



## **Rule of the Fraternity of the Sorrowful Passion of Christ**

The mission of the Fraternity of the Sorrowful Passion of Christ is to offer reverence, devotion, and gratitude towards Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament for His own sake and in reparation for irreverence, tepidity, and ingratitude towards the Blessed Sacrament. This mission is placed under the patronage of the Mother of Sorrows, St. John the Beloved Disciple, and St. Alphonsus Ligouri.

### **EUCCHARIST**

- I. The first and most important precept towards the Eucharist is the manner of its reception. The posture of receiving Holy Communion must be kneeling, and the Eucharist must only be received on the tongue.<sup>1</sup>
- II. Holy Communion must only be received under the species of bread.<sup>2</sup>
- III. Holy Communion, under ordinary circumstances, must be received from the hands of a priest or deacon.<sup>3</sup>
- IV. Holy Communion must be received no more than once a day.
- V. The member must observe a fast from midnight before the reception of Holy Communion. The only drink permissible before Holy Communion is pure water. Should a member attend a Mass at/after noon, a three hour fast is permissible.
- VI. The member must spend at least 15 minutes in prayer before Mass.

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<sup>1</sup> The establishers of this Rule, though recognizing the indult for receiving Holy Communion on the hand granted by Pope St. Paul VI as legitimate, have chosen to opt for the traditional method of reception likewise approved by the document *Memoriale Domini*.

<sup>2</sup> Exceptions to this precept can be made for those Catholics in the Byzantine Rite and for gluten intolerant Catholics, the latter being allowed to only partake either of the species of wine or a gluten-free host.

<sup>3</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Can. 230 §3.

- VII. The member must spend at least 15 minutes in the church as soon as possible after Mass to pray in thanksgiving for the Mass and Holy Communion (if received).
- VIII. Every time the Eucharist is received, the Holy Communion must be offered in reparation for sacrilegious Communions.
- IX. The member must spend an hour in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at least once a month, preferably on first Fridays.

#### MEMBERSHIP

- X. In order to join the Fraternity, a candidate must be a Catholic male, at least 13 years in age.
- XI. A candidate must enter the Fraternity with a clean heart; that is, completely detached from sin.
- XII. A member must be a practicing Catholic loyal to the Supreme Pontiff.
- XIII. A member must also have reliable, direct contact with the Fraternity's leadership,<sup>4</sup> and must receive personal permission from the President or his Chapter Director to join the Fraternity.
- XIV. As a test of the candidate's commitment, he must practice the Rule for a whole month.
- XV. After his one-month trial is complete, he must be interviewed as soon as possible by the President or by his Vice President (with the President's permission) as a final examination of the candidate's commitment and sincerity.<sup>5</sup>
- XVI. If the Vice President examines a candidate, he must make a full report of the interview to the President, not pledging admission to the candidate before receiving the President's permission.
- XVII. During this interview, the President is supposed to determine the candidate's motives for joining and his capacity for carrying out the Rule's provisions.

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<sup>4</sup> This includes the President, Vice President, Chapter Director or Vice Chapter Director exclusively.

<sup>5</sup> The candidate's trial can be prolonged, if the President is still uncertain about the candidate's commitment, or if the candidate needs more practice with the Rule's provisions, as the President sees fit, and for as much time as the President sees fit, as long as the candidate's whole trial does not exceed three months.

- XVIII. If the candidate passes this one-month trial, and admission is granted to him, he then enters into a one-year commitment as a “novice” member.
- XIX. At the end of his first year, he can choose to leave the Fraternity or stay. If he stays, he is a “formal” member and commits to his continuation of the observance of the Rule until the indefinite termination of his membership by his own will or by expulsion.
- XX. It is those who are at least formal members who can take part in votes and be appointed to offices of leadership. Those who hold positions of leadership are “senior” members. The rest of the Rule applies to novice, formal, and senior members alike unless it explicitly states otherwise.
- XXI. If a member leaves the Fraternity on no account of ill will, and desires to be readmitted, he can rejoin as a novice member or a formal member, as the President sees fit.

