

Year 2025

Course: Recognising oneself
The Statutes: a path and a mirror

Saturday, 12th April, 2025
Summary of the Lesson 4A
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“Government: service to unity”

- The focus of the lesson will be on the rules of the General Statutes concerning the organs of the central government of the Work of Mary on a universal, international level (Part Four of the General Statutes): the General Assembly, the President, the Co-President, the Centre of the Work of Mary, the General Council, the Central Delegates, the General Councillors (articles 73-114).
- Government is an activity that takes place through tasks that are carried out on a permanent basis by a person or by a number of people, provided for by rules, and is distinguished from governance, which is something generic, that concerns the ways of governing more broadly.
- The purpose of this in-depth study is to show the extent to which the norms concerning the organs of the central government are an expression of the charism, capable of expressing and protecting it in a seamless way with the others, to be read and understood always in the light of the premise of every other rule.
- Through the norms that establish and regulate the Centre of the Work of Mary and the General Council, there are two bodies with different and specific functions that ensure unity in the Work of Mary between the different branches, to which people with different vocations belong, where there are the two main sections made up of the men and women focolarini.
- In the organs of the central government, tasks are conferred in two different ways: through an election by the General Assembly or an assembly of a branch, and through an act of appointment, i.e. a choice by the President, which in some cases requires the consent and in others only the opinion of the General Council.
- On the subject of the international central government, a general decree issued by the Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life was promulgated on the 3rd of June 2021. This decree concerns the duration and number of mandates of government as well as how members should be represented in the election process of the international governing body of international associations of the faithful. This decree has the force of law and is binding for all associations of the faithful and for bodies recognised or established by the Dicastery, and therefore also for the Work of Mary.
- The General Statutes include a plurality of structures of communion through which each person can convey their voice to the organ of central government.
- The men and women focolarini have a life-long commitment at the service of the Work of Mary, they take on the evangelical counsels with vows or promises and are members with full rights.