

Handbook for Paulist Associates

Produced for use by the Paulist Associates

by

The Paulist Associate Board

2015

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This Handbook is for the use of the Paulist Associates.
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The Paulist Associates

Mission Statement

Attentive to the Holy Spirit, Paulist Associates are nourished by the uniquely American spirituality of Servant of God Isaac Hecker. Paulist Associates make annual promises to support each other and live out the mission and spirit of the Paulist Fathers.

Definition

Paulist Associates are lay persons, clergy or religious who have gone through a period of formation and who make an annual promise to fulfill the expectations of being an Associate. Paulist Associates, while not members of the Paulist Society, choose to faithfully live the Paulist spirituality. They need not be Catholic but must be able to uphold and support the mission and ideals of the Paulist Fathers.

In Brief:

Paulist Associates grow in the spirituality of the Paulist founder, Servant of God Isaac Hecker, and are nourished by the spirit of the Paulist Community. They meet monthly to support each other as they live out the ideals and work of the Paulists in their daily lives. Each year they can choose to renew their promise to associate with the Paulists and grow in their relationships with each other.

History

The Paulist Associates were formally begun in 1998 by an action of the General Assembly, in response to C3 of the Constitution of the Paulist Fathers (the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle): "Paulists welcome as affiliates men and women who are not members of the Society but wish to share in the Society's ideals and work."

The 1998 Assembly stated:

We propose concrete experiments to develop and evaluate opportunities for men and women who identify closely with the charism of Isaac Hecker and the mission and spirit of the Paulists to

- Explore the spirituality of Hecker and the Paulists for its relevance to their own life of faith and
- Appropriate the mission and spirit of the Paulists in their own lives and vocations

The 2006 Assembly, building upon remarks of the 2002 Assembly, stated:

The 2006 Paulist General Assembly is grateful to our God for the life and presence of the Paulist Associates. We recall the wisdom of the 2002 Paulist General Assembly in distinguishing Paulist Associates, Collaborators, and Lay People in Ecclesial Ministries. The 1998 Assembly specifically noted these distinctions and the 2002 Assembly reinforced them and made room for other initiatives, including a Paulist Missionaries Program. We remind ourselves that, currently, Paulist Associate membership does not require involvement in Paulist outreach ministries, but it does not preclude it either. Indeed, we notice happily, and commend, that the vast majority of current Associates are involved in ministries in our foundations. At the same time, we would not want to create Associates programs with two tiers: one for those who are active in Paulist foundation ministry and another for those involved simply in an “ongoing process [of]... reflection on Paulist writings and other materials reflective of our charism and faith-sharing among Associates and Paulists with whom they gather.” (2002 Paulist Assembly)

The 2014 Assembly offered the following reflection to the Associates from the document: *Mission: A Pilgrim Journey*

Led by the Holy Spirit, the Paulists are a missionary community that forms Catholics for mission, giving particular attention to those beyond the Catholic community. The qualities with which we embody this mission are freedom, joy, respect and understanding, and invitation and welcome, so we may display the love of Christ and his Church to the people we encounter.

Governing Structure

The Paulist Associates are led by a Director of the Associates, appointed by the President of the Paulist Fathers. He is part of the Associates Board which is composed of two other Paulists and four Associates chosen by ballot by active Paulist Associates.

Each Associates group, as well, needs to find leadership. This leadership should rotate on a basis decided by the group. Leaders are needed to convene and facilitate the meeting; leaders are needed to help members communicate with each other. Each group is free to develop the leadership that makes sense in terms of its needs. However, each group must have strong local leadership.

Each group must have a particular local Paulist designated as its liaison. If one is not available (such as in non-foundation locations), the designated

Regional Chaplain will serve as the liaison. In addition, local and visiting Paulists should be welcomed to Associate group meetings, provided they give ample room for the group to function in its own tempo and way.

Membership

Membership in the Associates consists of an Associate making the annual promise to (1) pray for the mission of the Paulists, (2) find opportunities to exercise the Paulist mission in his or her daily life, and (3) regularly participate in the monthly meetings. Potential members may be invited by local Paulists, Associates, or by requesting an invitation. Any Christian who endorses the spirituality and mission directions of the Paulist Community may apply to become a Paulist Associate.

Active Membership

Associates will be considered “active” when they have made the promise and are fulfilling the expectations of the Paulist Associates. Active members are entitled to vote, and to participate, when selected, in larger Paulist gatherings. Active membership is renewed annually in a Promise Ceremony, which is led by a Paulist. Ideally the ceremony should take place at a public Mass as a way of promoting the Associates.

