

PONTIFICAL COLLEGE
MARIA MATER ECCLESIAE

STATUTES



Approved by the Congregation for the Clergy. Prot. N. 20190431. February 5, 2019



CONGREGATIO
DE INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA
(DE SEMINARIIS ATQUE STUDIORUM INSTITUTIS)

D E C R E T U M

Futuras evangelizationis et universae christianae vitae sortes in mundo huius temporis e florenti sacerdotalis educationis statu magna ex parte pendere omnes pastores fidelesque firmiter sibi persuasum habent. Quapropter fere ubique terrarum, praesertim autem in multis regionibus Americae, viva desideria et vota manifestantur ut ad seminariorum paedagogicam navitatem solidandam atque altius in dies provehendam sacerdotes peculiari cura praeparentur qui, profunda pietate scientia et genuino Ecclesiae sensu pollentes, pares evadant huiusmodi urgentibus necessitatibus cum vera competentia occurrentis.

Quas iustas Populi Dei aspirationes vivide persentientes atque variis sub aspectibus perpendentes, Superiores Congregationis Legionariorum Christi consilium ceperunt peculiaris internationalis Collegii Romae condendi, ad solos dioecesani cleri candidatos excipiendos destinati, in quo iuvenes a suis Episcopis missi per convenientem disciplinam vitae atque solida philosophica ac theologica studia in utroque casu usque ad academicum Licentiae gradum protracta, necessarias spirituales intellectuales ac pastorales aptitudines sibi acquirerent, quibus in specialibus educationis et apostolatus muneribus implendis et praesertim in futuris sacerdotibus efformandis suis dioecesibus efficaci auxilio esse possent.

Ad laudabile hoc propositum iuxta sacrorum canonum normas in effectum deducendum, praefati Legionariorum Christi Superiores opportunas cum Summo Pontifice et Sancta Sede consultationes inierunt atque, in suis inceptis confirmati, adumbratum futuri Collegii Statutorum textum Congregationi de Institutione Catholica proposuerunt, quo de eius ratione institutionis atque iuridica condicione clarius constaret. Simulque idem Dicasterium rogaverunt, ut ad canonicam pii Instituti erectionem procedere vellet.

Quapropter haec Congregatio de Institutione Catholica, seminariis moderandis praeposita, cum sibi oblatum illud Statutorum specimen

probe perspexerit atque ceteras requisitas condiciones ad erectionem exploraverit easque rite adimpletas repererit,

COLLEGIUM INTERNATIONALE "MARIA, MATER ECCLESIAE",

Congregationi Legionariorum Christi concreditum, ad normam Can. 237, §2 erigit erectumque declarat, atque decernit ut regatur Statutis et Regulis pariter and normam eiusdem Canonis approbatis. Commendatur insuper, ut si quid in posterum in dictis Statutis et Regulis mutandum vel emendandum visum fuerit, communi consilio cum Sancta Sede procedatur; servatis ceteris de iure servandis; contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus Congregationum, d. XXV m. Martii a.D. MCMXCI, Festo Annuntiationis B.M.V.

F. to + Pio LAGHI, Pro -Prefetto
PRO-PRAEFECTUS

P. to + J. SARAIVA MARTINS. Secret.
A SECRETIS

ABBREVIATIONS

Cfr.	Compare.
CIC	Code of Cannon Law (25 january 1983)
CLC	Constitutions of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ (2014)
n./nn.	Number/s
OT	VATICAN II, Decree on Priestly Training <i>Optatam totius</i> . (28 October 1965)
PDV	ST. JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation <i>Pastores dabo vobis</i> (25 march 1992)
PO	VATICAN II, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests <i>Presbyterorum Ordinis</i> (7 December 1965)
RFIS	CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY, The gift of priestly vocation. <i>Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis</i> (8 December 2016).

