



Brothers of the
Christian Schools

**GUIDE
FOR BROTHER
DIRECTORS**

Presentation

The Guide for the Brother Director first appeared among the normative documents of the Institute when it was published on December 8, 1996. In response to the changing times, this valuable document was brought up-to-date by my predecessor as Procurator General of the Institute, Brother Leonardo Tejeiro, a man of great experience who was in post for six years. Now completely revised and brought into line with universal law and the law in force in the Institute, this booklet is presented under the title of «*Manual of the Brother Director*».

The law proper to the Institute is essentially based on *The Rule, The Administrative Directory*, the Acts of various General Chapters, the Circulars and all the other regulatory texts duly approved and published by the Brother Superior and his Council. For its part, the term ‘universal law’ simply means canon law.

Conceived and intended for the Brother Director as a religious Superior, this Manual has for its only purpose to help the Brother Director carry out better his ministry to his Brothers and other members of the Lasallian Family. It is offered as a tool to aid the Brother Director in acquiring a better knowledge of his responsibilities so as to meet them with courage and gospel simplicity.

In this perspective, it is presented as a valuable tool that supports the Brother Director in his mission of community government and animation. For him, this is a matter of rendering a service which consists in helping the community discern the will of God in a participatory process that respects *The Rule* of the Institute and Lasallian traditions. It is understood that this search for the will of God in the daily life of the community will be *adapted with creative fidelity according to the situation of each District*.

Introduction

The Brother Director is a religious Superior, and as such is the normal link between the community and the District, responsible for communion and fraternal unity, guardian of the Rule and Lasallian traditions within the community. He participates in a special way in the work of government and animation in the Institute.

This Manual is meant for him, and it constitutes a real guide that can help him to better fulfill his mission of providing, with simplicity, discernment and effectiveness, the service of authority among his Brothers in the community as a gift received from God.

The Manual is in two major parts. In the first part, it deals with various normative matters relating to the Brothers' community: the various dimensions of community, the foundations and animation of community, the ministry of the Brother Director, the major points of community animation and the formation of the Brothers in community.

The second part concentrates on the administration of community goods. It sets out and defines the principles of this administration, underlining the primacy of the Brother Director's responsibility for administering goods and the role of the Brother Bursar of the community. It gives rulings for some special situations that require attention: the conditions for administration of goods, community witness, the links between the community and the District and Institute, between the community and the Lasallian Family.

As a result, the contents of the Manual make proposals regarding practice, which each Brother Director will need to adapt to the particular situation of the community for which he has pastoral responsibility, in order to construct, with the agreement of the members, a true community, a centre of life in which people share an experience of faith.

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REFERENCE TEXTS

AI-2006 Report from the 2006 International Assembly

c Code of Canon Law

Circ. Circular from the General Council

DA The Administrator's Directory, 1989

DE Guidelines for Financial Administration, 1998

GF Guide for Formation, 1991

GHD Guide for Brother Directors, 1996

MV Manual for Brother Visitors, 1987

R Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 1987
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I. THE BROTHERS' COMMUNITY

1. Scope. It is characterized by being a community of faith (R 48-50), an apostolic community (R 51-52a) and a fraternal community (R 53-57a) all at the same time.

2. Principles of Community Leadership (GHD 2): a) The building up of the community is the responsibility of everyone; b) The authority of the Director is one of service, it tends to develop communion among all, the vitality of the Institute, the effectiveness of its mission and interdependence. It is exercised in a framework of respect for persons and subsidiarity (R 102); c) Where it is considered useful, a Brother Sub-Director may be appointed to assist, or if need be, to substitute for the Brother Director of a community (R 63c).

3. The Brother Director's ministry of leadership (GHD 3)

“As a religious superior, the Brother Director is at the service of his Brothers to help them in their spiritual growth, and in accomplishing their vocation as persons and as a community. He offers them the support of his advice and his authority. He himself strives to live and help others live in the spirit of the Rule” (R 61). Consequently, the Brother Director is called to: serve his Brothers, accompany each Brother in his personal and community life, promote unity and community participation, to lead the community in its apostolic mission, to vitalize the life of prayer of the community, to involve the community in the pastoral ministry of vocations.

