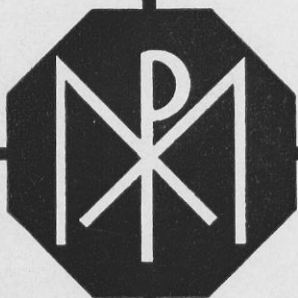
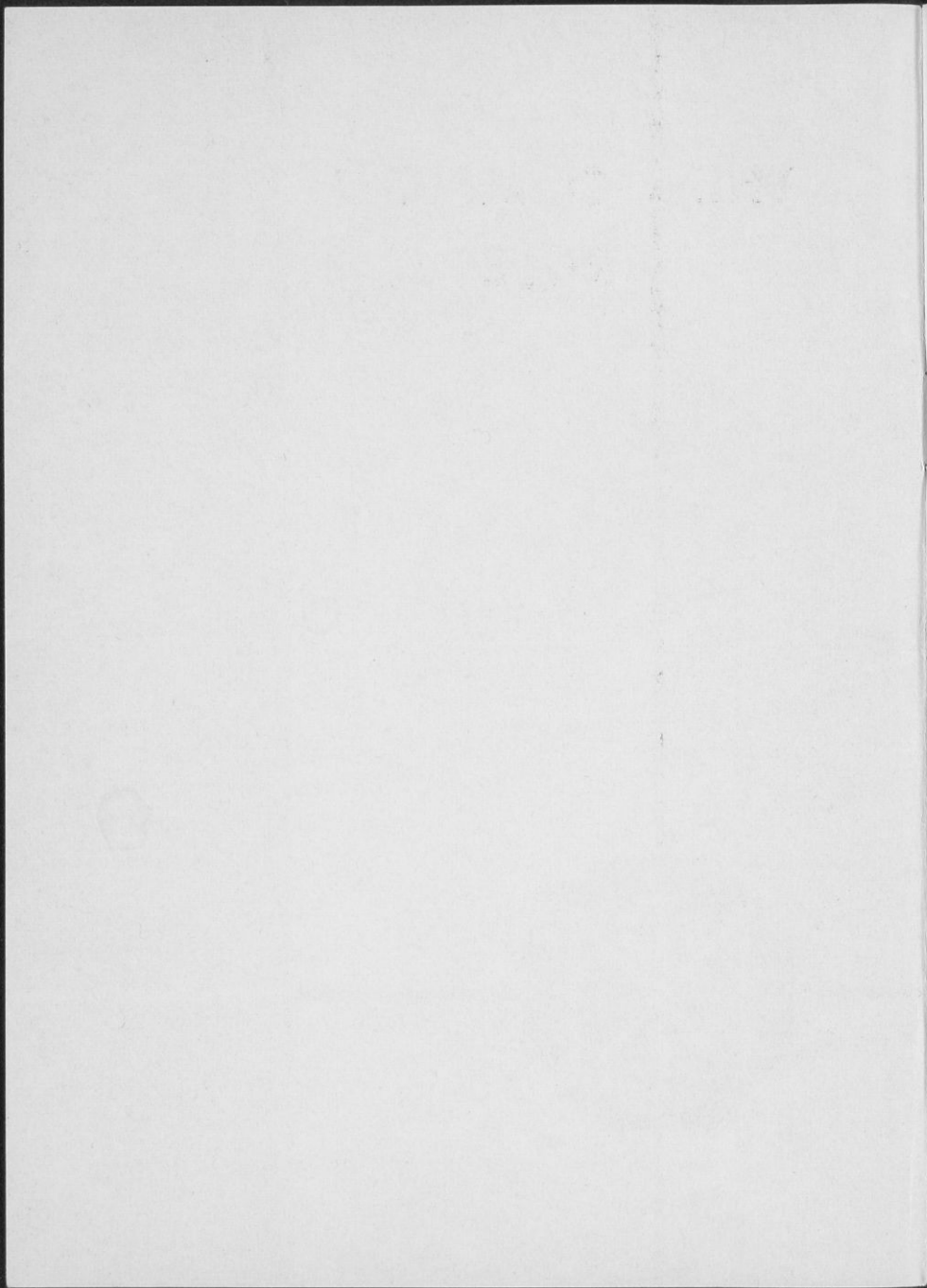


The Common Rules
AEC 1949

**THE
COMMON
RULES**

SODALITIES OF OUR LADY





*The
Common Rules*

*Sodalities
of
Our Lady*

THE QUEEN'S WORK
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THE QUEEN'S WORK

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PREFACE

This new (1957) translation of the Common Rules edited by the Central Secretariate in Rome (1951) stresses the features characteristic of diocesan Sodalities of Our Lady.

In 1948 the Apostolic Constitution, *Bis Saeculari*, made the Common Rules obligatory on all Sodalities of Our Lady. In applying the Rules, judicious adaptation of their non-essential details is not only permissible but advisable. However, the substantial features that give Sodalities their characteristic spirit and distinctive form must be observed exactly. Between some of the Rules, the editor has inserted notes to guide the reader in distinguishing essential from nonessential ideas.

Those parts of the Common Rules which pertain to Jesuit Sodalities have been grouped together in a supplement at the end of the Rules.

After the Common Rules this booklet lists the twelve characteristic marks which the Apostolic Constitution states must be found in every Sodality of Our Lady throughout the world.

Lastly, this booklet gives the official summary of indulgences and privileges granted to Sodalities of Our Lady affiliated to the *Prima Primaria* Sodality in Rome.

NOTE. The table of contents and the marginal subtitles are not part of the official Latin text of the Common Rules.

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COMMON RULES

Article I

END AND NATURE OF SODALITIES OF OUR LADY

Nature of Sodalities

1. Sodalities of Our Lady are religious associations approved by the Holy See. They organize Catholics under Our Lady's name and cultivate in them a deep devotedness, reverence, and filial love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Under the patronage of the Mother of God, Sodalities of Our Lady aim at making their members outstanding Catholics who give themselves wholeheartedly to sanctifying themselves in their own states of life and strenuously endeavor, as far as their social conditions permit, to save and sanctify others and to defend the Church of Jesus Christ against the attacks of its enemies.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 29, number I of the characteristic marks taken from the Apostolic Constitution.]

Power to Establish and Affiliate

2. The Bishop of a diocese has the exclusive power of establishing diocesan Sodalities of Our Lady. The affiliation of these Sodalities to the *Prima Mariana* Sodality in Rome so that they will share in its indulgences and privileges can be done only by the General or Vicar General of the Society of Jesus.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See pages 29-30, numbers II-V of the characteristic marks taken from the Apostolic Constitution.]