I. HISTORY

The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* was established as a response to one of the most urgent needs of the Church, as expressed by St. John Paul II to the Legionaries of Christ: "I want to encourage you to continue promoting the new evangelization through the works that you so fruitfully promote [...] In particular, you have given rise to a promising initiative such as the Maria Mater Ecclesiae International College, to help Bishops, prepare future priests who may eventually become formators in their own diocesan seminaries. In this way you have responded to one of the most pressing needs of the Church, as evidenced by the last Synod of Bishops on the Formation of Priests in the current circumstances" (Address to the participants in the II General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ, December 18, 1992).

On March 25, 1991, the Congregation for Catholic Education decreed the erection of the International College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*. On July 15 of the same year, the College began its activity in Rome, in a building adjacent to the headquarters of the General Directorate of the Legionaries of Christ. It started with 15 students from different countries of Latin America. The formative activities began with the propaedeutic course, which lasted until the start of the 1991-1992 academic year.

In 1992, the College moved to the area of Castel de Guido. A few years later, on May 12, 1999, the Holy Father, St. John Paul II, granted this College the title of Pontifical; Cardinal Pio Laghi, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, communicated it by means of an official letter six days later (Prot. 360/99).

At the end of the year 2000, given the constant growth of students, from 15 to 160, a new change of venue was considered necessary. The new and current seat is located in what had previously been the Center for Higher Studies of the Legionaries of Christ in Rome.

The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* operates in a multicultural context in its service to various particular churches, welcoming seminarians from all over the world: Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and Oceania. In this way the catholicity of the Church at the beginning of the third millennium is manifested, as well as the relationship of the Universal Church with the particular churches (see LG 13, 23, 26 and 28) in a globalized world. Seminarians from different nations, cultures, languages and even liturgical rites, unite around Christ and his Vicar, the Bishop of Rome, with a single common faith, to prepare for their future pastoral ministry.

In the first 27 years of its existence, around a thousand students have been ordained priests and work in their dioceses spread throughout the world. Of these alumni, a considerable percentage is dedicated to the formation of priests in their respective dioceses and seminaries; in addition, seven of them have been called to the episcopal ministry

II. NATURE AND PURPOSE

1. The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, based in the city of Rome, is an international institution of formation specifically of priests, created on the initiative of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ and canonically erected by the Holy See.
2. The aim of the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* is to collaborate with the diocesan Bishops in the integral formation of their priests, in accordance with the mission of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ: to form apostles at the service of the Church¹.
3. The priestly formation imparted therein is guided by the provisions of the Second Vatican Council, the Code of Canon Law², the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, and the various documents promulgated in this regard by the Apostolic See and, in particular, the dispositions of the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, *The gift of the priestly vocation*. These Statutes are complemented as far as priestly formation is concerned, by the Rule of Life and by the Project of integral formation.
4. The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, by the very fact of its official erection, has legal personality in the Church and can acquire, possess and dispose of movable and immovable property³.
5. The facilities of the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* can also accommodate priests sent to Rome by their Bishops to live a particular moment of their permanent formation. These priests are governed by their own Rule of Life and formation project, in which admission, accompaniment procedures, stages, formators and regulations are defined.
6. Seminarians and priests form two distinct and independent communities.
7. The College is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church, who with the example of her life and with her motherly intercession supports and guides those who are preparing to receive the priesthood of her Son. The College has Saint John Paul II as heavenly patron and St. Joseph as its special protector.

¹ Cf. CLC 4.

² Cf. CIC 232-264.

³ Cf. CIC 238 §1.

III. STAGES AND FORMATIVE DIMENSIONS

A) General formation.

8. The formation imparted by the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* is specifically priestly in nature; therefore, it seeks that each one of the students deepens in the awareness of his vocation and grows in the love and imitation of Christ the Priest, thus duly preparing himself to be a minister of redemption in the Church, as a co-worker of his Bishop.

B) Stages

Initial formation

9. The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* receives seminarians in the period of theological studies: the configuration stage. Within this period, two moments are distinguished: seminarians who study the Bachelor of Theology degree, and seminarians or deacons who do the Master's or Licentiate Degree. The other periods of formation (propaedeutic, philosophy, pastoral service) ordinarily are not attended to in the College.