#### PRAYER

- XXII. The member must, immediately after rising from sleep with the intention of starting his day, make a morning offering.
- XXIII. The member must spend at least 30 minutes a day in mental prayer, meditating frequently on the Passion of Christ. An alternative to this would be spending 30 minutes in spiritual reading.
- XXIV. A Divine Mercy Chaplet must be prayed at 3:00 PM.
- XXV. Five decades of the Traditional Rosary, or (and this is preferable) a Servite Rosary (the Rosary of Seven Sorrows), must be prayed daily.<sup>6</sup>
- XXVI. The member must offer his prayers and penances in reparation for sins against the Blessed Sacrament, for the benefactors of the Fraternity, for the spiritual growth of the Fraternity’s members, and for the advancement of the Fraternity.
- XXVII. Before confession, in addition to examining his conscience, the member must pray for the graces of contrition and that of making a good confession.

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<sup>6</sup> The composers of this Rule are not against the praying of the Luminous Mysteries; however, because of the “optional” nature attributed to them by the Church, they are not sufficient to fulfill the obligation of praying five mysteries of the Rosary a day. Five “mandatory” mysteries must be prayed in addition to the Luminous Mysteries, should a member choose to pray the latter.

- XXVIII. After going to confession, the member must make an act of thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Penance, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament.<sup>7</sup>
- XXIX. The President must appoint a prayer/litany to be prayed by the Fraternity during Advent and Lent.

#### PENANCE/MORTIFICATION

- XXX. The member is to abstain from snacks between meals, and observe a fast and an abstinence from meat on all Fridays throughout the year.<sup>8</sup>
- XXXI. Members who are 21 years in age or older must observe Ember Days according to the old laws and calendar of the Church.
- XXXII. Abstinence from sweets (candy, treats, desserts, etc.) and carbonated or sweet drinks (excluding fruit juices), is also to be observed.
- XXXIII. The member must take only cold showers.
- XXXIV. During Advent and Lent, a member must take up at least one extra penance; he should consult with a priestly spiritual director, if he would desire to do a particularly austere penance.
- XXXV. Ordinarily, all the above penances and mortifications can be omitted on all first and second class feast days.
- XXXVI. The entire section PENANCE/MORTIFICATION can be omitted during the octaves of Easter and Christmas, and on all special occasions within one's own household (except for the meat abstinence on Friday,<sup>9</sup> pertaining to the latter and to the octave of Christmas).
- XXXVII. During Advent and Lent, it is forbidden to give up any penances or mortifications on any second-class feast days. It is also forbidden during these seasons to omit any precepts of the section PENANCE/MORTIFICATION on any penitential first-class feast days. If the feast-day included as part of a penitential season is commissioned by the Church as a day of mitigated rejoicing, such as Gaudete Sunday, the member may give up one mortification prescribed by the Rule.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The thanksgiving must be made by the member in addition to his penance.

<sup>8</sup> Fasting is not required during the Easter season.

<sup>9</sup> If a first-class feast day should fall on a Friday, and it isn't a day of penance in the Church, the abstinence from meat not only can, but should be omitted.

<sup>10</sup> Here, household special occasions are considered first-class feasts.

## COMMUNITY

- XXXVIII. The President/Chapter Director must organize a meeting at least twice a month, with spiritual reading and reflection.
- XXXIX. The reflections must, as far as possible, be guided by the Fraternity's/Chapter's Spiritual Director.
  - XL. During this meeting, the President/Chapter Director must survey the members present, in order to know what precepts of the Rule they are struggling with.
  - XLI. The individual member is required to attend at least one meeting a month or receive an excused absence from the President/Chapter Director.

## GOVERNMENT

- XLII. The Fraternity is governed, firstly; by the laws of Jesus Christ and His Church, secondly; by this Rule, thirdly; by the President of the Fraternity, and fourthly; by whomever the President may appoint to offices of leadership.
- XLIII. The President must have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- XLIV. The President is to carry himself in such a way that reflects his office as the chief servant of the Rule and of the whole Fraternity; that is, with a servile spirit, not compromising his dignity and authority.
- XLV. The Fraternity must have only one President at all times, whose duty it is to organize meetings, assist his inferiors in their conformity to the Rule, supervise the spiritual and material welfare of the Fraternity, and who can assign temporary or permanent tasks or offices of leadership for the advancement of the Fraternity and the spiritual growth of its members, though this is not required of him.
- XLVI. Let it be known, also, that no one can take a role upon himself or assume any office without the consent of the President (the latter requiring written consent), unless otherwise stated in this Rule.
- XLVII. The President can also suppress any offices or mandates established (or assignments commissioned) by his predecessor.
- XLVIII. Upon taking office, the President must swear an oath of office.
- XLIX. The President must commit to the Presidency for at least one full year upon inauguration.

