

finium eorum promoverè ac adjuvare debent, non autem impedire aut suffocare. Causa illius inquietudinis et "criseos auctoritatis," quae nostris temporibus non tantum in societate civili, sed etiam in Ecclesia et in communitatibus religiosis passim manifestatur, magna ex parte in eo est, quod leges et formae institutionales saepe statui rerum hodierno vel iustis vitae exigentiis non sufficienter respondent et subditis non raro uti praescripta obsoleta, aliena, irrationabilia apparent. Organorum competentium est providere, ut leges et institutiones revera vitam hodiernam communitatis promoveant et supportent, neque uti obsoletae vel incongruae vitae progressionem impediunt. Quod etiam Concilium Vaticanum II a nobis postulat, decernens ut constitutiones necnon rationes regiminis monasteriorum, congregationum et Ordinis examini subiiciamus et congruenter recognoscamus, suppressis praescriptis quae obsoleta sunt.

89. Ut structura regiminis et legislatio vero sensu usui vitae inservire possint, sequentia prae oculis habenda sunt:

- a) Leges non sunt nimis multiplicandae: libertas actionis et initiativae non sunt nimis restringendae normis minutiosis. Illae tantum materiae legislationi subiiciendae sunt, quae quandam uniformitatem actionis vel coordinationem virium ad fines communes exigunt. Cetera vero responsabilitati superiorum et officialium vel liberae et responsabili decisioni confratrum consoriorumque relinquenda sunt.
- b) Leges vitae condicionibus continuo sunt aptandae. Cum vitae condiciones, exigentiae et munera continuo mutantur, et nostra aetate mutationes singulariter profundae ac celeres sint, etiam media vitae ordinandae, i.e. leges et institutiones iuridicae, iterum iterumque recognoscendae et reformandae sunt. Etiam media vel instituta quae aliquo tempore utilia, immo optima videbantur, mutatis temporum circumstantiis vim utilitatemque perdere, immo progressui vitae nocere possunt. Proposita et praescripta ipsorum fundatorum quoad organisationem vitae monasticae vel structuras iuridicas, licet magna in aestimatione habenda, non sunt tamen normae quasi immobiles vel perennes, nam et ipsa videlicet connexa sunt cum condicionibus mutabilibus sui temporis. Prudenter ergo considerandum est, utrum et inquantum novis vitae exigentiis respondeant.

uals and the community, and should help them reach their goals. They should not hinder or suffocate them. The cause of the unrest and the "crisis of authority" that is manifested in our times not only throughout civil society but also the Church and religious communities derives to a large extent from the fact that laws and institutional structures often do not correspond sufficiently to today's circumstances or to the just demands of life. Not infrequently these laws and institutional structures appear to subordinates as obsolete, foreign, and irrational. It is the responsibility of the competent authorities to see that the laws and institutions truly promote and support the life of today's community and that they not be obsolete and incongruous and thus impede the progress of life. The Second Vatican Council also demands this of us when it decrees that we submit to an examination and appropriately revise the constitutions and manner of governance of the monasteries, the congregations and the Order, and that we suppress those precepts that are obsolete.

89. So that the form of governance and the legislation can in a true sense prove useful for our life, the following must be kept in mind:

- a) Laws are not to be overly multiplied: freedom for action and initiatives should not be excessively restricted by detailed norms. Only those matters are to be subject to legislation which demand a certain uniformity of action and coordination of resources for common goals. Other matters, however, are to be left to the responsibility of superiors and officials or the free and responsible decision of the brothers/sisters.
- b) Laws are to be constantly adapted to the conditions of life. Since the conditions, demands, and tasks of our life are constantly changing, and in our age the changes are uniquely profound and fast, the means of organizing life — that is, the laws and juridical structures — are also to be reviewed and revised again and again. Even the means and structures which at one time seemed useful, indeed very good, can lose their force and usefulness as the circumstances of life change. In fact, they can harm the progress of life. Although they are to be held in great esteem, the Founders' proposals and precepts with regard to the organization of monastic life and its juridical structures are not as it were unchanging and everlasting norms, for they were themselves connected with the changeable conditions of their own times. One must therefore consider prudently whether and

Neque talis recognitio legum vel normarum vitae diutius differenda est, usquedum propter normas nimis rigidas vel obsoletas vitalitas communitatis perit et tensiones periculosae inter consodales oriuntur. In ipsis Constitutionibus et Statutis localibus includendae sunt vitae ac rationes legitimae quibus revisio vel mutatio legum a communitate respectiva postulari et effici possint.

