THE LORD IS TRULY RISEN. ALLELUIA!

“Christ is our Passover and our freedom and we await his return, with a changed heart, witnesses of his passion, death and resurrection and we proclaim: ‘The Lord is truly risen.’”

(Easter Letter of Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, Superior General)
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**Passionist International Bulletin**

*Nº 13 - New Series - April 2007*

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Letter to the Congregation for Easter 2007

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

It is always a gift of God to be able to share my thoughts and to greet you on the occasion of the great celebrations by which we remember the mysteries of the Lord who has loved us with infinite mercy and kindness. It is a love that gives us life and that sustains us and together with us, sustains the universe and all creation. It is true love and, consequently, it is life giving. Our interpersonal relationships within community and within families must be marked by the truth of this love if we want them to be truly authentic. While visiting the communities in preparation for the upcoming provincial Chapters I was aware of the need to once again reflect, as was also requested by a number of individual religious, on charity in community even if the most beautiful and efficacious letter on charity is the Crucifix itself.

In the celebration of Holy Week, which begins with Palm Sunday, we liturgically “remember” the mystery of the limitless love that was fulfilled when Jesus himself taught his disciples that: “There is no greater love than the giving one’s own life.” It is a gift that was begun with the Incarnation which we have recently meditated on when we celebrated the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord in which the Word of God, by the working of the Holy Spirit, began to be human in Mary’s womb. We celebrated Grace, i.e. gratuitous love. “Nothing is impossible for God”, the angel Gabriel reassured the distressed and fearful Virgin Mary. “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus…the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.” (Lk.1:26-38)

“Nothing is impossible for God” will resound in the heart of Mary even on Calvary and in the heart of those who loved him at the foot of the cross. We can understand this better by saying, “nothing is impossible for God” in the face of a love capable of laying down one’s own life. They contemplated that the “Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father…and of his Kingdom there will be no end.” While he bled to death on the “throne” of the cross only the Good Thief will recognize him as a king, even though he too was crucified and dying as he prayed to him: “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” (Lk. 23:42) He calls him by name, “Jesus” and as he names him there is a strange tenderness. Jesus comforts him and reassures him: “Today you will be with me in paradise”. Then he forgets about himself, hearing the voice of those who still pursued him in order to offend him and mercilessly hurl mocking words at him, even though he is dying, and Jesus prays: “Father forgive them because they do not know what they are doing.” It is Friday of the Passion on a hilltop near Jerusalem, the city that is rejected and beloved.

Even the disciples are at a distance and dispersed because they are afraid. However Jesus, predicting their fragility and their flight had celebrated the Passover and mystically anticipated and shared with them, in community, his Passion at the Last Supper: “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover meal with you...

“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU” (Jn.15:12)

Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, C.P.
Superior General

“The Eucharist is central to the life of each community. In so far as possible, we celebrate it together every day as the fundamental action of community life. Our common sharing in the same Body of Christ nourishes the life our community, constitutes its norms and fosters union among ourselves.” (Const. #43)
before my Passion…” (Lk.22:14) In the intimacy of the house and the community, together with his disciples, far from the crowds and from those who had already condemned him to death without process anticipated, by the institution of the Eucharist, His death and resurrection: “This is my body which will be given for you…this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you…do this in memory of me.” (Lk.22:19-20) At the Last Supper the offering of His life is carried out as a totally free choice and gift, without constraints either from the high priests or from Pilate. The dinner table becomes Calvary upon which Jesus the priest offers himself to the Father as a victim for the forgiveness of our sins, in union and with the already anticipated mystical “memory” of what will take place the following day, Good Friday, on Calvary where he will concretely accomplish his crucifixion and death.

In light of this mystery and in light of what will take place in the Cenacle and on Calvary and what takes place on our altars when we celebrate the Eucharist, we understand even more clearly what is stated in our Constitutions: “The Eucharist is central to the life of each community. In so far as possible, we celebrate it together every day as the fundamental action of community life. Our common sharing in the same Body of Christ nourishes the life our community, constitutes its norms and fosters union among ourselves.” (Const. #43). In fact, during the community concelebration we participate through Christ, with Christ and in Christ in His sacrifice and we share with Him and with each other the same death and resurrection and therefore, we achieve and experience a profound mystical unity that then “nourishes”, “constitutes” and “fosters” charity in community in everyday decisions and in the interpersonal relationships among us and with our brothers and sisters that comprise the holy people of God.

The Eucharist is not for us “a judgment of condemnation”; rather it nourishes and manifests our charity to those to whom we are called: “Our Passionist vocation is a call to live the fullness of Christian love in an evangelical community. We bear witness to our fidelity to Christ through the charity that makes us all one in mind and heart. ‘By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.’”[Jn.13:35] (Const. #25) Let us not be deceived. It is not religious profession or ordination that makes it possible for us to be recognized as disciples of Jesus; rather it is our charity and love for one another. At the Last Supper, in the context of the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus ties a towel around his waist and, by means of a simple and charitable gesture, he washes the feet of the disciples: “If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet.” (Jn.13:14) Jesus’ maximum expression of service to us was that of dying on the cross and to make it more understandable, he washed his disciples’ feet. And this is what should take place in our communities by overcoming any possible division or self-centeredness. Then the Congregation will be spiritually set aflame and we too will work wonders as did the primitive Christian communities who were admired and identified by their fraternal love—“see how they love one another”—and by the sharing of their possessions. (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37)

In Chapter 2 of our Constitutions entitled, “Community Life”, numbers 25 to 36 invite us to live “united in Christ” and therefore to respect the dignity and the equality of all and to accept every person in his uniqueness and to value him as a gift of God. To esteem others more than ourselves and to help each individual to develop his own personality and his own gifts and to rejoice in each person’s charisma demands human maturity and faith and interior development, conscious that the Holy Spirit is manifested in each of us.

If, in our everyday relationships, we consider each other to be brothers in Christ, we will avoid criticism and complaining and we will be solicitous toward each other. (Cfr. Mt.23:8) Mutual esteem will draw us to seek the companionship of one another and will enable the development of true and enduring friendships. If we have true charity any possible misunderstanding or quarrel will be positively resolved. Furthermore, respecting the dignity of one another as if it were Christ who was living with me, will lead me to be well-mannered in speech and behavior; to respect those places and times of silence and to seek forms of recreation that are helpful to life in common. Respect will lead us to be attentive even to the small things that can be annoying to those that are studying or resting. I will try not to isolate myself or to isolate others so that our life in common does not become individuals living in solitude. The same means of electronic communication, the Internet, the cell phone, etc. that can become intrusive in everyday life and can intensify isolation, should be used or employed in harmony with times and places for our common life. External communication should not jeopardize or become a substitute for internal dialogue: “Community life flourishes when its members are careful to maintain and foster fraternal personal relationships.” (Const.27) In fact, community is characterized by hospitality, listening, dialogue,
goodness and mercy, pardon, reconciliation, fraternity and joy. Community is family.

The Constitutions remind us to be particularly attentive to those religious who are ill, those who “share in the Passion of Christ at a deeper and more personal level”, an attitude that we must also have toward the elderly. (Const.29 and 30) And in order to be an evangelical community in the wider sense, we must live in a “culture of charity” both within the community itself and outside of the community realizing that we are part of the local Church and are open to sharing life in solidarity with those who are “‘crucified’ as they are by injustice”. (Const.65)

A task of particular importance is entrusted to the superiors, in their role of pastor and father, whether they are Provincial Superiors, who should “have at heart a deep care for all the religious” and should “bind them together in genuine brotherly unity.”(Const.124); or the local Superior who is not “set above or apart from his community…[but] ought to see himself as one who serves. He therefore exercises his authority in a spirit of service for the brethren and manifests thereby the charity with which God loves them.” (Const.120)

The true measure of our life together is expressed in our capacity for living charitably. What took place at the Last Supper between Jesus and his disciples, the teachings that He gave in his farewell address, the Eucharist and the washing of the feet can serve as models for us. These become the key to understanding the extreme service that he will offer to the Father and to the world by means of his death in which “Jesus shows us in particular the truth about love which is the very essence of God.” (Sacramentum Caritatis,#2)

“Love one another as I have loved you” is the true context for verifying the authenticity of our religious consecration and our interpersonal relationships in community. The process of Restructuring itself is a way of seeking greater truth and authenticity in our life and in the mission of the Congregation in today’s world. Above all, authenticity and identity must be present in our communities. “The local community is the living cell on which depends the vitality of the entire Congregation.” (Const.119)

The “Preferential option for the young” is translated as the reclaiming of livable and true community areas. And as I wrote in my address to the General Chapter on the State of the Congregation: “Were no change to come about they[the young] fear a future ever more limited and difficult. Young men deprived of any interesting vision for the future and under the impact of a difficult and unmotivated community and apostolic life, soon lose their enthusiasm and not infrequently leave the Congregation. It is precisely this which is causing worry as well as open and painful wounds in various Provinces…. A lot of the crisis among our religious can be attributed to shortcomings in this sector. Hence it behooves us to be particularly careful in our Provinces to get rid of those elements which impede communion and fraternity.”

