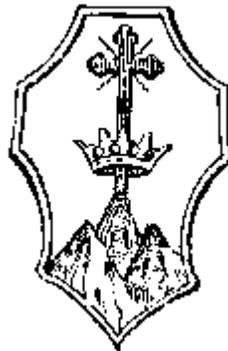


**THE CONGREGATION  
OF CAMALDOLESE HERMITS  
OF MONTE CORONA**

**RULE OF FORMATION**



**Elaborated and approved by the Diet of 1992  
and by the General Chapter of 1994**

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# PREFACE

The task of the monk is “to conform his whole existence to the demands of the Gospel, or rather to Jesus Himself, model of chastity, poverty and obedience” (cf. Constitutions, 16). For this reason the hermit, in a certain sense, never leaves the period of formation, because the monastic life itself is a continuous formation whose basic program is the Gospel, to which the Rule, the Constitutions and the Customary intend to lead.

The hermit’s initial formation before his definitive commitment in perpetual profession, is not so much the learning of a professional activity, as rather the introduction to a form of life that is a permanent “school of the Lord’s service” (cf. Rule, Prologue 45). The period that the candidates to our life go through until perpetual profession is the time of their formation in the strict sense. No one should have any doubts about the basic importance of such a period, whether for the individual monks or for the Congregation itself.

The present Rule of Formation is destined for those who have the immediate responsibility for the formation of the young monks, namely the Masters of Novices, their collaborators, the Priors and the members of the General Council (cf. Constitutions 49, 53, 64 & passim). This is not, however, a “reserved” document; on the contrary, its annual public reading is prescribed in all our hermitages.

# I. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION

1. “Do not grant newcomers to the monastic life an easy entry, but, as the Apostle says, ‘Test the spirits to see if they are from God’” (Rule 58: 1-2; cf. 1 Jn. 4: 1). Let there not be, therefore, any negligence in the proper selection of candidates in keeping with the following listed criteria.

2. He who desires to become a monk must in the first place be seeking God. Nevertheless, not all the candidates who come to our hermitages and who are truly seeking God, are thereby suitable for leading our eremitical life. Already from the beginning, “The novice should be clearly told all the hardships and difficulties that will lead him to God” (Rule 58: 8), without leaving out that “as we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God’s commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love” (Prologue, 49).

3. Required of aspirants to our life is a human and Christian maturity sufficient to assume a way of life that is characterized, in considerable measure, by solitude and silence. Experience shows that persons of sociable temperament succeed better at embracing our kind of life led in small communities.

Let there be no hurry to admit very young candidates, because, even though they should be received as true vocations each time, they can still lack the maturity which is normally acquired in the ordinary ways of life in the world.

4. Attention should be paid to the fact that mentally weak and even unbalanced persons are led to seek refuge in the well-protected environment of our hermitages, which obviously, is not their place. A psychological examination by a reliable and Christian expert can be useful.

5. Those responsible for the admittance of the candidates should never neglect to complete the documentation required by canon 645 C.I.C. In the case of lay candidates, let them come, furnished, if possible, among other things, with a letter of reference from a priest who knows them. It is helpful for the Fr. Master to know about the candidates’ family background. It is clear that growing up in a substantially healthy family has a positive influence on maturity of character. However, the authenticity of a call to intimacy with God is not exclusively a result of social factors. In fact, God is sovereignly free in His choices and callings.

On the other hand, it would be a waste of time and effort for us to examine candidates using psychotherapeutic methods of which we have neither the competence nor the capacity.

6. An iron health is not required for our life, although a certain caution is called for in this regard. Thus, when considered opportune, appropriate medical certification will be required.

7. We do not accept persons who are or have been alcoholics or drug addicts, as long as there is no certainty that they have really overcome their dependency. We do not accept candidates who manifest homosexual tendencies.

The use of tobacco is not permitted, even temporarily, by candidates.

8. Candidates who are insufficiently grounded in the faith and the practice of Catholic life should

be counseled to deepen their belonging to the Church by living for a period of time outside the hermitage before entering.

