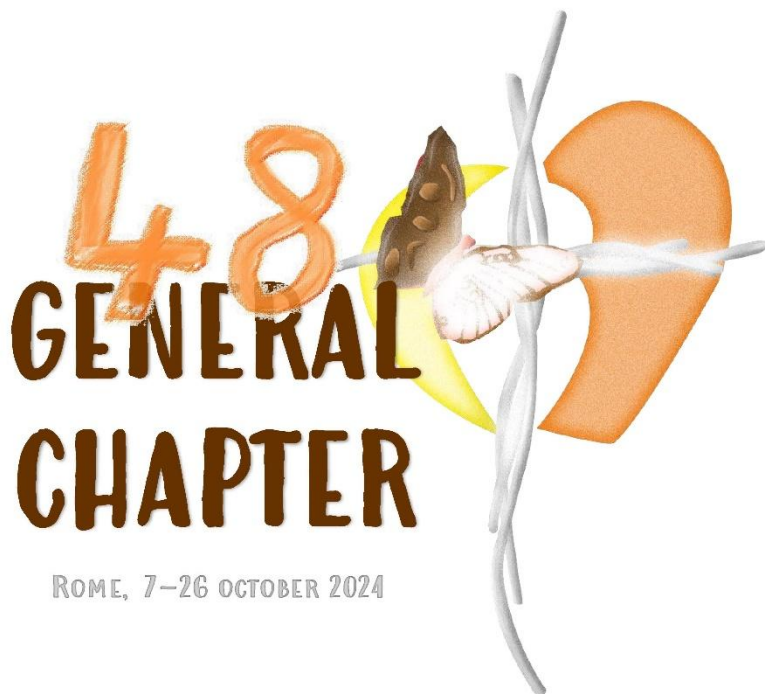


Congregation
of the Passion of Jesus Christ



DOCUMENTATION & CHRONICLES

GENERAL SECRETARIAT CP – ROME

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SUPERIOR GENERAL'S INTRODUCTION

"Here I am, send me." This timely, courageous and challenging text, inspired by the story of the Prophet Isaiah, guided the 48th General Chapter of our Congregation, inviting all participants to feel "con-voked" and "pro-voked" to respond to the challenges of today's world, "giving reason for the hope that is in us" (cf. 1 Pt. 3:15), rooted in the "Passion of Christ: our source of life and mission."

With this motto and with these sentiments, Passionists from all over the world gathered during the days of the Chapter to embark on a "journey" of evaluation and discernment concerning the life of our Congregation, and to renew our fidelity to our Vocation and Mission.

As I wrote in my letter of 1 November 2024: *"the Chapter sought to reflect on the areas of our personal, communal, and institutional life highlighted by the pre-Chapter consultations as problematic or needing attention. Time was spent listening to and reflecting on our "inner life" (the personal and community dimensions that root and sustain our mission), on our "sense of belonging" via our vocation (an expression of fidelity and support for the Congregation); on the service of "leadership and authority" in our provinces and communities (involving those who lead but also those who are called to follow and collaborate); on the promotion of apostolic "new ministries" (in order to respond to the epochal changes in the Church and society of today, with creative fidelity to our Charism); and on the vitality and viability of the "Configurations" (created to stimulate greater solidarity among the various Provinces and Vice-Provinces)."*

The Chapter followed a synodal process of listening and dialogue, starting from the five areas that emerged from the pre-Chapter consultation, and then developing several operational proposals that have a broader and transversal scope, aimed at supporting the journey of each Entity, Community and Religious, in communion with the Passionist Family.



Studying the table of contents of this book you immediately find a narrative description that presents the General Chapter, highlighting its main stages, style, climate, significant moments, information about the capitulars and the dynamics of the work.

Then, we move to the documents section. In the first part there is a presentation of the "Legislative Changes to our Constitutions" and the "Decrees and Recommendations of the 48th General Chapter". For the sake of practicality, we divided the Recommendations into 5 "sectors": "Life and Mission," "Formation," "Laity and Passionist Family," "Configurations," and "General Government."

Inserted after this section are 6 "Proposals" that were accepted by the Chapter by an orientation vote but, due to an organizational mishap, were not canonically approved. We present them anyway, although they are not comparable to the previous Recommendations.

Among the documents that the Chapter members produced, there are two noteworthy public messages, namely: "Appeal for Peace and Reconciliation" and "Letter to the Laity from the 48th General Chapter". These texts can be found at the conclusion of the first section of documents.

The second part includes the "Reports" presented to the General Chapter (Superior General, the Configurations, Procurator General, General Econome, General Secretariat for Solidarity and the Missions, General Secretariat for Formation, Postulator General, General Archivist, Passionists International), the Holy Father's "Message" and "Address," "The Chronicles of the General Chapter," the "Homilies," and the "Participants in the General Chapter."

Again I wish to thank all those who carried out the work of the Chapter and those who worked to collect the documents contained in this volume. In particular, I thank Fr. Cristiano Massimo Parisi, Fr. Rafael Blasco and Fr. Paul Francis Spencer, for attending to the final translation of the texts into the three official languages of the Congregation.

"In presenting these texts to the Congregation and to the Passionist Family, I personally believe that they consist not only of practical directives, but also inspirational elements useful for our common journey."

Let me point out the richness and depth of many of the Recommendations that, in indicating a concrete goal, propose the beginning of a "synodal process" that evolves over time, involving multiple protagonists and at multiple levels. This makes the proposals more complex and difficult, but it facilitates the awareness that what is being promoted is not just an answer to a specific problem, but the acquisition of a common vision about our future." (Circular Letter, 1 November 2024).

In conclusion, I make Pope Francis' appeals to our General Chapter my own: *"with a grateful and docile spirit dispose yourselves to take on the innovations He will reveal so that strengthened in faith and enlightened by Him you may make creative choices to face the challenges of the present hour (...)*

Be attentive to the exhortation to become 'compassionate apostles,' dispensers of God's love among the underprivileged, faithful instruments of divine Mercy to heal the wounds of humanity distressed by so much suffering. (...)

*Be enthusiastic witnesses of the **Sapientia Crucis** [the Wisdom of the Cross] by disseminating its salvific value. It is through the contemplation of the Crucified that we can know the immense power of the sacrificial love that emanates from the weakness of the Cross. Only in this way do we learn the humble manner of God who gives himself unconditionally in order to be close to man and set him on the path of hope that does not wane-- **Ave Crux Spes Unica** [Hail O Cross, our only hope]."*¹

Fr. Giuseppe Adobati
Superior General

Rome, Retreat of Sts. John and Paul, Rome
10 February 2025

¹ Message of the Holy Father to the 48th Chapter of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ - 29 September 2024.



THE 48TH GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE CONGREGATION: A SYNODAL EVENT

The 48th Chapter of the Congregation of the Passion took place from October 7th to October 26th in the Retreat of Saints John & Paul in Rome.

The theme of the Chapter

Amid a world crying for a message of hope and life, where so many live in a state of ongoing anxiety about global events, and live under the shadow of wars and disease – the Passionist Congregation met for the 48th General Chapter of our Congregation.

With conflicts such as the Palestine-Israel or Ukraine-Russian wars confronting us, the Chapter did not presume to address these world issues; however, it consistently affirmed our Founder's insight that the Passion of Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection are a remedy for the evils and sufferings of humankind, and that this truth is especially relevant in today's world.

The Chapter turned to the Passion of Jesus as the ultimate guide to our mission orientation and adopted the theme: ***"Here I am, send me. The Passion of Christ: our source of life and mission"***.

From its inception, the Chapter desired to look outwards and to the revitalisation of our mission in the world

The days of learning together – to be synodal.

The Capitulars embraced a synodal manner of being 'Chapter'. We embarked on the journey of the Chapter with a commitment to 'walk together' and to allow the Spirit to guide and inform our conversation, discernment and decision making.

To do this we engaged in a three-day period of preparation prior to the official opening of the Chapter. These days were focused on exploring what 'synodality' meant and learning the art of listening at a deep level and sharing spiritual conversations.

This spirit then pervaded the entire experience of the Chapter.



The daily timetable

The rhythm of the Chapter began with Contemplative Prayer in the Aula for thirty minutes at 8.00 AM and work began each day at 8.30 AM. The morning work was divided into two sections of two hours with lunch (*pranzo*) at 1.00 PM. The Chapter normally resumed work at 3.30 PM, and continued through till the Eucharist at 6.00 PM. Dinner (*cena*) occurred at 8.00 PM followed by a combined recreation time.

Our Prayer and Eucharists

The Eucharist became the spiritual foundation of the Chapter and all work within the 48th General Chapter took place in a climate of prayer and meditation. Our prayer life oscillated between the chapter hall and the different chapels of the Generalate. In the Aula, we began the morning with 30 minutes of prayer led by one of the 14 tables, which gave us a diversity of approaches and ways of leading prayers. It was a time of linguistically and culturally diverse sharing in the form of our daily morning prayer.

Each evening, the Eucharist was organized differently. Either we met in the community chapel with all the capitulars for a celebration of Eucharist animated by a specific linguistic area, or we met among members of our Configuration or in the same linguistic group (which then became a blending of members from several different Configurations). Of course, the major feasts and ceremonies were celebrated as a whole body in the Basilica.

These different ways of celebrating the Eucharist certainly helped us to feel part of the same family despite the difference in languages or geographical affiliation. We prayed together as Passionists brothers.

The Leadership of our Chapter

Until the election of Fr Giuseppe Adobati, Fr Joachim Rego was President and Moderator (*ex officio*), and after election Fr Giuseppe took over this role. The Chapter facilitators were Fr. Yago Abeledo and Mr. José Villoslada and the Central Coordinating Committee was Frs. Leonello Leidi, Alessandro Foppoli, Paul Francis Spencer, Christopher Monaghan. The Secretary of the Chapter was Fr. Cristiano Massimo Parisi.



As part of the commitment of the capitulars to make the Chapter a spiritual journey, a Spiritual Guide, Fr. Kenneth Thesing, journeyed with us and offered reflection at the end of each day. This activity was to help us keep a clear focus on the work of the Spirit amongst us and on our commitment to live this time in a synodal fashion and to call us back to prayerful discernment at each moment.

Our Logo

As illustrated in the Chapter Logo the theme of transformation was central to our deliberations. The imagery of our logo conveyed to the Capitulars a deep call that we were to let go of our own subjectivity and embrace the theme itself – to be open to transformation.

The Methodology of the Chapter

The dynamic for our Chapter was a modified version of the Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's methodology – and summed up in the five steps of *seeing, discerning, acting, evaluating and celebrating*.

These dynamics operated across the twenty-one days of Chapter and our progress and decisions were assessed within a broader framework of the quality of relationships, the inner state of the Congregation, and in the light of past decisions and the emerging future.

Above all else, compassion was the value that surrounded all of our dynamics and working together.

A Paperless Chapter

The General Chapter was essentially 'paperless'. Most documents were distributed digitally and communications reached each Capitular using a messenger service – such as WhatsApp or Telegram. Documents were circulated by a dedicated internet-based 'in-house' programme designed by Fr. Marco Pasquali and named 'Synago' - a virtual environment for supporting the activities of the Chapter. Reports of group discussions were returned to the Chapter Secretary and then published on the same secure internal communications platform.



The Journey to our Chapter and the five areas of major concern

While the 48th General Chapter was a time shaped by deep discernment, communal dialogue, and the desire to listen to the Spirit at work in our lives and mission, our journey began much earlier.

Our path to Chapter was illuminated by key moments of the Extended Council meeting in September 2023, as well as two significant moments of grassroots consultation. Together, these steps helped crystallize the central themes that guided the Chapter: Inner Life, Belonging, New Ministries, Leadership, and Configurations.

The grassroots consultations were a profound expression of the living body of our Congregation, reminding us that the heartbeat of our community is found not in individual voices but in the collective wisdom of our brothers and sisters. From different regions, cultures, and ministries, we shared our experiences and aspirations, bringing to light the core areas that required renewal and attention. These conversations highlighted the hunger for a deeper Inner Life—a longing to root ourselves more intentionally in prayer, contemplation, and the Charism of the Passion that animates all that we do.

Out of these consultations also emerged the need for a renewed sense of Belonging. As Passionists, we are called to live in communion, and it became evident that fostering deeper relationships within our communities is crucial. In a world where isolation and fragmentation often prevail, our shared life must be a witness to solidarity, mutual care, and inclusion. This theme reflects not just an internal focus but also an invitation to create spaces of welcome for those who journey with us.

The conversation then turned toward New Ministries, recognizing that we are at a critical juncture in our history. The evolving needs of the world—especially in the areas of justice, peace, and the care of creation—require us to be bold and creative in responding to the signs of the times. Our Charism of the Passion calls us to accompany those who suffer especially those in existential and geographical peripheries, and this Chapter asks us to reflect on how we can expand our reach, moving into new and perhaps unfamiliar territories of ministry while remaining faithful to our identity.



The need for Leadership/exercise of authority arose as a central concern. In a world marked by uncertainty, we are challenged to cultivate leaders/those in authority who can guide us with humility, wisdom, and courage. This leadership is not confined to positions of authority but extends to every member of our Congregation. We are all called to lead by example, fostering a spirit of collaboration and co-responsibility for the mission entrusted to us.

The fifth area of concern was the call for an examination of the key structure we have adopted for the practice of solidarity across the Congregation, namely the six Configurations. The pre-chapter discernment identified that there was a need to re-examine this structure with a view to assessing how effectively the configurations were functioning and, in particular, how they were enhancing and promoting solidarity within and across the Configurations.

These themes —Inner Life, Belonging, New Ministries, Leadership and Configurations —have not come to us by accident. They are the fruits of our collective discernment, aided by the preparatory committee, which has helped us focus on what truly matters. Now, therefore, we move forward, trusting that the Spirit will continue to guide us on this journey of growth, transformation, and renewal.

1. The Chapter as a time of blessing

In its etymology the word 'blessing' ('benedictio') means to 'say good' or to 'point out goodness' (in the other person, the place or the thing we are blessing).

This was the starting point of our orientation and preparation for this Chapter – to see the place, the process and especially the people around us - as a 'blessing'. We have been constantly challenged to see each other and to see the topics of our conversations through the lens of the Holy Spirit. At its deepest level this Chapter challenged us to allow the Holy Spirit to see through our eyes.

2. The Chapter as a time of deep listening and 'Synodality'

This way of 'seeing' strongly depended on a process of dialogue. A very significant number of the delegates were 'new' and attending a



General Chapter for the first time; and while the Chapter may have been a new form of experience of the Congregation, in another sense this way of walking together was new for everyone. We all shared a level of learning as we grew into a new style of ecclesiastical meeting.

Like the Synod of the Church, meeting at the same time as our Chapter, we too were engaged in an ecclesial event. The chapter operated in a 'synodal' style, that is the capitulars wanted 'to walk together'. As such, one of the first steps along the journey was that everyone's opinion was accepted, and capitulars were reassured that it was possible to talk about difficult topics in safety.

Our diversity extended far beyond cultural, linguistic, national or geographical dimensions. In fact, in an exercise in the preparatory stage of the Chapter we named more than sixty-seven other dimensions of our 'diversity'. The challenge the Capitulars faced was to work in solidarity amidst and yet beyond, this reality. To this end, we followed a strategy of 'spiritual conversations' where listening was primary, and prayer flowed through every aspect of our communication.