- c) Continuitas legis: traditio respicienda. Vita, quamvis varia et mutabilis, miram tamen continuitatem et tenacitatem habet. Nos quoque attendere debemus in vitae nostrae ordinatione, ne traditionem illam totalem Cisterciensem, de qua iam locuti sumus, rejiciamus et continuitatem vitae monasticae violenter interrompamus. Sicut damnosum est retinere formas organisationis obsoletas et leges inadaequatas, ita etiam periculosum esset divellere nosmetipsos a valoribus traditionis nostrae, et nomine accommodationis evertere elementa fundamentalia vitae nostrae. Ergo etiam in revisione structurae iuridicae vel in nova legislatione experientias praeteritorum saeculorum documenta habeamus oportet, et naturalem continuitatem harmoniamque cum traditione servemus. Id tamen cavendum est, ne fidelitas erga traditionem ducat ad immobilismum vel falsam securitatem, neque caecos nos reddat erga nova vitae postulata sive in Ecclesia sive in societate nostri temporis.
- d) Leges aliave statuta tunc tantum usui vitae prosunt, si normam agendi prudenter possibilem praescribunt. Si enim nimis ardua vel ab homine hodierno aliena definiunt, aut ad negligentiam legum invitant, aut onera importabilia imponendo, etiam homines prompti animi ad acerbitatem inducunt. Sit ergo lex simplex et clara, ne nimia implicatione vel ambiguitate normalem vitae cursum conturbet. Respiciat semper realitatem nostrorum monasteriorum et sodalium, neque iniungat ea quae ab eorum vitae formis prorsus aliena vel remota sunt, quin tamen imperfectiones vel vitia existentia approbet. Sit moderata, et magis viam boni positive ostendens, quam negative deterrens, ut a monachis bonae voluntatis libenter impleri possit. Eadem ratio etiam monet nos normam agendi aliquando non tam per leges vel praescriptiones stricte dictas determinari

to what degree they correspond to the new demands of life.

Nor should one postpone too long such a review of the laws and norms for life until a community's vitality perishes and dangerous tensions arise among the confreres because of excessively rigid and obsolete norms. In the constitutions and in the local statutes themselves, the manner and legitimate reasons are to be included by which the revision and change of the laws can be petitioned and carried out by the respective community.

- c) The continuity of legislation: tradition is to be respected. Although varied and changeable, life has nevertheless a marvelous continuity and tenacity. In the organization of our life, we should also be careful not to throw away the whole Cistercian tradition, about which we have just spoken, and thus violently interrupt the continuity of monastic life. Just as it is destructive to retain obsolete forms of organization and inadequate laws, it would also be dangerous to uproot ourselves from the values of our tradition and in the name of accommodation to overturn fundamental elements of our life. So also in the revision of a juridical structure or in the formulation of new legislation, we should regard the experiences of previous ages as a model and should preserve the natural continuity and harmony with the tradition. We must, however, be careful that fidelity to tradition not lead to immobility or false security, and that it not blind us to the new demands of life whether in the Church or in the society of our time.
- d) Laws and other statutes are only then useful for life if they prescribe a norm for acting that is prudently possible. For if they define things that are too difficult or that are foreign to modern man, they invite him to neglect the laws or even lead well-intentioned men to bitterness by imposing insupportable burdens. The law should, therefore, be simple and clear so that it not disturb the normal course of life with too much complication or ambiguity. It should always respect the reality of our monasteries and their members, nor should it enjoin what is foreign to or removed from their way of life. On the other hand, they should not approve existing imperfections or vices. It should be moderate and should positively point out the path to the good rather than serving negatively as a deterrent so that monks of good will can fulfill it willingly. This same principle

posse, sed multo aptius per directivas magis flexibiles, demonstrando plures possibiles agendi vias.

