



BROTHERS OF
SAINT JOHN

The Charism of the Brothers of Saint John

1. The Congregation of Saint John is an apostolic religious institute founded in 1975 on the day the apostolic constitution *Evangelii Nuntiandi* was promulgated. The brothers (whether priests or not) serve the Church by living a life of consecration and of brotherly communion with a view to mission, in the footsteps of Christ who was chaste, poor and obedient. Together with the Apostolic Sisters, the Contemplative Sisters and the secular oblates, they form the Family of Saint John.

Our spirituality

2. We have received God's call to follow Christ by living religious life in the spirit of the beloved disciple, Saint John the Evangelist. In his footsteps we wish to follow the Lamb and dwell with him. By contemplating Christ we seek to unite ourselves with his priestly work for the glory of the Father and the salvation of mankind, until he comes again.

3. As privileged witness of the Paschal mystery, John lay his head upon the Lord's heart; he saw blood and water flow from the side of Jesus crucified, and, in the empty tomb, he believed in the Resurrection. His writings, interpreted in relation with the entirety of Scripture and within the living Tradition of the Church, nourish our consecration and renew our missionary fervour.

4. To follow Jesus as Saint John did also requires that we become disciples who live in personal friendship with Jesus, keeping his commandments, and in particular that of brotherly love. Together with John we receive Mary as our Mother at the Cross; she is the one who teaches us how to be faithful to our calling each day.

5. We hear the call to be consecrated in the Truth. This means offering Jesus our whole person, allowing him to sanctify us in all our capacities: affective, intellectual and moral, and seeking the truth in all areas of our lives, from study to community life and apostolate.

Our witness

6. Our vocation thus calls us to friendship with Christ, to the search for truth and to brotherly communion. We desire to witness to this among the people to whom we are sent.

Friendship with Christ

7. We aspire to help all people discover that the encounter with Christ, experienced within a living faith, flourishes into friendship with him. We believe that everyone is called to follow him and to enter into communion with him.

Seeking truth

8. We desire to share the search for wisdom with all those we meet. By embarking with them upon a reflection about man and his vocation we want to give account for the hope we have within us.

Brotherly communion

9. We seek to allow our relationship with Christ to grow into brotherly communion. We thus hope to witness to the charity to which God invites us and all people, this charity which becomes reality in the mystery of the Church.

Our way of life

10. Our life in community is built upon four pillars: prayer, community, study, and apostolate.

A life of prayer

11. §1. Our days are punctuated by times of community silent prayer. These times bring us together and offer us the opportunity to receive the word of God in a profound way and so to dwell in him. Silent prayer is at the heart of our vocation and of its renewal; through silent prayer we allow the Holy Spirit to work on us deep within; it gives fervour and impetus to our consecration and overflows into our brotherly and apostolic life.

§2. The celebration of the Mass is the source and summit of our day and extends into daily community Eucharistic adoration. We draw from the Mass the graces needed to revitalise our personal relationship with Christ, to live life in community and to support our fervour in apostolate.

§3. Every day the celebration in common of a substantial part of the liturgy of the divine hours nourishes our relationship with Christ, connects us to the prayer of the Church, and builds up our brotherly communion.

Community life

12. §1. We are called to make our communities into places where love and truth come together. We therefore desire to live together in service and simplicity, in the spirit of joy and sharing, in seeking the truth, and listening to God in his Word and in our whole lives. Our priories are intended to be homes which radiate prayer, charity and light.

§2. Our daily life in common takes on a liturgical form through elements such as: wearing the habit, silence in the cloister, and through the ways in which we conduct chapters and community meals.

§3. The various chapters (general, regional, and conventual) play an important role in responding to our common calling. The vitality of our communities involves each brother's participation which allows them to discern together the orientations to be taken in the lives of our priories and in their apostolate.

A life of study

13. §1. In our integral formation, studies take the form of philosophical and theological search for truth which establish a fruitful dialogue between faith and reason. In this way we want to open ourselves to receiving the Holy Spirit's gift of wisdom.

§2. The search for truth and for wisdom takes place through personal and community study as well as in the various areas of our existence, including the most practical. Every circumstance in our life can thus be an opportunity to deepen our search for truth.

§3. The daily meditation of Scripture holds a particularly important place in our search for Christ who is the Word of God and the light of men. It also nourishes our preaching.

Apostolic life

14. §1. We desire to be engaged in the evangelical mission of the Church - be it through taking on missions entrusted to us by the bishops or by developing missions specific to our community - and so to be available to the callings of the Holy Spirit.

§2. Our main apostolate consists in human and Christian formation.

§3. In various ways in the different priories and through our life of prayer, of mission in common, and of brotherly cooperation, we desire to make of our community life a place of welcome where each person can discover the love of Christ and walk with him.