Inactive Membership

Associates will be considered “inactive” when they become irregular in their monthly attendance and have not renewed their promise for over a year. Inactive Associates can become active again by attending an Associate retreat, returning to regular participation at monthly meetings, and renewing the promise.

Former members, those Associates “inactive” for two years or more, can become “active” again in the same way.

Being Active

When Associates are no longer consistently involved in the meeting, the local group should recognize this. Some active Associates, along with a local Paulist or the Regional Chaplain, should talk with the Associate in question to discern the best next step.

If an Associate is persistently disruptive of a local group then the local lay coordinator should discuss the situation with the Paulist liaison to the group. If necessary, the group coordinator and Paulist liaison will meet with the disruptive individual and determine if the individual should continue as an Associate.

Formation

Paulist Associates go through a process of formation which is overseen by the Director of the Associates. Once a candidate has been identified, before formation starts, there is an initial meeting with either the local Paulist liaison or regional chaplain to determine the suitability of the candidate to enter formation. The Director of the Associates or a delegate assigned by the Director must be involved in the formation process of an Associate. One of the Paulist Associates who is not the group leader may coordinate the formation program.

Introductory Presentation

The Director of the Associates or Regional Chaplain or local liaison will usually be the one to give an introductory presentation about the Associates to people who are interested. The Director may designate another to do this. This introduction will explain the Associates, some aspects of Paulist spirituality, and the formation process. Candidates, while in formation, may observe a regular monthly Associates meeting to help them get to know the Associates.

Mentors

Each candidate will be given a local Associate member as a mentor who has been selected by the local leadership. This mentor will accompany the candidate through the formation process and will serve as one of his or her application references.

Six Formation Sessions

Those who wish to be Associates will listen to six formation talks on the following areas: 1) St. Paul; 2) Fr. Isaac Hecker; 3) Paulist Spirituality; 4) Paulist Mission; 5) Paulist History and 6) the Paulist Constitution. These sessions may be supplemented by various Paulists or Paulist Associates. Recorded presentations can be heard on-line at the Paulist website (www.paulist.org/associates/associates-talks).

In addition, candidates will prepare for the formation meetings using the Formation Booklet to discuss these presentations with his or her mentor and other Paulist Associates.

If a formation session is missed, the prospective Associate will arrange a make-up session with someone who is conducting the formation or his or her mentor.

Retreat

Before a person makes the Associate promise, she or he should be involved in a retreat hosted by the local Associates. The retreat can be given by the Paulist Director, the Regional Chaplain or another Paulist or a Paulist Associate designated by the Director. During the retreat, the prospective Associate reflects on the fundamental dimensions of Fr. Hecker's spirituality, the mission of the Paulists, and the responsibilities of membership.

Application

After the candidate has completed the formation sessions and the retreat, he or she can submit an application to the Director through a local Paulist or Regional Chaplain, who will forward the completed application and the references to the Paulist Presidential Board. All applications must be approved by the Presidential Board before a candidate makes his or her first promise.

The form of the application and the necessary documents of recommendation are included in the appendix.

Promise

A person becomes an Associate by making the following promise in a public gathering of Associates or Paulists, and by signing in the book which records Associate promises and renewals. The form of the promise is:

I, _____, believe that I am drawn by the Holy Spirit to the spirituality and qualities of the Paulist Community.

I have discerned both by prayer and study that God calls me to become associated with the Paulists.

I promise that I will pray for the works of the Paulist Society;

meet with others, who are also members of the Paulist Associates for spiritual sharing and formation; and I seek to embody the apostolic qualities of the Paulists in my daily life and calling.

Groups

A key component of the Associate experience is the monthly meeting. Ideally, Associates are part of a local Associate group that meets once a month. The camaraderie and the spirituality experienced by members through their openness to each other form an essential part of the Paulist Associate experience.

When more than one group exists in a foundation or locale, the groups may gather occasionally in meetings or events that build unity while recognizing each group's uniqueness.

Because of transitions, Associates sometimes cannot be part of the group they were connected with, and, at times, cannot be part of any Associate group. Monthly virtual meetings, by teleconferencing or video-conferencing, are recommended, but these are not really satisfactory substitutes for actual group meetings.

Associates who find themselves without a local Associates group are encouraged to find others who might be interested in becoming Paulist Associates and forming a new, local group under the guidance of the Director and Regional Chaplain.

