

Saint Angela Merici

RULE of THE COMPANY OF SAINT URSULA



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Translation by a team of Ursulines of the Roman Union, Rome 1995

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RULE: Trivulzian Codex

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[Prologue]

1. In the name of the blessed and indivisible Trinity.
2. Prologue on the life of virgins recently begun under the name Company of St. Ursula.
3. To the beloved daughters and sisters of the Company of St. Ursula.
4. Because, dearly beloved daughters and sisters, God has granted you the grace of setting you apart from the darkness of this miserable world and of uniting you together to serve his divine Majesty,
5. you have to thank Him infinitely that, to you especially, He has granted such a singular gift.
6. For how many important persons and others of every condition do not have nor will be able to have such a grace.
7. Therefore, my sisters, I exhort you, or rather I beg and entreat you all, that having been thus chosen to be the true and virginal spouses of the Son of God,
8. you be willing first of all to recognize what such a thing implies, and what a new and astonishing dignity it is.
9. Then that you strive with all your might to remain as you are called by God,
10. and to seek and desire all the ways and means necessary to persevere and make progress to the very end.
11. For it is not enough to begin, if one does not also persevere. That is why Truth says: "Qui perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit": the one who has persevered to the end, that one will be saved.
12. And again: "Beati qui audiunt verbum Dei et custodiunt illud"; that is, blessed are those into whose hearts God has breathed the light of truth, and to whom he has given the will to yearn ardently for their heavenly home; and who then seek to preserve within themselves this voice of truth, and this holy desire.
13. Undoubtedly, only that person will be able to remain faithful who is also willing to embrace the ways and means necessary to this end,
14. for there is little or no difference between the saying outright: "I will no longer serve God", and the not wanting the ways and rules necessary to be able to remain in his service.
15. And, all the more my sisters, must we be vigilant as our undertaking is of such importance that there could not be a greater,
16. for our life and salvation are at stake,
17. and we are called to so glorious a life as to be spouses of the Son of God and to become queens in heaven.
18. But here we must be wary and prudent, because the greater the value of what is undertaken, the greater the labour and danger which can be expected,
19. for here there is no kind of evil which will not try to stand in the way, seeing that here [on earth] we are placed in the midst of snares and perils,
20. so that water, air, and earth, with all of hell, will take up arms against us, since as yet our flesh and sensuality are not dead.
21. Neither does our adversary, the devil, sleep, he who never rests, but (as St Peter says) like a roaring lion, is always watching and seeking which approach he could use to devour any of us, and with his so many devious ways and wiles that no one could count them.
22. But, in spite of this, my sisters, you must not be frightened,
23. for if you strive in the future, with all your might, to live as is required of the true spouses of the Most High,

24. and to keep this Rule as the way along which you have to walk and as that which has been drawn up for your benefit,
25. I have this firm and unquestioning faith and hope in infinite divine goodness, that not only shall we easily overcome all dangers and adversities, but also, to our great glory and jubilation, we shall defeat them.
26. We shall even spend this very short life of ours in consolation,
27. and our every sorrow and sadness will be turned into joy and gladness, and we shall find the thorny and stony paths blossoming for us, and covered with paving of finest gold.
28. For the angels of eternal life will be with us, that is, in so far as we share in an angelic life.
29. Come then, let us all embrace this holy Rule which God in his grace has offered us.
30. And armed with its sacred precepts, let us behave so bravely that we too, like holy Judith, having courageously cut off the head of Holofernes, that is, of the devil, may return gloriously to our heavenly home,
31. where, from everyone in heaven and on earth, great glory and triumph will burst forth for us.
32. And now, therefore, all of you, please be attentive, with great and eager hearts.

On the manner of receiving Chap. I

1. First: let it be recalled that everyone who is about to enter or be admitted to this Company, must be a virgin
2. and have a firm intention to serve God in this way of life.
3. And then: that she must enter joyfully
4. and of her own will.
5. Third: that she should not have promised herself to any monastery nor to any man of this world.
6. Fourth: that if she has father or mother or other superiors, she first ask their consent;
7. thus, the lady-governors and governors of the Company will also be able to speak with them, so that they would have no legitimate reason if later, by chance, they wanted to prevent her from entering into this holy obedience.
8. Fifth: that she must be at least twelve years old.
9. However, let it be remembered that those under twelve may be accepted in the group so as to form them to the reality of this singular life.

