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*Fœderatio Internationalis Juventutem*

# Charter

(according to the decisions made during the February 9, 2008 Juventutem assembly in Bern)

1.

## **PREFACE**

This Charter defines the association known as « Fœderatio Internationalis Juventutem » (in English : « Juventutem International Federation », abbreviated to « FIJ »). In this charter and more generally, the term Juventutem means « the FIJ » or the Juventutem chapters.

2. The FIJ consists of, on the one hand, the Juventutem chapters, over which it has moral authority according to the Charter and, on the other hand, independent associations which have accepted the Charter without affecting their independence.
3. In the event of any question arising as to the meaning of translations of the Charter, the original in French will take precedence.
4. The Charter is considered to be the text providing unity among the Juventutem chapters, and other groups affiliated.
5. The name « Juventutem » (the accusative of the Latin word for « youth ») is a reference to the prayers at the foot of the altar in the Roman Missal revised by the Blessed Pope John XXIII in 1962. « Youth » as intended by Juventutem is not in essence a matter of age, but rather of familiarity with the grace of God.

6.

## **TYPE :**

Juventutem is an association of Catholic laity inspired by Canon Law, more particularly articles 215, 216, 298 and subsequent articles of the Code of Canon Law published in 1983. Young members of and those responsible for Juventutem freely seek the encouragement of the Church hierarchy. They see their activities and indeed their sanctification as a service to the Church.

7.

### **AIM :**

The aim of Juventutem is the sanctification of young people according to the liturgical and spiritual traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, referring to the *motu proprio* *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta*, published by Pope John Paul II on 2 July 1988 ; and to the *motu proprio* *Summorum Pontificum*, published by Pope Benedict XVI on 7 July 2007 : « Immediately after the Second Vatican Council, it might have been imagined that the demand for the use of the 1962 Missal would have been limited to the older generation, which had grown up with it, but it has since become clear that young people were also discovering this liturgical form, feeling attracted to it and finding in it a type of contact with the Most Holy Eucharist which suited them particularly well”<sup>i</sup>. In a dynamic perspective, Juventutem sees the sanctification of young people as necessarily contributing to the conversion of other generations :

- because young people are the adults of tomorrow : future husbands and wives, parents, religious, professionals, artists, scientists, politicians etc.
- because the adults of today are strengthened in their faith by taking part in the sanctification of young people by prayer and action.

8.

### **METHODS :**

Juventutem supports the spiritual life of young people and offers them various activities.

1. Spiritual life is supported :
  - a. by the various pious undertakings made by members ;
  - b. by the liturgy, according to the liturgical texts in force in the Latin Church in 1962 ;
  - c. by traditional doctrinal formation, inspired by St Thomas Aquinas, Common Doctor of the Church.
2. The activities are :
  - a. recreational, cultural or sporting excursions,
  - b. prayer meetings,
  - c. study groups,
  - d. pro-Life demonstrations and initiatives,
  - e. pilgrimages,
  - f. charitable activities,
  - g. evangelical campaigns,
  - h. national or international gatherings.
9. Juventutem willingly employs modern methods of communication and training. In this respect, the Juventutem internet sites are important areas for exchanges of information. Through these, Juventutem can make activities known which are not organised by it but are compatible with its purpose. Other audio-visual or printed methods may also be used by Juventutem : compact discs, films, performances, publications etc.

10.

### **PARTICULAR FEATURES :**

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, celebrated according to the Roman Missal as revised by the Blessed Pope John XXIII, has a central role in Juventutem. In particular, its members will meditate on the words of Pope John Paul II : «In the Roman (or St Pius V) Missal, as in various oriental liturgies, are to be found some very beautiful prayers in which the priest expresses the deepest sense of humility and reverence for the sacred mysteries : these prayers reveal the very substance of any liturgy»<sup>ii</sup>. So the young members of Juventutem will want to participate often and piously in Holy Mass, learning the meaning of its ceremonies, taking part in them by means of their prayerful presence, by providing liturgical service, by singing or in other ways. Members will be happy to help other young people to discover the riches of

Holy Mass.

11. In addition to Holy Mass, the adoration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, truly, really and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament with his Body, Blood, Soul and divinity, constitutes the core of the spiritual life of members of Juventutem. They will willingly take part in Eucharistic adoration and will seek to encourage devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.
12. Studying Catholic doctrine will provide a stimulus to the members of Juventutem<sup>iii</sup>. They will do so alone or in groups, by reading suitable books and listening to learned and zealous preachers, faithful to the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church. Members will wish to practice in their lives the truths of salvation, both in enriching their prayer life and in organising their social and professional activities.

13. **SPIRITUALITY : the « three whitenesses ».**

Telling of a dream which has become famous, the patron saint of Catholic youth, St John Bosco, described as «three whitenesses» the three fundamental elements of help to Christians : the Holy Eucharist, the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Father. The young members of Juventutem profess a great love for these «three whitenesses.».

14. After their faith and their devotion to the Most Holy Eucharist, described above, the young members of Juventutem have a special love for the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. They know that, as God alone chose Mary to come to us, we can find no surer path to return to Him. They will offer up at all times to the Most Blessed Virgin, their Mother in Heaven, all their troubles and all their joys, all their failings and all their successes. They will thank her for all her intercessions in their favour to God and for every grace she has obtained for them from her Divine Son. They will seek to imitate her in everything, so that she may bring them into ever more perfect union with their Eldest Brother and Lord, the Divine Redeemer Jesus Christ.
15. The young members of Juventutem are profoundly united to the visible Head of the Church, the Pope, successor of St Peter. They have for him a keen and fervent love, like that of St Catherine of Siena, advocate of the Roman Pontiff, whom she called «Sweet Christ on earth », a love as faithful as that of St Antony-Mary Claret, who promoted papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council.
16. The expression «three whitenesses» shows the intimate and providential link between Our Lord Jesus Christ, really present in the Holy Eucharist, His Most Blessed Mother, the Immaculate Virgin, and His infallible Vicar, the legitimate successor of the Apostle St Peter. This conjunction of the «three whitenesses» is so essential to the Catholic faith that the young members of Juventutem are sure to be on the right path when they embrace all three together in their hearts<sup>iv</sup>.

17. **CONDUCT :**

Friendly relations between young members of Juventutem will help effectively and eloquently in their sanctification. Their friendship is sustained by their shared interest in the traditional liturgy and doctrine of Holy Mother Church. They love and practise these with all the more joy and fruitfulness as they discover the beauty of them together. The members of Juventutem will not however present themselves as liturgists or theologians, merely as young believers, happy to practise their religion together. Thus humour and love, camaraderie and fraternal charity will inspire their behaviour. Relations between young men and women in Juventutem will be cordial and spontaneous, with no impropriety. Courtesy, the fruit of charity, will be most important. Healthy prudence will be found there.

18. Through good example, through prayer and friendship, the young members of Juventutem will encourage each other in the practice of the virtues of faith, hope, charity, patience, fortitude, justice, temperance etc.

19. Young members of Juventutem will accord pride of place to the virtue of charity, following the example of St Thomas Aquinas : «charity is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body »<sup>v</sup>. They will cultivate this virtue by practising kindness to their neighbour in a spirit of truth and, as far as possible, by works of corporal and spiritual mercy.
20. Young members of Juventutem attach great importance to the virtue of purity. They will practise it in their souls as well as in their bodies. To that end, they will avoid certain activities and conversations incompatible with purity. Their language, clothing and comportment will demonstrate the same desire for purity with simplicity and conviction.
21. To grow in the virtue of purity as in others, young members of Juventutem will seek inspiration from :
  1. the many young saints who glorified Christ on every continent, such as St Catherine of Alexandria ; in Rome, Saints Laurence, Cecilia, Sebastian and Agnes ; in Sicily, St Agatha and St Lucy ; St Aloysius Gonzagua ; St Bernadette Soubirous ; St Jean-Gabriel Perboyre ; St Joan of Arc ; St Jean Berchmans ; St Catherine of Siena ; St Paul Miki ; St Kateri Tekakwitha ; St Charles Lwanga ; St Theresa of the Child Jesus; St Maria Goretti ; St Rose of Lima ; Blessed Karl Leisner, etc ;
  2. saints upon whom God bestowed a particular charisma for young people : St John Bosco, St Philip Neri ;
  3. saints with a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament : St Tarcisius, St Francis and St Clare of Assisi, St Juliana of Cornillon, St Thomas Aquinas, St Pius V, St Pascal Baylon, St Jean-Marie Vianney, St Peter-Julian Eymar, St Pius X, St Pio of Pietrelcina, etc ;
  4. the holy angels ; the holy guardian angels ; the holy archangels – St Michael, prince of the heavenly militia, St Raphael, who protected the young Tobias against many dangers and defeated the evil demon Asmodeus and finally St Gabriel, sent by the Most High as His representative to Our Lady.

22.

### **THREE SPIRITUAL COMMITMENTS.**

The goal of Juventutem is to sanctify youth. To reach this goal, every member of Juventutem commits to:

1. every day : praying for the sanctification of youth and especially for other members of Juventutem. He can recite the extract from Psalm 42 «Judica Me » used in the prayers at the foot of the altar during Holy Mass, from where the name «Juventutem» is derived<sup>vi</sup>, or he can say a prayer of his choosing (such as the Ave Maria or Pater Noster) for example ;
2. every week : entering at least once, however briefly, into a church or oratory to adore Our Lord present in the tabernacle (either during Mass or at another time, on Sunday or during the week );
3. every year :
  - hearing Holy Mass in the traditional rite (at least once a year) ;
  - going to Confession (at least once a year) ;
  - taking part in some Juventutem activity.
23. The commitment is private, known only to those responsible for the administration of Juventutem.
24. The commitment is personal and is not binding under any penalty of sin.
25. The commitment having as its goal to help the Juventutem member to achieve sanctification, it must not remain theoretical but should be followed in practice with confidence and fidelity.
26. The commitment is made for one one year from the date of admission in a Juventutem group. It is automatically reconducted every 24 May, unless otherwise expressed to the group leader.

**CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

Juventutem consists mainly of single Roman Catholics, young men and women aged generally between sixteen and thirty-six. Unless otherwise stated, admission to membership either for a person or a group does not include direct membership of the FIJ but rather of a local Juventutem chapter.

28. Juventutem may admit married members under the age of thirty-six, as well as members over thirty-six, single or possibly married, who can offer their skills and experience in the organisation of activities and management.
29. Persons in holy orders (aged above or below thirty-six, whether priests, religious, seminarians or nuns) may become members of Juventutem if the rule of their order allows and if their superiors consider it appropriate.
  1. These members (even if part of an enclosed order) will provide useful support to the young members of Juventutem by prayer, pastoral ministry, spiritual direction and giving advice. They will take part in the activities of Juventutem according to their abilities. As Juventutem is a movement of young lay people in the world, clerics in holy orders (and apostolic consecrated persons more generally) must always remain in a minority.
  2. Nevertheless, the number of contemplative members (clerics in holy orders and other religious) of Juventutem is not limited. Indeed their participation in the activities and meetings of Juventutem is not material but entirely spiritual. So the young members of Juventutem will benefit greatly from the prayers of these members, who are invisible and powerful intercessors.
30. Moral persons (as distinct from natural persons) can also become members of a Juventutem chapter. These moral persons are institutions (according to canon, natural or civil law), whose members will not take part physically in the activities of Juventutem, on account of their age, their way of life or for other reasons. They support Juventutem by prayer, by alms, by recommendations, always with the aim of participating in the sanctification of youth.
  1. As members of a Juventutem chapter, they also benefit from the prayers and possibly from the visits and other charitable activities carried out by the young members of Juventutem.
  2. These groups may be religious communities, seminaries, universities, schools, hospitals, retirement homes, charitable associations, abbeys, dioceses, parishes, confraternities, centres of spiritual exercise, lay movements, families etc.
  3. Because of their widespread locations or the breadth of their activities, other groups may become members of the FIJ itself rather than of one of its chapters. These groups are distinct from associations and Juventutem chapters belonging to the FIJ through their apostolate to young people. They will have the status of «partners,» without any right to vote.
31. Members who are Christians but not Roman Catholics, or who are not Christians or who have no religious affiliation may be admitted to Juventutem if they wish to benefit from the means of sanctification offered.
  1. Their intentions must be sincere and their attitude in conformity with the Charter, respecting the faith and the customs of the Roman Catholic Church.
  2. They will observe the commitments described in article 24, except for sacramental confession, which will be replaced by a serious examination of conscience.
  3. Their presence at Holy Mass in the context of Juventutem does not include sacramental communion.
  4. Their number may not amount to more than one-fifth of the active members in each local chapter.
32. Active members are those who take part physically and not only in spirit in the activities of a Juventutem chapter. Not included as active members are therefore moral persons, persons in enclosed orders and honorary members (admitted to Juventutem on account of services rendered, without any rights or obligations). Only the active members may elect or be elected

as representatives of their chapter at a Juventutem meeting.

33. Persons who are not members of Juventutem chapters may take part in the activities of a Juventutem chapter (liturgy, excursions, pilgrimages, retreats, sessions etc.). These participants are not obliged to follow this Charter. They will however observe the customs and general standards in force in Juventutem during the period of the activity in which they are taking part.
34. An annual contribution of ten Euros is expected from each member according to his or her abilities. Contributions will be collected within each group and sent once a year to the Juventutem Bureau.
35. The bond uniting the members (whether Juventutem chapters or other associations or individuals) with the International Juventutem Federation is essentially a bond of honour and mutual trust. The Federation can bear no public liability for its members' possible misdemeanours, fines or condemnations.

36. **PASTORAL ASSISTANCE :**

A lay movement, Juventutem is by definition independent from any particular religious order or community. Nevertheless, Juventutem willingly seeks the pastoral support of clerics who are prepared to be available as « chaplains » in accordance with their superiors.

37. In conformity with the specific liturgical aspect of Juventutem, the more time a cleric devotes to the traditional ministry (that is, according to the liturgical and spiritual traditions mentioned in the motu proprio letters *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* and *Summorum Pontificum*), the more able he is to take part in Juventutem. Clerics belonging to religious societies whose constitutions lay down such a traditional ministry are favoured participants in Juventutem.
38. Diocesan clerics or members of societies which do not ordinarily use the Roman liturgy of 1962 may also provide pastoral support for Juventutem groups. In which case they respect the specificity of Juventutem and promote its charism.
39. The number of chaplains is not limited, but must always remain far below the number of lay members.
40. To assist the chaplains – religious, seminarians, friars who meet the criterion above may be admitted as members of Juventutem.
41. The status of chaplain of a Juventutem group:
  - is bestowed for one year, from the date of approval by the Ecclesiastical Assistant of the FIJ;
  - is renewed automatically on May 24, unless the Juventutem Management Board decides otherwise.

42. **HISTORY :**

The name « Juventutem » was mentioned for the first time on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2004, in correspondence between the founders of Juventutem. 24<sup>th</sup> May is of course the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. Following the victory of Christendom over the Turks at Lepanto, in the Ionian islands (1571), the Pope, St Pius V, had inserted in the litanies to the Blessed Virgin the invocation to Our Lady « Help of Christians. » It was also under this title that Pope Pius VII created a feast day, on 24<sup>th</sup> May, in honour of the Virgin Mary, to express his gratitude for deliverance in 1814 from exile and the captivity imposed on him by Napoleon I. 24<sup>th</sup> May is considered to be the anniversary of Juventutem. The International Juventutem Federation was founded in Bern, Switzerland, on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

43. Juventutem made itself manifest for the first time in August 2005 (in Bavaria and then in Düsseldorf) during the triennial World Youth Days. From its inception, however, Juventutem was intended to be a permanent structure with the purpose of sanctifying young traditional Catholics by demonstrating their diversity and vitality in regular activities.
44. Juventutem was founded in the context of the year of the Eucharist, decreed and inaugurated

by Pope John Paul II in October 2004 and concluded by Pope Benedict XVI in October 2005. Since its beginning and in future, Juventutem has entrusted and will entrust its members and works to the Son of God made Man, Jesus Christ our Saviour, present in the Blessed Eucharist.

45. Juventutem is represented by a monstrance with, in its centre, the Holy Host. The word Juventutem will also be shown in blue around the monstrance, thus demonstrating the Marian character of Juventutem. The year 2005, proclaimed as Year of the Eucharist, also marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of Immaculate Conception and our association was consecrated to Our Lady on Good Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2005, coinciding with the Feast of the Annunciation.

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<sup>i</sup> Letter to the Bishops, accompanying the Motu Proprio “Summorum Pontificum“, by Pope Benedict XVI.

<sup>ii</sup> Message from His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, Castelgandolfo, 21 September 2001.

<sup>iii</sup> « Lay persons are bound by the obligation and possess the right to acquire knowledge of Christian doctrine appropriate to the capacity and condition of each in order for them to be able to live according to this doctrine, announce it themselves, defend it if necessary, and take their part in exercising the apostolate » cf CIC, 229§1.

<sup>iv</sup> The union of the three whitenesses is expressed with force and concision in the Secret of the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians (24<sup>th</sup> May) : « Pro religi6nis christi6nae tri6mphi h6stias placati6nis tibi, Domine, immol6mus : quae ut nobis proficiant, opem auxili6trix Virgo praestet ; per quam talis perf6cta est vict6ria. Per Dominum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, Qui Tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia saecula saecul6rum. Amen. »

Translation : «O Lord, we offer this sacrifice to You for the triumph of the Christian religion. Since the power of the Virgin can bring us victory, may she bring us her help and thus make this sacrament of profit to our souls. For the sake of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen. »

<sup>v</sup> « Formaliter caritas est vita animae sicut et anima corporis » (cf Summa theologiae II-II q.23 a.2 ad 2).

<sup>vi</sup> « Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta: ab homine iniquo et doloso erue me.

Quia tu es, Deus, fortitudo mea: quare me repulisti, et quare tristis incedo, dum affligit me inimicus?  
Emitte lucem tuam et veritatem tuam: ipsa me deduxerunt et adduxerunt in montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua.

Et introibo ad altare Dei: ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam.

Confitebor tibi in cithara, Deus, Deus meus: quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me?

Spera in Deo, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi: salutare vultus mei, et Deus meus.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Introibo ad altare Dei. Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam. »

**Translation :**

« Judge me, O God, separate my cause from that of godless men : deliver me from unjust and deceitful man.

For You are my strength, O Lord. Why have You rejected me and why am I sad when the enemy attacks me ?

Send Your Light and Your Truth ; they will lead me to Your holy mountain, towards Your tabernacles.

I will go to the altar of God, to God who giveth joy to my youth.

I will praise You with the zither, O God, my God. Why are you sad, O my soul ? Why are you troubled ?

Hope in God, for I will praise Him again, my Saviour and my God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever more shall be. Amen.