- L. Under ordinary circumstances, the President must have at least two members of at least formal status present at his inauguration as witnesses, in addition to the Spiritual Director.
- LI. If a President leaves the Fraternity (or abdicates his office), he must first choose his own successor. The nominated successor must be given a choice to accept or reject this office, and at least two months' notice of his nomination before he can assume the office of President.
- LII. If the President should fail to choose a successor, then the Vice President replaces him as President, without needing to wait two months before taking office, but this is only permissible in this case.
- LIII. The President must ensure that the Fraternity has a priestly spiritual director at all times.
- LIV. The Spiritual Director does not necessarily have to be a member of the Fraternity.
- LV. The Spiritual Director's purpose is to guide the meetings' discussions and assist any members struggling with the Rule.
- LVI. The President must be wise and prudent in choosing a spiritual director that is known for his orthodoxy, as well as his loyalty to the Supreme Pontiff.
- LVII. Should the good of the Fraternity genuinely demand it, the Spiritual Director can be replaced, as the President sees fit.
- LVIII. The President must keep a watchful guard over the Fraternity against heresies, especially modernism and subsequent heresies.
- LIX. The President must prudently appoint one of the more responsible, pious, wise, and dedicated members to be his Vice President, whose purpose it is to replace the President, should the latter resign without appointing a successor, and to act as the President's personal secretary and advisor.
- LX. The President can be deposed, if two thirds of the Fraternity's formal and senior members vote to depose him. The President must then be replaced by his Vice President.
- LXI. The deposition of a President does not entail his automatic expulsion.
- LXII. Let those who vote to depose a President do so with the fear of God as their motive.

- LXIII. Individual chapters with sub-governing bodies can be established at the President's discretion and approval, though not necessarily at his suggestion.
- LXIV. These sub-governing bodies must be composed of a Chapter Director and a Vice Chapter Director.
- LXV. The President must give written consent for the establishment of new chapters.
- LXVI. All new members to these chapters can be interviewed and admitted into the Fraternity, particularly into his chapter, by the Chapter Director or by the Vice Chapter Director with the Chapter Director's permission.
- LXVII. The Chapter Director can appoint his own members to non-leadership positions and can nominate his choice for a Vice Chapter Director to the President for his approval in the form of the latter's written consent.
- LXVIII. The Chapter Director, should he resign, must choose his successor according to the same system described for the successor of the President and according to the same principles of office. The role of Vice Chapter Director serves the same purpose as that of Vice President, except that it is in relation to the Chapter Director.
- LXIX. The Chapter Director must submit his nomination for the chapter's Spiritual Director to the President for approval and receive approval before admitting the Spiritual Director into his chapter.
- LXX. The President must receive semi-annual updates by the end of every November and May.
- LXXI. The updates must include but are not limited to the latest data concerning a); attendance at meetings (attendance scores), b); member registration,<sup>11</sup> c); leadership appointment eligibility rosters,<sup>12</sup> and d); the projects of individual chapters and of the Fraternity in general.

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<sup>11</sup> The outline for each individual member's registration information is as follows: their name, their office/role, their immediate contact information, their registration status, their ranking status, their date of admission.

<sup>12</sup> Only those who are at least formal members and who have passed the senior membership test can (and must) be listed on this roster. The outline for each individual member's leadership appointment eligibility information is as follows: their name, their testing score, whether or not their essay has been approved by the President, and their current position of leadership (if applicable).

LXXII. These semi-annual updates- if possible- must come from the Vice President. This requires the cooperation of the Chapter Directors, who must constantly keep their attendance scores and registration rosters updated and send them to the Vice President well ahead of the semi-annual update's deadline, along with the other required information.