Principal Patroness

3. Each Sodality must acknowledge the Blessed Virgin Mary as principal patroness, taking for its own one of her many titles or mysteries. Each may also select a secondary patron.

Homogeneous Groupings

4. Sodalties of Our Lady can be formed for Catholics in any social class. They attain their goals more effectively when established according to age brackets, states of life, and social conditions; for example, for boys, young men, young women, students, professional people, workers, etc.

Article II**RELIGIOUS EXERCISES IN COMMON**

[EDITOR'S NOTE. For the sake of continual formation in the interior life and the accomplishment of an effective apostolate, Sodalties of Our Lady are to have meetings at least once a week, or in extraordinary circumstances, twice a month. Two different types of meetings are indicated in the Rules: a general meeting directed at interior formation (Rule 6) and group meetings intended for the study and planning of the social apostolate and carrying out of works of mercy (Rules 12-14). These group meetings must also aim at both the interior life of the members and the apostolate (Rule 42). Some Sodalties meet frequently and sometimes almost exclusively in small groups and in these meetings provide for both the further development of the interior life of their members and the planning and carrying out of apostolic action.]

Weekly Meetings

5. Sodalties of Our Lady should meet at least once a week on a day and at an hour determined by their bylaws or local custom.

Some Sodalties find it profitable to have a religious meeting on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

The meetings should not be cancelled or postponed without grave reasons even during the summer months.

Sample Order of Religious Meeting

6. For their religious meetings Sodalties frequently use the following program: An Invocation of the Holy Spirit by singing the hymn "*Veni Creator.*" Reading of some selected and pertinent paragraphs from a Catholic book to occupy the attention

of those waiting for the meeting to begin. Announcements about holydays, saints' feast days, and any Church event for the week.

Saying part of the Little Office of Our Lady: matins in the morning, vespers in the evening. The recitation or singing of another office of Our Lady may be substituted.

A short conference by the director on subjects touching the spiritual progress of the Sodalists.

The meeting closes with the recitation of the Litany of Loretto, or with prayers addressed to the secondary patron, or with those prayers determined by custom.

Other Common Religious Exercises 7. Other religious exercises held in common are general Communion, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and the solemn celebration of their own patronal feast day.

Corporate Communion 8. Each month on a fixed day — if possible on one of the solemn feast days of Our Lord or the Blessed Virgin Mary there shall be a general Communion of Sodalists.

Special prayers may be said in preparation for Holy Communion and in thanksgiving afterwards. After Mass some Sodalities have the reading of weekly notices and the singing of the "*Salve Regina*" or the brief recitation of prayers in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. Each Sodality must determine for itself whether general Communion are possible and advisable for its members. Some American Sodalities that find corporate Communion possible have a communion-breakfast program afterwards.]

Annual Retreat 9. Sodalists shall spend some days each year in making the Spiritual Exercises. They may close with a general Communion.

The director of each Sodality shall make the final decision regarding the suitable time for the retreat, the number of days, and the daily order. Lent is usually a good time.

A closed retreat shall be made whenever possible, as it certainly is the most fruitful way to make the Spiritual Exercises.

Those who cannot make the retreat can be given the Exercises in the morning and evening during a period of six days or more. The principal exercises are spiritual reading, meditations, conferences, Mass, and Rosary.

Titular Feast Days 10. Sodalities should celebrate their titular feast days every year with some religious solemnity. A triduum or novena made in preparation for the celebration of the feast of the principal patroness would help to praise and glorify the Blessed Virgin. Sodalities which honor St. Aloysius as a secondary patron usually observe the devotion of the Six Sundays dedicated to him. This practice is also an annual event in many other Sodalities.

Solemn but Modest Celebration 11. These feast days shall be celebrated solemnly. Any public function, however, should be staged within the Sodality's means and should be suitable to the social condition of its members. Sodalists should avoid all ostentatious demonstrations, since these only dissipate the interior strength and spirit of Sodalities.

Article III

SECTIONS AND ACADEMIES

[EDITOR'S NOTE. In the Apostolic Constitution, *Bis Saeculari*, Pope Pius XII states emphatically that Sodalities of Our Lady are "Catholic Action undertaken through the Blessed Virgin Mary's constant care and inspiration." Sodalities are essentially apostolic

organizations and can be called upon by the bishops and pastors for any kind of work for the Church without fear of violating their Rules.]

**Apostolic
Work
Essential**

12. Since the goal of Sodality of Our Lady is the greatest possible holiness in their members and an effective spiritual influence on others, each must necessarily strive to develop a deep spirituality in its members and to set up apostolates among their neighbors.

Prominent among these actions are teaching catechism, visiting the sick in hospitals and those in prison — practices zealously performed by the early Sodality. Each Sodality shall undertake whatever apostolic action is indicated by the needs and circumstances of its environment.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 32, number XI of the characteristic marks taken from the Apostolic Constitution. Pope Pius XII states that "Among their primary ends, Sodality include every form of the apostolate, particularly the social apostolate"]

**Specialized
Apostolic
Groups**

13. In larger Sodality specialized apostolic groups, called "Sections," may be formed for more effective apostolic action. These groups are composed according to the talents and interests of the Sodalists. Each group functions independently and determines how to carry out the apostolic action entrusted to it. They always remain subject to the authority of the Sodality.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. Rules 13 and 42 do not give any exact pattern for the apostolic group meetings. The form of the meeting must be determined by the Sodalists and the nature of their work. Many Sodality today form their members into small discussion-action groups or committees that allow for free discussion on the part of all the members, and a mobility in apostolic work. These small groups devote the first part of their meetings to developing their interior life and the other part to discussing and planning the execution of apostolic action.]

**Specialized
Study
Groups**

14. In accordance with their original plan, Sodalitys of Our Lady, especially those of students, may form one or more study groups, called "Academies."

This arrangement helps the young people develop practical knowledge of the sciences, literature, arts, economics, etc. Moreover, with competent direction they can learn and practice the correct principles needed for judging matters involving Catholic faith and morals.

Article IV

GOVERNMENT

**Dependence
on the
Hierarchy**

and canonical visitation.

15. Diocesan Sodalitys of Our Lady depend on the Bishop of the diocese for the approval of their rules, their spiritual and temporal administration,

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 30, numbers V and VI of the characteristic marks taken from the Apostolic Constitution.]