3. The Chapter as a time of spiritual conversations

In both the table conversations in the Aula and in our Discernment group meetings outside the Aula, this Chapter promoted active listening, respectful sharing, prayerful consideration of issues, and the freedom to share one's perspective. The meeting was conducted in a 'synodal' spirit with emphasis on creating greater solidarity across the Congregation.

The Chapter featured extensive work at 'table' settings and although each table featured only one language, the selection of members at each table reflected a true international and inter-configurational flavour.

4. The Chapter as a time of Intercultural living

The seventy-eight delegates collectively represented a rich diversity of cultural perspectives which resonated throughout the weeks of meeting. The fruits of this sharing across cultures can now be further developed in our Provinces, Vice Provinces, and Configurations and



enhanced by our reflection on the message of this Chapter and our learning from the Chapter.

5. The Chapter as a time of the Spirit's reign

The Chapter stood firmly under the shadow of the Holy Spirit and its synodal style of meeting was dependent on the capitulars listening to, and adhering to, the guidance of the Spirit. In our prayer and attitude, we invoked the strength, the power, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

Actively listening and speaking from the heart, in a spirit of gratitude we gave thanks to the Lord for all He was doing through our meeting. Our spirit of collaboration was very dependent on the prompting of the Spirit.

At every stage of the synodal process, namely the consultation with the membership, discernment of the members, and implementation of the results of the conversations in the spirit, we were constantly reminded to seek the presence of the Spirit in our midst. As we journeyed together and decided together – not only in joy but in our disappointment - the Spirit was very much alive and with us.

6. The chapter as a time of Encounters

Two significant encounters with members of the Passionist Lay family took place during the Chapter. Both events were through digital means and the Capitulars assembled in the Aula for these inputs and the conversations that emerged from them. The first of these was with the Director of Passionists International, Ms. Annemarie O'Connor, and the second of these encounters was with Passionist Laity from across the world

The Encounter with Passionists International was by means of a virtual meeting platform with Annemarie O'Connor, Director of Passionists International, and our NGO Representative to the United Nations. Prior to this interaction, Annemarie had already presented a written report to the Capitulars encouraging greater attention being given to this area of Passionist life.

Annemarie was welcomed to the internet encounter by Fr Joachim, who also paid tribute to Sr. Joanne Fahey. Sr. Joanne had died recently



and had been the Passionists International representative of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion.

Our Passionist work at the UN is collaborative, and we try to build connections in order to lobby with other like-minded entities – religious and secular – so that we can prosecute our values and advocacy. It is a matter of bringing our voice into this forum.

Our Passionist advocacy focuses on the UN Millenium development goals which currently are seriously lagging in terms of implementation, since only 17% have been met fully so far.

Additionally, Passionists International advocates for girls and young women, for justice, peace and development in Haiti, for positive responses to climate change, and we further advocate within the Israel-Palestine working group, and challenge harmful extraction of the world's resources (including sea-bed mining); we also advocate for indigenous peoples' issues.

The deep wish that emerged from this encounter was that we all connect and communicate at a greater level with Passionists International and that our Configurational JPIC personnel connect with this advocacy agency of ours so that we have a stronger voice in this arena.

An Encounter with Passionist Laity across the World

On Saturday, 12 October, lay members of the Passionist Family from around the world connected with the Capitulars by means of a virtual meeting platform and shared their experience of living within the Passionist Family.

Participants from every Configuration were asked to reflect and then share with us their answers to some key questions: Q: *What does it mean to be a part of the Passionist Laity? and How do you express this?* The second question was: Q: *What do you think of the Passionist Congregation at this time?* There was also a third question: Q: *What and how do you wish our common relationship of life and mission, laity and religious, to be today and in the coming years?*

The representatives ranged from the Passionist laity who had major administrative or formation roles in their Provinces or who shared ministry



with the professed, to those who know us from participation in parish life or who are members of lay Passionist groups.

Overall, speakers contributed from Portugal, Brazil, India, Ireland, Kenya, Germany, Spain, Ecuador, Guatemala, Italy, Philippines, USA, Argentina, Australia, Vietnam, France, Indonesia and Angola - all sharing about their contact with the Passionist Community, how it affects them and where they see our own future.

A key message to us was that the professed are not the only ones who can teach others to meditate on, or find consolation in, the Passion. Laity can do this with us too.

Participants shared:

- (i) How they live the Charism in their own lives, and how laity can help us renew our own dedication to the Charism. In this light there is a need for more formation in common.
- (ii) Noted that the decline of professed members was mirrored by the rise of lay companions and the need they have for formation too.
- (iii) Shared a hope that the future can be built on a more synodal and less vertical partnership.
- (iv) Expressed how we must all seek opportunities to deepen our contemplation and mission together i.e. 'to walk together' on a common path.
- (v) Named their desire for 'platforms' to enable Passionist laity from all over the world to contact each other.
- (vi) Shared with us how lay Passionists can also share in local ministries.
- (vii) Suggested to us how roles might evolve differently as the future of our mission unfolds, and how laity will take greater roles in our formation outreach and in the development of the Charism.
- (viii) Spoke of how they work together with professed members and constitute a Passionist presence in ministry to indigenous and minority groups.
- (ix) Reminded us that Lay Passionists can be '*catechists of the Passion*' in that they also witness to, and promote, the



Charism in their own living spaces and lead people into prayer through their witness.

This encounter enlivened the assembly and Capitulars truly appreciated how our laity have great potential to become the 'extended arms' of the Passionists in the world, and how the Charism can be lived in relationships, workplaces, and family as well as alongside us in Passionist settings.

7. The Outcomes and Decisions of the Chapter

Aware that any transformation is achieved only by decisions, our proposals were reached by consensus and working together across cross-cultural and cross-lingual groups. It was not always easy, but such openness and collaboration were very much part of the synodal process.

Drawing from the experience of the Chapter (a synodal experience) and learning from our past while being mindful of our potential biases and limitations – we aimed to empower our relationships and to create live-giving synodal structures of ministry, governance, and community relationships.

All our recommendations were made with the view that they might guide us for the next six years.

Having considered all the material from the grass-roots level, and after discerning in smaller groups and sharing in the Aula, the Chapter proposed action steps based on its reflection on the major areas of Inner Life, Belonging, Leadership, and New ministries. These have now been grouped under five headings (Life and Mission, Formation, Laity and Passionist Family, Configurations, General Government) and can be found in this volume. As Father Giuseppe Adobati wrote in presenting these texts to the Congregation, *"they consist not only of practical directives, but also inspirational elements useful for our common journey."*

8. The Spirit of our Elections

Between 16 and 18 October, the capitulars gathered for discernment in a spirit of prayer to choose the new Superior General of the Congregation and his Council. On 16 October, the capitulars held a moment



of personal interiorization of prayer with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and on 17 October, gathered in the chapter hall, where they elected the 26th Superior General of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ, Father Giuseppe Adobati.

After the election, the capitulars went to the Chapel of Saint Paul of the Cross, where the new Superior General made his profession of faith; they then celebrated the election with a delicious fraternal lunch.

In the afternoon of the same day, the capitulars were invited to meet by configuration in order to indicate some names of possible consultors. On 18 October, in the same spirit of prayer, the six Consultors who will accompany the Superior General during his six-year term were elected.

9. Our Encounter with Pope Francis

On Friday, 25 October the members of the Chapter traveled to the Vatican to have a private audience with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. In this action, which became a lived-out experience of walking together, we also linked our experience of the Chapter with that of the universal Church and its spiritual leader Pope Francis.

The Holy Father generously took time away from the Synod on Synodality to meet with us. In his speech to us, he stressed that for the Passionists, inner contemplation, a desire to preach and evangelise, and staying close to the crucified of our world were essential elements of our outreach. The Holy Father made a special point of emphasizing the value of silence as an essential element of the contemplative process, which in itself has the capacity to build community life and help to us to see the Lord walking among us on our journey.

“Here I am - send me”

We conclude this account of the Journey of Chapter, with a prayer used in the Chapter which reflects the abandonment into the loving hands of God that our Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, desired for each of us, his sons.

*I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you.*



I am ready for all, I accept all.

Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures.

I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you

with all the love of my heart, for I love you, Lord,

and so I need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands,

without reserve, and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father.

Here I am, Lord - send me.

Denis Travers, Paul Cherukoduth,
Aurélío Aparecido Miranda
and Jules Mapela Thamuzi



CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

Art. 104.

The establishment, suppression, and joining of Provinces are reserved to the General Chapter, or to the Superior General with the consent of the General Synod.

The modification and suspension of a Province belong to the Superior General with the consent of his Council, having heard the opinion of the Provincial Authorities concerned.

The constitution, the modification, the suspension and the suppression of a Vice-Province pertain to the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after having consulted with the others concerned.

The establishment and suppression of a General Regional Vicariate are reserved to the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

The establishment and suppression of a Provincial Regional Vicariate are reserved to the Provincial Chapter or to another body determined according to the Regulations of the Province, with the previous approval of the Superior General having obtained the consent of his Council.

The establishment and suppression of a religious house are effected by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, after complying with the requirements of common law, and after having consulted the Provincial Authority concerned.

In order to observe the requirements of law, a petition for the establishment or suppression of a religious house must be made to the Superior General by the Provincial Superior with the consent of his Council, and with the consent, or advice of those who according to provincial legislation also have a voice in the matter.



129.

The General Chapter meets every six years. Its ex officio members are: the Superior General, who will also preside at the Chapter, previous Superiors General, the General Consultors, the Procurator General, the Secretary General, the Secretary General for Solidarity and the Missions, the General Econome, Provincial Superiors, Vice-Provincial Superiors and the Superiors of the General Vicariates.

If a Provincial or Vice-Provincial Superior is prevented from attending the Chapter, his place will be taken by his first Consultor; if he in turn is unable to attend, another shall be chosen by the Provincial Council.

138.

The Superior General with the consent of his Council will appoint the Procurator General, the Secretary General, the General Econome, the Secretary General for Solidarity and the Missions and the Postulator General.

The Superior General with the consent of his Council will also appoint local Superiors in those houses over which he exercises immediate jurisdiction.

139.

If a General Consultor leaves office, his place will be filled until the next General Chapter by another religious elected by the Superior General, the General Consultors and the Procurator General acting collegially.

If the First Consultor leaves office, after electing a consultor, the Superior General and the Consultors will elect collegially who shall be the First Consultor.

**147.**

The Superior General is ex officio president of the Synod. The other members take part in the Synod according to the norms of the General Regulations.

159.

The executive council of each Configuration will establish norms for the election of delegates and their substitutes for both ordinary and extraordinary General Chapters, according to the directives given by the Superior General. The norms will be approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.

146.

The amendment of No. 146 with the holding of the Synod three years after the General Chapter has already become a definitive norm of the Constitutions (approved by Holy See on 10 June 2019).

147.

The amendment of No. 147 with the introduction of the Extended Council as the General's consultative body has already become a definitive norm of the Constitutions (approved by Holy See on 10 June 2019). No. 99 of the General Regulations stipulates its composition, as indicated by the same article of the Constitutions.



DECREE OF THE 48TH GENERAL CHAPTER

DIVISION OF THE CONFIGURATION OF JESUS CRUCIFIED (CJC)

The 48th General Chapter decrees that the Configuration of *Jesus Crucified* will be divided into two new Configurations: one in the North, composed of the Provinces of *St Paul of the Cross* (PAUL), *Holy Cross* (CRUC) and *Christ the King* (REG), and one in the South, composed of the Provinces of the Exaltation of the *Holy Cross* (EXALT) and *Gethsemane* (GETH).

RECOMMENDATIONS

LIFE AND MISSION

1. RENEWING THE COMMUNITY DIMENSION OF MISSION THROUGH A SYNODAL PROCESS AND PASTORAL CONVERSION

The 48th General Chapter recommends renewing and strengthening the sense of community mission in all our ministries (cf. Const. 67). The purpose is to keep mission at the center of our Passionist identity and community life.

To implement this, we propose a synodal discernment process that will lead to the development of a future mission plan for the entire Congregation (cf. "Renewing Passionist Mission. A Call to Walk Together," p. 17).

This process will involve all members of the Passionist family, both religious and laity, who can contribute with their valuable experiences and observations. This will ensure that the mission plan developed will be realistic, holistic and responsive to the signs of the times. In order to carry out synodal discernment, all the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates of the Congregation are encouraged to participate in the process, from the lowest level, the local communities, to the General Curia. The initiation of synodal dialogue will allow for pastoral conversion and more effective apostolic work.



This process is inspired by Pope Francis' invitation to respond to the question of how to proclaim the message of the cross in the modern world, including by going to the peripheries of today's world in a geographical and an existential sense.

In this context, we propose to strengthen, under the leadership of the General Curia, solidarity of personnel among the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates. This solidarity will make it possible to strengthen regions where the number of Passionists is decreasing and to enrich pastoral and apostolic experiences.

The process will begin with a letter from the Superior General inviting all religious and the laity close to our charism to take part in this work and will continue until the next General Chapter, which will present a comprehensive plan for mission in accordance with the encouragement of the last Synod of the Congregation in 2022.

2. REVITALIZING COMMUNITY LIFE

The 48th General Chapter recommends that a structured process be initiated to revitalize life in our communities, so as to develop a greater shared attentiveness to the voice of the Holy Spirit who leads us into a deeper relationship with Christ Crucified, and to promote a healthy environment conducive to the care and development of each person.

Drawing on our Constitutions (ch 2) and other sources (eg, 'A Call to Action', part 2), guidelines and orientations for a community to evaluate its vitality and viability will be drawn up by the General Council, with the help of a specialist team, and after consultation with the religious and the Configuration and Provincial, Vice-Provincial and Vicariate Councils.

All Configurations, Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates will be invited to adopt the Guidelines and to support the individual communities in applying them for their self-evaluation. A report of the communities' evaluation and any consequent decisions will be given to the Synod of 2027.



3. THE FIGURE OF THE RELIGIOUS BROTHER IN THE CONGREGATION

The 48^o General Chapter recommends that the figure of the Religious Brother in the Congregation continue to be enhanced and given importance.

The General Secretariate for Formation and the vocation and formation teams of the Configurations and Provinces/Vice-Provinces and Vicariates will review the General Program of Passionist Formation in the following way:

- to keep it clear that our first vocation is religious consecration; the General Plan of Formation does not distinguish between brother and cleric
- to preserve the desire of the Founder in this regard
- to enhance our different ministries as Passionists
- to ensure that in vocational ministry the vocation of the Religious Brother is presented as part of 'The Passionists' (avoiding the use of the title 'Passionist Fathers')
- to offer our brothers a more qualified formation, preparing them to fulfil all the tasks of specific vocations
- to ensure that our brothers are active participants in the formation process and in the areas of our mission

An annex to the General Program of Passionist Formation on this topic will be presented to the Synod of 2027.

4. CANONICAL VISITATIONS

The 48th General Chapter recommends that the General Council develop guidelines to ensure that General and Provincial Visitations are conducted in a synodal manner.

