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Dear Brothers,

I take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your commitment as a consecrated person and for your witness to Jesus and the Good News of the Kingdom of God as we celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life.

I was present at the meeting of the Superiors General with Pope Francis in Rome in November 2013. It was at the end of that meeting that Pope Francis announced the Year dedicated to Consecrated Life. During the meeting, the Pope answered questions posed to him about the Consecrated Life, speaking in a frank and open way from the heart. For me it was an honest sharing from a man who has dedicated his life to following Jesus as a consecrated person, but who shared the human challenges and struggles in this quest with absolute trust and confidence in the God who calls.

Like Pope Francis, we, too, have committed our lives to following Jesus Crucified in the consecrated life as Passionists, but we also know of the struggles we face because of changes, challenges, expectations and influences in and from the world we live in. This is inevitable and we need to trust in God who calls us and promises to walk the journey with us. From time to time it is good, and even necessary, to do a reality check. The Year of Consecrated Life invites us to focus and take stock of the life to which God has called us and to which we have given our “fiat”.

Personally, I do not see this Year as being one in which we are being asked to read or write more about the Consecrated Life. Rather, I see this Year as a celebration of this joyful life and an opportunity for renewal - an opportunity to focus specifically on our vocation to follow Jesus in a specific way of life which we commonly refer to as the ‘Religious Life’. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CIVCSVA) invites us “to reflect on the graced time we have been given to live…”

This ‘opportunity for renewal’ and ‘graced time’ begs both our personal and communal response. We are living the consecrated life from day to day. It is our life! Each of us has much food to reflect on and share from our experience of living this way of life each day. I encourage you to personally give time during this Year as a ‘memory’: not only to remember or recall to mind, but to make present again that first experience of your call and to rekindle that first fervour and fire of your desire to prophetically commit your life to Christ. I also encourage you to give time to sharing your experience and reflection with each other in community.

There is vast amount of rich material available for our reflection, based on the thoughts of Pope Francis, which have been produced by the CIVCSVA in preparation for the Year of Consecrated Life, including the Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father. In addition, the Secretary General’s office will post regular reflections on our website www.passiochristi.org during the course of this Year which I invite and encourage you to use for your own personal and communal ‘food for thought’.

The desire of Pope Francis is for religious to be authentic and joyful witnesses of the Gospel and to pursue the path of holiness, i.e. to be genuinely human, to form hearts of love and compassion, to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and to be wholeheartedly committed to following Jesus as he is presented for us in the gospels.

May this Year deepen our friendship with Christ through our relationship in both prayer and mission so that we may reflect his light in our world. May we grow in freedom to love through our genuine living and witness of the evangelical counsels – poverty, chastity and obedience – and our special vow to keep alive the memory of the Passion.

Fraternally,

Fr. Joachim Rego CP
Superior General
THE SECOND EXTENDED GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

Fr. Denis Travers, (General Consultant)

The Extended General Council Meeting was held in Rome from September 24th to 26th.

This advisory meeting, mandated by the 46th General Chapter meets at least once each year and its membership is comprised by the Superior General and Council, the General Secretary and the presidents of the six configurations that make up our Congregation. At this meeting, the Presidents of the respective Configurations, Frs. Frans Damen (CCH), Moisés Ruiz Río (CJC), José María Martín Sáez (SCOR), Leone Masnata (CEB), Raphael Mangiti (CPA) and Bro. Laurence M. Finn (PASPAC) were present. Fr. Ramiro Ruiz Betancourt (SCOR) served as the Secretary of the meeting.

Key items for discussion:

**The Norms for General Synod to be held in October 2015**

The Extended Council considered this complex issue for some time and offered several creative suggestions to the Superior General for possible later action. Amongst these was a suggestion that the Norms for the General Synod be moved to the Congregational Regulations.

There are some juridical functions of the General Synod and these require clear Norms for the membership of the Synod. At the same time it is hoped by many that the General Synod can be fully consultative, creative, open and representative of the whole Congregation in its widest sense - that is, not only its juridical entities but also its various cultures and national groupings of Passionists and our laity.

A report with various options prepared by a specially appointed commission was presented to the meeting and while no definite decision was made, the Extended Council supported a model whereby the Synod membership would be made up of members of the General Curia: Superior General, the General Consultors, the Procurator General, the Secretary General, the General Econome, the Postulator General, the General Secretary for Solidarity and the Missions and our former Superior Generals (14) and the Major Superiors of the Congregation. In the case of the two configurations which are provinces (CEB, SCOR) they will have extra delegates (by virtue of rescript). The Superior General is always able to add to this number by inviting various representatives. Thus the Presidents of Configurations who are not major superiors and those Vicars of entities with 25 members can be accommodated.

It is intended that documentation will be available to all members well in advance so that there can be good preparation for the Synod by all participants.

Various suggestions for the themes and issues for the Synod were received. Among these are:

- Norms of participation of future Synods and Chapters;
- The charismatic nature of Passionist Community;
- Financial aspects of our Congregation’s life;
- Looking outside our Congregation – towards issues like Evangelisation in a new world;
- Evaluate the progress of restructuring to date (our experience in configurations);
- The aspect of the Year of
Consecrated Life; Confronting the challenges of Religious life and what our Passionist Mission asks of us – e.g. the giving up of houses, patrimony, independence and taking on new options.

The General and Council will appoint a Preparatory Commission in the near future and this body will then advise the General Council on the practical arrangements for the General Synod of 2015.

**General News from the Configuration Presidents.**

**Configuration of Eugene Bosilkov (CEB):** Preparations for the inaugural Chapter (May 2015) are well under way and five Commissions are at work. Amongst their task are study of two alternatives on governance of the regions of the new Province (eight zones or four zones or a unique Province). The authority of the various Vicars is to be determined still and a Canonical Commission is at work on this matter. The Formation policy is being revised and a Community Life Commission is working on animation for communities (around sharing the Word of God, different retreats for the entire Province, a Congress on New Evangelisation and a document for pastoral activity. A Finance Commission has prepared a unified finance system and norms for safeguarding funds. Also being prepared is a discussion paper on relationships and possible houses to close and the members will be consulted to determine a name for the new Province. Further seminars are to be sponsored by “Gloria Crucis” and work on Letters of St. Paul of the Cross, new liturgies and a breviary is underway. In addition to all this there have been two workshops (a) for younger men and (b) for Local Superiors.

**Configuration of the Passionists of Africa (CPA):** This configuration is developing structures and awaiting the results of Trilateral Commissions so as to determine the levels of support from the former “Mother Provinces” as the three General Vicariates of MATAF, CARLW and GEMM move towards becoming Vice Provinces. Once each entity is stable in Formation, Finances and Personnel the whole of CPA will be stable. The achievement of financial security and self sufficiency for each entity remains a real challenge. Currently CPA is setting in place some initiatives to assist our presence and communities in Mozambique and some of the students are being encouraged and prepared for mission there. The meetings of the CPA keep as a focus some planning for joint projects to build up a sense of unity of the configuration. Further there is also good interest amongst younger men in going to other missions in other parts of Africa (and also other parts of the Congregation). SALV Vice Province is assisting the other Vicariates in their preparation to become Vice Provinces.

**The Asia-Pacific Passionist Configuration (PASPAC):** The Configuration is very aware of its geographical reality. It is located in the most densely populated region of the world and one that is substantially non-Christian. The Configuration is comprised of four provinces, two Vice Provinces and two missions. Currently there are three commissions working for solidarity in formation, finances and personnel, but the Configuration is also interested in setting up a Commission for JPIC. Current projects within the PASPAC Configuration include the English Language Program so that students can learn the working language of the Configuration (English), and so far thirty one students have taken part in this programme. The other initiative is the International Novitiate – currently in Adelaide, Australia and from this sixteen religious have been professed.

**The Configuration of the Sacred Heart (SCOR):** The sense of identity is growing across the whole Province and there is a good awareness of the ‘new’ reality that exists and less focus on what we have been in the past (not enclosed in our own worlds). There is great hope and security. The Province is
divided into four zones. Zone 1 is comprised of Bolivia, Chile, Peru; Zone 2: Venezuela, Panama, Ecuador and Colombia; Zone 3: Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Cuba; and Zone 4: Spain. The Provincial visits each zone once a year.

In total there are 56 communities. The formation of younger members takes place in several centres - theological formation occurs in Colombia and El Salvador, the two Novitiates are in Spain and Peru and the Postulant Houses are in Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and Cuba. The Aspirants are received and formed in nine countries.

The finances are coordinated by the Provincial Econome and he together with the four zonal economes constitutes the Economic Commission of the Province.

The Province has chosen as priorities the situation of the indigenous people of Peru, the homeless, the revitalisation of our presence in Chile and the situation of migrants in Mexico and Spain. Other Province projects include vocations, JPIC, Passionist Family and social media.