3.1 To serve his Brothers. “God, through the mediation of the Brothers and of the Superiors, calls the Brother Director to serve in government and to lead the community so that it may discover and better fulfill the mission of the Institute” (R 61-62).

3.2 To accompany each Brother in his personal and community life. To do this, a) he gives particular importance to the accompaniment of Brothers in temporary vows; b) he treats with special

care the Brothers who are aged or ill (cf. Circ. 455, page 22, 4.3.4), Brothers who are undergoing trials, maladjusted or marginalized; c) he also accompanies those Lasallians who share in the life and the mission of the community.

3.3 To promote unity and community participation. To do this:

a) he sets out to promote understanding and solidarity starting from the diversity of the Brothers in the community; b) with his Brothers, he seeks the means to practice fraternal correction (R 54b); c) with charity he intervenes in delicate situations; d) he helps the community in its search for God's will, respecting the principles of co-responsibility and subsidiarity; e) he intervenes “at the appropriate moment to endorse decisions on which consensus seems to have been reached or to settle personally questions which cannot remain undecided” (R 62).

3.4 To lead the community in its apostolic mission. “The Brother Director encourage and helps the community to become increasingly aware of the fact that its mission needs constantly to be discovered” (GHD 3.4).

3.5 To vitalize the life of prayer of the community. This involves: a) Vitalizing the community morning and evening prayer (R 71), meditation (R 69), daily participation in the Eucharist (R 70-70b), the sacrament of Reconciliation (R 75c), and the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (R 56); b) promoting Institute devotions (R 76-79). See the liturgical calendar of the Institute (Annex 7) and the important Institute dates of commemoration (Annex 8); c) inviting young people, teachers and others to participate in community prayer (R 71d); caring for the community chapel or oratory.

3.6 To involve the community in the pastoral ministry of vocations, in order to awaken and accompany vocations: prayer for this intention and explicit invitations for vocations as Brothers. He sees to it that his community is one that is “resolutely welcoming” and that it lives the Word of the Gospel “in a fraternal and apostolic spirit” by saying: “Come and see” (R 85; cf. Circ. 455, pages 36-39).

4. Important occasions for the exercise of community leadership (GHD 4)

4.1 Drawing up and revising the community annual program (R 58a; GHD 4.1)

- Everything that constitutes the community finds expression in the community annual program and it is much more than simply a timetable or list of individual tasks and commitments.
- The Brother Director has the primary responsibility for drawing up the community annual program and its implementation.
- From the 44th General Chapter: “To creatively construct the community annual program in a discerning manner, recognizing the importance of the Brother in community as an indispensable for community life” (Circ. 455, page 22, 4.3.3).
- The Brother Director submits the Community Annual Program to the Brother Visitor for his approval.
- The Brother Director accepts responsibility for being the guarantor of the community's fidelity to its program. From time to time, he invites the community to evaluate it.

4.2 Community Meetings

The Brother Director considers community meetings as significant times for reflection, in the light of the Gospel (R 59a). He does what he can to hear “the opinions of the Brothers since the Spirit speaks and acts in every Brother” (R 37; GHD 4.2).

4.3 The Community Council (DA 57-62):

The Rule distinguishes two types of Councils: a) The entire community constitutes the Council of the Brother Director; b) “By agreement with the Brother Visitor, a Council with fewer members may be constituted. In such a case the community delegates a certain number of its members to represent it and deliberate in its name” (R 59). The composition and manner of election will be determined in the community annual program. In both cases the way the Council works is also set out in the community annual program.

Some criteria to bear in mind: a) In all cases the meetings of the Community Council will be distinct from the ordinary meetings of the community; b) “Minutes should be taken of deliberations and decisions, and should include a special mention of any requests to be forwarded to the Brother Visitor or the Brother Superior” (R59b); c) “Brothers who do not take part in the meetings will be duly informed of the topics treated, also of any decisions taken” (R 59b).

4.4 District Retreats and Community Recollections

“The Brother Director reminds the Brothers of the importance of taking part in the District annual retreat” and “he considers community recollections as an important occasion for the life of the community and its renewal. When the community annual program is drawn up he and the Brothers decide on the form they should take, their frequency and their duration” (GHD 4.4).