Those responsible for the visitations will prepare a programme which includes the time necessary for community sharing and which supports the opportunities offered by this time of encounter.



5. REVITALIZATION OF TRADITIONAL APOSTOLATES AND EXISTING MINISTRIES

The 48th General Chapter recommends an in-depth evaluation of our apostolate at the level of local communities, Vicariates, Vice-Provinces, Provinces and Configurations in order to revitalize and update the Ministry of the Word, existing ministries and traditional apostolates - parish missions, retreats, confessions, spiritual direction, parish ministry.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMISSION ON EVANGELIZATION IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

Seeing how the new digital media can help in the work of evangelization, and understanding the importance of modern media in proclaiming the Word of the Cross, the 48th General Chapter recommends that the General Council establish a Commission on Evangelization in the Digital World.

The Commission, composed of representatives of all configurations - religious and lay - will be charged with preparing a document on options, possibilities and best practices for evangelization in the digital world and for promoting evangelization through the new media. The Commission will take into account the technical resources and solutions that already exist in our communities, the wider promotion of which will encourage the creative activities of the religious and laity of our Passionist family.

The Commission will meet online at least 4 times a year. At the end of each year, the results of the Commission's work and recommendations will be presented to the General Curia.

7. REESTABLISHMENT OF A JPIC OFFICE AT THE LEVEL OF THE GENERAL CURIA

Understanding the seriousness of the challenges of our time regarding concern for the environment, social justice and peace, the 48th General Chapter recommends the reestablishment of the JPIC Office at the level of the General Curia. The Chapter also recommends that a religious or lay person be appointed who, as part of the work of the office, will promote the ideas of JPIC at the configurational, provincial and vice-provincial levels to promote the issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation throughout the Congregation and at all international forums



FORMATION

8. ONGOING FORMATION

The 48th General Chapter recommends that every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate organize, at least once a year, study days for our religious and laity on the ways of relating and the attitudes which are necessary for being responsible guides and animators, including the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.

9. INTERNATIONAL FORMATION COURSES FOR FORMATORS

The 48th General Chapter recommends that the General Secretariat for Formation organise international courses of formation on the charism for the benefit of formators and those whom the Configuration has identified as being capable of serving as formators and vocation directors.

These courses will be organized at least twice during the six-year period, in places which are considered more suitable, taking into account the number of participants and the cost of organizing them.

10. INTER-CONFIGURATIONAL THEOLOGICAL STUDENT HOUSES

The 48th General Chapter recommends that the feasibility of establishing one or more Inter-Configurational Theological Student Houses be examined.

The General Secretariate for Formation will research the question. It will explore possible suitable places for gathering an international group of some selected theological students, taking account of their ability to learn languages. The value of such a project in terms of a greater international vision and solidarity should be evaluated. Its potential for ongoing formation can also be considered.

A report and possible proposal will be presented to the Synod of 2027.



11. COLLABORATION OF THE LAITY IN FORMATION

The 48th General Chapter, respecting local cultural sensitivities, recommends that within the next six years each Province, Vice-Province or Vicariate through its governing bodies (chapter, congress, assembly, provincial council) should review its formation plan, welcoming the possibility that some lay people (qualified people and those who share our charism), capable of making their own contribution to the formation and vocational discernment of religious in formation, collaborate with the formation team. The collaboration of the laity can also be of value for ongoing formation.

12. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT OF FORMATION IN PASSIONIST CHARISM AND SPIRITUALITY.

The 48th General Chapter recommends the development of a Congregational Project of Formation in Passionist Charism and Spirituality for all the religious, especially those in initial formation, and also the wider Passionist Family. The Project will aim:

- to sustain the inner life of our religious and lay associates
- to help them grow in their sense of belonging to the Passionist Family within the Church
- to revitalize the life and mission of the Congregation.

The Project will draw on and develop the historical sources of our Charism and explore its contemporary resonances. It will develop Passionist spirituality from an integral holistic perspective (human, social, psychological, spiritual, biblical, sacramental, ecclesial).

The Project will be initiated by the General Council. It should be coordinated by the General Secretariate for Formation. A team with various areas of expertise will need to be formed, drawing on theological specialists and formation teams of the Configurations and Provinces. The team will:

- articulate the framework and lines of the Project
- assemble and make available the necessary resources
- establish and deliver a programme of events, in-person and on-line.



The planning phase of the Project should begin in the first year of this six year term (2024-25) and be formally launched in October 2025. Ongoing review must be built into the programme, and a first evaluation report made to the Synod of 2027.

LAITY AND THE PASSIONIST FAMILY

13. ACCOMPANYING THE LAITY, AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN OUR MISSION

The 48th General Chapter recommends developing a document for the accompaniment of lay people who wish to share our charism and mission (cf. RG 7d).

The General Council will appoint a team, composed of a General Consultor and religious and lay representatives from each Configuration.

After appropriate consultation with the Major Superiors and representatives of the laity who share our charism, and after gathering the experiences already present in the Congregation, the team will draw up within two years a document with general guidelines which will be presented to all Provinces, Vice Provinces, Vicariates and the wider Passionist Family and will be reviewed at the next General Synod.

14. THE PASSIONIST FAMILY, A CHARISM WITHOUT BORDERS

The 48th General Chapter recommends that each Configuration in dialogue with consecrated and lay people present in its own territory, who identify with the charism of St. Paul of the Cross, organize meetings or congresses of the Passionist Family in the most appropriate places and venues, in order to share and deepen the sense of belonging to the charism, foster exchange and collaboration, and propose concrete actions to the government of the Configuration and the Congregation.



CONFIGURATIONS

15. SUPPORT OF THE GENERAL CURIA IN THE PROCESS OF REVITALIZATION OF THE CONFIGURATIONS

In the process of revitalizing the Configurations, the 48th general Chapter recommends that the General Curia should reach out to the experience of both the religious involved in the process of creating the Configurations and those individuals (religious and lay) who can offer relevant technical knowledge and skills for developing and promoting solidarity within the existing structures of the Configurations.

16. SYNODAL EVALUATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONFIGURATIONS

The 48th General Chapter recognizes the need for an in depth process of examination of the Configurations in relation to the journey of restructuring undertaken so far, at the level of the local community, Vice-Province, Province and Configuration, with the assistance of the General Government.

To this end, the Chapter recommends that on the occasion of the canonical visitation, the Superior General or his delegate offer a questionnaire to the individual religious and speak with all the community. The questionnaire, the object of which is to measure their understanding of the Configuration, will invite them to indicate the strengths, weaknesses, threats or opportunities of this structure, with particular attention to what has been achieved in the three areas of solidarity: personnel, economy and formation.

At the end of the canonical visitation, a summary of what has been gathered will be presented for evaluation to the next enlarged council and to the individual Configuration.

In the light of the results of the questionnaire, the Executive Council of each Configuration will develop strategies to improve and increase the configurational mentality. The General Government, assisted by the Extended Council, will be able to help the Executive Council of the Configuration in developing these strategies.

This same process can be followed using the participation structures of the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates.



17. A CONFIGURATION PROJECT OF LIFE AND MISSION

The 48th General Chapter recommends that each Configuration, at the beginning of the six-year period, in a spirit of synodal listening to all its constituent parts, develop a project of life and mission to be implemented not only in the areas of personnel, finances and formation, but also in other areas of solidarity (e.g. JPIC, Passionist laity).

Furthermore, in order to promote greater interaction between the Configurations, the General Chapter recommends that the General Government promote "Summits" at the continental level (Europe, America, Asia Pacific, Africa) that can involve all the Configurations, Provinces, Vice-Provinces or Vicariates operating in that geographical area.

18. NEW SPACES FOR SHARING AND COMMUNICATION

In order to promote communion and respect the richness of diversity, the 48th General Chapter recommends the creation of spaces for communication and sharing of information and experiences of Passionist life and mission among the Configurations.

The Communications Office of the General Curia, in collaboration with the corresponding offices of the Configurations, Provinces, Vice-Provinces or Vicariates, will promote the online publication of a Configurations Bulletin every six months, in which reports and accounts of "good configurational practices" can be collected in a narrative style. Stories or testimonies will be collected from projects which benefitted from the Configuration's solidarity in personnel, finances or formation. For this purpose each Province, Vice-Province, Vicariate and Configuration should appoint a communications person who can network with the Communications Office of the General Curia.



GENERAL GOVERNMENT

19. DELEGATED PERMISSION FOR THE PREPARATION OF NEW ELECTORAL NORMS

The 48th General Chapter entrusts to the Superior General, with the consent of his Council and the assistance of a special commission of experts, the task of preparing new norms for the election of delegates to the General Chapter, taking into account the criteria of representativeness and fair proportionality among the different parts of the Congregation. To this end, due account will be taken of the observations that emerged during the Chapter debate and the comments received from the Configurations to which the draft norms will be submitted. The norms will be presented for consideration at the next General Synod.

20. GUIDING CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT IN THE GROWTH OR DIMINISHMENT PHASE OF ENTITIES.

In order to facilitate institutional discernment on questions concerning the growth (cf. Const. n. 103-104) or diminishment phase of the entities that make up the Congregation, the General Chapter has identified some general guiding criteria.

Depending on the situation (growth or diminishment), it will be necessary to take into account whether or not the entities meet the following criteria:

- (a) **Capacity in personnel:** number* and average age of members; presence of vocations, ...
- (b) **Capacity in formation:** presence of young people in formation; formation personnel and formation structures, ...
- (c) **Capacity in governance:** persons capable of filling governance roles at various levels and ensuring the necessary changes of personnel in governance ...
- (d) **Capacity in finances:** sufficient financial means to fund the living costs of the religious, formation and ministries ...



The criteria listed are not exhaustive and should not be applied in a rigid or automatic form.

The evaluation of the situation and the application of the criteria, with a view to arriving at a decision, will be done in synodal form through dialogue between the entity concerned, the Configuration and the Superior General with his Council, by means of a gradual and agreed process.

In particular, in the phase of diminishment or fragility, other solutions may be identified, such as merger or union with another entity.

* With reference to **(a)**, the following numerical table is offered:

	MINIMUM NUMBER IN TIME OF GROWTH	MINIMUM NUMBER IN TIME OF DIMINISHMENT
PROVINCE	60/70	30
VICE-PROVINCE	30/40	20
VICARIATE	20	10 (delegation)

Note: The numerical criterion should not be the principal criterion.

21. SUPPORT FOR NON-OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

To foster communication and sharing within the Congregation, to free up energy and resources for the mission and to promote greater exchange of personnel, the General Chapter recommends promoting the learning and knowledge of other languages which are spoken in the Congregation. In particular, each Configuration should ensure that information and documentation are translated into the languages of minorities which are part of it. The general government, in dialogue with the configurations, should promote the presence in Rome – or in other appropriate locations – of religious (or laity) capable of providing this service for the entire Congregation.

Each Configuration, Province, Vice-Province or Vicariate, should indicate religious who are available to assist the general government with this service.



PROPOSALS

1. Acts of extraordinary administration

The 48TH General Chapter proposes that it be stated explicitly which are acts of extraordinary Administration for which each Major Superior must have the approval of higher authority (cf. Financial of Stewardship Manual, Appendix 3).

2. International Commission for the Revision of Texts

The 48^o General Chapter proposes that international commissions for the revision of the texts of the Constitutions, the General Regulations and the Liturgical Proper of the Congregation be set up.

3. Accounts at the IOR (The Institute for the Works of Religion at the Vatican)

The 48^o General Chapter proposes that every Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate of the Congregation open accounts in euros and dollars at the IOR, registered in its own name, with the Provincial, Vice-Provincial or Vicariate Superior and Econome as signatories. This will enable them to carry out Online Banking transactions. By giving power of attorney to the General Econome, they will allow him to act on behalf of the aforementioned entities solely when requested and when physical presence is necessary, such as, for example, when depositing cash.

4. Annual Course of specific formation for Major Superiors

The 48th General Chapter proposes that an annual formation meeting for all newly elected Major Superiors be established. This meeting, which will last at least one week, will be conducted with the help of experts and, if possible, as an in-person meeting.



5. Guidelines for the use of Bank Cards

The 48° General Chapter proposes that the Superior General with his Council draw up guidelines for the use of bank cards.

6. Comprehensive Renovation of the Generalate House

The 48° General Chapter proposes that a comprehensive project be prepared for the general renovation of the plant (plumbing, heating, electrical and security) of the House of Saints John and Paul (works, costs, etc.). This project should be presented at the next General Synod, 2027, for approval and for suggestions regarding the financing of the project.



A PLEA FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

As the General Chapter of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ, gathered in Rome this month, we pray constantly for the peace of the world, aware that peace is God's gift. We share in the deep distress of so many people everywhere about the easy resort to war today, and the intolerable grief and pain that this violence imposes on huge populations. As followers of Jesus Christ we believe that even such great suffering can never finally extinguish hope, and that suffering will give way to new life.

We recognise how the long history of human tragedy continues to cast deep shadows in Israel and Palestine, in Gaza and Lebanon, in Ukraine and Russia, in Sudan, Congo, Mozambique, Mexico, Haiti, Myanmar and many other places in the world. In our times, hearts have become hardened and peace seems utopian. The flames of conflict are fanned by self-interested parties, companies and individuals ready to plunder a region's resources, and those seeking political power and economic advantage, as in arms sales.

Together with Pope Francis our plea can only be for peace. When as a Chapter we met with him he encouraged us: "to proclaim the presence of the Crucified and Risen in the suffering of our day - its vastness and devastation in poverty, in wars, in the laments of creation, in the perverse dynamics that produce divisions between people, and the rejection of the weak. Let everything possible be done to prevent the pain of our brothers and sisters from remaining meaningless and resulting in a waste of humanity and despair". [*Address of His Holiness to the participants of the General Chapter of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ (Passionists)*, 25th October 2024].



We recognise the role that our various religious traditions continue to play, for good and for ill, among the nations and peoples locked in conflict today. While acknowledging the failures that make us complicit in the tragedy, we want to raise our voice, along with the Pope and other religious leaders, and say: violence will only stop with a ceasefire; peace can only be restored with a change of heart; reconciliation will be achieved only on the basis of true justice for all.

We join with all those ready to call Peace our sister and our daily companion. For this reason, in all the conflict zones, especially today in Gaza and Israel, in Ukraine and Russia, we urge: **The killing must stop**. Stand ready *"to beat swords into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks"* (Is. 2, 4).



A LETTER TO THE LAITY FROM THE 48TH PASSIONIST GENERAL CHAPTER

Rome, 26 October 2024

Very dear brothers, sisters, and friends,

We, who are the approximately 80 Passionists who have come to Rome from different nations to take part in this 48th General Chapter of our Congregation, wish to share a word with you. We have been moved by the desire to review our journey as a Congregation during the recent past, and to explore God's will for us so that we may joyfully live our gift of the Passionist charism while it continues to enlighten the life of the Church and the world in the present difficult circumstances which we are living through.

