



CONGREGAZIONE DELLA PASSIONE DI GESÙ CRISTO  
P.ZA SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO, 13  
00184 ROMA - ITALIA

*Al Superiore Generale*

Prot.n.2007.0228

Rome, 19 October 2007

### **Letter of the Superior General Introducing the Template for Guiding the Planning Process**

Dear Brothers of the Congregation and sisters and brothers of the Passionist Family,

This letter and the attached Template document that is being sent to all the entities of the Congregation is intended to serve as an instrument to help each Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate develop its plan with a view to the Restructuring of the Congregation. This Template was created during the meeting of the General Council and the Regional Coordinators of the seven areas or Conferences of the Congregation that took place in Rome at the Generalate of Sts. John and Paul, this past September 3-5. This document is intended to offer a guideline that begins with a statement of the reality of each entity, including its strengths and weaknesses, which will help us to plan for a more vital future for the Congregation. We aspire to this “**vision**” or plan for the future in order to revitalize our Passionist presence and mission. Based on the ten priorities that were established by the last General Chapter it should guide us in formulating a Plan for each entity (Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate) and in devising plans that can be shared with other entities within or beyond one’s own region.

The planning should help us to create a bridge between the past and our present and future realities in order to discern those changes, including structural changes, which we should employ in order to make our life and our mission more efficacious. In fact, this is the motive and the goal of the Process of Restructuring that is taking place in the Congregation.

The seed of Restructuring was already present in the General Chapter of 2000 that was celebrated in Itaicì, Brazil. In its Document it alludes to the need for a reorganization of the Congregation. The Synod of 2004 acknowledged Restructuring as a call to conversion from God to instill new, creative fidelity in our community life, our prayer and our mission, and in true solidarity within the Congregation and with the poor.

Restructuring is not an end in itself; it is a means of giving renewed vitality to the Congregation. It can serve to create new ways of being together and for discerning new responses to the changing conditions of the world and of the Congregation. In fact, the world has greatly changed and our Congregation is also very different from the past, and it is within these changing realities that we must build the Kingdom of God.

The process of Restructuring began with the work of a Commission that was appointed by the General Council and given three objectives: *1) Actively involve every religious in the process of spiritual and institutional renewal to which they have been called by God; 2) Devise a planning process that enables the Congregation to proceed in harmony; 3) Reformulate our Passionist “vision” for the world of today and tomorrow so as to discern and enact those changes to which we have been called.*

Having undertaken the long road toward Restructuring we are all the more convinced that personal and community conversion are needed to bring about effective change. This impels us to go to the very essence of our being that is consecrated to the Passion of Jesus.

At the last General Chapter of 2006 we expressed the questions that were previously posed privately or in community dialog: *“What kind of Restructuring is needed to give new vitality to the mission of the Congregation?; What type of community life, mission and future do we envision for the Congregation of today and within ten years?”* We are searching for responses to these questions as we move along the road toward Restructuring that was the central issue of the General Chapter.

By means of the **Central Decree**, the General Chapter established that *“every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate develop a plan for the future of its life and mission”* and *“has discerned ten priorities”* that will serve as a guide in formulating a Plan for every entity and for sharing them with the plans of the respective, neighboring regional realities and with the other parts of the Congregation: *“In the process of developing this plan, every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate can work independently or in collaboration with others, either within or beyond its own Region. These plans will be shared on a regional basis. They will also be shared with the entire Congregation with the goal of providing a foundation for the next General Synod and for the next phase of Restructuring.”* (**Decree of the General Chapter, 2006**)

The General Chapter invites us to undertake this discernment and the process of Restructuring *“with enthusiasm”*, i.e. proceeding actively and energetically along the road that was begun at the General Synod of 2004, that was confirmed at the General Chapter of 2006 and that is to continue until the General Chapter of 2012.

Perhaps at times it may seem that we are walking alone along the road and that we cannot recognize Him as happened to the disciples of Emmaus; however, we can be certain that Jesus is walking with us because we are building the Reign of God. May faith enable us to experience His presence and to listen to Him as He speaks to us along the way.

Before concluding I wish to invite the seven Coordinators to actively encourage those of their own Conference and the respective major Superiors so that by the next meeting of the General Council and the Coordinators that will take place in May, 2008 in Spain/Portugal (CII Conference territory), each juridical entity will be able to present its own Plan and also be open to present those plans that are shared with other juridical entities.

The General Chapter and the Conferences themselves that chose them, have given the Coordinators a task of leadership that they should undertake enthusiastically and with a zealous and generous spirit. Despite the various responsibilities that they may have, they should consider this a primary task of their mission.

**At the next General Synod that will take place in Mexico at our Retreat House in Cuernavaca, 7-17 September 2008,** together we will study and evaluate

what has been presented in the strategic plans in order to make decisions about how to proceed in the process of Restructuring.

According to Recommendation No. 4 that was approved by the last General Chapter, **a day for on-going formation for the Major Superiors will be proposed at the Synod for Saturday, 6 September.**

To everyone I wish joy and peace in the Lord and may your work be fruitful.

May Mary, our Mother of Hope, open our hearts to trust and may St. Paul of the Cross, our common Father and Founder, whose feast we are celebrating today, bless us and accompany us.

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio  
Superior General CP

Rome-Sts. John and Paul  
19 October 2007  
Feast of St. Paul of the Cross

## THE TEMPLATE FOR GUIDING THE PLANNING PROCESS

Each Province, Vice Province and Vicariate is asked to briefly describe their situation, using the outline and these questions as their guide.

Name of the Province, Vice-Province, Vicariate:

### **I. The Current Reality:**

1. List the countries in which this Entity is present.
2. State the number of religious of the Entity according to age groups: under 30 years of age, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71 80, 80 plus, excluding those living in Vicariates and the missions.
3. For those Provinces that include a number of countries, but remain as one Province:
  - Please list the nationalities of men working in each country and the total number of religious in the Province as a whole.For those Provinces which are essentially located within one country:
  - Please list the number of religious working in your Province but belonging to another juridical entity.
4. List the individual local communities, together with the number and nationality of the religious present in each one.
5. List the apostolic ministries and works undertaken in each community: Corporate and personal ministries.
6. Describe the current financial situation of each Juridical Entity (Province, Vice-Province or Vicariate) and each community of the respective Juridical Entity: i.e. funds including Investments, deficit budgets and profit margins. State the most significant source of income and expenditure for the Entity and for the each community.
7. Describe the current vocation and initial formation situation.
8. State the number of religious living outside the Province, for example those that work in the Vicariates or in the Missions.

### **II. What is the future projected for your Entity by 2012 based upon the information provided above (Section I, numbers 1 to 8)?**

*In light of these projections, what will your future situation be if no changes occur.*

### **III. Our Vision: Preferred or Desired Future to revitalize Passionist Presence and Mission?**

1. Identify the main life-giving resources or strengths of your juridical Entity. e.g.,
  - Spirituality
  - Culture
  - Youth
  - Traditions
  - Missions
  - Financial situation
  - Laity
  - Other...
2. Identify your limitations, weaknesses, concerns and challenges.
3. Given what you have named as strengths and weaknesses, describe your future vision for a more vital Passionist presence and mission.

*(Name the new structures that in your judgment need to be created and which of the present structures need to be modified and how, for a more vital Passionist presence and mission.)*

**IV. Why this New Vision? Briefly describe the major theological, spiritual and Congregational reasons that motivate and support the need for structural changes in your Province, Vice-Province or Vicariate.**

**V. The Ten Priorities of the Central Decree (General Chapter 2006) guide our Planning for a Vital Future. These are:**

- 1. International Collaboration for Community Life and Mission.**
- 2. Solidarity in the areas personnel and finances.**
- 3. A revision of the structures of government, communication and juridical entities.**
- 4. Formation**
- 5. Commitment to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.**
- 6. Collaboration with the Laity.**
- 7. Dialogue with the world of culture, and the arts and sciences.**
- 8. Communications**
- 9. Ecumenism and Inter Religious Dialogue.**
- 10. Preferential Option for the Youth.**

**In reference to each Priority, please respond to the following questions:**

1. Why? State the reasons why this priority is needed and is important.
2. How? Describe how you intend to address this priority:
3. When? State the time frame and successive steps that are needed in order to attend to this priority.

**VI. In the process of developing this plan, each entity “can work independently or in collaboration with others, either within or beyond its own region.” (General Chapter 2006.)**

1. How is this mandate of the General Chapter being accomplished in your Plan?
2. With which other Entities are you collaborating in this process?

**VII. Evaluation**

1. What is the time-frame that will be needed for the implementation of your Plan?
2. Who will evaluate it and how will it be evaluated?

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio  
Superior General CP

Rome-Sts. John and Paul  
19 October 2007  
Feast of St. Paul of the Cross