, nor permitting any reluctance arising from unholy prejudice. Let them see the spiritual destitution among worldly riches, as the saints have, and come to the aid of the lonely, the longing, and the lost. Let them not forget their brothers' needs, nor the needs of the families, both spiritual and material, as they meet the needs of the world.

Let the Brotherhood set aside a portion of its work or income for use in charitable works. In times and places where the need is greatest, let more be set aside to meet that need as they are able, reserving sufficiently to grow and secure the Brotherhood for future generations.

In some cases, it may be best for charitable works to be completed by some brothers wholly while others work in the businesses. In other cases, it may be best for all the brothers to work to meet that need together, each one setting down his business work for a time. Let it be valued that brothers participate personally in the work but let not opportunities be passed by for the sake of having work done by brothers. Let every brother keep the charitable work in his heart so that each one, either working in the business or in the completion of the charitable work,

remember always his contribution to that work by his participation in the Brotherhood. Let the leaders keep the brothers well informed of the needs of the world and how they may be met.

VII. BEAUTIFUL WORKS

Similar to works of charity for those in great need, it is good and important for Christians to make and share reflections of the beauty of God in all manner of arts, crafting, writing, building, and such things. Let the brothers seek to infuse all their works with such beauty, whether in business or for their families or in service to their fellow man.

Let the Brotherhood also set aside a portion of its work or income for use in creating beautiful works for the sake of men's souls and the honor of God. Let them participate in philosophy and science and arts and crafting of every kind. Let preference be given for brothers to participate in the completion of the work, but let the Brotherhood seek any opportunity to assist, whether by gifts of money or hiring or completing the work themselves.

It is a common temptation of men toiling to value only immediate utility and forget the eternal perspective which sees in man a soul and in all

creation a reflection of God. Let the brothers seek to praise Him in their works. Let them accept lower profits for the sake of creating more beautiful goods, yet not sacrificing the need for the Brotherhood to grow and remain secure for the sake of future brothers. Let them accept smaller homes or inconveniences or less power or money for the sake of better crafting, goods more beautiful in appearance and stronger and more permanent. When building a home, let them work so as to say “this is a good home” or smithing a sword let them work so as to say “this is a good sword.” Let them buy good solid tools to do their work that may be used by brothers in future years.

VIII. CUSTOMS OF THE BROTHERHOOD

Let the brothers form customs expressive of the truths of the Faith, the principles of the Brotherhood, the nature of man, and the love they bear for one another and for all. Customs may be borrowed from the society around them or they may be unique to the Brotherhood. Let the brothers act toward one another as brothers. Brothers embrace, rather than shake hands. Brothers speak candidly with one another, tempered only by charity. A brother

is not afraid to show his faults to his brother, for his brother is already well familiar with his brother's faultiness. A brother will ask for help from his brother when truly in need, for he knows that his brother is loyal to him and will come. In these and many such ways let the brothers express their love for one another.

Let the brothers wear some mark or sign of the Brotherhood while they work and pray together, if not always. Let the leaders choose the mark—it may be a full uniform or a small insignia or a ring or any other mark, and it may vary from one time to another. Let the brothers bear witness to Christ and their love for one another and all peoples.

VIX. FRATERNAL CHARITY

Of greatest importance is the love of the brothers for one another. This love must manifest itself in loyalty, sincere concern for wellbeing, generosity, assistance, forgiveness, patience, honor, encouragement, edification, gladdening, listening, postponing judgment, acknowledging mistakes, trust, vulnerability, and cooperation. The love of brothers is faithful and steadfast. All interactions between brothers begin with an understanding that one would lay down his

life for his brother, no matter what grievances or disagreements they have. Brothers take care of one another from the love that they bear for their brother. They may annoy each other or even hurt one another, but they always forgive.

When brothers meet there is a spirit of playfulness and cheerfulness that cannot be easily brought down. Even grief or grave danger cannot prevent brothers from trying to lift each other's spirits when they are able.

