



REGNUM CHRISTI

Portrait of the Regnum Christi Chaplain

"A chaplain is a priest to whom is entrusted in a stable manner the pastoral care, at least in part, of some community or particular group of the Christian faithful, which is to be exercised according to the norm of universal and particular law" (*Code of Canon Law*, Canon 564).

Exercise of pastoral care is no passive endeavor. It requires leadership which relies on the power of personal example, galvanizing influence, and inspiration rather than on positional authority. A good shepherd protects his sheep, leads them, and ***involves himself personally in the growth of the flock***. "Being a good shepherd means living the ministry as a service, especially in 'readiness to allow oneself to be taken up, as it were <consumed>, by the needs and demands of the flock' (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 28). In the words of the Apostle, we are 'slaves for the sake of Jesus'" (2 Corinthians 4:5). (*Ratio* #319)

Most Regnum Christi sections are assigned a chaplain who:

1. "fosters and promotes the liturgical and sacramental life of the section and collaborates in the spiritual formation of the lay members" (*Rule of Life* #35),
2. proactively seeks opportunities to deepen a Christian way of life in members, while modeling this joyful life,
3. and creates or engages in apostolates which serve the Church and society, while also helping multiply membership.¹

"The Legionaries of Christ, by their religious consecration, contribute the testimony of their self-giving to Jesus Christ and their complete availability for the fulfillment of the common mission. By their condition as priests, they make present Christ the Priest and the Good Shepherd through preaching, administering the sacraments and spiritual guidance. In communion with all, they collaborate in the integral formation, direction and apostolic projection of the associated faithful, promoting the fullness of their baptismal vocation and Christian leadership; and they establish institutions and initiate actions that can most contribute, in depth and in extent, to building the Kingdom of Christ in society." (*Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation* #3.5.2)

Qualities of a Regnum Christi Chaplain

A Legionary chaplain exhibits a particular style (cf. *Ratio* #106-117): He is impelled by love for Jesus Christ, lives "militancy" properly understood, is obedient and ready to go where needed, with "a missionary spirit diametrically opposed to every form of laziness."

The influence of a Legionary chaplain derives from his spiritual fatherhood, yet also from the human qualities and experience he continually hones (cf. *Ratio* #10). Mission flows from his identity as a priest configured to Christ, and he strives to imitate the way Christ lived and fulfilled his mission from the heavenly Father. He is another Christ for Regnum Christi members. He offers the sacraments; he nourishes them with his own spiritual life which flows from his personal relationship with Christ and the power of his priesthood. He offers counsel at all levels of the section where appropriate. He accompanies and listens to each individual member (from section director to the newest member). He longs to see that every member reaches their full potential as RC apostles. Grounded in his identity, the chaplain's security is not threatened when others grow and flourish as leaders. He desires to see Regnum Christi members respond fully to their personal call to holiness and apostolate and rejoices with them as they bear fruit for the Kingdom.

¹ Priests have a capacity to transcend social circles and maintain networks beyond the scope of most lay people. It is important for a chaplain to foster numerical and qualitative growth so that the section does not stagnate. Recruiting new members is a key contribution of the chaplain.



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The Regnum Christi members find in him a safe space to share their inner lives with confidence. As he imitates Christ, he makes himself available to the multitude, while recognizing those to whom he must dedicate more personalized attention. He works to serve as Christ came to serve, looking for lasting fruits that will remain beyond his assignment as chaplain. His work is person to person and collaborative; sometimes initiating, other times following, as members live out their vocations in their various states of life.

The *Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation* remind us about the importance of formation in the life of each member. The chaplain plays a key role in this regard through his efforts to offer personal attention:

To share a spirit and a mission requires that the formation of all must take into account the characteristic features and requirements of that spirit and mission. This formation must help us discover the full meaning of our lives in Christ, be configured to him, and fulfill our mission. Formation should be integral and include all the dimensions of the person. (Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation, 30)

Accompaniment is required to form convinced apostles who aspire to the fullness of life in Christ. Accompaniment is understood as close, stable personal attention marked by selfless service. It seeks to help the other be open to the action of grace and contribute their own human collaboration, so they can respond to the questions and challenges they encounter on their journey of human and spiritual growth (Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation, 35).

An important contribution of the Regnum Christi chaplain is his efforts to foster co-responsibility and complementarity, and cultivate communion, fundamentals set out in the *Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation* 28-29. This implies that the Regnum Christi chaplain is grounded in his identity and strives to help others live from their own identity. His spiritual fatherhood enables him to give and to receive and therefore to reflect to the RC member his love as father and friendship as brother.

Recommended Practices as Chaplain:

- Pray daily for those entrusted to your pastoral care.
- Assimilate and transmit the RC Identity as articulated in the *Statutes* and other important documents .
- Be familiar with the *Rule of Life of the Lay Member* and the resources available in the *Regnum Christi Formation Pathway* toolkit.
- Schedule a regular (ideally weekly) meeting with the section director. Offer support and share ideas to help Regnum Christi flourish. (Be open about your own skill sets and how you can apply them in the section).
- Be humble, but proactive. Where could the ministry of presence strengthen the section? Do not underestimate the impact of the chaplain's presence within the leadership teams and members.
- Offer to attend leadership meetings in the section: AFIRE or section work team, team leader training, spiritual director formation, etc.
- Pay special attention to the identification and formation of future leaders within Regnum Christi including those capable of forming others.
- Develop a working relationship with each of the AFIRE coordinators or section work team.
- Whenever possible, attend personally the Encounter with Christ meetings of each team so that the members get to know the chaplain personally.
- Offer support and encouragement to lay spiritual directors, working with the section director to offer ongoing formation, supervision,² and accompaniment to those who guide

² Supervision is essential for all spiritual directors. Regnum Christi asks each member serving in this capacity to participate in supervision either peer to peer or one on one. Section directors are required to



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others. Identify those who might benefit seeing you for direction or supervision.

- Make yourself available as much as possible to all those in the section seeking guidance regarding their apostolate or spiritual life.
- Contribute to the development of the section formation and evangelization plan.
- Offer feedback or ways you see the section can synergize with others and support the life of RC in the locality.
- Look to visit RC Families in their homes to strengthen the sense of belonging in the community and as a living testimony to the vocation of the priesthood.
- Be dedicated to the *Principles of Apostolic Action* as outlined in the Statutes and their application within the section.