It is very gratifying for us to find you alongside as we progress along the pathway of our life. Your friendship, your collaboration, and your sharing are constantly with us. We, also, wish to respond in a like manner since we share with one another a gift which we received with our baptism: **to be and to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus, which is the greatest and most marvelous work of God's love.**

The General Regulations of the Congregation address this aspect of our lives: *rooted in Christ through baptism and sharing in the universal call to holiness, and following the spirit and teaching of Saint Paul of the Cross, we share with the lay faithful the mission entrusted to us by the Church to announce the Gospel of the Passion to the world through our lives and our apostolate (cf., Const. 2). Respecting the identity and the uniqueness of each vocation, we open ourselves to a fruitful exchange of gifts, in reciprocity, to promote together with the laity who share our Charism the grateful memory of the Passion of Christ, in all men and women whom we meet on our way, especially the 'crucified' of the present day. (GR 7.d)*



Of particular significance was the meeting and sharing of 13 October, when we met with some of you by videolink. At that time we listened carefully to your sharing and to your hopes; you moved us and you challenged us to continue moving ahead through synodality. We wish to respond to this grace by placing ourselves at your service for the full realization of your vocation and mission as the laity of our family. In whatever form our sharing takes, **all of us, together, wish to testify to the Gospel.**

As the result of our Chapter work during these days, we wish to affirm to you that as the Congregation begins a new term, it is our desire, and we invite you to join us, to continue making progress in **recreating** the spirit of synodality which is the motive power which particularly today is moving the Church:

- Processes that strengthen **communion**, our closeness and our relationships with one another; as well as supporting our “ties” and sense of belonging with one another.
- Processes which will promote our **identification with, and participation in, the Passionist charism**, and foster the accompaniment and formation which strengthen our identity.
- Processes to build a **commitment to the mission**: to expand the shared development of the mission as a co-responsibility.

We realize that this degree of closeness brings a lot of responsibility with it, since it means to live and fulfill a vocation, and a lay ministry, which must be followed through discernment and by adapting to the present needs. In the same way, it is important that all of us continue to grow in our sense of belonging so that some day we may be able to share many more opportunities and roles.

We trust that the working of the Spirit of God, and the synodal path which is lived particularly today in the Church, will help us to make a reality of the theme and motto of the General Chapter: **“Here I Am, Send Me.” The Passion of Christ: our source of life and mission.**

We greet you and share an embrace in Christ, Crucified and Risen!

Superior General's Report

to the 48th General Chapter

"HERE I AM, SEND ME"

A journey of transformation through prayerful listening and surrender to growth in transparency, authenticity and humility.

"THE PASSION OF CHRIST: OUR SOURCE OF LIFE AND MISSION"

Our meaning and vision for a transformed future is found in *'the greatest and most overwhelming work of Divine Love'*,
- the Passion of Jesus.

INTRODUCTION: A SPIRIT-LED JOURNEY [2012 – 2024]

As I begin to write this report giving an account of the state of the Congregation over the past six years since the last 47th General Chapter in 2018, my mind is being oriented to reflect on a broader panorama, i.e. to look back and take a glance since the 46th General Chapter in 2012 when I began my mandate as Superior General. *With a sense of listening and obedience to the Spirit, where has the journey of our Congregation led us to today?*

The 46th General Chapter in 2012 had as its theme, ***Passionist Life: Solidarity and Mission***. This was because, since 2000, attentive to the workings of the Holy Spirit and reading the signs of the times, the Congregation felt a need to renew its structures: a process of **Restructuring** for the sake of giving greater vitality to its mission. The process of 'restructuring' led us through a period of experimentation with 'Configurations', i.e. entities grouping together to find a supportive future and to create **structures of Solidarity** in the areas of *personnel, formation, and finance for mission*. The 46th General Chapter confirmed the establishment of six Configurations and focused on the themes of *solidarity, communion, and mission*.

After some years of focusing on the structures and *looking within*, the 47th General Chapter in 2018 felt it was time to *look out* – to focus on the charismatic testimony of our mission – the reason for our being and existence as a Congregation. This was encouraged and supported by



the global promotion and call of Pope Francis to be a **missionary church**. Further, due to the upcoming commemoration of the Tercenary of the foundation of our Congregation, the theme chosen for this Chapter was, **Renewing our Mission: Gratitude, Prophecy, Hope** in light of the dynamic force of the *Memoria Passionis* which motivates and impels us. The Chapter's goal was to promote reflection and response to the call for renewal of our mission with the awareness that 'what we do' is closely linked to 'who we are'. Three closely connected and intertwined areas were identified for the renewal of our mission: **1) community life; 2) formation – initial & ongoing; 3) the promotion and institutionalization of structures of solidarity in the Configurations.**

Now, as we prepare for the celebration of the 48th General Chapter, we want to continue the theme of *mission*, which is at the core of our vocation. However, we want to emphasize not just the mission of the institution, but, rather, focus on the individual Passionist members – the missionaries. *What should be the response of those called to God's mission? From what standpoint does a Passionist make his response in mission? And so, we were inspired by the theme, "Here I Am, Send Me" - The Passion of Christ: Our Source of Life and Mission.* As I reflected in my letter convoking the General Chapter:

We were hoping for a dynamic theme that would be missionary in nature, but closely connected to our Passionist charism and identity. It was felt that the Congregation was in need of an injection to 'shock' us out of our lethargy and inspire us with a new enthusiasm to fan the ashes into fire, to stand ready and available to "go to the other side" [the margins, the peripheries, the places where no one wants to go], to leave behind our tents and comfort zones, and to take the risks necessary along the journey always with our awareness plugged to the Cross and Passion of Christ which, for us Passionists, is the wellspring and source of Divine Love and Wisdom. Are we, am I, truly ready to listen to the Spirit and respond: "Here I Am, Send Me"?

Looking back to the past two General Chapters, and looking ahead to the next Chapter, we get a sense, and we can trace the orientation of the journey on which the Congregation has been led. We can see that it has been a journey in response to the Spirit guiding and inspiring us to take the direction which would strengthen our fidelity in accordance with our charism and challenge our relevancy in accordance with the time of history in which we are living. So, for example, in response to the confusion, challenges and struggles being experienced in religious life (considering areas of growth and areas of decline), we discerned the creation of structures of solidarity within 'configurations' as a way of greater authenticity and relevance of our Passionist life and mission. Of course, there is no time-limit; it is ongoing. We have had our struggles in the institutionalization of these structures, but there are no manuals, or quick fixes or guarantees. What we need is the openness and patience to *walk together, evaluate, and make necessary changes* to achieve the outcome we want, which is the revitalization of the mission. Any signs of resistance and closedness from our part only serve to place obstacles in the path of building an albeit smaller, but life-giving future, different and new.

Similarly, in considering the renewing of our Passionist mission in the Church and the world today, three foundational features emerged:

- The close connection between our Mission and our Community Life: *"Our life is our Mission (by witness), our Mission is our life (by action).*
- The integral connection between our Mission and our Charism: renewing our Mission must build upon our dedication to Jesus in his Passion and to the crucified of today.
- The need for continual discernment of our Mission in light of the Signs of our Times and the Gospel of the Passion; we have to respond to the needs of our world today.

(Reflections and Orientations from the 47th General Chapter)



In a world situation which at the time was troubled by armed conflicts and wars, refugees, hunger and famine, ecological and environmental disasters, oppression of the rights and dignity of peoples, trafficking of peoples, growing poverty, race issues, gender and sexual discrimination, and the Covid-19 pandemic, Pope Francis, in his message to mark the 300th anniversary of our foundation, challenged us Passionists to deepen our commitment to **“the crucified of our age”** toward whom our missionary calling is directed. According to Pope Francis, this missionary calling of ours can only be strengthened by an **“inner renewal”** among us. In the words of Pope Francis:

The implementation of this task will require a sincere effort of inner renewal on your part, which derives from your personal relationship with the Crucified-Risen One...Only those crucified by love, as Jesus was on the cross, are able to help the crucified of history with effective words and actions...In fact, it is not possible to convince others of God's love only through a verbal and informative proclamation. Concrete gestures are needed to make us experience this love in our own love that is offered by sharing the situations of the crucified, even totally spending one's life, while remaining aware that between the proclamation and its acceptance in faith there is the action of the Holy Spirit.

I believe Pope Francis' invitation for an **“inner renewal”** among us Passionists is prophetic and calls our attention to focus more precisely and personally on the missionary thrust which the Congregation has been reflecting and renewing in these past recent years. Thus, it is no accident that this next part of our Congregation's journey focus on the **missionaries** – those called and sent. Hence emerged the Spirit-inspired theme which is presented for our 48th General Chapter and which confronts each one of us, individually and personally in the journey ahead: **“Here I Am, Send Me” – The Passion of Christ: Our Source of Life and Mission.**

To truly respond with conviction: **“Here I Am, Send Me”** is a huge challenge and cannot be taken lightly. Obviously, this response presupposes a question which demands attentive listening, deep reflection and prayerful discernment. Making this response tests our faith in the

God who calls. It demands the courage to leave one's comforts and familiarity and invites full confidence to surrender in trust to God and in the gift of the charism centered on the Passion of Christ in which is contained God's Power, Wisdom and Love. **The Passion of Christ: Our Source of Life and Mission?** *How convinced am I of this? Does the 'Passion of Christ' really influence my life? Can I surrender with confidence ("Let Go and Let God")?*

The grace of surrender and answering with obedience and freedom "**Here I Am, Send Me**" will mean that we must be open and ready to be *transformed and renewed* – from the inside, out. As St. Paul exhorts in Romans 12:2 – "*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...*" This verse highlights the importance of a renewed mindset in the life of every Christian. It challenges us to reject the values and beliefs of the world (*being conformed to the world*) which tempts us to cling to our comforts, idols and ideas, and instead, align our thinking with the teachings of Christ (*being conformed to Jesus*). This *renewal of the mind* involves a transformative process that leads to a renewed perspective, values, and actions. By renewing our minds, we align ourselves with God's truth and experience the transformative power of God's grace.

Our regular personal reflection and spiritual check-ups will help us to guard against being "*conformed to this world*". Experience confirms for us that without conscious reflection it is so easy to fall into, and become absorbed by, the 'worldly' which poses a danger to our consecrated life. In a RAI3 Italian broadcast interview in 2022, Pope Francis quoted the great theologian, Cardinal Henri de Lubac who called '**spiritual worldliness**': "*the biggest problem and greatest evil in the Church*". Pope Francis has himself stressed this many times, particularly in meetings with priests, warning that the seduction of *spiritual worldliness* is the worst thing that can happen to the Church because it makes clericalism grow which is "*a perversion of the Church and generates rigidity, and under every rigidity there is something putrid. Spiritual worldliness generates clericalism which leads to rigid, ideological positions, where ideology takes the place of the Gospel*". In this context it is difficult to freely surrender ourselves to the Lord and respond: "**Here I Am, Send Me**".



My hope for this Chapter is that by our *walking together* in synodality, and by our openness and *respectful listening* to the Spirit, to each other, and to the signs of our times, we may be able to discern a transformative path and experience the inner renewal desired, so that we may be joyful Passionist apostles and authentic missionaries witnessing and proclaiming by our life and mission a message of hope which reflects the love of God – and the God of Love – always with our eyes fixed on Jesus Crucified-Risen who is our source and meaning, our strength and hope.

SYNOD OF BISHOPS: ON SYNODALITY

We cannot ignore the fact that while we are gathered here for our General Chapter, the Synod of Bishops is in session in the Vatican on the theme of the **Synod on Synodality**. 'Synodality' is now a fundamental feature of the Church's identity and ecclesiology, and so it is important that we give attention and keep contact with the process of the Synod, because it is about us as members of the Church, the People of God. I Invite us all to adopt the 'synodal way' in the process of our Chapter, where all the voices are welcomed and heard, even if the full representation of the People of God is incomplete. Let us recognize that the **Holy Spirit is key**, without whom there is no synodality. The Chapter is not simply a question of like-minded people coming together to share, discuss, and come up with statements and plans and strategies. Rather, in synodality, we gather as a community of faith, of worship, of service and of mission. The call of Jesus and his vision of the kingdom of God, i.e. God's rule of justice, love and peace, is central and the goal. Listening, dialogue, silence, prayer and discernment are also necessary elements and key activities.

For these past six years, our Congregation has been journeying with the dream of a mission option, to take on a missionary attitude and be ready to go out to the margins of humanity. *Synodality* is defined in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* as "*an indispensable prerequisite for giving the Church a renewed missionary impetus.*" If our Congregation wants to become missionary, then it has to be part of a *synodal Church*, because synodality is not just a method, but the *mode of being* of a church which wants to go out in mission. It is a way

towards a re-thinking, re-imagining of the Church's (and of our Congregation's) role in today's society. This requires that we undergo **conversion (metanoia)** – a new way of understanding and approaching how we do our mission. For us, Passionists, our contribution in mission must also bear the mark and be inspired by the specific vision of our charism: the *memoria passionis*, with the awareness that, as Pope Francis said in his message for our Jubilee: "*For a charism to endure over time, it is necessary to adapt it to new needs, keeping alive the creative power of its beginnings.*" The Pope went on to express his hope and offer us a challenge for our mission:

I hope that the members of your Institute will feel 'branded' by the mission rooted in the memoria passionis. Your Founder, Saint Paul of the Cross, calls the Passion of Jesus "the greatest and most overwhelming work of God's love" (Letters II, 499). He felt consumed by that love and wanted to set the world on fire with his personal missionary activity and that of his companions. It is very important to remember that "Mission is at once a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people. When we stand before Jesus crucified, we see the depth of his love which exalts and sustains us, but at the same time, unless we are blind, we begin to realize that Jesus' gaze, burning with love, expands to embrace all his people. We realize once more that he wants to make use of us to draw closer to his beloved people. He takes us from the midst of his people, and he sends us to his people; without this sense of belonging, we cannot understand our deepest identity" (Ap. Exhort. Evangeli gaudium, 268).

Synodality is about involving people in **discerning God's will** and **listening to the Holy Spirit**. It is about **prayerful discernment** which needs space and time, and which must mature in contemplative silence. The goal is to be attentive to the movements within – the movements of the Spirit – and thus to perceive God's desire in knowing the best way to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus as God's saving love and compassion in the situation of the contemporary society and world. As Pope Francis expressed in his Jubilee message to us:

This significant centennial anniversary represents a providential opportunity to move towards new apostolic goals, without giving in to



the temptation to “leave things as they are” (Ap. Exhort. Evangelii gaudium, 25). Contact with the Word of God in prayer and reading the signs of the times in daily events will enable you to perceive the creative presence of the Spirit whose outpouring over time, points out the answers to humanity's expectations. No one can escape the fact that today we live in a world where nothing is the same as before.

My hope is that in this Chapter, the issues which have emerged from the broad consultation of the Congregation will be prayerfully reflected upon in a synodal spirit of deep listening, respectful dialogue, and prayerful discernment leading to consensus decisions inspired by the Spirit.

PASSIONIST MISSION – FORMATION PLAN - FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

a) *Passionist Mission Renewal*

Over the past six years, since the beginning of the 47th General Chapter in 2018, the theme directed for reflection and promotion in the Congregation has been: **Renewing our Mission – Gratitude, Prophecy, Hope**. This theme was chosen as a call for us to focus on the charismatic testimony of our Passionist mission, especially because of Pope Francis' emphasis on **evangelization** and **mission: proclaiming the joy of the Gospel to the poor and going out on mission to the peripheries and margins**.