However, we must have faith and cultivate hope in a new life that is characterized by the sign of the empty tomb and the face of the Risen Lord. And it is upon the Crucified and Risen One, who in his apparitions to his disciples possessed his visible and tangible wounds, that we project and base our hope, and shun pessimism and grief so as not to remain prisoners. Christ is our Passover and our freedom and we await his return, with a changed heart, witnesses of his passion, death and resurrection and we proclaim: “The Lord is truly risen.” (Lk.24:34)

I send Easter greetings, also on behalf of the General Council, to all the religious of the Congregation and to all those who are part of our Passionist Family. In particular I wish to especially remember with particular affection the sick and elderly among our men and women religious and the laity of the Passionist movements that are associated with us by the same charism and the same Father, St. Paul of the Cross. “Happy Easter” to his Holiness the Pope, Benedict XVI and to Fr. José Agustín Orbegozo, ex-Superior General; to the current General Consultors and those of the past six years; to those who assist the Curia and to the Major Superiors who share with us the responsibility and service of leading the Congregation. I send Easter greetings to the religious and to the lay collaborators of the community of Sts. John and Paul of which I am a part. And finally, to those who have a special place in my heart, “Happy Easter” to the young who are the beating heart of the Congregation: May you trustingly look ahead and dream of a new world into which you will be sent as missionaries in the sign of the Risen Christ. May Mary, the most pure icon of consecrated life, protect your vocation and be near to you in your formation in community with her attentive maternal heart, as she was present to the Child Jesus who matured together with her and Joseph in the home of Nazareth.

HAPPY EASTER TO ALL IN THE LORD JESUS, THE CRUCIFED AND RISEN ONE!
Amen, amen!
You will recall that last year Fr. Ottaviano wrote to the Congregation on the occasion of the “transfer” of the wooden cross from the young people of Cologne, Germany, to a representative group from Sydney, Australia. At the time Fr. Ottaviano wrote that on Palm Sunday 2006, “Pope Benedict XVI presided at the blessing of the “transferal of the Cross” of wood that a youth group from Cologne, Germany, entrusted to a group of young people from Sydney, who gathered near to the cross together with the Australian flag. Also present were their eminences Cardinals Joachim Meisner, Archbishop of Cologne and George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney. St. Peter’s Square was filled with people and the splendid springtime sun illuminated the flags that waved in the breeze and made the green olive branches more brilliant in color as they were festively waved at the words: Hosanna to “the One who comes in the name of the Lord.”

“The conferral of the wooden Cross” was also its “exaltation”, a symbol of offering and of love. This followed its recent pilgrimage to various Eastern countries, areas affected by violent threats and human suffering: the empty space of the razed Twin Towers of New York; the “favelas” of Latin America and the rich, opulent Western countries; now prior to its arrival in Australia, the Cross will lead a year-long pilgrimage in the lands of Africa. In fact, tomorrow, 10 April, it will leave for Senegal and then it will visit other areas that experience intense contradictions as well as great hopes”.

As I write the World Youth Day cross is still in pilgrimage to Australia. Having progressed throughout Africa it is now within the Paspac Region.

As an indication of the deep meaning and symbol of hope that the Cross is to young people it is worth noting that this week in a bid to highlight the quest for national reunification of Korea, young South Korean Catholics have brought the World Youth Day cross to the barbed wire barrier separating North and South Korea.

About 100 youths carried the cross as far as they could to the north end of the bridge in Imjingak, where the razor fence enforces the decades-old division of the Korean peninsula. There, each of them prayed in turn, with his or her brow against the cross.

The World Youth Day cross and icon of the Blessed Mother that they brought were gifts the late Pope John Paul II gave in 1984 to a group of young people to carry across the world in preparation for the first World Youth Day the following year.

**Two Special Passionist Events.**

World Youth Day is an event filled with symbols (such as the Cross and the Icon of Our Lady of the Snows) and activities (such as the Stations of the Cross) that resonate with our Charism and traditions. So it is good to see our Congregation preparing to host an encounter for young people at the time of next year’s World Youth Day. We wish to reach out to those young people who are associated with us and who are a sign of future life.
At the same time, as Fr. Ottaviano wrote in his Letter of April 20, the Congregation is also hosting a special meeting for younger professed members of the Congregation itself.

Thus prior to the official World Youth Day ceremonies, there will be a special gathering for young people associated with the Passionists throughout the world and a special meeting of younger professed religious of our Congregation. Holy Spirit Province has offered to organize both the events for younger people and for the younger professed religious.

For the past year in Holy Spirit Province a committee of eight members - four professed and four lay members - has been working to prepare for these events.

The week of March 1-6 some members of the Congregation’s International Organising Committee - Jose Manuel Leon (COPAL), Paul Francis Spencer (NECP), Orven Gonzaga (Paspac), Enzo Del Brocco (CIPJ) John Pearce (Holy Spirit Province Liaison person) and Denis Travers (Chair, General Council liaison) are meeting with representatives of the Holy Spirit Province Organising committee to move preparations forward.

International Organising Committee will plan and organise the meeting for younger religious and will liaison with Australian Province Committee regarding the planning for this ‘Passionist Youth’ gathering. Here the International Organising Committee will assist with advice on the present content and plans from an international perspective and assist in planning areas not yet addressed.

They will also offer any advice from an international perspective and assist with the planning of speakers, liturgies and prayer styles.

The two Passionist meetings are being organized to occur before the official World Youth Day 2008 events begin. After our own events the young people and those of our Religious accompanying them will journey to Sydney to take part in World Youth Day.

Please note that the two Passionist encounters will take place in two Passionist Communities in Melbourne. The Young Professed Passionists meeting will be held in Holy Cross Retreat Melbourne while the Young Peoples gathering will take place in St Paul Apostle Parish, Endeavour Hills.

The meeting for younger professed members of our Congregation at Holy Cross Retreat, Templestowe was originally suggested as part of the restructuring process. It is built on an idea that Fr. Ottaviano expressed after meetings around the world with younger members of the Congregation in the various Regions.

The timing of the Younger Professed meeting will be such that it allows these younger Passionists to join in the activities of the younger people taking part in their own meeting.

The meeting of Young People associated with the Passionists is for all those young people who share the Passionist Spirit. Young people who know us through
association with our Communities and Retreats, Shrines, Parishes, Youth Groups and who associate with us in other ways are warmly invited to this meeting.

It is expected that young people (pilgrims) will be arriving in Melbourne in early July (approximately between July 5 – 8), 2008. They will be ‘billeted’ (housed) with families in the Parish for their overnight accommodation and breakfast each day.

During the day they will move to the parish church for the gathering. The Church is large and the seating flexible so that many of the large gatherings can take place here. The church is surrounded by meeting rooms, halls, and school class rooms that will be used for meals and break out groups.

The encounter for young people finishes on Saturday evening, July 12, with Mass and celebration (i.e. a party).

The young pilgrims and professed Passionists then travel to Sydney (some 850kms away) over the period of July 13-15. We are exploring coach travel (approximately 10-12 hours), as planes will be limited. However, if overseas pilgrims can book their tickets for a flight from Melbourne to Sydney then that will assist. However the coach travel will also allow everyone to see some of the country.

The meetings will occur in mid winter. However Melbourne and Sydney are both coastal cities with a milder climate. In general Australia has a mild winter by many standards, but it will be wise to pack some warm clothes and a jacket. Average July temperatures in Melbourne are Minimum 6 degrees Celsius and an average of 14-15 each day, while Sydney temperatures are Minimum 7 degrees Celsius and average of 17-18 each day.