10. Seminarians who wish to enter the College must have a solid human and vocational maturity required to begin the configuration stage; as well as sufficient intellectual capacity to carry out theological studies in a university or athenaeum in Rome.

Permanent formation

11. Priests pursuing the goal of permanent formation can also reside in the College, as they study a specialization in one of the Pontifical Universities in Rome. These priests continue their process of permanent formation by integrating study with human, spiritual and apostolic growth. There are three stages to be considered:

1. Priests who start their studies in Rome (first semester).
2. Priests who are studying a Master or Doctoral Degree.
3. Priests who are finishing their studies and preparing to return to their dioceses.

C) Dimensions of formation

12. According to what is indicated in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, and *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*, there are four dimensions that interact in the formation of a priest: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. The formation is, therefore, integral, all of it oriented towards configuration with Christ⁴.

13. Human dimension. The priest is called to develop his personality having Christ, the perfect man, as model and source. Moreover, the recipients of his pastoral mission are men. Therefore, this dimension of formation must be oriented to enrich and to mature in freedom the personality of the seminarian and of the priest so that he may possess a well-formed moral conscience, firmness of will, and cultivate the virtues that are most esteemed in society and, thus, know how to behave socially in an appropriate manner⁵. One of the formators will coordinate this dimension, ensuring that the necessary means and activities are available in order to achieve these objectives. As needed, help will be available from professionals in various fields of the human sciences: doctors, psychologists, pedagogues, experts in social media, etc.

⁴ Cf. CIC 244; RFIS 42-43. 89-92.

⁵ Cf. CIC 245 §1; RFIS 93-100; PDV 43.

14. Spiritual dimension. This dimension aims at cultivating union with God through prayer and the sacramental life, in order to give priority to divine action in their own sanctification and ministry, as well as to practice the virtues that shine out most in Christ the Redeemer⁶. One of the spiritual fathers will be designated as the coordinator of this dimension. Among the means of spiritual life traditionally recommended by the Church, special importance will be given to:

1. Personal and community prayer, especially the Liturgy of the Hours.
2. The daily celebration of the Eucharist and Eucharistic adoration.
3. The frequent reception of the sacrament of Penance.
4. Spiritual direction.
5. Monthly retreats and annual spiritual exercises.
6. Marian devotion according to the tradition of the Church.

15. The intellectual dimension seeks that the student may obtain a solid competence in the theological field and an adequate cultural preparation, which helps both to understand man and to transmit the Gospel⁷. One of the formators will be designated as coordinator of this dimension.

16. The seminarians will attend the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum* to receive the basic theological courses and the courses for the Licentiate degree (Masters). If a Bishop wishes that a seminarian should study a license degree outside Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*, he will concord with the Rector of the College regarding the administrative conditions established in these Statutes⁸. As for the studies of the priests, this aspect is specified in their own Rule of Life.

17. The integral formation project of the seminarians includes an introductory course to the life of the College and to the studies.

18. The pastoral dimension seeks to arouse in each seminarian sensitivity for the salvation of mankind, a deep sense of his mission in the Church and it also seeks to train him in the methods proper to the priestly ministry⁹. He will be taught to see the apostolate as an expression of pastoral charity, its social and community meaning, as well as understanding the importance of the study of pastoral theology. One of the formators will be designated as coordinator of this dimension.

19. Seminarians and priests may carry out some pastoral activities in the parishes of Italy at certain times of the year, with prior authorization from the Rector and according to the modality indicated in the own Rule of Life. To undertake pastoral work outside of Italy, authorization from the Rector and permission of the Bishop will be required.

20. The College's Integral Project of Formation specifies in greater detail the principles of the formative process, the objectives of each one of the dimensions of the formation, the means, the times of their application, the educative stages, as well as the environment that the College offers for their growth.

⁶ Cf. CIC 245-247; RFIS 101-115.

⁷ Cf. CIC 248-252; RFIS 116-118.

⁸ Cf. nn. 67-68.