A brother always comes to his brother's aid. A brother is never left in hardship alone. When one brother is lost, all seek to find him. When one brother is wounded, the other brothers carry him. When one brother struggles to carry a heavy burden, the other brothers lend their shoulders. A brother does not bear reluctance to sacrifice for his brother—this must be diligently corrected among the brothers in and during all the activities of the Brotherhood. Selfishness is unwillingness to sacrifice for another, putting one's own desires before the good of another. Let the activities of the Brotherhood have, as one of the chief objectives, the eradication of selfishness and the propagation of fraternal charity.

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Let the brothers always remember the sacrifices their brother has made to be serving alongside them. Let them honor his service and efforts to grow in virtue. A brother should build up and encourage his brother and give him hope. He may correct his brother or criticize his actions, and sometimes he must correct him, but he must not seek to damage or discredit him by his words. A brother does not see his brother in the tainted view of unholy prejudice. Rather, because he is his brother, all such unreasoned opinions are forgotten when considering his brother, because he loves him as he is. Even if he retains his unholy prejudice to strangers, although he should not, he does not hold such things against his brother, because he sees his brother in the light of what he sees in him. He should treat his brother as a friend. A brother cannot be his enemy. The enemy is the evil one, or the men who come to destroy his family, community, or the innocent ones he defends. And yet if a brother speaks negatively about his brother or unkindly to his brother, both know that they will be reconciled. The brother forgives his brother and strives to not take too much offense over small hurts.

A brother always listens to his brother. He does not render judgment before due time. He is open

about his own struggles and cares. He asks for help in need. He acknowledges his mistakes. He trusts his brother to listen to him. Even when his brother does not listen perfectly, he remains open, humbly and patiently helping his brother to learn to listen. Every conversation between brothers should begin with the sincere conviction that his brother is trying to do what is good.

X. INTENTIONAL FRATERNITY

An indispensable aspect of fraternal charity is the deliberate awareness of a brother's need met with a wholehearted response of loving sacrifice. It is difficult to achieve that love which sacrifices all for the sake of a brother, often gained in degrees with much practice, and it is likewise a practiced skill to be aware of a brother's need. This growing in awareness consists much in simple, open conversation. It is not a matter of intuition, but of intentionally getting to know a brother and in practiced consideration of his needs.

Let the brothers work diligently to ensure that no brother comes unwelcomed to the Brotherhood, no brother slips into the fringe unnoticed, no brother stumbles unsupported through temptation and trials. The simplest method to support a

brother is friendship. Let it be a friendship wherein brothers sometimes ask meaningful and discerning questions of one another such that the matters of the soul may be revealed. Further methods that may be employed include such things as formal mentorship, such as assigning a brother to introduce a new brother to our way of life or assigning a brother as formation director who meets with the brothers to guide their formation time, small group meetings, performance review meetings, self-assessment surveys, etc.

XI. SUPPORTING LOCAL PARISHES

It is good to participate in the life of the Body of Christ. Let not the Brotherhood neglect its part in building up that body. Wherever the brothers go, let them support by works or money or participation the faithful activities of the Church. Let them give deference to the descendants of the Apostles and obey them in matters of faith and morals. Rather than create alternative structures for the organization of the Church, let them participate wholeheartedly as members of that body. Often it will be most beneficial to participate together as brothers in the Brotherhood, forming together a whole arm rather than each brother individually forming one finger. At other times

it may be better to remember their Brotherhood with one another silently, emphasizing the activity of the whole body. Let the leaders choose the expression of their Brotherhood in the activities of the life of the Church.

XII. SKILLS AND TRAINING

It is good for every man to grow and learn at every stage in his life. For the brother it is necessary and a duty. The brother's vocation is to serve the world and to remain as fit as he may be so that he may serve with the greatest vigor and skill. Moreover, it is the blessing of the Brotherhood on each brother that he would be raised up from inability to ability even though the ability may not bring immediate productivity or revenue. It must always be a goal of the Brotherhood to give its members good skills and knowledge, both skills directly used in the activities of the Brotherhood and skills less related to Brotherhood activities. Of the latter, especially valued are skills that a brother may use to craft what is beautiful, give what is needed, care for his family, and care for himself.

If the time allotted during workdays is insufficient for a particular important or high-value training opportunity, it is acceptable for there to be held

a required or optional training for some or all brothers beyond the normal workday formation. It may even be that some days or weeks are required for the most important events. Let the leaders work to ensure that the needs of the families are well-accounted for in the decision to extend formation. Let it be considered a high price that fathers are away from their children and husbands from their wives.

