



PRESENTATION OF THE NEW STATUTE

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I would like to present on behalf of the commission, formed by Father Antonio Papa, Sister Annamaria Babbini, Sister Mariangela Casagrande, taking the place of sister Teresita Pamplona, Adele and Giancarlo Cremonesi and myself, the New Statute of the Lay Canossian Association. This present Statute is fruit of the revision done on the previous version of the statute; work, that during the intermediate stage of the revision, after a first draft elaborated by the commission, had seen the collaboration of all canossians through the various religious realities and those through the lay of the local communities.

I take up once again the reasons that animated this work, going through some significant stages that enabled the writing up of the new statute and I would like to present part of the document that have been mostly modified or integrated.

1. A brief history...

The desire of Magdalene to identify and form lay people available to participate to the charism of "her least Institute" brought her to elaborate the "Plano of the Tertiaries" (1823) that is, projects for adults who, remaining in the lay state, shared her spirituality, her style of life and her great apostolic passion: *"above all to make Jesus known"*. In the history of the Institute, the laity shared in the charism in different groups but always keeping faith to Magdalene's understanding that of being called to the "perfection of charity, beginning from the Paschal Mystery

In 1950, the Church approved the "Statutes of the Canossian Collaborators" and in later years it needed to be reformulated. During the sixties, the Vatican council II opens to laity theological-pastoral perspectives, a new challenge that was taken up by the sisters of the Daughters of Charity Institute, and added with the prophetic insights of the Foundress, gave life to a ferment of renewal already starting from 1984 during the XI General Chapter of the Institute. However, it was with the General Chapter of 1990 that gave way to the official writing up of the new Statute. In February 1991, the Canossian Sisters already had Statutes approved by the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life, Statute approved with the aim to *"The aim of the Association is the active participation of the members in the life of the local Church, collaborating also in the specific ministries of the Daughters of Charity: education, evangelization, pastoral care of the sick, formation of laity and spiritual exercises"*.

After twenty years, more precisely the 8th of February 2011, the Congregation of Consecrated life Institutes *"approves ad experimentum for five years the text of the Statutes, with the included modifications, of the Association Lay Canossians"*. (cfr Decree)

2. Why renewal ...

The reasons that pushed the renewal of the Statute of 1991 were essentially two:

- The decision to share the lay Canossian Statute between the two institutes of the Sons and Daughters of Canossian Charity. Decision that initiated with the International Congress 2000 and made possible with the request, in 2003, of the Superior General, Father Antonio Papa, and the Superior Mother, Sister Marie Remedios, to renew the Statute so that all laity of the world, in some way connected to the two congregations, could make the same journey;
- The need for renewal for a major enculturation of Magdalene's charism to the present time.



3. Work scheme ...

During 2003 a Statute structure-outline on which to work on was examined. In 2006, after the International Congress, the commission elaborated a first draft of the statute that was sent to the various Canossian realities around the world. The work group, after having elaborated the various observations received, made the necessary integrations. The modified text was presented to the Vatican, to the Congregation of Consecrated life and Society of Apostolic life Institutes, February 2011 and approves it “ad experimentum” for five years.

4. The statute and its most important parts ...

See slides

integration n° 10 of the Statute Mission

In the part referring to the documents, it can be found a section dedicated to **MISSIONARY FORMATION**. It can be found in the Canossian charism, the missionary attitude, originated from S. Magdalena from the evangelic message : “Go out to the whole world” finds a deep echo in Magdalene making here ready to even “to go, for God and for His service, even to the Poles, were it necessary.”

He who, lay Canossian, feels to be called to the missionary vocation must take up a journey of particular preparation. In the documents it is indicated, as well, the signs of this vocation that enable the lay person to verify his missionary calling, the necessary requirements and the areas of testimony. The necessity of a solid formation is emphasized at all levels: human, spiritual, doctrinal and apostolic. This preparation is offered by the local coordinating team, after having informed the International coordinating team and the Superior generals of both institutes. It will be the Superior Generals and the International Coordinating team to decide on the time and places of the mission.

integration al n° 11 of the Statute Regulations

In the document **INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS**, the chapters. V, VI and VII of the Statute are further elaborated.

In particular, in **cap. V, relative to the formation**, the various stages for the initial encounter and journey to the association are indicated: encounter and meeting with a group of Lay Canossians, the participation of formative meetings, the presentation of a written request to the local Coordinating team that informs the Provincial Coordinating Team, the Promise or Prayer of Entrustment (the two models can be found in the appendix of the Statute), the enrolment in the special register of the Association and the receiving of the Lay Canossian medal, as a sign of belonging. The names of the registered persons, with the personal data and a brief curriculum, are sent to the General Curia, to the International Animator and the International Coordinating Team. The Lay Canossian is then asked to undertake the ongoing formation and the annual renewal, if possible, to the Promise or Prayer of Entrustment.