#### CODE OF PUBLICATION

- LXXIII. In writing anything for the instruction or edification of the members of the Fraternity, a member must cite at least five credible sources, and use two quotes from these sources for every chief article expressed in the writing.<sup>13</sup>
- LXXIV. Credible sources which the author can use include: Scripture<sup>14</sup>- provided that the author's interpretation of a Scripture quote is in line with the interpretation of the Church-, writings containing Church definitions, and the writings of the Church Fathers and Saints.
- LXXV. The writing must be reviewed and approved by the President and should be guided by the Spiritual Director of the Fraternity, if possible.
- LXXVI. The President/Spiritual Director cannot disapprove of any manuscript for publication unless a): the author's evidence does not clearly support his claim; b): the manuscript does not follow all of the criteria contained in this section; c): if the written work explicitly contradicts the teachings of the Church, a condition which can (and must) be proven, d): if the manuscript speaks uncharitably against anyone, (meaning, it insults them or soils their reputation, without sufficient cause, a condition to be judged by the President), or e): if the written work is profane, that is, irrelevant to Catholicism, a condition to be judged by the President.
- LXXVII. Documents of establishment or record must also be approved by the President before publication.
- LXXVIII. The President can assign any member to write an evangelical or documentary piece of writing about a topic of the former's choice for reading among the members of the Fraternity, for private use, or as otherwise instructed.

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<sup>13</sup> An exception to this criteria would be the brief commemoration of a feast day from the President.

<sup>14</sup> Multiple books from Scripture account for multiple sources.



LXXXIX. In order to guard the members of the Fraternity from pride, the President must permit individual members to publish their writings with moderation, with the guidance of the Spiritual Director.

#### CODE OF PENALTY

- LXXX. If a member commits a serious fault in relation to the Fraternity's members, leadership, or Rule, he can be privately admonished by a fellow member, in all patience, prudence, humility, and charity.
- LXXXI. If the member remains unrepentant and obstinate in continuing his error(s), let him be taken to the Chapter Director for further reprimand and appeal to repentance.
- LXXXII. If the member still does not amend, let him be taken to the President, and if, even then, the member resists the President's admonitions, let the President expel him.
- LXXXIII. If a member causes a serious public scandal (or serious scandal to the Fraternity), let the President examine the member in question and examine witnesses to determine whether or not the scandal was committed and/or whether the member should be expelled.
- LXXXIV. If any member is expelled (or causes scandal within the Fraternity), let readmission be granted to him (restitution for the scandal be established as fulfilled) only on the condition that he writes a sincere public apology (public only to the Fraternity).<sup>15</sup> The member is then to have the rights of a novice member for a year. He is also forbidden to omit any precepts of the section PENANCE/MORTIFICATION, except for on first-class feast days and household special occasions, for three months.<sup>16</sup>
- LXXXV. The President is not obliged to readmit anyone into the Fraternity who has been previously expelled.
- LXXXVI. After a member's third expulsion, let no admission into the Fraternity be granted to him again.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The apology can be omitted for members who leave through weakness.

<sup>16</sup> This can also be omitted for members who leave through weakness.

<sup>17</sup> The member and the number of his expulsions must be kept in the Fraternity's archives even in his absence from the Fraternity.

LXXXVII. If a member, through obstinacy in error, weakness, or contempt, leaves the Fraternity, the action counts against him as an expulsion, for the sake of the system described in precepts LXXXIV-LXXXVI.

#### SENIOR MEMBERS

LXXXVIII. All senior members must have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

LXXXIX. At a senior member's first appointment, he must pass a test concerning this Rule with at least a ninety-two percent passing score. This test must include at least three questions for every section of the Rule and three questions total concerning the beginning and ending paragraphs.

XC. The test may be administered before the formal member's appointment to an office of leadership.

XCI. As far as possible, the aforementioned test must be administered and proctored in person by a senior member and by a time limit set by the President.

XCII. The President can compose the aforementioned test or appoint the Vice President to compose the test in his stead.

XCIII. The aforementioned test can be retaken only once every two months with no limit as to how many retakes, on the condition that the President authorizes the retake.

XCIV. In applying for senior membership eligibility, the applicant must read the encyclicals *Lamentabili Sane* and *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* by Pope St. Pius X (as long as this is possible), writing a thorough essay covering both documents in order to demonstrate his understanding of modernism.

XCV. Unless he leaves the Fraternity, if a senior member resigns his position of leadership, he retains his status as a senior member.

XCVI. The President can strip any senior member of both his status as well as of his position at will.

XCVII. All senior members, upon being inducted into office, must make an oath of office and commit to their offices for at least one year or until released by the President from their roles.

XCVIII. The formulae for the enrollment, promotion, or appointment for the members of the Fraternity cannot be altered from their current form as established by the establishers of this Rule.

## CHASTITY

- XCIX. If any member desires to court, he must be in a marriageable position in life. The female in the courtship must also be in a marriageable position in life.
  - C. A marriageable position in life includes but may not necessarily be limited to (for the male party) having a substantial source of income, the ability to afford decent housing, and to be of a marriageable age. For the female party it is enough to be of a marriageable age. Both parties need to be released by their parents.
- CI. Members should avoid spending too much time frivolously, especially with virtual entertainment, since this makes custody of the imagination in regards to impure imagery unnecessarily difficult, even if the content of the virtual entertainment is itself innocent.

## CODE OF DRESS

- CII. This section at least applies at all Fraternity functions, including meetings. It is recommended, but not mandated, that the members apply it also to daily life.
- CIII. Unnaturally colored hair dyes are forbidden.
- CIV. Facial/body/ear piercings are forbidden.
- CV. Tattoos are forbidden. If a member has received a tattoo before joining, it must always be concealed.
- CVI. Members must not wear more than one ring.
- CVII. Members must never be without sufficient clothing (i.e.: a sleeveless shirt would be considered insufficient).
- CVIII. Tattered clothing must never be worn out of choice, but only if material poverty obliges the wearer to wear such clothes.

## RECORD RETENTION

- CIX. The stored records/archives of the Fraternity can be directly accessed by the President and/or his Vice President only.
- CX. The stored records/archives can be divulged to one or more members not the Vice President at the President's discretion.
- CXI. The stored records/archives can include but are not limited to: a) membership registers, b) attendance rosters, c) the expulsion archives, d)

certificates of enrollment, establishment, or appointment, e) contact information of the various members, e) correspondence (such as letters, emails) between members of the Fraternity hierarchy and their subordinates, f) correspondence between members of the Fraternity hierarchy and their equals, g) correspondence between members of the Fraternity hierarchy and those outside the Fraternity, h) formal declarations by the President, i) published articles in the Fraternity, j) photos, video and audio recordings, k) signed waivers.

- CXII. If paper copies of the records are kept, they must be stored under lock and key, accessible to the President and/or his Vice President alone. The same applies if the records are stored on a digital hard drive.
- CXIII. If the records are stored on a computer, the computer must be accessible to the President and/or his Vice President alone by password protection, and the same computer can not be accessed by another member without the President's or Vice President's permission.
- CXIV. The member who is not the President or Vice President can not open the Fraternity's records/archives while accessing the President's or Vice President's computer unless the President gives him specific delegation.

This Rule, as the charter of the Fraternity, is unchangeable, except by those who first established it,<sup>18</sup> and uncompromisable. Any member, of any rank, who attempts to change a single provision without the written consent of at least one of its original establishers is *ipso facto* expelled from the Fraternity. Likewise, any President who changes or promotes the contradicting of this Rule has made the force of his office null and void. He is expelled from the Fraternity until he recants and repairs his error(s). The same rules apply to anyone who changes any terminology or words in this Rule, though they should protest that they are not changing the Rule fundamentally. In regards to an expelled President, once reconciled with the Fraternity, he cannot resume holding the Presidency, but is replaced by the Vice President. If there is general doubt among the members of the Fraternity as to whether or not a President has promoted the contradicting of this Rule, the President receives the benefit of the doubt.

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<sup>18</sup> The original establishers of this Rule are Anthony Werthmiller of Tarpon Springs, Florida and Sebastian Merkle of Odessa, Florida. Residences apply to A.D. 2021.

The Rule of the Fraternity of the Sorrowful Passion of Christ is hereby established under the joint authority of Anthony Werthmiller and Sebastian Merkle.