How they should be dressed Chap. II

1. Let it also be recalled that their clothes and manner of wearing them should be modest and simple, as truly befits virginal modesty:
2. therefore, each one should wear her bodice properly fastened, and over it a shawl or scarf of some kind of linen, or cotton material not too fine and in no way transparent; and the same applies to the kerchief.
3. Now the dresses should be of coarse cloth or serge, brown or dark tan, or grey, or dark grey, as is convenient for each one according to her possibilities.
4. Nevertheless, the sisters may wear the dresses they happen to have when they enter the Company, but only as long as these last, and provided they never have flounces or slit sleeves, or any kind of openwork decoration, embroidery or any other similar ornamentation.
5. And let them wear a leather belt around their waist as a sign of exterior mortification and perfect interior chastity.*

6. They will not wear silk, or velvet, or silver, or gold; nor slippers or shoes that are not black and plainly fashioned.
7. Nor shawls or kerchiefs that are coloured, or of silk, or of any other sort too fine and transparent; nor ruffles on their camisoles.
8. Finally, nothing too fashionable or ornamental or transparent, and no other vanities that could sully their own consciences or those of others,
9. and might be contrary to virginal modesty.

* Verse n° 5 must have been added after Angela' death, since the belt was not made compulsory until the 11th of December 1545. Moreover, Angela never speaks of "chastity" in reference to the virgins; she says "virginity".

On the manner of behaving in public Chap. III

1. Furthermore, let it be recalled: First: that they should have nothing to do with women of bad reputation.
2. And then: that on no account should they listen to the approaches of men or women, especially in secret.
3. Third: that they should not go to weddings, or balls or jousts and other similar entertainments of worldly taste.
4. Fourth: that they should avoid standing about on balconies or on doorsteps or in the streets, either alone or with others, for many reasons.
5. Fifth: that, walking along the roads or streets, they should go with their eyes lowered and be modestly covered by their shawls
6. and walk quickly, not lingering, or stopping here and there, or standing about to gaze curiously at anything.
7. For everywhere there are dangers and various diabolical snares and traps.
8. Sixth: that if their mothers or other secular superiors should want to lead them into these or similar dangers,
9. or want to prevent them from fasting, or prayer, or confession, or any other kind of good,
10. they should immediately refer the matter to the lady-governors of the Company so that they may see to it

On fasting Chap. IV

1. Let it be recalled as well that each one should be willing to embrace bodily fasting also as something necessary,
2. and as the means and way to true spiritual fasting through which all the vices and errors are cut away from the mind.
3. And to this the example of all the holy persons very clearly invites us,
4. and above all, the life of Jesus Christ, the only way to heaven.
5. That is why the holy mother Church proclaims all this explicitly in the ears of all the faithful when she speaks thus to God: "Qui corporali ieiunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et praemia"; that is, O God, you who through bodily fasting curb the vices, lift the mind, give virtue and rewards;
6. for as gluttony was the origin of all our ills, so it is fitting that fasting and abstinence be the source and means of all our spiritual good and profit.

7. That is why the holy canonists say: "Indictum est ieiunium abstinenciae, lex a Domino Deo, praevaricatio legis a diabolo"; that is, fasting, a law of abstinence, was commanded by the Lord God, and the transgression of the law is induced by the devil.
8. For this reason, we exhort each one to fast, especially on these days of the year: First: all those commanded by the holy mother Church, that is the whole of Lent, the Ember days and all the vigils of obligation.
9. Then: the whole of Advent.
10. Third: they should fast immediately after the Epiphany forty days, to subdue the senses and the appetites and sensual desires which then, especially, seem to lord it over the world,
11. and also to implore mercy before the throne of the Most High for the many dissolute actions committed by Christians during that time, as is more than obvious to all
12. Fourth: after the octave of Easter they should fast three days a week, that is the Wednesday, the Friday and the Saturday.
13. Fifth: they should fast on the three Rogation days, or Litanies, which the Church celebrates before the Ascension to implore divine help for the Christian people.
14. Sixth: they should fast every day after the Ascension,
15. and at the same time they should remain in prayer with as much strength of spirit as is possible, until the day of the sending of the Holy Spirit, that is until the Easter of May,
16. asking for that great promise made by Jesus Christ to his chosen ones who are well disposed.
17. Seventh: after the Easter of May they should return to the above-mentioned three days a week until Advent.
18. But, as unreasonable things are not to be desired, then it must be stressed that no one is to fast without the counsel especially of her spiritual father
19. and of the lady-governors of the Company, who are to reduce and diminish these fasts as they see that to be needed,
20. because to afflict one's body indiscreetly, "esset offerre holocaustum de rapina"; that is, would be to offer in sacrifice something stolen, as the sacred canons also say.