**Power
of
Directors**

16. The priest-director enjoys full power in whatever concerns the spiritual and temporal administration, direction, and government of his Sodality.

He is at liberty to make rules, statutes, and decrees which prudence and reason suggest, provided, of course, these additions do not change the Common Rules or make them inoperative. He can also modify or abrogate such legislation without consulting or getting the consent of the Sodalists.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 31, number VII of the characteristic marks given in the Apostolic Constitution.]

**Appointment
of Directors**

17. The Bishop of the diocese appoints the directors of diocesan Sodalitys of Our Lady.

The Council and Major Officers 18. A group of Sodalists assists the priest-director in governing and administering the affairs of the Sodality. This group may consist of a prefect, two assistants, a secretary, six or more consultants, an instructor of candidates, and a treasurer. These are the major officers and compose the Sodality council. If they require help, the director can appoint Sodalists to assistant officers and designate them as major officers.

Minor Officers 19. The duties of minor officers, such as sacristans, recorders, librarians, and readers are purely executive. Such offices are created according to the Sodality's needs.

Choice of Officers 20. The director usually appoints the minor officers.

The director may appoint the major officers or the Sodalists may elect them, as stipulated in the Sodality's bylaws. In those Sodalities that elect their officers, it may be wise to have the director nominate three candidates for each office.

Each Sodality is left perfectly free to decide on any method that fits its particular circumstances.

Change of Officers 21. Ordinarily the officers are changed annually at a time determined by the by-laws or local custom. If a vacancy in office should occur during the year, the office shall be filled according to the precepts in Rule 20.

Authority of Officers 22. The officers of the council and the minor officers enjoy only that extent of authority and power which the director assigns them. In the discharge of their duties they are subject both individually and collectively to his authority.

Article V

ADMISSION AND DISMISSAL

**Admission
of
Candidates**

23. A candidate for a Sodality should be of irreproachable conduct and should possess the qualifications of age, state of life, profession, etc., proper to the Sodality he wishes to enter. Furthermore, he must have the firm determination to fulfill the Rules faithfully.

If possible, each candidate should be proposed for acceptance by a Sodalist. Each must apply personally to the director who alone has the power to admit them as candidates.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 38, Privilege number 19. Candidates can gain the Sodality indulgences.]

**Training
and
Probation**

24. Before being admitted into a Sodality as a permanent member of it, the candidate must discharge faithfully for at least two months all the duties the Sodality imposes on its members.

A Sodalist who transfers directly from another Sodality and presents testimonials of character and a satisfactory record of a full Sodality life may be admitted immediately. Others shall according to the judgment of the director undergo a sufficient training and probation before reception.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. The probation period (i.e., the two months of complete Sodality living required before permanent admission) implies a thorough training program that acquaints the candidate with the Sodality way of life and develops in him the necessary habits of prayer and apostolic action. For adults, it is recommended that this period of training last about a year.

Some directors require even more. As a further test, they have the trained candidate make a temporary consecration for a limited period before admitting him permanently into their Sodalities. In this consecration the candidate promises Our Lady to live the Sodality way of life completely for the period indicated. By making this

temporary consecration, the candidate does not become a Sodalist canonically but retains the status of candidate. The temporary consecration, however, does permit him to add to his Sodality living the merit of fidelity to a promise.

See pages 31-32, numbers IX and X of the characteristic marks about the formation and reception of Sodalists.]

**Reception
of Members**

25. The solemn reception of new Sodalists will be held twice a year or oftener, either on the titular feast of the Sodality or another major feast of Our Lady.

**The Council
and
Reception**

26. Sometime before the solemn reception of candidates the director shall meet with members of the council and get their approval or rejection of those he is considering for admission. After this consultation, he will decide which are to be received, given further training as candidates, and excluded.

**Solemn Reception;
Consecration**

27. All Sodalists shall attend the solemn reception of new Sodalists. The director shall be assisted at the function by the prefect, the secretary, and the instructor of candidates.

After the secretary has summoned the new Sodalists, they will go to the altar and on their knees recite one of the following consecration prayers.

**Consecration
Prayer
Used by
St. John
Berchmans**

Holy Mary, Virgin Mother of God, I, _____, choose you this day to be my Queen, my Patroness, and my Advocate, and I firmly resolve never to desert you, never to say or do anything against you, and never to permit others to do anything against your honor. Receive me then, I beg you, as your servant forever. Aid me in all my actions and desert me not at the hour of my death. Amen.

**Consecration
Prayer
Attributed to
St. Francis
de Sales**

Most Holy Mary, Virgin Mother of God, I, _____, most unworthy though I am to be your servant, yet touched by your motherly care for me, and longing to serve you, do, in the presence of my guardian angel and all the court of heaven, choose you this day to be my Queen, my Advocate, and my Mother; and I firmly resolve to serve you evermore myself and to do what I can that all may render faithful service to you. Therefore, most devoted Mother, through the Precious Blood your Son poured out for me, I implore you to number me among your subjects and accept me as your servant forever. Aid me in all my actions, and beg for me the grace never by word or deed or thought to be displeasing in your sight and that of your most holy Son. Watch over me and desert me not at the hour of death. Amen.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 38, Privilege number 17.]

After the consecration prayer has been said, the director or another priest delegated by him shall present the Sodality medal to each one. Then, using the following formula he shall declare them permanent members of his Sodality:

**Formula of
Admission
and
Consecration**

In virtue of powers duly vested in me, I receive you into the Sodality of Our Lady (primary title) and (secondary title) and declare you participants in all the indulgences granted to the *Prima Primaria* Sodality and to our Sodality. Your names shall now be entered on the local register of the Sodality. May they be written eternally in heaven.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. The Sodality permanent act of consecration is that act by which the Sodalist is received into a Sodality and thereby accepts for his entire lifetime all the obligations of the Sodality Rule. See page 31, characteristic mark number VIII, which describes the nature and binding force of the Sodality consecration.]

**Certificate
of
Membership**

Each one received is given a copy of the following certificate of membership: We gladly bear witness by this certificate that *(name)* was received on *(date)* as a member of the Sodality of *(class of persons)* under the title of *(primary title)* and of *(secondary title)* and is entitled to all the indulgences, favors, graces, and privileges which other Sodalists enjoy and, when he departs this life, will receive from our Sodality all the prayers and sacrifices which are customarily offered for Sodalists when they die.

Done in the same Sodality of Our Lady on the day in the year aforesaid.

