

Practical Norms

To The Fathers Departing for Germany,

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4 1. Your first and greatest asset will be to distrust yourself and have a great and
5 magnanimous trust in God. Join to this an ardent desire, enkindled and sustained
6 by obedience and charity, to attain the end proposed. Such a desire will keep the
7 end always before your mind, and make you also commend it to God in your
8 sacrifices and prayers and to make diligent use of all other suitable means.

9 2. The second means is a good life, and therefore an exemplary life. You should
10 shun, not only evil but the very semblance of evil, and show yourselves as patterns
11 of modesty, charity, and all other virtues. Since Germany is in great need of good
12 example, she will derive much help from it; and even though this example be
13 wordless, the affairs of the Society will prosper and God will do battle for us.

14 3. You should cherish a genuine affection for everyone and show it to everyone,
15 especially to those who have great influence over the common good, as the duke
16 himself, to whom you should offer your excuses for arriving so late, and to whom
17 you must show an affection which not only the Apostolic See but our Society
18 cherishes for him as well. Courteously promise him that you will devote your
19 every effort and endeavor to help his people.

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20 4. Show your love in truth and in action by bestowing favors on many, offering
21 them spiritual assistance, and also in exterior works of charity, as will be explained
22 later.

23 5. Give proof that you are not seeking your own interests, but those of Jesus Christ
24 [Phil. 2:21], that is, His glory and the good of souls. In keeping with this, accept no
25 stipends for Masses or sermons or the administration of the sacraments. You must
26 have no income of any kind.

27 6. Make yourselves loved by your humility and charity, becoming all things to all
28 men [1 Cor. 9:22]. Show that you conform, as far as the Institute of the Society
29 permits, to the customs of the people, and whenever possible see to it that no one
30 goes away from you sad, unless it be for the good of his soul. But do not gratify
31 others at the expense of conscience, and let no excessive familiarity breed
32 contempt.

33 7. Do not take sides in faction and party strife, but follow a middle course and be
34 friendly with both sides.

35 8. It will be helpful if you are known to hold sound doctrine both as representatives
36 of the Society and as individuals. This should be with everybody, but especially
37 with the duke and men of influence. It will greatly enhance your reputation not
38 only to cultivate interior composure, but also to manifest it exteriorly: namely, in

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39 manner of walking, gestures, appropriate clothing, and above all in circumspection
40 of speech, the maturity of your advice on both practical matters and speculative
41 questions as well. This maturity will keep you from giving your opinion too hastily
42 if the matter is difficult. In such a case take your time to think the matter over,
43 study the question, and even discuss it with others.

44 9. You must try to be on good terms with those in governmental positions and be
45 kindly disposed toward them. It will help to this if the duke and those members of
46 his household, who have a wide influence, confess to Ours, and insofar as their
47 duties permit, make the Spiritual Exercises. You should win over the professors at
48 the university and other persons of authority by your humility, modesty, and
49 obliging services.

50 10. Consequently, if you should learn that you or the Society is in ill esteem,
51 especially with persons in authority, you should prudently undertake a defense, and
52 try to get them to understand the work of the Society and your own, to God's
53 greater glory.

54 11. It will help to have an exact knowledge of the disposition and character of the
55 men involved, and to consider beforehand all possibilities, especially in matters of
56 importance.

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57 12. It will help if all the companions not only think and speak alike, but even dress
58 alike, and observe the same external manners and social customs.

59 13. Each of the companions should be careful to reflect on what is adapted to the
60 end proposed, and they should talk matters over among themselves. The superior,
61 after having heard what the others think, shall decide what is to be done or left
62 undone.

63 14. They should write to Rome to ask advice, and to describe conditions. This
64 should be done frequently, as it can be of no little help to all.

65 15. From time to time they should read this instruction and what will be stated
66 later, and other points which they think ought to be added, so that their memory
67 may be refreshed should it begin to grow dim.

68 *On Scruples*

69 *To The Fathers Departing for Germany,*

70 **Jhus**

71 From the letters of Father Master Jerónimo¹ and also of Father Eleuthère²,
72 our Father has learned what God is pleased to accomplish through the ministry of

¹ Jerónimo Doménech was provincial in Sicily.

² The rector at Bivona was Eleuthère Dupont, known in the correspondence as Pontanus. He was born in Lille, France, on October 27, 1527, and became a Jesuit in Paris on April 6, 1550. He was ordained in Rome in September 1555, and was then appointed rector of the community in Bivona, Sicily. He died in Brussels on January 31, 1611.

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73 Ours in your city. I am sure that He would make more use of them if your
74 reverence's excessive scrupulosity, reinforced by the lack of humble resignation,
75 had not proved an obstacle. Up to a certain point scruples are not harmful to the
76 one suffering from them, when that person becomes, because of his scruples, more
77 vigilant and careful about not offending God, and does not form a judgment that
78 this or that is sinful, even though he has some doubt or fear that it is, and places his
79 confidence in another person whom he should trust, setting aside his own judgment
80 and accepting that of his adviser. If these two points do not help the scrupulous
81 person, then he is in the gravest danger, not only of offending God by failing to
82 avoid what he erroneously thinks is sin, but also of losing the opportunity and the
83 ability to serve Him, and even his own natural judgment.

84 So Master Marín, determine to keep these two points fixed in your memory:
85 (1) not to make any judgment or to decide by yourself that something is sinful
86 when it is not clearly evident that it is and others do not think so; (2) when you fear
87 that there is sin, you should refer the matter to the judgment of your superior,
88 Father Eleuthère, and believe what he says, not because he is Master Eleuthère
89 (even though he is a man of fine spirit and entirely trustworthy), but because he is
90 your superior who holds the place of Christ our Lord. You should do the same with
91 any other superior you may have: humble yourself and trust that Divine Providence
92 will rule and guide you by means of your superior. And believe me, if you have

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93 true humility and submissiveness, your scruples will not cause you so much
94 trouble. Pride is the fuel they feed on, and it is pride that places more reliance on
95 one's own judgment and less on the judgment of others whom we trust.

96 Also beseech God in your prayers and Masses to free you from this suffering
97 or infirmity, as far as is needful to avoid offending Him, or being an obstacle to His
98 greater service, and ask the prayers of others for the same intention. Offering you
99 mine, I commend myself to yours.

100 May Christ our Lord give us all His grace always to know and fulfill His
101 most holy will.

102 From Rome, June 24, 1556.