

Manual of The Third Order of St. Norbert

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Preface

The *Manual of the Third Order of St. Norbert*, though chiefly intended as a Handbook or Companion for the Norbertine Tertiaries, may not be without interest to the lover of historical or ascetical books in general. Perhaps but few Catholics in this kingdom have heard of the existence of a Norbertine Third Order, and hence many may be surprised to hear that already numerous Catholics in England, Ireland, and even in America, wear the white scapular of the Norbertine Third Order in the same manner as their forefathers did before the so-called Reformation.

At the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, the Order of Prémontré counted thirty-four abbeys and two nunneries in England, six abbeys in Scotland, and seven in Ireland, while the White canons had at that time the spiritual care of numerous parishes in Great Britain and Ireland.

The Necrology of Beauchief Abbey, near Sheffield, which has lately been published, has revealed the fact that several Tertiaries were affiliated to the Abbey. This interesting document gives the names of about twenty-five "Fratres et Sorores ad succurrendum," or "assistant Brothers and Sisters" as the Norbertine Tertiaries were formerly called. As a matter of fact, it may be here observed that the same name is given to the Norbertine Tertiaries in the Constitution (1751) whereby Benedict XIV modified the former and approved the present Rule of the Norbertine Third Order.

After an interval of more than 300 years, the White Canons have (1872) again returned to England, where they now possess five priories or residences. And with the return of the First Order of Prémontré it was but natural that the Third Order should also make its appearance. "Spiritus ubi vult spirat:" "The Spirit breatheth where He will," says the written Word of God. [Pref.-001]

As might be expected, the first members of the Norbertine Third Order were persons who lived near the Norbertine Residence first established in England. On the foundation of other Houses more persons received the white scapular, but it was only when the *Life of St. Norbert* was published that the existence of the Third Order became better known beyond its former circle, and that new additions were made to the "pusillus grex," to the small, and even scattered, flock of Norbertine Tertiaries.

The *Life of St. Norbert* (as those who have access to it may see) speaks in the Introduction and in Chapter vii, of the origin and the spirit of the Third Order, and gives, in Appendix, the Rule of this Institution. It is still gratifying to remember how, in the first week that the *Life of St. Norbert* appeared, in December 1885, a zealous priest, then at the head of a religious establishment, wrote that the constitution and spirit of the Norbertine Third Order, of which he was ignorant before, had deeply interested him, and that he would consider it a favour if he were allowed to join it. Since that time the Third Order has been making steady, though slow, progress, and it seems now to require a Manual for the guidance and instruction of the members, and for the information of those Catholics who feel an interest in the progress of religious institutions.

There are thousands of Norbertine Tertiaries on the Continent, and we trust that, under the protection of Him Who gives the increase [Pref.-002] it may also spread and do good among the English-speaking Catholics.

Some perhaps, will say: We have already the Third Order of St. Francis, which has lately been singled out by Pope Leo XIII, and moreover, the Third Order of St. Dominic is also well known. Yes, we all admire the good work done by the Tertiaries of the Seraphic Founder, whose spirit, as a bishop has so well said, "is set before the Universal Church as a certain cure for the evils which affect the whole of society." We also know the good that is done by the Dominican Tertiaries. This is quite true; but as one Order differs from another on account of its spiritual exercises and works of charity, [Pref.-003] so one kind of Third Order differs from another for the same reason. Indeed, this variety of spiritual exercises and works of charity explains the existence, and gives reason for the existence, of the various Orders and Congregations which are found in the Church. They differ from each other, but as St. Norbert said: "Etsi diversae numquid adversae?" they are not opposed to each other; nay, far from it, they all work hand in hand in the service of Our Lord and of His Spouse the Holy Catholic Church, to promote God's kingdom on earth and to show forth its excellence [Pref.-004] like different kinds of flowers and plants make up the beauty of a garden, and by their variety and order delight the eye. There is diversity, but no real opposition. So true is this that many persons on the Continent are Franciscan and Norbertine Tertiaries, and thus combine the spiritual exercises and works of charity of the two religious Orders to which they are affiliated and in whose spiritual benefits they participate.

What is, then, the spirit which should animate and guide the Norbertine Tertiary? The spirit of the Third Order must evidently be the spirit of the First Order itself. Let me explain in a few words wherein this spirit principally consists. For further details I must refer the reader to the Introduction to the *Life of St. Norbert*, which treats at greater length of the mission and spirit of the Premonstratensian Order. [Pref.-005]

Three elements constitute essentially a Canonical Order, viz., the clerical dignity, the religious state, and stability or permanent service in a particular church. The Norbertine Tertiary is consequently affiliated to an Order of Canons Regular. Now two specific duties arise from the nature of a Canonical Order, viz., 1st - "Laus Dei in Choro" or the singing of the Divine Office, and 2nd- "Zelus animarum," or zeal for the salvation of souls. These are also, though of course only relatively and proportionately, the special duties of the Norbertine Tertiary.

(1) "Laus Dei" or the praise of God. The Norbertine Tertiary must say his own Office of "Paters" or of the Acts. He must be fervent and constant in his prayers; he must be willing to take care of, or to contribute to, all that concerns the altar, the House of God, and the Divine Offices; he should cherish a tender and enlightened love for Holy Mass - the most perfect and final expression of religious worship; in general, he should give to God what is due to His Divine Majesty, by repeated acts of the virtue of religion, and make reparation for sins committed against this virtue.

(2) "Zelus animarum," or zeal for souls, which is in general an act of intense charity, whereby the Norbertine Tertiary must ardently seek the glory of God and the salvation of his neighbour, and constantly reject what is opposed thereto. He must, as the Rule explains, endeavour to avoid, in all conversation in which he takes part, all detraction, immodest language, and blasphemy. He must try to restore peace between enemies, and always show himself ready to forgive an injury. He should be ready to cooperate with his pastor in all the good works of the parish. He should heartily join the Apostleship of prayer, and make the intentions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus his own. (see Rules II, III, and IV).

(3) To the particular ends which are common to, and characteristic of, all Canonical Orders, St. Norbert added fasting, abstinence, mortification, and other works of penance, together

with other pious customs peculiar to Monastic Orders, whereby his Order became as it were, Monastico-Canonical.

Norbertine Tertiaries should thus be animated with a spirit of habitual penance. It is true that the laws of fasting and abstinence which formerly bound the Norbertine Tertiary have been mitigated by the Constitution of Benedict XIV, and that works of piety and charity can now take their place; nevertheless, the Tertiary should remember that, as St. Norbert has said, "he is obliged to continually mortify his passions, and to spend his whole life in works of penance". The love of God will give him a hatred of sin, and also the spirit of penance for his own sins, and of reparation for the sins of his neighbour (See Rule VIII).

The fourth and fifth ends of the Tertiary are characteristic of the Norbertine Order. They are put forward in the first article of the Rule: "Imitating as a true child the virtues of our Father St. Norbert, he must heartily cherish and zealously promote a sincere devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and a tender devotion to the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary". For fuller details I must refer the reader to the Introduction of the *Life of St. Norbert*, and also to the explanation of the first Rule in this Manual.

To coincide with a few words on the form of the Manual, I must add that it is based on the second edition of the *Manuel du Tiers Ordre de St. Norbert, par le Rév. Godefroid Madelaine*, Prior of our Abbey of Mondaye, Calvados, France, from which Manuel the History of the Third Order and the explanation of the Rule have been taken, but a few additions have been introduced. Part III of the French Manual has been rearranged, and several chapters have been left out altogether; but, on the contrary, other portions have been substituted to these, e.g., "The Little Office of St. Norbert," translated from the Latin edition; several hymns, all but one due to a Loretto Sister; "Spiritual Counsels of St. Norbert," etc.

I must not omit to declare that, in obedience to the decrees of the Council of Trent and of Pope Urban VIII, both the author and the translator wish it to be understood that they humbly submit to the judgment of the Apostolic See whatever they have written concerning the historical facts, Indulgences, titles of holy persons, etc. as found in this Manual

- - - *F. M. Geudens, O. Praem.; St. Norbert's Residence, Crowle, Lincolnshire, feast of St. Joseph, 1889*

Part I

Chapter 1: Origin of the Third Order of Prémontré

Synopsis: *The First and Second Orders. Theobald, Count of Champagne. He offers himself to St. Norbert as a disciple. St. Norbert refuses to admit him, but gives him the little white scapular. The first Third Order established in the Church.*

It is not difficult to discover in the history of St. Norbert's career traces of the origin of the Third Order of Prémontré. In the year 1120 the Saint had laid the foundations, in the valley of Prémontré, of an Order which was already showering its blessings upon the northern districts of France, Flanders, and part of Germany. Monasteries quickly sprung up in the footsteps of the man of God. As early as 1121 a number of pious women, filled with a spirit of emulation, eagerly demanded permission to enrol themselves among the disciples of the famous Patriarch. Norbert gladly welcomed them, and thus became the Founder of the Second Order.

Doubtless, in the ardour of his zeal, he often asked himself whether it was not possible to open the doors of his Institute to persons living in the world. When men were obliged, by

their position, age, or health to dwell in the midst of the world, was it not possible for the cloister to grant them some of its spiritual favours? In a word, was it not possible to establish a new organisation which would be neither worldly nor monastic; which would exist in the very bosom of human society, yet bear, beneath secular clothing, a truly religious soul? Frequently, indeed, must St. Norbert have asked himself these questions, but even in 1124 nothing in the shape of a solution had appeared. The unexpected plays a notable part in the rulings of Providence; it is not chance - it is the hidden hand of God which brings each event to pass in its proper time and according to His good will and pleasure.

The following event gave Norbert the opportunity of realising the idea so long pondered and matured. The author of his Life, a contemporary and disciple of the Saint, narrates it with a simplicity of expression which it is desirable to preserve.

Our Father Norbert was truly the *burning and shining light*, [Orig-001] as seen in these latter times. He was the light placed not beneath the bushel, but on the summit of the mountain. In Germany as well as in France, his name was known and glorified. The return of the Blessed Father from Westphalia to France was everywhere heralded by the report of the conversion of Count Godfrey of Kappenberg. All admired the sudden change which had transformed a great prince into a humble religious, and a riotous court into a calm and peaceful monastery. This example appealed with a special force to one of the noblest lords in France, Count Theobald. [Orig-002]

This illustrious personage, who had been thus touched by the grace of god, was, according to all chroniclers of the age, the most powerful prince in the kingdom of France, and beyond all question the first in rank after the king himself. "Theobald IV, surnamed the Great, was son of Stephen, Count of Champagne and Blois, and Alice, daughter of William the Conqueror, King of England. In 1102 he succeeded to his father's estate. Together with his father's virtues and valour he inherited immense property, and says Guibert of Nogent, as many castles as there are days in the year, but these dignities and all his wealth only rendered him more humble and more charitable." [Orig-003]

In a word Theobald appears to us in the twelfth century as an ideal of a Christian prince whose only object is to secure the happiness of his people, and to encourage them in the practice of virtue. So fervent a man could not remain deaf to the voice of Heaven. He came without delay to Prémontré in search of the illustrious Founder. To him he disclosed the noble aspirations he felt for the service and glory of God.

The ways of Providence are wonderful. Theobald had come only with the view of obtaining good counsel and advice, and lo! "considering the eloquence of the man of God, the sweetness of his countenance, and the wisdom of his answers, he is so charmed with him and his work that he offers himself entirely to Norbert with all his possessions". [Orig-004]

At such a proposal the Founder of an Institute, which was only four years old and in great need of protectors, must surely have smiled. Another more interested or less enlightened than Norbert would immediately have listened with pleasure to an offer of this description; but Norbert, without accepting or rejecting it, asked for a few days of prayer to consult Our Lord and to confide to Him his project. What a contradiction to the slanders which some historians are pleased to dishonor the memory of the holy Founders of Orders!

In fact, St. Norbert well knew that the numerous castles of Count Theobald could not be alienated or made useful to his Order. To adopt such a measure would be a menace even to the kingdom of France itself, and a disturbance of the feudal hierarchy of his vassals. He knew, moreover, the generosity of the Count in comforting the poor and in building churches

and monasteries. He knew that Theobald was the father of the orphan, the defender of widows, the feeder of the hungry, the refuge of lepers. A man so discreet as Norbert could not place in the monastic life one whom God had called as he well knew, to such a career.

As Theobald was awaiting the Saint's answer, Heaven suggested the reply to Norbert. "You will not be a religious," he said to the Count of Champagne; "you will bear the yoke of the Lord as you have done till this day, and you will add to it that of wedlock. May God preserve us from opposing the designs of His Providence in your behalf." "If such is the will of God," answered the Count, "it is not for me to gainsay it, but be assured I shall not wed any but the woman you choose for me."

"See," cries the historian of St. Norbert, "how great was his discernment of spirits. Two princes, Godfrey and Theobald, come to him; he makes one give up all; the other he bids keep all, and possess all as if he possessed nothing." [Orig-005]

This offer of the Count of Champagne and its rejection by St. Norbert were, in the eternal decrees of God, the events which were to bring about the foundation of the Third Order of Prémontré. Before sending him away, Norbert drew up for him a Rule of life containing special practices sufficiently austere to become for souls of good will a safe road and bulwark against the evils of the age. In addition to these precautions, he thought it desirable to give the new Brother some outward token or sign of his aggregation to the Order; he therefore solemnly invested Theobald with a little woollen scapular of whit colour. This the Count ever afterwards wore as a symbol of the bond which united him to the Norbertine family. Henceforth in the midst of his gay and glittering court he was to be seen contentedly clad in simple and modest garments, and observing a rule of life far surpassing that of the pious laymen of his district. [Orig-006]

Not content with this close connection, he wished to have about him some of the children of the holy Patriarch, and he founded with this purpose within the very confines of his residence the Abbey of Château-Thierry, transferred a few years later to Valsecret, in the diocese of Soissons. His liberality to the Mother-Abbey of Prémontré was unbounded. Until the end of his life, he kept continually with him two Canons of the Order, to whom he confided the direction of his conscience, the distribution of his alms and the spiritual care of the inhabitants of his domain.