5. Partes communitatum in legibus ferendis

90. Vitae modernae condiciones exigunt, et etiam, Concilium Vaticanum II postulat, ut in legibus praeparandis vel decisionibus communitatem tangentibus efformandis omnia membra aliquam partem habeant. Membra enim communitatum normas vitae vel decisiones factas non immerito alienas a se sentient, si omnia superiorum vel paucorum consiliariorum iudicio decernuntur. Quae participatio omnium, diverso quidem modo et gradu fieri potest (consultatione praevia singulorum et communitatum; voto capituli conventualis; electione officialium et delegatorum; iure propositiones faciendi, etc.), id tamen omnino necessarium est, ut ubique et in quocumque plano structurae Ordinis formae aptae participationis realis et activae instituantur.

6. De exercitio auctoritatis personalis

91. Dum leges aliaeque normae scriptae aspectus magis generales et permanentes vitae monasticae regulant, ordinatio vitae concretae quotidianae et decisiones particulares in multis ad auctoritatem personalem superiorum et officialium pertinent. Exercitium huius auctoritatis nostris temporibus certe difficilior atque implicatior evadit quam antea, tum ex novis temporum adiunctis, tum ex mutata habitudine hominis moderni ad auctoritatem.

Ex una parte enim propter celerrimam rerum mutationem et evolutionem, quae vix praevideri, nedum legibus generalibus regi potest, causae quamplurimae personalem et subitam superiorum decisionem exquirunt, et quidem in materiis sat complexis et peritiam technicam saepe requirentibus. Ex altera vero parte homines hodierni ipsum officium superioris minus reverentur, sed qualitates et perfectiones humanas saepe nimio gradu ab eis expostulant, et de erratis et deficientiis superiorum aperte et acriter iudicant; rationes mandati clare perspicere volunt, neque obedientiam facile exhibent, si mandatum personali eorum iudicio vel commodo repugnat.

Licet munus eorum, qui auctoritatem in communitate exercent, certe arduum sit, non est tamen labor frustra susceptus, immo si aptae

also advises us that sometimes the norm for acting can be determined not so much through laws and precepts strictly speaking but much more appropriately through more flexible guidelines, by showing several possible ways of acting.

5. The Role of the Community in Passing Legislation

90. In preparing laws or in reaching decisions that affect the community, the conditions of modern life call for and the Second Vatican Council demands that all members of the community play a role. For the members of communities will rightly feel that the norms of their lives and the decisions made are foreign to them if all matters are determined by the judgment of the superiors or a few counselors. This participation of all can take place in differing ways and degrees (by the prior consultation of individuals and communities; by the vote of the conventual chapter; by the election of officials and delegates; by the right to make proposals, etc.). It is, however, altogether necessary that everywhere and on every level of the Order's structure appropriate forms for real and active participation be established.

6. The Exercise of Personal Authority

91. While laws and other written norms regulate the more general and permanent aspects of monastic life, in many matters the organization of concrete daily life and particular decisions belong to the personal authority of the superiors and officials. The exercise of this authority has certainly become more difficult and more involved than before both because of the new circumstances of our times and because of the changed condition of modern man toward authority.

On the one hand, because of very rapid changes and developments, which can hardly be foreseen much less governed by general laws, a great many issues call for the personal and immediate decision of the superiors, and that often in matters that are very complex and call for professional expertise. On the other hand, men today respect the superior's office itself less but often demand of the superiors human qualities and perfections to an excessive degree. They pass judgment openly and bitterly on the superiors' errors and deficiencies, they want to see clearly the reasons for an order, and they do not readily show obedience if an order opposes their personal judgment or convenience.

Although the task of those who exercise authority in the community is certainly difficult, it is not a labor taken up in vain. Indeed, if

formae et methodi gubernandi efformentur, multo efficacior fieri potest quam antea quocumque tempore : sodales enim nostra aetate promptiores sunt ad cooperationem sinceram et activam, ad curam sollicitudinemque communis boni cum superioribus participandam, et ad hanc participationem etiam melius praeparati sunt.

