

**STATUTE
OF THE "ASSOCIATION OF THE VERNIAN
LAITY"**

1. THE NATURE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Art.1

The Vernian Family, which gathers in the name of Mother Antonia, all those who in any way draw inspiration from her (Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea, Missionaries of Charity, lay groups, or any of the individual faithful), a private association of the faithful is formed with the name of the **Vernian Laity Association**. These faithful people wish to attain their Christian vocation through the charisma of the Institute of Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea, according to their lay status, and in communion with the Sisters of the said Institute.

Members intend to live the mystery of the Immaculate Conception spirituality following Mother Antonia's model, in gratitude to God for the gift of the Christian vocation, and to contribute to the Sisters' commitment to charity service and evangelization.

Art.2

Marian spirituality commits its members to cultivate a special devotion to the Immaculate Mary, celebrating her feast with particular solemnity. They are also called to live a proper Christian life, according to each person's state in life, in faithfulness to their own religious duties, in the participation in the Holy Mass and in the practice of the Sacraments. This spirituality draws its inspiration particularly from articles 2 and 3 of the Rule of Life of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea.

"Art.2: In the Immaculate Conception of Mary, we see the mystery of the absolute gratuity of God, who loves and saves, and the total dedication of the creature who offers herself without hesitation. Full of grace in free and gratuitous gift, Mary belongs to God in an exclusive and absolute manner because, Mother of the Word made flesh and united in His whole being in Christ Savior, she cooperated for the salvation of mankind." "Art. 3: In her we find the perfect image of our consecration and the sanctity to which we are called, the inspiring force of the apostolic action. We draw upon the genuine spirit of the Institute by contemplating on her mystery; we learn to be a community which does not belong, all and one for God and for others. Like Mary, and in Mary, we perform our saving charity in Christ with an open disposition towards the needs of our brothers."

Art. 3

The apostolic commitment of charity will be realized in the "maximum attention to the poor and the needy" that are encountered along the way, and in giving, within their possibilities, the proper time and aid in the service of charity. The apostolic commitment to evangelization and to catechesis demands the members above all to start from Christ, as the Holy Father has stated in the Apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, (NMI 31); to pay attention to their own whole spiritual formation and be available to do works of evangelization and catechesis. In such a way, the laity will not only be engaged in realizing their vocation to sanctity, received in Baptism, but will also act as support for other Christian brothers and sisters.

II – GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

Art. 4

The Vernian Laity Association's head office is in Rome, via della Renella 85, near Curia Generalizia delle suore di Carità dell'Immacolata Concezione d'Ivrea, its governing body is divided into three levels: **Local, Regional, and General**

4.1 At local levels there are groups constituted, duly recognized, with their own leader elected by the group itself, every four years.

4.2

At the regional level, a President is elected every four years, by absolute majority by the Regional Assembly, made up of all the members of the Groups who have made the “promise”
The President is assisted by two Counselors, also elected by the Regional Assembly.
The election will take place after an adequate preparation of the Groups, and it will be held in the presence of a member of the General Council or a delegate of the General President.
The regional level scope is determined by the Association President with this Council's consensus.

4.3

At the general level, there is a President aided by four Counselors elected every four years by the General Assembly. The first elected Counselor, acting as Vice President, may be delegated to perform functions or tasks at the President's discretion and will replace the President in case of absence or impediment.

4.4

The General Assembly is the utmost government collegiate organ, it is representative of the entire Association, it is constituted by members by right (President and General Counselors, vernian region Presidents) and by elected members.
It is held every four years and must mainly:
Elect the General President and the four Counselors.
Review the Association's life.
Elaborate the Association program for the next four years.

Art. 5

A group will be considered effectively formed when it is recognized as such by the President of the Association with the consensus of his Council. In the procedure of recognition, the following will be considered, when possible:

- The members must be no less than ten.
- They must not be geographically disperse.
- They must be grouped in such a way that, when possible, they will fulfill the statute's obligations together.
- They must have as a point of reference a religious community of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea.

Art. 6

The local head will function as an internal (between the group and the regional and general leaders), and external liaison. He will be responsible for the group adhering to the Statute of the Association. He will also be the promoter of the life of the group, both for the spirituality and apostleship, and for the development of the Association itself.

Art. 7

The duties of the regional leader are comparable to those of the local leader, but adapted to his level. In carrying out these duties, the leader will need the cooperation of his Council. In particular, he will decide, with the help of his Council, the acceptance of requests for admission of members (in a written statement) and will handle the most pertinent issues which are within his area.

Art. 8

Duties of the President and his Council

8.1

According to the Statute, the general President will be responsible for the life and the development of the entire Association. To this end, he will ensure that the members observe the Statute of the said Association.