The Third Order was thus definitely established. It was the third branch of a single Order, a branch destined to draw to itself the men and women of the world. by the institution of the Canons Regular of Prémontré, Norbert had enkindled in the heart of the Catholic church a furnace of uninterrupted prayer, and an unceasing apostolate. By the foundation of the Norbertine nuns, he had opened to the "weaker sex" the path of devotedness and self-sacrifice. By the creation of the Third Order, he has introduced the religious life into the bosom of the family and into the whirl of secular pursuits.

We have used the word *creation*. Such, indeed, was the character of the work. It is certain that before St. Norbert, no one had succeeded in establishing in the Church a state of life which should be midway between the cloister and the world, or, to put it in different language, a religious Order which should penetrate into Christian homes in the midst of the world. To him belongs the credit of having been chosen by God as His instrument for the accomplishment of so great a work. The *Dictionary of Trévoux* said in the eighteenth century: "The Carmelites, the Augustinians, and the Franciscans contend with one another for the honour of having originated the idea of Third Orders. If, however, it is true that the Third Order of Prémontré began in the very lifetime of St. Norbert (Père Hélyot himself says so),

since St. Norbert died in 1134, the Order of Prémontré must be the first which had a Third Order." [Orig-006]

"It was," says a more recent author, "the first institution of the kind, and was imitated in subsequent years by several other Founders, and notably by St. Francis and St. Dominic." [Orig.-007]

St. Norbert has then the glory of pointing the way to these two great men - an honour which may well be appreciated by the sons of the holy Patriarch and by all the friends of his Institute. The Norbertine Tertiaries were originally called *Fratres et Sorores ad Succurrendum* (from the assistance given to and received from the Order), which name is given also in the Brief of Benedict XIV concerning the members of the Norbertine Third Order. It is possible that this Brotherhood did not take the name of Third Order until after the foundation of similar institutions by St. Francis and St. Dominic; but if the name is more recent, it cannot be denied that the *idea* reaches back to the time of St. Norbert.

However that may be, the solemn aggregation of Theobald to the Order of Prémontré could not fail to act as a powerful stimulus to the Count's fervour, and as an edifying example for his courtiers and people. When he died, on 10th January 1151, Norbert, his friend and spiritual father, was no longer there to bless and strengthen him; but by his bedside were disciples of the Saint to comfort him, and bid forth the Christian soul in the name of God. St. Norbert himself from his throne in Heaven descended to meet his well-beloved son, the Count of Champagne, Chartres and Blois, the humble Brother of the Third Order of Prémontré. His name was inscribed by loving hands in the Necrology of Prémontré and Valsecret; and the *Ephemerides Hagiologicae* of the Order give a sketch of his life on the 26th September: "In France, commemoration of Theobald, of pious and glorious memory, Count of Champagne and Blois, etc. . . .".

Part I

Chapter 2: Growth, Decline and Revival of the Third Order

Synopsis: *The Third Order in the Twelfth Century. Primitive Rule of the Norbertine Tertiaries. The Third Order at Antwerp. The Confraternity of the White Scapular in Beauport. The Third Order remodelled by Brief of Benedict XIV.*

Theobald had been the first Tertiary of the Order of Prémontré; he was not destined to be the only one. The Counts of Brienne, who founded our Abbey of Basse-Fontaine, in the diocese of Troyes, became remarkable among the many disciples whom the spirit of the holy Patriarch had attracted even in the midst of the world. "So exact," says an old writer, "was their fidelity to the Rule drawn up for them by the Blessed Norbert, that all could see these princes did not wear the white scapular in vain. The integrity of their lives and the purity of their morals never belied the colour of their habit." [GDR-001]

Soon every district in France and many parts of Europe gave Tertiaries to the family of St. Norbert. "Kings, princes, dukes, counts, lords, and vassals," says Le Paige, "flocked to the Abbeys of Prémontré, demanding the white habit of St. Norbert, and the rule he had prepared for men of the world." [GDR-002]

We cannot but regret the brevity of the Norbertine writer. The names would have been valuable to us, and more circumstantial details could scarcely have failed to edify the reader. Each of the monasteries of the Order had its Register covered with names of Brothers and Sisters ad succurrendum, who, according to the writers of the Institute, were Tertiaries. The names - a great many of these Associates - are to be found in the Necrologies of the Norbertine Abbeys, some of which have lately been published, as for instance, in the

Necrology of Floreffé, near Namur, Belgium, and also the Obituary of Silly, in the diocese of Séez, France. There were also many Norbertine Tertiaries in England before the Reformation. The Necrology [GDR-003] of Beauchief Abbey, near Sheffield, Gives the names of more than twenty-five members. The Necrologies of all our Abbeys should certainly furnish similar indications.

The following Rules were observed by the Tertiaries of those distant ages: After they had received the white scapular from the hands of a Premonstratensian Abbot, their names were entered by the Sacristan on the Register of the Confraternity. From that time forward they were bound to recite devoutly a certain number of "Paters" and "Aves"; viz., for Matins, fifteen "Paters" and "Aves" with the Apostles Creed once; for Prime, Terce, Sext, and None, seven "Paters" and "Aves"; for Vespers, twelve; and for Compline, seven, adding the Apostle's Creed. They were, moreover, to confess and communicate at least seven times a year, viz., on the Feast of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints, the Assumption, and the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. In addition to the fasts appointed by the Church, they were to fast on every Friday of the year, and to abstain during Advent. These Rules, however, did not bind under pain of sin. The members bound themselves only to the acceptance of the penances imposed at the discretion of their own confessor. [GDR-005]

Such regulations were not too severe for the generous spirit of the Christians of these ages of faith. The world was literally crowded with men and women, young and old, who bore without human respect the badges of a religious Order, and observed as closely as possible all its customs in the privacy of their homes. It would, in fact, be difficult to over-estimate the beneficial influence exerted by the Third Orders on the general advance of Christian civilisation in France and throughout Europe.

The Bollandists specify some of the results which were visible at Antwerp about the middle of the twelfth century. The Patriarch of Prémontré was already surnamed the Apostle of Antwerp. The extinction of the heresy of Tanchelin, the re-establishment of Catholic worship, the restoration of peace to the city, were certainly benefits sufficient to entitle him to everlasting gratitude. The following contract of Brotherhood made (1135) by the Canons of Notre Dame at Antwerp and the Canons of Prémontré of St. Michael's Abbey, in the same place, is, therefore, not surprising. In this agreement there is a covenant that parishioners of Notre Dame who desire aggregation to the Premonstratensians, "on taking the Rule and habit of the Order, can receive the sacraments from them, and be buried by them, and in their cemeteries". As Père Papebroeck, the Bollandist, observes, there is evidently question here of a spiritual confraternity, comprising in its ranks the faithful of both sexes, even though married like those whom the Mendicant Orders call Tertiaries. [GDR-006]

The same author is of the opinion that, about the middle of the sixteenth century, the custom of wearing the scapular became modified, and that, instead, the Tertiaries carried a medal made of lead, having on one side a Host in a Monstrance. It would appear the Associates wore this medal suspended from their necks as a token of their faith in the most Holy Sacrament. The same writer adds that the Tertiaries of St. Norbert could scarcely choose a more suitable ensign than the image of the Blessed Sacrament, for the Adorable Eucharist was ever the centre of St. Norbert's thoughts and the strengthening principle of his religious life.

Works begun in the Church at the breath of founders raised up by God seldom fail to meet with enemies. From time to time they are assailed by prejudice born of passions, by the love of novelty which causes them to be cast in the shade, even by time itself, the inevitable enemy of all human institutions. Thus it happened that, in the thirteenth century, our Third

Order gradually declined. From that period little mention of it is to be found in the history of the Church. The Ritual and the Statutes of the Order do not speak of it. In the Ordinary or Ceremonial there is only a passing allusion, important, however, because it determines what prayers should be said in each Abbey "for deceased persons who have participation in our Brotherhood, or who, at the hour of death, shall have been duly clothed in the habit of the Order"; but it must be borne in mind that these books only speak of what directly concerns the members of the First and Second Orders of St. Norbert. Le Paige, in his *Bibliotheca Ord. Praem.*, printed in 1633, gives the ceremonial of blessing the white scapular, and of clothing with it the members of the Third Order.

At the close of the seventeenth century, a great effort for its revival was made in Catholic Brittany, in France. At that time the Abbey of Beauport, not far from St. Brieux, was held *in commendam* - that is, was without an Abbot of the Order, but it was ruled by a Prior who in better days would well have deserved the abbatial dignity. Prior Vincent Royer maintained in his monastery the most edifying regularity, and by his care the Abbey Church soon ranked first in wealth and splendour of all the churches in Brittany. His zeal was not restricted to the monastery; "he obtained a Pontifical Brief approving the Confraternity of the White Scapular which had been established in the Abbey. This Confraternity was also praised and approved by the General Chapter of the Order, assembled at Prémontré under the Abbot-General Michael Colbert in 1686. It does not appear to have differed from the Third Order, and it granted its members participation in all the spiritual goods of the Order." [GDR-007]

In the eighteenth century the Premonstratensians in Bavaria, with the consent of the Abbot-General Bruno Bécourt, resolved in their turn to re-constitute and extend this institution, which was already working in Bavaria and in other parts of Europe, and which they thought was likely to be productive of the happiest results for the good of souls. The Right Reverend Joseph Silbermann, Abbot of St. Saviour, in the diocese of Passau, the Vicar-General of the Order in Bavaria, the Tyrol, and the Palatinate, addressed a request on this subject to Pope Benedict XIV (1751). The illustrious Pontiff granted his request, approved once more the Third Order of St. Norbert, and gave it Rules better adapted to the new needs, or, to put it more correctly, to the new weaknesses of the age. A Manual immediately appeared at Passau, entitled *Idea and Practices of the Ancient Third Order of St. Norbert*. This was, it seems, the first Manual for the use of the Norbertine Tertiaries.

The important Brief of Benedict XIV, which contains the Rules of the Third Order of Prémontré, will be given and explained in the next chapters.

Part II: Constitution of the Third Order

Chapter 1: Brief of Pope Benedict XIV, on the Third Order of Prémontré

For a Perpetual Remembrance

Our dear son Joseph Silbermann, a duly professed Canon Regular and Abbot of the Monastery of St. Saviour, of the Order of Prémontré in Bavaria, and Visitor-General of the same Order for the Provinces of Bavaria, the Tyrol, and the Palatinate, has recently set before us: that St. Norbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg and Father of the Religious of Prémontré, in the year 1120, established and instituted, at the request of a large number of seculars, an Association for the benefit of those who live in the world, and are known under the name of the Third Order. It was speedily embraced by the many persons of rank in France, Brabant, Germany and Spain. The members are called Brothers of the Third Order of Prémontré. Under their ordinary lay dress they wear the white scapular, recite daily certain

prayers, fast more frequently than the generality of Christians, that is to say, during the whole of Advent and on Friday of each week. This Third Order still exists in several districts of Bavaria.

However, many of the faithful are frightened by the severity of the fasts. Now the Premonstratensians of the Province of Bavaria desire to develop the Third Order, so as to procure the salvation of souls and a greater perfection of life. They have accordingly mitigated the ancient regulation as to fasting. Moreover, the necessary permission and confirmation having been granted to our dear son, the present Abbot-General of the who by virtue of the statutes of the said Order, approved by the Apostolic authority, has the power to admit seculars with the title of Brothers and Sisters, and to give them participation both in life and death in all the Masses, prayers, and other spiritual goods and good works of the Order of Prémontré. New rules have been made for the Third Order on the basis of the old Rules, and which are appended.

Explanation:

This preamble of the Sovereign Pontiff is simply a historical sketch of the Third Order. Two chief ideas can be easily recognised in it. First, the Third Order is not a fantastic after-growth added at a later time to the work of St. Norbert. Its real author is the illustrious Patriarch himself. He it was who at the request of numerous lay persons erected it and established it in favour of men of good will who were obliged to live in the world. Moreover, in his idea, the Third Order is not the same as the religious life properly so called, for the religious life necessarily includes the idea of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. As in the Third Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic, a special branch may be admitted to live together in community under a special Rule, but ordinarily there will be no vows of any kind except the baptismal vows, the observance of which will be made at once stricter and easier. The Tertiaries are to be lay people affiliating themselves as far as possible to the Order properly so called and following a particular Rule without abandoning the world. Association in prayers, good works, communions, union in faith, and Christian living - such rules are the essence of the Third Order of Prémontré.

It is not, however, a simple Congregation or Confraternity. It is much more than that. It may be called a radiation of the Norbertine Spirit, a peculiar form of the Gospel spirit, well defined and easily adopted. Benedict XIV, in his Constitution of 1751, never calls it by any other name than that of the Third Order of Prémontré. It is a Canonical Association, recognized and approved by the Church, that is to say, by the Sovereign Pontiff, who is its Head and Chief.

The Apostolic Brief sums up in a few words the history of the Third Order of St. Norbert. Founded by that great Saint, it was at once embraced by numbers of lay persons in France, Brabant, Germany, and Spain. This eagerness to join the Institute of the Canons Regular in those times ought to stimulate and encourage the fervour of the Tertiaries of the present time. Noble examples have ever had the power of exciting to perfection certain souls that hunger and thirst after justice.

But an obstacle presented itself even to those most determined to win the kingdom of Heaven (which suffers violence). When the Patriarch of the Premonstratensians opened in the twelfth century the doors of his Institute to the people of the world, the human frame was, generally speaking, more robust and the will more energetic. In the eighteenth century there was greater weakness of frame and character, the best no longer had the courage to embrace the austerities practised by preceding ages. Accordingly, Benedict XIV, exercising his supreme

authority, mitigated the fasts and abstinences, taking care at the same time to preserve the spirit of mortification and self-denial, which is the very substance of all Christian life.

