



CONGREGAZIONE
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

(Translated from Italian)

Prot. n. P. 53-1/98

DECREE

The Association of the faithful of the Miraculous Medal, composed of laity, clergy and members of Institutes of the Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic Life, was approved and recognized throughout the Church, with its own objective and Statutes, by His Holiness Saint Pius X, through the Brief *Dilectus filius* of July 8, 1909, placing it under the direction of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity.

After the International Meeting that was held in November, 2009, on the occasion of the centenary of its first approval, the competent authority of the Association engaged in the careful work of studying and revising its Statutes in light of the fact that the Association had grown and spread to many countries with different cultural and religious expressions.

On March 29, 2010 the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission presented the Apostolic See with a petition of approval for the revised Statutes.

The Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, after an attentive examination of the material, now with the present Decree

approves

the new text of the General Statutes
of the Association of the *Miraculous Medal*

according to the Spanish text which is preserved in our archives.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary.

The Vatican, April 14, 2010

Franc Cardinal Rodé, CM
Prefect

Sr. Enrica Rosanna, F.M.A.
Sub-secretary



GENERAL STATUTES OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL ASSOCIATION

I - ORIGIN

1. Origin of the Association

The Miraculous Medal Association is a living and perpetual memorial of the apparitions of the Immaculate Virgin Mary in 1830. In these apparition the Virgin presented a model of the medal that, when copied, spread rapidly in many countries. It was the people who called this medal "miraculous" and they did so because of the innumerable blessings that God bestowed on them through this medal.

The Association came into existence in order to make known the Virgin of the Miraculous Medal and to transmit the message of the medal, viewing it as a catechetical lesson on the history of salvation offered by the Virgin Mary to those whose heart is open to her message.

2. Pontifical Approval

The Miraculous Medal Association¹, with its own Ends and Statutes, was approved and recognized by the whole Church in the brief *Dilectus filius* signed by Pope Pius X and dated July 8, 1909. The approval of 1909 assumed that the Association would be under the direction of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity. The Statutes were revised and approved once again on April 14, 2010 by the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (Prot. N.P. 53-1/98).

3. The See of the Association

3.1. The religious and devotional international see is:

The Chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
140 rue du Bac
75340 Paris, Codex 07 --- France

3.2. The canonical see is the place of residence of the Director General:

Casa Generalizia
Via dei Capasso, 30
00164 Rome --- Italy

¹ In the Act of Approval, 1998, it is affirmed that the popular name of the Association is the Miraculous Medal Association, a name that from this time forward is adopted as its own and only name --- all other names are now left aside. In these Statutes the name is used in its normal sense. The Miraculous Medal Association brings together those older Associations that used the names: *Novena Association of Prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Miraculous Medal*, *The Immaculate Conception of the Miraculous Medal*, and others that were used as a name for the Association.

3.3 The functional see is the place of residence of the Sub-director General

II – NATURE

4. The Miraculous Medal Association is a public association of faithful (canon 298) composed of laity, clergy and members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life who wear the miraculous medal and honor it with a Christian and apostolic life, each member doing so according to his/her state of life. Working together they seek to foment a more perfect life (in communion) and accomplish apostolic activities through spreading the 1830 message of the Blessed Virgin to Saint Catherine Laboure.

5. The Association is characterized by three marks:

5.1. Ecclesial mark

- 5.1.1. Because all its members, through their Baptism, are called to participate in the salvific mission of the Church under the direction of their pastors.
- 5.1.2. Because the fulfillment of the ends of the Association is connected to the Church's mission.
- 5.1.3. Because the Association has been approved and recognized by the Church

5.2. Marian Mark

- 5.2.1. Because the very nature of Christian spirituality implies a Marian dimension.
- 5.2.2. Because the Association came into existence as a result of the apparitions of the Virgin Mary to Saint Catherine Laboure in 1830.
- 5.2.3. Because all its members feel called to know, live and spread the message of the apparitions that occurred in 1830.

5.3. Vincentian Mark

- 5.3.1. Because the Association came into existence within the family of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac whose charism is the service and the evangelization of the poor.
- 5.3.2. Because the direction of the Association has been entrusted to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity.

6. Insignia

The insignia of the Miraculous Medal Association is the medal itself as it appears in the following design.



The insignia ought to be the same in every country.