Director

Prefect

Secretary

The names of the new Sodalists must be entered in the local register of the Sodality.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. Canon 694, number 2, requires the inscription of the member's name in the local register for validity of membership.]

**Conditions
for Valid
Membership**

28. The director can in particular cases dispense with the formalities prescribed for reception. Valid reception consists in the external expression of the candidate's desire to join and of the director's act of acceptance.

**Membership
Restriction**

29. The director can, for good reasons, receive into his Sodality someone who is in a state of life or social class different from those in that Sodality.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 39, Privilege number 26.]

Loss of Membership 30. Once Sodalists have been duly received into a Sodality, they are permanent members of it unless they either withdraw voluntarily or are dismissed as unsuitable.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 39, Privilege number 27.]

Dismissal 31. Any Sodalist or candidate who notably fails to measure up to the conduct expected of an outstanding Catholic or to the particular obligations of the Sodality Rule shall be dismissed from his Sodality. Dismissal is always decreed by the director. In borderline cases, he shall consult with the council before making his decision.

Article VI

DUTIES COMMON TO ALL SODALISTS

Respect for Rules 32. The Sodality Rules as such do not bind under pain of either mortal or venial sin. Some of them, however, do contain matter that falls under natural or Church law.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. Rule 35, for example.]

Sodalists should show great respect for their Rules and endeavor to fulfill them faithfully and exactly as they freely promised to do at the moment of their reception. These Rules prescribe the indispensable and effective means for reaching the Sodality goal.

Thinking With the Church 33. A Sodalist worthy of the name must be an exemplary Catholic who always and in all matters conforms his beliefs and practices to the faith and morals taught by the Catholic Church. He should praise what she praises, condemn what she condemns, and in all things think as she thinks. Never should he be ashamed, in

private or in public, to be a loyal and obedient son of his Holy Mother the Church.

Necessary Prayer Life 34. Sodalists shall be very diligent in performing those religious exercises which are particularly necessary for a fervent life.

The daily exercises are the following:

Every morning, on rising, Sodalists shall make acts of faith, hope, and charity, give thanks to the Divine Majesty for benefits received, offer to God their labors of the day, make an intention to gain all possible indulgences that day, and say at least three Hail Mary's in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

They shall set aside and spend at least a quarter of an hour in mental prayer.

If possible, they are to participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

They shall recite the Rosary or an office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the evening, before retiring, they are to examine their conscience carefully and make a fervent act of contrition for all the sins of their life and especially for any committed that day.

Avoid Occasions of Sin 35. They must diligently avoid all friendship and unnecessary association with persons of bad or questionable character. They shall not read indecent books or attend immoral shows. In general, they shall earnestly avoid any occasion that would be dangerous to their souls or a source of scandal and disedification to their neighbor.

**Fixed
Confessor**

36. As far as possible each Sodalist should select a devout, learned, and prudent priest as his fixed confessor.

Without reserve he shall manifest his conscience to his confessor and be formed and directed by him in all that pertains to the spiritual life.

**Candidate's
General
Confession**

37. Before his reception, each candidate shall make a general confession of his sins — unless his confessor judges otherwise.

**Sodalists'
General
Confession**

38. The Sovereign Pontiff Benedict XIV wisely advised all Sodalists to make a general confession once or twice a year, covering the period since their

last general confession. Excellent occasions for this would occur during the annual retreat, on a monthly day of recollection, and at the end of the year.

**Frequent,
Even
Daily,
Communion**

39. Sodalists should respond wholeheartedly to the invitation which the Holy See has made to all Catholics on the frequent and daily reception of Holy Communion.

Each Sodalist is earnestly exhorted to strengthen himself frequently with the Bread of Angels and not to confine his reception of Holy Communion to the days on which Sodalists can gain plenary indulgences. In accordance with the desires of Christ Our Lord and the Catholic Church he shall do all in his power to develop the habit of frequent and even daily reception of Holy Communion.

**Sodalists'
Devotion
to Our Lady**

40. Sodalists shall manifest an outstanding devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, their principal patroness. They shall strive to imitate her splendid virtues, place all confidence in her, and urge each other to love

and serve her with great filial loyalty.

Attendance at Meetings 41. All shall faithfully attend, at the appointed time, all meetings of the Sodality. Attendance may be recorded in any practical manner. The use of attendance cards has been found useful in many Sodalities.

An absentee must report the cause of his absence as soon as possible to his director, either personally or by letter. The director shall decide whether or not the reason given is justifiable.

Group Apostolate 42. Specialized apostolic groups (sections), as stated in Rule 13, are perfectly in accord with the Sodality spirit.

These apostolic groups are a means of developing a deeper interior life in the Sodalists and of providing an outlet for their apostolic zeal and Christian love. Every Sodalist is strongly urged to be an active member of a section. If circumstances permit, it would be wise to make such participation compulsory.

If there are any study groups [see Rule 14] in a Sodality, the local rules will determine whether the Sodalists are obliged to attend those dealing with their line of study or profession.

Personal Apostolate 43. In addition to participating in the Sodality's organized apostolate, every Sodalist on his own initiative should personally undertake spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Particularly should he be alert to recruit suitable Sodality candidates. These actions make the Sodalist a true apostle of God's glory and that of his Blessed Mother.

Obedience to Director and Officers 44. In all details of Sodality life Sodalists shall promptly and humbly obey the orders and the recommendations of the director. They shall respect and obey the prefect, members of the council, and the minor officers in all matters that pertain to their offices.

**Mutual
Love**

45. All their dealings with one another shall be characterized by brotherly love and Christian charity. They shall often pray to God Our Lord for the needs of the Sodality and of the Sodalists, especially the sick.

When a Sodalist dies, as many Sodalists as possible shall attend the funeral. All shall privately pray for his eternal rest, and recite the Office of the Dead or other prayers together. They shall all have a Mass said, thus securing for him the indulgences of a Privileged Altar.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 39, Privilege number 23.]

Finances

46. Each Sodalist shall contribute toward the expenses of the Sodality. He shall give either a voluntary offering according to his means or a modest fixed sum determined by custom.

**Temporary
or
Permanent
Absence**

47. When a Sodalist moves temporarily or permanently to a new locality, he must notify the director of his Sodality. The director, on request, should give him a letter testifying that he is a Sodalist and that in that respect he qualifies for admittance into other Sodalities. This letter shall be signed by the director and the prefect.