It would be good to keep in contact with the candidates during this period, giving them useful counsels, writing letters, and receiving them at times in the hermitage.

9. “Above all, in certain countries, some candidates for the religious life present themselves because of a more or less conscious search for social gain and future security; others look upon the religious life as an ideal place for an ideological struggle for justice. Finally, there are others of a more conservative nature who look upon the religious life as if it were a place for saving their faith in a world which they regard as being hostile and corrupt. These motives represent the reverse side of a number of values, but they need to be corrected and purified” (Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes, 89).

It is normal that among the complexity of motivations that lead one to the hermitage there may be some of less value or rectitude. Therefore the period of formation also serves as a purification process of the deep intentions that underlie the choice of our eremitical life.

10. Candidates who consider the future reception of Holy Orders as an absolute condition for their eventual entrance into the Congregation cannot be admitted. On the contrary, it is possible to accept someone who, though suitable for the priesthood, desires to remain a lay religious, while the ideal disposition is to defer to the decision of the Superiors in this regard.

11. Religious of other Orders may present themselves as candidates for our life, as well as other persons who will have spent time in the so-called “ecclesial movements.” In themselves, such backgrounds do not constitute obstacles to their admittance. It is necessary, however, that the candidates realize that by entering our Congregation it would be unrealistic to nourish any thoughts of a “multiple-belonging.” Naturally, certain values of past experiences can be integrated into their new form of life. In many cases these can be an immediate help to become integrated more fully. However, almost always the sacrifice of things valid in themselves, but no longer corresponding to new conditions of life, is also required.

12. An unfortunate background in the moral realm does not necessarily constitute an obstacle to admission. It is important that there should be a well-founded hope that the candidate will be able to live our life fruitfully in the future.

13. “As the sea quickly casts up a corpse, so the hermitage speedily rejects as dead a monk who is estranged from the eremitical way of life” (Bl. Rudolph, Constitutions, 37). Usually, candidates not suited for our life become aware of this by themselves during the course of the novitiate. If certain defects of character are not corrected, the community should not accept a novice for profession. Indeed, certain tendencies, which are too strong and too deeply rooted, make our life difficult for the individual and for the community; for example: excessive introversion, over-sensitivity, the desire to stand out, an overly critical spirit, an excessive desire for communication and approval, the feeling that one is having “supernatural” locutions and visions. To admit an unsuitable candidate out of pure mercy and compassion would soon be seen as a wrong decision. On the other hand, one should especially avoid the temptation to want to build a community of “the pure and perfect,” based on purely human standards. The Lord will not bless such an undertaking.

14. Those responsible for admission should not let themselves be influenced by personal criteria, likes or dislikes, but they should rather see the candidates as sons of God sent to us by the Lord. They should be sent away only if some objective reasons exist, even if these are not contained in the preceding list.

## II. AIMS OF THE FORMATION

15. The preferential love of the monk for Jesus Christ, the distinctive sign of his vocation (cf. Rule 4, 21; 5, 2; 72, 11), should—during the time of formation—be deepened, enlightened, and better understood in its multiple implications. The hermit should see himself in the words of Bl. Paul, “Lord Jesus Christ, you know that I have loved solitude not for its own sake, but for you” (Soliloquy 6/29/1519).

16. “The formation of the Religious must look in a special way to the wisdom of the cross, to that wisdom which is a gift of the Spirit, and which makes one truly intimate with the Lord and a profound connoisseur of his will” (John Paul II, 12/1/89). He who enters our eremitical life should not expect to become a “man of culture.”

The hermit makes a specific renunciation in this regard. Our state leads to wisdom, not to science or culture. On the other hand, we should esteem the various sciences and not forbid anyone from taking an interest in what appears helpful for his spiritual journey.

