

Creation of the CLERICAL ASSOCIATION

of the Emmanuel Community



Press release
30th August 2017

Summary

The Congregation for the Clergy erected on 15 August 2017 the Clerical Association of the Emmanuel Community, gathering together the priests and deacons of the Community.

This decision of the Holy See thus defines the canonical identity of the clergy who are members of the Emmanuel Community. It encourages their call to serve the local Churches while also favouring their mobility for the universal mission of the Church. It reinforces the communion of the priests and deacons with their lay brothers and sisters, for the New Evangelisation, according to the Emmanuel Community's own charism.

This new stage is situated in the continuity of the community. Thus, the way of ordinary incardination of the Emmanuel clergy remains in the dioceses, although these new statutes make it possible for their incardination in the new Clerical Association, but the Community will choose this new mode only in exceptional circumstances.

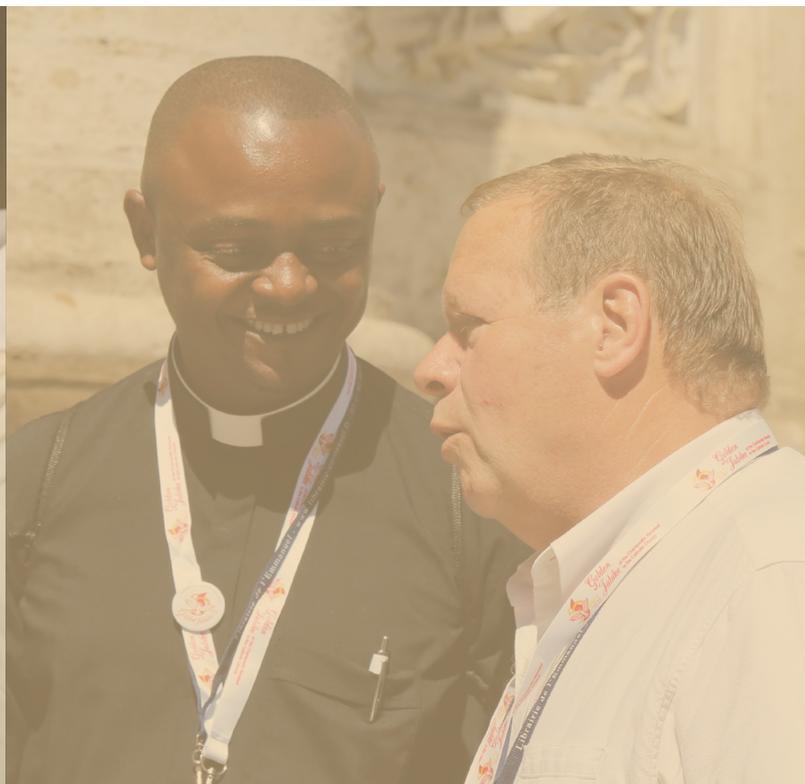
The Emmanuel Community welcomes with joy and thanksgiving today the solicitude of the Church in this regard.



Further details on this Clerical Association

The statutes of the Emmanuel Community situate it as an “International Public Association of the Faithful (composed of lay people and priests)”, overseen by the “Dicastery for the Laity, the Family, and Life”.

For some years, on the advice of Cardinal André Vingt-Trois, Archbishop of Paris, and ecclesiastical assistant of the Community, and under the direction of the Congregation for the Clergy, we have worked on drawing up statutes for a clerical association, inseparably linked to the initial association of the faithful, in order to respond to several challenges.



Why this clerical association?

It will enable us to witness humbly but resolutely to a “new style of collaboration between priests and lay people, sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (according to the expression of St John Paul II, in *Christi Fideles Laici*, 2), and based on the ecclesiology of Vatican Council II.

Concretely, the three goals are the following:

1. To guarantee that the ministry of priests in the Emmanuel Community is rooted in a fraternal communion with the lay faithful (according to the ecclesiology of communion elaborated by the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, text attached).



2. To favour the availability for the mission of the Community priests, in conformity with their commitment, and making it possible for them to serve outside their diocese of incardination (according to the intuition of Vatican Council II, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 10, text attached).

3. To facilitate a missionary collaboration with the bishops, through a canonical structure, honouring their authority and at the same time in keeping with the specific charism of the Emmanuel Community (Cf. *Lumen Gentium* 4, Chapter on the Mystery of the Church, text attached).



A clerical association and an association of the faithful closely linked

This new Clerical Association is inseparably linked canonically to the Association of the Faithful, which is the Emmanuel Community. The communion between the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood is thus at the heart of this disposition.

Priests form a constituent part of the charism of the Emmanuel Community.

In fact, the priests and deacons constitute with the other members of the Community a unique missionary corps at the service of the Church. Thus, for a cleric to be a member of the Clerical Association, he is obliged to be a member of the Association of the Faithful. The canonical link between these two associations will reinforce the clerics' belonging to the Community.

To understand more fully the link between the two associations, one needs to note:

- 1.** The establishment of a College of communion that brings together the Council of the Association of the Faithful and the Council of the Clerical Association, under the chairmanship of the general Moderator.
- 2.** The presence of clerics of the Clerical Association (the Coordinator of Ordained Ministers and the Coordinator responsible for the formation of clerics), are ex officio members of the Council of the Association of the Faithful.
- 3.** Conversely, the presence of lay people (among them the general Moderator of the Association of the Faithful) as ex officio members of the Council of the Clerical Association.
- 4.** The nomination of the coordinator of Clerical Association by the Congregation for the Clergy, proposed by the general Moderator of the Association of the Faithful.
- 5.** The statutory obligation to take certain decisions concerning the unity of the two associations, in a joint manner by the general Moderator of the Community and the Coordinator of Ordained Ministers.
- 6.** The statutory obligation for the Coordinator of Ordained Ministers to ask the advice of the general Moderator of the Community, for important decisions concerning the mission and the ministry of the clerics of the Emmanuel Community.

The fundamental aim of these statutes is therefore to define more clearly by a canonical formulation the foundational grace of the Emmanuel Community, in a decisive stage in its international development.

Is the Emmanuel Community renouncing incardination in dioceses?

Not at all. On the contrary, it is true that by these new statutes, the Congregation for the Clergy confers on the coordinator of the Clerical Association the faculty to incardinate priests and deacons within it, for the needs of the mission. But the habitual practice of incardinating clerics in dioceses will remain (Cf. preamble h).

In effect, this corresponds to the secular nature of the Emmanuel Community and to the call to serve local Churches. Whatever their mode of incardination, the clerics of the Emmanuel Community belong fully to the Clerical Association and fully to the Association of the Faithful.

In what case is the incardination of a cleric into the Clerical Association envisaged?

It would have to be examined, as an exceptional case, in the following situations:

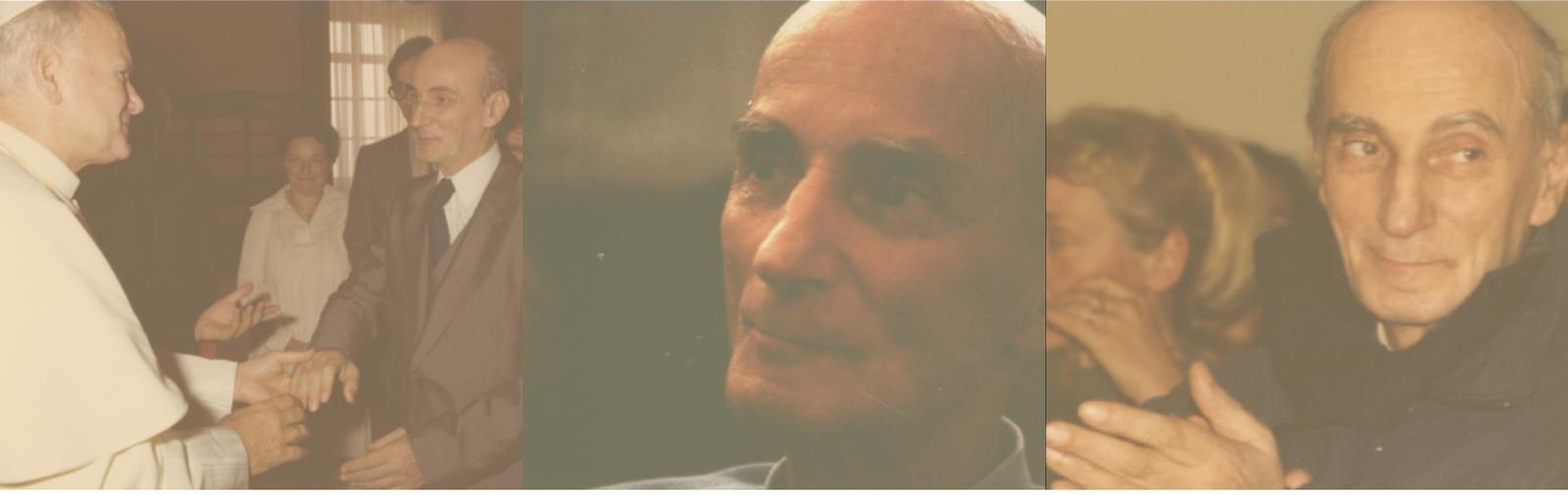
1. When incardination into a diocese would be impossible. For example, when the Community finds an explicit refusal to be welcomed according to its own charism.