In order to continue gaining the Sodality indulgences any Sodalist who moves to a place from which he cannot attend the Sodality's meetings for a year or more, must in the place where he now lives join a Sodality corresponding to his state of life. This requirement for the indulgences does not bind if the director of the Sodality in the new locality refuses to admit him into this new Sodality or his present director judges that he cannot be active in a new Sodality.

Absentee Sodalists should write occasionally to their director or prefect. As far as circumstances permit, they should be careful to continue the Sodality's spiritual prac-

tices. Always and everywhere they must faithfully lead the active Christian life expected of Sodalists.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 39, Privilege number 28.]

Article VII

THE OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See Rule 18.]

Greater Obligations of Officers 48. The major officers and other members of the council should live up to their high office by surpassing the others in the practice of virtue and in the observance of the Rules.

Consultation With Director 49. They shall diligently fulfill the duties of their offices, and whenever necessary, report to the director on their administration, consult with him about any doubts and difficulties, and carry out his instructions. Thereby they shall faithfully help him govern the Sodality.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See page 31, characteristic mark number VII.]

Decisions of the Council 50. They shall attend and have voting and consultative power in all council meetings called by the director directly or through the prefect.

Resolutions adopted by a majority vote of the council shall be considered valid only when they have been approved and promulgated by the director.

Norms for Officers 51. Members of the council shall in their meetings clearly and candidly state their opinions on matters under discussion. They shall never promote their personal ideas out of self-love and possible advantage, but should act solely for the greater glory of God and the genuine good of the Sodality.

**Prior
Discussion
With
Director**

52. When any member of the council desires to propose a controversial resolution that may have serious repercussions, he shall first discuss it with the director, who shall decide if the resolution will be proposed to the council.

Prefect

53. The prefect is the top-ranking officer and acts as the right hand of the director. He presides at meetings with due subordination to the director. He has a voice in all matters concerning the government of the Sodality—especially in the admission and dismissal of Sodalists.

**Assistants
to
Prefect**

54. The first and second assistants shall help the prefect with their advice and cooperation. The first assistant takes charge when the prefect is absent; and the second assistant, when both are not present.

Secretary

55. The secretary writes up the minutes of the council meetings and of the general Sodality meetings. He fills out and signs certificates of membership, diplomas, testimonials, letters, notices, and other official documents. He shall always act according to the minds of the director and the prefect. Each Sodality must have separate books for the minutes of the council, the minutes of the general Sodality meetings, and the enrollment of the Sodalists.

Consultors

56. The members of the council may give suggestions and may vote not only at their meetings but also privately when asked to do so by the director or prefect. They will best serve in their advisory and voting capacities after getting to know the members and making themselves familiar with everything pertaining to the Sodality. They shall give their opinions honestly without prejudice to or favoring any particular group in the Sodality.

Instructor of Candidates 57. The instructor of candidates has the duty of directing and instructing the candidates in the spirit and customs of the Sodality during the time preceding their reception into the Sodality.

He shall keep the director informed on the progress each candidate is making in and out of the Sodality and thus help the director in deciding on approving, postponing, or rejecting permanently the reception of the candidate.

Treasurer 58. The treasurer collects the scheduled dues and any donations made by the Sodalists and benefactors. He administers the Sodality funds and by order of the director or prefect pays the bills incurred by the Sodality.

He shall keep his books and papers accurately and in good order. In all details he shall be a faithful steward of the funds entrusted to him.

Article VIII

MINOR OFFICERS

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See Rule 19, which states that the following offices are created according to the Sodality's needs.]

Obligation of Minor Officers 59. The minor officers, like the major ones, should be distinguished for their devotedness to the Sodality. They must energetically and zealously do their jobs, consulting the director whenever they need his help.

Sacristans 60. Two or more sacristans are frequently required. They prepare the chapel for any meeting taking place there and procure whatever is necessary for the Sodality's religious functions.

**Attendance
Recorders** 61. There should be a sufficient number of attendance recorders to check and accurately record attendance at meetings. A report should be kept of each meeting, listing those present and those absent together with the excuses approved by the director.

**Reader
Where
Customary** 62. Where it is customary to have a reader, his job is to care for any spiritual reading made at meetings and to make the announcements of feast days and events of the week.

Librarians 63. One or more librarians shall care for the Sodality library, accessioning, cataloguing, and stacking the books. They must have the library open at the appointed times and check books in and out.

**Visitors
to Sick
Sodalists** 64. Visitors should be appointed to visit sick Sodalists. They should try to cheer the sick and by spiritual conversation help and console them. They shall also pray for them and, when anyone becomes seriously ill, have all the Sodalists pray for him. They shall keep the director informed so that the sick person will receive the last sacraments if necessary.

**Other
Officers** 65. In addition to the aforementioned major and minor officers, others may be created as needs arise. The director will determine the nature, rank, and duties of these additional officers.

Article IX

INTERCOMMUNICATION OF SODALITIES

Sodality Congresses 66. Congresses of Sodality directors and of Sodalists, especially of the same country, are highly recommended.

These conventions not only help individual Sodalities but also promote cooperation between Sodalities. Their deliberations and activities should be directed to the good of souls and to progress in solid spirituality. They should avoid spending money on mere external display and should strive to produce practical and permanent results.

Sodality Magazines 67. The publication and reading of magazines which treat of Sodality matters and foster the Sodality spirit are also highly recommended.

Unions, Federations 68. Whenever possible, Sodalities of the same class or in the same locality should form a permanent union governed by a common council. Such unions greatly promote the greater glory of God and honor Our Blessed Mother.

Article X

LOCAL RULES

Additional Rules 69. If a diocesan Sodality wishes to adopt a set of rules different from, but not contrary to, the Common Rules, it may do so with the approval of the Bishop of the diocese. The new rules must be approved also by the General of the Society of Jesus when affiliation is petitioned.

Local bylaws which are added to the Common Rules must not be contrary to them. If they are of sufficient importance and permanency, they must be submitted to the Bishop of the diocese for approval.

JESUIT SUPPLEMENT — COMMON RULES

[EDITOR'S NOTE. The following parts of the Common Rules pertain to Jesuit Sodalities only and have therefore been grouped together in this supplement. The marginal number indicates the Rule to which the part belongs.]