The present age, still weaker in soul and body than the preceding, has learnt to value this relaxation, now almost necessary. The Rules of the Third Order have therefore nothing to frighten those of weak health and good will can find substitutes for all exterior practices.

These remarks have their place at the commencement of the Rule of the Tertiaries in order to remind them in a few words of the position which the Third Order of St. Norbert holds in the bosom of the Catholic Church. They may, moreover, encourage themselves to study it and to grasp its full meaning by the reflection that it is the work of a Saint, and that the works of a Saint are always attended with special benedictions. They may encourage themselves to an exact observance of their Rule by surveying the vast field which is opened to them. Following in the train of countless holy souls who have shed glory on the Order of Prémontré, they have the right and the duty of striving to reach the highest pinnacle of evangelical perfection by simply using the means afforded to the Norbertine Brotherhood. To them, indeed, in a special manner, are addressed those words of our Divine Saviour: "*Be ye perfect as also your Heavenly Father is perfect.*" [Matt. v. 48]

Part II: Constitution of the Third Order

Chapter 2: Constitution of the Holy Third Order of Prémontré

Synopsis: The principal end of this Sacred Third Order is that the Brothers and Sisters imitate the virtues of our holy Father Norbert.

Rule 1: Of the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary

They must heartily cherish and zealously promote the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, from whom St. Norbert was deemed worthy to receive the white habit of the Order.

Explanation:

The Apostolic Constitution goes straight to the point. It shows the candidates for admission into the Third Order what is the end to which they are to direct all their efforts. They are to sanctify themselves daily. How? By reproducing in themselves the virtues of the holy Patriarch of Prémontré. Members of a family are easily known by the similarity of their features. If it is the happiness of a father to see himself again in the countenance, bearing, and inner character of his children, it is also the glory of children to reproduce the characteristic features of the authors of their being. What is true in the purely human order assumes a much more attractive reality in the supernatural and religious order. Every Christian should reproduce in himself, at least in some degree, the divine features of Jesus Christ. But the perfections of the Saviour of men are so admirable and so far beyond our weakness that they require to be decomposed, light light through a prism, before they can be brought within our reach. The Saints are this prism, which distributes to us, according to our small capacity, the infinite rays of the Sun of Justice. Hence in the Catholic Church that great diversity of graces, gifts, vocations, missions, states, ministries of which St. Paul speaks in his Epistles.

Now each Saint has his special physiognomy and his particular aspect. At bottom it is, indeed, always the same sanctity which radiates and spreads itself over the world, but the rays

vary in shade according to the particular attraction of each, or rather according to the eternal decree of Divine predestination. In every case, it is true to say that all the Saints resemble each other by the burning charity which inflames them, and that the same time all have their particular attractions by reason of the special vocation which they receive from Providence.

If you go through the history of St. Norbert, you will soon recognise in it two main ideas which make up his whole life. He was filled with a God-given passion for the honour of Jesus Christ, ever present and living in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and a boundless zeal for devotion to the Immaculate Virgin Mary. The first discourse of St. Norbert was delivered at the very altar on the day of his first Mass. His first miracle takes place at the altar. A heresiarch of Brabant dares to deny the real presence. Norbert is chosen by Our Lord to confound Tanchelin, and to re-establish at Antwerp the devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. His first counsel to his disciples was that they should show their faith in reverence for the Adorable Sacrament by a constant, watchful attention to the neatness and splendour of the holy altars. This was the characteristic feature in the moral physiognomy of the holy Founder, and this, in our opinion, was to be the peculiar spirit of his children.

The Tertiaries ought, therefore, in every way to display a lively faith in the Real Presence of the God of love in our Catholic churches. Their regular attendance at the religious services of their parish, their respectful bearing, their fresh and manly piety, free alike from human respect and from ostentation, their more frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, their more frequent communions, their love for liturgical ceremonies, ought to show to all that they have a truly living faith in the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

Nor is this all. To correspond to their special vocation as Tertiaries, they will set themselves to spread round about them, both by word and example, devotion to that God Whose delight it is to be with the children of men. They will love to make themselves missionaries of the Most Holy Sacrament. Thus, for example, they will make it a duty to carry out in a solemn manner the Perpetual Adoration and the "Quarant Ore," or Forty Hours' Prayer. According to their position in life, they will attend to the ornamentation of the churches, the decency and good taste of everything connected with Divine worship.

It is plain, then, that interior and exterior devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is the first obligation of a Norbertine Tertiary; or rather it is less a special obligation than a feeling or disposition which should permeate and possess the entire life of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order. Every grace comes to us from the Blessed Sacrament. Every action, every word falling from our lips, every beat of our hearts ought to be directed to the Tabernacle where Our Lord Jesus Christ is ever living for our sake.

We have already named the second devotion of the Third Order: tender piety towards the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of all men. A special tie unites the Order of Prémontré to the Queen of Heaven. It was the most Holy Virgin Mary herself who deigned, in a special vision, to show to our holy founder the colour and form of the dress or habit which his disciples were to assume. It is true that this tradition, which is common to the entire Order, met with illustrious opponents in the eighteenth century. The Bollandists, and Hugo in *La Vie de St. Norbert*, did not dare to treat it as a certainty, but other historians not less worthy of credit have asserted and proved a fact so honourable to St. Norbert and his children. Moreover, the new Bollandists, resting their case on an undisputed passage in the *Life of Blessed Louis of Arnstein*, written in 1198, declare that the white habit was certainly indicated by a Divine revelation to St. Norbert. Even Hugo was obliged to return to the common belief, and to say, together with all his Brothers in religion: "Resting on a constant

tradition, we believe that St. Norbert took the white habit by order of the Holy Virgin in person." [Cons.-001]

Benedict XIV, did not hesitate to consecrate this belief by officially recording it in the Martyrology of the Canons Regular for the 5th of August: "On the same day the apparition of the most Blessed Virgin, who in the Chapel of St. John the Baptist at Prémontré showed St. Norbert the white habit of the Institute". [Cons.-002] No family is without traditions and domestic reminiscences which are protected by reverence from any essential alteration, and assuredly the apparition of the Blessed Virgin to St. Norbert is the most precious treasure of the Norbertine family. Thanks to this glorious belief, each new candidate for the Order can, on the day of his clothing, hear the Queen of Heaven repeating to him the traditional saying: "Fili, Norberte, accipe candidam vestem." - "My son Norbert, receive the white habit from my hands!"

The Brothers and sisters of the Third Order will therefore consider themselves as children of Mary. They will love to pronounce her name, to celebrate her Feasts with devotion, to recite the Rosary. They will be proud and happy to wear her white livery, and to belong to an Order which can, with good reason, claim to be called the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary. If their occupations leave them sufficient leisure, they will recite her Little Office at least once a week, on Saturday or on Sunday. All practices of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary which have been approved by the Church will be dear to them. This filial piety will be to the Tertiaries a foundation for Christian virtue, a guarantee of perseverance, and a precious pledge of eternal salvation.

Rule 2: Of Conversation

They will endeavour to banish from all conversation in which they may take part, all detraction, immodest language, and blasphemy.

Explanation:

The Rule placed near the beginning of the Constitutions of the Third Order is of a very practical character. To introduce the Christian spirit into the conversation and ordinary talk of daily life is really to cut at the root of the evil. Man is that which he shows himself to be in his speech, and perfection in this regard is a very uncommon virtue. The Apostle St. James goes so far as to say: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." (Epist. iii. 2)

In an Arab proverb speech is described as of silver, silence as golden; but since it is necessary to speak, Tertiaries will consider it a special duty entailed by their vocation to keep a watchful guard over their ordinary conversation, and to maintain it as a befitting level. The spirit of the Gospel on this point may be expressed in a single word: respect. To have in our conversation respect for God, for our neighbour, and for ourselves - such is the teaching of the Gospel. Respect for God will surely preserve us from every word savouring blasphemy. Now, it is well to bear in mind that there is the formal blasphemy which declares itself without blushing, and the implicit blasphemy concealed beneath affirmations and negations which attack the Majesty of God. Thus it is that every unbecoming jest at religion is practically a blasphemy - that is to say, words insulting to God.

Next to the respect due to God, there is the respect due to our fellow-creatures, or, to use a more Christian word, to our brethren. Human malice is so great that very few conversations take place in which the credit of our neighbour is not injured or his reputation stained. A word passes quickly from between our lips, but is not a word of slander an arrow which wings its flight to strike in cowardly manner one that is absent? Hearts that are really

Christian have ever had a horror of slander and detraction. St. Augustine painted on the walls of the dining-room in which, with his disciples and friends, he was wont to take his meals, the following distich:

"Quisquis amat dictis absentem rodere vitam
Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi."

"If anyone likes to carp at the conduct of absent persons,
let him know that this table is forbidden to him."

All Norbertine Tertiaries will keep before their minds this memorable example, and strive to imitate it.

Self-respect in conversation calls for the practice of Christian modesty. Every misplaced word, every licentious suggestion, every song that is disgraceful, or even merely of a light and doubtful character, is an insult to one's own dignity. For this reason the Tertiaries should frequently reflect on the great counsel of the Apostle St. Paul: "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; or obscenity, or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose, but rather giving of thanks." [Cons.-003]

It must, moreover, be remarked that the obligation of our Tertiaries in this regard does not stop here with themselves. The Apostolic Constitution says expressly that in speaking and in all conversation in which they may take part they should endeavour to act the part of apostles of religion, of charity, and of good morals. God alone knows how many pious artifices may be employed to ensure success in this noble undertaking. Some pleasantry in good taste, a witty saying, a word which adroitly turns into another channel a conversation touching on dangerous ground - all these resources are within the reach of the Brothers and Sisters. They are practices devoid of difficulty, and seldom fail to produce a good effect. Thus, after the example of St. Norbert, who was called by his contemporaries "Presco Dei" - The Herald of God, the Tertiaries of Prémontré will exercise in all their conversations true apostleship.

Rule 3: Of Pardon Of Injuries:

They must try to restore peace between enemies, and always show themselves ready to forgive an injury.

Explanation:

Two things are here recommended to the Tertiaries of Prémontré: to endeavour to reconcile enemies and themselves to be personally prompt and generous in forgiving injuries. Nothing is so beautiful as the zeal and prudence which St. Norbert exhibited in this difficult work of reconciling enemies. It was, so to speak, a special grace conferred on him by the Divine Goodness. Wherever he went he became the messenger of charity, the "angel of peace". The latter title has, indeed, been given him. One day, in the year 1119, he was passing through the little town of Fosses, in the then diocese of Liège. He met a young man whose brother had been slain the previous week, going to seek revenge. The man of God stopped him, threw his arms round his neck, and embracing him tenderly, said: "My dear friend, I am a stranger, and am only passing through this country. Since my arrival here I have not yet asked any favour from any person, nor have I received anything. I behold you - young, bright, and of amiable appearance. It would give me pleasure to receive at your hands to receive the first favour I have asked in this country." At these words, the heart of the young man was moved, and with tears in his eyes he said: "Speak, my father; what could I refuse you?" "Well," replied St. Norbert, "I ask of you the pardon of your brother's murderer." Immediately the

young knight broke his sword in two, and relinquished his project of vengeance at the word of Norbert.

The life of the Saint is full of similar instances. Following his example, the disciples of the great Founder should ever regard themselves as messengers of peace and concord in that little corner of the world in which the Providence of God has placed them. What a noble mission is thus confided to them! It will be a duty to them to try and restore the magnificent spectacle which the primitive Church presented when all the faithful were of one heart and one soul: "Cor unum et anima una".

But in order to attain to this ideal state, they must understand that they should be the first to set the example of generosity and promptness in forgiving injuries. Of what use with their counsels be, or their entreaties in behalf of peace, if they are not in their own affairs of a peaceable, mild, and merciful disposition. It is, however, a work requiring constant watchfulness. The forgiveness of injuries or insults call for a serious and continuous struggle against our nature. It is absolutely necessary to conquer self and to frequently renew our resolution of pardoning every injury done to us, of bearing patiently every vexation, great and small. The virtue of patient endurance is a series of precautions against the self.

Rule 4: Of Profane Assemblies

Profligate parties, obscene plays, and scandalous dances are strictly forbidden.

Explanation:

In entering their names in the Register of the Norbertine Brotherhood, the Tertiaries renewed the solemn promise, already made at the baptismal font, of renouncing the works and pomps of Satan, who is the sworn enemy of our eternal salvation. The Constitution of Benedict XIV reminds us of this obligation. In the words of the Apostle St. John, "The whole world is seated in wickedness". [Cons.-006] Now this world is not a mere creation of the imagination; it is the very medium in which we live; it is the air we breathe unconsciously. Vice and error form a current difficult to resist. Therefore, abiding faithful to God, let the Tertiaries, who make a public profession of a close imitation of Our Divine Lord, forbid themselves, once for all, the reading of those novels or romances in which the mind finds nothing solid, and the heart is threatened with corruption. Let them know only by name of profligate festivities, indecent balls, or shameful dances. Their presence at these worldly gatherings would of itself be a serious scandal.

There is a great discretion shown in this fourth Rule. Only those pleasures and amusements which are scandalous or dangerous are forbidden. There is pure and lawful recreation to be found. These honourable joys which preserve the family life are far from being evil. In them the body recovers from its fatigue, the mind is relaxed, the heart finds repose, and the bonds of affection are tightened. Animated by this spirit of St. Norbert, the Tertiaries will observe a wise middle course between dissipating amusements and a certain savage melancholy which true piety never inspires.

Rule 5: Of Confession and Communion

They are bound to go to Confession and to receive Holy Communion at least seven times in the year, viz., on Christmas Day, on Easter Sunday, on Whitsunday, on All Saints' Day, on the Feasts of Our Lady's Assumption and Nativity, and on the Feast of St. John the Baptist; but the Holy Order ardently desires and earnestly exhorts them to approach more frequently these abundant sources of grace.