III – END AND MEANS

7. The Association has as its end:

- 7.1. To follow Jesus Christ with the strength of the Holy Spirit and after the example of Mary, the disciple and model of the Christian life.
- 7.2. To honor and encourage devotion and commitment to the Virgin of the Miraculous Medal.
- 7.3. To spread Marian devotion through the message of the Miraculous Medal.
- 7.4. To encourage the sanctification of its members through union with each other, the spiritual life and the apostolate.
- 7.5. To evangelize and serve: the ways of exercising the apostolate are multiple. Traditionally, the Miraculous Medal Association in many countries has carried out its apostolate with the family, for example, visiting homes or spreading the message through magazines, popular publications, personal contact or mailed material. The service of charity is exercised by means of projects undertaken on behalf of those who live in poverty and carried out with other branches of the Vincentian Family or by themselves. Each National Miraculous Medal Association engages in both evangelization and service according to the ways that appear to them to be most effective.

8. Means

- 8.1. To live a life of personal and community prayer, especially prayer centered on the Word of God.
- 8.2. To live a life of authentic communion with the other members of the Association, expressed especially in the Eucharist.
- 8.3. To know and give life to the message of the apparitions which is concretized in the signs of the medal.
- 8.4. To take responsibility for their integral formation through participation in the life of the local centers, especially meetings, assemblies, workshops, courses, retreats.
- 8.5. To participate in the organized apostolate of evangelization and service to the poor and to families. This apostolate is fulfilled through home visits and/or other pastoral means, such as new technologies.

IV – SPIRITUAL LIFE

9. The members of the Association are aware that an interior life and a community life, solidly established and lived, give strength and value to the witness that the

Association proposes in order to fulfill its ends. In addition to all that is involved in living a profound and joyous Christian life, the Association attempts to express itself in virtues that arise from its proper marks:

10. **TO PRAY AND CONTEMPLATE:** Invited by Mary (*Come to the foot of the altar... Oh Mary, pray for us who have recourse to you*) the members of the Association safeguard their encounter with God in prayer and contemplation (on both the personal and community level). The power of this prayerful attitude sustains the whole Association and enables it to go out to the evangelizing encounter with other human beings.

This presumes that the members are faithful to their personal and community practices of prayer and contemplation.

11. To live together in **COMMUNION** and evangelical love and to do this as a joyful undertaking, imitating the example of Mary who gathered together in the cenacle with the nascent Church. This gives life to the Association, unites it and invites it to celebrate this reality in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist and meetings and also unites the Association with the Church.

This supposes that the members will make every effort to adopt a personal and community life style that is imbued with charity which in turn will make the Association relevant before the world (John 13:35; Acts 2:42-47; 4,32-35).

Because of its ecclesial mark this communion is expressed by thinking with the Church and participating in a committed way in the Church's life and ministries.

12. **TO EVANGELIZE:** Following the example of Mary, as revealed in the mystery of the visitation, the members of the Association should be bearers of life, continually aware of the great things that the Lord has done and singing his praise because *God has lifted up the lowly*.

This supposes that the members will attempt to clothe themselves with the attitude of Mary of Nazareth (her attitude toward God and others) in order to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

13. **TO SERVE:** The members shall be willing to serve Christ in the poor and accompany them as Mary did with her cousin Elizabeth. This is characteristic of every Vincentian vocation.

This supposes that the members of the Association will live a contemplative Vincentian spirit that leads them to live a life of charity and following Jesus, lead them to work for spiritual and corporal justice on behalf of the poor.

14. The spiritual life gives structure to all the different EXPRESSIONS OF THE LIFE of the Association and is concretely expressed in:

- reflection and prayer
- celebration and encounter
- evangelization and service to those people who are poor

The Association encourages the spiritual life by means of a WAY OF LIFE, a text which serves as an inspiration and guide for the life of the whole Miraculous Medal

Association. This text is considered to be one of the fundamental texts that should guide the members in living the ends of the Association in a simple way.

15. Indulgences

The members of the Miraculous Medal Association enjoy the indulgences granted in perpetuity by a rescript of the Apostolic Penitentiary dated October 27th, 1995 and included in the Statutes approved February 19th, 1998 (Prot. N. 53-1/98) and in these Statutes:

- on the day they join the Association,
- on the anniversary of the establishment of the Association (this includes the local, diocesan, national and international level),
- on the feast of Saint Louise de Marillac, March 15th,
- on the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, September 27th,
- on the feast of our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, November 27th,
- on the feast of Saint Catherine Laboure, November 28th.