XIII. EXPULSION FROM THE BROTHERHOOD

If a brother is disobedient, unwilling to work, unwilling to participate in the life of the Brotherhood, or violates the laws of the Brotherhood, and is not willing to correct himself, then the brother must be expelled from the Brotherhood. Let the Brotherhood assist him as it may if his expulsion puts him in hardship.

XIV. POOR PERFORMANCE

When a brother does not perform his tasks well, let his leaders attempt to either teach him to perform better or find better suited work. It is acceptable that his wages may need to be reduced as a result. If a brother performs poorly

because he is unwilling to work diligently or only pretends to work, then let him be corrected firmly and clearly by the leaders. If after repeated correction and warning he is still unwilling to work, and no work that is better suited may be found for him, then let him be expelled from the Brotherhood. If a brother cannot perform tasks well enough to merit a wage that will allow him to keep his family in good health, from no fault of his own, then let the Brotherhood pay more than he merits, if it can, to meet his needs. No brother is to be left in hardship unaided.

XV. CONSTITUTION OF THE BROTHERHOOD

It is intended that those following this rule would form a single organization of united leadership and purpose. Let there be a constitution specifying the structure of leadership in such an organization. If anyone should prefer to part from the laws and structure therein to form another organization, let him write a new rule with a new name rather than present contesting claims of continuity with this rule. For those who cannot participate in the life of the organization set out in the constitution but who wish to live by the purposes and principles of the

Rule, let them live the Rule as they are able. It is good and much to be commended that men and women live for Christ in the spirit of the Rule even when unable to work in the Brotherhood.

It may also be good that more like Rules should be written and followed in the spirit of the Rule whenever a need arises for an organization different in kind than the Brotherhood, but alike in purpose. Let these sister Rules be written in a spirit of faithfulness to Christ, His Church, and the principles of united work and prayer. Let such organizations be aided and welcomed by the Brotherhood.

XVI. CONFLICTING OATHS AND OTHER WORKS

It is not compatible for a brother to be vowed to obedience to other men, since “no one can serve two masters.” Although the brothers do not serve under oath except in times of great trial, a spirit of obedience is a necessary condition for full participation in the Brotherhood. A brother who grumbles, disobeys, or passively resists his leaders is an impediment to the work of the Brotherhood. Instead of serving his brothers, he serves his preferences. Likewise, if the brother

owes obedience to another, then he would leave the brothers if ever a conflict should arise between the two obligations, particularly in times of great trials when his brothers need him most. However unlikely this may seem it is a hindrance to the spirit of loyal service in a brother. He will never be able to say “I am completely loyal to you, my brothers” for in truth he should be loyal first to his oath.

It is the role and responsibility of the lay man to participate productively in his society. The brother contributes to his society by participation in the Brotherhood, but if an opportunity arises to do good in addition to his work in the Brotherhood the brother may do such a work. However, let not a brother attempt to take up both work in the Brotherhood and work elsewhere in society if it prevents him from wholeheartedly and equally taking up his work in the Brotherhood or it somehow hinders the work of the Brotherhood.

If there arises an opportunity for a brother to do more good in a work incompatible with his work in the Brotherhood, let him discern for himself whether it is the will of the Almighty which work he should take up, remembering the numerous silent graces of life together in the Brotherhood. If he should leave the brothers for

a good work, let him be separated honorably and encouraged by his brothers to stay close to Christ.

XVII. SOCIETY AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY

It may from time to time be prudent for the Brotherhood to participate together in affairs of laws and governance or some other facet of society. It may also be prudent for the Brotherhood to refrain from participating as an organization in such affairs. Let the leaders use good judgment and consider the long-reaching effects carefully.

XVIII. THE PRIESTHOOD AND OTHER GREAT WORKS

Let it be known that the priesthood is a holy calling and greatly to be honored by the brothers. Let priests be honored by the merit of their consecration. Monks, religious, and all those who have taken up the imitation of Christ's life by solemn vows are also to be honored. It is to be encouraged and commended that a brother may choose to leave the Brotherhood in answer to such a holy calling.