92. Ad hoc novum genus exercendae auctoritatis pertinet,
- a) ut superiores de rebus monasterii vel ordinis sodales certiores faciant, difficultates vel problemata sincere et aperte eis pandant, eorumque sententias propositionesque exquirant et cognoscant;
 - b) ut prudentem criticam vel censuram non reformident, neque necessarias emendationes perficere dedignentur;
 - c) ut agnoscentes sui muneris complexitatem et multiplici-tatem, neque se solos omnia perficere posse arbitrantur, partes et functiones suas cum peritis sodalibus communi-cent, eorumque experientiam ultro requirant;
 - d) ut et singulis confratribus, et praesertim officialibus vel speciali muneri assignatis amplam libertatem agendi concedant, eorumque competentiam in munere assignato respiciant; sed simul relationem accuratam de iis quae eorum curae vel executioni mandata sunt, requirere non negligant.

B. De regimine monasteriorum

93. Expositis rationibus generalibus, quae in tota ordinatione et gubernio Ordinis et communitatum respiciendae et applicandae sunt, iam ad quaestiones speciales regiminis monasterii, congregationis et Ordinis tractandas veniamus. Initium autem facimus a monasterio, quod est elementum primarium et fundamentale organisationis monasticae. Vitae autem monasterialis cardo est Abbas, ideo oportet ut antea eius imaginem describamus.

appropriate forms and methods of governing are worked out, it can become much more effective than in any age before: for in our age confreres are readier to cooperate sincerely and actively, to share with their superiors in the care and concern for the common good, and they have been even better prepared for this participation.

- 92 To this new type of exercising authority the following belong:
- a) that superiors inform the members about matters of the monastery and the Order, that they apprise the members sincerely and openly of difficulties and problems, and that they seek out and learn their opinions and proposals;
 - b) that they not fear prudent criticism or blame, and that they not disdain to carry out necessary corrections;
 - c) that they recognize the complexity and multiplicity of their task and not think that they can carry out everything alone, and that they share their roles and functions with qualified members and freely seek out their experience;
 - d) that they grant ample freedom for action to individual confreres and especially to officials or those assigned a special duty, and that they respect their competence in the assigned task; but at the same time they should not neglect to require an accurate report on the matters that have been entrusted to their care and execution.

B. The Governance of the Monastery

93. Having presented the general considerations which must be respected and applied in the overall organization and government of the Order and of communities, let us now treat the special questions of the governance of a monastery, a congregation and the Order. We begin with the monastery because it is the primary and fundamental element of monastic organization. Monastic life, however, hinges on the abbot. We must therefore sketch his profile first.

1. De abbate monasterii eiusque adiutoribus

a) Abbas pastor animarum, mediator Verbi Dei et discretor spirituum

94. Abbas praeprimis est pastor animarum, i.e. munus eius est ante omnia spirituale et ad bonum animarum directum. Auctoritas eius est ministerium, habet characterem humilis servitii, iuxta doctrinam et exemplum Christi cuius vices gerit. Ideo decet, ut paternam caritatem qua Pater monachos diligit, erga fratres suos exprimat et ostendat.

95. Abbas est insuper Verbi Dei mediator, implens officium interpretis divinarum Scripturarum in multimodis adiunctis vitae quotidianae. Numquam praevalere potest divino Verbo abbas, immo magis ac magis subiectus ei esse debet.

96. Neque minoris momenti est aliud officium, quod Apostolus discretionis spirituum nomine indicat. Abbas ergo studeat discernere utrum unusquisque suorum monachorum a Dei Spiritu ducatur, an aspirationibus unice terrenis sui ipsius ingenii vel a spiritibus mendacii decipiat. Ut autem vocem Spiritus a qualibet alia voce discernere possit, ipse etiam in rebus spiritualibus et doctrina et experientia versatus esse debet.

b) Abbas centrum unitatis

97. Abbas est centrum unitatis communitatis, singulorum conspirationem in fines communes promovens, studia et labores omnium coordinans. Ideo abbas personalitatem omnium sodalium magni aestimare, comprehendere et cum respectu debito tractare debet. Abbati pro omnibus tempus disponibile et semper cor apertum habenti cura erit non de qualibet, sed de activa et responsabili obedientia et de cooperatione cordiali singulorum, ut dotes omnium in servitium Dei fructificent; quaeret promovere dialogum sincerum et apertum; curarum et consiliorum de vita monasterii et omnium negotiorum domus sodales participes faciet, nam eorum quippe res in his agitur. Assumet tamen responsabilitatem quae ei ex munere incumbit, si clare debet decernere id quod ei post diligens examen Dei voluntas esse videtur.