Explanation:

The Constitution contains the reason for the existence of this Rule. Penance and the Holy Eucharist are the two fountains from which every Christian can and must draw the living water, which is the supernatural life of the soul. The life of the body is not sustained without daily food. In like manner the life of the soul has need of renewal. It has need of Confession and Holy Communion, and it has need of them as frequently as possible. The Seven Confessions and Communions enjoined in this Rule are an absolute minimum. Moreover, the wish and counsel of the Constitution is plainly for a more regular frequentation. They place only one condition in order to prevent the spirit of routine; that is, the spirit of devotion and fervor. On this point as in all others, obedience is the great rule. This it is which rebukes the negligence of slothful and cowardly souls. This it is also which checks, if necessary, the excessive ardour of presumptuous souls.

Rule 6: Of Meditation and Spiritual Reading

They must on all Sundays and Holy Days make a quarter of an hour's meditation, or read a spiritual book during the same length of time

Explanation:

This is "God's quarter of an hour". Reflection is an indispensable element in every serious life. It is not, then, asking too much from souls of good will to impose on them a quarter of an hour's meditation in the week. If, however, any are frightened at this practice, they could substitute for it, for the same period of time, the reading of a pious book. During many long years St. Teresa knew no other method of praying. She used to take some book on spiritual matters, read a few words of it, and then pause until she had gathered all the fruit they contained. This thoughtful reading feeds the intelligence, inflames the heart, and leads to virtue. It is not out of place to remember that St. Augustine owed his conversion to such spiritual reading. Doubtless, it was the grace of God which did all, veiled beneath the words of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Rule 7: Of the Recitation Of The Office:

They must say:

- **For Matins and Lauds, each:**
 - **Apostles' Creed, once**
 - **Our Father, fifteen times**
 - **Hail Mary, fifteen times**
 - **Ejaculatory Prayer: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary!"**
- **For Prime, Terce, Sext, and None:**
 - **Our Father, seven times**
 - **Hail Mary, seven times**

- **Ejaculatory Prayer: "Praised be . . ." seven times, following each couplet of the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary"**
- **For Vespers:**
 - **Our Father, twelve times**
 - **Hail Mary, twelve times**
 - **Ejaculatory Prayer: "Praised be . . ." twelve times, following each couplet of the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary"**
- **For Compline:**
 - **Apostles' Creed, one time**
 - **Our Father, seven times**
 - **Hail Mary, seven times**

But if the Brothers and Sisters are already so much occupied by their usual prayers, or hindered by their daily occupations, that they cannot easily say the above-named prayers, in that case the Abbots will have the power to dispense with such, and allow them to make, in the place of the prescribed prayers, the following acts of virtue, viz.:

- **In place of Matins, an act of a good intention to please God in all things, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of Prime, an act of faith, hope, and charity, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of Terce, an act of contrition with purpose of amendment, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of Sext, an act of praise and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of None, an act of resignation to the Will of God, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of Vespers, acts of charity towards neighbours, the forgiveness of injuries, and of benevolence towards their enemies, followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once,**
- **In place of Compline, acts of thanksgiving for all Divine favours received, and of humility; followed by the Ejaculatory Prayer, once: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary!"**

Explanation:

By the prayers enjoined in this Rule, the Tertiaries are united to the Religious and Priests of the entire Church. They have the precious advantage of mingling their feeble voices with the great voice of the Catholic liturgy, which rises continually from earth to Heaven. Their prayer becomes stronger and more powerful when supported by that which is the universal, official, and public prayer of religion. The office of the Tertiaries is simple; it is composed of the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary" - that is to say, of the two prayers most authorised by the

Christian religion. To each "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" which they may recite in either Latin or English, the Brothers and Sisters add a Ejaculatory Prayer in honour of the Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate Conception. Herein is easily recognisable the peculiar spirit of the Third Order of Prémontré.

Those who are prevented by their occupations from reciting the "Paters" and "Aves" appointed for each Hour of the Office can be dispensed from so doing by the Abbots or Superiors of the Monastery to which they are affiliated. But they must, by way of compensation, make at least an act of Christian virtue corresponding to each part of the Divine Office. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this practice. It enlightens the soul regarding its duties, keeps it in full vigour, and strengthens it in the discharge of all its obligations. In the Third Part of the Manual will be found a special formula for each of these Acts. There is no mention in the Apostolic Constitution of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, but if the Tertiaries have sufficient devotion and leisure to recite it, they would only be acting in conformity with the spirit of their Order, which is bound, on almost every day of the year, to this act of filial piety towards the Blessed Virgin Mary.

His Holiness, Leo XIII, has graciously granted (May, 1884) an Indulgence of 300 days, once a day, to all the members of the Order of St. Norbert who shall recite with devotion the Ejaculatory Prayer: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of Mary".

Rule IX: Of The Clothing Of Tertiaries

They must wear under this dress the white scapular of the Order, blessed by the Abbot or his deputy. They must also dress with such modesty and propriety, that they cause no scandal and give no occasion of sin.

Explanation:

The special habit of the members of the Third Order is the little scapular of white wool, blessed by the Abbot or a priest appointed by him for that purpose. They should wear it constantly. This strip of woollen material is the authentic symbol of their aggregation to the Order.

To complete the dress of the Norbertine family our Tertiaries usually receive on the day of their taking the habit a medal specially called the *Medal of the Third Order*. This medal, which is blessed and indulgenced, has for its object to remind them of the two great devotions of their Institute: the Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

On one face of the medal is a Monastrance with two angels adoring, and the motto: "Ecce Panis Angelorum". On the other is the image of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, as she is represented in the Miraculous Medal, with the prayer: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee."

There is no special requirement as to the form or colour of the other garments of the Tertiaries. They should merely be marked by a modest simplicity, equally opposed to luxury and to unbecoming carelessness.

Rule 10: Of The Care Of The Sick and The Dead

They must kindly and mercifully come to the assistance of all Brothers and Sisters that are ill, and, if possible, be present at their funeral, and after their death say thirty-three

**"Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys" with the same number of the ejaculatory prayer:
"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them."**

Explanation:

One of the most precious advantages of religious associations is manifestly the powers which members possess of lavishing on one another both bodily care and spiritual help. In addition to the great Brotherhood of the Christian religion in which they are united, the members of the Third Order rejoice in a brotherhood of a rule of life, of prayers, and of hope. This is their special privilege. By the mere fact of their admission into the Third Order, they participate, as stated in the Apostolic Brief, in the "Indulgences, masses, prayers, and other good works of the Order of Prémontré, and this in life and death". If the words of Ecclesiastes (iv 9-12) are true of natural society, they are true, in a still greater degree, of union in the supernatural Order: "It is better, therefore, that two should be together than one, for they have the advantage of their society. If one fall, he shall be supported by the other. Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to lift him up. And if two lie together, they shall warm one another. How shall one alone be warmed? And if a man prevail against one, two shall withstand him. A threefold cord is not easily broken."

Now it is especially at the time of serious illness that the charity of the Tertiaries should be shown and the benefits of union should appear. Prudent Almsgiving the visiting of the sick Brothers and Sisters, a salutary warning, where possible, are duties of each and all.

When death calls away a Tertiary, a new duty imposes itself on the living, namely, that of recommending to the Divine Mercy the soul which has just entered into eternity.

The Rule lays down the prayers to be said immediately after such decease. It will be proper to make at least one communion for the deceased. A notice reminding the members of the Brotherhood to pray for the departed soul should be sent to each of the Tertiaries by the Director.

On three days of the year the Order of Prémontré solemnly commemorates its deceased members: on the Feast of St. Gregory, on that of the Most Holy Trinity, and on All Soul's Day. On these days, the Tertiaries will pray in a special manner for the departed Brethren, and, if they can, they will communicate for the benefit of their souls.

Rule 11: Of The Director Of The Tertiaries:

The Abbot alone, or the priest delegated by him in a special case, or he who after the Abbot's death, or in Priors or even in Monasteries, held "in commendam" represents him or holds his place, can admit Brothers and Sisters to the Third Order.#

Explanation:

The Abbot has ordinary jurisdiction over the Third Order as over his Monastery. By reason of his office, he admits new members, gives them the religious habit, and receives their profession. He is the father of the family; he has a father's rights, and also a father's duties.

With a view of favouring the spread of the Third Order of St. Norbert, the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII has, at the request of the General of the Order, granted to Abbots the power of appointing all their religious who are priests in a general manner, and not only for special cases, to receive Brothers and Sisters into the Norbertine Family [Cons-099] In special cases he can appoint secular priests to bless and give the white habit. But if an Abbey is without an Abbot, the Prior, or whoever holds the place of Titular Superior, can exercise the powers. He

can consequently admit new Tertiaries, give them the scapular, and grant similar authority to the other religious under his jurisdiction.

It belongs to the Abbot to appoint a Director-General of the Third Order, who will take care of everything relating to the good government of the associates, and will grant dispensations. He will also discharge in favor of the Tertiaries the duties of correction and instruction specified in Rules XIV and XVI.

Rule XII: Of Those Who May Be Received:

No notorious sinner or infamous person may be admitted, nor anyone under eighteen years of age, unless, according to the judgment of the Father Abbot, he be well known for piety, prudence, maturity and good morals.

Explanation:

Every person cannot be admitted indiscriminately. Too many admissions made without discernment can only end in compromising religion and the honor of the Order. No candidate should be received without serious and indeed, rigorous examination. In order that such examination may be made with prudence, it will not be well to trust too much to outward devotion and fervour of those who, like climbing plants, seek to prop themselves up and feed empty vanity by the support of a well known religious Order.

All Catholics of either sex, not less than eighteen years of age, who are leading good and Christian lives, may be admitted to the honour of membership in the Third Order of St. Norbert. No other conditions are required, but these are indispensable, excepting the requirement as to age, from which the Father Abbot may dispense, should he deem it desirable in the interest either of the candidate or of the Association.

Rule XIII. Of Priests and Religious Of Other Orders:

Professed members of another Order may be admitted in so far as the Rules of this Third Order do not interfere with their own Constitutions. Such members are held to satisfy the obligations of the prayers etc., before-mentioned, by the fact of their saying their own Divine Office provided they add the commemoration of St. Norbert, or say one "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" in his honour.

Explanation:

It is not merely laymen who are invited to become members of the Third Order. Even priests will find it in precious spiritual advantages. The Brotherhood will be for them a true centre and source of fervent piety and burning zeal in the works of their sublime ministry.

Moreover, Benedict XIV authorises its enrolment of professed members of other religious Orders in the Third Order of Prémontré. In such cases the religious who is a candidate for admission should, as a necessary preliminary, obtain the consent of his regular Superior.

Neither secular nor regular priests are bound to the recital of the "Paters" and "Aves" specified in Rule VII. The recitation of their office will be a sufficient substitute. Both should, however, when the Rubrics prescribe the usual suffrages at "Lauds" and "Vespers," join thereto the commemoration of St. Norbert, given in this *Manual*.

Rule XIV: Of the Correction of Brothers and Sisters:

To preserve the good name and honour of this sacred Order, and to provide the better for the spiritual welfare of the members, the good morals and manner of life of the Brothers and Sisters must be carefully guarded, and their faults manifested in a spirit of charity to the Father Abbot or his deputy, so that spiritual advice may be given, and a suitable penance imposed. Should a member, after having been admonished three times, not amend his life, his name must be removed from the list of members of the Third Order.

Explanation:

It is the duty of every association to guard its own honour. It is, moreover, for the advantage of erring members that their faults should be made known and checked. These are the two reasons for the watchfulness enjoined in this Rule. The power is exercised by the Father Abbot himself, or by the Director specially charged with the government of the Third Order. This Director should be, where possible, a Religious of the Order. He warns, corrects, and imposes salutary penances. If three successive warnings pass unheeded by any member, the name of such person is once for all erased by the Director from the Register of the Tertiaries.

Rule XV: Of the binding Force of these Rules:

Except penances imposed on account of sin, which penances a member is in conscience bound to fulfil, none of the preceding Rules oblige under pain of sin.

Explanation:

The Constitutions of Religious Orders, speaking generally, do not oblige under pain of sin. They are, except where there is a special declaration to the contrary, simply counsels of perfection to be lovingly followed, their neglect not, *of itself*, entailing mortal or venial sin.

The words *of itself* are used, because, as a matter of fact, a person may sin in breaking a monastic rule, on account of the violation of rule, as, for example, by sloth or sensuality. There would be great sin in transgressing the Rule through contempt. As regards the penances enjoined by the Abbot or the Director, the Tertiaries are obliged to submit to them, and would sin by refusing to do so, because they would thus take away from the law its only sanction, willfully incur exclusion from the Third Order, which constitutes the formal contempt of a benefit bestowed by Divine Providence.

Rule XVI: Of the Meetings of the Tertiaries:

The Father Abbot may, where members have proven numerous, call them together occasionally, in order, either himself or by mouth of another, to encourage them in the path of perfection, and to guide them in the practice of virtue, and in the observance of God's commandments, so that they may persevere in good resolutions and attain the end of their vocation.

Explanation:

Far from doing injury to the parochial spirit, or to the subordination necessarily due to ecclesiastical Superiors, these meetings ought to bring about the increase of these dispositions in the hearts of the Norbertine Tertiaries. However, all that concerns the meetings is left to the discretion of the Abbot, or of the Director appointed by him. He can convene a meeting when the number of Tertiaries in his district is sufficiently large. He presides over the assembly in person, and in the absence of the Father Abbot, the Director discharges his

duty. These gatherings have for their object the preservation of a spirit of brotherhood and unity of spirit among the Tertiaries. By seeing one another they are edified and mutually encouraged to the practice of the duties of religion, and of the special obligations of their Rule. They go forth from these meetings as from the *Upper room* in the Gospel, imbued more deeply with the spirit of faith, more generous and resolute to serve God and to save their own souls, while leading others to the practice of virtue.

