

Handbook for Associates

Produced for use by the Paulist Associates

by

The Paulist Associate Board

2010

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Contents

Definition	5
Governing Structure	6
Membership	6
Formation	7
Groups	8
Prayer	10
Mission	11
Appendices	13
Rites of Committal	
Application Form	
Reference Form	
Suggested Reading List	

The Paulist Associates

Definition

The Paulist Associates are those non-Paulists, whether 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 are usually Catholic, but they may be other Christians so long as they can uphold and support the mission ideals of the Paulist Fathers.

The Paulist Associates were formally begun in 1998 by an action of the General Assembly, in response to the Constitution of the Paulist Fathers (the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle) in response to C3 of the Paulist Constitution: "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 up 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)

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 Associate 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 should have a particular local Paulist designated as its liaison; in addition, local 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 pray for the mission of the Paulists, find opportunities to exercise the Paulist mission directions in his or her daily life, and attendance at a monthly meeting.

Active Membership

Associates will be considered “active” when they have made the promise and are mostly fulfilling the expectations of the Paulist Associates. Active members are entitled to vote, and to participate, when selected, in larger Paulist gatherings.

Inactive Membership

Associates will be considered “passive” when they have gone through formation and made, and lived, the Associate promise for at least one year, but, subsequently, have not renewed their

promise. Associates can pass from passive to active membership by re-making the promise.

Former Membership

Associates who no longer make the promise or attend meetings for a period of two years will be considered former members. Former members can become active members with the attendance of a retreat given by the Paulist Director or the annual Paulist retreat, followed by the making of the Associate Promise.

Being Active

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

Formation

Paulist Associates go through a process of formation which is overseen by the Director of the Associates. The Director of the Associates, or his delegate, must be involved in the formation process of an Associate.

Introductory Presentation

The Director of the Associates will usually be the one to give an introductory presentation about the Associates to people who are interested. He may designate another to do this. This introduction will explain the Associates, some aspects of Paulist spirituality, and the formation process.

Six Formation Sessions

Those who wish to be Associates will receive 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 can be conducted in person by various Paulist priests, or recorded presentations can be heard on-line at the Paulist website (www.paulist.org). Those in formation will be encouraged to write reflections in response to these sessions.

Retreat

Before a person makes the Associate promise, she or he should be involved in a retreat given by the Paulist Director, or the equivalent, in which the prospective Associate has time to reflect on the fundamental dimensions of Fr. Hecker's spirituality and on the responsibilities that the person will assume. The Paulist Director may designate another Paulist to conduct this retreat.

Application

The person desiring to becoming an Associate will make an application to the Director either directly or through a local Paulist. 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.

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 are available, but these are not really satisfactory substitutes for actual group meetings.

Members who consistently absent themselves from the monthly Associates Meeting should consider withdrawing from the program. Erratic attendance at group meetings undermine the viability 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.

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 Vocation)
- 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 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 List Server or other internet communication device. 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 local 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 or other function that needs attention by the group.

Annual Retreat

The Associate movement should have an annual retreat, supervised by the Director but organized by one or another Associate group. Attention to distance should be a concern as retreats are rotated from one geographical spot to another. The retreat should 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, 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 Associates 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 diminishing egocentrism and vice. Frequent attendance at Mass, with prayer for Paulists and Paulist mission, should amplify an Associate's experience of prayer.

Mission

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, work toward reconciliation in its various emphases and 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

Personal Mission

Associates 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, Associates should be conspicuously involved in ministries that reach out, notably the RCIA, any pre-catechumenal processes, welcoming ministries, and efforts to re-involve less than active Catholics. Associates 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 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

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

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?

PAULIST ASSOCIATES SUGGESTED READING LIST

I. Isaac Hecker:

Elliott, Walter, *Life of Father Hecker*, 1891.

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.

II. 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

III. 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.

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

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

IV. Paulists on St. Paul:

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

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