On prayer Chap. V

1. Let it also be recalled that each one be diligent in prayer, mental as well as vocal,
2. which is the companion of fasting; that is why the Scripture says: "Bona est oratio cum ieiunio"; that is, prayer with fasting is good.
3. And one reads in the Gospel about that Anna, daughter of Phanuel, who in the Temple day and night served God unceasingly *in ieiuniis et orationibus*.
4. Because; just as by fasting one mortifies the appetites of one's flesh and one's own feelings, so by prayer one obtains from God the grace of a spiritual life.
5. And although one needs always to pray in spirit and mind, given the continuous need one has of God's help, which is why Truth says: "Oportet semper orare"; that is, one must always pray,
6. nevertheless, we also advise frequent vocal prayer,
7. through which the bodily senses are awakened
8. and one disposes oneself for mental prayer.
9. For this reason, each one will say every day at least the office of Our Lady and the seven penitential psalms with devotion and attention,
10. because saying the office, one speaks with God, as Blessed Alexander the Martyr also said.

11. And those who do not know how to say it will have it taught to them by the sisters who do.
12. As for those who do not know how to read, they will say daily at Matins thirty-three Pater Nosters and thirty-three Ave Marias in memory of the thirty-three years Jesus Christ lived in this world for love of us;
13. then at Prime, say seven Pater Nosters and seven Ave Marias for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.
14. And, similarly, say the same at each of the other canonical Hours, that is at Terce, at Sext, at None, at Vespers and at Compline.
15. And to give matter and also a means to mental prayer, we exhort each one to raise her mind to God, and every day to practise this, and in the following, or another, or a similar manner, in the secret of her heart, to say:
 16. "My Lord, light up the darkness of my heart,
 17. and give me the grace to die rather than ever today offend your divine Majesty.
 18. And strengthen my affections and senses so that they do not stray, neither to right nor to left,
 19. nor turn me away from that dazzling face of yours which contents every afflicted heart.
 20. Alas! How grieved I am that, entering into the secret of my heart, for shame I dare not raise my eyes to heaven,
 21. for I deserve to be devoured alive in hell, seeing in myself so many errors, so much ugliness and vileness, so many monstrous and frightful wild beasts and shapes.
 22. Therefore I am compelled, day and night, moving, staying still, acting, thinking, to call out and to cry to heaven, and to beg for mercy and time for penance.
 23. Deign, O most loving Lord, to forgive me [my] so many offences, and every fault that I have ever committed from the day of my holy baptism to this hour.
 24. Deign also to forgive the sins, alas, of my father and mother, and of my relatives and friends, and of the whole world.
 25. I implore this of you by your most sacred Passion and your precious Blood shed for love of us,
 26. and by your holy Name, be it blessed above the sands of the seas, above the drops of the waters, above the multitudes of the stars.
 27. I deeply regret that I have been so slow to begin to serve your divine Majesty.
 28. Alas! until now I have never shed even the smallest drop of blood for love of you,
 29. nor have I ever been obedient to your divine precepts,
 30. and every adversity has been hard for me because of the littleness of my love for you.
 31. Lord, in place of those poor creatures who do not know you,
 32. and do not care to be partakers in your most sacred Passion,
 33. my heart breaks,
 34. and willingly (if I could) I would shed my own blood to open the blind eyes of their minds.
35. So then, O my Lord, my only life and hope,
36. I pray that you deign to receive this most vile and impure heart of mine,
37. and to burn away its every affection and passion in the fiery furnace of your divine love.
38. I pray that you receive my free will,
39. every act of my own will, which by itself, because it is infected by sin, does not know how to discern good from evil.
40. Receive my every thought, word and deed,
41. everything that is mine finally, both interior and exterior.
42. All this I lay down as an offering at the feet of your divine Majesty.