At these meetings, the various officers are appointed by the Father Director; with his consent they may also be elected by the Associates. The various Officers are:

- The Brother or Sister Prefect, who assists the Father Director, and in his absence presides at the meetings,
- The Novice Master or Mistress, who instructs the candidates and novices,
- The Secretary, who keeps the Registers and does the correspondence,
- The Treasurer, who handles finances of the Third Order body,
- The Librarian, custodian of publications, correspondence and other written and electronic media relating to the Third Order,
- and other such officers as the Father Director wishes to name.

In small congregations two or more offices may be held by the same Brother or Sister. The meetings open with the "Veni Creator Spirit / Come Holy Spirit" or some other prayer to the Holy Spirit. The Office of Our Lady, or the Little Office of St. Norbert, or the Litany of St. Norbert, may then be said; also prayers for the living and the dead. The Father Director gives an instruction; in his absence the Prefect, or one of the Associates, reads a chapter of this *Manual*, or of some other Spiritual work (Rule of St. Augustine, Sermon, Sayings, or Spiritual Counsels of St. Norbert, etc.). The clothing and profession usually take place at these meetings, and the business of the Brotherhood may be transacted.

From these meetings of Tertiaries to the establishment of a regular Third Order, there is but a single step, one easy of ascent. The regular Third Order, if it pleases God to awaken the thought of it in chosen souls, will be only the development of this Rule by a permanent body in which those who are called by God will strive to mount to the summit of evangelical perfection, and to attain with more fullness and security the end of their vocation.

(N.B.: Here follows in the Apostolic Brief the Ceremonial used at the clothing and profession of Tertiaries. It is given and explained in another chapter) .

Part II: Constitution of the Third Order

Chapter 3: Conclusion of the Brief of Benedict XIV

In order that these Rules may have greater force and authority, the above named Joseph, Abbot and Visitor-General, seeks for them the support of our Apostolic confirmation. For this reason he has humbly besought us to deign to grant him this favour.

We, then, desiring to grant the request of the aforesaid Joseph, Abbot and Visitor-General, do by these present letters absolve and declare him absolved from all sentence of excommunication, of suspension, and of interdict, and from all other censures and ecclesiastical penalties at any time on him inflicted "a jure vel ab homine," even if he were

publicly charged for the same. We lend a favourable ear to his requests, acting on the advice of our venerable Brothers the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church entrusted with the decisions of questions relating to Bishops and Regulars, to whom we have sent the supplication presented to us; we approve and confirm by our Apostolic authority, by these present letters, the Rules inserted herein for the Third Order of Prémontré, and we impart to them the binding force of Apostolic letters, saving, however, in all things the authority of the aforesaid Congregation of Cardinals.

We decree that these present letters shall be of authority, that they are and shall be valid and binding, and that they shall have full and entire effect. They shall benefit without reserve, and under all circumstances, those whom they now and shall hereafter concern. The judges, both ordinary and specially appointed, and also the auditors of causes of the Apostolic Palace, shall judge and define according to them. We declare without value and force whatever may be done contrary to these letters, no matter by whomsoever effected, or whether knowingly or through ignorance. The Constitutions and Apostolic Ordinances, and also the Statutes, Customs, and Privileges of the said Order, even though confirmed by oath, Apostolic confirmation, or other authority, or even by Indults and Letters Apostolic already granted or received contrary to the present Constitution notwithstanding. We expressly modify all such ordinances and constitutions in this case only, others remaining in force as before.

Given at Rome, at St. Mary Major's, under the Ring of the Fisherman, the twenty-second day of May, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one, in the eleventh year of our Pontificate.

Seal

+ + +

Of the Fisherman's Ring

Part II: Constitution of the Third Order

Chapter 4: Indulgences of the Third Order

The following are some of the principal Indulgences which may be gained by the members of the Third Order of St. Norbert. They have been granted to the Order of Prémontré by many successive Popes. Besides the Indulgences indicated in this list, there are many which may be gained by participation with other Religious Orders.

Plenary Indulgences:

- On the day of receiving the habit. Conditions: Confession, Communion and Prayer for the intentions of the Pope. (Paul V, 23rd May 1606),
- On the day of their profession. Conditions: Confession, Communion and Prayer for the intentions of the Pope. (Paul V, 23rd May 1607),
- On the day that a member of the Third Order says his first Mass. A plenary Indulgence may also be gained by all the members of the Third Order who assist at this Mass. Conditions: Confession, Communion and Prayer for the intentions of the Pope. (Paul V, 23rd May 1607),
- At the hour of death, by invoking the Holy Name of Jesus, with heart and voice, at least with the heart, with contrition. Conditions: Confession, Communion and Prayer for the intentions of the Pope. (Paul V, 23rd May 1607),

- On the Feasts of the following Saints of the Order of Prémontré:
 - 16 January, St. Godfrey, Confessor (Benedict XIII),
 - 17 February, St. Evermode, Bishop (Benedict XIII),
 - 3 March, St. Frederick, Abbot (Benedict XIII),
 - 29 March, St. Ludolph, Bishop and Martyr (Benedict XIII),
 - 7 April, St. Hermann-Joseph, Confessor (Benedict XIII),
 - 15 June, St. Isfrid, Bishop (Benedict XIII),
 - Monday during the Octave of the Ascension of Our Lord, St. Gerlac, Confessor (Benedict XIII),
 - First Sunday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, Feast of the Triumph of St. Norbert (Leo XIII),
 - 9 July, Sts. Adrian and James, Martyrs (Benedict XIII),
 - 11 July, or on the Sunday during the Octave, Solemnity of St. Norbert (Clement X),
 - 13 August, Feast of St. Gertrude, Nun (Benedict XIII),
 - 15 August, Assumption of Our Lady, Patron Saint of the Order (Clement X),
 - 28 August, St. Augustine, Legislator of the Order (Clement X),
 - 30 August, St. Bronislava, Nun (Leo XIII),
 - 24 October, St. Gilbert, Abbot (Benedict XIII),
 - 13 November, Feast of all the Saints of the Norbertine Order (Clement X),
 - 17 November, St. Siard, Abbot (Benedict XIII),
 - On the Feast of the Patron of Titular Saint of any Monastery of the Order (Clement X),
- Conditions to gain the above Feast-day-related Indulgences: Confession, Communion, visit to a Church of the Order, prayer for the Pope's intention. These Feast-day-related Indulgences are extended to all the faithful.

Partial Indulgences:

1. The members who renew their profession can gain for the first time an Indulgence of the half of the canonical penance due for their sins; after this an Indulgence of seven years, once a year, for this renewal. (Paul V, 19 October 1606),
2. Indulgence of the third part of punishment due for sins can be gained by those who say the Rosary, for the conversion of sinners, and especially of unfaithful Religious on the Feasts of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, on the Feasts of Our Lady, of St. John the Baptist, and of Sts. Peter and Paul (Paul V, 19 October 1606),

3. An Indulgence of 20 years for those who make a spiritual retreat in some house of the Norbertine Order. (Paul V, 19 October 1606),
4. An Indulgence of 40 days for those who make a half-hour's meditation. (Paul V, 19 October 1606),
5. An Indulgence of 100 days for those who examine their conscience during a quarter-hour. (Paul V, 19 October 1606),
6. An Indulgence of 100 days for those who fast on the Vigils of the Feasts of Our Lady. (Paul V, 19 October 1606),
7. An Indulgence of 300 days, once a day, for the members who recite the prayer: "Praised be to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary." (Leo XIII).

Part III: Ceremonial and Pious Practices of the Third Order

Chapter 1: Ceremonial of the Third Order

I. Blessing and Imposing the Small Scapular of the Third Order of St. Norbert:

The Abbot, or his Deputy, vested in rochet and stole, stands before the altar, the Postulant kneeling before him on the altar step, humbly joining his hands together. The Abbot asks:

V. What do you ask?

R. The mercy of god, Reverend Father, and the society of your holy Order.

The Abbot or the priest delegated by him, may then give a short exhortation on the Rule and Spirit of the Third Order. He then says the following prayers:

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord,

R. Who made Heaven and earth.

V. Show us Thy mercy, O Lord,

R. And grant us Thy salvation.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer,

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you,

R. And also with you.

Let us pray: O Almighty Father and everlasting God, Who didst will that Thy only Son should clothe Himself with the garment of our mortality, we beseech Thee to let the immense blessing {+} of Thy mercy be bestowed on this garment which the holy Fathers have appointed to be worn by those who renounce the world in token of innocence and humility, and to vouchsafe so to bless {+} it that Thy servant who shall be clothed with it may be worthy to put on Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, world without end. Amen.

Let Us Pray: Almighty, everlasting god, loving and merciful, Who grantest pardon and mercy to sinners who ask for mercy, we beseech Thy immense clemency that Thou wouldst be pleased so to bless {+} and sanctify this scapular that whosoever wearing it shall implore Thy mercy may obtain of Thy grace the forgiveness of all his sins through Our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, world without end. Amen.

The Abbot or his deputy then sprinkles the scapular with holy water, and vests the Postulant, still kneeling, with the blessed scapular, saying:

Receive, Brother (Sister) this white scapular, in order that you may clothe yourself with a greater increase of God's grace, and that you may be worthy to walk in white with the Lamb, Who liveth and reigneth with God the Father in unity of the Holy Spirit, world without end.

R. Amen

V. Save Thy Servant

R. Who putteth his (her) trust in Thee, O my God,

V. Be unto him, O Lord, a tower of strength,

R. From the face of the enemy,

V. O Lord, hear my prayer,

R. And let my cry come unto Thee,

V. The Lord be with you,

R. And also with you.

Let us pray: Give ear, O Lord, to our supplication, and vouchsafe to bless {+} this Thy servant whom we have vested in Thy Name with the scapular of our Order, that by Thy grace he may persevere in devotion in Thy Church, and obtain eternal life. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Let us pray: Stretch forth, O Lord, unto this Thy servant the right hand of Thy heavenly help, that he may seek Thee with his whole heart, and obtain what he rightly asketh. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

After this, the Abbot, or his Deputy, sprinkles the Postulant with holy water, and gives him the kiss of peace. In cases of Sister-Postulants, he offers his stole for her to kiss. He then adds:

I by the authority which I possess receive you as a Brother (Sister) of the Third Order, and by this act I declare that, through the bounty of the Apostolic See, you can gain all the Indulgences granted to our holy Order, and I make you, during your lifetime and after your death, a partaker of all the sacrifices and prayers that are offered up, and other spiritual good works which, through the grace of God, are performed in our Order. In the Name of the Father, {+} and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All being finished, the Father Sacristan writes the name of the "Frater / Soror ad succurrendum," that is, of the new Brother or Sister, in the Register of the members of the Third Order of St. Norbert.

Explanation:

The Director must, before giving the white habit to a Postulant, carefully investigate his or her qualities and disposition. (See Rules XII and XIII)

As to the Ritual or Ceremonial of the clothing of a Tertiary, the form approved by Benedict XIV is, with two or three slight alterations, the same as that which was observed in the first beginning of the Order. [Cere.-001] This may be easily seen from its striking simplicity, which points to its antiquity. The white colour of the religious habit is, in Catholic tradition a symbol of purity and of humility: "ad innocentiae et humilitatis indicium," says the prayer for the blessing of the scapular.

When several Postulants are to be clothed at the same time, the priest says the respective prayers in the plural.

The Tertiary belongs from the day of his clothing to the Norbertine Family, and as such may gain the Indulgences and claim the Privileges granted to the whole Order. His name is enrolled on a special Register. He participates in all the masses, comunions, prayers, and good works which are done in the Order. He should, however, remember that with this title of Brother he takes upon himself serious duties towards God, towards the Order, and towards himself. He must also be tried for a whole year by the Abbot or Director; only after a year's novitiate can he be definitively affiliated to the Order.

2. Form of Profession:

When the year of the Novitiate is over, the Novice kneels before the Abbot, or his Deputy, seated before the altar. The Abbot, or his Deputy, asks him:

V. Do you still persevere in your resolutions?

R. I do

The Abbot says:

You must then, in the future, walk in the way of God's commandments, and promise anew to keep His commandments.

The Abbot then takes the joined hands of each Novice in his own. The Novice makes his (or her) Profession in these words:

I (name) promise to Almighty God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the holy Father Norbert, to all the Saints, and to you, Father, during the rest of my life to keep the commandments of God, and to receive the penances imposed on me for my transgressions. I firmly propose to cherish and to promote the worship of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, to prevent, as far as I can, all detraction, immodest language, and blasphemies, and to reconcile enemies; and I now heartily forgive my enemies for God's sake.

After the Profession, the Abbot blesses the scapular in the following form:

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord,

R. Who made Heaven and earth.

Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst vouchsafe to clothe Thyself with the garment of our mortality, we beseech Thee, of the abundance of Thy mercy, that Thou wouldst be pleased so to bless this garment, which the holy Fathers have appointed to be worn in token of innocence and humility, that this Thy servant, who is to be clothed therewith, may be worthy to put on Thee Christ Our Lord. Who liveth and reigneth, God, world without end. Amen.

The Abbot then puts the blessed scapular on the now professed Brother, saying:

May the Lord clothe thee with the new man who is created according to God in justice and holiness of truth. Amen.

V. Save Thy Servant,

R. Who hopeth in Thee, O my God.

V. Send him help from the holy place,

R. And protect him from Sion.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against him,

R. Nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt him.

V. Be unto him, O Lord, a tower of strength,

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer,

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you,

R. And also with you.

Explanation:

We have already remarked that the Profession of the Third Order is not a vow properly so called, and that the Rule does not bind under sin. This profession is rather like to the renewal of the baptismal vows and to a solemn protestation of fidelity to the perfect observance, as far as possible, of the Commandments of God and of the Church.