17. Candidates should be taught to make their *lectio divina* and personal prayer in a fruitful manner. Daily contact with the Word of God heard in the liturgy and meditated upon in personal reading will slowly lead the hermit to familiarity with it, so that it will become for him a sweet and indispensable companion. “As he progresses in this way of life and in faith” (cf. Rule, Prologue, 49), he will also learn to discover God’s message in the great book of creation, and that of history—the page on which the “today” of God is written (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2705).

18. In order to become men of prayer and deep interior life, the young hermits will not be taught any “technique.” Prayers as well as short and frequent invocations will be recommended as the easiest way to remain united to the Lord without distractions (cf. 1 Cor. 7:35), which has been an age-old practice of monks in both the East and the West. However, emphasis will be placed on the acquisition of certain dispositions and attitudes such as fear of God, purity of heart, love of silence, fraternal charity, humility, thankfulness and joy—dispositions that aide and spontaneously facilitate a personal encounter with the Lord in prayer. Progress in the life of prayer reveals itself not so much through affection, simplicity, or a growing passivity, but rather through a deep, real experience of God that manifests its authenticity in humility, self-denial, and the willingness to endure and to suffer. True growth in prayer is not lived at a psychological but at a theological level, i.e., it is realized and manifested through a stronger faith, a more ardent hope, and a more profound charity.

The exercises of Yoga and Zen are not recommended inasmuch as they do not tend of themselves toward a deepening of faith (in which Christian mysticism consists), but rather toward a deepening of self-knowledge—which can certainly be useful—but if it does not lead to a knowledge of God, it can easily impede union with Him who is infinitely other, whose name of “Father” was revealed by Jesus (cf. Jn. 17:26).

19. The formation will prepare the young hermit for the complete gift of himself to God through the profession of the religious vows. For many of our contemporaries, every definitive commitment appears to limit rather than actualize human freedom. Therefore, to prepare them to assume in a

responsible manner the obligations inherent in their consecration as contemplative religious, this involves—among other things—to help them understand fully the value and necessity of the irrevocable nature of the gift of self. “The ‘logic of love’ does not admit of a temporary belonging to God; it lives, rather, the impatience of being consecrated forever in a definitive way to the Lord Jesus” (Sandro Maggiolini).

From what has been said it does not necessarily follow that he, who for various reasons did not make perpetual profession, was mistaken and merely wasted precious time. His more or less lengthy stay with us could very well conform to the particular plan of salvation that God has for him.

20. Every religious profession signifies the total gift of self to God. This is true even for temporary profession, which is a commitment to an additional trial in our Congregation. Temporary profession begins a period of development and a strengthening of the vocation, a time that offers security and assurance at the time of professing perpetual vows. Perpetual profession ratifies and makes definitive what temporary profession had already made intentionally present, i.e., a total consecration to God. The time of probation that characterizes temporary profession does not allow for an easy interruption. To take seriously one’s word that is given and a commitment that is well defined is an effective means for human and Christian growth.

21. The vow of chastity does not above all mean a renunciation. Rather, it is first of all a positive, total and unconditional choice for Christ, the supreme treasure of life. Such a choice is the response to a calling that implies the renunciation of that form of human love which is lived in the Sacrament of Matrimony. Experience has shown that the practice of chastity becomes easy and joyful if a climate of true fraternal charity reigns in the hermitage.

“Education for chastity will therefore aim at helping each one to control and to master his or her sexual impulses, while at the same time it will avoid a self-centeredness that is content with one’s fidelity to purity. It is no accident that the ancient Fathers gave priority to humility over chastity, since this latter can be accompanied, as experience has shown, by a hardness of heart. The pedagogy of consecrated chastity will aim at helping each one to profit by past personal experiences, whether positive, in order to give thanks for them, or negative, in order to be aware of one’s weaknesses, in order to humble oneself peacefully before God and to remain vigilant for the future” (Directives, 13).