Our specific mission as Passionists is “to preach the Gospel of the Passion by our **life** and **apostolate**” and in order to fulfil this mission, “we come together in **apostolic communities** ...” (Const. 2). So, there is an integral connection of **our mission** with **our life** in community. Our **community life** and our **mission** cannot be separated; they are two sides of the one coin. Our life is our mission (by witness), and our mission is our life (by action). Together, they both shape us and give us our identity and authenticity as Passionists. **Who we are** and **what we do** are interconnected and interrelated. “Our involvement in the apostolate flows directly from our life in community.” (Const. 67)

As mentioned previously, the 47th General Chapter discerned Three interconnected priority areas which were to be studied and reflected upon for the renewal of our mission, i.e. **community life; formation: initial and ongoing;** and **the revitalization of the Configurations – our principal structures of solidarity**. While this work did not progress further during the Chapter, it became a 'work in progress' which involved the participation of everyone in the Congregation. A document, **CALL TO ACTION: Reflections and Orientations from the 47th General Chapter** was composed inviting everyone at the level of community, Province/Vice Province and Configuration to participate and contribute their responses which would result in a Congregation-wide *Plan for the Renewal of our Passionist Mission* to be presented and ratified at the 16th General Synod. There was quite a good participation from the Congregation, the responses of which were collated by an appointed 'Renewal of Mission Commission' composed of: Frs. Juan Ignacio Villar Cabello (SCOR – President), José Luis García Pérez (CJC-REG), Elie Muakasa Ngumba (CPA-SALV), Denis Travers (PASPAC-SPIR), Wojciech Henryk Adamczewski (CCH-ASSUM), and Giuseppe Adobati (MAPRAES). With the resignation of Juan Ignacio some five months later, Fr. Gwen Barde was appointed as President, and Fr. Omar Trejo Valdéz (SCOR) as new member. The Commission then prepared the *Instrumentum Laboris* which was discussed during the General Synod (2022) and evolved into a document: **RENEWING PASSIONIST MISSION – A Call to “Walk Together” (Post-Synod Directions for a Passionist Mission Plan)**.

I encourage the use of both documents, **Call to Action** and **RENEWING PASSIONIST MISSION**, as resource tools for sharing at the local community level. They contain achievable goals, objectives and actions which can assist us to “walk together” in our life and mission, rooted in the charism of the *memoria passionis*.

b) Passionist Formation Plan

In March 2023, the much-awaited document entitled **The Passionist Formation** – a revised and updated version of the Congregation's General Program of Formation – was approved and distributed. This new program envisages a wholistic and life-long formation for Passionists and articulates the values needed in formation in these times of our



history. It also highlights the importance of areas such as mission, the spirit of synodality, the need for international and multicultural formation, the new digital culture, healthy human formation, safeguarding and right relationships.

We are greatly indebted to Fr. Martin Coffey as the Secretary General for Formation, and members of the Formation Commission, for carrying out the work of this document.

To encourage familiarity with the General Formation Plan, the Formation Office in the Generalate has begun producing and sending to all members of the Passionist family a series of catechesis on various themes concerning formation. This material is a resource for use both in initial and ongoing formation.

c) *Passionist Financial Stewardship Manual*

In September 2023, the Congregation's Financial Regulations and Directory, entitled the **Financial Stewardship Manual**, was approved and distributed. It incorporates the values, norms and customs of our Congregation in matters related to the administration of its assets, with particular reference to our vow of poverty. This is a valuable manual, not only for superiors and economes, but also for formators and students in understanding and developing a right culture of evangelical poverty and solidarity in the religious life.

Our sincere thanks is extended to Frs. Alessandro Foppoli and Antonio Munduate for coordinating and organizing the material to be included in this document

TERCENTENARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION: A JUBILEE

A highlight in this last six-year term was the preparation and celebration of the Congregation's 300th anniversary of foundation by St. Paul of the Cross, with the added privilege of obtaining from Pope Francis the permission to celebrate this historical and ecclesial event as a '**Jubilee Year**'. It was proposed to a creative and hardworking Commission appointed to prepare for this year-long event, that the commemoration of the Jubilee be planned as **a celebration of a charism** which we are to proclaim by word and deed. The focus was the "keeping alive" and "the promotion" of the charism, as is stated in Const. 6:

We express our participation in the Passion by a special vow, which is at once personal, communitarian, and apostolic. Through this vow we bind ourselves to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Christ. By word and deed, we strive to foster awareness of its meaning and value for each person and for the life of the world.

The Tercentenary Commission was headed by Fr. Ciro Benedettini (MAPRAES) and included as members: Frs. Juan Ignacio Villar Cabello (SCOR), Vital Otshudialokoka Onasaka (CPA), Anton Lässer (CCH), Francisco das Chagas da Silva Marques (CJC), John Pearce (PASPAC) who sadly passed away and was replaced by Einstein Thypampil (PASPAC).

Reflecting on the theme of the Jubilee: **Renewing Our Mission: Gratitude, Prophecy, Hope**, all local areas of the Congregation were encouraged to actively motivate the members of the Passionist Family to participate and be involved in:

- ✚ remembering the past humbly with thanksgiving to the God of Love and Compassion who has blessed us (**Gratitude**);
- ✚ reading the signs of the times and finding fresh ways to evangelize through the lens of the Passion of Jesus (**Prophecy**); and,
- ✚ discerning God's plans and promises for a meaningful future (**Hope**).



A Jubilee Icon was written for this historical event and a docu-film on St. Paul of the Cross was produced, directed by Elisabetta Valgiusti. The 'pilgrimage' of the Jubilee Icon and Relic of St. Paul of the Cross which travelled to all parts of the Congregation, including the regular catechesis and publications on aspects of our Passionist spirituality contributed by various religious, and also the planning, celebrations, prayer, conferences and publications in the local areas, assisted in promoting and rekindling a new appreciation and interest in our spirituality.

Many adjustments, postponements and revisioning had to be made to our plans due to the disruption brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the 300th anniversary commemoration of our Congregation's foundation was a significant event in the history of our Congregation and a time of grace.

THE PASSIONIST INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

The *International Theological Congress* on the theme: ***The Wisdom of the Cross in a Pluralistic World*** was one planned Jubilee event which brought together Church authorities and renowned scholars (both Passionists and others) from all parts of the world to reflect and present papers on the theme. Due to the limits and difficulties posed by the pandemic protocols regarding public safety and travel, the Congress was held from 21 – 24 September 2021 both 'in person' at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, and with presentations and participation 'online'. Despite our anxieties and concerns regarding this mode of participation, the results were very pleasing and gratifying. The Congress was sponsored by the Passionist *Gloria Crucis* Chair of the Pontifical Lateran University and organised by the Director of the Congress, the late Fr. Fernando Taccone. The three-volume set of printed and e-books containing all the papers and acts of the Congress in various languages (Italian, English, Spanish, French and Portuguese) are available, which I recommend as a wonderful resource for our libraries.

THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The experience of the global Covid-19 pandemic, which seems to have come and gone so quickly, was a life-changing event in our times and history and has affected us all in different ways and intensities. While the pandemic can easily be filed into the archives of history, it must not, and should not be forgotten because, like it or not, it has caused a profound change in each one of us and taught us many lessons, including in the way we look at life and do our ministries into the future. Rather, this change needs to be reflected upon. For example, the pandemic has taught us that we are not in control of the destiny and plans of our lives; rather, we must learn to live with openness, flexibility and trust, and not with rigidity and closedness. This was a lesson taught us by a little deadly virus. The many protocols and restrictions guiding our health during this time, meant the disruption of our many plans, including meetings, celebrations, apostolates and canonical visitations which had to be postponed and rearranged for another time.

The pandemic was not just a temporary disturbance and interruption in our lives; rather, it was a *watershed moment* for the world, i.e., a critical turning point in time where everything changed and will never be the same as before. Yet, many opportunities and new creative ideas have emerged and opened up for us which we must evaluate and discern in light of our life and mission.

At no time has **solidarity** been so meaningful and necessary as in the time of the global pandemic. We discovered, as Pope Francis pointed out, that we are **all** in the same boat and must row **together**. This is a contemporary expression of commitment for the **common good** and demands a sense of sacrifice and generosity in self-giving. In this spirit of solidarity and commitment for the common good, I encourage our 'walking together' in synodality as we journey into the future, sharing, and growing together in communion and mission in the distinct and diverse entities which comprise the Configurations and our Congregation.



THE XVI GENERAL SYNOD

All the Major Superiors of the 22 Entities (Provinces and Vice-Provinces) that comprise the Passionist presence in the world came together in Rome to participate and celebrate in the 16th General Synod from 11 – 21 September 2022. This event which normally takes place three years after the General Chapter and was scheduled for October 2021 (to coincide with the Congregation's Third Centennial Jubilee), was postponed by one year due to the continuing Covid-19 global pandemic.

The Synod was to respond to some of the demands of the last General Chapter, related to the renewal of our life and mission, and to offer its advice and support on some issues presented by the Superior General. In the months leading up to the event, the Synod members were invited to study the main documents, both to prepare for their own participation and to make evident the "synodality" of the journey, which invites all to dialogue and discernment as a spiritual experience.

The Synod, which is an advisory body to the General Council, focused its agenda on the analysis and orientation of the three main documents: the **Mission Renewal Plan**, the **General Plan for Formation**, and the **Financial Stewardship Manual**, which contain many topics concerning the life of communities and provinces.

Other areas concerning the Congregation's life were also considered in the agenda, such as: the report of the Superior General; the reports of the Presidents of the six Configurations about their realities during this period; the suppression of the Province IOS (England, Wales and Sweden) by aggregating the religious to the PATR Province (Ireland, Scotland and Paris); the reflection on our Laity in the light of the Lasallian Brother Antonio Botana's reflection regarding "**Charismatic Families**"; the administrative reports of the General Econome and the General Secretary for Solidarity and Mission. To this were added other topics related to the various roles

There were also special and significant moments, such as the spiritual retreat on the theme, **The Spirituality of the Synodal Process** animated by Maria Campatelli; the online meeting with Ms. Anne Marie O'Connor, the Executive Director of *Passionists International*; the vibrant witness and service of the Passionists present in Ukraine and Haiti; the

cordial and inspiring meeting with the Passionist bishops invited to Rome for their jubilee visit; and the pilgrimage to Monte Argentario and Vetralla.

A serene and positive atmosphere was experienced among the Synod members as they studied and discussed the various reports and proposals, as well as in presenting and accepting critical or dissenting remarks. The invitation to experience dialogue and confrontation in a "synodal" atmosphere helped to maintain an open and constructive profile.

MEETING WITH PASSIONIST BISHOPS

One planned event for the Jubilee was to invite our Passionist Bishops to Rome and to organize for them a pilgrimage to the sites of St. Paul of the Cross. This took place from 21 – 25 September 2022. Due to the interference caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this event was postponed from its original date to coincide with the ending of the General Synod. This was the first time that our Passionist Bishops were invited to come together as brothers in fraternal communion. As the General Synod was in session at this time, it was also an opportune time for them to meet and be with all the leaders of the Congregation.

Only six Bishops were able to be present: Giulio Mencuccini (retired of Sanggau Diocese, Indonesia), Jesús María Aristín Seco (Yurima-guas, Peru), Emery Kibal Mansong'loo (Kole Diocese, Congo), Luiz Fernando Lisboa (at the time in Pemba Diocese, Mozambique), Amilton Manoel Da Silva (Guarapuava Diocese, Brazil), and Pedro Luis Fuentes Valencia (La Paz Archdiocese, Bolivia). They were particularly inspiring in sharing their experiences in mission and describing the challenges of their life as Bishops. Their sharing and presence among us were much appreciated by all. In the subsequent days the pilgrimage organized for them followed.

MEETING AND PILGRIMAGE OF YOUNG PASSIONIST RELIGIOUS

A very successful meeting was held in Sts. John & Paul from 1 – 12 October 2022 which brought together about 64 young religious from all parts of the Congregation, representing the six Configurations. This



meeting, which was organized in light of the 300th anniversary of the Congregation's foundation, included a pilgrimage to the sites connected with St. Paul of the Cross: Ovada, Castellazzo, Monte Argentario, Vetralla and Rome. Time was given for the participants to internalize and share their experiences.

The last two days included a Passionist Spirituality Course with input and "lines of action" on the topic: ***Passionist Consecrated Life – Foundations and Expressions*** which was led and directed by Fr. Massimo Parisi (Postulator General).

The participants also had the opportunity to attend the Wednesday General Audience with Pope Francis and to meet and build friendships with each other, including sharing an evening of cultural festivities.

Unfortunately, I was not able to participate personally in all the activities of this event as I was recuperating from surgery. However, I managed to join with everyone in presiding and celebrating the closing Mass. We are grateful to Frs. Rafael Vivanco Pérez, Eddy Alejandro Vázquez López and Gwen Barde for their work in coordinating this event.

REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF THE CONGREGATION A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The predicted future reality

A consideration of the statistics of the Congregation and Configurations [**see Appendix at the end of the Report**] over the last 11-year period from 2012-2023 shows a consistent decline in the numbers of Congregation's personnel. It is expected that this downward trend (principally in the northern hemisphere, though not exclusively) will continue, with those now active religious ageing and retiring naturally, with deaths, departures and few new entries. As a consequence of this trend, it is likely that our houses and presences will have to be evaluated for closure, communities will need to be more concentrated and consolidated, and ministries limited or renewed. '**Solidarity**', especially in the areas of personnel, formation and finance within Configurations was considered as a way of responding to and dealing with this

phenomenon. It was seen as *a new way of being Passionists*. While some good and successful attempts have been made in some parts of the Congregation regarding the solidarity structures within Configurations, there have also been many struggles and misunderstandings (even *lack of understanding*) which calls for regular evaluation in the search for what works best for the goal.

In the last six-year General administration term, two Provinces in northern Europe: St. Gabriel's (GABR), Belgium (at the 2018 General Chapter) and St. Joseph's (IOS), England/Wales/Sweden (at the 2022 General Synod) were suppressed. Both were unable to or did not have the "appetite" to provide personnel for leadership. GABR expressed their desire to be under the responsibility of the Superior General, while IOS chose to be incorporated into St. Patrick's Province (PATR). Since then, due to advanced age and illness, the decision was made in Belgium to down-size further. Thus, the religious from the house in Wezembeek were transferred to the only surviving house in Kortrijk which now houses the last five living Belgian Passionists. The Wezembeek property was sold in September 2020. Negotiations are underway to sell a part of the Kortrijk property and to hopefully assign two Congolese religious to boost the Passionist presence in Kortrijk where exists the shrine/tomb of Blessed Isidoor De Loor and where the principal language medium is Flemish.