When in Sydney for the World Youth Day itself we will be taking part in the official programme of events organised by the Archdiocese. However we hope to have all Passionist pilgrims together in a school hall accommodation next to our Passionist Community of St Brigid’s Retreat. Here we also care for St Brigid’s parish and our church will be used as part of the official World Youth Day catechesis programme.

St Brigid’s retreat is 20 minutes by train to the centre of the city and a 10 km walk to the site of the Papal Mass.

The World Youth Day in Sydney starts with Mass on Tuesday July 15 and finishes with a Mass with the Holy Father on Sunday July 20, 10am.

Our own pilgrims will have a special Missioning Service with the Superior General, Monday July 21 at St Brigid’s Church Marrickville.

Costs for our programmes, timetables and registration procedures will soon be available. For information please email john.pearce@passionists.com.

Further Information for our special Passionists events in Melbourne and Sydney will soon be available on a special website at www.Passion8.org.au

Information for the official World Youth Day itself is available on www.wyd2008.org
THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE CONGREGATION DURING THE POST-CAPITULAR PERIOD

[Editors’ Note: During this period of time since the formal closing of the 45th General Chapter of the Congregation (1-21 October 2006) the Superior General and his Council have met in three General Consultas (October and December, 2006 and February, 2007). In part they discussed and made specific decisions (as mandated by the General Chapter) regarding the next phase of the Restructuring Process (2006-2008) which will be reviewed at the General Synod of 2008. In this issue of the BIP Fr. Denis Travers, 1st General Consultor, offers an abbreviated overview of the entire process of Restructuring. This is followed by a report on the innovation of the “Regional Coordinator” and the role that these religious will have during this Post-Capitular period.]

The Central Decree of the 45th General Chapter and the ten priorities that are to guide our Congregational Planning.
— Fr. Denis Travers, C.P.

The Central Decree

The central decree of our 45th General Chapter sets the broad context for the activity of the Congregation over the years to come. We are being asked to adapt and restructure our lives for the sake of greater efficacy and witness to the world.

The 45th General Chapter enthusiastically commits the Congregation to proceed with the process of Restructuring that was begun at the General Synod of 2004 and which will continue at least until the next General Chapter. This commitment is undertaken in order to promote the life and vitality of the Congregation and in order to more effectively respond to the Gospel mandate and to our Passionist vocation: to proclaim the message of the Cross in today’s world.

More specifically the Chapter decreed that
The Chapter decrees that every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate develop a plan for the future of its life and mission.

In the process of developing this plan, every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate can work independently or in collaboration with others, either within or beyond its own Region.

These plans will be shared on a regional basis. They will also be shared with the entire Congregation with the goal of providing a foundation for the next General Synod and for the next phase of Restructuring.

At the same time the General Chapter provided us with some sense of ‘direction’ for this process of planning that is to be undertaken by each Province, Vice Province and Regional Vicariate.

The Chapter has discerned ten priorities that will serve to guide our process of Restructuring on all levels.

While the whole Congregation is called to embark on a similar project – that of planning for the future – it is appreciated that this cannot be a ‘monolithic’ project. Each jurisdiction is unique; each responds to the particular social, spiritual and pastoral needs of the people it serves, each has its own culture, history and way of incarnating the Charism.

Indeed one of the more liberating ideas that I heard expressed in the Chapter was the view that a ‘Province’ (or any other jurisdiction for that matter) is not to be seen as merely a juridical or geographic entity, but as “an incarnation of the Charism in a particular place.”
So in essence every entity in the Congregation is being asked to plan for the future. We are being asked to plan for our own areas and we are being offered the challenge to do this in dialogue with others and within a specific time-frame (evolving over the next six years). We are being asked to share those plans with others—especially, but not exclusively with those within our own Regions.

In this way it is hoped that one of the principle ways the Congregation faces up to the future and builds up its life and vitality will be based upon a movement from the base upwards that will occur within a context of the whole Congregation sharing a journey together.

While the uniqueness of each entity and the specificity of each Region are recognised, there are elements within the Central Decree that work to ensure that there is some cohesion and coordination to all this planning activity throughout Congregation.

The Central Decree ensures this in several ways. Firstly, it offers the possibility that each entity can work on its plans in collaboration with others, either within or beyond its own Region.

Secondly even if we don’t draw up our plans in collaboration with other Passionist jurisdictions, the Decree does ask us to share these plans on a Regional basis.

Thirdly it asks that each entity be prepared to share their plans with the entire Congregation at the General Synod of 2008 “with the goal of providing a foundation for (this) Synod and for the next phase of Restructuring.”

Finally and this is a key factor, the General Chapter also discerned ten priorities to assist us in our planning. These areas are set aside as key areas for everyone’s reflection and planning. They form a kind of ‘measure’ for us to test our efforts by, they challenge the limits of our vision and they provide us with a template for drawing up our response to the world of today. Further, they have been discerned as those areas that best reflect our common desire to move forward as an international Congregation at this time.

B. What is the origin of these ten priorities?

The simple and short answer to the above question is to say that these priorities arose from the sharing and discussion that took place in weeks One and Two of the General Chapter itself!

However, such a simple answer might run the risk of doing some injustice to the evolution of the ten priorities. In my view, the real origin of these priorities lies in the preparatory process for the General Chapter itself.

To better contextualise the above statement a short review of our journey to the General Chapter of 2006 is helpful.

The General Synod of December 2004 advised the Superior General that the Congregation should embark upon a process of restructuring. The General Council of the time accepted this advice. As a first response and a beginning of the process of restructuring the General and Council appointed the Restructuring Commission.

The principal dynamics of the process were twofold:
That the General and Council were to be responsible for the Restructuring Process and that the Commission would work to advise and assist them;
That the Process itself was to be one that would take 8 years and have four distinct stages:

“It was evident that Charism is central to Passionist thinking about restructuring.”
Preparation for the General Chapter. This stage would be essentially one of Consultation. After the Chapter the Congregation would embark more definitely upon some restructuring targets (as mandated by the Chapter). These would be reviewed by the General Synod of 2008. The experimentation and evolution of restructuring would continue in light of the feedback from the 2008 Synod.

This final stage would further refine restructuring objectives and prepare us for the 2012 Chapter (which would legislate and approve the changes that had been brought to life over the past years.

More specifically the first stage of the eight year process – the two years just passed 2005-2006 (stage one) - focused upon a consultation process involving the whole Congregation with the aim of assisting the General Chapter of 2006 to articulate a vision for the future of the Congregation.

The first step in this Consultation process was the invitation to thirteen religious (representing every Region) to write a short paper on the topic “How I imagine the Congregation in 2012”.

These thirteen responses were summarised and analysed. As a follow up to this exercise a first questionnaire was devised (and was known as Consultation A). This questionnaire highlighted Passionist Charism, Presence and Mission and was sent to the entire Congregation. Every individual religious, Local Community and Council was invited to respond.

This exercise revealed three basic ways of describing or responding to the Charism: One orientation emphasises that it is by returning authentically to our founding tradition that we shall renew our personal Passionist lives. A second orientation underlined that vitality comes from being rooted in our traditions and being open to evolving future growth. A third orientation challenged us to live the Passionist Charism from new starting points.

It was evident that Charism is central to Passionist thinking about restructuring. There was a consistency in the responses in that one’s perspective on Charism seemed to flavour the responses one made to questions about Presence and Mission.

In response a second questionnaire (Consultation B) was devised. This questionnaire highlighted five significant aspects of Passionist life that emerged from the responses to Consultation A. These were – our understanding of Internationality, our relationship with the Poor, our hopes for the Formation of younger Passionists, the meaning of the Charism and our relationship with the Local Church. This questionnaire was sent to every Council in the Congregation, but was also shared with the entire Congregation.

The responses to Consultation B were analysed. Some significant reflections from the Commission were that

The responses clearly indicate that the great complexity of current reality in the world of today is incapable of being reduced to ideological stereotypes. There is a huge diversity of cultures, which must always be given respect. There is an ever-increasing speed of change and transformation (history is constantly accelerating); this rapidly makes obsolete, not only traditional forms of ministry but even those only recently adopted. The responses illustrate the wonderful love that Passionists have for the charism and a desire to guard the identity and unique nature of the Congregation.
We must recognise the unique nature of every individual and the nature of his particular fears and anxieties in the face of change.