Cap. VI: Organization of the Lay Canossian Association. The duties of the International Coordinating team are defined and then those of the single members of the team: President, Secretary, Bursar, Formator, Animator. At point n° 12 it is indicated the procedures of the Coordinating team’s renewal, (already illustrated) that has a mandate of five years with the possibility of renewal for another five years, and, as well, the international convention is defined. So as with the organization of the association at a Provincial level, the duties for the Convention, the coordinating team are defined: coordinator, secretary, bursar, animator, Provincial councilor of reference. At the end, the duties of the Local Coordinating team are established: monthly



meetings, annual formation planning according to the indications given by the Provincial Coordinating team, keeps contacts with other groups, with the local Church and with the institute, accepts and admits the new candidates to the Association.

Cap. VII: RELATION OF THE “LAY CANOSSIAN” ASSOCIATION WITH THE TWO CANOSSIAN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES

The duties of the Superior Generals and of the General Councillors of reference are defined. It is indicated, as well, the necessity to live in spiritual and committing communion according to the style of the of the family.

integration a n° 12 Private Vows.

In the documents section, there is a part where the **CONSECRATION WITH PRIVATE VOWS** are mentioned. The Statute foresees the possibility of consecration to one or more private vows. For those who intend tying themselves tightly to God, so as that their person can be reserved to the Lord (consecration), has a specific guide. The formation to the consecration converges, in a special way, to the “INSPICE ET FAC SECUNDUM EXEMPLAR” ”, essential rule of life that imitate the virtues that our Great Model, Jesus Christ on the Cross. The various vows are listed and explained: patience, docility, meekness, gentleness, charity, humility, poverty, obedience, apostolate. As well, it is indicated the contents and the sources of the formation, the importance of prayer, in systematic times, to the spiritual exercises and spiritual direction. The following the methods on taking the vows, for the renewal, in private form with the confessor.

integration n° 13 Formation plan

The statute indicates the necessity of formation, just like it was for Magdalena, and she declares the origin of it: “it is work of the Father”. Establishes that there must be an initial formation, and an on-going formation and the final aims are indicated, see the International formation plan for major details, and the provincial and local formations plans must reflect the International formation plan.

Therefore at an international level a **FORMATION PLAN** can be found in the Formation chapter of the Statute. The plan recalls the identity of the lay and specifically that of the lay Canossian, it establishes the general objective of deepen one’s identity as a baptized person and as a Lay Canossian in order to be, in the family, in the Church and in the world, living Charity which is nourished at the foot of the cross by contemplating Christ Crucified and Our Lady of Sorrows.

Then, the specific objectives that touch the three dimensions of the person have been defined: human, to tend towards harmonic and full growth of the person, to the Christian dimension, for growth in faith and the charism forming the heart to look towards the models of the Most Great Love and that of Our Lady of Sorrows. The modalities of the formation, that is, the time, contents, and the sources to which take from are indicated. Some personal and group evaluation forms have been inserted.

integration n° 15 formation of the formators

In the documents part of the statute, a section dedicated to the **FORMATION OF THE FORMATORS** can be found. S. Magdalena underlines the importance of choosing well the formators, this because the good result obtained from the formation depends in largely by the formator. In this way the sources of formation to which the formator must take from have been indicated: Divine Wisdom, the Word, the Teachings of the Church, the charism, the General Plan of Formation. The qualities if the formator have been highlighted: person of faith, of communion,



expert in humanity, open to the universality of the Church, of apostolic zeal, of great honesty and capable of discernment, a flexible person. The service and various duties of the formator have been then indicated, and at last, the modalities for the formation of the formators have been indicated: education, open heart, intense formative period, moments of living together, prayer lived in community, personal encounters and special attention to the individual.

5. Why is a Statute needed...

The statute is: “juridical act that solemnly and formally expresses the fundamental principles that regard the organization of a state or the structure of what so ever association” this is the explanation taken from an Italian dictionary. I ask myself, which value can the statute have for the lay Canossian, or better, for me lay Canossian?

I think back to the very beautiful images of the house that Adele used for her initial lecture, and I think that no house can resist to the weather and to adversities if it doesn't have good foundations and if the various levels are not kept together by good cement. Cement: “substance capable of adhering to materials that are not adhesive and to keep them solidly”. I read this again from by dictionary and I feel that the statute for me as lay Canossian, is that cement that enables me to adhere, as the explanation says, that is to be adhesive, coherent, to a reality to I feel myself part of: to be lay Canossian. The statute clarifies my identity and calls me to my responsibilities, that is responding coherently to that call of being lay and of being Canossian. But the definition, suggests something again very important: the cement solidly unites elements that otherwise could not adhere together. The Statutes enables the create unity, adherence therefore union, as communion. The statute enables me to be united to the other members of the association, because I am not a free batter but an element of a great construction that cannot lose sight of the initial blueprint, idealized by Magdalena, that shared by all the lay Canossian: evangelization and charity.