

**“WAY OF LIFE”
FOR LAY ASSUMPTIONISTS**

PRESENTATION

In response to the request of the Assumptionist General Chapter¹ of 2011 and to the expressed wishes of many lay persons throughout the world, after many consultations with lay persons and religious, we officially offer this text as the “Way of Life” for Lay Assumptionists.

Here are defined the fundamental dimensions or the “common basis” of the charism and the spirituality of the Assumption that all Lay Assumptionists should adopt and live, whatever their age, culture, social condition or formation may be. The “Way” aims at being a synthesis of the major principles that Fr. Emmanuel d’Alzon, inspired by St. Augustine, proposes as a Gospel way for all his disciples: Assumptionists, Oblates of the Assumption, lay people who share the spirit and the mission of the Assumption.

The Lay Assumptionist is “one who commits himself/herself to living his/her baptismal vocation and the mission that flows from it within the Assumption, within the Church and within society”².

¹ Acts of the General Chapter 2011, N° 144.

² *Ib.*, N° 143.

This “Way of Life” is an invitation to live according to the following fundamental options: fraternal community life, apostolic life, life in the Spirit, prayer life³.

International Commission
Alliance Lay-Religious Alliance

³ Ib., N° 144.

CHAPTER I

DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

1. Jesus Christ is the center of our life.

2. Out of love for Christ, we propose, before all else, to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God in us and around us. The passion of Christ for the Kingdom of God is also our passion.

3. Out of love for Christ, we love what he loved most on earth: Mary, His Mother, and the Church, His Spouse.

4. In faith, hope and charity we seek to know, love and imitate Jesus Christ each day a little more. This compels us to make every effort to make him known and loved by others.

5. To follow Christ implies a personal and communal encounter with Him. He guides us in our knowledge of the Father and sends us His Spirit. We will try to have the life of the Trinity grow in us through prayer, attentiveness to the Word of God, contemplation of God's action in our life and in the events that surround us.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDERS OF COMMUNION AND FRATERNITY

6. We are called to collaborate with God's plan and the Church's mission which consist in gathering humanity into the one People of God. In a world marked with conflicts, divisions, various forms of discrimination and war, we want to be builders of fraternal communion and unity.

7. Assumptionist fraternal life has its proper characteristics that we want to make our own. It is welcoming, open to diversity, able to promote the charism of individuals for the benefit of the community as a whole. It favors listening and dialogue. We accept one another with our differences because the one who unites us is stronger than that which separates us.

8. Faithful to the traditional family spirit of the Assumption, we will try to cultivate simple and authentic relationships in the family, in the workplace, in the Christian community, with our neighbors. We will try to establish links of friendship, solidarity and communion. We will try to cultivate frankness, loyalty, cordiality, mutual respect, the ability to forgive.

9. In accordance with the prayer of Jesus and like Fr. d'Alzon, we commit ourselves to work for the unity of the Church, as our situation allows, by collaborating in ecumenical and inter-

religious dialogue as well as in concrete actions that flow from it.

10. In order to build a world always more fraternal and committed to solidarity, we want to share the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties of the men and women of our time, especially the poorest and marginalized.

11. We propose to nourish fraternal communion within the Assumption family by coming together regularly for prayer, study and social gatherings with the Religious both male and female and the other lay Assumptionists.

CHAPTER 3

APOSTLES FOR THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

12. As Lay Assumptionists, we want to work, according to our personal vocation, for the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in us and around us. We want to be “builders of the kingdom”. The love of Jesus Christ urges us to be apostles and missionaries wherever we live and work.

13. Following the example of Fr. d’Alzon, we will make the great causes of God and man our own. We will go where God is threatened in man and man is threatened as the image of God.

14. To be apostles for the coming of the Kingdom, we must live out the prophetic dimension of our Baptism. Like Jesus Christ, we must proclaim and bear witness to the Kingdom of God in the world. But it will also be our duty to denounce with audacity and courage whatever opposes the coming and the growth of the Kingdom here and now.

