

*47th General Chapter  
Rome, 06 October 2018*

The 47th General Chapter gathered for the first time in the Basilica of Saints John and Paul to celebrate the Eucharist. Fr. Joachim Rego, Superior General, was the principal concelebrant. Also present was his Council and the other 78 delegates from all the provinces that comprise our Congregation.

On this memory of the Blessed Isidore de Loor, Fr. General expressed his gratitude to the General Council of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross, who this year celebrate the 200th anniversary of their aggregation to our Institute. He also thanked the Sisters of the “Sacro Costato” who, with their music, added to the solemnity of the beginning of the General Chapter.

The words of Fr. Joachim focused especially on the Word of God. He invited all the capitulars not to fear the encounter with God, because the Chapter is above all an experience, rather than a meeting of an organization. With a simple parable, everyone was invited to empty their heart of preconceptions, so that they can be filled with the love of God, which the Congregation needs at this time. A glass full of water cannot be filled, because it is already full. So also, the life of each one needs to be emptied so that God can occupy all the space. The Chapter will be an inspiring experience if we are able to open many spaces to God.

The example of Job in the first reading was opportune. Job was faithful to the Lord because he was able to empty himself and be open to God’s will until the end of his life. Then God blessed him abundantly. God is everything in our life, we need to realize that without Him we are nothing.

After a festive luncheon the Capitulars gathered in the chapel of the Retreat House and then processed to the Chapter room where the work began. Three themes were presented for reflection: **gratitude**, for the gift of life and the Passionist vocation (via the Word of God); **prophecy**, because we want to be a community that follows in the footsteps of St. Paul of the Cross (via the *Constitutions*); and **hope** (via the presentation of the Paschal candle) the sign of Jesus living among us. The Capitulars prayed the prayer of the General Chapter together and invoked the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit.

*Veni, Creator Spiritus  
Mentes tuorum visita  
Imple superna gratia  
Quae tu creasti pectora*

Each of the Capitulars was introduced with their name, province, nationality and place where they minister at this time. The moderator was then elected- Fr. Paul Francis Spencer (PATR) and the Chapter Secretary- Fr. Mirosław Lesiecki (ASSUM). The theme of the Chapter is-- “Renewing Our Mission: gratitude, prophecy and hope.”