It was further discerned that in all our Consultations: There was always a diversity of opinion and usually evenly spread across the Congregation and within Regions. The centrality of the charism as distinct from its traditional and various interpretations emerged as a life giving focus for conversation. Openness to the future seemed to outweigh the views of those with some resistance to change. Focus on the Charism and its implications for our Presence and Mission generated energy and a way of opening up discussion. Often new ideas were in a minority.

All of this seemed to reflect that we could not have one sole vision for the life and vitality of the Congregation. However, it was evident that there were common issues, consistent points of reference, shared areas of challenge and fundamental desires that were being reflected across the whole Congregation.

It was suggested that the General Chapter needed to focus a substantial part of its energy on the meaning of the Passionist Charism. It seemed to us that all through the process responses and reflections on the meaning of the Charism created great energy and enthusiasm. We discerned that while a Vision for the future was important, it must be a Vision based upon our understanding of the Passionist Charism if this exercise was to engage our hearts as well as our minds.

Thus the Restructuring Commission proposed to the General Council that the 2006 General Chapter needed to focus on three primary objectives. These were:

To enable a systematic process at the Chapter to encourage Capitulars to dialogue so as to achieve a more profound understanding and commitment to Passionist unity.

To establish a programme for the next stage of the Congregation restructuring process moving forward from the 2006 Chapter to the Synods of 2008, 2010 and beyond to the 2012 General Chapter.

To adapt Congregation leadership structures creatively and adequately to support Restructuring Chapter objectives for 2006 - 2012.

I believe that our General Chapter achieved these goals. The Chapter did not do the work for us; it merely called us to the task of planning for our future and provided us with some of the means to do so.

So how did the ten priorities evolve?

They came from our struggle to articulate a vision for the future, they came from the richness of ideas that emerged in all the pre-Chapter consultation exercises, they came from the passionate beliefs of the capitulars for the future possibilities of our Congregation, they emerged from our imagination, from personal prophetic awareness and from our common sharing, and they emerged from our struggle to find and hold a common view.
Conclusion.
The ten priorities are not in themselves a Vision or a definitive blueprint for a future Congregation of the Passion. They are however areas of concern, hope and aspiration that the General Chapter itself judged were universal enough to be held up before every Province, Vice Province and Vicariate. We are being asked to ‘imagine’ and prepare for our future in the light of these areas of concern.

For any Province, Vice Province or Vicariate to plan for its future without allowing these ten priorities to challenge or inform its future planning is to miss the challenge that the General Chapter is asking of us.

It is conceded that not every entity will be able to respond to, or engage with, each of the ten areas. Indeed they are not being presented to us as a compass to show us the precise or certain way forward, but they are offered as a more fundamental aid – a more primitive ‘lodestone’ if you like - to guide us in our planning. We are being shown the areas of natural attraction and concern to us, but we must do the work and find the road ahead – both as independent entities and in collaboration with our neighbours across the Congregation.

The General Chapter is encouraging us to plan for our future, for our collaboration within our Region and for the future life of our Congregation.

However, the General Chapter decree is asking us to do so both in light of the responses we could make to these areas of priority and in the light of all the new directions, challenges and imaginative possibilities they offer us for our future identity, life and mission.

The Regional Coordinator for Restructuring

After an ample and indepth study, in the light of what was decided by the 45th General Chapter, the Superior General and his Council have defined the role of the Regional Coordinator and also established the tasks that he is to undertake. Following is a summary that was approved during the General Consultas of December 2006 and February 2007.

A) Definition

1. The term Coordinator is preferable to that of Representative or Secretary because it primarily refers to the activity to be undertaken and not about institutional authority.

2. The term Regional was chosen rather than Conference or Area because this was the term that was used in the decree of the Central Declaration of the 45th General Chapter. Other terms might cause confusion. The Congregation is divided into seven (7) Regions that presently correspond to the Conferences.

3. The function is in reference to the Restructuring Process in each Region that is to be carried out in relationship with the other Coordinators and with the General Council.

B) The function of the Regional Coordinator

1. The Coordinator has the function of serving as a contact person between the General Council and the Region that he represents.

2. He serves as moderator (animator) in the Region with regard to Restructuring: he should oversee the coordination and interaction between the various Entities and be in contact with the General Council concerning the process of Restructuring.

The Coordinator does not supplant nor diminish the role and the responsibility of the Major Superiors in their juridical Entities.

This position will continue to evolve and will be evaluated for possible adjustments as the process of Restructuring continues.
The role is the same for all the Coordinators, however the manner in which it is fulfilled may vary from region to region.

The Regional Coordinator shall be elected by the Conference of the Region either directly or by sending nominations to the General Council by June 2007. The form of the election and the length of the term of the Coordinator will be determined by the respective regions.

The role of the Coordinator may coincide with that of the President of the Regional Conference. The Regional Coordinator will be a member “ex officio” (with right to vote) of the Assembly and at the Executive Council of the Region.

3. The General Council that is ultimately responsible for the process of Restructuring, will ordinarily meet with the group of the 7 Regional Coordinators once a year and/or when the General Council deems it necessary. This meeting will have as its agenda:

- Clarify the important elements of Restructuring.
- Report on how each Region is responding.
- Review the successive steps to be undertaken.

The Coordinator has no juridical authority except that which is granted him by the Conference.

The Regional Coordinators

The coordinators for each of the regions have been elected, some of them for a specific time period, i.e. until June, following the celebration of the provincial chapters.

Following is the list of the Regional Coordinators as of the date of publication of this issue of the BIP.

(L-R) Frs. Eulogio Cordero (SANG), Michael Ogwuemo (PATR), Joseph Jones (PAUL), Gabriel Tae-Won Pak (MACOR), Nicholas Postlethwaite (IOS).

Spain, Portugal: CII  
Fr. Eulogio Cordero (SANG)  
North America: IPCM  
Fr. Joseph Jones (PAUL)  
Latin America: CLAP  
Fr. Augusto Canali (until May 2007)  
Italy: CIPI  
Fr. Giovanni Pelà (until June 2007)  
Oceania: PASPAC  
Fr. Gabriel Tae-Won Pak (MACOR)  
Africa: CPA  
Fr. Michael Ogwuemo (PATR)  
North Europe: NECP  
Fr. Nicholas Postlethwaite (IOS)
ANNOUNCEMENT
of the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio
regarding appointments to the General Curia
and the local Community of
Sts. John and Paul, Rome

By means of this communiqué, I, with the consensus of the General Council, am appointing several individuals to Official positions in the General Curia and as Superior of the Community of Sts. John and Paul. Additional appointments will be communicated following the celebration of various Provincial Chapters during the upcoming months: the CIPI Provinces of Italy; CRUC (Holy Cross – USA); SPIR (Australia); and FID (Colombia).

The following have been appointed:
PROCURATOR GENERAL:
Fr. Floriano De Fabiis (PIET)
SECRETARY GENERAL:
Fr. Ramiro Ruiz Betancourt (FID)
GENERAL ECONOME:
Fr. Battista Ramponi (CORM) (as of 20 December 2006)
POSTULATOR GENERAL:
Fr. Giovanni Zubiani (CORM)
SUPERIOR of the community of Sts. John and Paul, Rome:
Fr. Mirek Lesiecki (ASSUM)

I wish to extend to these religious my gratitude and best wishes as they undertake this ministry to the Congregation.
I also wish to thank Fr. Umberto Palmerini who, for three successive mandates (18 years), with great dedication, precision and competence has served in the offices of Procurator and Secretary General. These sentiments of gratitude are shared by our Major Superiors and our religious throughout the Congregation. We assure him of our fraternal best wishes and our prayers during this period of personal suffering and illness, and in the hope that he will at least be able to recover some sense of personal autonomy. May his presence near St. Gabriel at his Shrine and the “good air” of the Gran Sasso mountains be the “best medicine” for him.

On behalf of the entire Congregation, the General Council and the Community at Sts. John and Paul we again wish to say “thank you.”
May St. Paul of the Cross, our Father, bless and protect you.


Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio
Superior General, C.P.

