

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE EMPLOYEES OF OUR COMMUNITIES AND OF OUR WORKS. RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

Introduction

- *“Laws regarding work, security, and justice, in favor of persons working in houses and works of the Congregation, should be exactly observed.”* (Statutes.107&1. Cfr. C.154&1)
- Our social criteria in this question are to be based on the rights of the workers and on relations of equity and justice.
- Some difficulties in the administration of our works: lack of technical training, frequent dependency on external personnel, the short-term nature of the appointments in the community, the need for economic benefits, the relations with our employees.

1.- Need for collaborators and frequent situations

- Besides the voluntary personnel that collaborate with us in our mission, we have employees to whom we are “patrons”, a kind of relation not easy to maintain due to the formation we have received.
- A tendency to yield to the employees’ demands. The functioning of a work of ours is not to be looked upon as an activity of beneficence.
- We should have clear criteria when we come to draw a contract with a person for a given type of work: what do we need, which qualities are to be looked for, what is the type of work to be done...
- We should know about and apply the salary paid for in a similar activity in the work market. The contracting conditions should be drawn quite clearly from the beginning.
- It is not usually advisable to contract relatives, friends or persons known, of ours or of our employees. Neither should charismatic affinity be the main criterium.
- It is necessary that the contracting in our communities and our works pass through the control of the corresponding entity: community, Provincial Council, Economic Commission.
- We should ask of our employees that they perform well their work.

2.- Relation with the employees

- We should be conscious that our employees are collaborators in our mission ... At times it happens paradoxically that our spirituality gets to everyone except to our own employees.
- We should try to keep a healthy relation with our employees: cultivate towards them above all a truly humane type of relation
- On our side, acting with responsible seriousness: stimulate our employees with our living example. Demand professional exactitude as regards working hours.
- Look always for the most efficacious means to use in the most profitable manner both the human and the material resources .

3.- Clear and transparent structures

- Need for a clear and transparent organization chart to define functions and assign the different activities. Functions and activities should be conveniently distributed...
- It is necessary to know how to conjugate in our structures stability and opening to changes ...
- Clearness in the hierarchical order and in the person in charge renders it easier to have a better relation among all... Hierarchical order is an instrument to coordinate efforts, facilitate

dialogue, get different opinions, channel initiatives, select mediations...

4.- Some criteria which should inspire our decisions in economic matters and our relations with our employees

- Before taking any decision, evaluate its possible consequences for the life and the mission of our communities and their members.
- Honesty, rectitude, and a sense of justice should inspire all our decisions.
- Economic matters should always be ordained to the service of our mission.
- We have to abide by civil and fiscal laws, even to the point of going beyond and above what is determined by law as a minimum.
- Paying a just salary to our employees and keeping in regard to them all the requirements determined by labor legislation.

5.- The Social Doctrine of the Church in regard to work and to a just salary

- The Social Doctrine of the Church has to be a key element to inspire our ministerial relation in regard to our employees.
- Work is the most basic element of any economic activity and the key element of the social question (John Paul II: “Laborem Exercens” 3)
- The deeply human and religious value of human work (G.S. 34)
- We should be motivated by a Christian sense in all things, a Christian look of human work, a profoundly respectful and humane view of the worker .
- In regard to the just salary, we have to keep the norms of justice and equity, we should keep in mind each worker’s contribution to the economic production, the financial situation of the contracting entity, the exigencies of the common good of the given political community, and those of the universal common good (Cfr. “Mater et Magistra”, 71)

6.- Rights and duties of the workers

- Main rights: right to work and to a free election as regards profession or job, to free labor association, to strike, to meet in public, to professional training and promotion in the field of work, right not to be discriminated against, right to physical integrity, to an adequate health and insurance policy, to personal intimacy and respect due to his dignity, to receiving on due time his just salary...
- Main duties: to fulfill diligently the concrete obligations of his job, to keep the given norms about safety and hygiene in the work place, to obey the orders of the man in charge within the limits of the latter’s authority, to contribute to the improvement of productivity, to keep faithfully the obligations arising from his work contract (as regards time, responsibilities, efficiency...)
- As a concrete point, the existence in our midst of irregular situations of work should be totally unthinkable. It is convenient that we commend to specialized people the redaction of the work contracts that specify the conditions agreed upon with the workers, also specifying in all cases a just salary, an adequate social security and a clear definition of working hours, functions and tasks.

Conclusion

It is important that we never lose sight of the evangelical nature of our

communities and of our works and of the missionary dimension not only of our work but of that of our employees as well. It is therefore desirable that we try to pass on to them the human and Christian nature of our activities, so as to motivate them to contribute with the best of their human resources.