

RULE FOR THE THIRD ORDER OF SAINT PIUS X

Purpose of the Establishment of the Third Order

Sanctification of the individual and of those for whom members of the Third Order are responsible.

Patron of the Third Order: St. Pius X

Sanctity today must be attained in a world which opposes it by errors and subtle heresies, introduced into all Catholic milieu under the name of Modernism. Pope St. Pius X was beatified for courageously denouncing Modernist errors and showing an example of sanctity in the solidity of doctrine, the purity of morality and devotion to the Eucharistic Sacrifice. This holy Pope is therefore clearly the model for souls who wish to sanctify themselves in our day.

Relationship of the Third Order to the Priestly Society of St. Pius X

The Third Order has been established by the Society and therefore the chaplains of the Third Order are designated by the District Superior and approved by the Superior General. Members of the Third Order share in the grace of the Society gained by its priests and merits of its members.

Members of the Third Order

All Catholics, priests or lay, who accept the spirit and the Rule of the Third Order, are eligible for membership. Children can be enrolled, with permission of their parents, the minimum age being twelve years.

Emblems: The medal of St. Pius X and Cross, given at the time of commitment in the Third Order.

The Spirit of the Third Order

The spirit of the Third Order is that which animates the Priestly Society, i.e., the spirit of the Church, its living faith, manifested in all of her Tradition, her infallible Magisterium, expressed and explained in the catechism of the Council of Trent, in the Vulgate Bible, in the teachings of the Angelic Doctor St. Thomas Aquinas, and the immemorial liturgy.

The spirit of attachment to the Roman Church, to the Popes, to the Bishops, spirit of obedience to the authorities of the Church according to their fidelity to their office, which is nothing else than to spread the Catholic faith and the Kingdom of Our Lord.

The spirit of vigilance in regard to anything which might corrupt the Faith.

Tender and filial devotion toward the Virgin Mary – according to the spirit of Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Monfort – to St. Joseph and to St. Pius X.

To rediscover the capital importance of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and its mysteries, to find there the meaning and source of Christian life, a life of sacrifice and co redemption.

Steps in Membership

1. Enrolment: A request is sent to the priest in charge of the Third Order or to the District Superior. The priest in reply sends an information sheet to be filled out. Then, if the request is granted, he sends a copy of the document for enrolment.
2. Postulancy of one year, in the course of which is tested the fidelity of the postulant in keeping his obligations and his adherence to the spirit of the Third Order.
3. Commitment: The postulant, in a ceremony, makes his commitment in the presence of the designated priest. He then receives the medal and crucifix and his card of membership in the Third Order.

Personal Obligations

Daily:

1. Morning and evening prayers, such as Prime and Compline or the prayers from the Retreat Book.
2. Recitation of the Rosary.
3. Attendance at the immemorial Mass, if possible – or a quarter of an hour of prayer.

Weekly:

Attendance at the immemorial Mass and not the Novus Ordo Missae, because of the danger of acquiring a Protestant spirit.

Every two weeks:

If possible, the sacrament of penance, or at least once a month.

Every two years:

A retreat.

Practical Notes:

1. Recommended reading: the acts of St. Pius X, the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the New Testament, the Imitation of Christ, the lives of the saints. Try to spread good reading material.
2. Fasting on Ember Days, on Vigils of great feasts, on Ash Wednesday, and Holy Saturday. Abstinence on all Fridays.
3. To abstain from television, from all unclean reading, to practice sobriety.

Obligations of the Married

1. To observe, in a spirit of submission to Our Lord, the laws of marriage toward the goal of having a large family. To renounce absolutely all positive action toward the goal of not having children.

2. To make of the family home a sanctuary consecrated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary where evening prayers are recited in the family and, if possible, the rosary. Liturgical life should be paramount on Sundays and feast days. Avoid everything that could harm the souls of children: television, unclean magazines.
3. To choose truly good and traditional schools and to contribute to their establishment.
4. To be prudent in the choice of leisure activities and of holiday locations.

Professional and social duties

1. To follow the example of the Holy Family and to pursue the duties of justice and charity, whether one be employer or employee.
2. To promote and defend the social reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ in society, to combat Liberalism and Modernism, scourges of modern times which are delivering the Church to her enemies.

Organisation

The priest in charge of the Third Order in the district receives enrolments, names his assistants, and calls meetings of his council and general meetings to encourage members to remain active and vigilant in the work of their sanctification and that of others.

He will set up libraries with a librarian charged with lending books to postulants and to members.

He will publish a bulletin keeping tertiaries in touch with one another, sharing addresses, information, hours of meetings, religious ceremonies, days of recollection, pilgrimages, ordinations, religious professions etc.

At meetings a collection will be taken up for the needs of the Third Order. A treasurer in charge will keep the accounts and will report them at meetings of the Council. The Council of the Third Order will decide how to use the resources at its disposal: internal expenses, help to a seminary, a school, the sick, retreat work, etc.

+ Marcel Lefebvre

Television, Videos, DVD, and the Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X

There is a point of difficulty concerning the Rule, which needs clarification: the television. In an address given to the Third Order at St. Mary's, Kansas, USA, in December 1982, Archbishop Lefebvre said: "It is difficult for many people to abandon the TV. But I know some families who had TV who asked to become members of the Third Order, and they gave it up. And afterwards they said: 'Now we understand why you ask us to abandon TV. Before we didn't understand, but now that we do not have it, we know that there is more peace in the family, more quiet, more spirituality.' TV should be a good thing, but in reality it is not."

Here are some more detailed rules regarding the use of television, video, DVD and movies:

1. The commercial television (with the antenna, its programmes and advertisements) is completely prohibited.
2. The use of honest television programmes recorded on video is permitted.
3. Attendance at the movies shown in cinemas is prohibited.
4. Honest and moral movies recorded on video or DVD and given to a private group are permitted.

Further clarifications:

Regarding No. 1 & 3

We admit that not all T.V. programs and movies are evil. There are some good ones. But helping us to attain perfection, Archbishop Lefebvre calls us to sacrifice. He wants us to make, for our Crucified Master, even the sacrifice of what is good. Not everything is sinful, we admit. The Third Order as if a religious order in the midst of this world, its members must follow more closely the three Evangelical Counsels and the eight Beatitudes (especially the first: "Blessed are the poor in spirit..."). Thus, if someone wants to belong to the Third Order, he will have this sacrifice to make; if he does not want to make it, he cannot be accepted.

Regarding No. 2

Many, nowadays, use video as an educational help. Let us not forget that a machine will never replace fully the teacher. The excessive and/or exclusive use of these machines will generate passivity in the children that will have for them terribly harmful consequences later on.

"God loves a cheerful giver."

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