He will be aided in the exercise of his duties by his Council.

8.2

In particular, it is the President's duty to keep in contact with the General Superior of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea, particularly what regards fidelity to the charisma, spirituality, apostleship, and formation.

8.3

The general President and his Council will be responsible for verifying the admission of new members, eventually dismissing members from the same Association, and treating the most important Association issues.

III - ADMISSION, DISMISSAL, RESIGNATION

Art. 9

To be admitted, candidates (men and women; married or single) are required to be of legal age, practicing Catholics. After adequate formation, they must be willing to commit themselves to realizing the goals of the Association and to observing the Statute, with a promise of fidelity to be professed, with the appropriate words, possibly during a liturgy, preferably in the Sisters' religious house, and to be renewed yearly on the eighth of December.

Art. 10

Those who have joined as members of the Association may be dismissed by the general President for lack of adherence to their own duties and obligations without having provided an explanation and for not renewing their own commitment to fidelity, after having been reprimanded twice by the regional authority in a written statement or in front of two witnesses.

Art. 11

If anyone has reason to leave the Association, he will have to take up the issue to the proper authority, either locally or regionally.

IV – THE LIFE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Art. 12

The Association will cultivate, in a special manner, the Christian formation of its members, in a way that they will always be suitable to realize its goals. For this purpose, there will be formation meetings according to a precise, yearly program, under the responsibility of the general President and his council.

Art. 13

The annual program will include a spiritual-theological deepened awareness of the vocation and mission of the laity; the apostolic preparation for areas where there is projected collaboration; and a spiritual deepening of the Vernian Family spirituality.

Art. 14

The members are called to operate particularly in the area of the presence of the Sisters of Ivrea and in collaboration with them, in hospitals, in schools, in the parish, in missionary lands, and in other areas in constant contact with the legitimate ecclesiastical authority and in harmony with other ecclesiastical groups.

Art. 15

Every member of the Association will be committed to developing his own spiritual life, through fidelity to his Christian duties and in his proper state to nurture a particular devotion to Mary Immaculate, especially through the recitation of the Holy Rosary, preferably daily; to dedicate oneself to the study of the Catholic faith, particularly in deepening knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, of the catechism of the Catholic church and listening to the words of the Holy Father.

Art. 16

A particular emphasis will be laid on the doctrine of the Church regarding the works of charity: aiding, evangelizing, teaching, and taking special care of the neediest (Cf Rule 1823).

Art. 17

It will be necessary for the group to set aside some time, at least every three months, for a meeting of recollection and prayer, for the group's updating and self examination.

Art. 18

For those desiring to do so, members may participate in prayer time, in the meditation on the Word of God and in family moments of the Sisters 'religious community.

V – ADMINISTRATION

Art. 19

The Association is a non-profit organization. The funds to attain the Association's goals derive from the contribution of its members or others. These funds are administered, at various levels, under the watchful eye of a competent responsible treasurer.

VI. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF IVREA

Art. 20

The Association will realize its goal only in communion with the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea, whom the charisma is derived from. Such particular communion implies that the Association participates in the life and the spirituality of the same Institute, with the knowledge of its history, spirituality, and apostleship.

Art. 21

The General Superior will be the guarantor of the Association's charisma, the spiritual formation of its members and the identity of the same association; especially through the promotion of areas of apostleship and the urgencies to which the commitment must be destined. Those who participate in these duties, at the regional level, are the provincial Superiors.

Art. 22

The General Superior may participate at any time in the Council meetings and in the Association's General Assembly. The general President will always keep the General Superior informed of the status of the Association and will send a yearly progress report.

Art. 23

For its growth and development, the Association sees the necessity of the presence of the Sisters. However, it will be seen to that each member may live his own spirituality according to his own state of life. In particular, it is necessary to avoid all forms of collaboration which do not respect the family secular vocation of the laity and the religious vocation of the Sisters.

VII. – ASSISTANCE OF A PRIEST

Art. 24

It is advised that the life of the Association be accompanied by a priest who will assist in the group's spiritual, doctrinal, and apostolic formation.

VIII – FINAL DISPOSITIONS

Art. 25

The present Statute, valid for the entire Association, may be tailored to adapt to individual regions. Any change must be approved by the general President with the consensus of his Council and by the General Superior of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception of Ivrea. For what is not expressly foreseen by the present Statute, the norms of the Codex Juris Civilis (CJC) will apply.

Assembly decision of 24.10.2015

It comes to the Assembly attention the problem of areas with only one vernian group. It is established that in these particular situations, the Association President will see to it that a Group or Region is constituted and Group of Region discipline will apply to these new realities.

Rome, January 3rd, 2003; modified by the General Assembly December 29th, 2007; modified by the General Assembly October 24th, 2015.