

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONVENTION  
OF THE SECULAR FRATERNITIES  
OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. THOMAS OF VILLANOVA  
HELD IN MONACHIL, GRANADA, SPAIN**

To our brothers and sisters of the fraternities of the Province and a to all the members of Augustinian Recollect family. Peace and joy in the Lord.

The members of the secular fraternities of Argentina, Brazil, Spain and Venezuela present at this meeting, greet the Prior General, Father Provincial, the Vicars of the Province and all the brothers and sisters of the fraternities who are non-participants in this meeting.

As members of the Church, we declare our communion with the Holy Father and the local Bishops.

During these days -13 to 17 of September 2008 - aided by the power of the Holy Spirit and under the protection of Our Lady of Good Counsel and our Patroness St. Magdalena of Nagasaki, we have undertaken the task of analyzing the reality of our fraternities.

We give thanks to God for our vocation as Augustinian Recollect secular, in the year that we celebrate the centenary of the Restoration of the our Province of St. Thomas of Villanova.

With great joy, we have confirmed that in our fraternities there are brothers and sisters who live their vocation to the full, making the Augustinian Recollect Spirituality, flesh of their flesh and life of their life, giving witness to our charism and being an inspiration for the other brothers and sisters and even for our brother religious.

We underscore that we have achieved the objectives proposed in a meeting with the Fr. Provincial for this Convention, on June 8, 2008.

The fraternities gathered in this first Convention considered very appropriate formulate the following recommendations to all our brothers and sisters of the Province.

### **Governance**

- 1) The need to foment the sense of belonging to Order is felt.
- 2) To recommend that meetings of the fraternity be made weekly.
- 3) We suggest that higher superiors should appoint with care the religious who should attend to the spiritual needs of the fraternities, and should be known for their love for them.
- 4) Our meetings are means of helping us grow spiritually, therefore, they must consist of parts: prayer, formation, fraternal get-together, concrete commitment.

### **Formation**

- 1) That the formation must be progressive and proper to the members of the group, within the topics for study: life and

works of St. Augustine, Catechism of the Catholic Church (Creed, Our Father, Gifts) and actual problems (Social Doctrine of the Church, Bioethics, etc.)

- 2) Give greater importance to the study of the Sacred Scriptures.

### **Spirituality**

- 1) Let us try to foster personal prayer in order to enrich others with our own experience of God's presence in our life, since we cannot give what we don't have.
- 2) We encourage a deeper knowledge of our Rule of Life. It offers the members of the fraternity a plan of Christian life according to the ideal of St. Augustine. We propose that all meetings start with the reading of one point of the Rule of Life reflecting on it for some minutes.
- 3) We must have a positive attitude in such a way that fraternal love may be practiced more profoundly and thus the spirit of unity and constructive dialogue may grow.
- 4) We are invited to grow more each day in greater coherence between faith and life.
- 5) In order to make our charism a reality, the following are very fundamental: prayer, frequent reception of the sacraments, active participation in the liturgy, the spirituality of the members of the fraternity.
- 6) We recommend the practice of Advent and Lenten retreats.

## **Pastoral Vocation**

- 1) Convinced that we cannot communicate our charism to others if we do not know it, we think that in order to become animators of vocations we must know our charism better through the study of our Rule of Life and live it with fascination and hope.
- 2) We encourage all the members of the fraternity to know, love their great gift of vocation and live it in community, thus they will influence those who surround them.
- 3) Our fraternities, are called to be schools of life, by showing bother externally and internally the joy, unity and a great spirit of hospitality.

## **Apostolate and Solidarity**

- 1) We are God's image, and He has chosen us. This is the reason for our being brothers sisters of the fraternity and our life and mission should respond to this: to proclaim, to announce to all men and women that God loves them and awaits for them, to live with joy and simplicity our vocation.
- 2) To encourage all the members of the SARF to get more involved in all the apostolic activities that are within their reach.
- 3) Let the SARF members be not content only with the apostolate of their parish, but should be ready to commit themselves wherever the Church may need them.

- 4) Let the SARF members have as their best apostolate the testimony of their lives, above all, in their habitual works shared with others.
- 5) Let the principal apostolic task of the SARF be the inspiration and orientation of youth.
- 6) We stress that in order to be in solidarity with others, we must be humble, besides, what should be prevalent in us is charity; leading us always towards God with one mind and one heart.

We are profoundly grateful to the Spiritual Directors the dedication that they show us and we encourage our brother religious to see in the secular fraternity the extension of the charism of the Order in the world.

We thank the Prior Provincial, Fr. Miguel Angel Fernández the organization of this Convention; we are also grateful to the community of the House of Spirituality of Monachil for their hospitality and attentions. And to those who made possible our presence and participation in this Convention.

We greet fraternally our sisters of contemplative life and all the members of the Order who with their prayers interceded for the success of this Convention, from which we came out, “strongly persuaded to persuade and enthused to enthuse in communion with the brothers.”