2. In order to avoid the isolation of a cleric at the moment of his incardination, in a country where the Community would be significantly absent or still too fragile in its foundation to support this same cleric.

3. When one would wish that a cleric could dedicate himself totally and durably to a work proper to the Community, for example to formation, or better still to a mission that necessitates an "inculturation" for a long time.





A little glance at how this came about:

The statutes of the Clerical Association have been erected on the solemnity of the Assumption. This is also the anniversary of the birth of Pierre Goursat, founder of the Emmanuel Community.

Who is Pierre Goursat?

A simple layman, both contemplative and a man of action, Pierre Goursat is the founder of the Emmanuel Community. Born in 1914, he was converted at the age of 19. Animated by great charity and an ardent missionary zeal, he put in place numerous apostolic initiatives. In the wake of Vatican II, he contributed to forming a new generation of lay people and priests at the service of the Church.

In February 1972, he discovered the Charismatic Renewal with Martine Catta, who was then a student of medicine. They received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and began a prayer group. This is how the Emmanuel Community was born. He died on 25 March 1991. His cause for canonisation was opened in 2010. The diocesan phase was completed in December 2016. His cause is therefore at present in the Roman phase.

From the beginning, Pierre Goursat, founder of the Emmanuel Community, had the desire to give priests to the Church, who could be supported in a community life with people in other states of life. The priests would live their priesthood at the service of particular churches and at the service of the universal mission of the Church:

“It is important,” he said, “that the priests in the exercise of their apostolate, in the dioceses where they are, are not alone [...] They can therefore very well live in community with lay brothers and sisters of the Fraternity of Jesus. Then they are supported.”

Information about the Emmanuel Community

The vocation of the Emmanuel Community is given in its name: “Emmanuel”, which means “God with us”. The Community unites priests and lay people (couples, singles, men and women consecrated in celibacy) to live this proximity to God and to witness together in joy. (Cf. Canon § 298, extract attached).

Some statistics:

- **67 countries** all over the world
- **11 500 members** (of which 5,700 are in France, 1,200 in Rwanda, 500 in Poland, 450 in Germany, 300 in Belgium...)
- **270 priests**
- **85 parishes** entrusted to the priests of the Emmanuel Community
- **200 lay men and women consecrated in celibacy**



For further information:

Books:

- *Fire and Hope*: Pierre Goursat founder of the Emmanuel Community, by Hervé-Marie Catta and Bernard Peyrous, Editions de l'Emmanuel, Paris, 2005: a book that traces the origins of the Community.
- *Words of Pierre Goursat*: collected and presented by Martine Catta, Editions de l'Emmanuel, Paris, 2014: a book that brings together many of the words of Pierre Goursat.
- *Prier 15 jours avec Pierre Goursat*, by Francis Kohn, Nouvelle Cité, 2011: a little book that summarises the principal themes of Pierre Goursat's spirituality.

Pictures:

- *Pierre et l'Emmanuel* (Bernard Simon, SAJE Productions and KTO): a documentary which traces the beginnings of the Community until today.
- *J'entrerai au ciel en dansant* (François Lespès, SAJE Productions and KTO): a documentary that traces the life of Cyprien and Daphrose Rugamba, founders of the Emmanuel Community in Rwanda, whose cause for canonisation was opened in September 2015.

Website : www.emmanuel.info

Excerpts from some documents Of the Magisterium of the Church

Extract from *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 10: the Distribution of priests

“ The spiritual gift which priests receive at their ordination prepared them not for a sort of limited and narrow mission but for the widest possible and universal mission of salvation «even to the ends of the earth» (Acts 1:8), for every priestly ministry shares in the universality of the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles. The priesthood of Christ, in which all priests really share, is necessarily intended for all peoples and all times, and it knows no limits of blood, nationality or time, since it is already mysteriously prefigured in the person of Melchisedech.(59) Let priests remember, therefore, that the care of all churches must be their intimate concern. Hence, priests of such dioceses as are rich in vocations should show themselves willing and ready, with the permission of their own ordinaries (bishops), to volunteer for work in other regions, missions or endeavors which are poor in numbers of clergy.

Present norms of incardination and excardination should be so revised that, while this ancient institution still remains intact, they will better correspond to today’s pastoral needs. Where a real apostolic spirit requires it, not only should a better distribution of priests be brought about but there should also be favored such particular pastoral works as are necessary in any region or nation anywhere on earth. To accomplish this purpose there should be set up international seminaries, special personal dioceses or prelatures (vicariates), and so forth, by means of which, according to their particular statutes and always saving the right of bishops, priests may be trained and incardinated for the good of the whole Church.

Priests should not be sent singly to a new field of labor, especially to one where they are not completely familiar with the language and customs; rather, after the example of the disciples of Christ,(60) they should be sent two or three together so that they may be mutually helpful to one another. Likewise, thoughtful care should be given to their spiritual life as well as their mental and bodily welfare; and, so far as is possible, the circumstances and conditions of labor should be adapted to individual needs and capabilities. At the same time it will be quite advantageous if those priests who go to work in a nation new to them not only know well the language of that place but also the psychological and social milieu peculiar to the people they go to serve, so that they may communicate with them easily, thus following the example of Paul the Apostle who could say of himself: «For when I was free of all I made myself the servant of all, that I might win over many. Among Jews I was a Jew that I might win over the Jews» (1 Cor 9:19-20).”

Extract from *Christi Fideles Laici*, 2

“In looking over the years following the Council the Synod Fathers have been able to verify how the Holy Spirit continues to renew the youth of the Church and how he has inspired new aspirations towards holiness and the participation of so many lay faithful. **This is witnessed, among other ways, in the new manner of active collaboration among priests, religious and the lay faithful;** the active participation in the Liturgy, in the proclamation of the Word of God and catechesis; the multiplicity of services and tasks entrusted to the lay faithful and fulfilled by them; the flourishing of groups, associations and spiritual movements as well as a lay commitment in the life of the Church; and in the fuller and meaningful participation of women in the development of society.”

Extract from *Lumen Gentium* 10: The Common Priesthood

“Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ.(2*) The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist.(3*) They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.”

Extract from *Lumen Gentium* 4

The sanctification of the Church by the Holy Spirit

“The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple.(13) In them He prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons.(14) **The Church, which the Spirit guides in way of all truth(15) and which He unified in communion and in works of ministry, He both equips and directs with hierarchical and charismatic gifts and adorns with His fruits.(16)** By the power of the Gospel He makes the Church keep the freshness of youth. Uninterruptedly He renews it and leads it to perfect union with its Spouse. (3*) The Spirit and the Bride both say to Jesus, the Lord, «Come!»(17)”

Extract from the Code of Canon Law

“Can. 298 §1. In the Church there are associations distinct from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life; in these associations the Christian faithful, whether clerics, lay persons, **or clerics and lay persons together,** strive in a common endeavor to foster a more perfect life, to promote public worship or Christian doctrine, or to exercise other works of the apostolate such as initiatives of evangelization, works of piety or charity, and those which animate the temporal order with a Christian spirit.”

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