1. The Abbot of the Monastery and His Helpers

a) *The Abbot as Shepherd of Souls, Mediator of the Word of God, and Discerner of Spirits*

94. The abbot is above all the shepherd of souls – that is, his task is before all else spiritual and directed to the good of souls. His authority is a ministry and has the character of humble service according to the teaching and example of Christ, whom he represents. Therefore it is fitting that he express and show toward his brothers that paternal love with which the Father loves the monks.

95. The abbot is, moreover, the mediator of the Word of God, fulfilling the office of interpreter of the Divine Scriptures in the manifold circumstances of daily life. The abbot can never overshadow the Divine Word. He should rather become more and more subject to it.

96. A further office is of no less importance, which the Apostle calls the discernment of spirits. The abbot should therefore strive to discern whether each of his monks is being led by the Spirit of God or is being deceived by the solely earthly desires of his own nature and by lying spirits. To be able to distinguish the voice of the Spirit from any other voice, he should himself also be well versed in spiritual matters both in theology and in experience.

b) *The Abbot as the Center of Unity*

97. The abbot is the center of the community's unity, promoting the individuals' cooperation toward common goals, coordinating the efforts and work of all. The abbot should therefore prize highly, understand, and treat with due respect the personalities of all the members. Available and with a heart always open to all, the abbot should concern himself not with just any kind of obedience but with active and responsible obedience and with the individuals' heartfelt cooperation so that the gifts of all might bear fruit in the service of God. He will seek to promote sincere and open dialogue. He will make all the members of the house participants in the concerns and plans for the monastery's life and in all its business, for it is indeed their business that is at issue in these matters. He will, nevertheless, accept the responsibility that belongs to him in virtue of his office if he must determine clearly what seems to him after careful examination to be the will of God.

98. Abbas uti promotor unitatis seponet omne id quod ad sui separationem a sodalibus tendit; vitam communitariam cum fratribus ducet, se illis exemplar praebens fidelitate et zelo; ad minimum restringet, pro posse, ea quae absentiam suam a monasterio exigunt. Factus enim Abbas remanet monachus et frater inter fratres, ita ut tamquam unitatis et caritatis centrum totum se pro fratribus in Christi amore impendat.

c) Adiutores abbatis

99. Imago Abbatis, quam traditiones Ordinis et opinionem consodalium sequentes supra depinximus, clare ostendit abbatem tantas et tam differentes partes functionesque habere in vita communitatis, quae raro unquam ab uno homine recte et plene impleri possint. Neque tamen hae partes ac functiones propter humanae personae limitationes simpliciter omitti possunt. Ideo Abbas prudens, suorum officiorum simul et limitationum conscius, providebit, ut adiutores aptos sibi asciscat, non tantum officiales regulares monasterii vel muneribus economicis et administrativis assignatos, sed etiam alios, qui in munere suo pastoralis, spirituali vel in unitate firmanda et studiis singulorum coordinandis sibi auxilium praebere possint.

100. Abbas, suprema directione et inspectione sibi reservata, munera oeconomica et administrativa, quotidianam dispositionem activitatum et negotiorum (permissiones minutas, laboris ordinationem, correspondentiam et hospitem receptionem aliasque relationes), in quantum fieri potest, expertis officialibus aliisque fratribus dignis committit, ut expeditus maneat ad suum munus implendum.