22. “The great originality of the Camaldolese eremitical life is the reintegration of the obedience that characterizes the cenobitic life. Obedience makes the monk” (Dom Jean Leclercq). Considering the very high value that today’s society attributes to personal autonomy, educating today’s candidates in religious obedience becomes one of the most difficult tasks for the one who forms them. It would certainly be insufficient to present obedience only as a condition for community peace and harmony. The monk’s obedience is not an inevitable concession to social life, but rather a spontaneous and joyous expression of love. One desires to submit his own will to the beloved. Thus Jesus always did what was pleasing to the Father (cf. Jn. 8:29). The fact that the monk does not yet see the one whom he loves (cf. 1 Pt. 1:8) is not an obstacle to obeying Him now. In fact, his faith leads him to see Christ in his representatives: in his superiors, in the pastors of the Church, in guests, in the poor, in his brothers, in all—friends and enemies alike. The hermit’s obedience calls for depth and maturity. Whoever learns by humiliating experiences that practically all we do on our own initiative is tainted by some impurity, will love to do voluntarily what is asked of him as the most sure way of fulfilling

God's will and pleasing Him.

23. "He who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:33). To want to follow Jesus and remain attached to material goods is an impossible undertaking, even if tried again and again. The education in evangelical poverty can be considered successful when the hermit has acquired the heart of a beggar: poor, humble, trustful and grateful. It is useless to dream of spiritual poverty without concrete renunciation and behavior, and without fighting against incorrect tendencies such as:

- considering the cell an exclusive domain reserved for oneself, so that every superior who wishes to see it is considered an intruder;
- disregarding order and cleanliness, and being pleased to live in squalor;
- helping oneself to things of common use with an irresponsible ease;
- assuming the attitude of an infallible judge with respect to how poverty should be observed in the community or by the brethren.

"In this regard, whoever needs less should thank God and not be distressed; but whoever needs more should be humble because of his weakness, and not self-important because of the kindness shown him. In this way all the members will be at peace" (RB 34: 3-5).

24. In the formation period, all the elements contained in our observance that can promote the human equilibrium of the young hermit must not be neglected. During the first year, permissions for greater austerity than what is prescribed by the rule are to be given with great caution.

To use psychology to understand and better help the young hermit can be truly useful, provided that an excessive "psychologizing," incompatible with a vision of faith, be avoided.

25. Before presenting a novice to the conventual chapter for admission to temporary or perpetual profession, or in the case of a religious in perpetual vows coming from another institute of consecrated life, the Novice Master together with the Father Prior or another hermit, should speak privately with the candidate to make sure he understands: 1) the substance of the vows made in the new institute and 2) the reciprocal obligations that arise from them.

The positive result of such a conversation should be noted in the minutes of the conventual chapter.

26. The vocation to the solitary life is a charism of the Holy Spirit, i.e., a personal gift to each individual, to be developed, however, in favor of the entire community. Thus it should not be hidden from the candidate that to become a monk means, among other things, to enter humbly into a preexisting and living tradition founded on the charism of our Fathers. To guard faithfully the identity of our way of life is a good for the entire Church and contributes in a hidden, though real and profound way, to the evangelization of the world.

### III. THOSE IN CHARGE OF FORMATION

27. “It is the individual religious who holds the first responsibility for saying "yes" to the call which has been received and for accepting all the consequences of this response; this is not primarily in the order of the intellect, but of the whole of life” (Directives, 29).

The personal responsibility of a candidate to the eremitical life is even greater because such a life necessarily lacks some of the helps and stimuli present in a more cenobitic life.

28. The eremitic tradition has always attributed a formative function of first rank to the keeping of the cell. The cell can teach, if not everything, certainly a great deal. The awareness in the cell of being under the watchful eye of the Almighty demands and leads to a great purity of heart, and thus helps the process of maturation before becoming a sign of acquired maturity. In the silence of the cell the hermit experiences total dependence on the Father: his faith, hope and love grow, and his prayer becomes one of supplication, adoration, blessing, praise and thanksgiving for himself and for all men. Only by persevering in this awareness will our novices become accustomed to the recollection of solitude and silence, acquire strength and light to love the brothers in their daily needs, and to experience the joy of filial abandonment to the Father. How could they detect the discrete and comforting presence of the Spirit if not by listening to their own heart in the friendly silence of the cell?