The form of the Profession contains an explicit promise to accept and to perform the penances incurred by the transgressions of the Rules.

Moreover, the professed Tertiary obliges himself to spread the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, to avoid and repress all detraction, immodest language, and blasphemy, to restore peace between enemies, for they must remember that such are the special duties, as well as the characteristic features of the Norbertine Tertiary.

The Tertiaries will also take care to renew frequently their vows, especially on the anniversary day of their Profession.

Part III: Ceremonial and Pious Practices of the Third Order

Chapter 2: Office of the Norbertine Tertiaries

I. Office of the "Aves"

The Tertiaries must say each day:

- **For Matins and Lauds:** "I Believe" once and fifteen "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys," adding each time: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary". (Indulgence, 300 days, once a day. Leo XIII, 1884),
- For each Hour of Prime, Terce, Sext, and Nones, seven "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys," adding each time: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary". (Indulgence, 300 days, once a day. Leo XIII, 1884),
- For Vespers, twelve "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys," adding each time: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary". (Indulgence, 300 days, once a day. Leo XIII, 1884),
- For Compline, seven "Our Fathers" and "Hail Marys," adding each time: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary". (Indulgence, 300 days, once a day. Leo XIII, 1884),

II. Office of the "Acts":

If the Brothers and Sisters are already so much occupied by their usual prayers or hindered by their daily occupations, that they cannot easily say the above prayers, they may, in the place of the prescribed prayers, practise the following acts of virtue (See Rule VII):

- **For Matins, an act of good intention to please God in all things:**

(N.B.: Any form or set of words which expresses an offering of our works, words, thoughts, sufferings, etc. may be used; it may be short or long as time allows or devotion suggests, and may form part of the morning prayer. The following Offering is taken from the Racolta, and is indulgenced:

"Eternal God, behold me prostrate before the immensity of Thy majesty. I humbly adore Thee, and offer Thee all my thoughts, words, and works of this day. I intend to do everything for love of Thee, for Thy glory, and for the fulfilment of Thy Divine will; in order to serve, praise, and bless Thee, to be enlightened in the mysteries of our holy faith, to secure my salvation, and to hope in Thy mercy; to satisfy the Divine justice for my many grievous sins, to assist the holy souls in purgatory, and to obtain the grace of a true conversion for all sinners. I desire, in fine, to do everything in union with that most pure intention which Jesus and Mary had during life, and the Saints in Heaven, and the just now on earth. Would that I could write down this intention with my own blood, and repeat it as often as there be moments in eternity! Accept, my God, my goodwill; grant me Thy holy blessing and efficacious grace never to commit a mortal sin throughout the course of my life, but particularly on this day, on which I desire and purpose to gain all the Indulgences which it is possible for me to gain, and to be present in spirit at all the Masses which will be celebrated today in the whole world, that I may apply them to the souls in purgatory, and free them from all pain. Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen."

(Indulgences: 100 days, once a day; Plenary once a month. Conditions: Confession, Communion, prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, Pius IX, 1867)

N.B.: The particulars about these and the following indulgences are taken from the Italian edition of the Racolta di orazioni e pie opere, 1886, Roma.

- **For Prime, acts of faith, hope and charity:**

N.B.: Any form of words may be used provided it expresses the motives of these theological virtues. Add the Norbertine ejaculation: "Praise be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

(Indulgences: 7 years and 7 quarantines for each time. Plenary once a month, if recited every day. Conditions: Confession, Communion, prayer for the intention of the Holy Father. Plenary at the hour of death, Benedict XIV, 1756).

- **For Terce, an act of contrition, with purpose of amendment:**

Say the usual "Act of Contrition" - or the "Confiteor":

"Oh my God, I am heartily sorry that I have offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishment, but most of all because they have offended Thee My God, Who art all good and worthy of all my love; I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and avoid the near occasion of sin."

or

"I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed; Therefore I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, and all the Saints to pray to the Lord our God for me."

Finish with the Norbertine ejaculation: "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

- **For Sext, an act of praise and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**

Any form of prayer, for instance the following:

"O God, Who in this wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion, grant us, we beseech Thee, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Thy Body and Blood that we may continually find in our souls the fruit of Thy redemption, Who livest and reignest world without end. Praise be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen."

- **For Nones, an act of resignation to the will of God; for instance:**

"May the most just, amiable and adorable will of God be ever done, praised and eternally exalted in all things. Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen."

(Indulgence: 100 days, once a day. Plenary, once a year for recitation every day. Conditions: Confession, Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father. Plenary at the hour of death, Pius VII, 1818)

- **For Vespers, acts of charity towards our neighbour, of forgiveness of injuries, and of benevolence towards enemies. Say slowly:**

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen."

- **For Compline, acts of thanksgiving for all the favours received from God; also act of humility:**

These acts may form part of the evening prayer. Say for instance, the "Te Deum," or the Prayer:

"O God, of Whose mercies there is no number, and of Whose goodness the treasure is infinite, we render thanks to Thy most gracious Majesty for the gifts Thou hast bestowed upon us; continue Thy mercy to us, and give us so much of Thy temporal blessings as Thou knowest will be for our good. Grant that the fruits of the earth may, by Thy holy blessing, increase and multiply; preserve them of all storms and tempests and whatever else may be hurtful to them. It is from Thy hand only we look for succor, and to Thee we have recourse in all our necessities. Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thee. Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

(300 days, once a day. Pius XI, 1868)

III. The Suffrage of St. Norbert:

Neither the secular nor the regular priests are bound to the recital of the Office of the "Aves" specified in Rule VII. The recitation of their office will be a sufficient substitute. Both should, however, when the Rubrics prescribe the usual suffrages at "Lauds" and "Vespers," join thereto the following commemoration of St. Norbert, which is taken from the Premonstratensian Breviary.

Antiphon: Norbert, as a burning light placed on a candlestick, illumined all who dwelt with him.

V. Pray for us, O Blessed Father Norbert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: O God, who didst make of Blessed Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, an excellent preacher of the Word, and by his means didst enrich Thy Church with new offspring, grant, we beseech Thee, that through his intercession we may put in practice, by Thy grace, what he taught us, both in word and work, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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Part III: Ceremonial and Pious Practices of the Third Order

Chapter 3: Pious Practices in Honour of St. Norbert

I. Little Office In Honour of Our Holy Father St. Norbert:

Matins:

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips;
R. And my tongue shall announce Thy praise.

V. Incline unto mine aid, O God,
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Hymn: The Conversion of St. Norbert:

O blessed Saint! While yet unborn,
A voice Divine decreed for thee;
"Thou'lt bear, through many a life-long storm,
The priest's and bishop's dignity".
Yet worldly glory wooed thy heart,
And thou, of noble race, didst turn
Away from thine eternal part
To seek the fair, false lights that burn
In royal halls of earth. But lo!
These halls are trembling 'neath the power
Of Him Who stoops to thee, to show
Thou shalt be His. Alas! That hour
Thou'rt faltering still. The voice of fame,
Its flattery, in thine ear is sweet.
Again thy God thy heart must claim
And sweetly stay thy wand'ring feet.
May we, like thee, shun worldly praise,
In worldly paths no longer roam,
But tread the peaceful, heavenward ways,
Till angels come to lead us home.

Antiphon: Being found in the rugged paths of vice by the Guardian of the city, stayed by lightning stroke, he puts off the old man, and is clothed with the first robe of innocence. He who was dead lives again; he who was lost is found.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Prime:

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips;
R. And my tongue shall announce Thy praise.
V. Incline unto mine aid, O God,
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Hymn: Norbert's Penance

With deep affliction thou hast mourned

The failings of thy former life;
Thy robes of princely state are spurned;
The court, its pomps, its gilded strife,
Are thine no more, for higher love
Has fortified thy glowing heart,
And, barefoot, through the snow thou'lt move
As one all heedless of the smart
Of scorne and insult. Then with fasts,
With scourges, and with iron chain,
Thou'lt seek to expiate the past,
and heal, with care, the former pain
Thy pride inflicted. May we now
Rich fruit of penance daily bear,
And in the hour of death do thou
Obtain our pardon by thy prayer.

Antiphon: Having laid aside his store of earthly goods, and bestowed them upon the poor of Christ, denying himself, and following Christ in a narrower path, he went barefoot, putting on a hair shirt - the garb of a penitent.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Terce:

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips;
R. And my tongue shall announce Thy praise.
V. Incline unto mine aid, O God,
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Hymn: The Foundation of Norbert's Order

In token of her constant love
The glorious Queen of Heaven above
Clothes thee in white, that thou may'st be
A witness to her purity.
St. Austin gives his hallowed Rule
To train thy followers in that school
Of holy life. And robed in light,
The Saviour meets the raptured sight,
To show, by seven-fold rays, the place
Where Norbert's band - a chosen race,
Shall dwell, as oft by Heaven foretold,
In lone Prémontré's blessed fold.
St. Norbert, who the world disdained,
Pray that we may, with hearts unstained,
Walk in the light of purity,

And thus the heavenly nuptials see.

Antiphon: He sought a place wherein he might fitly live and walk in the path of God, where there are different ways that lead to Him. When, therefore, he had found the vale of Prémonte, he cried out: "This is the spot which the Lord has chosen for us",

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray. Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Sext:

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips;

R. And my tongue shall announce Thy praise.

V. Incline unto mine aid, O God,

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

Hymn: Norbert's Preaching

In cloistered hearts thou didst awake
The love of Him, Who for our sake
Dwells on our altars, closely veiled.
When Tanchelin's profane touch assailed
That sacred Mystery, thou didst raise
Thy trumpet voice. And with amaze
The Gallic nation stood to hear
Thy matchless accents, rich and clear;
St. Bernard, too, proclaiming thee
A lute of heavenly melody.
Angels of peace, at thy command
Fierce discord vanished from the land,
And hearts by thee to Jesus given
Brought forth abundant fruit for Heaven.
When comes, at last, the harvest hour,
Oh! garner us, with saintly power.

Antiphon: Like unto a trumpet did he raise his voice, upbraiding a people steeped in sin. What he preached in word he fulfilled in deed, confirming all by his miracles and wonderful actions.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray. Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Nones:

Hymn: Norbert's Miracles

Filled with Faith's spirit, miracles were thine,
And thy skilled lips interpreted each sign
Of heavenly dealings. Thou didst banish far

The phantoms of hell's spiritual war.
Nor from the nauseous insect didst thou shrink
But calmly dared the chalice still to drink.
Diseases fled thy touch; the famished came
And all were soothed by thee in Jesus' name.
More wondrous still, a wolf thou didst compel
To guard the trembling sheep, and guard them well.
Thy prophecies resounded loudly. Then
The demon fled the tortured souls of men
At thy desire. And when the raging flood
Bore all away, at thy command they stood
Beside thee, saved. Thou, too, didst call to life
Three breathless forms that sank in mortal strife.
To us, thy clients, teach the heavenly art
To live and yet to die to evil's part.

Antiphon: At home and abroad he overcame, by the name of Jesus, the power of devils; on Easter Sunday, at Wurzburg, he gave sight to a blind woman by breathing on her eyes; he discovered some of the bodies of the eleven thousand virgins, and those of the two Ewalds, martyrs, and placed his church at Prémontré under their protection.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray. Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Vespers:

Hymn: Norbert's Persecution

Great Pastor! Model of thy flock! Thy mind,
Fixed on eternal interests, entwined
Round God's unchanging Church thy constant care;
Nor didst thou then her reckless plunderers spare.
They struck thee with the sword and with the tongue;
They exiled thee; vainly their darts were flung
Around thy tranquil soul. Thy zeal untamed,
New merits and new recompenses claimed.
Pray for us now that trials ne'er may be,
Triumphant o'er our faith and constancy;
Rather that heavenly pity, bending down,
May add new rays of glory to our crown.

Antiphon: Clothed in the garment of poverty, and barefoot, he entered Magdeburg, his episcopal city; unweariedly he preached the word of God, proving himself a faithful guardian of the household with which he was entrusted, a strenuous defender and protector of the patrimony of Christ.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray. Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Compline:

V. Convert us, O God, our Salvation
R. And turn away their anger from us.
V. Incline unto mine aid, O God,
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hymn: Norbert's Death and Translation.

Death summons thee, but do not fear,
The voice of Jesus soundeth near;
"Come, my beloved, take thy rest,
Come, for thou shalt be crowned and blessed".
Thy combat o'er, thy work is done.
The arms of Mary and her Son
Are clasped around thee. Thou dost bear
The olive and the lily fair,
And thus, beyond the distant star,
Thou'rt borne to heavenly courts afar,
Oh! may we win that peaceful rest,
We pray, who in thy joy are blest.

Antiphon: Having given his support to the Holy Church of Rome in her affliction, blessing his brethren, he happily fell asleep in Christ.

V. Pray for us, O St. Norbert,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray. Awake O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, was guided in order that, filled with the same Spirit, we may love what he loved, and live as he taught us. Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

II. Hymns in Honour of St. Norbert

Norbert's Life and Death:

Sing, my song, the fitting praise
of this glorious Prelate's ways.
Let my lips intone the fame
Of St. Norbert's hallowed name;
For while yet unborn 'twas said,
He would crush the serpent's head.

Thou, by Heaven, wast revealed
To thy mother's eyes unsealed,
Even before thy radiant birth
Gave a Pastor great to earth.
Heaven and earth both welcome thee,
Opening bud of Sanctity.

Thou the favourite of the king;
Thou, who didst all flower-like spring
Upward, to the world's delight;
Thou, who touched its shining height
Then, like Paul, was downward cast
By the Spirit's mighty blast.

Lily of white purity;
O'er the land thou goest free,
Preaching, soothing, breathing peace,
Bidding many sorrows cease
By the glance of thy pure eyes,
Lifted swiftly to you skies.

And while thy reforming hand
Marked the clerics of the land
Came Augustine, bidding thee
Joy amongst the poor to be.
Wise his holy teachings; so
Scatheless on thy path thou'll go.