43. And I pray that you deign to receive it even though I am unworthy of this.

44. Amen".

On going to Mass every day Chap. VI

1. Also, each one should go to Mass every day, and hear at least one entirely,
2. and attend it with modesty and devotion,
3. for in the holy Mass are to be found afresh all the merits of the Passion of our Lord.
4. And the greater the attention, faith and contrition one brings to it, the deeper is one's participation in these blessed merits and the greater the consolation one receives.
5. Indeed, this will be a communion in spirit.
6. However, it is recommended not to linger too long in churches;
7. but (if they wish to pray longer) they should go to their rooms, and there, shut in, pray as and as long as the Spirit and their conscience dictate.

On confession Chap. VII

1. We also exhort [each one] to go frequently to confession, necessary medicine for the wounds of our souls.
2. For no one will ever be justified from sin, if he does not first, with his [own] lips, confess his faults to the priest, as Scripture says: "Dic tu prius iniquitates tuas, ut justificeris"; that is, first, tell your sins, so that you may be justified.
3. And Truth says to St Peter: "Tibi dabo claves regni caelorum, et quodcumque ligaveris super terram erit ligatum et in caelis, et quodcumque solveris super terram erit solutum et in caelis"; that is, I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you unbind on earth shall be unbound also in heaven.
4. By which is clearly demonstrated that sin cannot be taken away except by a priest and through confession.
5. For how will the priest be able to absolve a sin if he does not know it?
6. And how will he be able to know it, if the one who has committed it does not manifest it with his own lips, since the sin remains hidden within him?
7. Let each one, then, willingly present herself before the priest as if before God, eternal Judge,
8. and there, full of sorrow,
9. with honesty and in truth of conscience, confess her sin,
10. and ask forgiveness for it,
11. and, always with fear and reverence, remain before the confessor until she has received the absolution.
12. Regarding this, let it be known that a place or a particular church has to be designated, where a common spiritual father, prudent and of mature age, will be elected, to whom each one will, at least once a month, confess herself;
13. and then, every first Friday of the month, they will gather in this church and there, all together, receive communion from this same father.
14. In addition to this, we exhort each one to go to confession and communion in her own parish on solemn feasts.

On obedience Chap. VIII

1. We also exhort each one to keep holy obedience,
2. the only true abnegation of self-will, which is in us like a dark hell.
3. This is why Jesus Christ says: "Non veni facere voluntatem meam; sed eius qui misit me Pater"; that is, I have not come to do my will, but that of the Father who sent me.
4. For obedience is in man like a great light which makes his every action good and acceptable;
5. that is why we read: "Melius est obedire quam sacrificare"; that is, it is better to obey than to sacrifice.
6. And the sacred canons say: "Nullum bonum est extra obedientiam"; that is, our every action, if it is to be good, must be done under obedience.
7. Because of this each one has to obey: first of all, the commandments of God, for Scripture says: "Maledictus qui declinat a mandatis tuis"; that is, cursed is the one who does not observe your commandments.
8. Then: what the holy mother Church commands, because Truth says: "Qui vos audit me audit, et qui vos spernit me spernit"; that is, the one who listens to you listens to me; the one who despises you despises me.
9. Third: to obey one's own bishop and pastor, and one's own spiritual father,
10. and the governors and lady-governors of the Company.
11. Moreover: to obey fathers and mothers and other superiors at home,
12. of whom we advise to ask pardon once a week as a sign of submission and to preserve charity.
13. To obey also the laws and statutes of the lords, and the governors of the states.
14. And above all: to obey the counsels and inspirations which the Holy Spirit unceasingly sends into our hearts,
15. He whose voice we shall hear all the more clearly as we have our conscience more purified and clean.
16. For the Holy Spirit is the one who (as Jesus Christ says) "docet nos omnem veritatem"; that is, teaches us all truth.
17. So, in conclusion: to obey God and every creature for love of God, as the apostle says,
18. provided that nothing is commanded us contrary to the honour of God and our own integrity.