To remain in the cell is not easy for everyone and requires a gradual education. During the period of formation the young brothers will do *Lectio Divina* in the cell. Novices are not permitted reclusion for more than one week.

29. The community of the eremitical family contributes greatly to the formation (cf. Constitutions, 52). Neither the same interests nor mutual sympathies has led each individual to the eremitical community, but rather the Lord and each one’s desire to live in his presence has brought them together. The joy of community life is proportionate to each member’s renunciation of himself.

In the novitiate houses not only do the “older” hermits have the serious responsibility of offering the younger ones a model of exemplary Camaldolese eremitical life, but the novices themselves should also help and motivate each other by the example of a generous observance of our rules.

30. Profession creates a new bond of the religious with the Church. For this reason, during the formation period it is necessary to develop in the candidate a sense of belonging to the ecclesial community, of being in tune with it and of discovering his place in it. The Church is, in fact, already present and working in the life of the monk: without the sacraments, the Word of God, the liturgy and communion with the People of God and their Pastors, there is no true contact with Christ, and hence not even monastic life in the Christian sense.

31. The Novice Master must be, before all else, a good witness of our Congregation’s charism. His mission to discern vocations and to accompany the candidates in the ways of the Lord is particularly delicate and demands respect for the person, attentiveness, firmness, and an enlightened understanding.

He is to guide the candidates to find enjoyment in the things of God: in prayer and *Lectio Divina*, in the liturgy and in work that is well done. The Novice Master cannot transmit such “spiritual enjoyment” to the disciple only by verbal instruction, but also and above all in a “contagious” way. If he who is in charge of formation does not pray, read or celebrate the liturgy with enthusiasm and deep conviction, and does not work—what does he have to transmit?

The formation of the Novice Master should also be characterized by a deep spirit of faith, a sincere love for our Congregation, a generous faithfulness to our rule and a great warmth toward those entrusted to him.

Only by way of exception and for a serious reason can a religious in formation have a spiritual guide other than the Fr. Master. Even in this case, however, he is still to attend the formation conference with the Fr. Master as foreseen in the formation program. The Fr. Master for his part should respect the choice made by the candidate.

In many cases the novice will have no spiritual Father in the strict sense, but in order to discern what the Spirit wants of him, he will already find sufficient elements of spiritual direction present in our life: the Fr. Master, other Superiors, the Confessor, Sacred Scripture, the Magisterium of the Church, the regular observance, etc. It is indispensable that the Fr. Master know the candidates well, but he should also carefully avoid leading them to be unduly attached to himself.

They are, in fact, God’s sons, not his. They must eventually learn to live our life in spiritual fruitfulness even in hermitages and under superiors that are less attractive.

## IV. STAGES AND METHODS

32. “Most of the difficulties encountered today in the formation of novices are usually due to the fact that when they were admitted they did not have the required maturity” (*Renovationis causam*, 4). For this reason we do not accept candidates who are too young, in conformity with article 45 of the Constitutions. Nor should one fear to prolong the postulancy when needed.

Even though the institution of oblate (donate) does not in itself exist as a means for entering our religious life in the future, it can in fact, in certain cases, act as a useful preliminary trial for later entrance into the novitiate.

33. “It is not advisable that the novitiate be conducted within a milieu foreign to the culture and native language of the novices.” Among other dangers, “a transfer into another culture at this particular moment involves the risk of accepting false vocations and of not perceiving what may be false motivations” (Directives, 47). On the other hand, it is good to recall that the monastic tradition has always attributed a precious ascetical value to the voluntary decision, out of love for Christ, to abandon one’s own country and live in a foreign land.

Obviously a true discernment is needed in each case.

34. In order to permit all the temporary professed to root themselves more deeply in our eremitical life, their theological studies, done outside the hermitage and ending in the conferring of Holy Orders, do not ordinarily begin before perpetual profession.

If a temporary professed began the theological studies a short time after profession, once these studies are finished, he will, with a view toward deepening his interior life and eremitical formation, wait at least a year before making perpetual profession.