1. Sodalities of Our Lady were originally founded by the Society of Jesus.
2. The General or Vicar General of the Society of Jesus has the power to establish and affiliate Sodalities of Our Lady in Jesuit houses and churches.
15. According to the Constitution, *Omnipotentis Dei*, of Gregory XIII, which was confirmed and extended by other Apostolic Constitutions, the General or Vicar General of the Society of Jesus has the supreme governing power of Sodalities of Our Lady established in Jesuit houses and churches. In virtue of this authority, the General can make and publish rules, constitutions, and decrees for the administration of these Sodalities, can examine and approve those rules made under his order by others, and can modify, correct, and recast them whenever he wishes.
17. The General of the Society of Jesus has conferred on provincials and mission superiors the power to appoint directors for Jesuit Sodalities. Local superiors have the same powers as the directors of Sodalities established in their houses or churches and can, if there is good reason, subdelegate these powers for a time.
69. Sodalities established in houses and churches entrusted to the Society of Jesus should submit local regulations to the provincial or mission superior. If they have a set of rules different from the Common Rules, they must submit it to the General.

TWELVE CHARACTERISTIC MARKS

From the Apostolic Constitution, "Bis Saeculari"

[EDITOR'S NOTE. These twelve characteristic marks are distinctive of and must be found in every Sodality of Our Lady throughout the world.]

Nature of Sodalities

I. The Sodalities of Our Lady duly affiliated to the *Prima Primaria* Sodality of the Roman College are religious associations established and constituted by the Church. To make them more capable of accomplishing the mission entrusted to them, the Church has enriched them with many great privileges.

Erection and Affiliation

II. To be a lawful Sodality of Our Lady it must be erected by the Ordinary who has power to do so. In places belonging to the Society of Jesus or committed to its care they are erected by the Father General. Everywhere else they are erected by the Bishop of the place, or with his formal consent, by the aforesaid Father General.

To enjoy all the Sodality privileges and indulgences, a Sodality properly erected must be duly affiliated to the *Prima Primaria*. This affiliation — which may be sought only with the consent of the Ordinary of the place and which can be granted only by the General of the Society of Jesus — gives neither to the *Prima Primaria* nor to the Society of Jesus any rights over such a Sodality.

Norms

III. Sodalities of Our Lady fully comply with the pressing needs of the Church today, and must therefore, in accordance with the will of the Supreme Pontiffs, keep intact their Rules, characteristics, and methods of formation.

Rules

IV. The Common Rules, whose observance, in substantial points at least, is required before a Sodality may petition and obtain affiliation, are earnestly recommended to all Sodalities as an authoritative summary of the way of life observed by the early Sodalists and confirmed by constant practice.

Dependence

V. All Sodalities of Our Lady, no less than other organizations dedicated to the apostolate, are subject to the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. The way in which they are subject is the same in all substantial points as that of other organizations but differs in nonessential matters.

Authority

VI. In propagating the Kingdom of God and defending the rights of the Church, Sodalities of Our Lady must not dissipate and weaken their forces. For this reason, Sodalists in undertaking and carrying out apostolic works must faithfully follow the example of their predecessors and hold fast to their present form and practice by keeping in mind the following points.

a. The Local Ordinary:

1. according to the norms of Canon Law but without detriment to the precepts and documents of the Apostolic See, has power over absolutely all Sodalities within his jurisdiction concerning the exercise of the external apostolate;
2. has power over Sodalities erected outside of places maintained by the Society of Jesus and accordingly can give them their own rules — provided that the substantials of the Common Rules remain intact.

b. The Pastor:

1. is by his office the director of parish Sodalities and governs them as well as other societies within his parish limits;

2. possesses over all the Sodalities engaged in apostolic works within his parish limits, that power which has been given him by Canon Law and by diocesan statutes for the right ordering of the external apostolate.

Priest Director VII. The legitimately appointed director of any Sodality must always be a priest. As director, he is entirely subject to his lawful ecclesiastical superiors. Nevertheless, in the internal life of the Sodality, he has that complete power which is set down in the Common Rules. It is fitting, however, that he should for the most part exercise this power through Sodalists chosen to help him in his office.

Marian Character VIII. These must be called Our Lady's Sodalities, since they take their name from the Blessed Virgin Mary, but principally because each Sodalist professes an extraordinary devotion to the Mother of God and unites himself to her by a complete consecration. Without binding himself under pain of sin, the Sodalist of Our Lady in his consecration pledges to fight with all his resources under the standard of the Blessed Virgin Mary to win Christian perfection and eternal salvation for himself and for others. Moreover, by this consecration the Sodalist binds himself to the Blessed Virgin Mary forever, unless he is dismissed from his Sodality as unsuitable or he himself through lack of constancy leaves it.

Careful Selection IX. In the reception of Sodalists, great diligence should be exercised to select only those who are not at all satisfied with leading a common ordinary life, but are determined, in accordance with the ascetical norms and exercises of piety laid down in the Rules, to fulfill even the highest "aspirations of their hearts" (Cf. Ps. 83:6).

**Formation
of Members**

X. Sodalties of Our Lady must, therefore, give their members, each in accord with his condition in life, a formation that will make them capable of being proposed to their equals as examples of Christian living and apostolic zeal.

**Apostolic End,
Cooperation**

XI. Among their primary ends, Sodalties include every form of the apostolate, particularly the social apostolate, since the apostolic work of spreading the Kingdom of Christ and defending the rights of the Church has been mandated to Sodalties by the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy itself. In order to ensure this real and complete cooperation of Sodalties in the apostolate of the Hierarchy, the Sodality Rules which have that effect are not to be modified or changed in any way.

**Same
Level
as Others**

XII. Lastly, the Sodalties of Our Lady are to be considered on the same level as other associations dedicated to the apostolate. This is true even if they should federate themselves with the other associations or become closely connected with the central organization of Catholic Action. Moreover, since it is the duty of Sodalties, under the direction and authority of their spiritual shepherds, to lend their active support to every other association, it is not necessary for individual Sodalists to become members of another organization.

* * *

MARIAN CATHOLIC ACTION

“Sodalties of Our Lady likewise qualify with full right to be called ‘Catholic Action undertaken through the Blessed Virgin Mary’s constant care and inspiration.’”

— PIUS XII, *Bis Saeculari*

SUMMARY

of

INDULGENCES AND PRIVILEGES

WHICH THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFFS HAVE

GRANTED TO THE

PRIMA PRIMARIA SODALITY

ERECTED IN THE

ROMAN COLLEGE OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

UNDER THE TITLE

OF OUR LADY OF THE ANNUNCIATION

AND SS. PETER AND PAUL

AND TO OTHER SODALITIES THAT

HAVE BEEN OR SHALL BE AFFILIATED TO IT

I

PLENARY INDULGENCES GRANTED TO SODALISTS

1. On the day of reception into the Sodality, if after confession, they receive the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist on that day.

2. At the hour of death, if they kiss a medal or badge of their own Sodality blessed by the director, or if they touch it in any way whatever, provided they have been to confession and Holy Communion, or, if they have been unable to do so, if contrite they at least invoke the name of Jesus and Mary, vocally if they can, or at least devoutly in their heart, and patiently accept death from the hand of the Lord, as a penalty of sin.

3. On the feasts of Our Lord and of Our Lady, under the usual conditions, according to Canon 921, paragraph 1.

[NOTE. This indulgence can be gained on the following feasts of Our Lord and Our Lady: Circumcision (Jan. 1), Epiphany (Jan. 6), Resurrection, Ascension, Corpus Christi (Thurs. after Trinity Sun.), Nativity (Dec. 25), Purification (Feb. 2), Annunciation (March 25), Assumption (Aug. 15), Nativity (Sept. 8), Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8).]

4. On the special solemnity called "World Sodality Day" when Sodalists gather and renew their consecration to the Blessed Virgin, under the usual conditions.

5. Once a week, on any day they choose, under the usual conditions, provided they have been present at a Sodality meeting within the week.

6. When they receive Holy Communion, even individually, publicly carrying a medal or badge of their own Sodality blessed by the director, under the usual conditions.

7. Each month, on any day chosen by each Sodalist, if after confession they receive Holy Communion in honor of that particular Heavenly Patron who, according to an age-

old Sodality custom, has been drawn by lot by each, and offer pious prayers to God for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, provided they recite with a contrite and devout heart each day of the month three Our Father's, Hail Mary's, and Glory's in honor of that Heavenly Patron.

8. If they make the Spiritual Exercises for any number of days, even one day of recollection, once a month, under the usual conditions.

9. The director of the Sodality, if he visits a sick member of his Sodality and aids him with spiritual advice to bear patiently the discomforts of illness or to accept death willingly from the hands of Our Lord, and has him recite before some image of our crucified Savior three Our Father's and Hail Mary's for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, can impart to him a plenary indulgence on the day on which the sick Sodalist receives Holy Communion.

II

PLENARY AND PARTIAL INDULGENCES GRANTED TO SODALISTS

10. If on the days of the Stations of Rome they devoutly visit their own oratory or some church and there recite five times the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be to the Father before the Blessed Sacrament and at least once more for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, they can gain the indulgences of the Stations, namely (a) of ten years; (b) plenary if in addition they have gone to confession and Holy Communion, according to the norm of the Declaration of the Sacred Penitentiary, of February 25, 1933.

11. If after the Spiritual Exercises they recite pious prayers for forty days for obtaining perseverance, two hundred days indulgence for each day, and if after confession they go to Communion within the forty days, they can obtain a plenary indulgence.

III

PARTIAL INDULGENCES GRANTED TO SODALISTS

12. *Seven years:*

a) whenever they devoutly hear Mass on days not of obligation;

b) whenever they carefully examine their consciences in the evening before going to bed;

c) whenever they are present at public or private meetings, or at the Divine Office recited by the Sodality for the souls of departed Sodalists or other departed Christians, and approved by the Sodality director;

d) whenever they visit the poor or sick or imprisoned;

e) whenever they reconcile enemies;

f) whenever they pray for the sick or the dead;

g) whenever they accompany the bodies of Sodalists or others of the faithful to church burial;

h) if when going to bed they place the medal or badge of their own Sodality, blessed by the director, at the head of the bed and at least with a contrite heart devoutly recite the Hail Mary three times;

i) if they teach children or uninstructed people Christian Doctrine.

13. *Three hundred days:*

a) whenever they recite the consecration prayer either of St. John Berchmans or of St. Francis de Sales;

b) whenever they kiss the medal or badge of their own Sodality and devoutly recite the little prayer: "Mary with her loving Son, bless us each and every one."

14. *One hundred days* whenever they take up the emblem of the Sodality, inscribed with the name of Mary, and say "Hail Mary," or whenever carrying that emblem they greet each other with the words "Hail Mary."

If for an entire month the pious works or prayers enumerated in Nos. 12, 13, and 14 are repeated every day, a plenary indulgence can be gained under the usual conditions.

IV

PLENARY INDULGENCES

WHICH ALL THE FAITHFUL CAN GAIN IN PLACES WHERE SODALITIES ARE ESTABLISHED

15. If after confession and Holy Communion, they visit such a place on the primary or secondary titular feast of the Sodality and devoutly pray for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

But if the Sodality has no secondary title, one can be chosen by the director — with the consent of the Bishop of the diocese (or his own superior, if the director be a priest of a religious order) — one such day each year.

But if the Sodality meeting place varies, or is permanently or temporarily changed, or even if for the greater convenience of the people and greater solemnity, the primary or secondary titular feast — with the director's consent — happens to be celebrated in another church, nevertheless the same indulgence avails for a visit to that church.

Likewise, if either titular feast or even both cannot be celebrated with sufficient convenience or solemnity on its own day, the director of the Sodality — with the consent of the Bishop of the diocese (or if the director be a priest of a religious order, of his own superior) — can designate another day within the year for the celebration of the feast and the gaining of the indulgence granted.

But if the day chosen is impeded by a double, one Solemn Mass of the feast transferred as above can be celebrated.

16. If they are present at the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament held in the place of the Sodality for some time on three successive days, and there pray and perform the other works enjoined, they can gain the indulgence granted for the devotion of the Forty Hours.

V

PRIVILEGES

17. The director of the Sodality can substitute for himself another priest to receive the faithful and bless the medals.

18. The indulgences listed above are granted to all kings, princes, dukes, and counts holding supreme authority and to their relatives, by blood or marriage, within the limits of the first or second degree, provided they have petitioned to be enrolled in a Sodality, and on condition that they perform works of piety and pay a visit to some church.

19. From the moment of their admission to probation, candidates share in the privileges, indulgences, and other spiritual graces granted to Sodalists.

20. The prayers recited by the Sodalists together at the weekly meetings, with the intention of directing them to the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff, suffice for gaining the indulgences granted for those meetings.

[EDITOR'S NOTE. See numbers 5 and 12a.]

21. The indulgences connected with the weekly meetings avail even if the meetings take place only twice a month.

22. All indulgences that have been or will be granted to Sodalities of Our Lady, except the plenary indulgence to be gained at the hour of death, can be applied also to the souls of the faithful departed.

23. Mass said for a deceased Sodalist, in any place and by any priest, enjoys the privilege of a Privileged Altar.

24. While anyone is in the service of Sodality, he can gain all the Sodality indulgences under the conditions specified.

25. The legitimate appointment of a priest as director of a Sodality makes him a member of that Sodality without his going through any ceremony of reception. As director he has full right to participate in all the Sodality privileges and indulgences.

26. Directors may admit adults and married men into Sodality expressly established for youths. The same holds good in like cases for other Sodality, including those for women. But a good reason is required. This may easily be present if, for example, after a Sodalist changes his state of life by marriage he wants to remain in his present Sodality and there is not in his locality any Sodality of Our Lady for married people.

27. Sodalists validly admitted into a Sodality always remain members of it, unless they withdraw voluntarily or are dismissed as unsuitable. By fulfilling the conditions required, they always share in its favors and indulgences.

28. In order to gain the Sodality indulgences, a Sodalist absent for a year or longer from the place where his Sodality is established and taking up residence in a place from which he cannot attend its meetings, must in his new locality enter a Sodality which has been established for Catholics in his state of life. The Sodalist, however, will continue to enjoy the Sodality indulgences if the director of the Sodality in the new locality refuses to admit him into this Sodality, or if his present director judges there is some other legitimate obstacle that keeps him from being active in a Sodality.

29. If Sodalists are present, the director, or another priest (diocesan or religious) taking his place, may every Saturday celebrate a votive Mass of Our Lady, provided that no double of the first or second class or privileged feria, octave, or vigil falls on the same day, and also that the rubrics are observed. This privilege does not hold good for the whole of Lent.

August 9, 1948

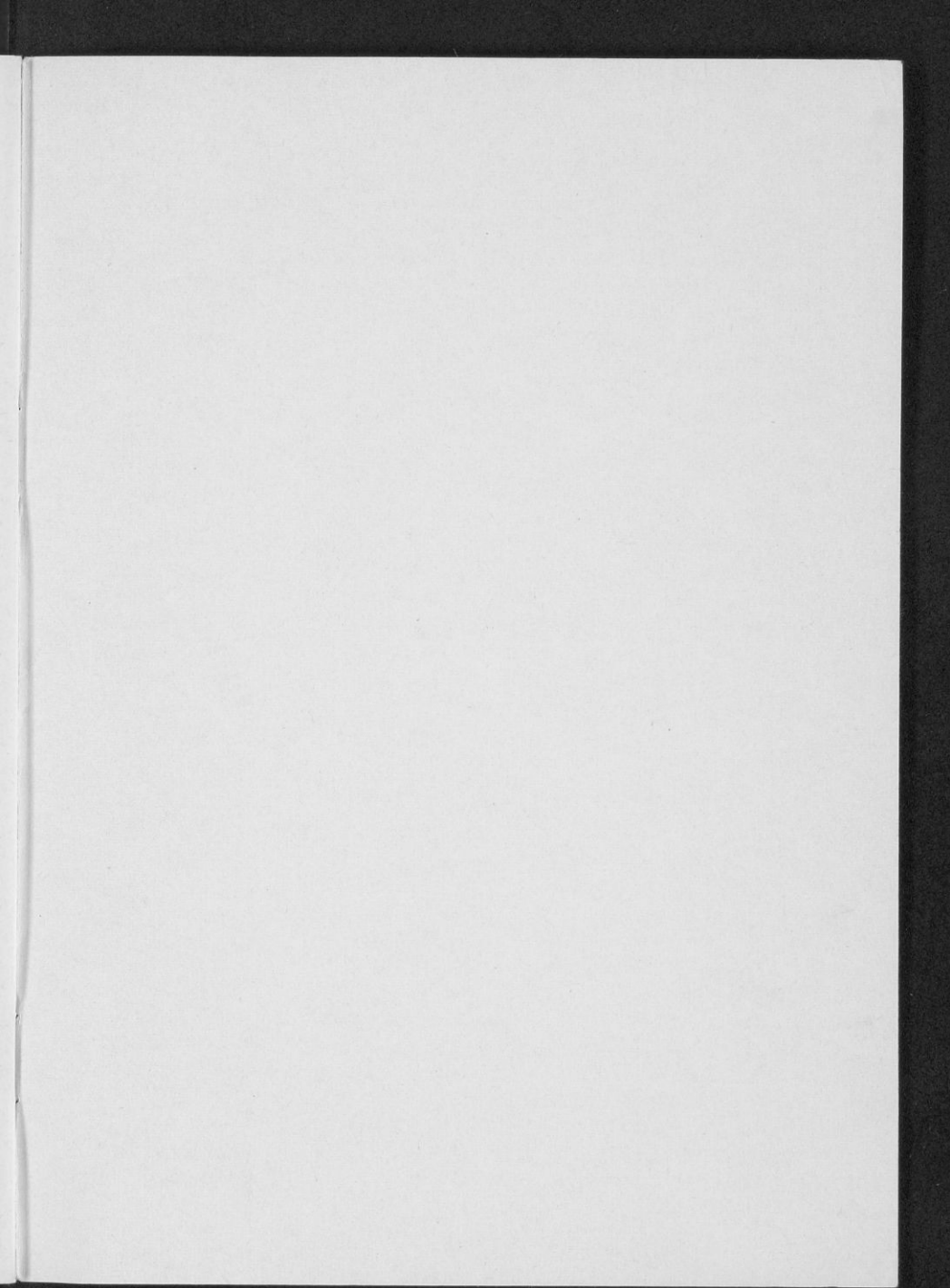
The Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, under express orders of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, received by the undersigned Cardinal Grand Penitentiary in audience of August 7 of the current year, has approved the present Summary, made up of authentic documents, revised and again accepted, and has declared that it is to be considered the only list of indulgences and other spiritual favors regarding indulgences thus far granted by the Apostolic See to the *Prima Primaria* Sodality, under the title of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saints Peter and Paul, and has permitted it to be printed and made public. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

L. ✠ S.

N. CARDINAL CANALI
Grand Penitentiary
J. ROSSI, *Secretary*

New Privilege for World Sodality Day

On March 10, 1949, the Sacred Congregation of Rites, at the direction of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, granted a new privilege for a period of ten years. Each year on World Sodality Day (the second Sunday of May) the director or some other priest taking his place may say or sing for Sodalists one Mass of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, provided there occurs no double of the first or second class or privileged Sunday and that the rubrics are observed.



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