16. Proper liturgical feast

The principal feast of the Association is celebrated on November 27th. During this celebration we remember the apparitions of the Virgin of the Miraculous Medal to Saint Catherine Laboure.

The Association remembers this feast on the 27th of each month (or on some other day that the Center considers opportune) with the celebration of the Eucharist or some Marian devotion.

In addition the members of the Association share in a special way in all the Marian and Vincentian celebrations of the liturgical calendar.

V – MEMBERS

17. Members in general

All the faithful are able to belong to this Association and share in its privileges if they wear the sacred medal, blessed and imposed The members are obliged to repeat frequently the invocation: "Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you!" (Saint Pius X, Statutes, articles 5 and 7).

- This means that:
- they have consciously accepted the message of the medal,
- they have had the blessed medal placed on them and have fully accepted what it signifies,
- they wear the medal as a continual reminder of the message and also as a reminder to live the message,
- they habitually invoke Mary with the words inscribed on the medal as a way to encourage fidelity to her.

The sacred Medal is a gift to everyone and those who receive it and wear it with devotion and confidence are considered to be members of this Association.

18. Committed members

Committed members are all those persons who, after having received specific formation, express a desire to join the Association and accept the responsibility to work toward the accomplishment of the ends of the Association.

It is necessary to make this commitment in some formal way.

19. Rights and responsibilities of committed members

19.1. Rights:

To rejoice in all the spiritual benefits that the Church grants to its members and to have active and passive voice within the Association.

19.2. Responsibilities:

To commit themselves to fulfill and have others fulfill the Statutes and to participate actively in the Association. Members also commit themselves to participate actively in the formation programs and the apostolate.

20. Reception of committed members

In order for a person to be considered a committed member of the Association, he/she ought:

- 20.1. to participate in a basic formation of at least six months in the principal elements of the Christian doctrine and the identity of the Association. Each National Association will indicate in their Statutes the frequency and content of said formation;
- 20.2. to express their intention to be united in a spirit of Christian communion with all the members of the Association;
- 20.3. to have participated in the apostolate proper to the Association;
- 20.4. to express in writing, to the local President if there is one and if not to the National President, their desire to be a member of the Association and to register their names in the Book of Members in the Local Center.

VI - GOVERNMENT

21. The government of the Association functions on the general, national and local level and where it is deemed effective, on the regional level.

22. General Level

22.1. Director General.

This Association is ruled by the authority of a Director General who is the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity and in the manner established by the Holy See (*Dilectus filius*, July 9, 1909).

22.1.1. Competency of the Director General:

The Director General is competent:

- 22.1.1.1. To govern and animate the Association. His authority arises from his office as superior general of the Congregation of the Mission and of the Company of the Daughters of Charity. This authority was recognized by Pius X in the brief *Dilectus filius*. According to said text the Director General guarantees the *unity* and the *continuity* of the Association.
- 22.1.1.2. To represent the Association before international organizations of the Church and in all meetings to which he is called.
- 22.1.1.3. To appoint a Sub-director General who normally will be a member of the Congregation of the Mission, even though it could also be a Daughter of Charity or any other member of the Miraculous Medal Association.
- 22.1.1.4. To appoint, at the request of the Visitor or Visitors of a country and his/their council, National Directors.
- 22.1.1.5. To appoint, at the request of the Visitatrix or Visitatrices of a country and her/their council, a Daughter of Charity as National Delegate.
- 22.1.1.6. In those cases which do not involve a member of the Congregation of the Mission or a Daughter of Charity, the appointment will be made through a petition to the Sub-director General.
- 22.1.1.7. To establish National Associations and approve their Statutes.
- 22.1.1.8. to convoke, by himself or in an exceptional case, through his delegate, a meeting of the General Council.
- 22.1.1.9. to remove members from the General Council according to the conditions of canon 318, § 2².

22.2. General Assembly

The General Assembly attempts to promote the participation and the communion of each member in the Association. The Assembly will be held at least once every six years.

22.2.1. Participants in the General Assembly

The general council and for each National Association with approved Statutes, the National Director, the Daughter of Charity who has been appointed National Delegate and two lay persons. The National Associations that do not have approved Statutes can send two representatives, one of which should be the National Director or the Daughter of Charity who has been appointed National Delegate and the other, a lay person.

All the representatives in the General Assembly have voice and vote.