The Configuration of Jesus Crucified (CJC): The Configuration is aiming for increased communications and also making a priority of working at new or enhanced formation opportunities (including ongoing formation). Other priorities include the interchange for younger religious so that they can have concrete experience and learn new language skills and participation of laity in our mission.

It is better to present the positive goals of the configurations (not just what must die).

Novitiates are currently established in Mexico and Brazil.

The Configuration of Charles Houben (CCH): There have been recent meetings of the Leaders of the Configuration and there is an annual Assembly of Leaders and delegates.

Some of the current priorities of the Configuration are the fostering of the Vocation ministry and collaboration together to enhance this. There have been some new initiatives to encourage the study of English amongst younger members of the Configuration. A Seminar on Memoria Passionis is proposed for 2015, as are meetings for members under 50 years of age and for students. A combined Mission Statement has been created.

The Configuration, like much of the Congregation, is challenged to find new ways – within a ‘new’ culture (even if it is our own and ‘familiar’ culture) to proclaim the gospel. In western societies, for many of our contemporaries religion was a very important part of their lives and of society’s life; today religion does not mean what it once did. We have to create new spaces for new proclamation.

Canonical Visitations (Constitutions 141 & Reg. 84)

The Extended Council considered, but did not choose to modify the present model of canonical visits. However, some points made in discussion noted that while there are limits to what a Consultor can achieve (since practical decisions are made by the Major Superior) we could note the following:

The Consultor should come in a positive spirit and share the lives of the brethren in solidarity. The General Consultor should come as a brother; he also has a symbolic role, to represent the Superior General and in a sense the whole Congregation and thus the Visitation should be done in a fraternal spirit.

While there is a shift from a juridical basis to a fraternal style, it is better to keep both elements (talk to members, know the people, the struggles, but also to report to the Superior General and to give any necessary advice to the members). Canonical visits can be positive even with fraternal correction. The Visitator should be a partner in dialogue and focus on issues that are of vital concern to the community members.

The Superior General made a request to the Configuration Presidents to ask community superiors to re-establish the custom of keeping the various record books for each house.
The Charismatic nature of Passionist Community

It was suggested that some process to address this General Chapter priority needs to begin in each community. Indeed this may be a topic of the General Synod 2015. Various ways of encouraging a ‘catechesis’ of this issue were discussed. Options considered were: for the Superior General to issue a basic catechism (via a General Letter or through video presentation, to have some kind of regular discussion sheet/reflection sheet sent to communities.) Alternatively it was asked if the Consultors make use of the Assemblies of religious to do some catechism during Visitations.

The Superior General and Council will continue to study this issue in subsequent meetings.

Essentially it was felt that we need to look for experiences that unite us and identify us? Passionist life will find its own form in different cultures and contexts, but we must look to our primary unifiers.

The Report of the Econome General

Fr. Vincenzo Carletti presented a detailed report to the meeting. The essential issues were:

1. Currently there is some maintenance underway for the Generalate (roof repairs and some repainting). This work is being covered by Generalate funds and Community contribution.

2. The question was asked whether we need a policy that allows the Generalate to build up funds for investment and to have funds for greater expansion of the Congregation. Such a fund would be quite separate from the Formation Fund or Solidarity Fund. (3) We have 29 entities – all except one regularly send their quota/contribution to the Generalate. This year the Solidarity Fund has received up to now around €335,000 from the 2% or 7%, and only a third of the entities have sent their donations. But talking about the 2% or 7%, donations should come not only from Provinces or Vice-Provinces but also from the Vicariates of the Congregation.

Houses

The Congregation maintains four houses under the jurisdiction of the Superior General: Sts. John and Paul, St, Martha’s Bethany, St. Joseph’s Highgate and St Joseph’s, Monte Argentario. The Generalate is also responsible for the Vicariates of MATAF, CARLW, GEMM and the Mission in Vietnam. An ongoing issue is providing staff for these communities. Currently the Philippine Province is providing three men for Bethany.

Formation

The new Congregational Office for Formation is established. Fr. Augusto Canali is the Consultor for liaison with the new office and Fr Martin Coffey is the Executive Secretary. The six members of the International Formation Commission will meet with Fr. Martin and Fr. Augusto in Rome on October 24th.

Year of Consecrated Life

After discussion of many ideas and suggestions regarding the best way for our communities to celebrate this special year, it was decided that: Configuration Presidents will collect suggestions from throughout their Configurations and give these ideas to the General Secretary. (The General Secretary will also forward them to the Office of the new Secretariat for Formation).

World Youth Day: Krakow, Poland, July 25 – August 1, 2016.

Many ideas and suggestions emerged in this discussion, but no definite decision was reached regarding our own initiatives at the Congregational level for WYD 2016. Difficulties with previous gatherings have concerned both the financing of the meetings
for younger Passionist religious and young people who are associated with us, as well as logistical problems in gathering our young people in the midst of the World Youth Day programme itself.

Suggestions were that perhaps we should only have meetings at Configurational levels or only at Province levels. If we have an international meeting then it should be separated from the WYD meeting days as this would make the organisation of practical issues easier. Another view was that “meetings” today are different – they are often via social media and we should not neglect this issue. It was noted that the Dioceses in each country make big efforts for WYD. They stay somewhere beforehand to give young people an experience of immersion in some situation of poverty. Should we collaborate with our local dioceses? There was also the challenge of finding ways of sharing/filtering this experience to other younger men who do not attend – until this occurs we don’t receive the fruits of the gathering.

It was also suggested that we do an evaluation at entity level (and configuration level) before we plan for 2016.

Consultor for Laity
After receiving advice from the Extended Council the General Council is continuing to discuss this role. However it was generally thought that while most activity concerning our laity occurs at the Local level, the Generalate acting on the international level can help to organise this and help us to focus our activities and to walk in the same direction.

Our Laity organisations and their relationships with the professed members differs very much from entity to entity around the world. It was noted that many of the Letters of the Superior General are written to ‘all’ the Passionist Family; thus it is possible for each Province or entity to use letters or media from the Superior General for Laity as well.

Reviewing the Six Priorities of General Chapter
The general consensus of the Configuration Presidents is that these priorities are being used. For example, in PASPAC they will serve as framework for leaders meetings; in SCOR they keep the Province alive and help each religious; and they are helping CEB to evaluate the CEB project.

However, it is noticed that they are not always used as a ‘backdrop’ in the planning of Provincial Chapters and there are challenges to apply these priorities. But it is also seen that often the priorities did emerge without being formally the topic of discussion in Chapters.

It was asked whether we should give some kind of universal directive for evangelisation and it was seen as good if this issue can be a topic of reflection in our configurations. Some are struggling to understand what the Chapter asked.

It was also noted that these six priorities do not apply equally across the Congregation. Some entities cannot do this any longer. Some are well equipped and are embracing this work – e.g. within CPA the priority of evangelisation is being embraced at community and ministry level.

Liturgical calendar
A revision of the Congregation’s Liturgical Calendar is being proposed by the CEB Liturgy Committee. Our Congregational Calendar was officially approved by the Holy See in 1974. The Calendar we currently have is somewhat modified from the original and was changed after a Congregation-wide consultation. This was presented to the Holy See and gained approval. A General Synod made or approved these changes. Addenda have been added – the original text is in Latin.

It was noted that no one Province can change our liturgical calendar, but it may also be helpful at this time that we form a liturgical group representative of the whole Congregation to work on something together. This matter was left to the General and Council to take any further action.

Meeting with Fr. Jesús María Aristín
Fr. Jesús Maria spoke of the JPIC Workshop to be held in 2015. The Passionist Office of Solidarity and the Missions is organizing a seminar-workshop on JPIC (Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation) at the Generalate in Rome from 13 to 19 April 2015. The following will participate in the workshop as speakers: Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (Nobel Peace Prize recipient); Comboni Missionary, Fr. Alex Zanotelli; Fr. Joseph Mitchell (CP-CRUC); Martin Newell (CP-IOS; Antonietta Potente; and Andrea Riccardi, founder of the Community of Sant’Egidio of Rome.

The aim of this workshop is primarily to form a network of Passionist solidarity, to meet together as clergy, religious and lay people who work in these areas of solidarity, justice and peace. The cost will be €50/day and the Workshop will last for six days. To book for the seminar please contact Fr. Jesús María as places are filling fast.

Dictionary of the Passion.
The Dictionary currently has a publication date for Lent 2015.
Every year the Office for Solidarity and the Missions usually receives requests for approximately twenty projects from our missionaries seeking financial assistance from the Mission Fund. Our work involves submitting these requests to different institutions and organizations to seek approval for them and if so, to subsidize them 100%.

When the projects are well presented accompanied and by the bishop’s letter of support, they usually have an 80% chance of receiving the grant. There are agencies that are very generous with us, among these the Italian Episcopal Conference, some Caritas groups and some Congregations of religious such as the Sisters Missionaries of St. Peter Claver. Additionally some Passionist provinces and communities make generous donations. Finally we receive some donations from individuals that enable us to help our missionaries.

We want to take this opportunity to express to everyone our deepest gratitude, and to inform you about what we are doing. May God bless you and know that we pray daily for our benefactors. Below is a brief overview of some of the projects completed this year.

**Safe drinking water:** In Nyarongi, Kenya, the hometown of Passionist Fr. Gilbert Otieng (CARLW) running water has finally arrived. Thanks to the support of “Caritas Antoniana”, which donated 12,000 Euros, and with the help of some friends of Fr. Gilbert in the USA, residents within a 20 Km. radius of this town have access to safe drinking water.

**Two water tanks for the new community of Oruba (Kenya):** The scarcity of water is undoubtedly one of the most serious and urgent problems of Africa. Having access to water in this area is a luxury. In addition, water is used many times as an influential commodity for making money at the expense of the thirst of poor people. If water is absent, life ceases to exist.

For this reason, we have prioritized the realization of projects for the construction of wells for drinking water, because they are essential to life and because water is a basic need. The right to water is an inalienable right of individuals and nations. In coming years the water problem will generate many conflicts and will awaken many economic interests, as is already happening today.

We are called to be in solidarity with thirsty Africa and to help to provide more wells for drinking water.

**Sheep and chickens in Molo (Kenya):** This community is home to young men aspiring to

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**A child care center in Rousse (Bulgaria).**
Passionist life in Kenya. Like all formation communities a large problem is economic self-sustainability. Therefore any projects that teach them how to work in order to provide financial income for the community are very important. The breeding of sheep and chickens has been a project that they have chosen and is one that has been successful in generating revenue.

**The inauguration of a maternity department in the hospital of Itololo (Tanzania):** On August 21st the new Maternity Pavilion in the Hospital of Itololo, built by the Passionists in our mission in this city, was inaugurated.

The Association, “Friends of Fr. Ricardo”, has been the leading organization that has supported and promoted the construction of this pavilion designed specifically for the care of pregnant women. It consists of a health center, a delivery room and an operating room. The volunteers of the Association have closely followed the construction and completion of this maternity center. When these volunteers returned to Italy they expressed their immense joy at accomplishing this project. In the hospital three children, healthy and strong boys, have already been born. Indeed, this is their greatest satisfaction!

**Honey production in Arusha (Tanzania):** Fifty bee hives have been installed on the grounds of our formation house in Arusha, Tanzania. This formation community welcomes philosophy students from Mozambique, Kenya and Tanzania. This ecological project aims to promote the financial self-sufficiency of this house. The project, totaling 3,500 Euros, has been financed by the Passionist Solidarity Fund. Collaboration in the area of formation serves to strengthen the future of the Congregation in Africa.

**Two bakeries in Kikwit and Lodja (Congo):** Fr. Vital Otshudialokoka, Provincial Superior of the SALV Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo has been the promoter and architect of these two major projects, which from now on will feed thousands of our hungry brother and sisters, fulfilling the Gospel command: “give them something to eat yourselves” (Lk.9:13).

This was possible due to an investment of approximately 80,000 Euros, of which 54,833.70 Euros was subsidized by the Italian Episcopal Conference; the Office of Solidarity and the Missions provided 24,893 Euros.

**The Retreat House of Uskirika (Kenya):** There have been numerous requests for a prayer location from groups of people who want to gather for this purpose in this region of Kenya. Thus far our retreat house of Uskirika has only been able to accommodate small groups of no more than thirty people, whereas the majority of retreatants are more numerous. After building an extension to the retreat house it can now accommodate groups of up to a hundred people. The project has cost about 300,000 Euros. A part of this expense was financed through a gift and the other part was provided in the form of a loan that the local religious will have to pay back during the next few years. Over the past several weeks they have already begun to accommodate larger groups.

**A child care center in Rousse (Bulgaria):** A child care center was opened in the parish St. Paul of the Cross in the city of Rousse. The children that are welcomed in this center are ensured a warm meal, in an environment that will help them to develop socialization and learning skills. Additionally some of the mothers, working as teachers, will have a source of employment and will thus be able to improve the financial situation of their family.
From the discourse of Pope Paul VI on Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God, Passionist, on the occasion of his solemn beatification, October 27, 1963.

Blessed Dominic Barberi: a Champion of Holiness

The Church confers on one of its sons a public and official honor: on one hand She honors the glory of God, and on the other this glory reflects on the Church too, to our common edification, like a candle, lit in honor of God, that finds the assembly of the faithful gathered for prayer… We have come to realize that Father Dominic is worthy of memory as a scholar and as an author of great studies of theology and philosophy: for example his study on the papal infallibility, anticipates, with sure vision, the doctrine, that several years afterward, the First Vatican Council would define…

This profile of a man of sacred letters will be rendered still more interesting for all when we see him as a man of both prayer and action: we know that Father Dominic was a great master of asceticism, an indefatigable preacher, an apostle and expert apologist of the contemporary thought of his time… Action also characterizes his life in his government of his religious family, his travels, and the foundations that he makes.

[However] the fact which causes us to remember Father Dominic, and which is most well-known, and has been until now the main reason for his notoriety is the fact of the conversion of Newman. It was Father Dominic, who during an evening of October 1845, came to Littlemore, and received the decisive profession of catholic faith of that most singular spirit. The extraordinary importance of that simple event and the increasing fame of the celebrated Englishman reflected upon this humble religious like a ray of light. Ultimately the question comes to mind: Was it Dominic who converted Newman? What was Father Dominic’s influence upon him?

These questions are still today of interest and if the answers cannot attribute to our Blessed the direct merit of that formidable conversion, after highly laborious and dramatic meditations, two other very remarkable attributes must also be noted: that he listened to a mysterious, inexplicable vocation which was clearly communicated to his spirit from the first years of his religious life, i.e. consecrating his apostolic ministry to England where the Passionists had still not yet put their feet… Father Dominic would be the first Passionist to enter England, and, living there, would found four houses of his Congregation.

Newman wrote of this new Beatus, Father Dominic of the Mother of God: “He had a great love for England!” This phrase would seem to define the figure of this humble but great follower of the Gospel of Christ; it seems to sum up the historical current of the sentiments of the Church of Rome, towards that island of high destiny; it seems to give expression to this present spiritual moment of the Apostolic See, which now raises to the glory of “Blessed” this generous missionary, whose arms are open wide towards all that is most venerable and most significant in that blessed country’s present state of its magnificent Christian heritage; and it seems today to rise up from the heart of the Ecumenical Council, being celebrated in this Basilica, like an on-going sigh of suffering, but which is always confident [in the hope of] Catholic brotherhood.

* * *

From the letter of Paul VI on the occasion of the first centenary of the canonization of St. Paul of the Cross, April 23, 1967.
The Apostolate of the Holy Cross

What are the signs of the holiness of your Founder, St. Paul of the Cross? If the nature and character of this man is examined attentively, it will be clearly seen that in a certain sense he rushed into his own age as it were from the former days of antiquity - from the solitude of [the desert of] ancient Thebes or Palestine. And his was an age not at all in harmony with his ideals. This indeed happened by God’s design, so that more effective remedies might be given to a soft and lax age and so that the Christian discipline of public morality might be restored through the example of his more eminent virtue and through the richness of his heavenly grace.

The singular love which burned in him for Christ Crucified marked the whole course of his life. It characterized the whole tenor of his spiritual life; it inspired all his plans and works. Now it sheds its warm light on us as we repeat and recall the same realities. Paul indeed was a remarkable ascetic and mystic…

Moreover, the apostolate of the Holy Cross must in no way cease after Paul has gone to his heavenly reward. And the reason is this: an ordinary mild remedy would not suffice, especially in subsequent times and particularly in our own age. The cure for the evils which is desired and sought after must be based on strong, extraordinary power.

Indeed, this commission - the apostolate of the Holy Cross - which is certainly purer and more excellent than any other, is entrusted to this religious family which takes its origin from it. In view of this, a fourth vow is added to the vows which the members of the Congregation profess. This fourth vow is taken to foster and promote devotion to the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. O how beautiful is that honor which is heaven’s choice! O how noble is that work assigned to you!

The highest tribute is to be paid to the sons of St. Paul who after a short time, spread the Congregation throughout the countries of Europe and then very soon traveled across the Atlantic “with rich blessings from Christ” (Rom. 15:29)... Moreover it is fitting and expedient that we give due attention to the norm of the decrees of the recent Council, so that, according to the demands of the changing needs of our times, the life of this Congregation and its apostolic form of action can be properly renewed. Nevertheless, strive to observe the sound law of the interior spirit which you have received from your most holy founder. In this centennial commemoration of his canonization he is present to you as a gracious father; he watches over you as a helping father and encourages you to greater growth in numbers and in virtue…

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From the Letter of Paul VI on the occasion of the Second Centenary of the death of St. Paul of the Cross, October 14, 1975

The miracles of God understood through the Cross

We should like to mention this one fact in praise of Saint Paul: namely, that he did not place before his companions just any focal point of our religion, to be reflected upon, preached, lived by, and loved, but that one which is supremely holy and worthy of reverence: the Passion and Death of Christ. Whether we consider the Passion of the Son of God as the limpid font, the source of man’s salvation, which could not have been accomplished without the shedding of blood (cf. Heb.9:22); or think of it as the sure path to the conversion of sinners; or as the most efficacious
Under this aspect, the lifespan of your Holy Founder shows its fullness of Christian values. St. Paul of the Cross teaches that absolute priority must be given to prayer and contemplation because in this every commitment to progress in the spiritual life finds its strength. In this respect, this exhortation occurs so frequently in his writings that it is needless to insist on it.

Regarding personal prayer, We wish to touch upon that unremitting perseverance in meditation, the importance of which is recognized by all authors of the spiritual life. Then in respect of the forms of community prayer, Our exhortation goes first to the common recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours which must remain, or again become "a most honored event" in your religious life. For in this common recitation of the divine praises the inexhaustible well-spring of supernatural fraternal love is found by which one can continue to build up an ever closer bond between intention and activity.

Another factor of great importance which St. Paul of the Cross requires of you is the practice of poverty, that is to say, a real spirit of poverty that becomes a way of life as well of individuals as of communities. In this way your life is freed from that multiple interior and exterior slavery which in various ways impedes one’s commitment to spiritual progress and apostolic ministry. On this point it should be remembered that the first apostolate of your Holy Founder was directed in a special way to the poorer classes in the depressed regions of his time: in the Tuscan Maremma and the Roman plains.

**From the message of Pope Paul VI for the General Chapter of the Congregation, October 12, 1976**

**The Passionist Charism**

Not without reason did the Second Vatican Council, when determining the principles of renewal of religious life affirm that: “It serves the best interests of the Church for communities to have their own special character and purpose” (PC, 2; b); and “therefore loyal recognition and safekeeping should be accorded to the Spirit of Founders.” (ibid.)

If we wish to sum up briefly and explain in a few words the elements that form the characteristic spirituality that shone forth in St. Paul of the Cross, we must say that he was an “authentic contemplative” and an “untiring missionary”; indeed, he was an untiring missionary because he was an authentic contemplative. As a matter of fact, his relationship with God, that is, his union with Him, nourished and fostered by constant recollection and ascetical commitment, was a source and stimulus of that dedication to neighbor which made him take to heart particularly the moral miseries, healing them by preaching the Word of God.

Should not, then, the Passionists of today be driven to live in such a manner as to reproduce in themselves the features of the spirituality of him whom they acknowledge as Father and Master? In this respect there comes to mind the particularly solemn and stimulating words with which, from his deathbed, St. Paul of the Cross exhorted his sons to keep intact the “spirit of prayer, solitude and poverty” (cfr. St. Vincent M. Strambi, Life of Venerable Father Paul of the Cross - Rome, 1786, p. 184).

Greatness of soul and strength are required of whoever wishes to follow St. Paul of the Cross today; such a one must in fact go against the prevailing currents, refusing a slavish conformity to a world that is a characteristic of the “old man”, opposing it with the newness of a life reborn in Christ (cfr. Rom. 6:5,ff). Under this aspect, the lifespan of your Holy Founder shows its fullness of Christian values.

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And if the inhabitants of those localities willingly welcomed St. Paul and his first companions, they did so because they saw them so detached from worldly goods that the people called them “the poor of Jesus”. Let your concern be, therefore, to give to the Christian people a true and clear witness to personal and collective poverty beginning, as is evident, with Superiors who should be the first among the religious to give the example. As you know, St. Paul was tremendously jealous of poverty. This is evident in the very chapter of the Rules on poverty, which is the longest of all.

The third element which, along with the others mentioned above, characterizes in a special way the form of your spirituality according to the intention and orientation of the Holy Founder is the love of mortification and penance. It is not necessary to delay on this point because his whole life and doctrine are a glowing testimony thereof. Notwithstanding, it would perhaps be very opportune to give some thought to a certain general norm which, without descending into minute detail, would yet bind individuals and communities to this commitment, so that in your Institute there will truly be present a proper and characteristic element of “ecclesial identity”.

If you cultivate attitudes of prayer and of ascetical commitment with generous assiduity, they will become for you wellsprings of fruitful apostolate. Having cast aside other means, they will also make you understand that in the mystery of the Cross is to be found the solution of that problem which profoundly disturbs mankind; that is, the problem of suffering and evil. This problem cannot be resolved by rationalized disquisitions because these are inadequate. Man in fact cries out for ‘concrete’ help that will give him true freedom from slavery to the powers of evil that oppress him. Without a doubt these problems are confronted with success when so many magnanimous men, forgetful of self, give themselves to the relief of suffering, oppose violence and repress injustice. Yet is this a reply calculated to resolve the problem completely? Accordingly, having abandoned a first plan to take upon himself the defense of truth by the force of arms, St. Paul of the Cross preferred another solution; namely, he vowed with all the fervor of his heart to proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ to men intent on seeking their own advantage. He was, in fact, intimately convinced that only by loving meditation on the Passion of the Savior could come the radical remedy for the evils of his time (cfr. Letters of St. Paul of the Cross, Rome, 1924, Vol. IV, p. 228). The sacred preaching of this illustrious missionary and of his first companions which, like St. Paul the Apostle, centered on Christ crucified (cfr. 1Cor.1:23) did, in a short time, produce abundant fruit. Indeed, men, even brigands and bandits repented of their misdeeds, put aside their ancient hatreds, abandoned plans for revenge, and gave up oppressing their neighbor by unjust vexations. Thus society was reclaimed by the popular preaching of the Passion, and in this way the Congregation sunk the roots of its vocation of witness and evangelization.

Today We point out to you this charism underlying the origins of your Institute, reminding you that the preaching of the Passion of the Savior to the people is still a valid and most useful mission, worthy of making you concentrate all the strength of your Congregation upon it. It would surely be a regrettable thing if resources were so dispersed in other activities without moderation and prudence that they became exhausted, thus running the risk of no longer pursuing the end which is proper and characteristic of your Institute.
In order to address the specific need for formation in Passionist spirituality, the last General Chapter of 2012 approved the creation of an Office for Formation for the entire Congregation. The overall objective for this “General Secretariat Office for Formation” is two-fold: (1) To promote, support and plan programmes and processes of formation in the Passionist Charism and Spirituality for the ongoing formation of our religious and laity who are drawn to our Charism, and (2) To ensure that our religious and laity have access to the resources necessary to achieve this goal. The first meeting of the Formation Commission of this Secretariat took place at Sts. John and Paul, Rome, October 21 to 24, 2014. Present were Frs. Augusto Canali (General Consultant), Mark Robin Hoogland (SPE), Amilton da Silva (CALV), Brian Traynor (SPIR), Andrew Okeyo (CARLW), José Luis Quintero (SCOR), Daniele Pierangeli (PIET), and Martin Coffey (Executive Secretary). The meeting was facilitated by Mr. Roberto Clark.

The first morning was devoted to a sharing of experiences of the Passionist Charism. Each member was asked to reflect and share how he would tell a young person about our life as Passionists. The sharing that followed enabled the participants to highlight some essential elements of the charism which are captured by the following statements: the infinite love of God, which is revealed in the Passion of Jesus, is a fire which sets our hearts aflame; We are gathered to tell this story which sheds its light on our personal passion, and which also touches the story of every human being as an experience of compassion; Through this continual retelling of the Passion we discover a profound sense of identity which is rich and deep but impossible to capture in a fixed definition; Driven by the strong wind of the Spirit we become co-protagonists of this story; We are confident that “all will be well” and that we will have a deeply felt joy that does not depend on tangible results; Our narrative mission (Memoria Passionis) pays careful attention to the cultural context and to the language of the persons who share their story with us; and We seek the help of those sciences with the clarification that the phrase “ongoing formation” refers to all the stages and levels of formation including initial and lifelong formation. The second day of the meeting began with a presentation from Fr. Jesús María Aristin (Secretary General for JPIC and the Missions) regarding collaboration between this Secretariat and the Office of Solidarity and the Missions. They also met with Fr. Alessandro Ciciliani (PIET), President of the Historical Commission of the Congregation. It was agreed that it is important that these two groups work closely, collaborating with each other.

There was also discussion about the concerns and needs of the Configurations in order to see if there were any urgent matters or priorities for the Commission to address. For this purpose they reflected on two questions: What is the gift of the Passionist tradition for the reality of your Configuration? How can we in the Formation Commission capture and communicate that gift? In the course of the sharing and listening that followed numerous items were mentioned. These were reduced to the two overall concerns: (A) Revitalizing the Gift of the Charism for our religious and lay members; (B) Accompanying and supporting those religious involved in formation.

Day three was devoted to a fuller discussion of these priorities and included discussion of practical ways or activities of addressing them. The following activities were suggested.

Activities concerning point A: Prepare an inventory of written materials and resources concerning the charism and the history of the Congregation, in particular the matter of translations in languages other than the three major languages Italian, Spanish and English; facilitate a sharing of different cultural experiences and expressions of the Charism with the whole Congregation; Set up a “think-tank” to reflect on the charism in order to realize its greater potential for our life and ministry today and into the future; Make available to the whole Congregation the fruits of any “experimental experience” such as the one planned in the CEB Configuration; Organize courses on the spirituality of the Passion either locally or at the General level; Design a “Passionist Pedagogical Program/Itinerary” along the lines of the Castellazzo experience; Encourage, promote and organize pilgrimages to the places associated with the origins and high points of our history and spirituality; Help to cultivate an environment in the Congregation where members can share their personal story of living the charism in various contexts and times of their life; Facilitate workshops or experiments with new forms and expressions of the charism; and Work closely with the new areas of the Congregation to help them reflect on their experience of the Charism as they find new forms of expression relevant to their situation.

Activities concerning point B: Contact and network with all those responsible for formation in the Configurations; Organize a first meeting of all formation personnel; Encourage participation in and the use of initiatives in formation in the configurations, in other religious communities, and in the local Church.

Finally, Fr. Augusto shared some items from the General Council: the celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life; ideas and programmes for a Sabbatical Year; and a General Consultant for the laity.
On 11 and 12 November 2014 the Board of Directors of Passionists International (PI), our NGO (http://www.unodc.org/ngo/list.jsp) accredited at the United Nations (UN), took place at the Passionist community of Jamaica, New York. The board is composed of the representatives of the three supporting Congregations of PI, which, in addition to our own, are the Sisters of the Cross and Passion and the Daughters of the Passion of Jesus Christ and of our Lady of Sorrows. The PI board normally meets twice a year, once in a conference call via skype and the other in a meeting at the offices of the Executive Director of PI in New York.

The meeting was attended by Fr. Miroslaw Lesiecki (ASSUM) Executive Director of PI, Fr. Giuseppe Adobati Carrara (CORM) General Consultor and representative of the Superior General of the Passionists, Fr. Alex Steinmiller (CRUC), a member of the board of PI, Sr. María Virginia Alfaro of the Daughters of the Passion (Superior and regional representative of the Superior General), Sr. Claudia Cecilia Echeverría of the Daughters of the Passion (a member of the Board of PI), Sr. Joanne Fahey of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion (representative of the Superior General), Sr. Anne Cunningham of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion (a member of the board of PI), Ms. Annemarie O’Connor (staff member of PI) and Mrs. Dorothy Brandreth (Secretary of the board of PI and staff member of our Bishop Molloy Retreat House, New York).

This meeting was held a few months after the change of Executive Directors, from Fr. Francisco Murray (CONC) to Fr. Miroslaw Lesiecki. The goal of the gathering was to have an initial meeting with the Executive Director at the beginning of his mandate and in the light of ongoing activities and projects in process.

Fr. Miroslaw invited all those present to share something about their apostolic and pastoral experience. Some very interesting testimonies emerged from this exchange about the apostolic commitment of several board members. Consequently it became clear that the efficacy of the work of PI, which externally may look like “words and papers” (conferences, declarations, legislation and information notes, etc.) concerns keeping in contact with the concrete life of our apostolic communities around the world, so that there can be sharing of information and further reflection on these topics.

This view was confirmed by the personal experience of Fr. Miroslaw in his role as Executive Director of PI. During these first months of his mandate he was able to participate in several meetings and events of the United Nations, in particular the Permanent Forum on Indigenous People (May 2014) and the meeting of the Permanent Department of Information (August 2014). The latter meeting gave Fr. Miroslaw assurance that our presence at the UN, while being minimal, is of great value, since we are able to offer our experience of apostolic and missionary life among the poor and suffering in different parts of the world. Even Passionists International, along with many other NGOs, can bring to the attention of the various committees of the UN, various social, moral and humanitarian problems, with possible solutions, emerging from the experiences of our Passionist family. This is what took place, for example, with WGG-Working Group for Girls (in defense of the rights of girls, composed of more than eighty NGOs), whose coordinator is Mrs. Annemarie O’Connor, on behalf of PI. This group recently produced a declaration, which was signed by additional NGOs, and was presented by a Committee as preparatory material for specific legislation on the matter.
During the Board meeting the Executive Director noted that during the first months of his term he has gradually tried to enter into contact with the “different worlds” present in (and around) the UN. He participated in a meeting of those committees on which PI has been registered for several years (including one on indigenous people, social development, the increase of social information, the promotion of human rights), and the NGO working groups (including one for poverty eradication, the development of fair trade and solidarity, dialogue and peace between Israel and Palestine, and in particular, the RUN, which gathers all the religious NGOs accredited at the UN. Fr. Miroslaw has devoted part of his time to so-called “public relations”, getting to know (and be known by) different realities and people, through meetings and related activities, among them, participation in specific conferences on indigenous people, on the objectives of the Millennium Development (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/beyond2015-news.shtml), on the rights of the Palestinian people, on Christian critique of the gender theory. There were also meetings concerning particular topics such as the Israeli youth movement “Refusing to occupy” (who fight for a demilitarization of Israel); Noam Chomsky (academic philosopher and theorist of American communications and professor at MIT university); Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid Al-Hussein (a Commissioner for human rights); and the Special Representative for human rights in the Palestinian territories Richard Anderson Falk. In addition to these special events, he attended frequent meetings with NGO leaders of various religious institutes (http://rngos.wordpress.com), especially Franciscans International, Dominicans International, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Vincentian Family Orientation, and Augustinians International with whom we share expenses and office space that we rent together near the UN in Manhattan.

Fr. Miroslaw said he was aware that any proposal for social and human concerns presented at the UN is conditioned and impeded by a thousand interests (political, economic, social and cultural), but we need to believe that something can be changed, and that it can be changed now! Therefore the matters or requests promoted by various NGOs, some of which actually get placed on the discussion table, provide the diplomats with a particular opportunity to have free and independent contact with the social-humanitarian realities around the world. He is aware that our NGO is one of the poorest in means and resources, and that he, like many other religious associations, had no special preparation (on diplomatic or legal levels or in international law); but he is convinced that it is worth being there. Therefore he talked about the orientation needed by the Board to maintain our autonomy as an NGO, and not to merge with any other Association (richer, powerful and well-organized), which might offer greater operational capability, publicity and maybe even increase our effectiveness, as well as reduce our personnel commitment and economic costs; but it would take away the identity/visibility of Passionists International by reducing our freedom to promote our initiatives and to join our proposals to the proposals of other entities or that other entities propose to us.

As a result of the dialogue among the members of the board of PI we realized that much of this activity and reality need to be shared better with our brothers and sisters through greater and more effective means of communication. For this reason Fr. Miroslaw is working on updating the web site (http://passionistsinternational.org/), as well as the Twitter profile of PI (@passionistsint).

The board concluded its work by renewing their gratitude to Fr. Miroslaw and also to the Superiors and General Councils of the three Congregations that support it, hoping that other Congregations of the Passionist family may soon become a part of this project, which seems to be a useful tool to help our brothers and sisters to be aware of, to understand, study and to respond to the urgent needs of the today’s world.
The Province of the Korean Martyrs celebrated two major events this year – the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Korean foundation which culminated in the celebration of the fourth Provincial Chapter of the Province.

The fiftieth anniversary was celebrated on a number of levels, among those being: A week long seminar in September centering on the history of the Korean Province, with special emphasis on the earliest days of the foundation. Those important figures in the decision to make new beginnings on the Asian continent soon after the closure of China to missionaries were considered and studied. Korea began in 1964 and was preceded first with the Japanese Foundation in 1953 and the Philippine foundation in 1958.

A professional study was done by the Future Planning Company which led us from a consideration of the past to a deeper look at the present reality and the future possibilities for the Congregation in Korea. The chief work of this phase of the celebrations was a questionnaire which reflected on the attitudes and dreams of the membership of the Province regarding current problems and possible solutions to these problems. The state of religious life in Korea is going through a profound change chiefly in the areas of apostolate and training of young religious.

The Provincial Chapter itself was held from October 12 to 18 at the Passionist Monastery and Retreat House in Gwangju Province, South Korea. During the Chapter a new leadership team was elected and confirmed by the Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego, who presided at the Chapter. Fr. Paul Mary Kang Su Gun, a leader in liturgical music in the Korean Church, was elected as Provincial Superior, along with Fr. Peter Cheong Yeong Dae as first Consultor and Fr. Peter Seo Hyeon Seung as second Consultor.

Immediately following the Provincial Chapter there was a public celebration of the fiftieth anniversary in the gardens of the Gwangju House of Meditation. At the solemn Mass the principal concelebrants were the Archbishop of Gwangju, Hyginus Kim Hee Jong and the retired Archbishop Andrew Choi Chang Mu, along with the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese Simon Ok Hyun Jin. Also in attendance were the Superior General, Joachim Rego, along with two General Consultors, Fr. Sabinus Lohn and Fr. Denis Travers, plus all of the Provincials, Vice Provincials and Mission Superiors in the Asia Pacific region. As a special guest, the Provincial of Holy Cross Province (CRUC), Fr. Donald Webber attended the celebration representing the Mother Province of the Korean foundation.

At the close of the celebratory Eucharist, gifts were shared with all in attendance. Each guest received a copy of a special commemorative icon of
all of the Passionist Saints and Blesseds as a memento of the day. Featured on the icon were four Passionists who were directly concerned with the decision to make the foundation originally (Fr. Malcolm Lavelle, Superior General in 1964 and Fr. James Patrick White, Provincial Superior of the U.S. Holy Cross Province at that time). Also included in the icon were Fr. Raymond McDonough (1920-2008), superior for the first 16 years of the Passionists in Korea, and Fr. Justin Paul Bartoszek (1936-2008), one of the early missionaries to this new Asian foundation. The icon was created by a lay Passionist to celebrate the first fifty years of the Passionists in Korea.

A Brief History of the MACOR Province

The birth of the Korean Catholic Church began two centuries ago when several Koreans were first attracted to the “heavenly way” during a journey to China. They received baptism, returned to Korea, and baptized thousands, long before missionaries arrived on the scene.

The CRUC (USA) Provincial, Fr. James Patrick White established the Passionist mission in South Korea, assigning the first three religious Fathers Raymond McDonough and Patrick O’Malley in 1964, and Justin Bartoszek in 1965. Father Gabriel Mulnix was assigned in 1968, Father Richard Thomson in 1969, and Brother Laurence Finn in 1975.

A Passionist residence and retreat house were established in Kwangju in 1969 at the invitation of Kwangju’s Archbishop Harold Henry. At the request of Cardinal Stephen Kim of Seoul, another foundation was made at the same time which consisted of a simple residence in lieu of future expansion in the Archdiocese of Seoul, which came to fruition in 1977 with the construction of a retreat center in Seoul. A second house in Seoul was established in 1986.

The first two Korean Passionists were Father Paul Kim and Brother Pius Chung. Both entered in 1970 and were professed in 1974. Korea was recognized as a regional vicariate in 1972 and as a Vice Province in 1988. By this time native Korean Passionists were responsible not only for retreat and parish apostolates, but also for vocation and formation ministry and leadership roles.

From 1981 until 1989 the Passionists staffed a parish in the Cheongju Diocese where in 1991 a house was established at Choksan-ni for novices and preachers. In early 1997 a community of three religious began serving a parish on the southern island of Cheju and in the same year a community of greater solitude was established in the northern province of Kangwon-do. This foundation was moved to larger building with more ample facilities for private retreatants in 1999.

In 2000 Vice Provincial, Fr. Augustine Kim sent two Korean Passionists to the East Asian Mission for language studies. Currently there are four professed Korean Passionists serving in this Mission, and formation has begun of religious from this area since 2009. There are also three professed religious from this Mission who continue their education in the Philippines and in Australia. Passionists have been involved in the foundation of the Cursillo Movement and the Movement for a Better World, with Marriage Encounter, college and seminary teaching ministry, hospital apostolates, Army and Air Force chaplaincies, and ministry with AIDS patients, prisoners, and youth. Novices from the East Asian Mission and Korea have participated in the Asia Pacific Configuration’s International Novitiate program since 2010 in Australia.

A monastery of Passionist nuns was established in 1986, at Cheongju, and the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross arrived in Chunchon in 1996.

The Vice Province was raised to the status of a Province in 2002.
On the morning of September 21, 2014, the new Shrine of St. Gabriel was consecrated. The Rite of Consecration (that lasted approximately three hours) was presided over by the special envoy of Pope Francis, Cardinal Ennio Antonelli, Archbishop of Florence and now President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council for the Family. On the occasion of the consecration Pope Francis sent a special letter that was read at the beginning of the Mass. In this communique Pope Francis instructed the Cardinal to “exhort everyone present to a closer imitation of Christ and to develop, with renewed commitment, and through the intercession of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin, an intense love for the Gospel and for the Church and so strengthen their faith.”

The consecration of one of the largest contemporary shrines of Europe that is visited each year by two million pilgrims, was attended by the bishop of Teramo-Atri, Bishop Michele Seccia, the Passionist bishop of Sanggau (Indonesia), Bishop Giulio Mencuccini, and the Superior General of the Congregation of the Passion, V. Rev. Joachim Rego and the General Council of the Passionists. Also present were the Provincial Superior of the Passionist PIET Province, Fr. Piergiorgio Bartoli, as well as many priests, religious and civil authorities and various members of the military. Also some relatives of St. Gabriel from Rome were in attendance, as well as some delegations of immigrant associations from Philadelphia (USA), Melbourne and Brisbane (Australia) and Dour (Belgium). The Rite of Consecration was attended by more than five thousand faithful, but throughout the day almost ten thousand pilgrims visited the Shrine.

The construction of the new Shrine dedicated to St. Gabriel was begun on February 26, 1970. It is shaped like a Greek cross, 90 meters long and 30 meters wide, made of white concrete, glass, polycarbonate, aluminum and steel. Nearly a mile of planters and some twenty large terraces enhance the complex. The new shrine can hold 10,000 people.

At the center of the basilica is the great altar. In the four corners of the Basilica there are six steps and a long ramp that lead down into the great and welcoming crypt that contains the relics of St. Gabriel. It was solemnly blessed by Pope John Paul II during his historic visit to the Shrine on June 30, 1985. The Pope also inaugurated the new Reconciliation Chapel (which has 30 modern confessional) where he humorously congratulated the architect and the religious of the Sanctuary saying: “You are helping us save the Sacrament of Reconciliation!”

The construction of the new Shrine lasted more than forty years. It was not easy to carry out such a huge and expensive work, but thanks to the contributions of many devotees of St. Gabriel (including the generosity of the Abruzzesi emigrant associations throughout the world), the subscribers to the monthly magazine the “ECO of St. Gabriel”, some significant benefactors and some public entities, the construction of the new Shrine became a reality.

At the end of the celebration a dedicatory plaque commemorating the consecration was unveiled. In part it reads: The new Shrine...will forever be an everlasting sign of God’s presence among his people, in the convocation of the ecclesial community, and a memorial of the wonders performed by God through his faithful servant Saint Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin. It is a work of art for people of today and even more, for those of tomorrow, because in silence and serenity humans beings can renew their relationship with themselves and with God and thus give a sense of purpose to their life, and to love and trust again.
The annual Assembly of Eugene Bossilkov Configuration (CEB) took place from 30 September to 3 October 2014 at the Generalate of Sts. John and Paul in Rome. The principal objective was to prepare for the imminent unification of the eight provinces of the Configuration into a single province, which will take place at the Chapter of May 2015.

The Assembly was composed of the Provincial superiors and the Provincial Councils of the eight Provinces (six Italian, one Portuguese and one French) that compose it (CFXI, CORM, DOL, FAT, LAT, MICH, PIET, PRAES). In total (excluding the secretarial assistants and the technicians) there were thirty participants, including Fr. Giuseppe Adobati (General Consultor) and former Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio (President of the CEB Finance Commission). Fr. Leone Masnata (CEB President) presided and Fr. Antonio Munduate (General Consultor) was the moderator.

At the beginning of the Assembly the Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego warmly welcomed the religious, pointing out that the unification of the provinces of the Configuration into a single province is a bold and brave project which must lead us to improve our community and missionary life. It is especially challenging to be able to work together, learning from each other, and especially listening to those who are different from us or have an experience different from ours. They will also need to prepare new structures and new legislation for the combined province which requires listening and respect for diversity; thus, the process will be profitable for all the members.

Much attention was given to legal issues that need to be studied further at the next chapter and during the initial period of the new province – an entity which will be composed of about 450 religious (located in at least six countries) and divided into sixty communities. Among the first decisions of the Assembly was the approval of the rules for participation in the Chapter. The study of the new legislation took into account the need to clarify the number, role and the degree of autonomy of the Regions in the single Province. In fact, according to the decision of the General Chapter, 2012, the new province should be established with an internal division into regions which, under one provincial Superior, will facilitate particular attention to the diversity that will exist in the single entity.

In addition to legal issues, a significant amount of time was spent on the presentation of the activities carried out by the four Committees of CEB:
Community Life and On-going formation, Vocation (initial) ministry and studies, the Apostolate, Finances and Solidarity.

In the area of initial formation they will continue sharing all formation programs, starting with the Postulancy (on a regional level) including the single novitiate and theologate. This will help to promote a common experience for the young religious who, despite coming from specific regions, have joined one, sole province.

The same applies to the spiritual development of the communities (promoted by the Commission for community life and on-going formation) which will continue to offer resources for spirituality and formation (through materials for meetings, prayer times, shared listening to the Word of God), together with specific renewal programs for superiors, formation personnel, administrators, etc.

The Apostolate Commission focused on finding new initiatives to propose to our missionaries and preachers (evangelizers) being aware that we must change the ways and means of our preaching. The Commission found it very interesting and stimulating to study the points that Pope Francis proposed to the Church in “Evangelii Gaudium”, especially with regard to “always taking the first step to go out to the world” and to be attentive to bring the Gospel to the poor.

Two years ago the Finance Commission initiated a process of studying the assets that belong to the various provinces, together with the progressive unification of their financial capital, creating new shared funds, with the participation of all provincial Economes, based on the number of religious. Recently they published a study regarding the possible reduction of the number of houses and communities currently present in the eight provinces, in view of the reorganization of the new united reality.

In conclusion, the following is an excerpt from the talk given by of Fr. Leone Masnata, CEB President, at the beginning of the Assembly: “Restructuring will not end with the next provincial chapter, initiating a single juridical entity, complex, but nevertheless, unit-ed. Instead a process of welcoming and adjustment by all according to the same essential values which form the basis for Passionist religious life, its community life, its apostolate... while respecting the territorial and historical identity of the regions... Restructuring becomes a providential occasion for renewal for everyone and everything, even the common life project that we want to achieve. There still remains, in fact, a lot to improve in our prayer life, in charity, in developing spiritual growth the communities by sharing the Word of God (Lectio Divina)... This is natural, because communities are always defensive and we find it difficult to admit that there are problems: there are problems in all families. But we must not lower our guard nor resign ourselves to the status quo. We are still very fragile and inconsistent about organizing our life and work around central values such as prayer, the Eucharist, the Word of God. (...)

Fortunately there is no shortage of opportunities even today, and we must be ready to accept an invitation to go higher, keeping alive the inner desire to search for a more evangelical, credible and joyous life. Pope Francis has repeatedly spoken about being attractive, contagious — the way to make the Church grow via the new evangelization. “The Church must be attractive. Wake up world! Be witnesses of a different way of doing, acting, living! It is possible to live differently in this world. [...] I expect an answer from you”.

The poster announcing the first Chapter of the unified Province.
THE DAUGHTERS OF THE PASSION:
FIFTY YEARS AT STS. JOHN AND PAUL, ROME

In 1962 Fr. Malcolm La Velle, Superior General, officially invited the Sisters, Daughters of the Passion to come to minister at the Generalate of Sts. John and Paul. On 4 November 1964, the first group of six Sisters arrived from Mexico and were received by the then Superior General, Fr. Theodore Foley. They were accompanied by the Mother General, Mother María Elena de la Cruz Zavala, and the Secretary General of the Institute. That same evening, in the chapel of the Holy Founder in the Basilica, a simple liturgy was celebrated to implore the blessing of the Lord on their new ministry.

In the presence of the Superior General, Fr. Theodore Foley, the General Curia, and the whole community, the General Consultant, Fr. Feliciano of the Immaculate Virgin (Rodríguez) greeted the Sisters and welcomed them on behalf of the superiors and religious of the community. He expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the work that they will do. The liturgy concluded with the singing of the “Veni Creator” and Benediction.

The new community, which would normally consist of nine to ten Sisters, would work in the kitchen, laundry and tailor shop for the two communities of Sts. John and Paul and the retreat house.

On 3 October, 2014, the Generalate Community of Sts. John and Paul, Rome, celebrated fifty years of the presence of the “Mexican Sisters”, the Daughters of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Sorrows of the B.V.M. The day began with a festive lunch in the monastery refectory that included a power point presentation about the Sisters, the history of their Institute and their ministries. In the late afternoon the community gathered in the Basilica for a solemn liturgy of thanksgiving. The Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego, was the principal celebrant, and among the concelebrants were the Rector of Sts. John and Paul, Fr. Matteo Nonini, and Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, former Superior General. In his homily, Fr. Joachim remarked: “In your witness to us and to many people you live both as disciple and as apostle. In your busy day-to-day life of service to us you make time to be like Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus or perhaps as Passionists sitting at the foot of the Cross, listening to Him the Crucified speaking to you... We want to say that your work, your example, your witness is not taken for granted. We might not come every day to say thank you. Perhaps, sometimes we do. But on this day we want to collectively...say thank you for your service to us your brothers and sisters. We ask God to continue to bless you, to give you all you need to live your charism, your life and to be an example to us.”

Among those present at the celebration in Rome were Sr. Aureliana Aguirre de Guzmán, Superior General of the Sisters, Sr. Fabiola Francés, Regional Delegate and Sr. Lucia Margarita de la Cruz (Marroquín Zarate), one of the original group of Sisters who arrived in Rome in 1964. Sr. Margarita shared some of her memories of those first days at the Generalate of Sts. John
and Paul: “Fifty years ago when we went to the new foundation in Rome, at the Generalate of the Passionists... for me it was an invitation to give and offer my life in hidden and humble service. I was very happy; but not all of my fellow Sisters felt the same, since in those times if any religious left for a [foreign] country there was no certainty of returning to our homeland... When we arrived in Rome our greatest difficulty was the lack of knowledge of the language and little information about Italian food. We cooked as if we were in Mexico, which caused difficulty for some of the priests and brothers. But the Superior General [Fr. Theodore Foley] and the Vicar tried to comfort us by visiting us every day in the kitchen or in the laundry and offering us words of encouragement. In those difficult times, prayer was a great source of help to us, and we often prayed in the chapel of St. Paul of the Cross.”

Following the Mass, the community gathered in the reception area of the Chapter Hall for refreshments and entertainment that included a mariachi band.

The Institute of the Daughters of the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Sorrows of the B.V.M. was founded in the Tacubaya section of Mexico City, Mexico, in 1892 by Fr. Diego Alberici, C.P. and Mother Dolores Medina Zepeda. It is an Institute of Pontifical right.

In 1901, they obtained a letter from Fr. Bernard Silvestrelli, Superior General, declaring them “in spiritualibus” with our Congregation and in 1912, Fr. Jeremiah Angelucci, Superior General, granted them the faculty to wear our Passionist Sign.

Currently the Sisters minister in schools and centers of spirituality and offer home care services. They assist in seminaries and retreat houses, as well as centers for missionary evangelization and the care of migrants. In an ecclesial spirit and in keeping with their charism, they are open to other forms of apostolate which respond to the signs of the times. Currently there are 300 religious who are present in twelve countries (México, United States, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Cuba, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Spain, Italy, the Democratic Rep. of Congo and Tanzania).
On 3 April 2014, the Holy Father, Pope Francis authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate decrees concerning various causes of saints, among them the decree of “Venerable” regarding the Servant of God, Maria Maddalena (nee Maria Giuseppina Teresa) Marcucci, an Italian professed nun of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ (1888-1960).

Mary Josephine Teresa Marcucci was born on 24 April 1888 in San Gemignano di Moriano, near the Italian city of Lucca. She had great devotion to the Passion of the Lord, a devotion which she subsequently zealously promoted. At the age of 18, on 10 June 1906, together with her sister Elisa, she entered the Passionist monastery of Lucca which was still in the process of being founded. On June 27, 1907, the day of her vestition, she received the name Mary Magdalene of Jesus; but the name by which she is generally known is “J. Pastor”. This pseudonym was given to her by her spiritual director the Dominican, Fr. Juan González Arintero, in order to hide her from people’s curiosity and to protect her humility. She later became a valuable and assiduous collaborator of the magazine he founded in 1921.

On March 18, 1913, at the age of 25, together with five other nuns, she left Lucca to found a Passionist monastery in Mexico, a project that could not be realized because of the revolution. On January 13, 1916, together with two other Sisters she left Mexico City, because she felt called by the Lord to go to Spain. For two years they resided at Lezama, a village a few kilometers from Bilbao and then finally in 1918 moved to Deusto near Bilbao, where they founded the first Passionist monastery in Spain.

In 1935 she was called by the Sacred Congregation for Religious to assume the role of superior of the Passionist community of Lucca. During the five years that she held this position she, a native of Lucca, had the joy and honor to build the new Passionist monastery as well as the Shrine of her compatriot, St. Gemma Galgani in the area of the city known as “Fuori Porta Elisa”. She also prepared the celebrations for her canonization which took place on May 2, 1940.

On July 15, 1941, she left Lucca to return to Spain where, strengthened by an ardent love for the Passion of the Lord and for the salvation and holiness of his people, she founded a monastery in Madrid. Here, in the Passionist monastery she founded, she died on February 10, 1960, shortly before her 72nd birthday.

She wrote extensively to promote the ideal of holiness of life. Her autobiography, entitled the “Apostle of love”, is described by the Dominican theologians of Salamanca, Spain as “the most sublime work ... that has ever been written about God’s love for all creatures”. In the introduction to his book, “La santità è amore” (“Holiness is Love”), Fr. Max Anselmi (CORM) writes: “One thing that somewhat surprises scholars about her spirituality is the amount and quality of the work that Mother Magdalene wrote to spread devotion to the Passion of the Lord and the spirit of joyful holiness. She did this unbeknownst to anyone other than her spiritual director, writing tirelessly, but all in secret until her death. She can rightly be considered to be one of the greatest writers of Passionist spirituality, and also a pearl among the authors of twentieth century mysticism, a very particular phenomenon, so much so that great theologians, after her death, have felt justified and motivated in urging that she be promptly given the title of ‘doctor of the Church’.”
We have made the journey in reverse, which Blessed Dominic made from his beloved homeland.” These words of Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham were spoken to an assembled group of clergy, religious, laity and descendants of the Barberi family, gathered at a Convention held in Viterbo to honour the memory of Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God on September 18th this year.

Earlier in the year the Archbishop received an invitation to visit Viterbo and the sites associated with Blessed Dominic, from a group of lay people in Viterbo, the ‘Friends of Blessed Dominic.’ This group do all they can to keep the memory of this famous son of Viterbo alive and maintain the chapel at Merlano, near where Blessed Dominic lived on his uncle’s farm, prior to his entry into the Passionist Congregation.

The Convention on Blessed Dominic took place in the “Regia dei Priori”, a large hall in the city of Viterbo. Welcome speeches were made by the Bishop of Viterbo, Monsignor Lino Fumagalli, the President of the Friends of Blessed Dominic, Mario Mancini, the Mayor of Viterbo, the President of the Province of Viterbo, a member of the Lower House of Parliament, the Superior General, Fr. Joachim Rego the British Ambassador to the Holy See, Nigel Baker and finally Archbishop Bernard Longley. In his remarks, Fr. Joachim noted that “As pilgrims...we use all our senses to go into the spirit, the sense, the environment of this Blessed. We know that Bl. Dominic was a brilliant man; intellectually he was very capable. But he was simple. He was a very deeply spiritual man. He was one who really had a spirit of listening to God and speaking to him. It was God, through his mother Mary...who called Dominic to be a Passionist priest and a missionary to England.”

After this there were three short lectures given on Blessed Dominic. The first lecture was given by Luciano Osbat a local historian, entitled: ‘The Political and Religious Life of Viterbo from the 18th and 19th Centuries.’ The second lecture was given by Passionist Fr. Adolf Lippi (PRAES), Superior of the Retreat at Vetralla: ‘Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God and the Roots of Christian Europe.’ The final lecture was given by myself: ‘Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God, the Cause for Canonization’.

Two brief visits were made by the Archbishop to the small chapel at Merlano near to where Blessed Dominic worked in the fields on his uncle’s farm and to the birthplace of Blessed Dominic in the town of Palanzana. Later that evening a Votive Mass of Blessed Dominic was celebrated by the Archbishop in the Church at Vetralla with Passionists concelebrating including Fr. Joachim Rego, Superior General, members of the local Passionist community and members of the Presentation Province.

In his opening address to the Convention in Viterbo on September 18th 2014, Archbishop Longley said the following: ‘Today we begin to repay in a small way a debt of gratitude to the Church in Viterbo for the gift of her son, Blessed Dominic Barberi to the Catholic Church in England and we thank the Passionist Order for enabling Blessed Dominic to spend his entire energy at the service of our local Church. We continue to benefit today from the good foundation which Blessed Dominic established almost two hundred years ago’. These sentiments give witness to the love and esteem which Blessed Dominic of the Mother of God continues to enjoy in the Archdiocese of Birmingham and the genuine desire we have to see his Canonization.
PROFESSION OF FINAL VOWS

Ten religious professed Final Vows during the period July to December 2014. In the REPAC Province of Indonesia, the following religious professed Final Vows on 06 July 2014: Yohanes Paulus Arief Samara and Agustinus Riang Kapuka. In the FAT Province of Portugal, José Gregório Duarte Valente professed Final Vows on 03 August 2014. In the PATR Province of Ireland-Scotland, Francis Trias professed Final Vows on 14 September 2014. In the THOM Vice-Province of India, three religious professed Final Vows on 26 September: Binu Johnson Kunnummel, Johnson Emmanuel Mamath and Jifin Sebastian Mappilassery. Jorge Henrique Abreu Tanus, of the EXALT Province of Brazil, professed Final Vows on 15 October 2014. In the PAC Vice-Province of Puerto Rico-Dominican Republic, Santiago Alberto Valerio made Perpetual Profession on 18 October. Finally, on 07 December 2014, Salvatore Viola professed Final Vows in the LAT Province of Italy.

PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS


PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

Thirteen of our Religious were ordained to the Priesthood during the period July to December 2014. On 27 June 2014, Frs. Yakobus Ego and Yosef Feri Wara of the REPAC Province of Indonesia were ordained to the priesthood. Fr. Edilberto Junior da Cruz was ordained in the EXALT Province of Brazil on 16 August 2014. On 20 September in the PASS Province of the Philippines, Fr. Crisanto Renacido
Dimaculangan was ordained to the priesthood. In the PIET Province of Italy, three religious were ordained priests: Frs. Marco Staffolani (27 September), Salvatore Frascina (04 October) and Piero Berti (22 November). In the SCOR Province of Spain-Latin America, two religious were ordained on 18 October:
PROFESSIONS AND ORDINATIONS

Fr. Salvatore Frascina (PIET).

Deacon Francesco Solazzo (LAT).

Frs. Carlos Rosendo Díaz Castellón and Rónal Sangama Mendoza. On the same date Fr. Gareth Thomas was ordained in the PATR Province of Ireland-Scotland. Fr. Mykola Lyahutko of the ASSUM Province of Poland was ordained on 19 October. Lastly, in the SCOR Province of Spain-Latin America the following two religious were ordained priests: Frs. Alfonso Tarazona Cáceres (22 November) and Wilmer Guevara Fuentes (8 December).

DIACONATE ORDINATIONS

During the same period of July to December 2014, eight Religious were ordained deacons. In the REPAC Province of Indonesia, Yakobus Ego and Yosef Feri Wara were ordained deacons on 19 February 2014. On 13 September, two Religious of the REG Province of Mexico were ordained deacons: Carlos Aguilar Quiroz and Alexander Márquez Olivares. In the EXALT Province of Brazil, Jorge Henrique Abreu Tanus was ordained on 22 November 2014. And on 27 September in the THOM Vice-Province of India, three religious were ordained to the diaconate: Binu Johnson Kunnummel, Johnson Emmanuel Mamath and Jifin Sebastian Mappilassery. On 13 December 2014, in the PATR Province of Ireland-Scotland, Francis Trias was ordained a deacon. And finally, on 14 December, Francesco Solazzo was ordained to the diaconate in the LAT Province of Italy.

Deacons Binu Johnson Kunnummel, Johnson Emmanuel Mamath and Jifin Sebastian Mappilassery (THOM).

Deacon Francis Trias (PATR).

Fr. Wilmer Guevara Fuentes (SCOR).

Fr. Gareth Thomas (PATR).

Fr. Salvatore Frascina (PIET).
NEW PUBLICATIONS


Piccioni, Matteo, C.P., CARO IN IESU BENEDICTIONE CRISTOLOGICA E ANTROPOLOGICA IN RUFINO DI CONCORDIA, Edizione: PONTIFICIA UNIVERSITAS LATERANENSIS, 2014. Dissertatio ad licentiam in theologa et scientis patristicis consequendam, INSITUTUM PATRISTICUM AUGUS TINIANUM


### Notitiae Obitus

Usque ad diem 1 Agosto 2014 – 6 Dicembre 2014, acceptae

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### Moniales et Sorores Defunctae

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<td>Sr. Maria Magdalena van het Kruis (Madeleine) Seurinck Monasterio Passionistarum de Heule (België) 21/07/1919 16-set-42</td>
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<td>Sr. Vincenzina della Passione Corvinelli Inst. Sororum Passionistarum a S. Paulo a Cruce (Signa) Prov. Sacro Cuore di Gesù 16/05/1952 27-set-81</td>
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<td>Sr. Paola della Croce (Dina) Salvi Monasterio Passionistarum de Campagnano (Italia) 23/08/1917 28-apr-39</td>
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St. Paul of the Cross wanted to be a preacher to the people: and he knew how to descend from the heights of contemplation, like Jesus who came down from the mountain, to catechize, to evangelize, to proclaim the Good News.

May you not lack a sense of commitment and purpose, and a spirit of sacrifice in order to fulfill this duty of preaching: without forgetting that your words, as well as the knowledge of today’s challenges, must originate from a heart replete with God, as was intended by the Founder. Only by habitually living and loving in communion with our heavenly Father, through the mediation of Christ, the eternal Victim and Pontiff, and only by means of the school of assiduous prayer, and by imitating Him will you discover the source and the depth of your words, the power of persuasion, and the spark that moves and converts hearts.

(Address of Pope Paul VI to Passionist Mission Preachers, 6 Feb. 1974)