White-robed warriors round thee throng;
Thou, their father, calm and strong,
Leadest them to the See of Rome,
Whence the sacred seal will come.
O'er Christ's foes they'll hold their sway,
Fearless on Last Judgment Day.

Comes the spotless Queen of Heaven
With the snowy habit, given
As her pledge of constant care.
Christ, the Sovereign, standing there,
Blessing them, whate'er betide,
Shields them in His pierced side.

Magdeburg is seeking thee
For the pastoral dignity
Crime denounced with fearless word
Speaks the Champion of the Lord,
Vowed to lead his warriors on
Till the citadel is won.

Vainly Tanchelin strove to sow
Seeds of heresy and woe,
In the peaceful pastures where
Norbert's flock, secured with care,
Saw their shepherd bear away
All the laurels of the day.

Vainly Tanchelin might assail
Christ beneath the mystic veil,
Where the forms of bread and wine,

God and man, in silence, shine
Flushed with diabolic flame
Proudly forth the scoffer came.

Came in raging hate, but then
Rose thy clarion voice again;
Eucharistic truth it proved;
Every listening heart is moved;
And the heretic condemned,
Prostrate, shows the falsehood's end.

Let us venerate on high
Him who gained the victory;
Let him judge and guardian be.
Let that holiest Mystery
Ever o'er false doctrines reign:
Norbert labouring not in vain.

Christ, Our Saviour, with Thy grace
Light our earthly dwelling place,
Strengthen and confirm our faith;
Watch our life and guard our death.
May St. Norbert's guiding hand
Place us 'mid Thy chosen band.

To the Father and the Son
Be our reverent homage done,
And to Him, the Almighty Dove,
Still proceeding from their love.
Praise and honour too be given
To St. Norbert, throned in Heaven.

St. Norbert and the Blessed Sacrament:

Life's light chains had sweetly bound him,
Life's soft voices wooed his soul,
In his heart life's yearnings round him
Swelled, all restless of control.
Lo! the lightning flash is falling,
And the voice that will not cease
Speaks in accents, richly calling:
"Turn to Me and Seek for Peace!"

Chorus:

O St. Norbert, may thy spirit
Live in us till Mary's hand
Leads thy children home forever
Sheltered in the changeless land.
Lowly listened Norbert, praying:
"As Thou wilt"; and, far away,
Heavenly music answered, saying:
"Hail! O Victor of the day".
Never from that morn, forsaking

Him Who sorrow's path hat drod,
Went St. Norbert, always seeking
Peace Divine, the Peace of God.

Chorus

Ever silently repeating,
"Love for Thee, and Thee alone";
Ever, 'mid dark shadows, meeting
Starlight from Our Lady's throne;
Ever on her Aves dwelling
When the foes grew loud and strong;
Ever from his heart was swelling
Mary's praise on one sweet song.

Chorus

While the great, unwearied Fountain
Of the love, abiding here,
On the Eucharistic Mountain
Soothed him oft through toil and fear.
Then the fulness of fruition
Came at last. The combat o'er,
Norbert gazes on the vision
Changeless on the golden shore.

Chorus

(Words by S.G., Music by Chevalier Lemmens-Sherrington)

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Hymn to St. Norbert

Blessed trance, to life awaking,
Slumberinig soul of noble worth!
Heaven-sent storm, whose pealing thunder
Heralded thy spirit's birth!
What to thee were worldly honours,
Wealth, or courtly favours high?
Since, like Paul, by grace converted,
Thou hadst seen thy God so nigh.

Chorus

Hail St. Norbert, ardent lover
Of this Sacrament Divine!
Pray thy children may inherit
Faith unwavering, love like thine.

White robed prophet, holy founder
Of a band whose blessed part
Is to emulate the virtues
Of the Virgin Mother's heart;
She, who bore her child, her Saviour,
On her pure and sinless breast,

And from Calvary's gory summit
Gave Him to a world oppressed.

Chorus

With thy God upon thy bosom,
In the pyx or in the cup,
Forth thou went a conquering hero,
Breaking chains of thralldom, up;
Heresy and social bondage,
Fiercest feuds and passions wild
Bent their crippled forms and vanished
'Neath thy rule of mercy mild.

Chorus

Great St. Norbert, thus triumphing
By the Holy Eucharist!
Send again thine arm of vigour
That all evil we resist
Let all praise be ever given
To Our Lord Who reigns above,
But Who still upon our altars
Is a God of grace and love.

Chorus

St. Norbert and the Immaculate Conception

In lone Prémontré's valley prayed
St. Norbert through the night,
Till suddenly the dark green wild
Grew glorious with soft light,
And 'mid the starry splendour stood
Our Queen of many years,
Our joy in days of gladness; then
The solace of our tears.

Chorus A:

Oh! aid us from thy throne above,
St. Norbert, by thy prayer;
Dear Lady of our life-long love,
Ah! take us to thy care.

OR

Chorus B:

St. Norbert, by thy holy prayer
Be thou our advocate;
May thy pure Heart our model be,

Mary Immaculate.
The Saint with glowing heart beheld
The radiant Queen who said:
"Take thou this sign of grace, my child,"
As o'er his bending head
She held the snowy habit, blessed
By heavenly hands above,
And brought by Mary's care, to be
A token of her love.

Chorus:

The light grew dim; this Queen was gone;
St. Norbert slowly rose
And in the spotless habit clad
Went forth to meet his foes.
The foes of the great heart of love,
Who sought the altar throne;
The foes of her whom nations hail
"Immaculate Alone".

Chorus

Long years went by; St. Norbert found
A holier home than earth,
Yet still the pure white habit tells
Its spiritual birth,
And still it bids St. Norbert's bend,
With hearts that dwell above,
In choral prayer and praise proclaim
God and Our Lady's love.

Chorus

Still to the wand'ring and the weak
They haste with holy care;
Still shrinks the tempter from the touch
Of Norbert's Lily fair.
And when from exile and from strife
The call to rest has come,
St. Norbert's glorious band will lead
His faithful children home.

Chorus.

III. Litany in Honour of Our Holy Father, St. Norbert:

Lord, have mercy on us,
Christ, have mercy on us,
Lord, have mercy on us,
Christ, hear us,
Christ, graciously hear us,
God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us,
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us,
God, the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us,
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us,

Holy Mary, pray for us,
Holy Mother of God, pray for us,
Holy Virgin of virgins, pray for us,
Queen of the White-robed Order, pray for us,
Thou who hadst a great love for St. Norbert, pray for us,
Holy Father Norbert, pray for us,
St. Norbert, whose birth was foretold from Heaven, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who was marvelously converted by God, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Mirror of true penance, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst trample earthly pomps under foot, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Despiser of the world, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst conquer thy passions and affections, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst gain the victory over temptations, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst quell and cast down devils, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Restorer of peace and concord, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst walk barefoot, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst practise mortification, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Lover of the Cross, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Pattern of abstinence, pray for us,
St. Norbert, most strict Observer of fasting, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst thyself practice and teach silence, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who didst receive the white habit from the Mother of God, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Most constant in faith, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Most firm in hope, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Most fervent in charity, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Zealous lover of chastity, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Model of poverty, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Mirror of obedience, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Vigilant teacher of discipline, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Defender of the true faith, pray for us,
St. Norbert, choice Vindicator of the Blessed Sacrament, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Pillar of the Catholic Church, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Flower of sanctity and brightness of all virtue, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Light of prayer and contemplation, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Pattern of perfection, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Leader of the white-robed army, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Patriarch of the Premonstratensians, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Father and protector of thy Order, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Primate of Germany, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Worker of miracles, pray for us,
St. Norbert, wonderful Discerner of spirits, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Imitator of Jesus Christ, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Follower of the Apostles, pray for us,
St. Norbert, who was like to the Martyrs, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Gem of Pontiffs, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Glory of Confessors, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Companion of virgins, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Colleague of all Saints, pray for us,
St. Norbert, Admirable in his translation, pray for us,
Be merciful, spare us, O Lord,
Be merciful, graciously hear us, O Lord,
From the neglect of Thy commandments, deliver us, O Lord,

From the transgression of our vows, deliver us, O Lord,
From uncleanness of mind and body, deliver us, O Lord,
From the spirit of fornication, deliver us, O Lord,
From a proud and sad spirit, deliver us, O Lord,
From the snares of the devil, deliver us, O Lord,
From overwhelming temptation, deliver us, O Lord,
From the disorder of our passions, deliver us, O Lord,
From the blindness of self-love, deliver us, O Lord,
From the obstinacy of self-will, deliver us, O Lord,
From an evil and unprovided death, deliver us, O Lord,
Through the wonderful conversion of St. Norbert, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his austere penance, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his ardent zeal in preaching, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his exemplary life, deliver us, O Lord,
Through all his virtues, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his holy death, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his wonderful translation, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his glorious crown in Heaven, deliver us, O Lord,
Through his merits and intercession, deliver us, O Lord,
We sinners, beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst grant us true sorrow and contrition of heart, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst grant us a true conversion of life, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst grant us obedience to our Rule and preserve us in the same, we beseech Thee,
hear us,
That Thou wouldst make faith, hope and charity to grow in us, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst make us zealous observers of our three vows, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst grant us the gift of prayer, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst bestow upon us the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to govern and preserve Thy holy Church, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to extend and preserve the Premonstratensian Order, we beseech
Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to strengthen the Abbot General and all the Abbots of the Order with
perfect spirit, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant us the crown of perseverance, we beseech Thee, hear us,
That Thou wouldst give grace to the living and to the departed eternal rest, we beseech Thee, hear
us,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord,
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Christ hear us,
Christ Graciously hear us,
Lord have mercy on us,
Christ, have mercy on us,
Lord, have mercy on us,
(secretly) Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be
done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as
we forgive those who trespass against us - -

V. And lead us not into temptation,
R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Father Norbert,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer,
R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you,
R. And also with you.

Let us pray:

O God, Who didst make of Blessed Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop, an excellent preacher of the Word, and by his means didst enrich Thy Church with new offspring, grant, we beseech Thee, that through his intercession we may put in practice by Thy grace what he taught us, both in word and work.

Awake, O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit by Whom St. Norbert, Thy Confessor and Bishop was guided, in order that, filled with the same spirit, we may love what he loved and live as he taught us.

O Lord, grant to us Thy servant's constancy in Thy faith and service, that, rooted in Divine charity, we may not be conquered by any temptation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Praised be the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Praised be Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Part III: Ceremonial and Pious Practices of the Third Order
Chapter 4: The Teachings of St. Norbert**

As the members of the Order of Prémontré should endeavour to imitate the virtues of their holy Founder, they should study the works and words of the Saint as they find them recorded in his life and writings.

The Tertiaries are moreover bound by Rule VI to make a short meditation and to read spiritual books, especially on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation or at their weekly or monthly meetings.

They will thus carefully read the following Exhortations and Counsels of St. Norbert, and ponder well each word, so as to obtain a fuller knowledge of the inner life of the "Man of God," and of the spirit that animated him in all his dealings with God and man.

I. The Sermon of St. Norbert:

Be Diligent in the Service of God:

We exhort you, dearest brethren, to be most diligent in the service of God, to Whom you have consecrated yourselves by the solemn profession of your vows. For, having of your own free will and from pure love of God renounced your earthly possessions and even yourselves, you are obliged daily to carry the Cross of Christ; that is, you are obliged continually to mortify your passions and to spend your whole life in works of penance.

This is, indeed, the narrow road to Heaven. This is the road which Jesus Christ has pointed out beforehand, both by His life and death, by His words and deeds, and which guides to our heavenly home all those who to the end of their lives walk in that path. You cannot go to Christ unless you enter upon this road with courage, confidence and earnest endeavor; for the Apostle St. Paul has said, "None is crowned except he strive lawfully;" [Son-001] and St. John, "Who abideth in Christ ought himself to walk even as He walked." [Son-002]

Walk, therefore, continually in the way which God has shown you, lest death surprise you. Let your obedience be prompt, your poverty voluntary, your chastity above suspicion. Without these three virtues, that which constitutes an Order is wholly destroyed.

Shun the World:

You have promised stability or perseverance in this holy place; remain, therefore, faithful in the service of God, and never grow weary of your duties in the monastery; depart from it rarely and then only in necessity, lest you lose in dissipation of time the sweetness of a virtuous life and the consolation which you find in contemplation of the divine mysteries; lest you open the door to love and this deceitful transient world in which all is danger and wickedness. A fish out of water soon dies; so a weak Religious seeking frequent contact with the world, no longer protected by the shelter of the cloister, no longer aided by the example and salutary lessons of his brethren, soon falls into sin and is ensnared in the toils of everlasting death. Flee the company of worldly persons as the fish avoids dry land, but love the cloister, which protects you and keeps your mind pure. You will be unworthy of the name of Religious, if despite this sacred bond, you show by your desires that you are attached to the world rather than to God alone.

Keep a Watch Over Your Tongue:

Remain, therefore, constantly in the monastery; be steadfast, charitable, agreeable. Avoid murmuring, detraction, envy, that you may dwell together in the house of God in peace and concord. A slanderous and deceitful tongue is a spreading evil and full of deadly poison. It never ceases to do harm, it destroys peace, it paralyzes all devotion. It is therefore written: "A quarrelsome and grumbling monk is never a true monk."

Restrain your tongue. Lift up your hearts to the Kingdom of Heaven, where are all true joys. Moved by the desire of perfection, follow the saints beyond the clouds on the wings of contemplation. Bear with grief the burden of your bodies, that you may say with the Apostle: "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." [Son-003] and with the Psalmist: "Bring our souls out of the prison of our bodies." [Son-004] that you may reign eternally with Christ.