Fr. Floriano De Fabiis, CP
Secretary General

(L-R) Frs. Floriano De Fabiis (PIET), Ramiro Ruiz Betancourt (FID), Giovanni Zubiani (CORM), Battista Ramponi (CORM) and Mirek Lesiecki (ASSUM).
An Update from the Passionist Historical Commission

(Editors’ Note: During the recent 45th General Chapter of the Congregation the Historical Commission published a report of its work during the previous six years. In this issue of the PIB, Fr. Fabiano Giorgini offers an overview of the status of the commission and the works that have been published as well as those that are in process or those which are scheduled for publication at future dates.)

The origins of the Historical Commission have been described in past issues of the PIB: PIB 2003, No.1 contains documentary references; for the components of the Commission see BIP 2003, N. 2. In the PIB of 2004, No. 4, information can be found about subject matter that the General Chapters and the General Curias requested concerning the history and the spirituality of the Congregation and the work that the Commission has tried to organize and process.

The Commission presented a proposal to the General Chapter to encourage the Provinces to have written a history of the individual provinces within the next six years. Methodological guidelines were provided.

The two present members of the Commission are working according to the same directives as in the past:
-- on-going research on our history: Paulino Alonso for the period 1839-1862; Fabiano Giorgini for the period 1863-1946.
-- give conferences at Passionist formation meetings as requested (Italian and Spanish novitiates and student residences);
-- encourage research about Passionist history by Passionists as well as scholars outside the Congregation.

In 2005 booklet No. 57 was published in the series “Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality” on the topic of: Organization and Restructuring in the History of the Passionist Congregation. Historical Notes. (Italian) The booklet is the result of conferences that were given at the request of the CIPI Commission and for a meeting with the religious of the CORM Province.

Again during 2005, the Commission coordi-

It is also worth noting that there are works that were published on the occasion of the 100th or 50th anniversaries of various retreats or Provinces that offer substantial information even if they are not truly historical works.

For purposes of research there are also important volumes that deal with historical sources: Regulae et Constitutiones Congr. SS.mae Crucis et Passionis DNJC, Edito critica textuum curante Fabiano Giorgini, Romae 1958, pp. XXXI-205 [a brief history of the six texts and the respective approbations from 1736 to 1930 and the various texts of the Rule and a comparison of the same].


Decreti e Raccomandazioni dei Capitoli generali della Congregazione della SS. Croce e Passione di NSGC, a cura di Fabiano Giorgini, Roma 1960, pp. XIV-(84)-228 [brief history of each chapter with the decrees and recommendations from the 1st to the 37th in 1958].


[Below is a summary of the booklets in the series “Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality”. There are also booklets in this series in Italian and Spanish although they do not necessarily correspond to each other.]

**Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality**

3. Artola, A.M., Cp, The Presence Of The Passion Of Jesus In The Structure And Apostolate Of The Passionist Congregation.
9.Ibid., Part Ii: Poverty; Solitude.
16. Various Authors, Cp, Commentaries On The General Constitutions Cp, Chapters I And II.
17. Various Authors, Cp, Commentaries On The General Constitutions Cp, Chapters III And IV. (Supply Exhausted)
18. Various Authors, Cp, Commentaries On The General Constitutions CU Chapter V.
19. Various Authors, Cp, Pastoral Aspects Of The Memoria Passionis. (Supply Exhausted)
20. Various Authors, Cp, The Memoria Passionis In The Constitutions. (Supply Exhausted)
23. Various Authors, Cp, Living The Passion Of Christ (The Memory Of The Passion In Latin America).
27. Sweeney, James, Cp, Models Of Passionist Life And Mission.
29. Spencer, Paul Francis, Cp, Elements Of Passionist Spirituality.
Assembly of the Portuguese Passionist (FAT) Province and Visitation of Angola

From December 26 to the 29, 2006 the Assembly of the Province of Our Lady of Fatima (FAT) of Portugal was held in the community of Barroselas. It consisted of days for work as well as fraternal sharing and recreation. The 29 members of the province are located in five communities of Portugal and a mission community in Angola.

The Provincial Superior, Fr. Laureano Alves and the Provincial Procurator for the Missions, Fr. Nuno Almeida visited the province’s mission of Uije in Angola from 25 January to 24 February, 2007. In particular they hope to further develop programs aimed at greater solidarity with the poor and marginalized in that country.

24th ASSEMBLY OF THE CORI PROVINCE, SPAIN

During 3-4 February, 2007 the CORI Province of northern Spain held it 24th Assembly at the Angosto Shrine. There were 27 religious and 7 lay people who participated in the event. The main topic of discussion was the evaluations of the programs of the Provincial Chapter from the perspective of the individual communities.

OPENING OF THE CELEBRATIONS MARKING 100 YEARS OF PASSIONIST PRESENCE IN MIERES (Asturias, Spain) of the SANG PROVINCE

On Saturday, 27 January 2007 events marking the opening of the celebration of 100 years of Passionist presence in Mieres took place in Villa de Mieres, Spain. Bishop Carlos Osoro, the Archbishop of Oviedo, accompanied by the Provincial and the religious and local clergy, celebrated a solemn Mass at 12:30 PM.

The local civil authorities and a numerous group of the laity also attended. In his homily Bishop Osoro spoke of the arrival of the Passionists in the region and the notable ministry of evangelization that took place during this time period. He recalled that during a large part of its history this community served as the formation house for the Passionist missionaries who even today continue to minister in so many areas of the region. He referred to the figure of St. Inocencio Canoura as a mature fruit of the Passionist presence, a presence which culminated in his martyrdom in 1934, the supreme witness of love in the following of Jesus Crucified.

The Passionist community in Mieres, in conjunction with a small centenary committee, has programmed a series of activities during this year: conferences, photography exhibitions, concerts and the annual meeting of the Passionist Family of the SANG Province during the month of June. The closing of the centenary will take place on 9 October 2007, the feast of St. Inocencio Canoura.
THE SANG PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY

The Annual Assembly of the SANG Province took place from December 27-29, 2006 in the Passionist Community of Las Presas (Cantabria). The religious of the seven communities of Spain participated. During the Assembly there were reports from each of the communities as well as reports from the various Provincial commissions: apostolate, youth ministry, vocations and formation, the missions and finances. Each of the communities made their report based on guidelines that were provided by the Provincial Council that were inspired by the objectives of the Province Planning and the Central Decree of the 45th General Chapter. Special attention was given to reflection and discernment concerning programs of vocation ministry.

January 28th was designated a day for study, prayer and sharing with the laity associated with the various communities. Reports were also given about the General Chapter.

Blessing and Inauguration of the Passionist Seminary of the FAM Province in Venezuela

On 16 Feb. 2007, Bishop Mario Maronta, bishop of San Cristóbal, Venezuela, presided at a Mass during which the new missionary seminary for aspirants and postulants of the FAM Province in Palmira, Edo.Táchira, Venezuela was blessed. Also present for the blessing of the facility that is dedicated to Our Lady of Holy Hope, was the Provincial Superior, Fr. Fernando Rabanal as well as other Passionist religious of the area and the Passionist Sisters of El Pabellón and Pavia-Barquisimento.

In his circular letter, Fr. Fernando stated that “inaugurating our seminary in Venezuela is truly a sign of new life. We will not be discouraged by the problems that we will have to confront. We recall the beginnings on Monte Argentario for St. Paul of the Cross. If it is of God, as we believe it is, then the project will go forward. The aspirants and the novice which Providence has given to us, are a source of hope and challenge to be welcomed and which all the communities must embrace as necessary pastoral ministry for youth and vocation ministry. A parish where this kind of outreach does not exist would be a rejection of vitality and life, an inappropriate absence of pastoral integrity. I also invite the laity of the Passionist Family to collaborate in this work so that they too may enrich this charismatic and vocation ministry. This time of Restructuring in our Province is also an opportunity for the revitalization of our life and mission.”

The formation community is presently composed of Frs. Agapito Medina, Antonio Gracia and Valentín Duerto as well as one postulant and four aspirants.

MEETING OF THE IBERIAN PASSIONIST FAMILY

This past October 7, marked the conclusion of the 75th Anniversary celebrations commemorating the Passionist Presence in Portugal. The closing of the anniversary year was celebrated in Fatima, Portugal, with the meeting of the Iberian Lay Passionist Family.
CHAPTER OF THE VICE PROVINCE OF THE JAPANESE MARTYRS (MAIAP)

The Chapter of the MAIAP Vice Province took place from July 2 - 7, 2006.