⁹ Cf. CIC 255-258; RFIS 50-52,119-124; PDV 58.

IV. AGENTS OF FORMATION

21. The Holy Trinity is the main agent of priestly formation. The members of the universal Church, and, in particular, of the diocesan Church are all co-responsible on different levels, modes and competences. In the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* the main agents of formation are:

A) The Bishops

22. The diocesan Bishop is primarily responsible for the formation for the priesthood in his territory¹⁰. Therefore, although he has entrusted a stage of formation to the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, to him and to his government team corresponds any decision to be taken in this regard. Therefore, the Rector of the College, aware of the subsidiary dimension of his collaboration, maintains frequent communication with each Bishop, particularly sending the annual reports and welcoming to the College the Bishop or his delegate for formation whenever they wish to visit. However, the Bishop "has the moral duty to consider, with the utmost attention, the final evaluation of the formation team, expressed by the Rector, who gathers together the fruits of the experience lived during the formative years"¹¹.

B) Seminarians and priests

23. Each seminarian and each priest is ultimately responsible for his own formation. The sense of maturity and personal responsibility will be fostered as a free and generous response to the love of God.

24. The seminarians and priests are jointly responsible, together with the team of formators, for the conservation and maintenance in the College of a formative environment in accordance with the values of the Gospel and with the orientations of the Church.

C) The team of formators

25. The team of formators is composed of a Rector, one or two Vice-rectors, a Bursar, a Secretary, Spiritual Directors and other formators who coordinate the various dimensions of formation. They must be presbyters, well prepared and dedicated exclusively to this service. For the same reason, it is convenient that they reside in the college itself¹².

26. The members of the formation team, with the exception of the Rector, are appointed by decree of the General Director of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ, after hearing the opinion of the Rector.

Their appointment is for a period of three years, with the possibility of renewal.

27. The whole group of formators constitute an educational community that lives, prays and works together in the service of priestly formation. They meet regularly with the Rector, as stipulated in the Regulations, to organize the life of the College and verify the formation of the seminarians and priests.

¹⁰ Cf. CIC 233 §1.

¹¹ RFIS 206.

¹² Cf. CIC 239; RFIS 132

1. The Rector

28. The Rector of the Pontifical College Maria Mater Ecclesiae is appointed by the Congregation for the Clergy. The candidate is presented by the General Director of the Legionaries of Christ. The appointment is for a period of three years, with the possibility of renewal.

29. The Rector has at least two councilors, appointed by the General Director of the Legionaries of Christ, with the consent of his council and after having consulted the Rector. These councilors are ordinarily members of the team of formators and priests of the Legion of Christ. They are appointed for a period of three years with the possibility of renewal.

30. The function of the councilors is to assist the Rector in what is determined by these Statutes¹³ and to offer their opinion in whatever he may consult them or in anything they may wish to transmit to him.

31. It corresponds to the Rector to direct the life of the College in all its aspects, and to demand with prudence and kindness fidelity to the general guidelines of the Church for the formation of future priests. His most important functions are¹⁴:

1. Coordinate and direct the activity of the formators. Accompany and attend integrally the formators, and suggest to the General Director eventual changes in the team of formators.
2. Having heard his council, give admission to seminarians and priests.
3. To ensure that the seminarians know and comply with the general norms of the Church for priestly formation and what is prescribed by these Statutes and the Rule of Life.
4. To know each seminarian and priest personally, to help them in a timely manner in their plans and formation needs.
5. Ensure that all cultivate an atmosphere of responsibility, of sincerity in their own priestly formation, as well as an atmosphere of communion and pastoral charity.
6. Grant dispensations and exceptions to the rules of these Statutes and Rule of Life.
7. To expel, with the consent of his council, seminarians or priests who do not integrate with the spirit and norms of the College.
8. Direct the preparation of the periodic evaluations, preferably semi-annual or, at least annually, that the formators will consign in writing¹⁵.
9. Send to the respective Bishops an annual report on the evolution of each seminarian in his priestly formation. This report will also be transmitted to the seminarians, at least orally and in its essential lines.
10. Elaborate, after hearing the team of formators, a detailed report of each candidate to be presented in each of the scrutinies¹⁶.
11. Report annually to the Congregation for the Clergy on the general progress of the College.
12. As the ultimate responsible for the financial and administrative management, ensure that the established procedures, regulations and annual budget are observed.

¹³ Cf. nn. 31, 2º y 7º; 35, 6º; 52; 66.

¹⁴ Cf. CIC 260.

¹⁵ Cf. RFIS 58.

¹⁶ Cf. RFIS 205

2. The Vice-rector

32. The Vice-rector is the most immediate collaborator of the Rector, and will maintain unity with him in all that he does. His main obligations are:

1. Help the Rector in fulfilling his duties.
2. Assume and exercise the functions of government that the Rector entrusts or delegates to him.
3. Take over the function of the Rector when, due to illness or absence, it is necessary to do so.
4. Inform the Rector of those functions that were delegated to him and of the acts performed during the time of substitution.
5. Without the express authorization of the Rector, he must not act in matters exclusively reserved to the Rector.

33. Ordinarily a Vice-Rector will be appointed for the community of seminarians and another Vice-rector in charge of the priests in permanent formation.

3. The Bursar

34. The Bursar carries out a truly educational task. He must be aware of the impact on the seminarians and priests of the physical environments in which they live and of the educational value of an honest and evangelical use of material goods. This contributes to the formation of a spirit of priestly poverty¹⁷.

35. His main functions are:

1. Help the Rector to draw up the annual budget.
2. Make purchases of whatever is needed.
3. Keep up to date the accounting books, the management and supervision of the corporate, fiscal and insurance regime.
4. Carry out the administrative and labor supervision of the employees.
5. Order and keep the administration file up to date.
6. Present to the Rector and the Council a detailed report of the administration of the College each month.
7. Coordinate the payments of tuition fees, the procurement of scholarships and support for the upkeep and sustainability of the College.
8. Be attentive towards the functioning and conservation of the material assets of the College.

4. The Secretary

36. The Secretary must be a mature priest who is distinguished for his discretion, availability and efficiency at work. Due to the nature of his assignment, he is obliged to secrecy.

37. The Secretary is responsible for:

1. Answering in first person for the General Secretariat of the College.
2. Assisting the Rector in the organization and care of the archive of the College.
3. Assisting the Rector in the preparation of the official documents of the College.

¹⁷ Cf. RFIS 138.

4. Representing the College as a delegate to the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*, the Congregation for the Clergy, the Secretary of State, the *Questura*¹⁸ and other institutions in regard to secretarial matters.
5. Assisting the Rector in the convocation of the meetings of the team of formators and in the preparation of the minutes thereof.
6. Assisting the Rector, when he so requests in the preparation of communications or official correspondence.
7. Preparing annually the database of the community and updating the statistics and database of students and alumni of the College.
8. Keeping the college's diary up to date.

5. For the community of seminarians

a. The spiritual Directors

38. It is the duty of the Spiritual Directors to accompany the seminarians in the discernment of their vocation and of their formation in the internal forum¹⁹. They must be true masters of interior life and prayer. For the same reason:

1. They will seek to be close to them to create a climate of human and supernatural trust.
2. Assist seminarians assiduously. The formative work of the spiritual Director must be systematic and personalized.
3. They will actively support the coordinator of the spiritual dimension in the promotion and development of the liturgy and of the life of piety in the College.
4. They will also be available to attend the priests who may ask.

39. The Rector, after hearing the formation team, will appoint one of the Spiritual Directors as coordinator of the spiritual dimension²⁰. The coordinator is responsible, in communication with the Rector:

1. Coordinate the work of the spiritual Directors and of eventual external confessors.
2. To moderate the organization of the liturgy of the College by promoting a profound liturgical experience in fidelity to the teaching of the Church.
3. Guide and coordinate the various exercises of piety in the College.
4. Prepare the program of annual spiritual exercises, monthly retreats, conferences, pilgrimages and other spiritual activities during the liturgical year.
5. Promote the practices of Eucharistic worship, Marian devotion and of spiritual life that he deems appropriate for the spiritual formation of the seminarians.