4.5 The Personal Interview (GHD 4.4; R 61)

One of the principal functions of the Brother Director is the personal accompaniment of the Brothers. It is his responsibility to have regular personal interviews with each Brother. The Brother Director takes the initiative to decide with the Brothers how often these interviews should be and how they should be held.

He looks on these interviews as a valuable opportunity to acquaint himself with the individual character of each Brother, to accept him as he is, and to encourage him in his vocation. It should be noted that the personal interview is not necessarily either spiritual direction, in the strict sense of the word, or psychological counseling.

4.6 Brothers’ special situations that require the intervention of the Brother Director:

a) “Since commands in virtue of the vow of obedience are very rarely given, the competent Superior should clearly state his intention to do so by some appropriate formula” (R 38); b) “In case of grave external scandal or of extremely serious and imminent harm to the Institute, a Brother can be expelled immediately from the community by the Brother Visitor. If there is

danger in delaying, this action can be taken by the Brother Director with the consent of his Council” (DA 39).

5. The formation of the Brothers

5.1 Brothers in the community in initial formation.

5.1.1 A formation community: “The first years of a young Brother in community constitute the final stage of his initial formation, and that is why the community that he joins at that point becomes by that very fact a formation community. In its community annual program, it takes responsibility for this situation and expresses it” (GF 146; cf. 245 and 258, R 96c).

5.1.2 The Brother Director of Community (GF 259; cf. Circ. 455, pages 40-42, especially Lines of Action 3.3, 3.6, and 3.7): a) He accompanies the young Brothers personally, and he is close to them; b) He ensures that the young Brothers have a pedagogical and apostolic guide.

5.1.3 Report to be presented to the Chapter of Admission to Vows for temporal vows and perpetual vows (Circ. 438 2.2 and 3.2): a) “After deliberation, the professed Brothers of the community send a written report, supported by reasons, to the candidate's Chapter of Admission. This report is accompanied by the result of their vote for or against the admission. Each Brother has one vote in this ballot”; b) “Also they prepare a written report for the Chapter of Admission on the way in which the community has accompanied and supported the candidate”; c) It is advisable to take advantage of this “opportunity to assess, not only the progress made by the Brother with temporary vows, but also its own life and its growth as a formation community.” This evaluation is best made over a period of several months and not only at the time of the Chapter of Admission, since this enables the community to provide accompaniment which is more conducive to genuine growth on the part of the Brother and of the community (Cir. 435, page 62).

5.2 Continuing formation for the Brothers in the community.

Principles to keep in mind: a) “Superiors and communities strive to

provide each Brother with the conditions and the means most suitable to develop his spiritual, theological and professional formation” (R 101); b) Each Brother has the primary responsibility for his own formation (R 101a); c) “The community is a particularly apt place for the continuing formation of the Brothers.” Said formation is spelled out in the community and personal annual programs (GF 304); d) “The community is responsible for establishing an effective and ongoing plan for its own formation as a group. The evaluation of this plan forms part of the community's annual program” (R 101b).

5.3 The formation of the Brother Director of Community

- “Those in charge of a District provide pastoral formation for Brother Directors and for any other Brothers who might eventually be called to fill this office” (R 101e).
- “To fulfill his ministry as community leader the Brother Director participates in suitable formation programs provided either by the Institute or other agencies” (Circ. 455, page 22, 4.3.2; cf. GHD 5.4).

II THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY GOODS

6. Principles for the Administration of Community Goods

6.1 The Brothers place everything in common. The Brothers “place everything in common” which includes “the fruits of their labor” which “supports the community” (R 32, paragraph 4; 35b).

6.2 Guidelines. “...communities are non-profit making entities. They have the right to acquire, possess, administer and dispose of material goods in view of their specific mission...they act within the authorized limits and under their own responsibility, conforming to canon law and the legislation of the Institute, and taking into account the requirements of civil law” (R 139).

6.3 Social Justice. “With regard to its employees and auxiliary personnel, the community observes both the obligations of social justice and the demands of Christian charity” (R 60c).

6.4 Separation of Administration with regard to ministries. “Each community has a financial administration, a budget and accounts separate from those of the educational establishment or establishments of which it has charge” (R 60a).