The following religious were elected:
Vice Provincial Superior: Fr. Isaia Kishi;

CHAPTER OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PROVINCE (CONC)
Argentina - Uruguay

From July 24-27, 2006 the CONC Province of Argentina – Uruguay held its provincial Chapter. The following religious were elected: Provincial: Fr. Juan Maria Rosasco; and Consultors: Fr. Juan Ignacio Clarey and Fr. Carlos Saracini.

CHAPTER OF THE PROVINCE KOREAN MARTYRS (MACOR)


The following religious were elected: Provincial: Fr. Paul Gabriel T. W. Pak; 1st Consultor: Fr. Joseph Seong G. Oh and 2nd Consultor: Fr. Dominic Savio K. W. Pang.

The following is a statement that summarizes some of the principal themes of the MACOR Provincial Chapter.

“Where There is no Vision, People perish.”
(Proverbs 29:18)

Admitting that there are deficiencies in our life as a Province we have attempted to honestly consider the central dimensions of religious life, taking into consideration those things that strengthen this life and preserve its values. The challenges that we see weakening our life and hindering mutual understanding are secularism and the prevalence of individualism. As flowing water from its source cannot be divided, so you cannot separate our apostolate from our religious life - we recognize to do so would be to perform an injustice to ourselves.

So that during the coming four years our Province may advance in the spiritual dimension and that our common life may deepen and thus enrich our apostolate, the Chapter has decided to concentrate on the following areas:

1. To recover a sense of mutual understanding among the brethren living our Community Life, we commit ourselves to a renewal of our hearts.

   In order to restore a sense of mutual faith in one another, we commit ourselves to vital life-sharing on the practical and faith levels. On the personal level, we seek to live harmoniously in an atmosphere where all can freely speak their own minds in an atmosphere of mutual understanding based upon a deeply felt esteem for one another.

2. For the renewal of religious life, recovering a sense of common life.

   The monastery is a challenge to the apostolate and to our lives. It is the place where we are refreshed. While limiting our absences from the monastery, we shall attempt to re-establish a sense of being together in common. We will attempt to renew ourselves through mutual respect, and deepen our commitment to poverty by willingly sharing whatever we receive from outside the monastery with those with whom we live.

3. The harmonization of the flow of Religious Life and the Apostolate through variety in the apostolate.

   The dimension of a life of contemplation and activity is a particular element of our way of life that is in accord with the Founder’s intentions for the Congregation. In order to maintain this type of life, we seek to harmonize the flow of our lives between contemplation and the apostolate. In order to develop this characteristic life style of our Province, we shall make a special effort through the special commission recently formed to undertake a study of our Province. Today, while the apostolate is centered on our Retreat Centres, we will make a special effort to broaden our vision of the apostolate by coming to terms with various special apostolates.
38th CORM Provincial Chapter

From 19 to 24 February 2007 the 38th Provincial Chapter of the CORM Province took place in the Italian city of Caravate (province of Verona). By the end of June all of the Italian provinces will have held their respective Provincial Chapters.

The Capitular assembly consisted of 57 religious of whom 49 were voting members. Among the participants there were present: Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio (Superior General); Fr. Luigi Vaninetti, General Consultor and also a member of the CORM Province; observers of each of the other Italian (CIPI) provinces; Fr. Filippo Astori, the Regional Vicar of Kenya; Fr. Francesco Breda, a representative of the Regional Vicariate of Tanzania; and two other delegates from each of the African vicariates. Additionally, during the last day of the Chapter there was also participation from some laypeople who are members of the Passionist Lay Movement of the Province.

The topic of Restructuring for the Congregation and for CIPI (Italian Passionists) formed the basis for the various matters that were discussed during the Chapter. The canonical session of the Chapter was preceded by two other non-canonical sessions which took place during 27-29 November 2006 (four-year verification) and 15-17 January 2007 (proposals for the next four years). All the material that was addressed during the two sessions comprised the Instrumentum Laboris that was studied and then approved during the Chapter.

The Chapter Assembly reconfirmed Fr. Giuseppe Martinelli as Provincial Superior for the next four years. Additionally, after modifying no. 141 of the CIPI Regulations, (the areas of responsibility of the consultors), four Consultors were elected: Fr. Leone Masnata (Charism, Spirituality, On-going Formation); Fr. Giuseppe Adorati (Apostolate); Fr. Corrado Albini (Initial Formation and Vocation Ministry) and Fr. Gianfranco Albini (Finances and Solidarity).

44th PIET Provincial Chapter

From 5 – 9 March 2007 the 44th Provincial Chapter of the Pieta Province took place at the Shrine of St. Gabriel. The theme of the Chapter was: “New Life through fidelity to the Charism”. The assembly participants worked within the framework proposed by the 45th General Chapter that invited the provinces to “planning for restructuring”. In the capitular programming the importance of community and spiritual life was highlighted as a means of rediscovering a fraternal spirit, hospitality and mutual care. With regard to evangelization, attention was given to the urgent need to reevaluate our missionary role through research of methodology and new terminology in keeping with present Church teachings. In the area of vocation and youth ministry, there was a strong move to increase efforts in this area by providing additional resources. The importance of the area of initial formation was also discussed with an emphasis on inter-provincial collaboration. The leadership of the province for the next four years was entrusted to Fr. Piergiorgio Bartoli (Provincial), assisted by Frs. Natale Panetta (Community Life); Aurelio D’Intino (Apostolate); Daniele Pierangiolì (Formation); and Vincenzo Fabri (Finances).
PRAES Provincial Chapter

From 19 to 23 March the 75th Provincial Chapter of the Province of the Presentation (PRAES) took place on Monte Argentario. Approximately 50 religious participated, in addition to the students and five religious from other Italian provinces. On 22 March, Fr. Fiorenzo Bordo was elected Provincial Superior. After voting to change the number of consultors from four to two, on 23 March Fr. Vittorio Bruni was elected 1st Consultor and Fr. Adolfo Lippi, 2nd Consultor.

The following were the principal topics that were addressed during the Chapter: Restructuring and membership in the Congregation; Finances and solidarity; Personal and community lifestyle; Preferential option for youth; and Initial and on-going formation.

Prior to the Chapter, Fr. Luis Alberto Cano, General Consultor, conducted the canonical visitation of the communities of the province. Don Giuseppe Tacconi, Salesian, was the chapter facilitator.

American Holy Cross (CRUC) Province Celebrates its Assembly and 100 Years of Passionist Presence

Holy Cross (CRUC) Province gathered at Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center, in the city of Sierra Madre, California, from August 7 – 11 for its Annual Assembly, this year dedicated to the Strategic Plan process. During this gathering the Province also celebrated 100 years of its founding.

In 1906, all the Passionists in the United States were part of one province—St. Paul of the Cross. But as the Congregation pushed westward, it became increasingly difficult for the religious to cover such a vast territory and for the Provincial to govern it. Dividing the Province into two seemed to be a good solution. Because a new monastery and chapel was about to be dedicated in Louisville, Kentucky, during the summer of 1906, this was the site that was chosen for the official division of the Province.

Over the years Holy Cross Province continued to grow, with ministries and communities added in the cities of Chicago, Birmingham, Des Moines, Houston, Orlando, Sacramento and Los Angeles areas, Detroit, San Antonio, and Carbondale, Illinois. Overseas, Holy Cross Province assigned missionaries to Japan in 1952 and to Korea in 1963; both of these missions grew strong and are now independent Provinces. In 1981, the Passionists of the CRUC Province responded to a call to establish a mission in the southern part of India. The Passionists of Holy Cross Province have also served in China, Germany, the Philippines, and Jamaica, West Indies.

The last 10 years in particular have been a time of great collaboration between vowed Passionists and lay men and women. The religious members of Holy Cross Province have actively invited lay people to join them in advancing the charism of St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the Congregation of the Passion. From this outreach came the creation of the Community of Passionist Partners (CPP) which currently has more than 250 lay members.