The temporary professed follow the course of studies instituted for the novices. If they find themselves in a hermitage without a novitiate regular conferences should possibly be set up there for them.

35. In some cases a temporary professed may experience a difficult and delicate period before deciding to commit himself definitively to our eremitical life. All those in charge of formation are exhorted to be attentive to these brethren with availability, discretion, and above all, prayer.

While encouraging and enlightening, they should avoid every form of psychological pressure, so that perpetual profession may truly be an expression of the gift of self to Christ and to the Order.

If the doubt persists, one should not fear to suggest separation from the Congregation or prolongation of temporary vows.

36. Our monastic formation always develops within the confines of the eremitical community. The regular life, work not excluded (cf. Constitutions, 51), takes on a formative value. The readings heard in common and those done in the solitude of the cell, as well as the Prior’s weekly conferences, undoubtedly contribute to broadening the intellectual horizon and strengthening the spiritual life. They are helpful factors toward a permanent formation.

The continual, devout and conscious participation in the liturgy of the hermitage, together

with the silence of the cell, constitute noble and efficacious elements of a school of faith and prayer.

Except in the case of necessity, novices should not hold an office, but they should rather help the older hermits, which is an important formative element, especially in the area of obedience.

37. The conferences or lessons that make up part of the program of formation are to be given by the Fr. Master and possibly by other hermits. Even a temporary professed, provided he is well prepared, can give lessons in certain materials to the brothers in formation. The possibility of calling in persons from the outside for completing the theoretical formation is not excluded. There should be at least two conferences each week.

The Fr. Master should try to have a formative talk with the candidate once a month from the beginning of the postulancy to perpetual profession.

38. Of particular importance to the solitary life is formation through reading. It is not unusual for a book to become like a friend whose company is enjoyed, with whom one converses, and which leads to a broader intellectual and spiritual outlook.

It pertains to the Fr. Master to guide discreetly the brothers' reading by proposing suitable books, teaching the way to read, and speaking about the readings done.

The schedule of the community should foresee, at least for the hermits still in formation, a time set aside for study different from that of *Lectio Divina*.

When those responsible permit the novices and temporary professed to use the library, they should be attentive that they do not lose the taste for prayer by plunging into excessive, disordered, or less suitable reading (cf. Customary, 107).

39. In our eremitical communities there generally reigns a climate of freedom and peace. Paradoxically, this is the fruit of a rather austere discipline. In fact, it is necessary to have acquired a certain self-discipline in order not to abuse freedom toward oneself or others. The Fr. Master has the right and at times the duty to impose sanctions on those in formation. He should, however, always proceed with prudence and caution, making it understood that he is not acting out of anger, but out of love and kindness.

## V. FORMATION MATERIALS

40. It pertains to the Fr. Master to explain each week the Rule, the Constitutions, and the Customs. Before simple profession all must have necessarily participated in these classes, which should contain a specific catechesis on the religious vows as well. The Rule of St. Benedict also remains fundamental for our eremitical life. It should be studied not only as a typical expression of cenobitic life, but also as a compendium of all monastic tradition and as a venerable text particularly open to the values of the eremitic life.

41. Included in the formation there should be an introduction to Sacred Scripture, especially to the Psalms, and a course of reading in spiritual and mystical theology. It may, in fact, easily happen that a candidate, especially a young one, might have a great deal of generosity, but lacking sure doctrinal directives, does not grasp correctly the Word of God, and gets lost in misleading biblical interpretations or in mistaken ascetical and mystical paths.

42. “In order that our liturgical service may always be executed with dignity and decorum, the liturgical education which our candidates must receive during the period of formation is of the greatest importance. Such an education does not consist solely in the transmission of the indispensable historical and theological concepts in liturgical matters but must, above all, introduce the young hermits to a profound liturgical sensitivity, which includes: reverence before God present under the sacramental signs and in the praying community, the avoidance of all haste and superficiality, attention to order, cleanliness, authenticity and a sober beauty, the sense of community and a continual effort to enliven with interior participation all exterior words and actions” (Customary, 69).