This reality of ageing and decline in both number and strength in some Provinces and Vice-Provinces continue to exist, with the only mechanism to respond being, either reduction in the status of the entity (which is always resisted) or suppression (which is the last resort) - even though up to this time, generally, the status quo has been maintained. Since the predictions show that this phenomenon of decline is a future reality, *what means of response can the Congregation suggest being applied? How best are we equipped to deal with this situation?*



Ordained-religious life integration

Another concern is the number of religious who request to leave the Congregation **[cf. Appendix at the end of the Report]**. The number of exits/departures each year is quite significant. They comprise mainly younger to middle-aged ordained priests, mostly requesting exclaustation or incardination into a diocese. There are multiple reasons for these moves such as, for some, the demands of community life, issue of poverty, disagreements with superiors, authority issues, strained relationships with confreres, past hurts, the desire to be in charge and self-sufficient, feeling of not belonging and not being accepted etc. For others, it is seeing a slow 'death' of the institute with no clear meaningful hope for the future. And for others again, there is no opportunity or certainty for personal self-promotions and to "climb the ladder". This smack of our religious life being captured by the influence of "*spiritual worldliness*" which Pope Francis warns about, and which promotes individualism, self-centredness, independence, and clericalism.

While we can understand this in the context of our human weakness and sinful condition, it is nevertheless important that better attention be paid toward these signs in the community and, even more so, that they be brought to the awareness of the candidates during the time of initial formation where it should be first addressed. Primarily, our vocation call is to **a life** (*consecrated life*), not **a job**!

It seems to me that the ordained religious of our membership, especially in the times and needs of the Church today, identify strongly with the '*priestly*' role and ministry which is quite clear-cut, and the demands for which are very much sought. Every bishop is ready to accept more priests for the diocese. There will always be work available for a priest. Of course, there is nothing wrong with this in principle; after all, we are a clerical congregation. However, our life as consecrated religious can be compromised. Perhaps this can be one reason why we so easily and readily get drawn to accept parish apostolates and other sacramental ministries. It allows us to feel sufficiently 'employed' and engaged and shapes our identity as *priests*. While this fulfils his sense of being needed and useful, it can also bring about stress-related and health issues, not to mention the detrimental effects on the *priestly life*, such as time for personal prayer, reflection, spiritual reading, ministerial

preparation, personal rest etc. My point is that for a *religious priest*, a whole other side of the *religious life and vocation* can be left neglected, undernourished and unfulfilled, especially that of a genuine **community life and witness**: fraternity, communion, prayer, contemplation, simplicity of life, study, reading, welcoming, hospitality, pastoral ministry etc.

In this context, I refer our attention to the document **Call to Action** wherein the following is proposed as elements for our *objectives* in community life - and which is worth pondering...

✚ Making our community life a “school of prayer”:

- a) Ensuring our relationship with God is the centre of everything we do.
- b) Through commitment to the experience of prayer, contemplation, silence.

✚ Making our community life a “school of humanity”:

- a) We promise a spirit of dialogue and tolerance, sacrifice and patience – creating something that is humanly likeable.
- b) We practice understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation – integrating all aspects of our life in common.

Laiity in the Passionist Charismatic Family

The 47th General Chapter recommended the possibility of creating “an *international commission, composed of religious and lay Passionists, to promote cooperation and exchange between the various lay groups associated with our Congregation.*” (Recommendation n.6) This recommendation did not progress very far, not because we do not consider it important or worthy, but because it is generally felt that much satisfactory cooperation and collaboration is already happening in the local Province/Vice Province situations and which is encouraged and given tacit approval by members of the General Council at meetings during the canonical visits or Chapters. And so, we did not give it the priority attention it deserves. Certainly, previous General Chapters and Synods have given good attention to this topic of the “Passionist family”. Nevertheless, I believe some work is necessary in clarifying the terminology used, e.g. “lay Passionist” or “Passionist laity”, and in



understanding the nature and status of '*lay belonging*' to the Congregation (rights and responsibilities).

In the past year a General Consultor has been assigned to this area and some work of gathering information and understanding the complexity of the various lay groups and styles in the Congregation was begun, but it is still in its early days and in process. Members of the Passionist charismatic family on pilgrimage, or visiting Rome were always made welcome and guided at the General House of Sts. John and Paul.

It is always very inspiring to witness the interest of the lay faithful in our Passionist charism and spirituality and their thirst for deeper formation. I am also pleased to see the generally good collaboration of the "professed religious" and "lay persons" in the various ministries of the local entities throughout the Congregation. This joint relationship and collaboration between professed and lay happens on two levels:

- 1) On the level of being drawn or attracted by the **charism** of the congregation - which is recognized as a spiritual gift given to the whole Church.
- 2) On the level of being involved in the **mission** of the congregation - which is an integral part and responsibility of all the baptized in the evangelizing mission of the Church.

With the current emphasis on "*synodality*" and the "*synodal church*" which promotes the ecclesiology issuing from the Second Vatican Council that **all the baptized** are the People of God, are part of the Body of Christ, and belong to the Community of Disciples, this collaboration between lay and professed members of religious institutes will continue to grow and develop as the laity understand and accept their legitimate role in the mission of the Church. It becomes clear that **all the baptized** have a share in the spiritual gifts and are *co-responsible* in the evangelizing mission of the Church. They are not simply followers of Christ, and not simply disciples, but they are 'apostles' – 'sent' by Christ as missionary disciples. When dealing with the question of lay participation in mission, we need to make a paradigm shift from viewing them as mere *collaborators*, to recognize them as **co-responsible** for the Church's being and action. Similarly, when addressing the issue of the belonging of lay people to a charismatic family, we need to

understand and accept the way in which they live and promote the charism through their vocation as lay people and speak of their **right** and **responsibility** as apostles of evangelization.

Safeguarding Creation

With regard to *Safeguarding Creation*, the 47th General Chapter recommended the following:

In the light of the concern for the environmental crisis of our time and inspired by the Encyclical "Laudato Si'" by Pope Francis, the General Chapter recommends that all the entities of the Congregation evaluate how best to respond to this concern and commit themselves to assuming concrete action steps in this respect.

In May 2021 we launched ***Passion of the Earth – Wisdom of the Cross***, a six-session program of formation and action for the Passionist family. The objective was to engage with Pope Francis' landmark Encyclical: ***Laudato Si' (On Care for our Common Home)***.

This project was realized in collaboration with *Passionist Solidarity Network* (Louisville, USA) to whose members the Congregation owes a debt of gratitude for the many hours in research, reflection and creative writing. ***Ecological and evangelical conversion*** was the goal of the program, inspired by our shared contemplative engagement with ***Laudato Si'*** in the light of our Passionist charism. Our desire was to listen and hear *the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*, and to find concrete ways to act in favor of justice, solidarity and peace.

The program (all six sessions) which was prepared in the three languages (English, Italian, Spanish) was to have been completed and available within a year. However, due to unforeseen circumstances and illness, the last two sessions (5 & 6) have only recently become available. We apologize for this delay and beg your understanding.

Unfortunately, however, it is disappointing that not everyone or every community took up the call to participate in this program. These are urgent matters of concern and impact directly on our humanity and our world. They are, further, related to our Passionist charism and spirituality, yet they do not seem to excite our interest. I, therefore, renew



my appeal to all members of the Passionist family to commit to engage with ***Laudato Si'*** by your participation in the program: ***Passion of the Earth – Wisdom of the Cross*** which is available on the Congregation website: www.passiochristi.org

The Generalate

The **General House, SS. Giovanni e Paolo** has seen a number of changes in leadership since the last General Chapter. After the 2018 Chapter, Fr. Luis Alberto Cano (SCOR) was appointed Rector, but unfortunately after only two years, due to serious health reasons, resigned his position to return to Spain and concentrate on his medical treatment. These were difficult times for leadership and management of the community due to the complexities associated with the global pandemic.

In September 2021, Fr. Natale Panetta (MAPRAES) was appointed the new Rector. He generates a good atmosphere of welcome and hospitality in the community while also guiding and animating a greater spirit of fraternity, spirituality and ministry. He is ably supported by Fr. Erasmo Sebastiano (MAPRAES) as Vicar, Econome, and Carer, especially of those who are sick and infirm. The community is ever grateful for the ministry, generosity, and commitment of these two brothers.

After suffering severe losses during the period of “lockdown” and restrictions due to the pandemic, with no new international university students, and a shortfall in the house finances, the House is once again ready to welcome our religious, both those seeking to do further studies, and others who can contribute to the life and ministries of the community. The Retreat House and Basilica have also resumed their ministries to full strength offsetting the financial stress. We are grateful to the committed efforts and hard work of Fr. Vito Patera (Director of the Retreat House) and Fr. Graziano Leonardo (Rector of the Basilica) in this regard.

The General House welcomes many visitors, both Passionist religious and friends, and generally exudes a friendly and cordial atmosphere which is always appreciated by the visitors. There has been a greater openness in recent times to share out some smaller rooms in the house

on a day basis for the ministry of outside groups. The community has also shown its compassionate face by welcoming and providing a space in the house for refugees and a family fleeing the war in Ukraine.

Of course, our Passionist Sisters (Daughters of the Passion) who work so hard for the mission of the General House are dearly appreciated and included in the celebrations of community events.

Maintenance of the vast building and property of Sts. John & Paul is always a major financial burden. However, with a generous gift donated by the former St. Gabriel's Province, Belgium, the Chapter Aula was renovated and upgraded recently to accommodate the dynamics of the synodal style of meetings. This is becoming more sought after by groups who use our Retreat House for meetings and Chapters. We are grateful to our Belgian brothers for their generosity and solidarity.

Myanmar Mission Foundation

The Passionist mission in Myanmar, coordinated by the PASPAC Configuration and canonically under the Superior General, began with two missionaries in the Diocese of Pathein (southern Myanmar) in September 2018. Frs. Paul Motoyuki Hata from Japan (MAIAP) and Marsilin Sony Kannanaikal from India (THOM) were the first missionaries, though some others had been there by invitation to preach retreats. Both Paul and Sony showed great commitment and patience since they were on a visa which did not permit them the stability to remain in the country for any suitable length of time but required that they go in and out multiple times after short periods. Nevertheless, they persevered until late 2020 when they were out of Myanmar due to Covid-19 and then were prevented from returning because of the military coup d'état which followed in February 2021.

Both Paul and Sony were well considered by the former Bishop John Hsane Hgyi, who sadly succumbed to Covid in June 2021. Both Passionists were well appreciated and involved in preaching retreats and offering spiritual counsel to the Clergy and Sisters, and also in teaching English to the seminarians.

The new Bishop Henry Eikhlein was appointed in May 2023 and stands ready to welcome the Passionists back to Pathein. The time is not yet



opportune, but let us keep this mission in our prayer and look forward with hope to the day when we can respond: **"Here I Am, Send Me"**.

Passionist Africa Summit

From 8 to 10 February 2024 a *Passionist Africa Summit*, comprising the Superior General and Council, the Secretary General, the Procurator General, the General Econome, the Provincial or Vice Provincial Superior, and one formator representing every Passionist entity on the African continent was held at the Passionist Ushirika Retreat Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. The Summit had as its theme: **"Passionists, together on the Way in Africa: Renewing and Strengthening Solidarity"**.

The objective of the gathering was to set in motion a process of listening to and comparing the various Passionist realities present in Africa (currently operating in 8 nations), with a view to greater mutual knowledge and awareness, and better collaboration and solidarity. The days were an excellent opportunity to listen to the reports on the various presences, highlighting their riches and poverty, which then generated an exchange of ideas, insights and perspectives for a common vision on the future of the Passionists in Africa. In confrontation and dialogue, we followed the **synodal method** of "*spiritual conversation*" which, in an atmosphere of prayer, invited each one to listen to the others, and to allow what has been heard to generate new ideas and perceptions, which were then shared with simplicity and freedom.

Besides the presentation on the current state of the various entities, four thematic poles were developed: **1) The Church and Religious Life in Africa**, with a presentation by Bishop John Mbinda, on the socio-ecclesial reality in Africa and the challenges that are being faced with the help of the synodal path; and by Prof. Aloyce Ojore, on the weight and value of traditional African cultures and religions, and the need for better inculturation of the Gospel; **2) Community Life and Mission in Africa**; **3) Formation for Passionist life in Africa**; **4) Management of economic resources for Passionist life and mission in Africa**.

The following priorities emerged at the conclusion of the Summit when the participants were asked to outline the most important actions to be implemented as soon as possible:

1. To continue, in each individual entity, dialogue and discussion on the issues that emerged at this gathering. Each Superior should set aside a time (Assembly) to share and discuss with all the religious the results and issues that emerged.
2. Promote the unity of the Plans and Programmes of formation in Africa, in order to gradually create an inclusive project for our African formandi.
3. Identify and prepare confreres to be initiated into the Formators' Course.
4. To commit ourselves to re-launch the house of Kisima as an *international Passionist Theological Studentate in Africa*, with the view to sending theologians from the various entities and studying a plan to be presented at the next General Chapter.
5. To identify a new *common missionary project for the Passionists in Africa*, which could be, primarily, assistance to the mission in Mozambique and then some possible new openings, e.g. Uganda, Malawi.
6. To study a way of including the missions of Angola and Mozambique in the moments of meeting and dialogue of the Passionist Africa Configuration (CPA).
7. To study a renewal of the structures and modalities of aid and economic support to the various African entities.



Born into Eternal Life

During this six-year period, the General Curia mourned the deaths of the following brothers who served the Congregation with faithfulness and commitment, and were called to their eternal reward while in office:

- Fr. Fernando Alfredo Ruiz Saldarriaga (52), Secretary General, died in Colombia on 6 February 2020.
- Fr. Luis Alberto Cano Seijo (76), Rector SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Roma, died in Spain on 1 March 2023.
- Fr. Paolo Aureli (78), Secretary General for Missions and Solidarity, died in Rome, Italy on 6 August 2022.

May their souls and those of all the faithful departed rest in peace with God.




Appointments by the Holy Father

We are grateful to the Holy Father, Pope Francis for appointing the following religious to the service of leadership in local churches. We are also grateful to these brothers of ours for their obedience and sacrifice in accepting the call by the Holy Father to service in these particular churches:

- ✚ Amilton Manoel da Silva (GETH) – appointed Bishop of Guarapuava, Brazil in 2020, after serving as Auxiliary Bishop of Curitiba.
- ✚ Luiz Fernando Lisboa (GETH) – appointed as Archbishop of the Diocese of Cachoeiro de Itapemirim, Brazil in 2021, transferred from the Diocese of Pemba, Mozambique.
- ✚ Pedro Luis Fuentes Valencia (SCOR) – appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of La Paz, Bolivia in February 2022 and Apostolic Administrator of Military Ordinariate of Bolivia in August 2022.
- ✚ Valentinus Saeng (REPAC) – appointed Bishop of Sanggau, Indonesia in June 2022.