In his message to the Province, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio, Superior General wrote: “May your celebrations be marked by a sense of profound gratitude to God who has blessed the good will of the religious.
Gratitude is also in order for the sense of responsibility on the part of the religious who, with generous fidelity, have helped Christians to turn to God in the midst of the great social changes that have characterized the past one hundred years. It is my sincere hope that the mutual trust and collaboration between the Provinces in the USA and with the entire Congregation, which is presently involved in the process of Restructuring, may always continue to grow in love. This can serve as a means of overcoming the difficulties of today’s world. Our History is a treasure that must be safeguarded. By the grace of God, it is a patrimony for life and a source of energy for the future.”

NORTH AMERICAN INTER-COUNCIL MEETING


The participants were from Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic and the United States, specifically from the Province of St. Paul of the Cross (PAUL); Holy Cross Province (CRUC); the Province of Christ the King (REG); the Vicariate of Our Lady of Peace (PAC); as well as the Passionist Sisters, Daughters of the Passion; and the Secular Institute of the Passion in Mexico.

Among the topics discussed were Province planning, especially with regard to inter-provincial projects; formation and vocation programs; the study of foreign languages; evaluation and recommendations concerning an exchange of personnel for purposes of ministry; the consequences and effects in the provinces of the 45th General Chapter; the ten areas of priority as outlined by the Chapter and their application in each zone; the role of the Coordinator of each of the areas as a liaison for the Superior General and his Council; the Passionist Presence in the community of Bethany in the Holy Land; the impact of the new US immigration laws and their effect upon Mexican immigrants; possible pastoral ministry with immigrants in the US by the Passionist Sisters; a presentation on the mission, charism and spirituality of the Missionaries of the Secular Institute of the Passion; report on the activities of the Passionist Volunteers in the US; and finally, a report on the reality and the development of the Latin-American Passionist Conference (CLAP).

First Provincial Chapter in Indonesia (REPAC)

On the feast of St. Paul of the Cross, 19 October 2006, the recently concluded 45th General Chapter, which took place at the Generalate of Sts. John and Paul, Rome, according to the norm stated in No. 104 of the Constitutions elevated the Queen of Peace Vice-Province (REPAC) of Indonesia to the status of Province with the same name.

The first Provincial Chapter of the newly formed Province took place in Indonesia from 15-20 January 2007. The following were elected Provincial and Consultors:
Fr. Sabinus Lohin, Provincial Superior, Fr. Nikodemus Jimbun, 1st Consultant, Fr. Mikael Dou Lodo, Consultant; Fr. Marcellius Mobel, Consultant; and Fr. Yustinus Sukardi, Consultant.

PATR Province Celebrates 150 Years of Passionist Presence

On 3 September 2006 a Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated marking 150 years of Passionist Presence in Mount Argus and Ireland. The principal concelebrant and preacher was Archbishop Diarmuid Martin D.D., Archbishop of Dublin. Among the concelebrants were the Superior General, Fr. Ottaviano D’Egidio C.P., Fr. Martin Coffey C.P., Provincial Superior and Fr. Frank Keevins C.P. Rector of Mount Argus. At the head of the congregation in the full Church were the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, and her husband. In attendance were also the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Councillor Vincent Jackson and his wife.

In the message (dated 15 August 2006) that the Superior General sent to the Provincial, Fr. Martin and to the religious of the PATR Province, he noted the unique history and present international dimensions of the Province: “The first Mission of the Passionists in Ireland was preached in Dublin in 1849. It generated such a positive response on the part of the clergy as well as the laity that, from that point on, the
Passionists were constantly called upon to preach missions and retreats in parishes and in religious communities, affording them opportunities to promote the memory of the love of God as revealed and communicated by Jesus Crucified and Risen. From the very early days many of the laity received instruction about Passionist spirituality and they made it a part of their lives by means of the Confraternity of the Passion. It enjoyed additional growth in the Province through the efforts of well-trained religious assistants. This spiritual growth was further supported by the publication *The Cross*. Recently, these same lay people have worked with our religious in the evangelization of Botswana and South Africa.

Your Province has also had a unique international and intercultural dimension, because originally the Passionist presence in Northern Europe and in England consisted of the Province of St. Joseph which also encompassed Belgium. Consequently, it was known as the “Anglo-Belgian” Province. The international and intercultural aspects of the Province, in our present globalized world, are very timely for us as we undertake the process of Restructuring our life, mission and presence in various regions.”

The Provincial Superior, Fr. Emery Kibal of the SALV Province has named Fr. Leonard Okuku (SALV) the Superior-Director of the Student Residence of Kisima for a three year term 2006-2009. For the past two years he has served in this house as assistant to Fr. Francesco Breda (CORM). He will be assisted by two other religious, Fr. Moses Amala (CORM) as Assistant Director and Brother Martin Odego Ochiel (CORM) as Econome.

The annual pilgrimage of the Passionist Family of Mexico to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe took place on December 22. Fr. Primo Feliciano de la Vega, CP of the Mexico REG Province was the presider at the Mass. This year the theme of the preaching and meditation was: “OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE: “The Virgin who forged a nation! How do we collaborate with her?”
On 15 January 2007, at the Palace of the Urban Vicariate of Rome, the “Supplice libello” (petition) and the various documents for the introduction of the Cause of the beatification of Fr. Theodore Foley were consigned to the Office of the Cardinal Vicar, His Eminence Camillo Ruini. Fr. Theodore was Superior General of the Congregation from 1964 until his death in Rome on 9 October 1974.

This presentation of the texts was done by the Postulator General, Fr. Giovanni Zubiani, accompanied by the Vice-Postulator for the Cause, Fr. Dominic Papa (PAUL). In addition to the “supplex libellus” (petition), they also submitted the elencus (list) of the witnesses to be questioned as well as the format for the interrogation that consists of more than one hundred queries that will be used to facilitate an in-depth analysis of the life and the virtues of Fr. Theodore.

The next step will be the presentation of three documents to the Cardinal Vicar: the consensus of the “coetus episcoporum” (the bishops of the region of Lazio, which includes the city of Rome); the “nulla osta” (approval) on behalf of the Congregation for Doctrine and Faith and that of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Then the members of the Historical Commission and the two theological censors will be named. Finally a tribunal will be set up to begin the questioning of witnesses and the usual statement of testimony will be published.

Father Theodore Foley

PRAYER FOR THE CANONIZATION OF FATHER THEODORE FOLEY

Lord Jesus Christ, you called Father Theodore Foley to follow you as a Passionist Priest even to Calvary’s heights. Through your Immaculate and Sorrowful Mother, you taught him obedience to your Father’s will and the fulfillment of your Commandment of loving God and neighbor. Let the loving inspiration of your servant move us to live a more profound life of virtue. We ask that you glorify your servant Father Theodore Foley according to the designs of your holy will. Through his intercession, we ask you to grant the request I now present (here mention your request) Through Christ our Lord. Amen (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father)
Bishop Mauro Pereira Bastos, C.P.

On 14 September 2006, near the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the Passionist bishop Mauro Bastos, recently named bishop of Guaxupé by Pope Benedict XVI, was killed in a tragic car accident. He was on his way to a priests’ conference when he was struck from behind by a truck that was traveling at high speed. The resulting explosion and fire incinerated his body, the only recognizable remains being his episcopal ring and pectoral cross.

Fr. Antonio Rungi, Provincial Superior of the DOL Province in Italy and of the DOL-VICT Vicariate to which Bishop Bastos belonged commented: “Fr. Mauro was an exemplary religious...priest and pastor and because of his total obedience to the Church he accepted every assignment. He died on the day that the Church was celebrating the Exaltation of the Cross. His episcopal motto, in addition to summarizing the itinerary of his pastoral life, is also an expression of his personal life: ‘Through the Cross to the Light’.... Merely 51 yrs. of age, six of these were spent as bishop, and of these in his first and beloved diocese of Janauba. Since 19 April 2006 he was, in fact, bishop of Guaxupé where he continued to work tirelessly and lovingly for God, the Church and the poorest of his brothers and sisters. He was an exceptional bishop, and above all a person who was affable, simple, joyful, generous and possessing many humane, pastoral and intellectual qualities.”