101. Inter officiates monasterii primum locum tenet prior, quo Abbas tanquam proximo utitur laborum socio atque administro, ita ut absente ipso vel impedito, monasterio praesit. Deinde in tironibus educandis atque instituendis sollertiam curamque suam exhibent magister novitiorum et magister professorum, quorum quidem officium, quia spes messis in semine est, plurimum momenti habet et ponderis. Magister autem liturgiae abbati assistat in praeparanda et curanda digna celebratione Eucharistiae et Operis Dei. In temporalium vero rerum

98. As the promoter of unity the abbot will set aside all that tends to separate him from his confreres; he will lead a life in common with his brothers, by his fidelity and zeal offering himself to them as an example. In as much as possible, he will restrict to a minimum whatever demands his absence from the monastery. For even though he has been made abbot, he remains a monk and a brother among brothers such that in the love of Christ he gives his whole self for his brothers as the center of unity and love.

c) The Abbot's Assistants

99. The profile of the abbot that we have drawn above following the traditions of the Order and the opinion of our confreres shows clearly that the Abbot has such great and varied roles and functions in the life of the community that rarely can one person fulfill them correctly and fully. Nor can these roles and functions be simply omitted because of the limitations of the human person. Therefore the prudent abbot, aware of his duties and at the same time of his limitations, will see to it that he acquire for himself suitable helpers, not only the regular officials of the monastery or those assigned to financial and administrative jobs but also others who can offer him help in his pastoral and spiritual task and in strengthening the unity and coordinating the efforts of individuals.

100. While reserving the ultimate direction and supervision for himself, the abbot entrusts to skilled officials and other worthy brothers, insofar as it is possible, the financial and administrative tasks, the day-to-day distribution of activities and jobs (specific permissions, organization of work, correspondence, reception of guests, and other affairs) so that he might remain free to carry out his task.

101. Among the officials of the monastery, the prior holds first place, whom the abbot uses as his closest companion and administrator in his jobs so that when he is absent or impeded the prior presides over the monastery. Next, in educating and training the younger members the master of novices and the master of professed monks exercise their skill and concern. Their office, indeed, is of the greatest importance and weight, for the hope of the harvest is in the seed. The Choir Master assists the abbot in preparing and seeing to the worthy celebration of the Eucharist and the Opus Dei. In the administration of the material goods

monasterii administratione abbati operam praestat cellerarius, cuius est rem familiarem curare, necessaria ad domesticam vitam procurare, conservare.

2. De capitulo conventuali et consilio abbatis

102. Quotiescumque de gravioribus monasterii negotiis agitur, praeprimis in casibus in Constitutionibus Congregationum et iure communi praescriptis, Capitulum conventuale participat in regimine domus. Per actum vere collegialem ibi fit electio Abbatis, et modo collegiali decisiones feruntur de actuositate monasterii, de admissione et formatione novorum sodalium, de administratione bonorum.

103. Sed munus Capituli non est restringendum unice ad casus, ubi ex iure communi vel particulari capitulares vota sua deliberativa vel consultiva dare debent; sodales saepius debent ad colloquium coadunari, ad dialogum vere fraternum, ut efficaciter exerceatur sodalium pro bono monasterii participatio et cura. Ideo Capitulum conventuale debet esse etiam forum informationis de rebus monasterii, congregationis et Ordinis, simulque ubi officiales de rebus gestis ac periti de quaestionibus actualibus relationem faciunt.

104. Argumenta in Capitulo tractanda seligantur, cooperante Consilio magis restricto Abbatis, respectu habito desideriorum et problematum a quolibet sodalium propositorum atque tempestive et apte conventui notificentur, ut tempus adsit pro studio quaestionum et reflexione. In quibusdam materiis responsa opportunius scripto dabuntur. Obligatio secreti restringatur ad ea quae discretionem absolute exigant, sed ad extra sodales, ubi de rebus familiae monasticae agitur, discretionem maxima utantur.

105. In singulis communitatibus insuper media apta praevideantur, ope quorum omnes, etiam hi qui extra domum commorantur, de rebus monasterii, congregationis et Ordinis habitualiter, tempestive et accurate informentur.

of the monastery, the cellarer offers assistance to the abbot. It is his task to look after the community's goods, to provide and care for the things necessary for the life of the house.

2. The Conventual Chapter and the Abbot's Council

102. Whenever matters of greater importance for the monastery are concerned, especially in the cases prescribed in the constitutions of the congregations and in common law, the conventual chapter participates in the governance of the house. In a truly collegial act the election of the Abbot takes place there, and in a collegial manner decisions are taken regarding the activity of the monastery, the admission and formation of new members, and the administration of the property.