15. In the spirit of St Augustine and prompted by the intuitions of Fr. d’Alzon, we want to share the three fundamental options defined for the Assumptionists in the General Chapter of 2011:

“Be men and women of faith, of communion, in solidarity with the poor”.⁴

16. Each one will try to find the apostolate to which the Master of the vineyard is calling him or her, according to his or her abilities, preparation and availability. The privileged areas of apostolate for lay people are youth and vocation ministry, family ministry, solidarity with the poor, justice and peace, evangelization through teaching and the media, commitment in the world of work, politics and business.

17. Our apostolate will always be that of the Church. We are committed to remain faithful to the orientations of the universal Church and the local Church. We collaborate closely in the apostolate and the mission of the Assumptionist communities. We are always available to serve the local ecclesial community.

18. The mission requires continued formation, at the spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral levels. As we work at becoming ever more aware of the charism and the spirituality of the Assumption, we try to understand the reality of our fellow men and women and the world in which we live in order to discover the signs of God present there.

⁴ Acts of the General Chapter 2011, N° 62.

CHAPTER 4 WITNESSES TO LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

19. We want to follow the Gospel way of Jesus Christ putting his teachings into practice, making his options our own, and imitating Him in his relations with God, His Father and with the neighbor, His brothers and sisters, actively collaborating with Him in His plan for redemption... Like him, we want to bear witness to the love of the Father and live in solidarity with the men and women of our time, especially the poorest and the marginalized.

20. By obeying the commandment of love and observing the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience in the spirit of the Beatitudes⁵, we discover the ultimate meaning of our lives and our call to holiness.

21. We acknowledge God as the absolute of our life, the most powerful reason to live and act. In order to go to meet Him, we bear witness to the relative value of created goods. In this way, we can announce the future Kingdom.

⁵See Mt 5,1-12 and Lk 6,20-23

22. Along with the Theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, we will try to grow in the practice of the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, strength and temperance.

23. We will try to cultivate the virtues proper to the charism of the Assumption: passion for the Kingdom, apostolic zeal, the search for truth, fidelity to the Church. We will make our own those virtues Fr. d'Alzon enjoined on his disciples: frankness, cordiality, simplicity; availability, audaciousness, creativity, love of study, a doctrinal, social and ecumenical spirit.

24. In a world where God is mostly absent and Jesus Christ most often unknown, we want to bear witness, by our way of being and doing, that Christ is alive among us and that the ultimate meaning of our human existence is found in the definitive encounter with the living God.

CHAPTER 5

MEN AND WOMEN OF PRAYER

25. Like Fr. d'Alzon, man of faith, we acknowledge the need for prayer. Prayer opens us to the action of God. It is there that we meet God, keep covenant with him and live in communion with him. Prayer is the perpetually renewed fount of our daily activity, following the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

26. Our prayer is the prayer of the Church. Being an apostolic prayer, it assumes the great intentions of the Church along with the hopes of the men and women of our time. It is expressed in praise of the Father for the revelation of His love, thanksgiving for what his action in us and in the world, intercession for forgiveness and freedom for ourselves and humanity.

27. Our prayer is nourished by the study and meditation of the Word of God, the frequent reception of the sacraments, the faith-filled reading of the events that surround us. We need to ask ourselves how our life is reflected in our prayer and how our prayer influences our life.

28. The Eucharist is at the center of our prayer life. The Divine Office, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary and retreats constitute our privileged means of spiritual renewal.

29. After Christ, the Virgin Mary holds a privileged place in our prayer as Mother of the Lord and Mother of the Church.

30. For all Assumptionists, religious and lay, "*Contemplation and action are united for us in a single goal: serve the extension of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ*"⁶ (Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon)



The Superior General, in Plenary General Council, upon the presentation of the International Commission on the Lay-Religious Alliance, approves this text "Way of Life" for Lay Assumptionists, and with the help of the Lord and their brothers and sisters, invites all to put it into practice.

Paris, June 13, 2014

Fr. Benoît Grière, a.a.
Superior general

⁶ Directory, Part II, Chap. XI , p. 61