Fear God's Justice:

Though outwardly fairly clad with the white habit, a symbol of simplicity and innocence, should any of you having unfortunately lost the spirit of religious perfection, neglect the discipline of the Order, and despise the wholesome lessons of your superiors, even though you be superior, may you remember that the thoughts of our hearts are known to God and that unless you repent in time, you will not escape the eternal torments of Hell, wherein "there is no order, but where an everlasting horror dwells." [Son-005]

Endeavor, therefore, to avoid the terrible judgment of God by constantly doing His Will in fear and righteousness, that God may keep you in holy religion, and that in His Mercy He may preserve you from punishment in Hell. God will reward abundantly those who are faithful in His service: for God gives great rewards for small services, eternal rewards for

temporal services, as He Himself promises His disciples: "What will be the reward for contempt and detachment from all things and for the good works we have performed?" they asked. "You will receive a hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting." [Son-006]

Love the Word of God:

My dear children, never find irksome the reading of this short exhortation to be faithful in the service of God. The word of God, according to the Prophet, is a fire fanned by the breath of the Holy Spirit: it consumes vices; it promotes virtue; it opens the treasures of wisdom to well-disposed souls and gives them the food of heaven. Therefore, Our Savior has said: "Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it." [Son-007] In this manner, Mary Magdalen by listening attentively and devoutly to the Word of God, is said to have chosen the "best part" which Martha, so solicitous in her outward administrations, was unable to obtain. Listen cheerfully to the Word of God, keep it wisely, and observe it faithfully, that at the end of time you may rejoice to hear these consoling words of Christ: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the Kingdom of Heaven." [Son-008]

Think of the Delights of Heaven:

In Heaven, God will wipe away all tears from your eyes, and you will obtain forever peace and rest, the glorious vision, and knowledge of His infinite perfections. God will dry your tears; there shall be no more death, nor pain, for your short sufferings will soon pass away. God shall manifest the heavenly consolations which he has reserved for all who fear him. There you shall taste those never-ending delights which God has prepared for your consolation and for that of all His elect. There shall the wholesome fountain of God's garden refresh you; there the overflowing wells of living waters shall revivify you; there shall the abundant delights of the house of God gratify you. There God shall envelop you in virtue and power; resplendent in the brightness of eternal light. He shall minister unto you and shall give Himself as your reward exceedingly great, magnificent recompense in which His largesse surpasses all your desires, as He promised Abraham to reward his faith and obedience: "I shall be thy reward exceedingly great." [Son-009] This is the one pearl of great price, to obtain which you must sell all you now possess. The greatness of this reward no man, says St. Paul, can understand nor fully comprehend, did God not give it to him out of pure charity, no man could fully merit it either by the practice of a virtuous life or by his good works and mortifications; for "the sufferings of this time," the Apostle says, "are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." [Son-010] Pray, then, with fervor to the Omnipotent God, Who for our sake became man. Who knows the weakness of human nature, so prone to evil, to help you by His mercy, to guard you by His charity, in order that you may not be drawn away from Him by the love of the world, but that you obtain your eternal crown in Heaven. May He Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever grant you this grace. Amen.

II. Spiritual Counsels and Holy Exercises of St. Norbert:

Faith:

It is the duty of a man to follow the dictates of reason; it is the duty of a perfect and holy man to follow the dictates of faith.

He who does not from the bottom of his heart and with the utmost reverence meditate on the mysteries of holy faith may take it for certain that he will never duly love and venerate them.

Faith without good works, deprived of charity is like to a lamp without oil and a candle unlighted.

If you strike a flint with steel, you will obtain a spark of fire; likewise a lively faith in the Divine Mysteries will bring forth burning sparks of divine love from hearts of stone.

Above all, meditate frequently on these three mysteries:

- A God Incarnate, the Son of the Eternal Father, condescending to be born in a stable and patiently enduring, for your salvation, lying on a little hay and straw.
- A Spouse of fair love, giving you at the Last Supper His own flesh and blood,
- Christ, the Lamb that was slain, becoming obedient unto death, which He suffered for love of you on Calvary.

These are three furnaces from which you can draw the burning fire to quicken your faith and enkindle your charity.

Piety and Religion:

Bees fly from flower to flower to gather honey everywhere; likewise a soul must search into the various mysteries of our faith to acquire therefrom devotion and piety. Especially when the Blessed Sacrament, the true Body of Christ, is exposed on the Altar or received by you in Holy Communion, be mindful to use all your strength in endeavoring to offer to your Divine Guest all the faculties of your soul, especially your will and to awaken in your heart the most fervent love.

He is no true son of the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, who is not with his whole heart devoted to her.

The intention of this Mother of fair love in adorning us with the white habit - a symbol of purity - was no other than to teach us a true devotion to her Immaculate Conception. If your heart be not aflame with love, if you do not possess virginal chastity, you are a Canon of Prémontré only in dress and name.

You must have a great veneration for the relics of the Saints, for they are more precious than all the treasures of the world. Should you possess any in your house, consider them as the guardians of your home and your heart.

Hope and Confidence in God:

To trust in one's own strength is to build upon sand or to lean on a broken stick.

Love for the Poor and of Poverty:

To harbor poor people, sharing what we possess with them, is the source of abundant plenty.

He who, of his own free will, has become poor for God's sake ought not complain when he is treated and clad like the poor.

Having dwelt at court and in the midst of wealth, I have learned by experience that there the heart is never satisfied, and that when far away from these the heart is at rest.

Riches pass away, but holy poverty is a lasting good and a token of a happy eternity.

Patience, Meekness and Affability:

We learn in the school of truth not to render evil for evil, but to render good for evil.

Do you suffer persecution? Be patient; are you better than your Master? Are you blamed, falsely accused, or disgraced? Be courageous; is this not a sign of true friendship?

Endeavor to win the friendship of your neighbor by the following means: Be courteous in your conversation, have a cheerful countenance, and say a kind and welcome word.

Humility:

If one scale of the balance goes up, the other comes down; in the same manner do you take a lower place when the world despises you?

The judgments of God differ from those of man; God gives you what you deserve and nothing more. When you are despised and laughed at when you receive an insult or an injury, be thankful from the bottom of your heart, and show yourself agreeable and courteous towards him who does you wrong. Lay aside all thoughts of revenge and say: "How just is God, Who in His mercy deigns to give me what my sins have deserved!"

Not much attention is paid to children when they talk and act foolishly, because that is not unbecoming their age; but when a Religious, whose only aim ought to be to remain unknown to the world, covets honours and dignities, he deserves to be called foolish and vain.

To employ one's self about humble and mean services, to despise no one except one's self, constitutes the food of perfect humility.

Learn at least this true lesson, that the Holy Spirit will not dwell in the hearts of the proud.

Chastity:

Chastity is a flower which a Religious of the Order of Prémontré must always carry and preserve; for like a precious pearl in a crown must his chastity be; well known and of good repute, and shining forth in all his actions.

To be indulgent to one's own body is to nourish one's enemy.

He who covets a life in the midst of worldly people without suffering loss of chastity is like to a man who presumes to touch pitch without staining his hands.

Obedience and Resignation:

He who always acts in order to please God, and avoids that which displeases God, is constantly in the enjoyment of internal peace and happiness. Never follow your own will, but have in all things recourse to God, saying: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" Should God raise you up in prosperity, or let you fall into adversity, or not grant you what you expect, what is all this to you? Such is the will of God, and you must make your will conformable to His. If you rejoice to find that you have obtained all you have asked for of God, how dare you refuse Him?

When your Superiors speak, think that they stand in God's place. Listen in all humility to what they say, and obey them directly. I deem it preferable to enter a burning furnace, to suffer even death itself, than not to obey.

Distrust of one's self and confidence in God is the foundation on which solid virtue is built.

When you have undertaken a work, however difficult and arduous it may be, in which the honour of God is concerned, have recourse to God with this prayer: "Behold, O Lord, without Thy assistance I can do nothing, but with Thee all things are possible". After this expect a prosperous result.

Do what you will, your good resolutions are sure to receive some check; but never lose your courage, for whatever your Heavenly Father has planted in your hearts cannot be rooted up, unless you distrust the mercy of God.

Never fear, even though the world and the flesh may declare war and rebel against you, and the devil encompass you; for Satan has lost much of his power ever since our Saviour has taken his arms from him. Let this thought enkindle your faith, and then say with great confidence: "If God is for us, who is against us?"

Have recourse to God's holy Providence in all confidence, for God will never fail you. With a strong hand and lifted arm will He guide you, and never will He forsake you.

Prayer and Recollection:

A talkative, over-curious, and restless person is like an oven which is open and exposed on all sides, and which keeps no heat; you will never enjoy the sweetness of a quiet prayer unless you shut your mind to all worldly desires and temporal affairs.

The Holy Scriptures will teach you how to pray.

A prayer-book is the occupation of Saints. Make good use of it, and you will be able to find therein a source of holy fervour. Let prayer be the beginning, the middle, and the end of all your works. Against temptations you will find no better, no readier shield than that of prayer.

I see no difference between a fish out of water and a Religious whose mind knows no recollection, but wanders about and is distracted by worldly and indifferent cares.

Love of God:

Do you wish to know an object worthy of your love? God alone, and nothing else.

If you think often of God, if you do all things for His greater glory, if you are ready to work and suffer for Him alone, you may then believe that you love God with a true love and a praiseworthy zeal.

To live for God, and God alone, is the true and only happiness of Heaven.

When I was persecuted, insulted and buffeted, I prayed to God for nothing so much as to shed my blood and to lay down my life for the sake of my Redeemer. Believe me that to wish for martyrdom, and not to suffer martyrdom, is an immense torture for a soul that is consumed with pure love of God.

Speaking frequently of the eternal happiness of Heaven is like a spiritual loadstone, whereby the most hardened hearts are attracted to the love of God. He who serves God only to be seen by others drinks a poison which causes death.

Love of Our Neighbour:

Do willingly all you can for the sake of your neighbour; unless you do so, you do not love your neighbour as yourself.

He who from the fields of sublime thoughts gathers a harvest of high-sounding phrases, not so much in order to teach the ignorant the ways of salvation as to pass for a learned man, certainly does not love his neighbour, but himself instead.

Charity demands that vices should be pointed out and censured. A preacher who neglects to do so is like a house-dog that does not bark.

It is no small matter to save but one soul for God. Should but a single sheep have gone astray, seek it; and having found it, bring it back to the fold.

When you do for your neighbour what you wish to have done for yourself, you prove that you love him; but when you willingly and courageously put yourself between your neighbour and his enemy, and so shield him from the attacks of his foe, then, I say, charity asks for nothing more from you.

The school of Christ teaches us to procure and to promote the union of hearts; he is no true disciple of Christ who rejects this doctrine.

It is impossible for a congregation in which there is no harmony not to fall, and for one in which there is harmony not to flourish.

He who has become all for all truly fulfils the duties of charity.

III. Celebrated Sayings of St. Norbert:

- At Court I was never satisfied; in the monastery I was never dissatisfied.
- I have been at court, I have been in the monastery, I have enjoyed ecclesiastical preferments; everywhere have I learned that nothing excels the happiness of belonging entirely to God.
- Those who understand how to do penance find therein an abundance of delight. A life of austerities bears a rich crop of happiness, but no-one believes this unless he has given it a trial.
- Why fear the devil, armed as we are with Jesus Christ?
- A thousand worlds are not equal to the peace and calm of a good conscience and of a heart which is truly religious.
- A good conscience and a heart which loves correction are worth more than a thousand worlds.
- Calumny is the test of a patient and generous heart, which bears with it rather than give up working for God.
- He who has God on his side is troubled at nothing.
- I have frequently been at the courts of princes, I have possessed abundant wealth, I have not denied myself the pleasures of the world; nevertheless, believe me, brethren, this abundance of worldly goods is real poverty. Never was it better for me than when I was without them,

because the entire freedom from these worldly goods gave me the fullness of those that are heavenly, which are more pleasant for their sweetness, more lasting for their constancy, better constituted for the satisfaction they give to the heart of man.

Norbert on the Priesthood:

- O priest! thou art not thyself, because thou art God.
- Thou art not of thyself, because thou art the servant and minister of Christ.
- Thou art not thine own, because thou art the spouse of the Church.
- Thou art not for thyself, because thou art a mediator between God and Man.
- Thou art not for thyself, because thou art nothing.
- Who, then, art thou, O priest? Nothing and everything!
- O priest! take care lest it be said to the what was said to Christ on the cross: "He saved others, Himself He cannot save!"

N.B.: As the vigour of the passage is lost in the translation, the author gives the Latin text in this note, especially as St. Norbert so frequently addressed these words to his disciples: "*O Sacerdos! Tu non est tu, quia Deus es. Tu non es tui, quia servus et minister Christi. Tu non es tuus, quia sponsus Ecclesiae. Tu non es tibi, quia mediator Dei et hominum. Tu non es de te, quia nihil. Tu quis ergo, O Sacerdos? Nihil et omnia. O Sacerdos! Cave ne tibi, quod Christo patienti, dicatur; alios salvos fecit, seipsum non potest salvum facere!*"

Praised be Jesus Christ, Amen

Books Recommended

Important Note

This is the bibliography printed in 1889

- **A sketch of the Premonstratensian Order and their Abbeys in Great Britain;** Rev. F. M. Geudens, O.Praem, 6d.
- **The Life of St. Norbert, Founder of the Order of Prémontré, Archbishop of Magdeburg;** Rev. F. M. Geudens, O.Praem., 3s 6d.
- **Sister Rose and the Mass of Reparation;** Translated from the French by Rev. F. M. Geudens, O.Praem., bound 1s, wrapper 6d.
- **Tract on Holy Mass - Or Why, How, and When Should We Hear Mass;** Rev. F. M. Geudens, O.Praem., 1d.
- **Two English Hymns in Honour of St. Norbert;** Music by Chevalier Lemmens-Sherrington, 3d

N.B.: These books can be had from Burns & Oates, Ltd., 28 Orchard Street, London, W.; or from the Norbertine Canons, St. Norbert's Residence, Crowle, Lincolnshire. *[note of 1889]*