103. But the task of the Chapter should not be restricted solely to those cases in which the members of the chapter should give their deliberative or consultative votes according to common or particular law. The members should be brought together frequently for discussion, for truly fraternal dialogue, so that the participation and concern of the confreres for the good of the monastery might be exercised effectively. Therefore the conventual chapter should also be a forum for information on matters of the monastery, the congregation, and the Order, and at the same time the place where the officials of the monastery report on their activities and specialists on current issues.

104. Topics to be treated in the Chapter should be selected with the cooperation of the more restricted council of the abbot and with respect to the desires and problems brought forth by any of the brothers. The community should be notified of the topics in a timely and appropriate manner so that there be time for study of the questions and reflection. In certain matters responses will be given more suitably in writing. The obligation of secrecy should be restricted to those matters that absolutely demand discretion. To people outside the monastery, however, the members should use the greatest discretion about matters dealing with the family of the monastery.

105. In individual communities, moreover, the appropriate means should be provided so that by them all members, even those living outside the house, are informed in a timely and accurate manner about the matters of the monastery, the congregation, and the Order.

106. Abbatis Consilium numero membrorum magis restrictum quod "seniorum" saepe appellatur, opportune convocatur pro quavis familiae necessitate vel utilitate necnon pro rebus quae uti secretum tractandae sunt. Huius Consilii fere dimidiam partem conventus eligere solet, alteram abbas nominat.

107. His principiis et consiliis ad effectum deductis, communitates novum vigorem acquirere poterunt, eruntque familiae in domo Dei per caritatem habitantes, atque acies fraternae bene ordinatae unitate firma gaudentes, ubi unusquisque suum munus implens omnibus servit et ab omnibus roboratur.

C. De congregationibus Cisterciensibus

1. Congregationum Cisterciensium origo, ratio et finis

a) *Origo congregationum*

108. S. Benedictus in sua Regula non loquitur de unione monasteriorum inter se, sed solum de ordinatione interna monasterii. Decursu historiae tamen formae coniunctionis monasteriis diversae natae sunt, quarum finis erat, ut vita religiosa in monasteries efficacius et securius ducatur. In quibusdam huius generis unionibus pericula quidem isolationis per organisationem congregationis remota sunt, at autonomia legitima monasteriorum servata est; in aliis autem ad formam centralisatam perventum est, ubi singula monasteria ab aliqua abbatia centrali dependebant, uti fuit in Cluny et in genere etiam in foundationibus a Molesme factis.

109. Fundatores Cistercii iuxta principia in Charta Caritatis exposita et autonomiam legitimam monasteriorum tutam reddere et unionem necessariam mutuamque adiutorium per Capitula Generalia et visitationes annuas stabilire studebant. Attamen cum Ordo magnopere crevisset, et nonnullae condiciones vitae saeculorum decursu mutatae essent, exortae sunt Congregationes, uti superius iam brevissime delineavimus.

Ita nunc Ordo noster de facto constat, uti Capitulum Generale explicite definivit, ex Congregationibus ad normam iuris monasticis:

106. The Council of the Abbot, more restricted in the number of its members and often called the council of "seniors," is convened appropriately for any necessity and need of the family and for matters which must be treated confidentially. The community usually elects about half of this council, while the abbot appoints the other half.

107. If these principles and counsels are put into effect, communities will be able to acquire new vitality, and they will be families living by charity in the house of God. They will be well-ordered ranks of brothers rejoicing in their firm unity, where each fulfills his task, serves all and is strengthened by all.

C. Cistercian Congregations

1. The Origin and Purpose of Cistercian Congregations

a) *The Origin of the Congregations*

108. In his Rule St. Benedict does not speak of the union of monasteries among themselves but only of the internal organization of a monastery. In the course of history, however, various forms of joining monasteries together have come about so that the religious life in the monasteries might be led more effectively and securely. In some of these unions the dangers of isolation were removed through the organization of a congregation, while the legitimate autonomy of the monasteries was preserved. In others, however, a form of centralization was arrived at in which the individual monasteries were dependent on a central abbey, as was the case in Cluny and generally in the foundations made from Molesme.