6.5 Participation of the Brothers in the administration of community goods. “The Brothers of the community participate in the establishing the budget and putting it into operation” (R 60b), including both ordinary and extraordinary expenditures (cf. DE 9.6 and 28.2 b, c, and d). “They decide together the guidelines for the best use of their resources” (R 32, paragraph 4); “When he has to make important decisions, the Director should not neglect to hear the views of the community, once he has informed its members about the financial situation of the community” (DE 28.2 b).

7. The Brother Director, the primary responsible figure for the administration of goods.

7.1 Principles:

a) “The overall responsibility for the administration of community goods and the upkeep of the house lies with the Brother Director”

(GHD 6; cf. R 63d); b) “His administration is characterized by openness and conformity to the spirit of religious poverty” (GHD 6); c) “The Director administers temporal goods carefully and honestly without conceding privileges to anyone” (DE 28.2 e); d) “When he has to make important decisions, the Director should not neglect to hear the views of the community, once he has informed its members about the financial situation of the community” (DE 28.2); e) The Brother Director and the Bursar comply with the limits of financial powers set by the Brother visitor and his Council (cf. R 138a, 5; DE 28.1).

7.2 Functions: a) The Brother Director administers the resources belonging to the community, but bears in mind his dependence on the Visitor (DE 28.2 a; cf. R 60a); b) “If the permission of the Visitor or the Superior General is required, the Director should consult the community or the community council” (DE 28.2 c); c) “He sees that money that comes into the house, for whatever reason, is handed over to the Bursar for the community” (DE 28.2 f); d) Every year, at a suitable time and according to prescribed norms, the Director draws up with the Community a draft budget and a statement of accounts for the year, including income and expenditure. He subsequently submits it to the Visitor for his approval (cf. R 60a-60b; DE 28.2).

8. The Brother Bursar of the Community

Where possible, the Community should have a local Bursar (cf. R 63d).

8.1 Functions:

a) “The Bursar of the Community, under the responsibility of the Director, administers the temporal goods of the community” (DE 29.3; cf. R 63d); b) He is responsible for the bookkeeping and prepares the documents in a form prescribed by the District that the Director has to send to the Visitor. Every month or quarter, according to what the District has decided, the Community Bursar prepares the documents the Director has to send to the Visitor, that is to say, the balance sheet and the ordinary income and expenses report (cf. DE 29.3 1); c) He orders the repair of buildings, furniture and equipment; d) With regard to its employees and auxiliary per-

sonnel, the Director observes both the obligations of social justice and the “demands of Christian charity” (R 60c); e) He keeps the financial records in a safe place that will allow for easy access; f) He follows the instructions of the District Bursar relating to the insurance of the community house (DE 29.3.2).

8.2 Cessation of his responsibility: When a Bursar is changed, he hands over to his successor a written and signed report on the economic and financial situation, and the state of the patrimony of the community. His successor will testify in writing and with his signature that he has seen all the accounts. A copy of these documents must be kept in the archives of the community. At the same time, all the necessary formalities have to be carried out regarding the change of signatures for the different bank accounts (cf. DE 4.4).

9. Particular situations requiring attention

9.1 Loans to parents and friends: It is recommended to avoid doing this, but in special situations it can be done by obtaining permission beforehand from the Visitor with the consent of his Council.

9.2 Loans to others: Only in isolated and rare cases can this be done but only where recuperation is assured. The amount and conditions of a contract valid in civil courts must be written down, as should the date when the payment is due and other specifications (cf. DE 8.1.2).

9.3 Change of Community for a Brother: “When a Brother receives an obedience for another community, the Director, with the advice of the Community, must authorize what he takes to the other Community” (DE 5.10).

9.4 Death of a Brother: “Following the death of a Brother, the Director must make sure that manuscripts and objects that would be suitable material for the Archives are not destroyed” (DE 5.10).

9.5 Unrestricted gifts: These gifts may be accepted by the Brother Director; moreover, he must not refuse to do so without the permission of the Brother Visitor. It is advisable for the Director to ex-

amine with the Community or his Council the gift to be received and the use to be made of it (cf. DE 7.2).

9.6 Acceptance of gifts from persons outside the Institute: “Directors and Administrators are not allowed to receive money deposits from persons outside the Institute, either in cash or in securities, or other valuables, etc., except for serious reasons, with all precautions taken, and with the written permission of the Visitor” (DE 8.2).

