



IN THE SPIRIT OF EUGENE

“One Heart with Christ in Mission”

Constitutions 14 and 15

C 14 - *In answer to a special invitation from Christ, we choose consecrated celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom. (cf. Mt 19:12)*

C 15 - *By this option, we consecrate ourselves to the Lord and, at the same time, give ourselves to the people we serve; we thereby free ourselves for a love which reaches out to everyone and challenge the tendency to possess and use others for selfish purposes.*

This choice is also our way of giving witness to the depth of the Church’s covenant with Christ, her only Spouse, and to the spiritual fruitfulness of her union with him. We live our celibacy as a sign of the perfect charity which will be fully revealed only in the Kingdom.

Introduction

Constitutions 14 and 15 present consecrated celibacy as a personal response to Christ’s invitation and a radical way of seeking the Kingdom. This choice is not first about renunciation, but about inner freedom — about a heart made available to God and to others. Celibacy shapes the way we love, calling us to purity of heart and integrity of desire. Lived faithfully, it becomes a sign of hope, pointing to the perfect love that belongs to the Kingdom yet to come.

Scripture Passage – Matthew 5:8

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Purity of heart is not narrow or negative. It is a singleness of desire — a heart centered on God and freed from divided loyalties. For the Oblate, consecrated celibacy is meant to foster this inner clarity and transparency, so that our love may be genuine, respectful, and inclusive. A pure heart allows us to see God at work in others and to serve without possessiveness or self-interest.

Message from Saint Eugene de Mazenod

Saint Eugene repeatedly linked holiness, mission, and the integrity of the heart. In the Preface to the Constitutions (1818) he wrote: *“They must strive to become saints... they must walk courageously in the footsteps of so great a Master, working seriously to become another Jesus Christ.”* - (Preface to the Constitutions and Rules, 1818)

For Eugene, celibate chastity was never simply a discipline to observe, but a way of forming the heart in the likeness of Christ. A unified heart, rooted in love for Jesus, made the Oblate capable of authentic relationships and credible witness.



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Reflection

Constitutions 14 and 15 invite us to live celibacy as a liberating and purifying commitment. It calls us away from using others to meet our own needs and toward loving with reverence, freedom, and compassion. Celibacy, lived with honesty and maturity, trains the heart to desire rightly — to place God first and to relate to others without possession or control.

This way of life becomes a quiet but powerful sign of the Church's covenant with Christ and of the spiritual fruitfulness that flows from it. It also points beyond the present to the Kingdom where love will be complete and undivided. Even in our weakness, celibacy can remain a witness to hope, reminding us and others that God alone suffices and that the heart's deepest longing finds its rest in Him.

Questions for Personal Reflection and Sharing

1. What does purity of heart mean for me at this stage of my life and ministry?
2. How does consecrated celibacy help—or challenge—my interior freedom?
3. In what ways am I called to greater honesty and integration of heart?
4. How does our community support healthy, respectful, and transparent relationships?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You call us to love with an undivided heart and to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Purify our desires and deepen our freedom, so that our lives may reflect Your love.

Shape our hearts after Your own, that we may serve without possessiveness and love without fear.

May our witness point beyond ourselves to the fullness of charity that will be revealed in Your Kingdom.

Amen.