

To the Major Superiors and their Consultors:

My dear brothers,

The month of May, the month of Mary, is nearing its end and, as was announced to you in the Letter commencing the process of Restructuring of 20 March 2005, 3b, Part II, I am sending all of the Major Superiors, the Provincial Superiors, Vice-Provincials, Regional Vicars and their Consultors, as well as to all the communities of the Congregation, several questions aimed at soliciting reflections that may help to formulate the initial steps of the eight year program that is planned for the Process of Restructuring. The period of eight years for this process was designed precisely because of the fact that Restructuring is not merely about “making some minor adjustments”; rather it involves a revision and a global rearticulating and thus we feel that it is necessary to involve everyone so each individual may make a contribution to the process.

These questions will be sent, together with the same questionnaire, to all the Consultors of the major Superiors of the Congregation and to all the communities and the individual religious. Every religious may submit personal responses, however it would be better if the communities met to study the questions and offer a common response.

These questions have been prepared during several meetings which the general Council had with the Commission for Restructuring.

The three main inter-related questions concern the **Passionist Charism, Passionist Presence,** and the **Passionist Mission.**

The **Charism** refers to the fundamental, unifying elements of our specific vocation: the Passion of Jesus; present-day human suffering; our unique identity; the characteristics of our life and our spirituality. This means that each act of restructuring should be founded upon a more in-depth exploration of what the Passionist charism means today. While intellectual research may be important, even more important is the experience of the charism.

Presence, above all refers to the Passionist communities, to their composition and the structures upon which they are established, their situation in the Church, in society and in their particular localities. Presence is the basis of mission. It is the starting point for mission and the reality to which we return to live the common life, to pray together, to encourage one another and from which we are sent forth.

Regarding our **Mission**, this means re-focusing the mandate God gave us by means of our vocation and reflecting on the apostolates that we are presently undertaking and on those that we can or may yet assume as well as those where we are not present. Who are those who are the privileged recipients of our mission and what are the appropriate languages to use so that we are comprehensible and successful in communicating the power of the Cross to those who are suffering in our post-modern world?

The General Council and the Restructuring Commission would greatly appreciate your specific contribution to help us and to explore, as far as possible, the wonderful potential of what it means to be a Passionist.

We would be grateful if you would share with us some of your hopes for the future, so that your reflections may help us to formulate strategies for planning the subsequent stages of the process.

What life style, what mission can we envision today for a Passionist future? How are we present and effective in the current globalized world? What kind of Congregation can we envision? What are possible dreams?

It is necessary to send the responses and reflections to the Secretary of the Commission, Fr. Elie Muakasa, as soon as possible but no later than next August 15. The Commission will have an opportunity to study the responses and to integrate some or all of your reflections or suggestions into the upcoming work phase.

We are looking forward to the ideas that you have to offer us so as to proceed more efficiently.

Together with this letter you will find the questionnaires and the three main questions: **Charism, Presence, and Mission**, as well as other points or questions to keep in mind while formulating the responses.

Then the reflections and the responses will be studied and categorized by the Restructuring Commission in the form of a report and which will then constitute the basis of dialogue and further study by the Commission and the General Council next September in Australia where the PASPAC Assembly will take place and during which the General Council will meet among themselves and with the Major Superiors of the Region.

At the September meeting the Commission will prepare the third phase by means of more specific questions directed toward the Major Superiors and the Regional Conferences. This will also be the point at which we wish to enlist the involvement and consultation of the women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family.

Obviously the Restructuring process which was initiated with the mandate of the Synod of last November/December, wishes to involve all the religious of the Congregation and the various components of the Passionist Family. We must all be involved in searching out paths to be taken and in offering concrete suggestions for actualizing Restructuring. It must truly be a collegial undertaking because we are convinced about the presence of the Spirit of God in the Congregation and about the living dimension of the sacrament of salvation that, according to the Council, is the Church.

Therefore, in a spirit of simplicity and humility, may no one feel inadequate to be able to give a response, because "*the Spirit blows where he wills*" and because through the "*mouths of little ones God is glorified*". Today, 31 May, the feast of the Visitation of the most Blessed Virgin Mary to St. Elizabeth her cousin, "*the barren one who gave birth*". We entrust to her, the Mother of Jesus, our journey, she who "*set out and traveled to a town of Judah*". (Lk. 1:39) Her presence and her greeting also make new life for Congregation "*leap*" within us. "*And blessed are you who believed what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.*" (Lk. 1:45)

As I leave for a week's pastoral visit to our mission in Bulgaria, I send my fraternal greetings to all the religious of the Congregation, especially to the sick who in their flesh experience the Passion the Jesus, to the young and to the women religious and the laity of the Passionist Family.

Sts. John and Paul, Roma
31 May 2005
Feast of the Visitation

Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio. C.P.
Superior General

The address to which you may send your responses is as follows:

- * Secretary of the Commission for Restructuring
Fr. Elie Muakasa, C.P.
P.za SS. Giovanni e Paolo, 13
00184 Roma Italia
e-mail: muakasa@yahoo.fr
or to the Secretary General
- ** e-mail: segretariogen@passiochristi.org

To the Councils of all Provinces, Vice Provinces, Vicariates

In order to share your hopes for the future of our Congregation, please answer the three major questions below. These will be sent to every Province, Vice Province, Vicariate and every community to be shared during this second stage of the consultation process.

Q A. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation, our Province is committed to deepening our experience of the **Passionist Charism** now and in the future in the following ways:

Q B. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation our Province is committed to development of **Passionist presence** now and in the future in the following ways:

Q C. In light of the call to restructuring of the Congregation our Province is committed to re-focusing the **Passionist mission** now and in the future in the following ways:

In responding to these three questions please take account of the following issues that have emerged in the process so far. Grouping these issues under a particular question may help you. However, feel free to use them as you deem best.

For Question A: 1, 2, 3, 4;

For Question B: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14;

For Question C: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14;

1. The ways in which the Congregation can remain rooted in its charism and yet have the strength and flexibility to adapt and develop new ways of life.
2. The ways in which the prophetic witness of the Congregation could develop.
3. The ways in which our Passionist Formation can develop.
4. The ways that your Council could assist the Province, Vice-province or Vicariate to experience, express and communicate the Passionist Charism?
5. The ways that diminishment of our Congregation can call us to new ways of life.
6. The ways we can widen our Passionist presence to welcome others in.
7. The way in which that the experience of the poor & suffering of our world impact upon us.
8. The ways that new forms of leadership and governance could develop for the Congregation.
9. The ways in which we could re-focus our mission as Passionists.
10. The ways that communications within the Congregation could be enhanced.
11. The ways we can respect the needs of younger and older religious.
12. The ways we maintain and promote a positive relationship between developed and developing parts of the Congregation.
13. The ways that the Passionist Congregation can understand and promote the priesthood of all the baptized.
14. The ways we can finance our life and ministry for now and the future.