Members who consistently absent themselves from the monthly Associates Meeting should consider withdrawing from the program. Erratic attendance at group meetings undermines the viability and morale of a group.

Monthly Meeting

For most Associates, the experience of the monthly meeting is crucial. Meetings should be held in easily accessible places, have a clear starting and ending time, and include a provision for hospitality where members can share more informally. Associates unable to attend a local meeting may participate in a virtual meeting with the local group or the National Director, if this is available.

When more than one Associates group exists in the same location or nearby, they are encouraged to show unity by occasionally getting together and may choose to have a joint Promise Ceremony.

Each meeting should be marked by a clear agenda. The agenda must concern itself with Paulist spirituality and Paulist issues. The Associate group is no place for people to be inventing spiritualities or urging Associates to adopt other spiritualities.

The agenda should include the following:

- Check-in: a time for members to update each other in terms of their recent life experiences
- Opening Prayer (preferably from the Paulist Prayer Book)
- A common reading or theme (from the Newsletter, from the works of Fr. Hecker, or from an article that closely reflects Fr. Hecker or Paulist spirituality/mission; the Paulist Vocation should be consistently consulted for resources.)
- Sharing on the reading
- Reports on apostolic initiatives in which members strive to act on the mission ideals of the Paulists
- Announcements about the next meeting
- Closing Prayer
- Hospitality

Local Leadership

Groups should find a way to select local leaders. Each year a group should select one Associate to be a representative to the National Director. This representative not only receives material that the Director might send, but also should communicate the interests and concerns of the group to the wider Associate organization through use of the national Associates e-list, the Associates Facebook page, and other internet communication devices. An important role of the representative will be to send to the Director and those on the Board an updated roster of members of the local group. The representative should also help connect the Associates to the Paulist community.

In addition, leaders may be chosen to facilitate meetings and to coordinate hospitality, to transact agenda and to calendar with the local Paulist community or parish and/or other functions that need attention by the group.

Annual National Retreat

The Associates movement should have an annual retreat, supervised by the Director but organized by one or another Associates group. Attention to distance should be a concern as retreats are rotated from one geographical spot to another. The retreat could begin on a Friday evening and end on Sunday afternoon, with information and invitations sent at least four months prior to the retreat.

Occasional Gatherings

In addition to retreats, Associate groups which are not too distant from each other should try to gather at least one time a year to share experiences and develop one or another aspect of Paulist spirituality. The representative from the group, in coordination with local Paulist superiors or Regional Chaplain, should attempt to arrange this.

Prayer

Father Hecker often articulated the poles, or aims, of the Paulists to be personal perfection and zeal for souls. The Associates receive this double legacy of Hecker because their membership is buoyed by a particular concentration on prayer as well as attention to opportunities for apostolic mission. Associates should find Paulist prayer a convenient and supporting structure for their own personal growth in discipleship.

Paulist Prayer Book

The greatest resource for Associate prayer is ***The Paulist Prayer Book***. Copies should be readily available for members and may be obtained gratis from Paulist Press (except for the price of shipping). This prayer book contains four basic weeks of prayer based on morning prayer and evening prayer. Each prayer event is characterized by readings from Fr. Hecker or another Paulist, and readings from the scripture, along with psalms and the prayer to the Holy Spirit. These weeks should parallel the Liturgy of the Hours. In addition, the prayer book contains weeks of prayer for Advent, Lent and the Easter season. Special prayer services around various themes have also been developed. The book has services for Paulist patronal saints, monthly themes and virtues, and a large assortment of occasional prayers. Each Associate should be thoroughly acquainted with the prayer book.

Spiritual Reading

The Associate's life should be characterized by regular spiritual reading. ***The Paulist Vocation***, which contains a rich selection of the writings of Fr. Hecker, should be a steady part of an Associate's reading. Reading in themes of mission, spirituality (particularly in our North American setting) and service should have a special place in the Associate's regimen. Associates should set aside particular times for this reading.

Daily Prayer

Prayer life, as envisioned by Fr. Hecker, should lead to an ever-expanding openness of the Associate to the authentic guidance of the Holy Spirit. Rooted in the Spirit, Associates should leave significant times for quiet reflection and self-scrutiny in order to follow the Spirit more fully, with ever increasing holiness. Frequent attendance at Mass, with prayer for Paulists and Paulist mission, should amplify an Associate's experience of prayer.

Mission Activities

Paulist Associates find opportunities in their daily lives, through their various vocations, to exemplify the mission commitments of the Paulists in the charism of Fr. Isaac Hecker. His charism specified that, in modern American/Canadian culture, the Holy Spirit was at work, making it conducive to invite people to faith, and helping the Church understand its role in modern, democratic societies. His charism was marked by openness to others and a particular welcome to outsiders.