On virginity Chap. IX

1. Each one should also preserve sacred virginity,
2. not making a vow on account of any human persuasion, but voluntarily making to God the sacrifice of her own heart.
3. Because virginity (as also the canonists say) is sister of all the angels,
4. victory over the appetites, queen of the virtues,
5. and she possesses all good.
6. That is why each one should behave in everything in such a way that she would not, within herself or in the presence of others, do anything unworthy of the spouses of the Most High.
7. And so, above all, let her keep her heart pure and her conscience clear of any evil thought,
8. of any shadow of envy and ill-will,
9. of any discord and evil suspicion,
10. and of any other wicked desire and purpose.
11. But let her be joyful and always full of charity, and faith, and hope in God.

12. And let her behaviour towards others be reasonable and modest as St Paul says: "Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus"; that is, let your moderation and prudence be clearly visible to all; and so, let every action and word be honest and moderate.
13. Not taking God's name in vain.
14. Not swearing, but only saying simply: Yes, yes, or No, no, as Jesus Christ teaches.
15. Not answering haughtily.
16. Not doing anything grudgingly.
17. Not staying angry.
18. Not grumbling.
19. Not repeating any malicious gossip.
20. Finally, not performing any act or gesture which would be unworthy, especially of those who bear the name of servants of Jesus Christ.
21. But let all our words, actions and behaviour always be for the instruction and edification of those who have dealings with us,
22. always having charity burning in our hearts.
23. Moreover, each one should be prepared to die rather than ever consent to stain and profane such a sacred jewel.

On poverty Chap. X

1. Finally, we exhort each one to embrace poverty,
2. not only effective poverty of temporal things,
3. but above all the true poverty of spirit by which man strips his heart of all affection
4. and longing for created things,
5. and of his very self.
6. And in God he has all his wealth; and apart from God sees himself to be completely poor, and a total nothing, and with God to have everything.
7. For Truth says: "Beati pauperes spiritu quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum"; that is, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
8. And so, let each one strive to strip herself of everything,
9. and to place all her wealth, and love, and delight, not in goods,
10. not in food and gluttony,
11. not in relatives and friends,
12. not in herself and in her own resources and knowledge,
13. but in God alone and in his gentle and ineffable Providence alone.
14. That is why the Gospel says: "Primum quaerite regnum Dei, et haec omnia apponentur vobis"; that is, seek first the kingdom of God, and all these other things of yours will be set before you.
15. And again it says: "Nolite solliciti esse quod comedatis, neque quod bibatis: scit enim Pater vester quia his omnibus indigetis"; that is, do not be anxious in seeking what you will have to eat or what you will have to drink, because your heavenly Father knows very well that you have need of all these things,
16. as if to say clearly: do not trouble yourself about any of your temporal needs,
17. because God, and he alone, knows, can and will provide for them,
18. He who wants nothing for you but only your good and your joy.

On government Chap. XI

1. To govern this Company it is arranged that four of the most capable virgins of the Company should be elected,
2. and at least four widowed matrons, prudent and of honest life,
3. and four mature and experienced men.
4. The virgins should be as mistresses and guides in the spiritual life.
5. And the widows as mothers, full of concern for the good and welfare of their spiritual sisters and daughters.
6. And the four men as agents and even fathers with regard to the needs of the Company.
- 8a. And so, let the four virgins have especially this as their task, that is, to visit every fortnight,
7. or more or less often as they will see the need,*
- 8b. all the other virgins, their sisters, who are scattered through the town,
9. to comfort them and help them if they should happen to be in some situation of disagreement or other trouble, of body as much as of mind;
10. or if their superiors at home did them any wrong,
11. or wanted to prevent them from doing something good,
12. or to lead them into the danger of doing something wrong.
13. And if they themselves could not provide a solution, they should refer the matter to the matrons.
14. And if these cannot set things right either, let the four men also be called in so that, all together, they can concur to find a remedy.
15. If it should happen that one of the sisters, being an orphan, could not get what is hers,
16. or if, being a servant, or a maid, or the like, she could not obtain her wages,
17. or if there should arise another such situation which would make it necessary for her to go to court and through legal proceedings,
18. or to come to an agreement (which would be the best thing to do),
19. then let the four men, out of charity, in the manner of fathers, take the matter in hand and assist according as there is need.
20. If members of the government should be lacking either through death, or through being relieved of office, then the Company should meet and elect others to complete the legal number.
21. Also, if one of them were unable to fulfil her office or behaved badly, that person should be removed from the government.
22. If, by God's will and bounty, it should happen that they have money or other goods in common, let it be remembered that these must be carefully administered,
23. and prudently distributed,
24. especially to help the sisters and according to each need which may arise.
25. If there were at least two sisters left alone, without father and mother and other superiors, then, out of charity, a house should be rented for them (if they have none) and they should be provided for in their needs.
26. But if there is only one, then let one of the others receive her in her house,