XIX. PROTECTING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

Let the Brotherhood take as a responsibility the safety and security of all the families of the brothers, their fellow brothers, and their local communities. Further, it is an act of charity and the call of the lay man to secure and safeguard those who are most vulnerable and cannot protect themselves, particularly children, the elderly, the disabled, and the oppressed.

Let the brothers lay plans to safeguard these in the event of catastrophes or upheavals.

Let the brothers always make careful consideration for safety and security in all their work.

XX. USE OF FORCE

It is the role and responsibility of the lay man to protect his family, his community, innocents, and his brothers from harm and injustice. It may be necessary in grave circumstances to use violent force to fulfill this duty. Let the brothers take great care in exercising prudence during such grave times. If it is decided that

some or all of the brothers must act, then let them act in unison. Let all fight together under one banner, rather than each one protecting himself and his family alone. It is acceptable that the leaders may require the brothers to fight on pain of expulsion in such grave times.

Let the brothers prepare together to meet the need for the use of force, training appropriately for the needs of the time. If war looms near to their land let them train hard and often in the arts of war. If peace settles let them train more in non-lethal and less violent means of securing themselves but remain vigilant and skilled enough to be able to train quickly if insecurity or war come suddenly.

XXI. WARRIOR SPIRIT OF A BROTHER

A brother practices daily a warrior spirit. He meets his enemy with undaunted resolve. He is focused, calculating, cunning, and strong against his foe. On occasion it may be that the brother's foe is a man. Daily, his foe is an evil spirit. Let him meet both with courage, strength, and focused aggression. There is a concept called "violence of action" that any soldier knows. At the point of meeting

the enemy one must act decisively, aggressively, overwhelmingly, and forcefully. Not only must one's strategy be offensive, but even the body's movements must be infused with a forceful spirit. A soldier must attack with strength, disregarding pain or fear. If a soldier fights timidly against an aggressive enemy he will die surrounded. The aggressor retains the initiative and takes the field of battle.

The Offensive is a principle of war which must be kept without violating the other principles, such as Security and Economy of Force. Likewise, its virtues must be practiced by the brothers without violating other virtues. Brothers must practice strength of spirit. Let them not shy from conflict against evil. They must be disciplined, focused, and decisive against their enemy. Let them root out evil in themselves daily, with strength. Let them be also patient, humble, taking into account their weakness and striving for greater strength. Let them learn the skill of fighting.

XXII. SUPPORTING THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Let the Brotherhood assist in the establishment and support of evangelistic communities wherever it goes. Let the brothers be

encouraged to participate in the activities of the communities. Such communities should be open to all and instructive in the faith. The communities must be unwaveringly faithful in the service of Christ and his Church.

Let the Brotherhood also assist in the establishment of neighborhoods of Christian families living near one another and practicing the faith in unity. Let these actively support the local parishes, help to promote faithfulness to Christ, participation in the Sacraments, pursuit of holiness, and reach out to those outside the neighborhood. Neighborhoods should strive to be beautiful, safe, nurturing homes for families, an enclave for the faithful in a sea of unfaithfulness.

XXIII. RETREATS

Let the brothers gather for a spiritual retreat once or twice per year. Let them be formed in understanding of the faith and renewed with prayer and the Sacraments. Let special care be taken that spiritual formation draws deeply upon the timeless teaching of the Church and the example of the Saints. It is best that the retreat would be three days consecutively spent all together in one place and without any brothers

leaving or having much contact with others outside the retreat, but let exceptions be made rather than not have a retreat at all. Let special consideration be taken for fathers of children and those who are most needed at home.

XXIV. CEREMONIES

Let the principles and honor of the Brotherhood form its rituals, formal or informal. Let there be formal ceremonies for events of great importance, such as the acceptance of a new brother, the death of a brother, a brother leaving the Brotherhood for the priesthood, a brother marrying, election to offices, presentation of names or awards, urgent communal prayer, and other such occurrences. Let the ceremonies be described in a book of ceremonies so that all can follow together.

*“Truly, I doubt not that the angels,
wondering and adoring, came thronging
in countless multitudes to that poor workshop
to admire the humility of him who guarded
that dear and divine child, and labored at his
carpenter’s trade to support the son and the
mother who were committed to his care.”*

SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES