



CONGREGAZIONE DELLA PASSIONE DI GESÙ CRISTO

P.ZA SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO, 13

00184 ROMA – ITALIA

TEL: (39)-06.77.27.11 – FAX: (39)-06.700.8454

Il Superiore Generale

Prot.n. 2017.111

CIRCULAR LETTER OF CONVOCATION OF THE 47th GENERAL CHAPTER

In my Easter greeting to the Congregation and to the Passionist Family I prayed, "*May the celebration of resurrected life bring new hope to your being. May the victory over earthly death turn your eyes to the promises of heaven. May the empty tomb help you to leave your sorrows at the foot of the cross, so that God's hope, promises and forgiveness may reign in your life forever.*"

In this same context of joy and hope, and by means of this Circular Letter, **I am convoking our 47th General Chapter, which will be celebrated in Rome from 6 to 27 October 2018.**

This Chapter occurs amidst the activities that we are preparing for the celebration of three hundred years of the history of our Congregation (2020). Some of these activities, such as the repair work on the exterior of the Generalate, the restoration of the Room of St. Paul of the Cross, etc., are in process. Other projects will begin after 29 June 2017, the date of the 150th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Paul of the Cross.

1. Convocation of the General Chapter prior to the prescribed date.

As it is stated in number 77b of our General Regulations, the number of Delegates to the General Chapter is established according to the number of religious computed on the day of the convocation of the General Chapter. Additionally, the "*General Chapter is announced by means of a circular letter sent by the Superior General to the entire Congregation nine months before it is to take place*" (GR 76).

These regulations concerning the number of delegates and the date of Convocation present practical difficulties that must be studied by the General Chapter itself. This is because our legislation is based on "Provincial" structures, while in fact, currently we are working with the model of "Configurations".

This problem becomes obvious in the election of the Delegates to the Chapter. No.77 of the General Regulations establishes that "*Each Province will elect a Delegate ...*"

The current version of No.77b, approved by the General Synod (2015) and confirmed by the Holy See on 19 October 2016, establishes that, "*Each Configuration will have the right to one delegate for every 25 religious ...*" Furthermore, it asks the Executive Council of the Configurations to draw up the norms to be used for the election of the delegates and their substitutes. Then the General Superior with his Council will approve these norms.

In fact, some Configurations (e.g. CJC) have already submitted these norms and others will decide these regulations within the next few weeks, during their Provincial Assemblies or Chapters (MAPRAES and SCOR). Currently it is unrealistic for the Superior General and his Council to approve norms for the election of delegates to the General Chapter knowing that within the period of ten months, when the circular letter of convocation of the General Chapter is prescribed to be issued, the number of delegates to be elected probably will have changed. In fact, four or five religious more or less in a Configuration can change the number of participants and delegates in the General Chapter based on the rule that establishes one delegate for each 25 religious.

For this reason, in order to give stability and legal precision to the decisions that are made, with the consent of my Council, I requested the Holy See to dispense number 76 of our General Regulations, so that I could proceed to convoke the Chapter before the established date of nine months. The Holy See granted me this dispensation on 23 March 2017.

2. The number of Delegates to the 47th General Chapter

The General Regulations establish (approved by the Holy See on 19 October 2016):

No. 77: *“The ex officio members are: the Superior General, who will also be the President of the Chapter, previous Superiors General, the General Consultors, the Procurator General, the Secretary General, the Secretary General of the Missions, the General Econome, Provincial Superiors, Vice-Provincials and the Vicars of the General Vicariates. Additionally, the Presidents of the Configurations that are not Major Superiors participate ex officio.*

If a Provincial, Vice-Provincial or a Vicar of a General Vicariate is prevented from attending the Chapter, his place will be taken by his First Consultor; if he in turn is unable to attend, a replacement shall be chosen by the Provincial Council.”

No. 77b: *“Each Configuration will have the right to one participant in the General Chapter for every 25 religious. Apart from the ex officio participants, they will elect the number of delegates necessary to achieve the above-mentioned quota of one representative for every 25 religious. Among these representatives, one shall be a Brother.*

The number of religious in a Province is reckoned as being that existing on the day the Chapter was convoked. Those who have been deprived of active and passive voice based on common law are not considered in this reckoning.”

Therefore, I hereby convoke the 47th General Chapter on April 16, 2017, the Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord. Consequently, the number of participants, and therefore the number of Delegates, is established according to the data contained in the General Secretariat as of this date, namely:

Configuration	Number of Religious	Participants (1:25)	Ex-officio Participants	Brother Delegates	Other Delegates
CCH	196	7	6 Major Sup. = 6	1	0
CJC	365	14	6 Major Sup. + Pres.= 7	1	6
CPA	162	6	4 Major Sup. = 4	1	1
MAPRAES	420	16	1 Provincial Sup. = 1	1	14
PASPAC	395	15	6 Major Sup. +Pres. = 7	1	7
SCOR	376	15	1 Provincial Sup = 1	1	13
General Curia		12	12		
TOTAL	1,914	85	38	6	41

3. The election of Delegates and their substitutes to the 47th General Chapter.

No.77c of the General Regulations states (approved by the Holy See on 19 October 2016):

“The executive Council of the Configuration determines the manner of electing delegates and their substitutes for both ordinary and extraordinary General Chapters. These norms shall be approved by the General Superior with the consent of his Council.”

Accordingly, I hereby ask the Presidents of the Configurations *to send me these norms for approval*, bearing in mind that:

- a. The delegates are chosen as delegates of the Configurations; they are not delegates of the Clerics or of the Brothers.
- b. The norms must stipulate the distribution of delegates according to the Regions or entities of the Configuration.
- c. The manner of election should be clear: *who has active voice; the majority required to be elected; and the number of ballots*. Except for the election of a Brother delegate, the ballot form must include all religious with perpetual vows of the Zone, Region or Province according to the election system that is proposed, regardless of their status, unless they have lost their passive voice.

4. The Preparatory Commission of the 47th General Chapter.

In light of the necessary preparation for the General Chapter, I asked the Presidents of the Configurations to give me the names of three religious of the Configuration who could provide this service. Having considered the names presented and after consulting with my Council, I have appointed the following religious to the Preparatory Commission of the 47th General Chapter: Fr. Mark Robin Hoogland, Chairman (SPE-CCH), Fr. Alex Steinmiller (CRUC-CJC), Fr. Anthony Sikhalele Mdhluli (MATAF-CPA), Fr. Dario Di Giosia (MAPRAES), Fr. Valentinus Saeng (REPAC-PASPAC) and Fr. Germán Méndez Cortés (SCOR).

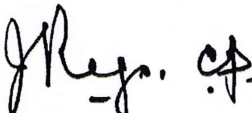
I am grateful to the members of the Commission for their willingness to serve and for the enthusiasm with which they have begun their work. Next September we will have a meeting in Rome of the Extended Council and the Preparatory Commission.

Subsequent to the publication of this Circular Letter of Convocation of the 47th General Chapter, additional communications will address the following: points for reflection, appointment of additional working Commissions and other information in order that all Passionists may live this General Chapter as grace-filled event.

I conclude this Circular Letter convoking the 47th General Chapter with the same words that I addressed to all of you in the conclusion of my Circular Letter for the 150th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Paul of the Cross: *May the efforts of each of our religious in the preparation and celebration of the next General Chapter be a source of grace for the Congregation and for the entire Church.*

Generalate of Sts. John and Paul
16 April 2017
Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord




Fr. Joachim Rego CP
Superior General