Bishop Mauro Pereira Bastos was born on 12 September 1955 in the diocese of Cachoeiro de Itapemirim, in the State of Espirito Santo. In January 1981 he made perpetual Profession of Vows and on 7 July 1984 he was ordained to the priesthood. He received a Licentiate in Biblical theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. He was director of the "Escola Passionista" of Vila Velha, in Vitória (1986); Pastor of "Santa Maria Goretti" in Cariacica, ES. (1987) and at the same time Professor of Theology at the Istitute of Philosophy and Teology of Vitória; later he was named director for the formation of Passionist seminarians for Philosophy in Vila Velha ES. (1989-1993); Vicar of the Regional Vicariate "Nossa Senhora da Vitória" of the Passionists in the States of Espirito Santo and Minas Gerais. He was director of the "Família Passionista" in Brazil (1989-1995); Director of Formation for seminarians of Theology for the Congregation in Belo Horizonte (1996-1997); Pastor of "Nossa Senhora da Penha" (2000) in Barbacena, in the Archdiocese of Mariana. On 5 luglio 2000 he was named the first Bishop of Janaúba and consecrated bishop on 17 September 2000.
At 11:00 AM on the morning of 23 February 2007, in the Consistory Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, during a celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, his Holiness Benedict XVI presided at an Ordinary Public Consistory to receive the vote of the Cardinals concerning the causes for the canonization of five Beati. Among these Beati is the Passionist priest: Charles Houben (of St. Andrew) "of Mt. Argus". The Holy Father announced that the Canonization will take place at the Vatican on Sunday, 3 June 2007, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity.

Among the Passionists who were present at the Vatican were: Fr. Giovanni Zubiani, Postulator General; Frs. Luis Alberto Cano and Denis Travers, General Consultors; Fr. Paul Francis Spencer, Provincial Consultor PATR; Fr. Francis Keevins, Rector of Mt. Argus; Fr. Miroslaw Lesiecki, Rector of Sts. John and Paul; Fr. Giovanni Pelà, CIPI Secretary; and Fr. Leo Bos, Provincial SPE.

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Since the start of his pontificate, Benedict XVI has indicated that he will not ordinarily preside at beatifications, leaving other prelates to lead those ceremonies, and allowing many beatifications to take place outside Rome in the candidate’s native region. However the Pope continues to preside at canonization ceremonies, to emphasize the solemnity of the declaration in which the Church declares a new saint.

In 1988 Father Charles, together with Bl. Bernard Silvestrelli, was beatified by Pope John Paul II. In 1999, in the Dutch town of Munstergeleen (Blessed Charles’ birthplace) Mr. Dolf Dormans lay dying. He was suffering from a ruptured appendix which had caused severe damage to his intestines. When the hospital staff informed him that there was no hope of a recovery, Mr Dormans decided to turn to Blessed Charles. His prayer was heard; he made a full recovery and is still attending Mass every day at the chapel beside the house where Blessed Charles was born. After stringent examination by doctors and later by theologians, first in the Netherlands and then in Rome, the cure of Dolf Dormans was approved by Pope Benedict XVI on the sixteenth of December 2006 as a miracle worked through the intercession of Blessed Charles of Mount Argus.

Our Passionist Religious who would like to participate in the Canonization Ceremony are kindly requested to submit their names to the Postulator General, Fr. Giovanni Zubiani, as soon as possible. Also, for any pilgrims that will be accompanying our religious, please inform Fr. Giovanni as to the number of these tickets (gratuitous) that will be needed for access to St. Peter's Square.

The Postulation Office is preparing Kits for the events that consist of a briefcase, the neck scarf that will be used to identify the group, a rosary with a relic and a keychain. These will be available at a cost of Euro 9.50.

For practical questions regarding possible hospitality at Sts. John and Paul, please contact the Local Superior, Fr. Mirek. Precedence will be given to our Religious on a first come, first served basis.
PASSIONIST SISTERS – PROVINCE OF MARY IMMACULATE

The Passionist Sisters of the Province of Mary Immaculate, Madrid, held their Provincial Chapter from 12-15 October, 2006.

In the course of the Chapter the following Sisters were elected: Provincial Superior: Sr. Isabel Arrizabalaga; 1st Consultor: Sr. Ma Luz Miangolarra; 2nd Consultor: Sr. Ma. Carmen Ugarte; 3rd Consultor: Sr. Begoña Polo; and 4th Consultor: Sr. Carminda Baptista.

The Sisters were founded in Italy in 1815 by Maria Maddalena Frescobaldi and in 1959 foundations were made in Spain and Portugal. Today the Sisters are involved in a variety of apostolic activities including education, social work, care for the elderly, parochial ministry and ministry in the foreign missions (Colombia, Ecuador, the Philippines, Korea, Congo and Tanzania.)

Visit their web site: http://www.pasionistas.net/hnas_pasionistas/default.htm

DIACONATE ORDINATIONS

On 11 November 2006, Sandro Pippa, Marco Pasquali and Francesco Di Feliciantonio of the PIET Province of Italy were ordained to the diaconate. In the CORM CARLW Vicariate of Kenya, Jakob Otieno Oyuji and Gilbert Otieno Omolo were ordained deacons on 16 December 2006. Alain Ndombe Muamba and Blaise-Pascal Muswar Mutini of the SALV Province of Congo were ordained deacons on 17 December 2006. Finally, on 17 February 2007, Kléber Guillermo Chacha Chamorro was ordained to the deaconate on 17 February 2007.

Armando Morales Aparicio

(L-R) Francesco Di Feliciantonio, Marco Pasquali and Sandro Pippa.
PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS
On 7 October 2006, Fr. Aloyce Babene was ordained in the CORM-GEMM Vicariate of Tanzania. On 12 November 2006, Fr. Alex Antônio Favarato was ordained to the priesthood for the DOL-VICT Vicariate of Brazil. In the CORI-RES Vicariate of Peru, on 8 December 2006, Fr. Raúl Romero Ipushima was ordained and on 7 January 2007, Carlos Reátegui Chumbe was also ordained in Peru. On 17 December 2006, Frs. Martin Ngoy Molamba and José Wawa Ombien were ordained in the SALV Province of Congo. Finally, the following religious were ordained in the CALV Province of Brazil: Alan Hildeu Felicio, ordained on 10 February 2007; Sidnei da Silva and Gesner José Coube, ordained on 03 March 2007.

PROFESSIONS AND ORDINATIONS

PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS
In the FAM Province of Spain, Isidro Alberto Flores Flores professed first vows on 27 October 2006. Two religious of the SANG Province of Spain professed vows on 06 January 2007: Juan José Rodríguez Mela and Washington Roberto Buitrón Flores, and in the Vicariate CORI-RES (Peru): Edilbrando Neyra Vásquez, Wilmer Guevara Fuentes, Jorge Luis Chinguel Mirez, Rónal Sangama Mendoza, Rolly Werner Bardález Saavedra and Alcides Guerrero Segura. On 13 January 2007, the following religious of the PRAES DOMIN Vicariate of Brazil professed vows: Valdomiro dos Santos, Luis Antônio Barbosa dos Santos and Homero Gomes Rebouças Filho. In the DOL VICT Vicariate of Brazil, Elson Mauro do Nascimento professed vows on 27 January 2007. And finally, on 18 February 2007 the following religious of the CONC Province of Argentina professed first vows: Antonio Ramón Lezcano López.

PROFESSION OF FINAL VOWS
### Notitiae Obitus

Usque ad diem novembris 2006 - martii 2007, acceptae

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### Moniales et Sorores

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<td>Inst. Crucis et Passionis (Anglia)</td>
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<td>Sr. Immacolata di S. Gemma</td>
<td>Monasterio Passionistarum Napoli</td>
<td>1913</td>
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</table>
O may our great God be ever blessed and praised
that he has been pleased to have us reach the most solemn feast
of the glorious resurrection.

Let us then sing in company of the Blessed Citizens
Alleluia - Praise the Lord!
Oh! what a victorious word that is!
This is the song of praise
sung by the victorious citizens of Paradise.

Alleluia is not a sound found on earth,
it is a hymn of Paradise
and to sing it one needs to be despoiled of one's old self
and clothed with the new self, who is Jesus Christ,
I mean to say adorned with the holy virtues
for whose acquiring our great and victorious Captain Jesus Christ paved the
way.

To him we sing Alleluia forever.

From the letter of St. Paul of the Cross
to Nicolina Pecorini Martinez
Santa Maria della Catena, Gaeta, 21 April 1726