40. The College encourages that the Spiritual Directors be the seminarian's habitual confessors, and, respecting always their freedom to recur to any confessor within or outside the College, will assure the availability of ordinary confessors as well as other confessors that will go regularly to the College²¹.

¹⁸ Office of the official organism that gives residence permissions to foreigners to remain in Italy.

¹⁹ Cf. RFIS 136.

²⁰ Cf. RFIS 136.

²¹ CF.CIC 240 § 1; RFIS 107.

b. The coordinator of the intellectual dimension

41. The coordinator of the intellectual dimension monitors the university studies of the seminarians, verifying the intellectual integration of the subjects studied and preparing a complementary training plan, which includes the aspects not addressed in the University or Faculty²².

42. His main functions are:

1. Maintain institutional academic relations between the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* and the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*.
2. Accompany each seminarian in his academic performance.
3. Organize the academic life of the College: complementary training activities, courses, conferences, etc.
4. Inform the Rector of the students' academic performance.

c. Other formators

43. Eventually there may be other formators, according to the formative needs of the College. Their main functions are:

1. Assist the Rector directly in the personalized attention and accompaniment of the formation of the seminarians and priests.
2. The practical and disciplinary organization of the College and other functions that the Rector entrusts or delegates to them.
3. Coordinate the different dimensions of formation: human, intellectual and pastoral.
4. Collaborate with the Rector in the preparation of periodic evaluations.

6. For the community of priests

44. The community of priests will have at least one spiritual director assigned and one person in charge of studies (who can be the vice-rector himself) to accompany the priests in their dealings with the centers and universities where they study.

D) Environment and other Agents of Formation

45. It is the responsibility of the team of formators, mainly of the Rector, to ensure that in the College an appropriate discipline is observed and that a conducive atmosphere for comprehensive formation is maintained, in accordance with what is established in the Rule of Life.

46. To this end, the formators will explain to the seminarians and priests the provisions contained in the Rule of Life of the College so that they accept them and observe them freely and willingly, aware of their suitability and formative value.

47. Other formative agents participate in the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, mainly: the professors of the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*, professionals - lay and consecrated persons - invited to give lectures or courses on various formative aspects (in accordance with the Integral Formation Project), external confessors, and priests who accompany the seminarians in

²² Cf. RFIS 137.

their pastoral activity. Special attention will be paid so that the seminarians acquire an adequate knowledge and familiarity with the feminine reality²³.

48. The contact of the seminarians and priests with their own families and with persons belonging to their dioceses of origin (Bishops, priests, laity, consecrated persons), either through the media or through visits, will be encouraged, albeit without detriment to their integral formation or to the fulfillment of their academic duties.

²³ Cf. RFIS 95.

V. CRITERIA AND NORMS

A) Admission

49. The following can be admitted to the *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* Pontifical College:

1. Seminarians who have achieved sufficient freedom and maturity in the stage of philosophical studies that enable them to continue on the path that will lead them to a greater configuration with Christ in the vocation to ordained ministry²⁴. They must also be under 28 years old²⁵.

2. Priests who are presented by their Bishops.

50. To safeguard the authority of diocesan Bishops, only applications for admission that they endorse and send may be met. The Bishops will take care, therefore, that the candidates have a good spiritual and moral disposition, are physically and psychologically healthy, and who are intellectually qualified to face studies in the ecclesiastical universities of Rome. These qualities are necessary for admission²⁶.

51. The request of the Bishop must be accompanied, in all cases, by the complete documentation of each seminarian or priest, in accordance with Canon Law²⁷.

52. The authority to admit to the College rests with the Rector, having heard his council. All applications will be studied in order of arrival.