We are also thankful for the many years of episcopal service provided by the following brothers who have reached the age of retirement, and we wish them every blessing and peace for their future life and ministry:

- ✚ Bishop William Kenney – Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham, UK
- ✚ Bishop Giulio Mencuccini – Bishop of Sanggau, Indonesia

-  Bishop Neil Tiedemann – Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn, USA
-  Archbishop Washington Cruz – Archbishop of Goiania, Brazil
-  Bishop Tommaso Cascianelli – Bishop of Irece, Brazil

CONGREGATION VISITS AND MEETINGS (2018 – 2024)

2018

Korea/China (MACOR) – Chapter (December)
Japan (MAIAP) – Congress (December)

2019

Indonesia (REPAC) – Chapter (January)
Vietnam (SPIR) – Visit (January)
Madonna della Stella, Italy (MAPRAES) – Visitation (February)
Cirò Marina, Italy (MAPRAES) – Visitation (March)
Alghero, Sardinia, Italy (MAPRAES) – Visitation (March)
Cameri, Italy (MAPRAES) – Visitation (March)
Carpesino, Italy (MAPRAES) – Visitation (March)
Rome, Italy – MAPRAES Chapter (March-April)
Rimini, Italy (MAPRAES) – 150th Pio Campidelli Mass (April)
Livorno – Visit (April)
Belgium (GABR) – Visitation (May)
Sierra Madre, USA (CRUC) – Chapter (June)
Australia/NZ/PNG/Vietnam (SPIR) – Chapter (July)
Highgate, London (CURIA) – Visitation (August)

2020

India (THOM) – Visit (January)
St. Gabriel's Shrine, Italy (MAPRAES) -Feast Day Mass (February)
[Covid-19 pandemic postponements of Chapters/Congresses/events]

2021

Mexico (REG) – Chapter (January) *delegated to Fr. Rafael Vivanco*
Kenya (CARLW) – Congress (February) *delegated to Fr. Aloysius J. Nguma*



Tanzania (GEMM) – Congress (February) *delegated to Fr. Aloysius J. Nguma*
D.R. Congo (SALV) – Congress (March) *delegated to Fr. Aloysius J. Nguma*
England/Wales (IOS) – Chapter (July)
Ireland/Scotland (PATR) – Chapter (July)
Germany/Austria (VULN) – Congress (July)
Poland/Ukraine (ASSUM) – Visit (August)
Romania & Bulgaria (MAPRAES) – Visit (August)
Basella, Italy (MAPRAES) – 100th anniversary celebration (September)
Netherlands (SPE) – Chapter (October)
Botswana/Sth. Africa/Zambia (MATAF) – Congress (October) *delegated to Fr. Aloysius J. Nguma*
Brazil (GETH) – Chapter (October) *delegated to Fr. Rafael Vivanco*

2022

Spain (SCOR) – Chapter (February) *delegated to Fr. Rafael Vivanco*
India (THOM) – Congress (April)
New York, USA (PAUL) – Chapter (May)
Poland/Ukraine/Czech Rep. (ASSUM) – Chapter (June-July)
Brazil (EXALT) – Chapter (July)
Korea/China (MACOR) - Chapter (Dec.) *delegated to Fr. G. Barde*

2023

Indonesia (REPAC) – Chapter (January)
Philippines/Sweden (PASS) – Extraordinary Elective Chapter (February)
Japan (MAIAP) – Congress (February)
Italy, Portugal, France, Angola (MAPRAES) – Chapter (March)
Bethany, Israel (PASS) – Visit (April)
Peru/Yurimaguas (SCOR) – Visit (May)
Sierra Madre, USA (CRUC) – Chapter (June)
Poland (ASSUM) – Centenary Jubilee celebration (June)
Australia/NZ/PNG/Vietnam (SPIR) – Chapter (July)

2024

Kenya (CARLW) – Passionists Africa Summit (February)

Mexico (REG) – Chapter (June)

Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia (SCOR) – Visit (June)

Bethany, Israel (PASS) – Visit & St. Martha feast celebration (July)

Rome, 48th General Chapter – (4 – 26 October)

**Note: Most of the canonical visitations were conducted by the General Consultors. They also participated in Configuration assemblies and meetings.*


GENERAL COUNCIL & EXTENDED COUNCIL MEETINGS


From 2018 (October) until 2024 (September), 27 meetings of the General Council were held. In addition, there were a number of extraordinary mini-Council meetings called when required.

In that same period of time, 5 Extended Council meetings were held.

The General Council also participated in 4 annual retreats (2019/2021/2022/2023) which were conducted each year by Fr. Rafael Vivanco (Consultor) based on a modified 'Castellazzo Program'.

GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

 To all the Provincials, Vice Provincials, Consultors, Presidents of Configurations, Local Superiors, Economes, and Formators – for your commitment in leadership and service to our brothers and sisters in the Passionist family of your local areas.

 To Fr. Natale Panetta (Rector, SS. Giovanni e Paolo), Fr. Erasmo Sebastiano (Vicar/Econome), Fr. Graziano Leonardo (Rector of Basilica), Fr. Vito Patera (Director of Retreat House), Fr. Mario Collu (Librarian), and all those who lived and served in the various ministries of the General House of SS. Giovanni e Paolo over the six years, especially Fr. John Baptiste Ormechea, Br. Efraim Diakon Ambon, Br. Elfidius Pidi and all the wonderful employed and volunteer staff of the House: Lucia, Michele, Francesco, Monica, Delia, Gaetano, Carlo.



- ✚ To all our Passionist Sisters (Daughters of the Passion) over the past six years for the tireless and humble service they carry out every day in the kitchen and laundry to provide for us all in the General House.
- ✚ To all those who served as members of the various Commissions and Committees. At this time, I particularly recognize the members of the General Chapter Preparatory Commission: Frs. Elie Muakasa Ngumba, Gregor Lenzen, Alessandro Cancelli, Yoseph Pedhu, Tarcisio Hernando Gaitán Briceño, and Clemente Barrón (until his resignation and replaced by Rafael Vivanco Pérez).
- ✚ To all those who served in the General Curia over the past 6 years (and to their collaborators):
 - Fr. Lawrence Rywalt (Translator; Communications & PIB-BIP until 2020)
 - Fr. Javier Antonio Solís Basilio (Director, Communications Office since 2020)
 - Mr. Andrea Marzolla (Webmaster, Assistant in Communications Office)
 - Fr. Antonio María Munduate Larrea (Procurator General until Sept. 2019; Spiritual Assistant to the Congregation of Passionist Nuns)
 - Fr. Alessandro Foppoli (Procurator General since Sept. 2019)
 - Fr. Leonello Leidi (Canon Law Advisor)
 - Fr. Fernando Alfredo Ruiz Saldarriaga (Secretary General until July 2019)
 - Fr. Rafael Blasco Bordejé (Secretary General since Sept. 2019)
 - Ms. Federica Franco (Office of the Secretary General)
 - Fr. Vincenzo Carletti (General Econome until Oct. 2019)
 - Fr. Antonio Siciliano (General Econome since Oct. 2019)
 - Fr. Massimo Parisi (Postulator General)
 - Ms. Eunice Dos Santos (Archivist General)
 - Fr. Mario Collu (Librarian)
 - Fr. Martin Coffey (Formation Office until Oct. 2022) – replaced by Fr. Rafael Vivanco Perez

- Fr. Paolo Aureli (Secretary for Mission & Solidarity until Aug. 2022) – replaced by Fr. Aloysius John Nguma
- Mr. Franco Nicolò (Voluntary Assistant in Office of Mission & Solidarity)
- Fr. John Kathoka Muthengi (Executive Director of Passionists International until Sept. 2021)
- Ms. Anne Marie O'Connor (Executive Director of Passionist International since Sept. 2021)

✚ To the General Consultors, my closest collaborators in the governance of the Congregation over the past six years: Frs. Ciro Benedettini; Rafael Vivanco Pérez; Juan Ignacio Villar Cabello who resigned in 2021 and was replaced by Eddy Alejandro Vásquez López; Miroslaw (Mirek) Lesiecki; Aloysius John Nguma; and Gwen Barde...thank you for your support to me, your availability, patience, and for sharing your wisdom with openness and trust in the best interest of the Congregation and the common good of all. I have attempted to work with you in a collaborative manner, with a leadership style I believe was co-responsible and inclusive, making use of the gifts, strengths and expertise of each one. I am indebted to each one of you and can only wish and hope for you many blessings in your future life and service.

✚ I leave the last word for my faithful and loyal brother, Alessandro Foppoli, who has endured a close and patient relationship with me over the past twelve years as my personal secretary and translator. One can say that this was his role, and he did it well. But over and above this duty, I am particularly indebted to him for his brotherly and fraternal care shown during my times of need, especially with the hospitalizations, surgeries, medical appointments, and pharmaceutical necessities. I appreciated greatly his "hands-on" concern for me, his availability, and his management of my health and other appointments. Thank you, brother!



CONCLUSION

There are some areas of the Congregation's life and activities which I have not mentioned or ventured into in this report, because they will be covered by separate reports which you will have received, e.g. the report of finance, solidarity and missions, the Configurations, procurator, postulator, *Passionists International* (PI) etc.

So, all that is left for me to say is: THANK YOU. Thank you for giving me the honor and opportunity to serve our beloved Congregation and the Passionist Family as Superior General over the past twelve years. It has been a real privilege, and I will certainly miss this multi-task, multi-cultural and international ministry. However, I also know and feel it is time after twelve years in this role to hand on the baton.

To conclude, I share these following thoughts and reflections which I was asked to write recently for an article in the *Passionists International Bulletin* (PIB-BIP) describing my time and ministry as Superior General.

My call to service in the office of Superior General I would describe as a time of **“holy privilege”**, because it gave me the privilege to enter into the lives and stand on the “holy ground” of my brothers (and sisters), whose pastoral care was my first responsibility within the Congregation. I tried my best to always be available and open to all the brothers and to receive them fraternally with the honor and respect they deserved. For me, it was always a special moment to meet my brothers and to give of my time and attention to listen to whatever they felt free to share with me. Similarly, it was also a special time for me to meet with the brothers in the community visitations and to participate in the various Chapters/Congresses in which I presided. These were ‘graced moments’ for me, occasions of “holy privilege” in which I was able to listen to their joys and sorrows, hear their cries and pain, and sense their deeper desires to grow in their faith and to live out their vocation more authentically. In a similar way, meeting the many lay people and religious Sisters associated with our charismatic family was always a highlight and a delight. My faith was always nourished and strengthened by the example and witness of their faith and their desire to be formed and grow in our Passionist spirituality and to keep alive the grateful memory of the Passion of Jesus. In my role as leader, I was proud to

represent our Congregation at many levels, to hear of the "good fruits" of my brothers in ministry which has touched others, to express gratitude and appreciation, and to encourage and confirm my brother-Passionists in their vocation and mission.

Of course, with travel which took me to all five continents over the 12 years, I was blessed with many experiences and learned to appreciate and respect the distinct cultures and styles within our Congregational family which are so enriching, unique, and yet all-encompassing. Perhaps St. Paul of the Cross today would never recognize the Congregation he established 300 years ago: small and limited in accordance with the times. However, we can be certain that from his place in heaven, Paul has been happily encouraging, accompanying and supporting the growth of the Congregation throughout the world, pleased that his vision, the charism to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus by his sons (and daughters), and to promote its precious fruit of God's overwhelming love everywhere, is being fulfilled.

I feel blessed to have accepted the call to serve as the Superior General of the Congregation. I thank God and I am grateful to all of you, my brothers in the Congregation, for the trust, respect and privilege in allowing me to serve. I know there is much to be desired, and I am well aware of my limitations, mistakes and shortcomings. Not all was fulfilled, but, as I walk in the Curia corridor of SS. Giovanni e Paolo past all the portraits of the Superiors General beginning with the Founder, I become aware of men who with their strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures, lights and shadows obediently accepted the call to this service, surely with the surrender prayer of Jesus: **"Not my will, but your will be done"**. Relying always on the power of the **"Passion of Christ: the source of our life and mission"** they responded with that generous missionary spirit: **"Here I Am, Send Me"**. It's been a privilege to serve the Congregation as the 25th Successor of St. Paul of the Cross. THANK YOU!



APPENDIX

48th General Chapter 2024 Superior General's ReportCONGREGATIO
PASSIONIS IESU CHRISTIRELIGIOSI et NOVITII
PER STATUS ORDINATI
AD DIEM 31 AUGUSTI 2024
1.766

Sacerdotes: 1340
Diaconi permanentes: 8
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 117
Fratres votorum temporalium: 13
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 56
Clerici votorum temporalium: 198
Novitii Fratres: 2
Novitii Clerici: 32

APPENDIX

48th General Chapter 2024 Superior General's Report

COUNTRY	41: Novitii Fratres	42: Novitii Clerici	43: Clerici votorum perpetuorum	44: Clerici votorum temporalium	45: Fratres votorum perpetuorum	46: Fratres votorum temporalium	47: Diaconi permanentes	48: Sacerdotes	Total e 41-48 (ad 31.08.2024)
33. Nederland	6	4							
34. New Zealand	1		1						
35. Nigeria	2	7							
36. Northern Ireland	20	14	1	1	1	1			
37. Österreich	5	3	1		1				
38. Panama	10	9			1				
39. Papua New Guinea	8	1							
40. Peru	27	25	5	1					
41. Philippines	58	46	1	1	1				
42. Polska	39	32	1	1	1	1			
43. Portugal	21	7	2	1	1				
44. Puerto Rico	5	3							
45. Rep. Pén. de Congo	46	10	2						2
46. República Dominicana	11	4			1	1			
47. Scotland	5	3							
48. South Africa	6	4							
49. South Korea	23	9							
50. Sverige	7	5							
51. Tanzania	67	20	4		20				4
52. U.S.A.	119	57	1	17		4			
53. Ukraina	4	7							
54. Uruguay	2	5							
55. Venezuela	7	2							
56. Vietnam	29	3		1	3	12			
57. Zambia	9	9							
	1766	1340	8	117	13	56	198	2	32

APPENDIX

48th General Chapter 2024 Superior General's Report

RELIGIOSI et NOVITII PER NATIONES et STATUS ORDINATI

COUNTRY	Total e 41-48	41: Novitii Fratres	42: Novitii Clerici	43: Clerici votorum perpetuorum	44: Clerici votorum temporalium	45: Fratres votorum perpetuorum	46: Fratres votorum temporalium	47: Diaconi permanentes	48: Sacerdotes
1. Angola	18	9	1			8			
2. Argentina	5	5				2			
3. Australia	63	40	1			3			
4. Belgil	12	10	2						
5. Bolivia	9	9							
6. Botswana	6	6							
7. Brazil	129	96	1			5	19		5
8. Bulgaria	7	7							
9. Canada	7	7							
10. Chile	12	12							
11. China	8	8							1
12. Colombia	32	25	2			2	3		
13. Cuba	3	3							
14. Deutschland	23	15	2	1	1				
15. Ecuador	10	9				1			
16. El Salvador	7	7				6			
17. England	10	9	1						
18. España	141	114	11	3	3	1	4		
19. France	16	17	1						
20. Guatemala	4	4							
21. Haiti	1	1							
22. Honduras	12	9	1			5			
23. India	37	30	1			5	1		
24. Indonesia	194	94	39	9	19	35			10
25. Ireland	19	15	1						
26. Israel	3	2							
27. Italia	389	202	6	12	3	7	9		3
28. Jamaica, West Indies	4	4							
29. Japan	10	6	1	1					
30. Kenya	75	37	9	1	4	14			
31. México	56	45	1			5	7		
32. Myanmar	3	3							

APPENDIX

48th General Chapter 2024 Superior General's Report

CONFIGURATIONES

AFRICA: 224

Sacerdotes: 160
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 13
Fratres votorum temporalium: 1
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 4
Clerici votorum temporalium: 40
Novitii Clerici: 6