109. According to the principles set forth in the *Charta Caritatis*, the founders of Citeaux strove both to safeguard the legitimate autonomy of the monasteries and to establish a necessary union and mutual aid through the General Chapters and annual visitations. After the Order had expanded greatly and several conditions of life had changed over the course of the centuries, congregations arose, as we have already very briefly outlined above.

Thus, our Order now consists *de facto* of monastic congregations according to the juridical norm, as the General Chapter has explicitly defined:

1. Congregatione Regularis Observantiae S. Bernardi seu de Castella,
2. Congregatione S. Bernardi in Italia,
3. Congregatione Coronae Aragonum,
4. Congregatione Augiensi,
5. Congregatione B.M.V. Mediatricis Omnium Gratiarum,
6. Congregatione Austriaca,
7. Congregatione Immaculatae Conceptionis B.M.V.,
8. Congregatione Circensi
9. Congregatione Purissimi Cordis B.M. V.,
10. Congregatione Casamariensi,
11. Congregatione Reginae Mundi seu Polonia,
12. Congregatione Brasiliensi,
13. Congregatione S. Familiae et
14. Congregatione Monasteriorum Monialium Cisterciensium de S. Bernardo necnon ex quibusdam monasteriis virorum ac mulierum nulli congregationi incorporatis.

Foederationes Monasteriorum Monialium, quae sunt iuris pontificii, habent magna merita et ad utilitatem monasteriorum et Ordinis munus suum persequentur.

b) De principio subsidiaritatis et pluralismi legitimi in congregatione

110. Principia subsidiaritatis et pluralismi legitimi magnum habent momentum in structura Congregationum. Quae enim monasteria singula pro sua parte efficaci competentia et accuratiori condicionum localium cognitione perficere possunt, iisdem relinquenda sunt. Organorum vero Congregationis est studia singularum communitatum fraterno consilio auxilioque iuvare, earumque nisus ad proposita communia coordinare et abusus si qui irrepererint, corrigere; easque apud auctoritates tum ecclesiasticas tum civiles repraesentare. Secundum principium pluralismi agnoscenda sunt notae specificae et munera specialia monasteriorum et diversitas donorum in concordiam finium communium dirigenda quin unitas Congregationis in periculum ponatur.

111. Inter monasteria, non obstante principio pluralismi, plerumque adest non solum ligamen organisationis iuridicae, sed et ideale quod-

1. The Congregation of the Regular Observance of St. Bernard or of Castella,
2. The Congregation of St. Bernard in Italy,
3. The Congregation of the Corona Aragonum,
4. The Congregation of Mehrerau,
5. The Congregation of the BMV Mediatrix of All Graces,
6. The Congregation of Austria,
7. The Congregation of the Immaculate Conception of the BMV,
8. The Congregation of Zirc,
9. The Congregation of the Most Pure Heart of the BVM,
10. The Congregation of Casamari,
11. The Congregation of Regina Mundi or Poland,
12. The Congregation of Brazil,
13. The Congregation of the Holy Family,
14. The Congregation of the Cistercian Monasteries of Nuns of St. Bernard and of some monasteries of men and of women that are not incorporated into a congregation.

The federations of monasteries of nuns that are of pontifical right have great merit and will pursue their task for the benefit of their monasteries and of the Order.

b) The Principle of Subsidiarity and Legitimate Pluralism in the Congregation

110. The principles of subsidiarity and of legitimate pluralism have great importance in the structure of the congregations. Whatever the individual monasteries for their part can carry out through their effective competence and more accurate knowledge of local conditions should be left to them. It belongs to the organs of the congregation to help the efforts of the individual communities with fraternal advice and aid, to coordinate their efforts toward common goals, and to correct abuses if any should creep in; they also represent them before ecclesiastical and civil authorities. According to the principle of pluralism, the monasteries' specific characteristics and special tasks are to be recognized and the diversity of their gifts is to be directed toward the harmony of common goals lest the unity of the Congregation be endangered.

111. Among the monasteries, the principle of pluralism notwithstanding, there is very often not only the bond of juridical organization but