53. The Bishops, by entrusting the formation of their seminarians to the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, adopt an agreement with it. Therefore, they commit to:

1. Receive, accept and endorse the Statutes and Rule of Life of the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*²⁸.
2. Accompany the formation of the seminarians through periodic visits to the College, in person or through a delegate²⁹.
3. Honor and fulfill the economic agreement established with the College³⁰.
4. Financially support their seminarians in their personal expenses such as health issues, academic material, travel and other personal needs³¹.

The agreement can be freely dissolved by both parties, at any time, with prior notice between the parties.

54. It is an indispensable condition for admission that both the Bishop and the seminarian or priest are familiar with the Statutes and Rule of Life of the College, and that they express their full acceptance in the request module.

²⁴ Cf. RFIS 67.

²⁵ Cf. RFIS 24.

²⁶ Cf. RFIS 190-196.

²⁷ Cf. CIC 241.

²⁸ Cf. CIC 259 §1.

²⁹ Cf. CIC 259 §2

³⁰ Cf. CIC 263.

³¹ Cf. n. 67 of these Statutes.

55. Seminarians or priests of whom there is positive doubt about their suitability to continue their formation in Rome, should return to their diocese or to another place indicated by their respective Bishop, without any responsibility on the part of the College.

B) Scrutinies

56. The act of discerning the suitability of a candidate is called scrutiny. In the Pontifical college *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, they are ordinarily held in four stages: admission as a candidate to holy orders, admission to the ministries (lectorate and acolyte) and admission to the diaconate. Admission to the presbyterate ordinarily takes place in the seminarian's own diocese of origin.

57. In the process of reception of the ministries by the seminarians, the formators will follow the criteria established by the Church on the suitability of the candidates, namely: interior freedom, right intention, genuine faith, careful preparation, sufficient studies, ample knowledge of the faith, sound doctrine, sincere piety, customs proper of the Christian tradition, ecclesial and pastoral experience, clear conviction about the priestly vocation and of its inherent commitments, sincere acceptance of the teaching of the Church on priesthood and on celibacy, sufficient human affective and sexual maturity, good reputation and customs, behavior consistent with the option taken, good health and aptitude for the practice and exercise of the ministry³².

58. The seminarians who wish to receive the ministries of lectorate and acolyte and sacred orders³³:

1. Having consulted with the spiritual director, and supported by his prudent judgment, the candidate must express to the Bishop (through the Rector), his desire to freely receive the ministries of the lectorate, the acolyte or sacred orders. This request must be personal, free and handwritten³⁴.
2. This request must be presented to the Rector with sufficient notice in order to be discussed at the meetings in view of the scrutinies.
3. The Rector will send to the Bishop the results of the scrutiny together with a report on the candidate and his application for admission.
4. The Bishop will send a written response to the seminarian, not directly, but through the Rector of the College. The Rector will communicate the response to the seminarian.
5. A copy of the seminarian's request, the results of the scrutinies, a copy of the Bishop's response, as well as the record of the reception of the ministry or diaconate must be kept in the archives of the College, even when the ceremony is not held in the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* itself.

59. The College, respecting and embracing the traditions and customs of each particular Church to which the seminarians belong, will adjust the order of reception of ministries and orders for each seminarian according to the indications of his Ordinary, at the same time seeking that the liturgical rites are carried out in an orderly manner in accordance with the College's program, namely:

1. Application for admission as a candidate for sacred orders: from the second semester of the first year of theology.

³² Cf. CIC 1026-1029 and 1051, §1°.

³³ Cf. CIC 1034 §1 and 1035, §1; RFIS 72.

³⁴ Cf. CIC 1036.

2. Application for admission to the Ministry of Lector: from the beginning of the second year of theology.
3. Application for admission to the Ministry of Acolyte: from the beginning of the third year of theology.
4. Application for admission to the diaconate, after consulting the Bishop:
 - a. From the second semester of the third year of theology³⁵.
 - b. For seminarians who will continue on to do the licentiate, it is recommended that they request the diaconate from the second semester of the first year of the license.

