

RULE OF LIFE

Chapter 6 – The Fraternal Community

	Fraternity, a Gift from God	
Trinity and fraternal communion	55. Trinitarian communion is the source and model of fraternity. The Brothers are brought together by the Spirit in the name of Christ and are maintained in unity by his prayer to the Father: "That they also may be one in us." This fraternal life is a gift received, lived out and celebrated, and offered to all by the community.	VC 41 IMRB 21 Jn 17:21
Consecration and community	56. The religious consecration, experienced in community, expresses a prophetic witness for the world of today: • through an obedience which is the search for God's will, the Brothers are united by a common project, with respect for each person and recognizing the diversity of their gifts • through a chastity which broadens the capacity to love, the Brothers live to the full their relationships in community and their availability for serving others • through a poverty which implies a sober and simple lifestyle, the Brothers share their goods and talents in order to live in communion.	
	Fraternity, a gift lived out and celebrated	
Community and prayer	57. Religious fraternal life in community is founded on the Word of God and the Eucharist. Together, Brothers bear the responsibility for their prayer life. Together, they meditate on the Word of God, celebrate the Divine Office and participate in the Eucharist. <i>57.1 The Brothers observe Sunday as the Lord's Day and periodically schedule for themselves opportunities for spiritual renewal.</i>	VFC 14
Building up the community	58. In simplicity and joy, the Brothers willingly share what they are, what they do and what they have. Chosen and brought together by God, they seek to know and love each other with the heart of Christ. Through daily self-denial and the generous gift of self, they work at becoming a community that welcomes and forgives, heals wounds and lives in authentic fraternal communion.	
Fraternal relations	59. Brothers take care above all to ensure the quality of their fraternal relations. They are attentive to each other and spare no effort to understand each other, engage in dialogue and demonstrate good humour towards everyone. They accept the inevitable constraints of living together and see cultural and intergenerational differences as a source of	VFC 28

	richness. They are open to young people and ready to help them, and they show a particular concern for the elderly, the sick and those in difficulty.	
Joy and the meaning of reconciliation	60. "The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus." This joy permeates the different moments of their lives. Times of leisure and relaxation, mealtimes, weekends, and holidays, in particular, are moments to cherish. So that their "joy may be complete", Brothers also endeavour to forgive and to forget wrongs. Despite inevitable conflicts, they seek to live together in peace, because it is "the most precious of all treasures, and one cannot make too many sacrifices to preserve it".	EG 1 Jn 15:11 CG V, 56.
Community meetings and sharing	61. Fraternal life in community grows through communication, dialogue and encounter. Regular community meetings are opportunities for discussion and sharing on their life and mission, and for ongoing formation. <i>61.1 Discussions where Brothers can express themselves and listen to each other in truth and kindness are a precious means of giving information, fraternal correction, consultation, and sharing: "Above all, my children, let great charity and perfect union reign among you."</i> <i>61.2 Brothers use digital technology and social networks with discernment as sources of information and means of communication. They are especially careful to preserve the interpersonal relationships that these tools cannot replace.</i>	VFC 31 CG VI, 241 LS 47
Particular gifts and discernment	62. In their diversity, the personal gifts, talents, intuitions, and charisms of the Brothers bear witness to the freedom of the Holy Spirit "who blows where it wills". In union with those in authority, the Brothers discern together and ensure that these particular gifts and the resulting initiatives serve the mission of the Institute, so as to impart a real dynamism to the life of the community.	SA 20, 3 Jn 3:8
Community and personal projects	63. To remain true to its identity and mission, at the beginning of each year the community takes the time to formulate its community project which is the responsibility of all. Each Brother is also invited to formulate his own personal project. <i>63.1. The community project updates the mission of the community and its particular way of "being Brothers together", based on the guidelines of the Congregation, the Province or the District. It describes the community's form of presence in the Church and society, taking into account the mission of Lay people in the Mennaisian Family, as well as vocations and youth ministry in general. It indicates the practical organization of daily community life relating to prayer, sacramental life, meetings, meals, daily tasks and hospitality. The project is then submitted to the Brother Major Superior for approval.</i>	

	<i>63.2. Each Brother develops his own personal project in the spirit of the community project, with a view to unifying his life. He specifies the means and attitudes needed for putting it into practice through a process of human and spiritual growth, of ongoing formation and apostolic commitment.</i>	
Local Superior and community	64. The Local Superior is at the service of fraternal life. He exercises his ministry in readiness to serve his Brothers and in consultation with them: "Be their model: in your relations with them, always edify them by your exact observance of the Rule, by your humility and your reverence." <i>64.1. The Superior has the main responsibility for overseeing and animating the fraternal life of his community. He sees to the implementation of the community project. He encourages opportunities for dialogue, striving to obtain a convergence of wills and considering his Brothers' opinions when making decisions. He sees to it that tasks are assumed in co-responsibility so as to promote the well-being of each person and harmony among all.</i>	VFC 48 CG V, 311 SA 20, 2
Community setting	65. The Brothers furnish their houses and structure their community life in such a way as to favor prayer, work, and fraternal relationships. The house includes quarters for the Brothers' exclusive use. It includes an oratory where the Eucharist forms the heart of the community.	SA 20, 3 CIC 608
	Fraternity, a Gift Offered to All	
Community and mission	66. The community "is always a brotherhood for mission". Dedicated to the common task of evangelization, the community revises its orientations, adjusts its approaches, and reflects on the meaning of its witness with humility and realism, recognizing the need for continual reassessment. Through collaboration with Lay people in schools, other educational establishments and places of evangelization, Brothers work with them to build a true educational community that inspires and supports each of its members.	IMRB 23,1
	67. Through their availability, serenity and assiduous prayer, elderly Brothers and those who have ceased regular employment bear faithful witness and are a precious factor of harmony in their communities. According to their abilities and strengths, they make themselves available to serve in the mission and in the life of the community.	
Community and hospitality	68. Brothers make it their duty to be welcoming to all, especially to their own confreres, their relatives, young people and the poor. They receive their guests warmly, with simplicity and openness, bearing in mind the needs and priorities of community life. <i>68.1 The community pays special attention to the welcome of Lay Mennaisians with whom it shares its mission and spirituality. The</i>	

	<i>mutual bonds developed in this way are strengthened through times of prayer and encounter.</i> <i>68.2 Outside the community, the Brothers act with prudence and discernment, developing, as religious, a kind of "spiritual instinct" to guide them in all their activities, outings, and relationships.</i>	PC 12, 2
Brothers to all	69. The community seeks to understand the wider Church and the world, so as to be better acquainted with their needs, issues and deepest aspirations. Brothers are interested in the lives of their fellow human beings, especially the poor. They readily participate in cultural and social activities that promote inclusive human relations and a fraternity open to all.	GS 4, 1 FT 94