9.7 Gifts to parents and friends: “The Brothers will avoid giving without good reason, Institute money to their relatives, friends, acquaintances or others through filial devotion or imprudent compassion” (DE 8.3.2).

10. Conditions necessary for the administration of community goods

10.1 Bookkeeping: “Daily, one must write down everything that has been received or spent in cash for whatever reason and also all other bookkeeping operations... All bookkeeping operations must be accompanied by a supporting document” (DE 10.4). It is advisable to keep, at least for the time stipulated by the law of the state, all invoices of whatever nature they may be, even those relating to purchases of minor value (cf. DE 10.7). “The accounting books are kept as long as the civil law requires it and until the District Bursar authorizes their destruction” (DE 12.3).

10.2 Inventory: “At least once a year, the inventory of stock must be made so that it can be entered into the accounts. This inventory must be part of the annual report” (DE 10.5).

10.3 Document archive: The Brother Bursar of the community must ensure that the documents in which the laws of the Institute are found are preserved and classified so that access to them is available at all times (cf. DE 12.1). Also, the documents that the Visitor specifies must also be preserved (cf. DE 12.1). The following must be kept also: plans of buildings, of the sewerage system, of the electricity and heating systems as well as revised plans for improvements (cf. DE 12.5).

10.4 Insurance: “The District Bursar is normally the person primarily responsible for insurance. The reason for this is to avoid misunderstandings that could turn out to be costly” (DE 13.6).

10.5 Cash in Hand: “All the revenues and the expenses are to be registered daily either in an account book or a computer. A daily checking of the balance should be done in order to detect errors and possible disappearances. The amount of cash in hand should not exceed what is needed for the community. Surplus cash must be transferred to a bank account” (DE 14.1.1).

10.6 Money in Banks: Bank accounts of all categories should be in the name of the juridical person of the Institute: a community, a school, a District (DE 14.1.2 a). If for legal or political reasons a bank account has to be created in the name of a person, at least two signatures should be appointed and have the power to withdraw sums of money separately (cf. DE 14.1.2 b).

11. Administration of goods and community witness

“In fidelity to the spirit of the Founder and conforming in every respect to the cultural traditions of the locality where it is active, the community is always careful to witness to the spirit of gratuity and Gospel detachment in all that concerns gifts from the students or their families” (R 60d). The Brothers “are careful that the resources that are pooled deriving from their labor do not lead to collective wealth” (R 35b). The Brothers share generously with the poor (cf. R 35b) and therefore “budget estimates should allocate certain sums of money to poor people and charitable organizations” (DE 8.3).

12. The Community in relation to the District and the Institute

- Each local community is conscious of its solidarity with the other communities of the District and those of the Institute as a whole. It maintains a cordial relationship with the Brothers of other communities and expresses this by fraternal help whenever this is called for (R 64).
- “The Brother Director is the usual channel of communication between the community and the District” (R 63b); a) For this reason the Brother Director promotes cordial relations with the other

communities in the District (GHD 3.3); b) At the proper time he sends the information requested to the District Secretary (R 63d).

- “The official visit of the Brother Visitor is the principal occasion to evaluate the internal life of the community and its apostolic commitments. It is also an opportunity for the community to deepen its relationship with the District and the Institute” (R 64b). The Brother Director takes the necessary measures to ensure that the visits of the Brother Visitor produce as much fruit as possible (GHD 3.3).
- “The community shows a special interest in the circular letters and other documents that are sent out from the District, the Region, or the Center of the Institute. The Brothers willingly use these for personal reflection, for community exchanges, and in their prayer” (R 64c).

13. The Community and the Lasallian Family

13.1 Guidelines from the Rule

- The community also extends a welcome to members of the Lasallian Family (R 64).
- Brothers’ communities also should do their utmost to fulfill their role as the driving force behind the growth and vitality of Lasallian groups. Consequently it is desirable that each group should have the help of a Brother delegated by his community and in contact with it (DA 51.4).

13.2 Guidelines from the 44th General Chapter (Circular 455)

- “To open the community to Lasallians who seek to develop their faith and deepen their spirituality and understanding of the mission by their sharing with the Brothers” (page 21, 2.3.3).