43. Finally, there are some materials, such as the history of monastic life, an introduction to monastic literature, the history of our he, and an introduction to Canon Law, that should not be omitted from the formation of the religious. If it is not possible to have classes in these matters, it may be necessary to substitute them with the study of adequate books.

# CONCLUSION

All those who are more directly responsible for the formation of the brothers should remember that their office calls for dedication and competence, but that the result does not depend solely on their efforts. Never become discouraged! Indeed, those who are under your care are not inert matter that can be molded at will, but rather sons of God who are gifted with personal freedom and called to make a free gift of themselves to God. However, this freedom can also be used in a wrong way.

Not all those who are attracted to our way of life are truly called to enter and remain. It cannot be stressed enough that among all the agents of formation the principal one is always the HOLY SPIRIT who breathes where He wills.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **CLASSES DURING THE TIME OF FORMATION**

#### **I. Monasticism**

1. The Rule of St. Benedict
2. Our “Legislation,” Constitutions and Customary; Rule of Formation; definitive decrees of the General Chapter.
3. Theology of monasticism.

#### **II. Consecrated Life in general**

1. Theology of the Consecrated Life
2. The religious vows
3. Canon Law for Religious

#### **III. Spiritual Theology**

By way of illustration: Christian asceticism; prayer; mysticism; theological and moral virtues.

#### **IV. Sacred Scripture**

1. General Introduction
2. The Psalms
3. The New Testament

#### **V. Liturgy**

1. General Introduction
2. The Divine Office
3. The Liturgical Year

#### **VI. Dogmatic Theology**

A brief exposition of the Christian faith: the Trinity; Jesus Christ; the Church; the Blessed Virgin Mary; grace and sin; the Sacraments; the Eucharist; eschatology

#### **VII. Patrology**

#### **VIII. History**

1. History of monasticism
2. Camaldolese history

## **IX. The Magisterium**

A brief presentation of ecclesial documents on the consecrated and monastic life from the Second Vatican Council

## **APPENDIX II DIRECTIVES**

1. The list contains the teaching materials that should be used during the period of formation.
2. Some materials should be more stressed during the time of novitiate, others can be left to the time of temporary profession. For example:
  - A) Novices: Rule of Saint Benedict and our Legislation; Christian Spirituality; the religious vows; Liturgy and Sacred Scripture.
  - B) Temporary professed: deepening of the religious life; Dogmatic Theology; History; etc.
3. The breadth and depth of the teaching depends on the need/capacity of the “disciples.”
4. For some subjects a little reading is enough
5. The Fr. Master will guide those in formation to the works that are more helpful in learning about our spiritual tradition; for example, the books of Jean Leclercq on the Camaldolese and on our founder Blessed Paul.

A short list of the principal “Masters” of the monastic tradition in general, and of the Camaldolese in particular. The reading of these authors is part of the formation of our candidates.

A. Required books:

1. St. Athanasius: *Life of St. Anthony*
2. St. Gregory the Great: *Life of St. Benedict*
3. St. Peter Damian: *Life of St. Romuald*
4. *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*
5. St. John Cassian: *Conferences and Institutes* (at least some)
6. Bl. Rudolph: *Eremitical Rule*
7. Bruno of Querfurt: *Life of the Five Brothers*
8. Bl. Paul: *Rule of the Eremitical Life*

B. Recommended books:

1. St. Dorotheus of Gaza: *Conferences to Monks*
2. Palladius: *Lausiac History*
3. *History of the Monks of Egypt*
4. St. John Climacus: *The Ladder*
5. John Moschus: *The Garden*
6. *The Philokalia* (in part)
7. William of St. Thierry: *Golden Letter*
8. Thomas à Kempis: *Imitation of Christ*
9. St. John of the Cross: *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*
10. St. Teresa of Avila: *The Way of Perfection*
11. St. Therese of Lisieux: *Story of a Soul* (autobiography)