



GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND STATUTES OF THE LAITY OF THE CHEVALIER FAMILY

*(Officially approved by the General Assembly,
Sao Paulo, Brazil, Saturday July 22, 2017).*

After approval by the General Assembly, the final text of these Guiding Principles and Statutes will come into effect and will be made available to the National Councils who may use them in composing their own Manuals for the Local Groups of the Chevalier Family in their country or region.

In the Manuals, the Guiding Principles and Statutes may be elaborated and specified in accordance with the local situation and cultural needs. However, the spirit of the Guiding Principles and the structure indicated in the Statutes cannot be changed.

PART I: CONTENTS of the GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The Identity of the Laity of the Chevalier Family
2. Charism and Spirituality of the Heart
3. Mission
4. Formation
5. Resources.

1. The Identity of the Laity of the Chevalier Family

We, the lay members of the Chevalier Family, are a communion of people, animated by a Spirituality of the Heart, which has its roots in the charism of the Founder, Fr. Jules Chevalier.

Together with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, we belong to the Chevalier Family, and

share the same Charism, Spirituality and Mission with Father Chevalier's religious families.

2. Charism and Spirituality of the Heart

We believe that Jesus' compassionate Heart reveals God's unconditional love for every human being and all of creation. Belief in God's unconditional love, which is the remedy for the ills of society, transforms our own hearts.

We draw strength from the pierced Heart of Jesus as a source of new life and the birthplace of a new world.

We trust in the Holy Spirit who empowered Jesus Christ to love people unconditionally with a human heart. We also believe that the same Spirit enriches our hearts with gifts of love, gratefulness, joy, courage and faithfulness, as well as respect for every human being and creature.

In Mary, honored as "Our Lady of the Sacred Heart", we discover a mother, who leads us to the Heart of her Son, and forms us in living a Spirituality of the Heart.

Our motto is: "May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere."

3. Mission

We participate in the mission of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the world, and are committed to live and spread a Spirituality of the Heart, as shown by the Heart of Jesus Christ.

The Heart of Jesus was concerned about people, cared for their needs and took action accordingly. We experience that God has a heart for us too and sends us to be God's heart in the world. This commitment gives our lives meaning and content.

In our personal relationships, professional occupations and social engagements we try to make visible and real God's love and compassion, while particularly paying attention to our sisters and brothers in society, who are poor, excluded and treated unjustly.

4. Formation

To answer our call to mission, we need formation. This is a life-long, integral process, committed to the spiritual growth of the human person.

New members will be offered an initial formation program, and permanent members an ongoing formation program. By allowing ourselves to be formed by the experiences of daily life and by prayerfully reflecting on them in the light of the Gospel and our Charism, we will be constantly renewed.

Formation should not be a burden, but an incentive to live a Spirituality of the Heart joyfully.

5. Sources we draw on

- the Word of God by reading and reflecting the Holy Scriptures;
- writings from the tradition of the Church, Papal Documents and other publications reflecting a Spirituality of the Heart as lived by the laity;

- Jules Chevalier's Charism and his various writings, handed down to us;
- personal and communal prayer;
- the support of a group whose members try to live a Spirituality of the Heart.

PART II: ORGANIZATION, MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES

Organization

The communion of lay members of the Chevalier Family consists of members who are related to one of the Chevalier congregations and are, as individuals, committed to live a Spirituality of the Heart, while others belong to one of the local country groups. These groups are part of the following organization.

A. Local Country Groups

Each Local Country Group

- is free to organize its local administration according to needs and customs;
- decides about its own program, while respecting the present Guiding Principles and Statutes;
- accepts the accompaniment of the National Council of the Chevalier Family in a certain country.

B. The National Council

The National Council relies on the support and collaboration of the Provincial Administration(s) of the Chevalier Congregations in each country for its establishment.

The National Council consists of one or more representatives of the local administration(s) of the Lay Group(s) in the country, together with one or more officially appointed representatives of the Provincial Administrations of the Chevalier Congregations, present in a certain country.

The task of the National Council is:

- to endorse the legitimate execution of the administration of each Local Country Group;
- to provide ongoing formation of the members in Spirituality of the Heart;
- to appoint one or more Spiritual Accompaniers for Local Country Groups;
- to assure collaboration of the administrations of the Local Country Groups with the wider Chevalier Family;
- to support the continuous presence of the laity of the Chevalier Family in the country;
- to send, if possible, 1 (one) member with right of vote to the General Assembly, appointed by the National Council.

C. The General Assembly

The General Assembly officially represents all the members of the Laity of the Chevalier Family and has the right to make binding decisions.

The membership of the General Assembly is made up of the following persons:

- 1 (One) representative of each country, who has been appointed by election or nomination as an official representative from local groups in the country;
- the members of the International Council;

- other participants, who would like to attend but do not have voting rights.

The following members of the General Assembly have the right to vote:

- One official representative of each country present at the General Assembly.
- Every member of the International Council.

A person is elected or a proposal accepted by a simple majority of votes that means 50% plus one of the persons who have the right to vote.

The General Assembly will come together every 6 (six) years.

The task of the General Assembly is:

- to review the state of the Laity of the worldwide Chevalier Family;
- to reflect on and to deepen the understanding of the Spirituality of the Chevalier Family;
- to evaluate the functioning of the sitting International Council;
- to make amendments to these Guiding Principles and Statutes by voting;
- to elect the General Secretary and her / his first councilor or deputy as members of the to make recommendations for the program of the newly-elected International Council, including suggestions regarding the host country of the following General Assembly, to be held after six years.

D. The International Council

The International Council is the executive body of the General Assembly. The General Secretary and her/his first councilor, who also acts as her / his substitute, are elected by the General Assembly. Other members of the International Council will be appointed by the General Secretary in such a way that at least each continent will be represented.

The task of the International Council is:

- to decide about the task of the General Secretary;
- to carry out the recommendations of the General Assembly;
- to promote unity-in-diversity among the various lay groups of the Chevalier Family all over the world, based on these guidelines;
- to safeguard the communication and exchange of information among the various local lay groups in the worldwide Chevalier Family;
- to provide resources of formation for the local country groups;
- to promote the continuous presence of the laity of the Chevalier Family in a certain country, in collaboration with the National Council of the country concerned;
- to call a General Assembly every 6 (six) years, and prepare its program in collaboration with the National Council of the country, which will host the General Assembly;
- two years before the next General Assembly the International Council draws up the official list of National Councils who are members of the Laity of the Chevalier Family. Based on this list a quorum is established for the General Assembly.

- to keep in regular contact with the Tri-Generalate that is, the three General Administrations of the Congregations directly related to Fr. Jules Chevalier, for evaluation and planning

E. The Tri-Generalate

The General Administrations of the three Congregations directly related to Fr. Jules Chevalier, called the Tri-Generalate, act as the Accompanier of the Laity of the Chevalier Family. The General Secretary will always act in close collaboration with the General Assembly, the International Council and the National Councils.

Membership

Membership in a local country group of the laity of the Chevalier Family is possible for everyone, who would like “*to grow in love*” (Chevalier) and to live a Spirituality of the Heart, according to the above mentioned Guiding Principles and who will be accepted by a local country group and the National Council.

Membership of a National Council to the General Assembly of the Laity of the Chevalier Family is established through regular communication with, and financial contribution to, the International Council.

Finances

Each member of a local group will make a financial contribution to their local groups, in order to enable each group to cover its own costs.

Each group is also expected to contribute to the costs of the National Council, while the National Council will contribute to the expenses of the members of the International Council.

The amount of the contribution of the group is based on the capacities of the members and the groups in the respective countries.



Alison McKenzie

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