C) Periodical evaluations

60. At the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, periodic evaluations of the suitability and of formation of the seminarians are carried out in order to verify whether the aims of each educational period have been achieved. In addition to the evaluations that are made in the process of admission as candidates to the sacred orders, to the ministries of the lectorate and acolyte, and to the diaconate, at the end of each academic year the formation team will make an evaluation of the seminarians considering the four dimensions of formation. The results will be sent to their Bishops in order to be kept in the diocesan archives.

D) Interruption of the formation process

61. If the formation team considers it necessary for a seminarian or priest to interrupt his stay in the College at any time during the formation process, after having consulted the Bishop, they must refer the fact in a written document in which they expose with prudence, at least summarily, the circumstances that have motivated the decision³⁶.

62. Reasons for admonition and possible expulsion can be:

1. Harassment or immoral conduct in relation to the sixth commandment.
2. Abuse of alcohol or use of narcotics.
3. Stealing, lying or cheating.
4. Persistent immoral use of the media³⁷.
5. Emotional and / or affective instability that seriously hinders life in the college³⁸.
6. Indiscipline and serious or repetitive breach of duty³⁹.
7. Defamation or slander about other people.

63. Certain serious faults can cause an immediate expulsion from the College. However, when a seminarian or priest incurs in any of the situations noted in the previous article, usually the following process will be respected, guaranteeing justice towards all:

1. A formal verbal admonishment by the Rector in front of a witness. The fact of this admonishment must be recorded in the report.
2. If there is recidivism, a written admonishment is given by the Rector and signed by a witness. The interested party must sign the receipt of the warning and a copy of it must be kept in the archives of the College.

³⁵ Cf. CIC 1032 §§1 and 2.

³⁶ Cf. RFIS 197.

³⁷ Cf. RFIS 99.

³⁸ Cf. RFIS 94.

³⁹ Cf. RFIS 43.

3. Although they be of different subjects or areas, the accumulation of three admonishments - one verbal and two written-implies expulsion from the College.

64. If a seminarian or priest freely expresses that he has difficulties in any of the aforementioned subjects, although they are reason for admonition, he should be helped, without this being a direct reason for the interruption of the formative process in the College.

VI. ECONOMIC REGIME

A) General principles

65. The Rector is ultimate responsible for the administration of the College. In this task he is assisted by the Bursar and his councilors.

66. In the administration of economic affairs, the Bursar but also the Rector and his council shall be governed by the instructions of the General Director of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ, and by the provisions set forth in the Regulations of the College. They will be especially attentive in assuring:

1. That in the management of money a regime of joint signature is followed.
2. That in the administration everything proceeds according to the approved budget.
3. That all be administered with austerity and professionalism and that the guidelines of the General Administration of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ be followed in the accounting systems.
4. That the total sum of the scholarships be periodically approved by the General Director of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ.

B) Means of financing

67. The expenses of staying at the College, the university fees and the personal expenses (clothes, books, medicines, etc.) are to be met by the diocesan Bishop and by the seminarians and priests themselves.

68. For those seminarians whose diocese requests financial help:

1. The Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* may offer a partial scholarship after having examined the Bishop's request. These scholarships will cover part of the cost of lodging, food and tuition fees. It will not cover the personal expenses of seminarians, such as: medical attention, psychological consultations, clothing, books, trips, personal cleaning supplies, etc.
2. The granting of a higher percentage of the partial scholarship includes the condition that the seminarians in question study at the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum*.
3. To maintain the scholarship, the seminarians in their examinations must have the average established by the tabulators and comply with the disciplinary norms of the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* and of the Pontifical Athenaeum *Regina Apostolorum* or of the university where they are studying.

69. The College will strive to establish a sufficient patrimony so as to guarantee the economic base of the scholarships that are granted.

70. Bishops who apply for scholarships for priests will be guided to foundations and organizations that dedicate themselves to this help. The College will only grant partial scholarships to priests who do not have the support of foundations and whose dioceses cannot cover all the expenses.

C) Final provision

71. In the event of the extinction or dissolution of the Pontifical College *Maria Mater Ecclesiae*, all movable and immovable assets, will revert to the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ.

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