

## **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.*

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Core Themes**

1. Apostolic Commitment and Task
2. Fidelity

#### **Keys to Understanding**

**A.** To be a Salesian Cooperator requires a free vocational response based on the call to adhere to one's Baptismal Promises and to the apostolic project wished by Don Bosco. For one's entire life, apostolic commitment and the fidelity of the Salesian Cooperator are strictly bound to each other and attain full efficacy in response to the gift received from the Lord for the Church. Conscious of the fact that being a Salesian Cooperator is not an honorary title and that it conforms to one's personal abilities and situations, the Cooperators:

- live their faith and their spiritual life in the knowledge that these cannot be divorced from *daily life*;
- develop their Baptismal commitment as disciples of Christ and as members of the Church, keeping in mind both the Divine and human aspects;
- live the Gospel of Christ and assimilate the Salesian Spirit and educational method at the school of Don Bosco;
- get involved in the Church and in the Association with availability and an attitude of service both to the parish and in the diocese;
- place particular importance on participation in and support of the development of the ecclesial pastoral; and
- give witness by upholding the values of the Faith in the Salesian way, as true missionary apostles of their Christian responsibilities in their family, at work, and in their social and civic duties.

**B.** Salesian Cooperators support each other, united on their journey of faith, in their commitment and in developing their human, personal, spiritual, and apostolic gifts in:

- fidelity to the commitments requested of the Salesian Family by creating living environments and lively communities which are at the service of poor youth after the manner of Don Bosco. In an educative spirit, they put into practice Jesus' compassion and Don Bosco's heart;
- fidelity to the Church, to the Religious Community, and to their Center, by living their Baptismal Promises and their Cooperator *Promise* of fidelity to their vocation, with a precise identity within the Salesian Family;
- fidelity to the true message of God's Word which asks us to be countercultural by taking a stand against the main thought of modern society which seeks to lay claim to and exalt individualism and libertinism;
- fidelity to God, which is not egocentric but, rather, open to others, based on the faith that God is always our Father, in all the many situations of one's personal life: successes and failures, falls and picking oneself up again;
- fidelity to the Christian life begun in Baptism. The Lord is merciful, ever ready to forgive and to fortify our faith;
- fidelity to Don Bosco, our spiritual guide and teacher. The *Project of Apostolic Life* traces out the way to make the recommendations of our Spiritual Father materialize, constituting a pedagogical tool for reaching sanctity. It is a help and not a code of law; it does not impose but proposes; and
- fidelity to the Renewal of the *Promise*. This is a moment of public, privileged, and meaningful celebration which is to be carried out autonomously in the modality defined by the individual Council. One particular modality is foreseen for those Salesian Cooperators living at a distance from a Center: they may renew their *Promise* with their Center of reference or at a different time – foreseen by the local Council – in which certain Salesian Cooperators go to pay them a visit; however, communication lines are always to remain open with them regarding the life of the Center. The affection and prayer which unite them as members of the Association and of the Salesian Family are always to be underlined.

The Local Council of the Center to which the Cooperator belongs, being the depository of sensitive data, notes the date of renewal in its register of members.

## **References**

*Christifideles Laici* 60.

*Costituzioni FMA* (1982) art. 73; *Regolamenti FMA* 1982 art. 67.

*Costituzioni SDB* (1984) art 5 e 47; *Regolamenti SDB* 1984 art. 36, 38.

## *from the Regulations to the Project of Apostolic Life*

### **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 makings 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."

§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 Sisters 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.

## **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 Family 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.

**from *The Identity of the Salesian Cooperator***  
*Please see excerpts to Articles 5, 22, 23, and 25 in this Compendium*

### **from the 2018 *Handbook of St. Philip the Apostle Province***

**Art 47.** With the understanding that one's spiritual growth and formation as a human being, a Christian, and a Salesian Cooperator is primarily the responsibility of the Cooperator him/herself, each Cooperator sees to the personal fulfillment of the commitments assumed when making his/her Promise to live according to the vocational path traced out in the Project of Apostolic Life. Therefore, each Salesian Cooperator is individually responsible to make every effort possible to attend offered Formation Days, Retreats, and Family celebrations each year. When impeded from attending a particular Day or weekend due to other commitments, he/she will arrange to participate in other spiritual and formative moments offered in the local Church or in the broader Salesian Family.

**Art 48.** On its part, the Local Council, in keeping with Article 14 §2 + §3 of the Regulations, approaches the Member who has not fulfilled the requirements, outlined in Article 47 above, after a period of three years so as to listen and dialogue as to why it is so, and then to encourage the fulfillment of their commitment both out of a sense of duty and out of the need for spiritual refreshment and growth on the part of all.