His mission has been specified by the Paulists as a basic vision of evangelization, with an emphasis on serving those who are seeking and inactive in their faith, an ecumenical openness which includes inter-religious sharing, and working toward reconciliation (in its various meanings), in a way that emphasizes Paulist collaboration with lay people. Because of these mission commitments, Associates should be sensitive to those who are seeking faith, seeking to return to the practice of faith, and expressing faith experiences different from our own. Associates should attune their personal mission efforts to these directions. Whatever mission Associates engage in, it should be done in a spirit of collaboration with local Paulists and ministries.

Personal Mission

Individual Associate are involved with people in their daily lives, in addition to their being involved in various ministries in a parish/center setting. These provide opportunities for reaching out, for engagement, for welcome, for encouragement. In a parish/center, an Associate may model outreach by involvement in ministries that reach out, notably the RCIA, any pre-catechumenal processes, welcoming ministries, and efforts to re-involve less than active Catholics. An Associate might also give leadership to parishes/centers which have not cultivated a strong program of outreach.

In daily life, Associates should be keen on ways to tactfully and respectfully witness to faith, invite others to think about faith, or invite people to an experience with other Catholics.

Among their peer groupings (friends, co-workers, neighbors), Associates should be able to help others learn appropriate behaviors of welcoming and listening to people who are seeking faith today. Associates should always be alert to opportunities for ecumenical and inter-faith sharing.

Associates in Mission

Associates are not, in themselves, an apostolic arm of the Paulist Fathers. However, Associate groups might, under the coordination of the local Paulist superior/director, undertake specific apostolic outreaches. Where this is done, the Associates must not be perceived as “another parish ministry group,” nor must they seem to be pushing others from ministry because they are perceived as “special.” Rather, in conjunction with local Paulist leadership and the ministry structure of the parish/center, Associates might undertake a specific ad hoc ministry that fits into local ministry ambiance.

Appendices

Rites of Committal

Application Form

Reference Form

Suggested Reading List

Rite of Commitment of Paulist Associates

Presentation of the Associate candidates:

Each one is called by name to come forward

Questioning of the candidates:

For spiritual and apostolic reasons you have shown a desire to associate with the Paulist Community in our spirituality and mission, are you now ready to do so?

Candidates: We are.

In your personal lives will you look for opportunities to reflect the fundamental Paulist apostolic commitments to evangelization, ecumenism, and reconciliation?

Candidates: We will.

We Paulists promise to spiritually support you. Do you promise to spiritually support the Paulists and one another?

Candidates: We do.

Commitment Promise

(Each candidate says their name and then together they say the promise.)

I, _____, believe that I am drawn by the Holy Spirit to the spirituality and qualities of the Paulist Community.

I have discerned both by prayer and study that God calls me to become associated with the Paulists.

I promise that I will pray for the works of the Paulist Society;
meet with others, who are also members of the Paulist Associates for spiritual sharing and formation;
and I seek to embody the apostolic qualities of the Paulists in my daily life and calling.

Attentive to the Holy Spirit and faithful to the example of St. Paul
and the charism of Father Isaac Hecker,
I commit myself for one year to membership in the Paulist Associates.

The newly promised Associates sign the Paulist Associates enrollment book and receive a symbol/gift from the Paulist Community.

APPLICATION
To become a Member of the
PAULIST ASSOCIATES

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail _____ Mobile Phone _____

Date of Application: _____

Home Parish (name and city) _____

Name of Pastor _____

What parts of the preparation program have you completed?

Introductory Presentation

Retreat

Formation Sessions on:

History of The Paulists

Mission Direction Statement

The Thought and Spirit of Hecker

Theology of St. Paul

The Paulist Constitution

Paulist Spirituality

What has been your contact with the Paulist Community?

What has attracted you to the Paulist Associates Program?

What are your expectations from the Paulist Associate Program?

Please list references:

- 1) A Paulist Father who knows you
- 2) The Pastor of the Church you attend, if you are not a member of a Paulist Foundation
- 3) Three lay persons who know you, including your Paulist Associate mentor.