* In the Trivulzian manuscript, this phrase follows directly after n° 6. It is probably an added note that the copyist misplaced in the transcription.

27. and be given the subvention which seems suitable to those who govern.
28. If, however, she wanted to go to work as a servant or maid, those who govern should see to it that she be placed where she can feel at home and live honestly.
29. If there were sisters so old that they could not support themselves, they should graciously accept being assisted and served as true spouses of Jesus Christ.
30. Finally, if one of the sisters is ill, it is recommended that she be visited, and assisted, and served, by day and by night, if it is necessary.
31. And if she is near death, she should leave a little something to the Company as a sign of love and charity.
32. When one of them has died, then all the others will accompany her to her grave, walking two by two, with charity, and each one with a candle in hand.
33. And those who know how to read will say the Office for the Dead;
34. and those who cannot read will say thirty-three Pater Nosters and as many Ave Marias,
35. so that if this soul were in the pains of Purgatory on account of some sin, our gentle and loving Spouse Jesus Christ, would draw her out of these pains,
36. and lead her to the glory of heaven with the other virgins, crowned with the golden and most shining virginal crown.

Documents

These documents do not appear in the Trivulzian manuscript. We have taken them from the edition of the Rule printed by Turlino in 1569.

Confirmatio

[Confirmation of the Rule, permission to publish it, and granting of 40 days' indulgence by Lorenzo Muzio, vicar general and deputy of the Cardinal bishop of Brescia, 8th August 1536.]

Laurentius Mutius Juris utriusque Doctor in Episcopatu Brixiensi Reverendissimi in Christo patris, et Domini Domini Francisci miseratione divina tituli Sanctae Praxedis, Sanctae Romanae Ecclesie, et presbiteri Cardinalis Comelii Episcopi, Brixiensis Ducis, Marchionis et Comitis, locumtenens, et vicarius generalis: visis, et perlectis suprascriptis capitulis, quia nihil invenimus in eis preter aut contra catholicam fidem: iccirco instante Domina Angela huius societatis auctrice, auctoritate ordinaria, omnia et singula in eis contents approbamus iuxta facultates, et licentiam publicandi, concedimus eadem auctoritate quadraginta dies indulgentiae in forma Ecclesiae consueta qualibet die quibuscunque predicta servantibus; concedentes per praesentes manu nostra subscriptas, et appensione sigilli eiusdem Reverendissimi Domini Cardinalis munitas. In quorum fidem etc. Datum Brixiae in Episcopali pallatio die octavo Augusti 1536, indictione nona.

Laurentius qui supra Vicarius manu propria subscripsi. Bemardinus de Boarno cancellarius mandavit.

Concessio

[Permission relating to the Sacrament of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, granted by Lorenzo Muzio.]

Concedimus insuper dictis sororibus ut confiteri peccata sua, et sacramentum poenitentiae et sanctam Eucharistiam recipere possint quodcumque preter quam in die Sanctae paschatis resurrectionis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, vel quando sumsent in infirmitate pro viatico, quo tempore, et casu teneantur accedere ad proprias parochias vel ecclesiam Cathedralis et a suo Curato vel maiore ecclesiae sacramentum eucharistiae recipere, vel de dicti proprii sacerdotis, aut ordinarii licentia ceteris temporibus, et casibus, libere possint predicta sacramenta a quocumque sacerdote, et ubicumque maluerint, alius tamen canonice recipere sine alia licentia alicuius persone. Datum in Episcopali pallatio Brixiae die. XXVII. mensis Septembris anno, et Indictione quibus supra.

Idem Laurentius qui supra Vicarius manu propria subscripsi.

Confirmatio

[Confirmation of the Rule, concession of 100 days' indulgence on each feastday, and confirmation of the privileges accorded by his predecessors, given by Giovan Pietro Ferretti, vicar general and deputy of the Cardinal bishop of Brescia, 19th May 1545.]

Nos Joannes Petrus Ferretus Ravenas inns utriusque Doctor, Dei, et Apostolicae [Sedis] gratia Milenensis Episcopus Reverendissimi ac Illustrissimi Domini Domini Andreae Comelii Sancti Theodori Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae diaconi Cardinalis Episcopi Ducis Marchionis et Comitum Brixienis in pontificalibus suffraganeus et vicarius generalis etc. quia vidimus, legimus, et diligenter scrutati sumus Regulam bonae memoriae Dominae sororis Angelae sub vocabulo Divae Ursulae, virginitatem servantem in civitate Brixienis in huiusmodi egregio consortio optineri, et observari debere: conoscentes devotionem Sanctae quondam Mulieris, et ea, quae in sancto hoc instituto reperiuntur bona re et iuxta ritum volentium spiritu adherere Deo salutem fidelium mulierum quam maxime expedire, cum ad catholicae fidei exultationem tendant. Idcirco laudamus, et approbamus singula in ea contenta auctoritate nostra qua fungimur, super addentes eadem auctoritate in omnibus festis diebus, perpetuis futurisque temporibus centum dies Indulgentiarum eisdem dicti consortii virginibus secundum ritum Ecclesiae. Onmes quoque alias gratias per praecessores nostros ipsis concessas confirmamus, et omni meliori modo corroboramus per praesentes, utque libere sacramenta omnia suscipere possint ubique, cum debitis honore, et reverentia, quocumque tempore absque tamen parochialis ecclesiae praeiudicio in finem vite, gratiose indulgemus, et elargimur.

In quorum fidem has nostras literas manu nostra propria scripsimus, atque subscripsimus. Datum Brixiae in aedibus Episcopalibus die 19. Maii. 1545. sub fide etiam sigilli nostri minoris.

Idem Joannes Petrus qui supra et manu propria.

Ordinatione

[Requirement of wearing a black leather belt, imposed by Aurelio Durante and Donato Savallo, archdeacon and archpriest of the Cathedral of Brescia, and by Lucrezia Lodrone, principal lady-governor, 20 April 1546.]

Noi Aurelio Durante Archidiacono et Donato Savallo Arciprete de la cathedral chiesa de Bressa conservatori apostolici, et ancora Lucretia Contessa di Lodrone Madre, et Governatrici della compagnia, et congregatione dele Vergine, et donne sotto al titolo di Santa Orsola di Bressa:

Considerando che per li segni esteriori molte hate se conosce la interiore spirituality de la creatura in segno che siano de ditta congregatione, et de vera humiliatione et perfetta castita, statuimo et ordinamo, come ancora per la molta piu maggiore parte de la confraternita et governatrici de ditta compagnia

sotto al di undese Dicembrio. 1545. fu statuito et ordinato, et in essecutione de quella et de la Bolla Apostolica, che cadauna de ditta compagnia si de presente, come per lavenire debba portare uno cingulo de corio negro largo uno dita marmello vel circa, che significa vera continentia, et acciO siano ancora conossute dale altre donne sotto pena de essere casse de ditta compagnia, et altre pene come se contiene in le dette Bolle Apostolice. Adi XX. Aprile. MDXLVI.

Ita est pro ut supra. Ego Aurelius Durantus Archidiaconus Brixiensis conservator Apostolicus manu propria me subscripsi in fidem praemissorum.

Ita est Ego Donatus Savallus Archipresbiter Brix[i]ensis et conservator Apostolicus manu propria supscripsi.

Sigillum Aurelii

Sigillum Donati