22.2.2. The tasks of the General Assembly are:

- 22.2.2.1. Elect three members for the General Council, attempting to choose persons

² Canon 318, § 2, The moderator of a public association may be removed for a just reason, by the person who made the appointment or the confirmation, but the Moderator himself and the senior officials of the association must be consulted, in accordance with the statutes. The chaplain can, however, be removed by the person who appointed him, in accordance with canon 192-195.

- who represent the regions where the Association is established. The conditions of canon 119³ will be kept in mind during the election.
- 22.2.2.2. Propose the revision of the International Statutes. Any change of the Statutes must be approved by two-thirds of the members of the Assembly and must be approved by the Director General. These changes will then be sent to the Holy See for approval.
 - 22.2.2.3. Study the situation of the Association: spiritual, pastoral, economical, etc. and propose initiatives for the future in any of the areas where the Association wishes to express itself.
 - 22.2.2.4. Suggest themes of formation related to the spirit and the development of the Association.
 - 22.2.2.5. Approve the commitments that arise from the Assembly.
 - 22.2.2.6. The Sub-director General will present a report on the present state of the Association.
 - 22.2.2.7. Approve the annual quota that the National Associations will contribute for the functioning of the General Council and the General Secretariat.

22.2.3. Decision making

Except in the matter of revising the Statutes, all other decisions will be made in accord with canon 119 with regard to those decisions that involve elections and decisions in other matters.

22.3 Sub-director General

Normally the Sub-director General is a member of the Congregation of the Mission who is appointed by the Director General to help him fulfill his functions. The Sub-director General can also be a Daughter of Charity or any other member of the Miraculous Medal Association.

22.3.1. Functions

His authority is delegated to him by the Director General as described below and also delegated to him in instances clearly indicated by the Director General. The primary functions of the International Sub-director are:

22.3.1.1.

- To animate and provide guidance to the National Councils so that they promote the fulfillment of the ends of the Association.

³ Canon 119. In regard to collegial acts, unless the law or the statutes provide otherwise:

1. In regard to elections, provided a majority of those who must be summoned are present, what is decided by an absolute majority of those present has the force of law. If there have been two inconclusive scrutinizes, a vote is to be taken between the two candidates with the greatest number of votes or, if there are more than two, between the two senior by age. After a third inconclusive scrutiny, that person is deemed elected who is senior by age;
2. In regard to other matters, provided a majority of those who must be summoned are present, what is decided by an absolute majority of those present has the force of law. If the votes are equal after two scrutinizes, the person presiding, can break the tie with a casting vote
3. That which affects all as individuals must be approved by all.

- To promote the functioning of the Association in those countries where the Association does not exist.
- To review the National Statutes of the Association and make pertinent observations so that those Statutes are in accord with the International Statutes. He will also present the Statutes to the Director General for his approval.
- To offer his opinion to the Director General with regard to the appointment of the National Director as well as the appointment of a Daughter of Charity as a National Delegate.
- To offer formation material for the Association in different countries. Provide criteria for the preparation of new formation material. All materials should be in accord with the recommendations of the final documents of the International Meetings of the Miraculous Medal Association.
- To present at least once a year a report to the Director General on the state of the Association in the world.
- To convoke and prepare at least once a year a two day meeting during which time the General Council can meet with the Director General. In said meeting the activities of the Council will be evaluated and planned in order to further encourage and spread the Association.
- To encourage the countries to study the Final Documents of the meeting and to elaborate commitments or lines of action in accord with their needs and cultural values.
- To maintain communication with the National Directors of the Association, offering them information and formation material so that they might encourage and accompany the National Councils and local groups in an effective manner.
- To supervise the website of the International Association of the Miraculous Medal as a means of information and formation.

22.3.2. Term of Office

The term of office of the Sub-director General is left to the decision of the Superior General and shall be as indicated in writing at the time of his/her appointment. It should not be longer than six years even though he/she could be appointed for a second term of three year.

22.4 The General Council

22.4.1. Members

In addition to the elected members, the following are part of the General Council: the Director General, the Sub-director General, a general counselor from the Daughters of Charity, the executive secretary and the treasurer. These are the “seniors officials”. (cf. Canon 318, § 2) for the Association.

22.4.2. Meetings

The General Council will meet at least once a year. This meeting is convoked and presided by the Director General or the Sub-Director General or someone designated by the Director General. It is good for the members of the Council to be in communication with one another throughout the year.

22.4.3. Functions

- To propose reflection themes on important aspects of the life and activity of the Association
- To assure the encouragement, good communication and support with and among the Association on the international and/or national level through correspondence, visits and other possible means
- To evaluate the approved commitments of the General Assembly and other international meetings and to carry out the decisions that were taken.
- To prepare the General Assembly and international meetings.
- To study and approve the budget and the year end balance report presented by the treasurer.
- To be vigilant with regard to the fulfillment of the General Statutes.
- To designate liquidators of goods according to the norms established by the General Council, in the case that the Association is dissolved.

22.4.4. Term of Office

The three members elected by the General Assembly will exercise their office until the next assembly and can be re-elected for a second term.

22.5. General Secretariat

22.5.1. Composition

The General Secretariat is composed of the Sub-director General, the executive secretary, and the general treasurer. These persons are appointed by the Director General after consulting with the General Council of the Association and, if they are member of the Congregation of the Mission or the Company of the Daughters of Charity, their respective Visitors and Visitatrices. These persons can also be lay members of the Association.

22.5.2. Functions of the General Secretariat

- To promote the vitality of the association through the execution of the proposed actions of the General Council.
- To promote unity among the National Associations
- To provide information about the life of the Association.
- To receive notification of appointments that take place on the national level as well as notification concerning the creation of new Associations
- To organize and carry out in the international forum meetings and other initiatives that the Director General and the General Council judge to be effective in promoting the spiritual and apostolic life of the Association
- To maintain the archives up to date.
- To present at the beginning of the year a provisional budget to the General Council and at the same time the balance from the previous year.

22.5.3. Term of Office

The term of office of the General Secretary and the General Treasurer is left to the decision of the Director General, but shall not be for more than six years and they can be re-appointed for second term of three years.

23. National Level

- 23.1 In order to establish a National Association it is required that their Statutes be approved by the Director General.
- 23.2. In the National Statutes particular norms should be established with regard to formation, the organization of members, rights and obligations of the members and the apostolic work that the Association proposes to undertake. The Statutes should also indicate the manner of forming a local Association, the organization of roles and the elaboration of national and local work projects.
- 23.3. The Miraculous Medal Association will have a National Council defined in the National Statutes and approved by the Director General.
- 23.4. The function of the National Director is to represent the Director General according to the attributes indicated in the National Statutes.
- 23.5. The National Director will inform the Director General about the state of the Association in the country. A copy of this report will be sent to the Sub-director General. This report will be submitted at least once a year.

24. Local Level

- 24.1 The local groups or centers, with their activities, are the true life of the Association.
 - 24.2 To begin a new group of the Association it is necessary to receive the approval the National Council and the written consent from the competent ecclesiastical authority in virtue of the common law and our own law.
- 25.** Both the General Council and the National and local Council are at the service of the Association and the members in general.

VII – FINANCES

26. The Miraculous Medal Association is a not-for-profit organization. Its members are conscious of the fact that the goods they administer are the patrimony of the poor and have to be at the service of the Association and its apostolic ends. All of this has to be done according to what is stated in the Statutes.

26.1 The General Council, as well as the national councils and local councils, will appoint a treasurer who will be in charge of administering the goods of the Association according to its ends and under the direction of its respective councils.

26.2 These treasurers ought to periodically give an account of their administration to

the members of the council. The General Council must give an annual account of its finances.

Other councils must give an account in the manner specified in the National Statutes.

26.3. The treasurers, on the different levels, will undertake an annual inventory of goods.

26.4. For the functioning of the General Council and the Secretariat, the Association in each country will contribute an annual quota that is determined by the General Assembly. They will also donate annually a reasonable contribution to defray the expenses and support the projects of the General Council.

VIII – DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

27. The Director General of the Association could, for a justified reason, request the Holy See to dissolve the Association.

27.1. The General Council would then make the corresponding liquidations.

27.2. After all debts have been settled, the goods that remain will be used for the poor as designated by the Director General.

27.3. The text of article 27 ought to be included in the National Statutes so that it might be aptly applied in the case of the dissolution of a National and/or Local Association.

IX – OBSERVATION AND FINAL EXHORTATION

28. In those matters not expressly indicated in the present Statutes, the Association will be governed by what is decreed in the universal law of the Church with regard to the associations of the faithful.

29. The members, aware that *Mary taken up to heaven ... did not lay aside this salvific duty, but by her constant intercession continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation (Lumen Gentium, 62)*, should endeavor to repeat frequently the words that appear on the medal, *Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you!* Moreover the members should recall that *true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues (Lumen Gentium, 67)*