CHARLES HOUBEN: 135

Sacerdotes: 113
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 10
Fratres votorum temporalium: 1
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 2
Clerici votorum temporalium: 7
Novitii Fratres: 1
Novitii Clerici: 1

JESÚS CRUCIFICADO: 317

Sacerdotes: 244
Diaconi permanentes: 1
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 19
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 11
Clerici votorum temporalium: 36
Novitii Clerici: 6

MAPRAES: 345

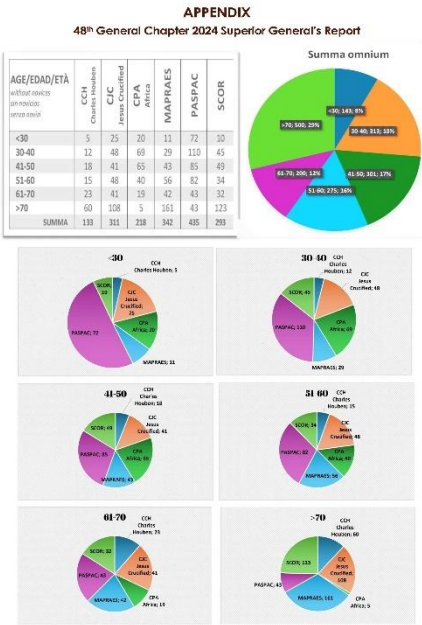
Sacerdotes: 290
Diaconi permanentes: 6
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 19
Fratres votorum temporalium: 1
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 6
Clerici votorum temporalium: 18
Novitii Clerici: 3

PASPAC: 447

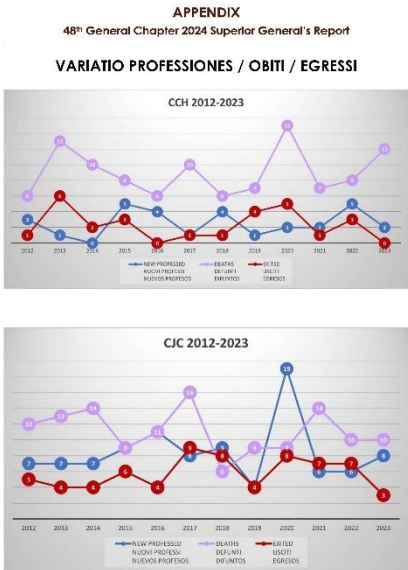
Sacerdotes: 287
Diaconi permanentes: 1
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 37
Fratres votorum temporalium: 9
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 24
Clerici votorum temporalium: 77
Novitii Clerici: 12

SCOR: 298

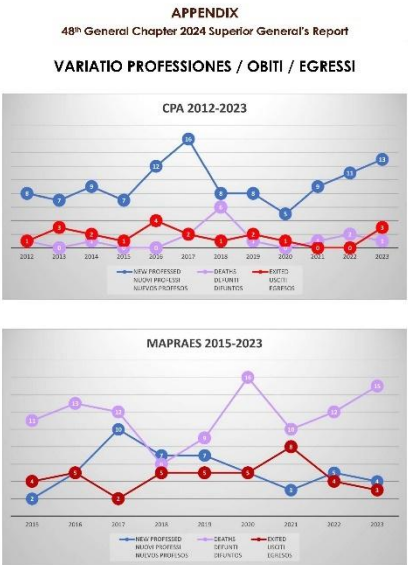
Sacerdotes: 246
Fratres votorum perpetuorum: 19
Fratres votorum temporalium: 1
Clerici votorum perpetuorum: 7
Clerici votorum temporalium: 20
Novitii Fratres: 1
Novitii Clerici: 4



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Reports from Configurations

CHARLES HOUBEN – CCH

Fr. Paul Francis Spencer

This General Chapter is celebrated during a “Year of Prayer” called by Pope Francis in preparation for the Jubilee Year 2025, the theme of which is ‘Pilgrims of Hope’. Here is how he describes that hope whose pilgrims we are called to be:

*‘Hope is born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross: “For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life” (Rom 5:19). That life becomes manifest in our own life of faith, which begins with Baptism, develops in openness to God’s grace and is enlivened by a hope constantly renewed and confirmed by the working of the Holy Spirit’ (Pope Francis, *Spes non confundit*, 3).*

The Reality

This Configuration is what the General Regulations call ‘a Configuration composed of more than one juridical entity’ (*General Regulations* 97, 1).

Since the last Chapter, the number of juridical entities in the Configuration has reduced from six to four, with the suppression of GABR, whose six members are now under the guidance of the Superior General, and IOS, whose members have joined PATR. Other Passionist presences within the territory of the Configuration are the community at Highgate, London (under the Superior General), the Congolese Passionists in Belgium and the Filipino Passionists in Sweden. The four provinces of the Configuration (ASSUM, PATR, SPE and VULN) have different profiles and challenges.



VULN (South Germany and Austria) has 24 religious with an average age of 46, in four communities. There is a strong commitment to community life and to formation in this entity. In recent years there has been a development of the ministry of missions and retreats which also involves strong lay participation. There are also two shrines and two small retreat houses in the Vice-Province.

ASSUM (Poland and Ukraine) has 42 religious in nine houses; the average age is 57. Since the last General Chapter, the Province has closed its house in Czechia and intends to open a second house in Ukraine. Much time, energy and resources have been devoted to responding to the war situation in Ukraine. There are eight parishes, one shrine and one retreat house. The religious are engaged in a variety of ministries. A lot of work has been done in promoting Passionist spirituality and a knowledge of our saints among the laity.

PATR has seven houses in Ireland and Britain, an English-speaking mission in Paris and three religious ministering in Sweden. There are 51 members of the province. There are also four religious from other configurations who are ministering in the province. The average age is 72. The province has six parishes, two retreat houses and a shrine; the shrine of Blessed Dominic is also within the territory of the province but no Passionists are living at this shrine. Care for sick and elderly religious is provided in the community in Dublin.

SPE has two communities: one in the Netherlands and one in Germany. The province has 14 religious with an average age of 79.5 years. Some religious minister at the province's shrine and some others are engaged in parishes. One religious has an academic theological ministry. Care of the elderly is a significant commitment for the province. The province is looking at suspension and later integration into a larger reality as an option for the future.

The Past Six Years - What were we doing?

'The Configurations are principally organized to promote dialogue and cooperation between the different parts of the Congregation, and to foster initiatives and common action for the life and mission of the

Congregation'. (General Regulations, 95) They do this 'to achieve Solidarity in the three areas of Personnel, Formation and Finances' (ibid.). Perhaps 'Mission' would be a better word than 'Personnel' here.

Mission

CCH has identified four areas for solidarity in Mission; these are: shrines; outreach; retreat houses; peace and reconciliation. At present the main emphasis here is on our shrines as a focus for action in solidarity, with the creation of a shrines website for the Configuration and meetings of our shrine directors.

Formation

Three of the four provinces have religious in initial formation, some of whom took part in the Encounter-Pilgrimage for Young Passionists in 2022. This year, the Configuration had a follow-up encounter for those in formation in the Configuration. Meetings of formators from across the configuration also take place to promote dialogue and cooperation and to exchange experiences. In recent years the work done by Fr Martin Coffey, General Secretary for Formation, on promoting the General Programme for Formation has occasioned dialogue among the formators in the Configuration. We thank Fr Martin for his work on the Programme and for the meetings, including those online, which were held to reflect together on the Programme.

Ongoing formation at the level of the Configuration is supported through the Minsteracres 'Passion Seminars'. Since 2015, the Configuration has been organising a reflective theological seminar every two years at Minsteracres Retreat Centre in England, with talks given by members of the Configuration and other invited speakers. This initiative was created and sustained by Denis Travers when he was General Consultor. The seminars are open to our religious, Passionist sisters and lay associates. Recent themes were 'Love and Suffering – Exploring the Memory of the Passion' (2019) and 'Contemplating the Passion' (2023). The 2021 Seminar was cancelled because of Covid. The Passion Seminars at Minsteracres have had participants from MAPRAES, PASPAC, CPA and CJC Configurations.



Finance

Solidarity in Finance at the level of the Configuration is principally focussed on the House of Mercy in Ukraine. The entities of the Configuration provide financial support to the House of Mercy which is operated by ASSUM Province with the Daughters of Charity. This project provides accommodation for elderly people in need of care, operates a mother/child service, and gives assistance to those with drug or virus problems.

The situation in Ukraine and also in Poland has been dramatically altered by the war in Ukraine. The House of Mercy and the monastery in Ukraine welcomed refugees and those displaced by the war; so also did all our monasteries in Poland, providing accommodation, food, clothing and medical supplies. Provinces and parish communities of the Configuration provided financial and other support to ASSUM in this crisis, as have other parts of the Congregation. The war in Ukraine and its long-term effects will continue to challenge those working in the region and beyond for many years to come.

Challenges

Another challenge we face lies in how we respond to JPIC in the context of climate change. The former IOS Province had taken concrete steps in this area through advocacy and promoting awareness of the issues. They also worked to lower their carbon footprint and divest from fossil fuels. The level of interest in this issue varies across the Configuration.

Difficulties and challenges in the region of Northern Europe could be listed: secularisation, the scandal caused by child (and adult) sexual abuse, the challenges of safeguarding and professional standards, the ageing membership of most of our entities, the fall in religious practice (accelerated by the pandemic), religious illiteracy among the young, the small number of vocations. In fact, these challenges exist across Europe and in other regions such as North America and Australia.

This age has been described as the time not just of 'Liquid Modernity'² but of Metamodernism which 'oscillates between the modern and the postmodern. It oscillates between a modern enthusiasm and a post-modern irony, between hope and melancholy, between naïveté and knowingness, empathy and apathy, unity and plurality, totality and fragmentation, purity and ambiguity.'³ According to Vermeulen and van den Akker, 'Metamodernism moves for the sake of moving, attempts in spite of its inevitable failure; it seeks forever for a truth that it never expects to find.'⁴ This is the context in which we live our religious life and carry out our mission.

A specific challenge which our Configuration faces is how we will respond to the situation in those countries where our Congregation seems to be disappearing. In this context, Belgium – the cradle of our Congregation beyond the Alps – comes immediately to mind, but there are also other examples. Do we just watch this happening or do we propose some concrete response? Will we respond with empathy or apathy? Do we believe that our disappearance will impoverish the life of the Church in some way? Or do we see ourselves in those places 'embarking on the path to completion'?⁵ Certainly, this is something we need to study at Configuration level – but also at the level of the Congregation. Models of responding are available from other religious institutes, such as the 'St Laurence of Brindisi Project' of the Capuchins. What are **we** going to do?

Where to go? The Way Forward

At the last meeting of the Configuration, we looked at the idea of a 'Passionist Mission Plan' which was proposed in the document 'Renewing our Mission – A Call to Walk Together' after the 2022 Synod of the

² Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*. Bauman sees our time as characterised by uncertainty and change where each one must construct their own identity.

³ Timotheus Vermeulen & Robin van den Akker (2010), 'Notes on metamodernism', *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, 2:1, 5677, DOI: 10.3402/jac.v2i0.5677.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See, for example Cees van Dam, Theo Sponselee and Ad Leys (2010), 'Explorations on the "Completion" of Religious Institutes', *RCRI Bulletin*, 2012, no. 8, pp. 9-27.



Congregation. The members of the Configuration hope that the General Chapter will 'work on an apostolic plan' which 'can provide the signposts for the Synodal Path we will follow together as a Congregation over the next coming years.' (Renewing our Mission, III, p.17) We asked ourselves the question 'As our presence in Europe diminishes, what should remain? The following is what was said in response to this question at our last meeting:

To answer this question, we need clarity about our identity and our mission. We have our own spirituality but it is not always well known and understood, even within our Congregation. At every General Chapter, there are requests for a deeper theological reflection on and formation in our spirit and our purpose– for a programme or place where our understanding of our charism can be developed – for a centre or a forum, but this hunger remains unsatisfied.

What, then, should remain? 'The Church... entrusted us with a mission: to preach the Gospel of the Passion by our life and apostolate'. (Constitutions 2) Keeping the charism alive is the focal point. Our young brothers come to us because of the charism and a living connection to Christ. That will continue to be attractive, and people will come to us because of the possibility of getting to know Jesus. The binding aspect in all our provinces, no matter how different they are, no matter what challenges they face, has to be the task the church entrusted us with.

Blessed Dominic went without a plan, without money, without people, without all the means we have at our disposal now. But he went and started his "job", finding his resources along the way. We should have more of his spirit, more missionary thinking. Also, our founding fathers came with this spirit, dealing with so many obstacles. But the mission was the reason they came and kept on. This mentality needs to be put first.

We are a missionary Congregation, but the advantage of our founders was that they had a clear concept of their mission and a clear sense of identity. They knew their message and their goal and worked hard for that. For Blessed Dominic the goal was the conversion of England through preaching the Passion. This sense lived on and made our congregation attractive for people. Having a clear idea of our profile is

essential. Our founder established in the church a unique spiritual school which stands on its own. We have not yet discovered the core uniqueness of this. Had we, it would be easier for us. Our task is to re-discover our sources, which we can call upon, our inner spiritual sources, which we should dedicate much more time to reflecting upon. That is what would be missing if the Passionists disappeared.

As I listened to these comments of the provincials of our Configuration, I was reminded of something that Father (now Cardinal) Aquilino Bocos Merino CMF had said in his address to the Passionist Synod in 2010: 'The secret of the process of restructuring is in the formulation of a Project for life and mission, with its priorities.' From 2010 until now we have been accompanied on our journey by a series of words and phrases: 'Restructuring', 'Configuration', 'Renewing our Mission', 'Synodality', and now 'Transformation'. However, perhaps we have lacked a unifying Project for Life and Mission which could act as the golden thread holding everything together. Maybe we will find that golden thread during these days.

Our Configuration approaches this General Chapter with hope. May it be a hope which does not disappoint, which is 'born of love and based on the love springing from the pierced heart of Jesus upon the cross' (*Spes non confundit*, 3). In his letter for the Jubilee Year 2025, Pope Francis reminds us that 'Hope finds its supreme witness in the Mother of God. In the Blessed Virgin, we see that hope is not naive optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life.' At the foot of the Cross, 'in the travail of that sorrow, offered in love, Mary became our Mother, the Mother of Hope' and 'amid the tempests of this life, the Mother of God comes to our aid, sustains us and encourages us to persevere in hope and trust.' (*Spes non confundit*, 24)



CCH Configuration - Statistics 2024

There are four entities in the CCH, from West to East:

1. PATR: Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales, Paris (France), Sweden;
2. SPE: the Netherlands, northern Germany;
3. VULN: southern Germany, Austria;
4. ASSUM: Poland, Ukraine.

Number of religious 135

Average age 64

Number of Professed students 12

Number of novices 5

Number of houses: 23

Number of languages: 4 main languages + 4 others

	ASSUM	PATR	SPE	VULN	CCH
Religious	42	55	14	24	135
Average Age	57	72	79.5	46	64
Students	4	3	0	5	12
Novices	1	0	0	4	5
Communities	9	8	2	4	23



CJC – JESUS CRUCIFIED

Fr. Francisco Valadez Ramírez

1. The "Jesus Crucified" Configuration is divided into the **Northern Zone**: the Provinces of St. Paul of the Cross (USA, Canada, