



Project of Apostolic Life



ASSOCIAZIONE SALESIANI COOPERATORI
Consiglio Mondiale
La Coordinatrice

The precious gift, the “book of life,” entrusted to us in these pages is the fruit of a long process of discernment, of study, and of prayer involving Salesian Cooperators from around the world who took on the task of renewal so as to respond better, with Don Bosco’s heart, to the new challenges handed to us by this globalized and secularized society.

Fidelity to the original intuition which Don Bosco had in our regard, that of being true Salesians called to live in the world without being of it, is the connective tissue of this *Project of Apostolic Life*. We graft onto it our lay response to the dictates of the Magisterium of the Church and of the Salesian Family.

The *Statutes* are our charismatic identity card: they describe our spirituality, highlight our apostolic commitment, and define our path of sanctification, which, in profound union with the entire Salesian Family, we wish to follow, witnessing to Love and to Hope.

The *Regulations* gather together and describe how to live the Gospel project of the *Statutes* in a concrete manner, thus forming a harmonious “oneness” which will help us remain firm in faith and rooted in that culture of life which stands in opposition to the widespread egocentric relativism of our society.

The young, families, the excluded, and the poor await, with ever greater urgency, the concrete response which can only come from one who wants to collaborate with God in making His Kingdom of charity and justice present in the here and now.

Together, let us welcome the spiritual richness which this our new *Project of Apostolic Life* offers us and let us make of our Salesian commitment a most sincere, trusting, and enthusiastic “YES” to the Lord, in the young.

Noemi Bertola

Documents related
to the
Project of Apostolic Life



DIREZIONE GENERALE OPERE DON BOSCO
Via della Pisana 1111 – 00163 Roma

Il Rettor Maggiore

APPROVAL OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In accord with the proofreaders who were delegated by me and who recognize this present English translation as being in full conformity with the *Project of Apostolic Life* of the Association of Salesian Cooperators, I hereby authorize its printing.

Pascual Chávez V.
Fr. Pascual Chávez V., SDB
Rector Major

Rome, December 18, 2013

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Il Rettor Maggiore

PROJECT OF APOSTOLIC LIFE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS

Presentation

Dear Salesian Cooperators,

With the Decree of April 29, 2013, the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life has confirmed and approved your *Project of Apostolic Life* in definitive form. It is now your charter of identity in the Church, in the Salesian Family, and in society.

It is offered to you as a “book of life,” which must accompany you always. It contains the renewed *Statutes* and the *Regulations* of the Association of Salesian Cooperators. The *Project of Apostolic Life*, thus approved, guarantees fidelity to the original inspiration of Don Bosco; spiritual, theological, and pastoral harmony with Vatican Council II and the Magisterium of the Church; continuity with the prior *Rule of Apostolic Life*; and the Christian and Salesian response to the new challenges of the world.

Today, December 8, 2013, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, which marked the beginning of our vocation and mission in the world, I, in my capacity as Rector Major and Successor of Don Bosco, do hereby officially promulgate this renewed *Project of Apostolic Life*.

I invite you to welcome and receive it with the gratitude and hope of one who receives a precious treasure.

From this moment of its promulgation, the *Statutes* must occupy a privileged place both in the personal life of every Cooperator and in that of the entire Association. This carries with it the need for its contents to be known and its values interiorized.

The *Statutes* describe the spiritual riches of your charismatic identity; define your apostolic project; trace the path of your sanctification; and invite you to give witness to them as your greatest gift.

They also contain all that which refers to the structure of the Association but they are not exactly a text of juridical norms or a simple doctrinal tract. The *Statutes* delineate the profile of the Salesian Cooperator so he or she might be perfectly suited for his/her vocation and mission. You are a *true Salesian in the world* according to the original intuition of Don Bosco, who wished the Cooperator to be a passionate collaborator of God through the great choices of the Salesian mission: the family, the young, education, the Preventive System, and commitment in social and political environments, giving privileged attention and openness of heart to the poor, the excluded, the ill, and the marginalized of every kind.

The *Statutes* are intimately linked to the Founder, who wished to communicate to you his spirit. In them you can find Don Bosco. Your love for him will show through your taking on and bringing to life the Gospel project which he is offering to you. He is your model.

A necessary complement to the *Statutes* are the *Regulations*, also approved by me, which make the great inspirations from the Gospel and the life choices which are expressed in the *Statutes* normative and able to be put into practice in daily life. This is so because a vital understanding of the *Statutes* would remain incomplete without an adequate study of the *Regulations*. Certainly, we are speaking of two texts which have unique, different natures, but this should not imply that they should be put on different planes as though they differ in importance, but rather, that there needs to be an integration of the two. The first, the *Statutes*, represent your charter of identity and comprise the project of the Founder; the norms relative to the animation and governance of the Association, as approved by the competent authorities of the Church and which can be modified only with Her approval; and the necessarily harmonized spiritual and juridical elements. The second, the *Regulations*, contain the concrete and practical applications of the universal interests in the *Statutes* and, therefore, are valid to be put into practice in the entire Association. Since some of the norms have been formulated taking into consideration determinate historical conditions, which, *per se*, are mutable, the *Regulations* are, by their very nature, more easily modifiable.

I hand over to you, my dear Salesian Cooperators, this “book of life” as a most precious gift, along with the task of knowing and interiorizing it. It must become the object of your study, of assimilation, of your prayer, and of your life.

I hand it to you with the heart of a father, the heart of Don Bosco, and I entrust you to Mary Help of Christians. She will take you by the hand and will be your Mother and Teacher.

Pascual Chávez V.

Don Pascual Chávez V., sdb

Rector Major

Rome, December 8, 2013 *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary*

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Sacred Scripture

| | |
|----------|---|
| I Cor. | The First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians |
| I Pt. | The First Letter of St. Peter |
| I Thess. | The First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians |
| Eccles. | Ecclesiastes |
| Eph. | The Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians |
| Jn. | The Gospel of St. John |
| Mt. | The Gospel of St. Matthew |
| Phil. | The Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians |

Documents of the Church

| | |
|-----|---|
| AA | <i>Apostolicam Actuositatem</i> , Decree of Vatican Council II |
| AG | <i>Ad Gentes</i> , Decree of Vatican Council II |
| CCC | <i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> |
| CIC | <i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i> (Code of Canon Law) |
| ChL | <i>Christifideles Laici</i> , Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II |
| GS | <i>Gaudium et Spes</i> , Constitution of Vatican Council II |
| LG | <i>Lumen Gentium</i> , Constitution of Vatican Council II |
| SJD | Social Justice Doctrine of the Church |

Salesian Sources

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ASC | Acts of the General Council (Acts of the Superior Chapter of the SDB) |
| ASGC | Acts of the Special General Chapter of the Salesians of Don Bosco (1971-1972) |
| BM | The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco (19 volumes) |
| RDB Good of | Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way of Contributing to Public Morality and to the Society (The Rule of the Salesian Cooperators by Don Bosco, 1876) |
| RSDB | The (Constitutions and) Regulations of the Society of St. Francis de Sales, 1984 |
| RSS | Ricerche Storiche Salesiane |

Other acronyms (in Italian)

| | |
|-------|---|
| ASE | Animating Economic Solidarity |
| ASSCC | The Association of Salesian Cooperators |
| DB | Don Bosco |
| FMA | Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice) |
| PVA | Project of Apostolic Life (Progetto di Vita Apostolica) |
| RVA | Regulations of Apostolic Life |
| SC | Salesian Cooperator |
| SDB | Salesians of Don Bosco |
| SEM | World Executive Secretary (Segreteria Esecutiva Mondiale) |
| SSCC | Salesian Cooperators |

ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS

Project of Apostolic Life

Preface

Diverse are the paths offered to Christians for living out their Baptismal faith. Some, through the urging of the Holy Spirit and attracted by the person of Don Bosco, realize their ideal of “working with him” while remaining in the world. These persons are called to live out, in the lay or clerical state, the same charism as the Society of St. Francis de Sales.

From the very start, Don Bosco thought about organizing the “co-helpers” of his work. He invited lay people, men and women, and members of the diocesan clergy to “cooperate” in his mission of salvation of the young, especially of those who are poor and abandoned. In 1876 he clearly defined their project of life in the *Regulations for the Salesian Cooperators* which he himself wrote and which were then approved by the Church.¹ Today Salesian Cooperators are spread throughout the world and work at that level.

The present text describes the *Project of Apostolic Life*. It offers an authentic path of sanctification, “to exercise charity by working for the salvation of souls.”² Salesian Cooperators² trust in the fidelity of God³ the Father, Who called them.

¹Salvatore Magnasco. “Decree of December 12, 1877.” *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Eugenio Ceria, SDB. Diego Borgatello, SDB, ed. Vol. XIII. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 1983) 467- 468. Print.

²Giovanni Bosco. *Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way of Contributing to Public Morality and the Good of Society*. Trans. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco. Introduction: “To the Reader”. n.d. Web 30 Nov. 2013. <http://cooperatori.sdb.org/cooperatori/files/regvitaaping.pdf>

³Eugenio Ceria, SDB. *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Diego Borgatello, SDB, ed. Vol. XI. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 1964) 70-72. Print.

STATUTES

*«You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you,
and have appointed you that you should go and
bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.»*

(Jn. 15:16)

Chap. I

THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR, IN THE SALESIAN FAMILY AND IN THE WORLD

Art. 1 The Founder: a Man Sent by God

To contribute to the salvation of youth, “the most delicate and most precious portion of human society,”³ the Holy Spirit, through the maternal intervention of Mary, raised up St. John Bosco, who founded the Society of St. Francis de Sales (1859) and, together with Saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (1872). He extended the apostolic energy of the Salesian charism by officially setting up the “Pious Union of Salesian Cooperators,” the third branch of the Family (1876), united to the Society of St. Francis de Sales (also called the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco or the Salesian Congregation).

The Holy Spirit formed the heart of a father and teacher in St. John Bosco, one capable of total dedication, inspiring him with an educational method permeated by the charity of the Good Shepherd.

Art. 2 Salesian Cooperators: a Specific Vocation in the Church

§1. To commit oneself to be a Salesian Cooperator means to respond to the apostolic Salesian Vocation, gift of the Spirit, taking on a specific way of living the Gospel and participating in the mission of the Church. It is a free choice, defining one’s existence.

§2. Catholics of whatever cultural or social circumstance can follow this path. They feel called to live their faith life fully involved in each day’s concerns, characterized by two attitudes:

- a) knowing God as Father and the Love which saves; encountering in the Only-begotten Son Jesus Christ the perfect Apostle of the Father; living in intimacy with the Holy Spirit, Who animates the People of God in the world;

³Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, SDB. *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Diego Borgatello, SDB, ed. Vol. II. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 1966) 35. Print.
Ibid. Vol. VII. 171.

- b) feeling called and sent on a concrete mission: to contribute to the salvation of youth, committing themselves to Don Bosco's very mission to the young and to ordinary folk.⁴

Art. 3 One Vocation: Two Ways to Live It

§1. Don Bosco conceived the Association of Salesian Cooperators as being open both to the laity and to the secular clergy.

§2. Lay Salesian Cooperators carry out their apostolic commitment and live the Salesian spirit, with lay characteristics and sensitivities, in the ordinary situations of life and of work.⁵

§3. Secular bishops, priests, and deacons who are Salesian Cooperators live their ministry taking inspiration from the pastoral charity of Don Bosco, whose priestly life is a model of one which gives pride of place to working with commitment in behalf of young people and in places where ordinary folk work and live.

Art. 4 The Association in the Church

§1. The Association of Salesian Cooperators⁶ is approved by the Apostolic See⁶ as a public Association of the Faithful and shares in the spiritual patrimony of the Society of St. Francis de Sales.

The members actively collaborate in its mission, in the name of the Church, under the authority of the Rector Major as Don Bosco's Successor, in a spirit of fidelity to its Pastors and in collaboration with other ecclesial forces.

§2. Salesian Cooperators manifest a filial devotion to the Supreme Pontiff.

§3. The Association of Salesian Cooperators is recognized as a public ecclesiastical juridical person⁷. It has its headquarters in Rome.

Art. 5 The Association in the Salesian Family

The Association of Salesian Cooperators is one of the Groups of the Salesian Family. Together with the Society of St. Francis de Sales, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary

⁴Giovanni Bosco. *Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way of Contributing to Public Morality and to the Good of Society*. Trans. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco. 42-49. Art. IV. Web. 30 Nov. 2013. <http://cooperatori.sdb.org/cooperatori/files/regvitaaping.pdf>

⁵Canon Law Society of America. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*. (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1983) can. 278. Print.

⁶Pius IX. "Cum Sicuti." *Memorie Biografiche del Beato Giovanni Bosco*. Eugenio Ceria, SDB. Vol. XI. (Torino: Pia Società Salesiana, 1930) 546-547. Print. (found in Italian version only).

John Paul II, RVA (5/9/1986), Prot.n.T9-1/1986 – Benedict XVI, PVA *ad experimentum* (3/15/2007), Prot.n.T9-1/2006 – Francis, Definitive PVA (4/29/2013)

⁷*Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*. Can. 313.

Help of Christians, and other officially-recognized Groups⁸, it is a bearer of the common Salesian Vocation and shares responsibility for the vitality of Don Bosco's project in the Church and in the world.

The Association brings to the Salesian Family those values which are specific to the secular state, respecting the identity and autonomy proper to each group. It lives a particular relationship of communion with the Society of St. Francis de Sales which, by the will of the Founder, has a specific role of responsibility within the Family.

Art. 6 Salesian Cooperators: Salesians in the World

Salesian Cooperators live out their faith in their own secular reality. Taking inspiration from Don Bosco's apostolic project, they have a strong sense of communion with the other members of the Salesian Family. They commit themselves to the same mission to youth and to ordinary folk in a fraternal and united way. They work for the good of the Church and of society in a manner adapted to the educational needs of their territory and to their own concrete possibilities.⁹

⁸Superior Council of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco. "Guidelines Adopted by the Superior Council for Acceptance into the Salesian Family." Trans. *Acts of the General Council*. 304.2 (1982): 61-65. Print.

⁹Pascual Chavez, SDB. *Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco (Salesian Family Charter)*. Trans. (Rome: Tipografia Vaticana, 2012) 25-26. Print.

«You are the salt of the earth... You are
the light of the world... let your light shine
before men, in order that they may see
your good works and give glory
to your Father in Heaven.»
(Mt. 5:13-16)

Chap. II

THE APOSTOLIC COMMITMENT OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 7 The Witness of the Beatitudes

The lifestyle of a Salesian Cooperator, marked by the spirit of the Beatitudes, commits him or her to the evangelization of culture and of social life.¹⁰ For this reason the Cooperator, being rooted in Christ and aware that all baptized people are called to the perfection of love, lives and gives witness to:

- a life lived according to the Spirit, as the source of joy, peace, and forgiveness;
- freedom, in obedience to God's plan, appreciating the value and autonomy proper to secular realities, committing themselves to direct these, above all, to the service of persons;
- Gospel poverty, administering the goods entrusted to them using the criteria of temperance and of sharing, in view of the common good;
- a sexuality according to a Gospel vision of chastity, marked by delicacy and a joyful married or celibate life, lived with integrity and based on love;
- that mercy which opens one's heart to all material and moral miseries and urges one to work with pastoral charity;
- justice to build a more fraternal world that recognizes and promotes the rights of all, especially of the weakest;
- a firm will to be a builder of peace in a world agitated by violence and class hatred.

This way of love for God and for others is a sure path towards sanctity.

¹⁰John Paul II. *Christifideles Laici*. Par. 16. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html

Vatican Council II. *Gaudium et Spes*. Par. 72. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

Art. 8 Apostolic Commitment

§1. Salesian Cooperators carry out their apostolate, first of all, through their daily tasks. They follow Jesus Christ, the perfect Man, sent by the Father to serve the people of the world. This is why they are committed to putting into practice the Gospel ideal of love for God and for one's neighbor in the ordinary circumstances of life.¹¹

§2. Animated by the Salesian spirit, they give special attention to young people, especially to those who are poorest or victims of any kind of marginalization, exploitation, or violence; to those setting out in the world of work; and to those who show signs of a specific Vocation.

§3. They foster and defend the value of the family¹² - the foundational nucleus of society and of the Church - and are committed to construct it as "a domestic Church"¹³. Married Salesian Cooperators live their mission through their marriage as "co-operators with the love of God the Creator"¹⁴ and as "the first and chief educators of their children,"¹⁵ according to the pedagogy of goodness proper to the Preventive System.

§4. They are attentive to the Social Justice Doctrines of the Church and to social communications so as to foster educational journeys to grow in these areas.

§5. They support the Church's missionary activity and commit themselves to educate to a global perspective as an opening to dialogue among cultures.

Art. 9 Task of Christian Education

§1. Salesian Cooperators, like Don Bosco, bring the task of educating and evangelizing¹⁶ everywhere, in order to form "honest citizens, good Christians, and blessed inhabitants of Heaven,"¹⁷ who know that they are always on the journey to a greater human and Christian maturity.

§2. They share with the young their enthusiasm for living with authenticity the values of truth, freedom, justice, the sense of the common good, and of service.

¹¹*Gaudium et Spes*. Par. 45.

¹²*Christifideles Laici*. Par. 40.

¹³Vatican Council II. *Lumen Gentium*. Par. 11. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html

¹⁴*Gaudium et Spes*. Par. 50.

¹⁵Vatican Council II. *Gravissimum Educationis*. Par. 3. Trans. The Holy See n.d. Web 1 May 2014. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_gravissimum-educationis_en.html

¹⁶Egidio Viganò, SDB. "The Salesian Educational Project." Trans. Acts of the General Council. 290.3 (1978) 27-39. Print.

¹⁷*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Introduction: "To the Reader".

§3. They educate the young to encounter the Risen Christ – in our Faith and in the Sacraments – so they may find in Him the meaning of their life so as to grow as “new men and new women”.

§4. They are committed to helping the young develop a life plan which will give witness to their Christian and Salesian presence in the Church and in society.

Art. 10 The Pedagogy of Goodness

In their educational task, Salesian Cooperators:

§1. put into practice Don Bosco’s “Preventive System,” a spiritual and educative experience which is based on reason, religion, and loving-kindness¹⁸

§2. foster a family environment in which constant dialogue, an animating presence, personal accompaniment, and group experience help all perceive God’s presence;

§3. promote the good and educate to a love for life, to responsibility, solidarity, sharing, synergy, and communion;

§4. appeal to a person’s inner resources and believe in the invisible action of grace. They look at each young person with realistic optimism, convinced of the educational value of the faith experience. Their relationship with the young is inspired by a mature and welcoming love.

Art. 11 Typical Activities

Salesian Cooperators are open to varied forms of apostolate. Among these they give a privileged place to family life, besides their own work and their life in the Association¹⁹:

- Christian catechesis and formation;
- animation of youth and family groups and movements;
- collaboration in educational and scholastic institutions;
- social service among the poor;
- work in social communications;
- cooperation in pastoral ministry for Vocations;
- missionary work;
- collaboration in ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue;
- witness to their own faith in socio-political service;
- the development of the Association.

¹⁸Giovanni Bosco. *The Preventive System in the Education of the Young*. Trans. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco. 50-54. n.d. Web. 30 Nov. 2013. www.sdb.org.hk/cp/p01/p01c05/p01c05012.doc.
Pietro Braido, SDB. “Il Sistema Preventivo in un ‘Decalogo’ per educatori.” *Ricerche Storiche Salesiane*. 4.1 (1985) 131-148. Print. (available in Italian only)

¹⁹*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. IV, 1.
Lumen Gentium. Par. 35.
United States Catholic Conference, Inc. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994) nos. 904-906. Print.
Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way... Art. IV, 2-5

Art. 12 Structures and Ways in Which They Work

§1. Salesian Cooperators participate in the mission of the Association in the Church and reinforce it with their own commitment and by involving other persons.

§2. Normally, the activities of Salesian Cooperators take place, in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation, in structures where secular circumstances offer them greater possibilities of meaningful involvement: civic, cultural, socio-economic, political, ecclesial, and Salesian.²⁰

§3. Salesian Cooperators can carry out their apostolic commitment in works run autonomously by the Association and in initiatives which respond to the most pressing needs of their locality.

²⁰Eugenio Ceria, SDB. *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Trans. Vincent Zuliani, SDB. Vol. XVII. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 2002) 10-11. Print.
Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition. Can. 305.
Christifideles Laici. Par. 42.

«And what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, these things practice. And the God of peace will be with you.»
(Phil. 4:9)

Chap. III

THE SALESIAN SPIRIT OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 13 Precious Heritage

Guided by the Holy Spirit, Don Bosco lived and passed down to the members of his Family an original style of life and action: the Salesian spirit²¹.

The Salesian spirit is a quintessential Gospel experience, whose source is in the very heart of Christ, who urges those who live it to become gift and to give service. It is nourished by the carrying out of apostolic charity, the principal interior dynamic which unites passion for God and passion for neighbor. It is manifested in a Sacramental spirituality, which is made actual by living daily life with joy and optimism and in responsible service within the ecclesial community and civic society. It requires a demanding “ascetical method” expressed through a serene and joyous countenance, in keeping with Don Bosco’s urging: “work and temperance.”²²

Art. 14 Experience of a Committed Faith

§1. The Salesian Cooperator welcomes the Salesian spirit as a gift of the Lord to the Church and makes it fruitful according to his or her own lay or ministerial condition. He or she takes part in the charismatic experience of Don Bosco and commits him or herself to promote Salesian humanism so as to create reasons for hope and future prospects for both the person and for society.²³

§2. By living Salesian spirituality, he or she fosters a “practical” experience of ecclesial communion.

§3. The Salesian Cooperator entrusts him or herself to the Immaculate Virgin and Help of Christians, for She is the guide of one’s apostolic Vocation: to be a true “co-operator

²¹ *Salesian Family Charter*. 37.

²² *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Vol. XII, 338.
Ibid. XIV, 89.
Ibid. XV, 148.

²³ *Salesian Family Charter*. 15-17.

of God”²⁴ in making His plan of salvation real. He or she asks Mary, the Help of Christians and Mother of the Good Shepherd, for the help and strength necessary for his or her own salvation and for that of the young. The daily entrustment to Mary characterizes Salesian spirituality.

Art. 15 Centrality of Apostolic Love

§1. The heart of the Salesian spirit is apostolic and pastoral charity. This makes the mercy of the Father, the salvific love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit present among the young. Don Bosco expressed this with his motto: “*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle.*” He signified it in the name “Salesians,” by choosing St. Francis de Sales²⁵ model of Christian humanism, of apostolic dedication, and of amiability, and promoter of lay spirituality, as his patron.

§2. This charity is, for Salesian Cooperators, a gift of God, which unites them to Him and to the young. Further, it takes its inspiration from the maternal solicitude of Mary, who supports and sustains them in their daily witness.

Art. 16 Salesian Presence in the World

§1. Salesian Cooperators know they are “in intimate solidarity”²⁶ with the society in which they live and for which they are called to be light, salt, and leaven. They believe in the interior resources of the person. They share the values of their own culture and they commit themselves to work so that it may be guided by Christian humanism. They promote new realities with a critical Christian sense. They integrate into their life “all that which is good,”²⁷ adopting a listening stance, especially as regards the young, in discerning the signs of the times.

§2. Faced with socio-cultural challenges²⁸ and difficulties, they adopt a critical and constructive attitude. They work with commitment to spread a Christian culture and ethic of welcome and solidarity in society.

Art. 17 Style of Action

Salesian Cooperators live as “good Christians and honest citizens,”²⁹ sanctifying their existence in everyday life and rooting their action in union with God. They believe in the value of life, of giving freely without seeking return, of fraternity, and of “being

²⁴I Cor. 3:9

²⁵*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. V, 8.
Francis de Sales. *On the Love of God*. Trans. John K. Ryan. 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963). Print.

²⁶*Gaudium et Spes*. Par. 1.

²⁷I Thess. 5:21

²⁸*Gaudium et Spes*. Paragraphs 4 and 11.

²⁹*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Introduction: “To the Reader”.

neighbor.” They cultivate those attitudes which foster education to the joys of daily life and they communicate this to others.

Art. 18 Style of Relationships

Salesian Cooperators, taking their inspiration from the Preventive System of Don Bosco, practice loving-kindness³⁰ in their relationships as a sign of the love of God and as a means to re-awaken His presence in the heart of all those whom they meet. They are always ready to “take the first step” and to welcome others with goodness, respect, and patience. They tend to establish rapports of trust and friendship so as to create a family atmosphere of simplicity and affection. They are peace workers and seek clarification, consensus, and accord in and through dialogue.

Art. 19 Style of Prayer

§1. Salesian Cooperators are convinced that they can do nothing³¹ if they are not in union with Jesus Christ. They invoke the Holy Spirit Who enlightens them and gives them strength day by day. Their prayer, rooted in God’s Word, is simple and trusting, joyous and creative, permeated with apostolic ardor, holding tight to life and extending into it. So as to nourish their prayer life, Salesian Cooperators have recourse to the spiritual resources offered by the Church, by the Association, and by the Salesian Family. They participate actively in the liturgy and value the forms of popular piety which enrich their spiritual life.

§2. They reinvigorate their faith through the Sacraments. They find nourishment in the Eucharist for their apostolic charity. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation they encounter the Mercy of the Father, Who impresses upon their life a dynamic and continuous conversion and makes them grow in their capacity to forgive.

§3. They reinforce their interior and apostolic life with spirituality moments, including those offered by the Association.

Art. 20 In Communion with Mary, Help of Christians, and our Saints

§1. Salesian Cooperators, like Don Bosco, nurture a filial love for Mary Help of Christians, the Mother of the Church and of humanity.³² She cooperated in the salvific mission of the Savior and continues to do so also today, as Mother and Helper of the People of God. She is the special guide of the Salesian Family. Don Bosco entrusted the Salesian Cooperators to Her so that they might receive protection and inspiration in their mission.

³⁰Pietro Braido, SDB. “I molti volti dell’amorevolezza.” *Rivista di Scienza dell’educazione*. 37.1 (1999) 17-46. Print. (available in Italian only)

³¹Jn. 15:5.

Vatican Council II. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*. Par. 4. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html

³²*Salesian Family Charter*. 53-55.

§2. They turn with particular affection to St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church. They have trustful recourse to the intercession of St. John Bosco, “Father and Teacher”³³ of the young and of all the Salesian Family.

§3. Among the models of apostolic life, they venerate, with predilection, St. Francis de Sales, St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello, Alexandrina da Costa, Mamma Margaret, and all the other Saints, Blesseds, and Venerables of the Salesian Family. Knowledge of their lives is a font of inspiration and prayer.

³³John Paul II. *Juvenum Patris*. Trans. Direzione Opere Don Bosco. Par. 1. n.d. Web. 1 May 2014. www.sdb.org/ENG/doc/JuvenumPatris-eng.doc

*«...walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called,
with all humility and meekness, with patience,
bearing with one another in love, careful to preserve
the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...»
(Eph. 4:1-3).*

Chap. IV

THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR IN COMMUNION AND COLLABORATION

Art. 21 Brothers and Sisters in Don Bosco

Their common apostolic Vocation and membership in the same Association makes Salesian Cooperators spiritual brothers and sisters. Indeed, “united with one heart and one soul alone”³⁴ they live their communion with those bonds characteristic of Don Bosco’s spirit.

They joyously take part in the “family life” of the Association through getting to know each other, growing together, exchanging faith experiences, and working on apostolic projects.

They foster the associative life by welcoming each other reciprocally.³⁵

Art. 22 Co-responsible in the Mission

§1. The Salesian Cooperator feels responsible for the common mission and carries it out according to his or her own conditions in life, competencies, and possibilities, giving it valuable and substantial support. He or she shares educative and evangelizing co-responsibility in the Association. Each Cooperator must participate in the meetings for programming and evaluating the various activities and in choosing those who will undertake specific responsibilities.

If called to take on particular responsibilities, he or she commits him or herself to carry them out with fidelity and in a spirit of service.

§2. With responsibility and a sense of belonging, every Salesian Cooperator supports the economic autonomy of the Association so that it can carry out its mission.³⁶

³⁴*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. I.

³⁵*Ibid.* Articles V, 7 and VII, 4-5.

³⁶*Salesian Family Charter.* 20-21.

Art. 23 Participation in and Ties with the Groups of the Salesian Family

§1. In fidelity to Don Bosco's vision that "weak forces, when united, become strong, and if one cord taken by itself is easily broken, it is rather difficult to break three united,"³⁷ Salesian Cooperators care for the communion and the collaboration with the other Groups of the Salesian Family. They do this by means of reciprocal knowledge and information, reciprocal spiritual and formative help, and involvement in common apostolic tasks, with respect for the identity and autonomy of each Group.³⁸

§2. Participation on the Salesian Family Consulta/Commission³⁹ at the different levels and the link with the pastoral structures of the Church and civic institutions foster the common search for new initiatives. The Salesian mission promotes and gives witness to the rich spiritual and apostolic inheritance it has received.

§3. Salesian Cooperators feel close to all the Groups belonging to the Salesian Family because they are all heirs of the Salesian charism and spirit.

They are open to and foster every form of collaboration, especially with lay groups, respecting the identity and autonomy of each one.

Art. 24 The Ministry of the Rector Major

§1. The Rector Major of the Society of St. Francis de Sales is the successor of Don Bosco.⁴⁰ Through the explicit will of the Founder, he is the Superior of the Association and carries out the function of Supreme Moderator within it. He guarantees its fidelity to the Founder's Plan and promotes its growth.

§2. In his ministry, exercised also through his Vicar or the World Coordinator, he normally avails himself of the World Council and the World Executive Secretary (the SEM), above all, to animate the entire Association and to coordinate the various formative and apostolic initiatives.

§3. The members of the Association nourish sentiments of sincere affection for the Rector Major and of fidelity to his guidelines.

Art. 25 Particular Bonds with the Society of St. Francis de Sales and with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

The Association of Salesian Cooperators has a "bond of stable and secure union"⁴¹ with the Society of St. Francis de Sales and particular charismatic ties with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

³⁷*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. I.
Eccles. 4:12.

³⁸*Ibid.* Art. VI, 1-2.

³⁹Salesian Family Charter. 66-67.

⁴⁰*Ibid.* 23.
Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way... Art. V, 3.

⁴¹*Ibid.* Art. II.

Every Salesian Community (SDB and FMA), at both the Provincial and Local levels, feels involved, as Don Bosco wished, in the task of “supporting and increasing” the Association, of contributing to the formation of its members, and of making known and promoting their *Project of Apostolic Life*.⁴²

Art. 26 The Apostolic Service of the Delegates

§1. Within the Association, the Delegates, of whatever level, take part by right and with active voice on the respective Council, assure the “bond of secure and stable union” with the Salesian spirit, and share the charismatic and spiritual experience of the Founder.

In creative fidelity to Don Bosco, they are committed to offering their own specific contribution, even through participation in the collegial decision-making tasks of the Association.

§2. They motivate the Councils in their responsibilities and advocate for organizational autonomy in charismatic communion with the Society of St. Francis de Sales and with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.⁴³

§3. They offer the service of being a spiritual, educational, and pastoral guide to support a more efficacious apostolate of the Salesian Cooperators in their area.

⁴²Salesian Society of St. Francis de Sales. *Constitutions and Regulations of the Society of St. Francis de Sales*. Regulations, art. 38. Trans. (Rome: Esse Gi Esse, 1984) 154-155. Print.

⁴³*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. V, 5.

«May the Lord make you to increase and abound in charity towards one another, and towards all men just as we do towards you, that He may strengthen your hearts, blameless in holiness before God our Father.»
(I Thess. 3:12-13)

Chap. V

MEMBERSHIP AND FORMATION OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 27 Entrance into the Association

§1. The commitment to become a Salesian Cooperator demands a personal, free, gradual, and motivated choice which matured under the action of the Holy Spirit and the accompaniment of those who have this responsibility.

The person who desires to become part of the Association accepts a formation process, which must cover the fundamental points of the *Project of Apostolic Life* and which takes into account the Aspirant's personal experience. In this way, a proper institutional formation is guaranteed while still being personalized. This personal plan of formation will be adapted by those who are responsible to carry out this role in the Association.

§2. When the Aspirant has reached a sufficient assimilation of the Salesian charism, as recognized by those who are in the position of responsibility in the Local Center, he or she shall present a request for admission. The Aspirant must have reached legal age.

§3. Membership in the Association begins with the pronouncement of the personal Apostolic Promise, by which the Aspirant expresses his or her will to live his/her Baptismal commitments in the light of the *Project of Apostolic Life*.

Art. 28 The Value of Membership

§1. Salesian Cooperators are aware that membership in the Association nourishes their faith experience and that of ecclesial communion. It represents, moreover, a vital element in support of one's own apostolic Vocation.

§2. Membership demands concrete signs which are expressed both in an active participation in the life of the Association and in a fitting demeanor on the part of the member in his/her daily and professional life.

Art. 29 Responsibilities and Initiatives as Regard Formation

§1. Salesian Cooperators are the first ones responsible for their own human, Christian, Salesian, and professional formation.

§2. The Association promotes and supports personal and group formation through the action of qualified Salesian Cooperators, Delegates, and other members of the Salesian Family.

Art. 30 Fidelity to Commitments Assumed

§1. With the *Apostolic Promise*, the Salesian Cooperator responds to a Vocation which lasts his or her entire life. He or she expresses it in daily life through witness, the apostolate, and various forms of service. He or she places self at the service of the mission of the Church with availability, living the Salesian charism with authenticity. He or she collaborates with commitment in initiatives that are promoted by other ecclesial, religious, and civic organizations. Each one's fidelity is supported by the affection and solidarity of the other members of the Association and of the Salesian Family.

§2. In order to reinforce the value of belonging to the Association – and through this, to the Salesian Family as a whole – membership commitments assumed with the making of the *Apostolic Promise* are renewed according to those modalities which are most opportune, as established by the *Regulations*.

Art. 31 Leaving the Association

§1. The Salesian Cooperator who, through personal choice, intends to cease to be part of the Association will communicate this to the Local Council with a written declaration. The Local Council will send a copy of the declaration to the Provincial Council.

§2. The decision to dismiss one of its members from the Association for grave reasons, must be taken by the Provincial Council, at the justified request of the Local Council, in the spirit of charity and of clarity, after having verified a lifestyle which is incongruous with the fundamental duties expressed in the *Project of Apostolic Life*. This decision shall be communicated to the interested party in writing.

Art. 32 Meaning and Formula of the Apostolic Promise

§1. The meaning and purpose of the *Promise* is to express the Aspirant's will to live his or her Baptism according to the *Project of Apostolic Life*. Don Bosco himself proposed the *Promise* as an apostolic expression of the Salesian Vocation in society.

§2. The *Promise*⁴⁴

“O Father, I adore You because You are good and love everyone.

I thank You for having created and redeemed me,

*and for having called me to become part
of Your Church*

and for having me come to know in Her

the apostolic Family of Don Bosco,

*which lives for You at the service of the young
and of ordinary folk.*

*Drawn by Your merciful Love,
I wish to love You in return by doing good.*

For this reason,

I PROMISE

to live out the Project of Apostolic Life of the Association of Salesian Cooperators with commitment (as a Priest). That is:

- to be a faithful disciple of Christ in the Catholic Church;*
- to work in Your Kingdom, especially for the advancement and salvation of the young;*
- to deepen and give witness to the Salesian spirit;*
- to collaborate, in Family communion, in the apostolic initiatives of the local Church.*

*Give me, O Father, the strength of Your Spirit,
so that I might know how to be a faithful witness
to these commitments.*

May Mary, Help of Christians, Mother of the Church, assist me and guide me in this life choice. Amen.”

⁴⁴The present formula may be adapted according to the differing situations, as long as the contents are respected. When the *Promise* is renewed, say: “I renew the promise to...”

*«According to the gift that each one
has received, administer it to one another
as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.»
(I Pt. 4:10)*

Chap. VI

ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Art. 33 The Reasons for This Organization

Salesian Cooperators, called to live their apostolic Vocation in society and in the Church, have an appropriate organizational structure. The Association of which they are part is the means to live out mission and communion according to this *Project of Apostolic Life*.

Art. 34 Flexible Organization

Faithful to the will of the Founder, the Association has a flexible and functional structure, established on three levels of government: Local, Provincial, and World.

The efficacy of the Association's action in its area, and its openness to the universality of communion and of mission, are assured through this structure of organization.

Art. 35 Governance and Animation at the Local, Provincial, and World Levels

With the authority of the Rector Major safeguarded, and represented normally by his Vicar, or by a delegate named by him, the governance and animation of the Association is entrusted to its own Local, Provincial, and World Councils, which also include the presence of Religious members nominated by their respective SDB or FMA Provincial for the Local and Provincial Councils, and by the Rector Major for the World Council. Legal representation of the Association is entrusted to the Coordinator of the respective Council.

Art. 36 The Local Level

§1. The fundamental nucleus of the Association is the Local Center. Ordinarily, it gathers together Salesian Cooperators who work within a specific territory. Every Center has a Delegate appointed by his or her respective Provincial. The Center is preferably established near a Salesian work – either of the Salesians of Don Bosco or of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

§2. The Local Centers are directed collegially by a Local Council which is elected by all the members comprising the Assembly of the Local Center. The Council elects from among its members a Local Coordinator and defines the specific roles of the Councilors. The Delegate is part of the Council and has an active voice.

§3. Men and women of good will, even if of a different Christian Confession, or of a different religion, and/or culture, who feel an affinity with the Salesian charism, can share in the initiatives of the Local Center and offer their collaboration as “Friends of Don Bosco.”

Art. 37 The Provincial Level

§1. Local Centers are organized into Provinces established by the Rector Major, subject to a proposal by the World Council.

§2. In consideration of the “bond of union” and of the charismatic ties among the Association of Salesian Cooperators and the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Association’s Provinces are related to the reality of the respective SDB or FMA Provinces.

§3. Every Province has a Provincial Council elected by the Local Councils *in sede* at the Provincial Congress according to the modalities foreseen in the Regulations of the Congress.

§4. The Provincial Council is organized collegially, electing a Provincial Coordinator from among its Council members. The Council itself defines the specific tasks of each of the Councilors. Every Provincial Council has an SDB and an FMA Delegate among its Councilors. These have an active voice and are named by the respective SDB and FMA Provincials.

§5. For the animation of the Association, the Provinces, with respect for the autonomy of their governance, are organized into Regions according to affinity of language, culture, and territory, by the decision of the Rector Major, with the agreement of the World Council. The SDB and FMA Provincials concerned, in common accord, name one SDB Regional Delegate and one FMA Regional Delegate.

Art. 38 The World Level

§1. The World Council is composed of:

- the World Coordinator, named directly by the Rector Major;
- the SDB World Delegate, named by the Rector Major, and the FMA World Delegate, named by the Rector Major on the proposal of the Mother General of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians;
- the World Councilors, elected by the respective Regional Congresses;
- the World Treasurer and World Secretary, elected – by secret ballot – by the Councilors themselves.

§2. The World Executive Secretary (SEM) is composed of the World Coordinator, the World Treasurer, the World Secretary, the SDB World Delegate, and the FMA World Delegate.

The SEM has the function of seeing to the ordinary acts of administration which do not require the convocation of the World Council. Within the World Council, it assumes the task of “Council for Economic Affairs” within the Association according to the terms of Canon 1280.

§3. The term of office for members of the World Council is six years.

§4. The directives of the World Council come into force upon the approval of the Rector Major.

Art. 39 The Administration of the Goods of the Association

§1. The Association of Salesian Cooperators, in that it is a public ecclesiastical juridical person, has the ability to acquire, possess, administer, and alienate temporal goods, according to the norms of the Law. The goods owned by the Association as such are ecclesiastical goods.⁴⁵

§2. The Rector Major, with the World Council, administers the goods of the Association at the World level and is the competent authority in granting to the Local and Provincial Councils the permissions needed to establish acts of extraordinary administration and alienation which do not require the intervention of the Apostolic See.⁴⁶

§3. The Councils, through a Treasurer chosen from within the Council, care for the management of the goods of the Association. The Treasurer also prepares the "Statement of Cash Flow" to present annually to the Council of the next higher level.

Art. 40 Final Dispositions

§1. The Association of Salesian Cooperators is governed by the present *Statutes*. Other norms are contained in the *Regulations* at the World level, or in the Handbooks at the various levels.

- The *Statutes* define the apostolic Vocation of the Salesian Cooperator: his or her identity, spirit, mission, and communion, and the principles of the organizational structure of the Association.
- The *Regulations* contain those practical points which specify and regulate its action, methodology, structure, and organization. It renders concrete the principles of the *Statutes*, to which it is subordinate, so they may be lived out in a practical manner.
- The *Handbooks* (formerly called *Directories*) list those particular dispositions of the Association to adapt the *Project of Apostolic Life* to the concrete functioning in the diverse territorial realities. They are approved by the respective Councils and ratified by the Councils of the immediate higher level, who must guarantee that the dispositions conform to the *Statutes* and the *Regulations*.

⁴³*Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*. Canons 1255 and 1257 §1.

⁴⁴*Ibid.* Can. 1292 §2.

§2. The present *Statutes* can be modified at the proposal of the Supreme Moderator, of the World Council, or of the Provincial Councils. The proposed modification must include a clear and detailed presentation of the motives which justify said modification, must define the concrete objectives which follow from it, and the principles on which it is articulated. It pertains to the Superior of the Association to evaluate and accept the proposed modification.

The process of modification will be defined by the World Council with the consent of the Rector Major.

The modification must be approved subsequently by an absolute majority from among the participants at the World Congress, by the Superior of the Association, and by the Apostolic See.

CONCLUSION

Art. 41 A Way to Sanctity

Salesian Cooperators choose to share the Gospel way traced out by the present *Project of Apostolic Life*.

They commit themselves in a responsible manner to this way which brings one to sanctity: the Association of the Cooperators “is designed to shake many Christians from the languor in which they lie, and to spread the energy of charity.”⁴⁷

The Lord accompanies with the abundance of His grace all those who work in the spirit of the “*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*,” doing good to youth and to ordinary folk.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Eugenio Ceria, SDB. *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Trans. Vincent Zuliani, SDB. Vol. XVIII. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 2003) 125. Print.

⁴⁸*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Introduction.

REGULATIONS

Introduction

The present *Regulations* complete the *Project of Apostolic Life* defined in the *Statutes* of the Association. They give directives and establish the conditions by which the principles expressed in the *Statutes* are put into practice.

Chap. I

THE APOSTOLIC COMMITMENT OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 1 Salesian Cooperators in the Church

§1. Salesian Cooperators integrate themselves in both the parish and the diocese with availability and in an attitude of service in the Salesian style. Called to a ministry by the Church, they carry it out as a means of support and development of the ecclesial pastoral⁴⁹.

They live their Baptismal vocation by taking on Don Bosco's Preventive System as the specific modality in which to express God's love, taking particular care of the young and of families.

§2. The Salesian Cooperators promote heartfelt acceptance of and adherence to the Magisterium of the Church. Their relationships with their parish priests, with other priests, with Religious, and with other laity are marked by esteem, solidarity, and active participation in pastoral plans, especially in those which focus on the young, families, and vocations.

Art. 2 Salesian Cooperators in Their Socio-Cultural Reality

§1. Salesian Cooperators make the educational solicitude of the Salesian charism their own in all areas of life. They are faithful to the Gospel and to the Social Justice Doctrines of the Church. They are attentive to the signs of the times; they continue God's creative work and give witness to Christ with integrity, hard work, and coherence of life; through the educative mission and serious, up-dated professionalism; through sharing joys and sufferings in faith; and by being available to give service in every circumstance.

⁴⁹John Paul II. *Christifideles Laici*. Par. 28. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html.

§2. Their aim is to form a mature critical conscience so as to participate responsibly in social life in the areas of culture, economy, and politics. They refuse all that which provokes and feeds injustice, oppression, marginalization, and violence, and they work courageously to remove their causes.

§3. They give attention to and value the ethical dimension of culture. They keep themselves constantly updated on the evolution of the means of social communication, above all because of the impact which these have on the formation of the young, of families, and of ordinary folk.

§4. They integrate themselves, according to their own capacities and possibilities, in cultural and sociopolitical structures and workers' unions so as to develop and achieve the common good. They work, in conformity with the Gospel demands of liberty and of justice, for respect for human rights and, consequently, for the renewal and the healing of mentalities and customs, and of the laws and the societal structures of the areas in which they live.

Art. 3 The Association in Civic and Ecclesial Realities

§1. The Association is attentive, with the thrust of the Preventive System, to the cries coming from society for the integral promotion of the human person and of fundamental human rights.

§2. The Association intervenes courageously, according to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church⁵⁰ to promote a sociopolitical culture inspired by the Gospel and to defend human and Christian values. It illumines and urges its members to assume their own commitments in society with responsibility.

Salesian Cooperators make themselves present and bring with them the unique characteristics of the Salesian charism to Associations, Apostolic Movements and groups, educational agencies, and to organizations which have service to youth and to the family as their objective, and which promote justice, peace, and solidarity with peoples on the path of development.

§3. The Association follows social volunteering with particular attention. It adheres to formative proposals and participates in the initiatives of organizations of Christian inspiration.

§4. The Association commits itself to foster intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

Art. 4 Structures in Which They Work

Salesian Cooperators promote the launching and functioning of works of the Association, becoming active in the areas in which they live; in a particular way:

- in civic, cultural, intercultural, socioeconomic, and political arenas: paying attention to the education of the young, human rights, and the life of the family;

⁵⁰Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, SDB. *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. Diego Borgatello, SDB, ed. Vol. V. (New Rochelle: Salesiana Publishers, 1969) 380. Print.

- in ecclesial environments: offering their personal collaboration, in synergy and with responsibility, to their bishops and parish priests, especially in the parish communities and in the animating bodies of the diocese;
- in places animated by the Salesian Society, by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, or by other Groups of the Salesian Family;
- in works run by other Religious Communities and ecclesial movements.

Art. 5 Works Run Directly by the Association or by Members of the Association

§1. Salesian Cooperators can live out their apostolic commitment in works run either directly by the Association or by its members. Such works must express the Salesian spirit and charism, in both their characteristics and goals, according to what is defined in the respective statutes.

§2. The responsibility for running the work will rest directly with the Local Center if it is a work promoted by the Association, or with those members who have undertaken its administration, without involving, in such a case, any responsibility on the part of the higher levels of the same Association.

The Association can take the steps necessary to be recognized as a civic nonprofit organization in those places in which they consider it opportune.

Chap. II

SALESIAN COOPERATORS IN COMMUNION AND COLLABORATION

Art. 6 Family Spirit

§1. To make the sense of belonging to the Association grow, Salesian Cooperators support each other through the sharing of spiritual goods.

§2. They show their human and Christian solidarity in a concrete way to those Salesian Cooperators who are ill and in difficulty, accompanying them also with their affection and their prayer.

§3. In communion with the deceased Salesian Cooperators and benefactors, and grateful for their witness, they continue their mission with fidelity. They pray for them, in particular, in the celebration of the Mass in memory of Mamma Margaret.

§4. In fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church, and to Her pastoral guidelines concerning family issues, the Association gives attention to those members who are undergoing the consequences of separation and/or divorce. The Association accompanies them along this difficult life and faith journey which they are traveling. Such an attitude will be met with a similar one on the part of the member, with the commitment to live one's present condition trusting in the infinite mercy of the Father, and maintaining a tenor of life which is coherent with the commitments assumed with the *Promise*.

§5. In keeping with the Family Spirit, the Association shows itself open to Religious of the Salesian Family who have legitimately left their Institute, and who feel themselves forever tied to the spirit of Don Bosco.

For these persons, official entrance into the Association requires accepting the *Project of Apostolic Life*. If the person requests it, he or she agrees with the Delegate on a formative itinerary. He/she will also decide as to the manner of the making of the Promise, whether it will be public or private.

Art. 7 Co-Responsibility in Acting

So that co-responsibility in the mission translates into co-responsibility in acting:

§1. those who are entrusted with leadership roles within the Association, at whatever level, carry out said roles in a spirit of service, according to the principles of communion, co-responsibility, synergy, and cooperation;

§2. given their diverse situations and commitments, Salesian Cooperators offer their witness by participating in various ways in the life of the Association:

- the young, bearers of dynamism, contribute to the common mission with their sensitivity and their creative capacity;
- the adults and the elderly, with their mature experience and long fidelity, bring with them the witness of a life rooted in Christ and lived in temporal realities:

- in the family, through their commitment in the areas of their own work and of culture, and in their exercise of social, economic, and political responsibilities;
- those for whom for it is impossible to carry out an active apostolate give strength to the educative action and to the apostolate of all the others through the offering of their suffering and their prayer;
 - the members of the diocesan clergy who are Salesian Cooperators offer the service of their own ministry.

Art. 8 Economic Solidarity

§1. The sense of belonging and of co-responsibility also involves the economic aspect of the Association. For its functioning and for the actualization of the mission at the Local, Provincial, and World levels, the Salesian Cooperators support the Association with free and generous contributions, as Don Bosco wished: "The Cooperators have no monetary obligation whatever, but they will make monthly, or annually, that oblation which the charity of their hearts will tell them."⁵¹

§2. The Association participates in economic solidarity also through the offerings which it sends to the Rector Major. With such offerings and the help of benefactors, it supports the worldwide needs of the Association, missionary initiatives, and other projects tied to the Salesian mission.

§3. The Association, through the World Council, elaborates an annual plan of economic solidarity based on animation needs for the development of the entire Association.

Art. 9 Particular Bonds with the Society of St. Francis de Sales and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

§1. Relations with the SDB confreres and the FMA Sisters⁵² develop in a climate of reciprocal trust. The animation of the Centers which are established at Salesian works involves the Delegates, in particular, their respective Provincial, and the Local Religious Community. These have the task of contributing in various ways to the formation of the members so that they might promote and give witness to the Salesian charism, above all in the lay environment.

§2. The SDB and FMA Provincials, with the collaboration of the Animators and Directors, guarantee unity in communion and in the mission. They commit themselves to promote the spiritual growth of the Centers and to involve the Religious Communities in witnessing to the values of sanctity and in the generous service of animation.

⁵¹Giovanni Bosco. *Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way of Contributing to Public Morality and to the Good of Society*. Trans. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco. 42-49. Art. VI, 3. Web. 30 Nov. 2013. <http://cooperatori.sdb.org/cooperatori/files/regvitaaping.pdf>.

⁵²Superior Council of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco. "Agreed Policy of the Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians for the Animation of the Cooperators." Trans. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco. 37-41. Web. 30 Nov. 2013. <http://cooperatori.sdb.org/cooperatori/files/regvitaaping.pdf>.

Art. 10 Ties with the Groups of the Salesian Family

§1. The Salesian Cooperators, recognizing the common spirituality and mission which unite them to the other Groups of the Salesian Family⁵³ work in solidarity and in synergy in confronting the pastoral challenges of the Salesian mission.

The ties with the Groups of the Salesian Family are expressed particularly in apostolic co-responsibility. This requires, in some cases, the mutual commitment to carry out common objectives, to share educational concerns, and to make the Preventive System known.

Each and every Salesian Cooperator is personally responsible for animating and promoting the spiritual inheritance received.

§2. In order to realize this communion with the Groups of the Salesian Family in a concrete way, the Salesian Cooperators are called to participate actively in encounters and celebrations; days of formation and of updating; moments of animation, friendship, and familiarity; and days of prayer, retreats, and spiritual exercises.

§3. They are particularly open to collaboration with the Salesian Lay Associations while respecting their diverse identities.

⁵³Pascual Chavez, SDB. *Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco (Salesian Family Charter)*. Trans. (Rome: Tipografia Vaticana, 2012) 45-47. Print.

Chap. III

THE SALESIAN SPIRIT OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 11 Style of Action

§1. Don Bosco was a practical and enterprising man, an untiring and creative worker, animated by an uninterrupted and profound interior life. Faithful to his spirit and attentive to reality, Salesian Cooperators have a sense of the concrete. They discern the signs of the times and with a spirit of initiative push themselves to give appropriate responses to the needs of the youth in their territory and in society. They are constantly ready to verify and to re-adapt their response.

§2. They accompany their action with an attitude of contemplation, which urges them to seek and to recognize the mystery of God's presence in everyday life and the face of Christ in their brothers and sisters. Moreover, sustained by the Spirit, they confront with serenity the difficulties of life and the joys and the sufferings which accompany their apostolic work.

Art. 12 Spiritual Life

§1. Salesian Cooperators nourish their interior life through daily dialogue with the Lord, participation in the Sacraments, and with *Lectio Divina*.

§2. They celebrate the traditional Salesian Feast Days.

§3. If they have the possibility, they also participate in the spiritual exercises, retreats, and other initiatives proposed by the Association.⁵⁴

§4. They value spiritual guidance as accompaniment, exercised particularly by Salesians (both Religious – FMA and SDB – and lay).

§5. The Association is open to all. In its planning, it will facilitate the participation of its own members and of those who feel one with the Salesian charism.

⁵⁴*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. VIII.

Chap. IV

MEMBERSHIP AND FORMATION OF THE SALESIAN COOPERATOR

Art. 13 Entrance into the Association

§1. The person who desires to enter into the Association matures his own choice freely and responsibly, by means of some fundamental steps: meeting with the group of Salesian Cooperators of a Local Center, sharing in their path of formation and participating in the initiatives promoted by it; sharing its spirit and mission, sustained by a progressive understanding, growth, and verification of his/her personal motivations.

§2. The person who desires to enter into the Association is welcomed by those in charge of the Local Center. He or She agrees with the one who is responsible for formation (the Delegate and/or the Formator) on a program adapted to his/her path of discernment and begins, as an Aspirant, this path of formation.

§3. After completing the process of formation in the Local Center, the Aspirant presents his/her written request to take part in the Association.

§4. The Local Council passes the request of the Aspirant on to the Provincial Council, accompanied by its own evaluation based on the Aspirant's knowledge of the charism of Don Bosco and of the contents of the PVA, the *Project of Apostolic Life*. The Provincial Council, on the basis of such evaluation, proceeds to the approval of the request.

§5. Entrance into the Association happens when the personal apostolic *Promise* is made. This apostolic *Promise* is a spiritual and ecclesial commitment which the Aspirant takes on through a free and knowledgeable choice. By means of it, he/she responds to the gift of the Lord and to his or her call to live this personal vocation according to the Salesian charism.

§6. The apostolic *Promise* is ordinarily made in the Local Center in the way indicated by the person himself and in keeping with the diverse contexts.

§7. In particular situations, where no juridically-established Local Center exists, one of the World Delegates will, in understanding with the Rector Major, give directions regarding the path of formation.

This directive is also valid for those persons who, because of logistical difficulties (of place or of time), are unable to be directed to a Local Center.

§8. The apostolic *Promise* may be received by the Rector Major, by the World Coordinator, by the Provincial Coordinator, by the Local Coordinator, or by someone delegated.

Art. 14 Sense of Belonging

§1. So that the sense of belonging to the Association may grow, and to nourish con-

stantly their own vocation, the Council of every Local Center commits itself annually to offer the possibility to the Salesian Cooperators to renew their apostolic *Promise*, preferably on the occasion of a Salesian Feast.

§2. A lapse in the renewal of the *Promise* lasting a period of three years, without a valid motive, accompanied by a distancing from the associative life, will commit the Local Council to verify this situation of detachment from the life of the Center.

§3. The Local Council has a fraternal responsibility to contact and accompany the Salesian Cooperator who has distanced him or herself, inviting said member to make a process of discernment regarding his/her situation of belonging to the Center.

§4. The Salesian Cooperators who are particularly involved in other apostolic realities or in volunteering give witness to their specific charism, spread the work of the Association, and enrich the Center by sharing their experiences.

Art. 15 Initial Formation Initiatives

§1. The process of formation accompanies the members along their entire life because the Lord always calls us through the continuous evolution of personal situations and of one's environment.

§2. To accompany the Aspirant's process of discernment, the Association promotes formative paths which are both structured and flexible, whether communal or personal. These include the study and the analysis of some formative themes as regard the human, Christian, ecclesial, and Salesian spheres, taken from:

- the Word of God
- the documents of the Church
- the life and work of Don Bosco
- the Preventive System of Don Bosco
- the *Project of Apostolic Life* of the Association
- the documents of the Rector Major
- the documents of the Association
- Salesian spirituality and sanctity
- the history and development of the charism of the Salesian Family
- the life and work of the Saints, the Blessed, and the Venerables of the Salesian Family

§3. An integral part of initial formation is an apostolic commitment and, ordinarily, participation in the life of the Center.

Art. 16 On-going Formation Initiatives

§1. Conscious of the importance of on-going formation, the Salesian Cooperators⁵⁵:

- develop their own human gifts, so that they might fulfill ever better their family, professional, and civic responsibilities;
- mature in their faith and in charity, growing in union with God, to render their life more Gospel-like and more Salesian;

⁵⁵*Salesian Family Charter*. 39-43.

- dedicate time to reflection and study to deepen Sacred Scripture, the Doctrines of the Church, their knowledge of Don Bosco, and Salesian documents.

§2. The formative initiatives are:

- periodic meetings, ordinarily held monthly, carried out according to the demands of life and of the apostolate of the members of the Center; and other forms of encounter, possibly open to the territory and to the civic society;
- intense moments of prayer and of discernment;
- contacts with the Groups of the Salesian Family at all levels;
- deepening of the documents of the Rector Major and of the publications of the Salesian Family, giving preferential attention to the *Salesian Bulletin*.

§3. Meetings and planning or verification initiatives which the Association promotes at various levels have great importance in the formative plan. Proposals of specific themes with other Groups of the Salesian Family are to be favored. Participation in such initiatives must be adequately prepared, and their fruits are to be shared with all the members of the Center.

§4. The Association commits itself to utilize the many means of social communication and the new technologies to collaborate in cultural dialogue, to foster the development of their critical capacity, and to elaborate and spread formative publications accessible in various ways to all.

Art. 17. Formation to the Service of Leadership

§1. The service of animation and of leadership in the Association is an apostolic one, by means of which the Association grows and matures in communion, in the spiritual life, and in the Salesian mission. It may be requested of any and all the Salesian Cooperators to offer their energies and abilities for a determinate amount of time in the service of animation and of leadership.

§2. The Salesian Cooperators welcome with availability the time of leadership service requested of them, live it with discernment and synergy, and deepen the specific formation which is necessary to qualify them for their task according to the established programs of the Association.

At the end of their period of service they give witness to their belonging with attitudes of simplicity and availability for the Association.

§3. The Salesian Cooperator who has a role of responsibility in the political sphere is invited to suspend temporarily his/her role as Coordinator of the Association at whatever level, in order to avoid any interference.

Chap. V

ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Art. 18 Local Centers and Their Coordination at the Provincial Level

§1. Ordinarily, Local Centers are comprised of a minimum number of six members who live and work in a determinate territory. They are organized at the Provincial level as soon as is possible, with a minimum number of three Centers.

§2. The establishment of a Center requires three steps: the consensus of the Provincial Council; the formal consent in writing by the Provincial concerned or by the diocesan Bishop by means of a juridical canonical act, if the Center should be outside of a Salesian work; the collegial act of the Provincial Council with the issuance of the "Establishment Decree" bearing the Provincial Coordinator's signature.

§3. In the event that there exists no possible reference to a Provincial Council for the establishment of a Local Center, recourse is made to the World Council with the prior consent of the SDB or FMA Provincial. This is so, in particular, in the following cases: when there is a lack of the minimum number of Centers; or in the formation of a group of persons interested in the Salesian charism and in the Association who frequent either a Salesian work or territory.

§4. Local Centers can organize themselves into groups of common interest and of specific commitment. Said groups are always followed and animated by the Local Council.

It is advisable that one member of such groups be part of the Council. Alternatively, it is hoped that a member of the Local Council will be in dialogue with the particular interest group so as to maintain the link with the Center.

§5. Members who live in a territory where no Local Center exists always remain linked with the one that is closest, which maintains contact with them and encourages their participation in its activities.

§6. The Association is open to the possibility of creating Centers of Salesian Cooperators wherever the Salesian mission calls for it.

§7. Those members who are involved in an apostolic and educational Salesian reality can open the way for the creation of a Salesian Cooperator Center which remains linked to that work.

Such Centers will commit themselves to propose a way for the laity involved in that Salesian work to draw near to the Association.

§8. Salesian Cooperators who, on account of a transfer, do not have the possibility of integration in the life of a Local Center can remain linked to the Local Center of origin if there is no other solution. The Local Council of said Center takes on the responsibility of maintaining contact with them, even through the modern technologies of communication.

§9. The SDB Provincial is recognized, both at the Provincial level and in the territory of reference, as the one who represents the Rector Major in the services of animation, of

charismatic guide, and of the promotion of the Salesian Family.

§10. In Centers established in connection with FMA Communities, the Rector Major, with the consent of Mother General, delegates the service of animation, of charismatic guide, and of the promotion of the Association of Salesian Cooperators to the FMA Provincial concerned.

§11. Whenever the decision is made to suppress a Salesian work (SDB or FMA) to which a Local Center of the Association was connected, the Local Center will commit itself to guarantee the continuity of the Salesian presence in the territory, working in strict understanding with the Local Church.

The Provincials will agree with those in charge of the Local Center on solutions to eventual logistical and organizational problems consequent to the suppression of the work. Moreover, they will commit themselves, as much as possible, to assure its necessary spiritual animation through the confirmation of a Delegate, and, eventually, through the canonical establishment of a new Center.

§12. When Local Centers are established in connection with neighboring SDB and FMA works, it is opportune that relationships of communion and of collaboration be established proper to those who recognize that they have the same mission and the same spirit in common, while respecting the autonomy of each Center.

Art. 19 The Local Council

§1. At the Local level, the Association is directed collegially by a Local Council. It is composed of both a convenient number of members – ordinarily from three to seven – elected by the Salesian Cooperators from the Local Center and the SDB or FMA Delegate named by the respective Provincial. The Delegate has an active voice with a right to vote on a par with the other members of the Council.

If the Local Center is set up in one of the Houses which depend directly on a Superior General, the naming of the Delegate falls to said Superior General.

§2. Elected Councilors remain in office for three years and can be re-elected for only one further triennium.

After having finished their mandate, they may be re-elected following a period of three intervening years.

For there to be a third consecutive triennium, recourse must be made to the Institute of Postulation, according to the norms of the *Code of Canon Law*, Canons 180-183, along with the corresponding dispensation from the Rector Major.

Once the Councilors have been elected and have publicly accepted their charge as Councilor, they gather together to establish what their roles will be. The division of these roles can take place by secret or public vote.

Within a reasonable amount of time following the date of election, the handing over of the authority from the exiting Coordinator to the new Coordinator will take place.

§3. If the Salesian Cooperator elected by the assembly of the Local Center renounces the position, the Cooperator with the most votes among those not elected takes his/her place.

Art. 20 Collegial Direction

§1. According to the norm of Canon 119 of the *Code of Canon Law*, in order for a *collegial act* to take place, certain pre-established conditions are necessary: the convocation of all the members of the Council; the presence of an absolute majority of Council members; then, following the voting, the computation of the absolute majority is made on the number of members effectively present for this collegial act (half plus one).

§2. So that the election of a Coordinator may be a *collegial act* – according to the norms of Canon 119 of the *Code of Canon Law*:

- 1) an absolute majority is necessary for the first and the second ballot;
- 2) “after two indecisive ballots, the choice is between the two candidates who have obtained the greater number of the votes, or, if there are several (with the same numbers),” – whether in the case that all the candidates receive an equal number of votes, or in the case of a difference in votes between one candidate with a relative majority and other candidates who have an equal number of votes – [the choice is] “upon the two who are senior in age”;
- 3) “after a third ballot, if the tie remains, the one who is the senior in age is considered elected”;
- 4) the third ballot is definitive in every case and therefore, once it has been made, the voting process is prolonged no longer.

§3. If, however, the collegial act concerns other matters:

- 1) an absolute majority on the first vote is necessary;
- 2) if the first vote should be inconclusive, a second vote takes place, still requiring an absolute majority;
- 3) if no majority is obtained in the second vote, the decision in question is not approved; if there is a tie, then the Coordinator, who presides over the Council according to the norm of Art. 21 §1 of the PVA, can add his vote publicly to break the tie and thus decide the question.

§4. The list of candidates eligible to be elected Councilors contains all the names proposed by the Councils and/or by the Congresses at the various levels.

Art. 21 Tasks of the Local Council as Pertain to Its Apostolic Service

§1. In order to assure the functioning of the Association as regards its apostolic and missionary purposes, the tasks of the Local Council are to:

- plan, promote, and coordinate the formative and apostolic initiatives of its members;
- take care of the bonds of union and of communion with the Provincial Council or the World Council of the Association where no Provincial Council exists;
- strengthen the charismatic ties and bonds of communion with the Salesian Congregation, with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and with the other Groups of the Salesian Family;
- decide on the convocation of Assemblies;
- see to the administration of the goods of the Association;
- approve the Budget and the Balance to present to the members;

- accompany the Aspirants in their participation in the Center and give them a quality formation, taking into account the formation guidelines of the Association adopted by the Provincial Council;
- make use of the professional competencies and the spiritual riches of all the members for the good of the Association, valuing their differences and directing them constructively towards the gift of unity;
- animate initiatives which foster the vocational fidelity of the members and their active participation in the life of the Center, taking into account the various groups which compose it, and favoring differentiated paths;
- make known and spread Don Bosco's spirituality (for example, by means of the Mamma Margaret workshops, the "Bosco Homes", and other similar initiatives);
- propose the Vocation of the Salesian Cooperator, planning possible initiatives to welcome Aspirants;
- adopt other initiatives to foster an optimal functioning of the Center, respecting the directives of the *Project of Apostolic Life*.

§2. Every Local Council elects from among its lay members:

- a Coordinator
- a Treasurer
- a Secretary.

Every Council, moreover, designates from among its members someone to be in charge of Formation, who coordinates with the Delegate, as a guarantor of the charism. In the case that the designation of such a person is lacking, the Coordinator, in dialogue with the Delegate, can identify a Salesian Cooperator who is not part of the Center to carry out this service.

Art. 22 Tasks within the Local Council

Individual tasks are entrusted to different Councilors who assume responsibility for government and animation within the Council. The first act of establishment is the assignment of the roles (Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary, Formator, etc.) along with the election of the Coordinator.

§1. It is the responsibility of the Local Coordinator to:

- convoke the meetings, preside over them, coordinate the work, see to the implementation of the decisions taken;
- inform the Local Center about the planning and verification activities established with the Provincial Council;
- represent the Association and maintain official relationships, in the name of the Council, with ecclesial and lay organizations and with the other Groups of the Salesian Family;
- participate on the Local Consulta of the Salesian Family;
- make decisions in the case of an emergency on matters that fall within the sphere of competencies of the Council and, afterwards, give an account of them to the entire Council;
- present to the Provincial Council all Aspirants' requests for acceptance to be-

- come part of the Association, together with the respective informational sheets;⁵⁶
- prepare verification reports at the end of every triennium, convoke the elections for the renewal of the Council, and take care of handing over the leadership from the exiting Council to the one coming in;
- establish, together with the elected Councilors, the date for sharing with the Local Centers the information about the roles internal to the Council, within a short time from the date of election.

§2. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to:

- safeguard the goods belonging to the Association;
- motivate the members to economic missionary solidarity;
- follow the initiatives for financing the various planned activities;
- seek possible sources of support and economic help even outside of the Association;
- sensitize the members to acts of solidarity in behalf of the most precarious realities of the Association;
- gather contributions to hand over to the Rector Major who can then direct them to emergency situations within the sphere of the Salesian mission;
- promote initiatives and seek sources of solidarity to foster and to sustain the Provincial Council and the World Council in accord with missionary subsidiarity;
- keep the accounting books up-to-date (see the first note to the ASE document, “Animating Economic Solidarity”);
- present the Budget and the Balance to the Local Council (ASE);
- present the annual “Statement of Cash Flow” to the Provincial Council (ASE).

§3. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to:

- draft the minutes of the Council meetings;
- aid the Coordinator in carrying out juridical acts with the Church and civic society;
- take care of the updating and the maintenance of the archival documentation of the Council;
- communicate the updated data to the Provincial Council every three years.

§4. It is the responsibility of the Formator, with the understanding of the Provincial Council, to:

- prepare the formation program for the Aspirants;
- prepare the annual plan of on-going formation;
- take care of and follow all the specific aspects of formation, in agreement with the Delegate.

Art. 23 Delegates

§1. The FMA and SDB Provincials, through the Delegates, animate the Centers established in connection with their works or linked to their Provinces.

⁵⁶The Association of Salesian Cooperators. “Animating Economic Solidarity.” Trans. 34-37. Print.

§2. Every Local Council has an SDB or an FMA Delegate. Every Provincial Council and the World Council have an FMA and an SDB Delegate. They are the spiritual animators⁵⁷, and educative and pastoral guides, who are responsible, above all, for Salesian apostolic formation. According to the norms of the *Statutes*, article 18, they take part by right on the respective Councils.

§3. The Delegates to the Local and Provincial levels are named by each one's respective Provincial after having heard the thoughts of the members of the respective Council and keeping in mind, as much as is possible, the needs of the Centers.

§4. If the Local Center is not established in connection with a Salesian work of the SDB or the FMA, the Provincial can nominate a Salesian Cooperator⁵⁸ as a Local Delegate or another member of the Salesian Family who is adequately prepared.

§5. When necessary and opportune, a Delegate can fulfill this task for more than one Local Center.

§6. The Provincial Delegates animate the Delegates of the Local Centers to help foster the assumption of their responsibilities as regards their task of spiritual animation of the Salesian Cooperators and of co-responsibility in their Salesian apostolic formation.

§7. The Provincial Delegates, in understanding with the Regional and/or World Delegates, promote, if it is the case, updating and formation activities for all the Delegates of the Province on the Salesian charismatic dimension, with specific reference to their role of animation. These activities are open to the participation of the leadership of the Association.

Art. 24 Organization of the Provinces and of the Provincial Councils

§1. The Local Centers of a determinate territory – established by the Rector Major with the World Council – constitute a Province.

§2. At the Provincial level, the Association is directed in a collegial manner by a Provincial Council.

§3. The Provincial Council consists of members elected by the Councilors of the Local Centers during the Provincial Congress. It is composed of a convenient number of Councilors, from four to twelve, and of the Provincial SDB Delegate and the Provincial FMA Delegate who have an active voice; i.e., with the right to vote.

§4. Each Provincial Council elects from among its lay members:

- a Coordinator
- a Treasurer
- a Secretary
- a Formator
- other Councilors who fill roles of animation in specific groups.

⁵⁷Canon Law Society of America. *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*. (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1983) can. 317 §2. Print.

⁵⁸*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...*Art. V, 5.

§5. The Provincial Councilors elected remain in office for three years and may be re-elected, without interruption, for another triennium. Once finished with their second mandate, after an interval of three years, they may be re-elected.

Once the voting has been held, the elected Councilors gather together to define each one's role in the Association. The division of the roles can be carried out through a secret or public vote.

Art. 25 Tasks of the Provincial Council as Pertain to Its Apostolic Service

In order to assure the functioning of the Association as regards their apostolic purposes, in communion with the World Council, the tasks of the Provincial Council are to:

§1.

- promote the Association's guidelines and coordinate formative and apostolic initiatives;
- support the Local Centers, valuing the commitment of their Councils;
- establish with the Local Councils two formative encounters during the year, according to the guidelines of the Association;
- hold at least two formative initiatives during the year, where it is possible;

§2.

- grant approval for entrance into the Association, on the proposal of the Local Council;
- carry out the collegial act of a dismissal;

§3.

- foster the bonds of union and of communion with the Local Councils and the World Council;
- strengthen the charismatic ties with the Society of St. Francis de Sales, with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and with the other Groups of the Salesian Family;
- give their opinion on the naming of their own Provincial Delegates;

§4.

- promote the renewal of the *Promise* as a moment of celebration which gives quality to their path of fidelity;
- promote the spiritual exercises, that strong moment of spirituality in which the vocational fidelity of the members is renewed with the *Promise*;
- take care of and animate the initiatives which foster the vocational fidelity of the members and an active participation in the life of the Association;

§5.

- receive and examine the "Statement of Cash Flow" of the economic management of the Local Centers;
- approve their Budget and send it to the Local Councils;
- approve the "Statement of Cash Flow" of its own economic management and send it to the World Council;
- convoke and organize the Provincial Congress;

- foster the participation of the Local Centers in the initiatives of the Regional Consulta;
- see to the administration of the goods of the Association in the Province.

Art. 26 Tasks of the Members of the Provincial Council

Different tasks are entrusted to the Councilors who assume responsibility for governance within the Council.

§1. It is the responsibility of the Provincial Coordinator to:

- convoke the meetings, preside over them, coordinate the works, see to the implementation of the decisions taken;
- represent the Association and maintain the official relationships, in the name of the Council, with ecclesial and lay organizations and with the other Groups of the Salesian Family;
- make decisions in case of an emergency on matters that fall within the sphere of the competencies of the Provincial Council and, afterwards, give an account of them to the Council;
- accompany, in agreement with those responsible in the Local Center, the Cooperators who find it impossible to have regular contact with said Center;
- collaborate with the World Councilor of the Region, promoting his/her initiatives and informing him/her about the life and the activities of the Association;
- participate actively on the Provincial Consulta of the Salesian Family;
- prepare verification reports at the end of every triennium, convoke the elections for the renewal of the Council, and take care of handing over the leadership from the exiting Council to the one coming in.

§2. It is the responsibility of the Provincial Treasurer to:

- safeguard the goods belonging to the Association;
- animate the economic missionary solidarity of the Local Centers;
- suggest possible sources of support and economic help;
- promote solidarity funds to provide for an act of subsidiarity in behalf of those realities of the Association which are most precarious;
- keep the accounting books up-to-date;
- present the Budget and the Balance to the Provincial Council;
- present the annual "Statement of Cash Flow" to the World Council.

§3. It is the responsibility of the Provincial Secretary to:

- aid the Coordinator in carrying out juridical acts with the Church and civic society;
- draft the minutes of the Council meetings;
- see to the updating and maintenance of the archival documentation of the Council;
- communicate the updated data to the World Council every triennium.

§4. It is the responsibility of the Formator to:

- draw up a plan of formation for the Aspirants, which is to be agreed upon with

- those responsible for formation at the Local level;
- draw up programs of on-going formation at the Provincial level;
- take care of and follow all the specific aspects of formation in the Province, in agreement with the Delegates.

Art. 27 Specific Tasks of the Provincial Council

§1. It is the responsibility of the Provincial Council to establish and to suppress Local Centers by means of a decree signed by the Provincial Coordinator, with the consent of the SDB or FMA Provincial.

For a Local Center which is outside an SDB or FMA work, written consent from the diocesan Bishop is necessary.

§2. The fusion of a Local Center connected to an FMA work with a Local Center connected to an SDB work, or vice versa, is realized by a collegial act of the Provincial Council. This takes effect, by means of a decree of the Coordinator of said Provincial Council, after having listened to the respective Local Councils and having obtained the consent of the SDB and FMA Provincials concerned.

The new Local Center assumes the economic situation of the two previous Local Centers, unless there is a different directive given in the “Decree of Fusion”.

§3. So that the Provincial Council might confront or deepen themes of particular pastoral-apostolic interests which are useful for the realization of the Province’s purposes and objectives, it can invite persons external to the Councils to participate in the meetings of the Councils, because of their specific competencies, whether they belong to the Association or the Salesian Family, or not.

§4. The Provincial Council defines the modalities of the establishment of Salesian Cooperator Centers there where the Salesian mission requires it.

Art. 28 The Provincial Congress

§1. The Provincial Congress is made up of all the members of the Local Councils and of the members of the Provincial Council, including the Delegates.

§2. The Provincial Congress is ordinarily convoked by the Provincial Coordinator every year for planning and verification.

§3. In particular, every three years the Provincial Coordinator convokes the Congress on the occasion of the renewal of the Provincial Council.

§4. The tasks of the Provincial Congress are to:

- establish, following the guidelines of the World Council, concrete directives regarding the Provincial Council in the realm of formation and of mission;
- verify the growth and development of the life of the Association in the Province;
- elect the Provincial Council according to the modalities of the Regulations of the Congress.

§5. The organizational modalities are defined in the Congress' Regulations as prepared by the Provincial Council and approved by the World Council.

Art. 29 The Regional Congress

§1. The Regional Congress is composed of all the members of the Provincial Councils of a Region and of the members of the Regional Consulta, if one is established.

§2. The Regional Congress is convoked by the World Council by mandate to the World Councilor of the Region.

§3. The Regional Congress can be an elective one or one that deepens particular topics for the development of the Salesian charism and of the Association.

The tasks of the Regional Congress are to:

- draw up the Regulations of the Congress and present them for the approval of the World Council;
- elect the new World Councilor of the Region according to the modalities approved by the Rector Major, taking into consideration that the Religious members who are voting do not supersede one-third of the total of the Assembly of those who have the right to vote;
- verify periodically the state of the Association in the Region and its operational directives.

Art. 30 The Ministry of the Rector Major

§1. The Rector Major makes Don Bosco, his mission, and his spirit present today. In him is recognized the service of unity as Don Bosco's Successor and as our common Father, the Center of unity of the entire Salesian Family.⁵⁹

Within the Association, to him falls the charismatic task of offering guidelines necessary to guarantee the fecundity of the charism, the development of the Association, and the maturation of formative and apostolic initiatives.

§2. In the exercise of his ministry, carried out personally or through his Vicar or another representative chosen by him, the Rector Major ordinarily avails himself of the Salesian Cooperator World Council, above all, for the animation of the entire Association and for the coordination of the formative and apostolic initiatives.

Art. 31 The World Council and Its Tasks

§1. In order to achieve the apostolic missionary purposes of the *Project of Apostolic Life* and for a more efficacious vitality and co-responsibility, the Rector Major avails himself of the World Council.

§2. The World Council collaborates with the Rector Major and his Vicar for the governance and the animation of the Association: it furnishes general guidelines as regard formative, apostolic, organizational, and administrative initiatives entrusted to the animation of the World Councilors.

⁵⁹*Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way...* Art. V, 3.
Salesian Family Charter. 13.

§3. The World Council is composed of:

- the World Coordinator
- the World Treasurer
- the World Secretary
- the SDB World Delegate
- the FMA World Delegate
- the World Councilors of the individual Regions, elected at their respective Regional Congresses.

§4. The tasks of the World Council are to:

- foster the connection of all the Regions to the Rector Major;
- know the realities of the different Regions and to present them to the Rector Major;
- furnish the Rector Major with timely and useful information for making decisions and guidelines;
- promote the practical application of the Rector Major's decisions and guidelines for the Association.

§5. The specific tasks of the World Councilors are defined by the Council at its first meeting, upon the naming of the World Coordinator, according to what is indicated in the *Project of Apostolic Life*, through the adoption of a specific Handbook.

Also defined therein are the modalities regarding the participation of the Councilors in the meetings of the World Council.

§6. The World Council approves the Handbook prepared by competent bodies at the Provincial level.

§7. The World Council presents its Handbook and the Regulations of the World Congress to the Rector Major for his approval. The modalities governing the election of a World Councilor follow the indications of Canon 164 of the *Code of Canon Law*.

§8. The World Council guarantees animation at the World level via appropriate instruments of communication in the principal languages of the Association.

§9. The Regions in which the Association is ordinarily organized are:

- America Cono Sud (America South Cone)
- Africa e Madagascar (Africa and Madagascar)
- Asia Est e Oceania (East Asia and Oceania)
- Asia Sud (South Asia)
- Brasile (Brazil)
- Europa Centrale e Est (Eastern and Central Europe)
- Europa Centrale e Ovest (Western and Central Europe)
- Iberica (Iberia)
- Interamerica
- Italia-Medio Oriente-Malta (Italy-Middle East-Malta)
- Pacifico Caribe Sud (Pacific and South Caribbean).

Art. 32 The Functioning of the World Council

§1. So as to render its work easier and more functional, the World Council avails itself of a “World Executive Secretary” (SEM). It is composed of the World Coordinator, the World Councilor Secretary, the World Councilor Treasurer, the World SDB Delegate, and the World FMA Delegate.

§2. As regards the nomination of the World Coordinator, the World Councilors, the World SDB Delegate, and the World FMA Delegate propose to the Rector Major three names of persons chosen, even from outside the Council.

The World Treasurer and the World Secretary are chosen by secret ballot. These may also be chosen from among Cooperators not on the Council. In the case that those chosen should be elected members of the Council, the person who had the second highest number of votes from the elections in his/her respective Region will take on the role of World Councilor.

§3. All the elected members of the World Council have a six-year term of office and, ordinarily, will not be re-elected for a second consecutive term.

§4. The directives of the World Council become binding only after the Rector Major has approved them.

§5. Ex-World Coordinators and ex-Delegates may be invited for the work of the World Council, but without the right to vote.

Art. 33 The World Congress

§1. The World Congress, the greatest expression of representation of the Association, gathers together, from time to time, Salesian Cooperators from all the Regions in unity and communion with the Rector Major according to the defined organizational modalities, on the basis of the specific purposes of the Congress.

§2. The World Congress is convoked mostly to:

- approve modifications to the *Project of Apostolic Life*;
- confront topics of specific interest at the world level;
- establish working guidelines regarding the topics listed on the order of the day;
- celebrate particularly important moments of the life and history of the Association and of the Church.

§3. The participants in the World Congress by right are:

- the Supreme Moderator, the Rector Major of the Salesian Congregation of Don Bosco
- the Vicar of the Rector Major, Councilor for the Salesian Family
- the Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (or her delegate)
- the World Councilors:
 - the World Coordinator
 - the World SDB Delegate
 - the World FMA Delegate
 - the World Councilors of the SEM

- the World Councilors representing the 11 Regions
- the Provincial Coordinators
- one or more representatives in addition to the Provincial Coordinator for every Province, according to the criteria set forth in the Regulations of the Congress
- one SDB or FMA Delegate for each Province. It is to be borne in mind that the number of voting Religious members cannot exceed one-third the total of those in the Assembly who have the right to vote.

§4. It is the responsibility of the Rector Major to decide on the theme, the meeting place, and the participants of the ordinary and extraordinary World Congresses, from the proposals of the World Council. Its organization is entrusted to the World Executive Secretary (the SEM).

The World Coordinator assumes responsibility for the concrete and technical coordination of the Congress.

Art. 34 The Regional Consulta

§1. The World Council, with the consent of the Rector Major, can foster the establishment of Regional Consultas, in places where there are nations or geographic areas with a number of provinces that share linguistic and cultural affinities.

§2. The Regional Consulta, as the body of animation, has service as its purpose for a more efficacious apostolic co-responsibility between the Provincial Councils and the World Council. Every Regional Consulta shares the challenges of the apostolate and of formation for the benefit of the entire Region.

§3. The following comprise the Regional Consulta: the World Councilor of the Region, who presides over it in the name of the World Council, the Provincial Coordinators, the Regional SDB Delegate, and the Regional FMA Delegate. Other Salesian Cooperators, based on animation needs can also take part in it, as established by the “Criteria for Animation and Functioning”.

§4. The Regional SDB Delegate is named by the SDB Regional concerned; the Regional FMA Delegate is named by Mother General on the proposal of the Conference of Provincials concerned within the geographical area.

§5. The modalities for the meetings and the organization of the Regional Consulta are defined in the “Criteria for Animation and Functioning”, as established by the World Council.

Art. 35 Handbooks

In order to render the principles and prescriptions of these *Regulations* flexible and adaptable to the different territorial realities of the Association, the animating and governing bodies foreseen by the same *Regulations* for the development of the Salesian charism and the Association can create “Handbooks” for said purpose which integrate and/or apply aspects which regard the governance and the animation of the Centers.

Every Handbook (Local and Provincial) undergoes the evaluation of the Council concerned (Local/Provincial), which accepts it by means of an absolute majority of

those who have the right to vote and presents it to the World Council for its definitive approval.

The same process is applied in the approval of modifications to the different Handbooks.

Art. 36 The Administration of the Goods of the Association

The Rector Major, with the World Council, administers the goods of the Association at the World level.

He represents the competent authority to grant to the Local and Provincial Councils the permissions to accomplish extraordinary acts of administration and of the alienation of goods, which do not require the intervention of the Holy See, with the directives of article 39 §3 of the *Statutes* remaining in full force, and in accordance with what is specified in the ASE document.

Art. 37 Final Dispositions

§1. The Salesian Cooperators respect and apply the present *Regulations*.

§2. Any proposal for modification must:

- offer a clear and detailed presentation of the motivations which can justify it;
- define the concrete objectives which follow from it;
- indicate the principles on which it is articulated.

The process of modification is determined by the World Council under the supervision of the Rector Major.

§3. The present *Regulations* may be modified on the proposal of the Superior of the Association, of the World Council, or of the Provincial Councils. In whatever case, it is the responsibility of the Superior of the Association to approve the modification initiative, which will be published in a timely manner.