Please Read and Sign:

- 1) I wish to apply for membership in the Paulist Associates Program.
- 2) I understand that membership in the Paulist Associates is for one year and that it may be renewed in the future.
- 3) I understand that, while not actually a member of the Paulist community, I will strive to reflect Paulists values in my daily life through prayer and apostolic opportunities.
- 4) That I can make the following promise:

I, _____, being drawn to the spirituality and qualities of the Paulist Community, and having discerned both by prayer and study that God calls me to become associated with the Paulists, promise that I will pray for the works of the Paulist Society, meet with others who are also members of the Associates Program for spiritual sharing and formation, and seek to embody the apostolic qualities of the Paulists in my daily life and calling, for one year.

(signed)

References

Three references are required

CONFIDENTIAL

REFERENCE FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE PAULIST ASSOCIATES

Name of Applicant _____

The person named above is applying to become an associate of the Paulist Community—a Catholic organization which operates in North America. Applicants will promise to make our spirituality and goals central to their lives by (a) meeting regularly with others to pray and share and (b) seeking opportunity in their personal lives to help others with faith.

Your Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

1. How long have you known, and what relationship do you have with the applicant?

2. Do you think the applicant would function well as an associate of the Paulists as described above? If so, why? If not, why?

3. Would you vouch for the applicant as a committed believer of good moral and spiritual character? How would you describe the applicant religiously?

SUGGESTED READING LIST

I. Works Authored by Isaac Hecker

Hecker, Isaac T. *Aspirations of Nature*. New York: James B. Kirker, 1957.

Hecker, Isaac T. *Questions of the Soul*. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1855.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=O7MpAAAAYAAJ>

Hecker, Isaac T. *The Church and the Age: An Exposition of the Catholic Church in View of the Needs and the Aspirations of the Present Age*. New York: Paulist Press, 1888.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=338XAAAAYAAJ>

Hecker, Isaac T. *Isaac T. Hecker: The Diary; Romantic Religion in Ante-Bellum America*. Edited by John Farina. (Sources of American Spirituality.) New York: Paulist Press, 1988.

II. Biographies of Isaac Hecker

Elliott, Walter. *The Life of Father Hecker*. New York: Columbus, 1894.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=ggQoAAAAYAAJ>

Farina, John. *An American Experience of God: The Spirituality of Isaac Hecker*. New York, Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1981.

Farina, John (ed.). *Hecker Studies: Essays on the Thought of Isaac Hecker*. New York, Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1983.

Holden, Vincent CSP. *The Yankee Paul: Isaac Thomas Hecker*. Bruce Publishing Co., 1958.

O'Brien, David J. *Isaac Hecker: An American Catholic*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1992.

McSorley, Joseph, CSP. *Isaac Hecker and His Friends (Revised Edition)*. New York/Paramus/Toronto: Paulist Press, 1952.

III. Paulists:

Gribble, Richard CSC. *Guardian of America: The Life of James Martin Gillis, C.S.P.* Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1998.

Keiser, Elwood. *The Spiritual Journey of a Showbusiness Priest*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1996.

Neenan, Benedict OSB. *Thomas Verner Moore: Psychiatrist, Educator and Monk*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2000.

Sheerin, John B. CSP. *Never Look Back: The Career and Concerns of John J. Burke*. New York, Paramus, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1975

IV. Paulist Mission:

Chilson, Richard CSP. *Evangelizing Homily Hints*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press

DeSiano, Frank CSP and Boyack, Kenneth CSP. *Creating the Evangelizing Parish*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1993.

DeSiano, Frank CSP. *The Evangelizing Catholic: A Practical Handbook for Reaching Out*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1998.

Hoover, Brett CSP. *Losing Your Religion, Finding Your Faith. Spirituality for Young Adults*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1998.

McGarry, Michael CSP. *Christology After Auschwitz*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1977.

Rivers, Robert CSP. *From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelization and the Revitalization of the Parish*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2005.

Ryan, Thomas CSP. *A Survival Guide for Ecumenically Minded Christians*. Ottawa Canada: Novalis/the Liturgical Press/Woodlake Books, 1989.

Ryan, Thomas CSP. *Interreligious Prayer: A Christian Guide*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2008.

Ryan, Thomas CSP. *Remember to Live: Embracing the Second Half of Life*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2012

Sabatte, Frank CSP. *Soundbite Spirituality*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press

Stransky, Thomas F. CSP and Sheerin, John B. CSP. *Doing the Truth in Charity*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1982.

V. Paulists on St. Paul:

Boadt, Lawrence CSP. *The Life of St. Paul*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2009.

Franco, Ronald A, CSP. *Isaac Hecker for Every Day*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2009

Kerrigan, Michael CSP. *Saint Paul the Apostle for Every Day*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2009.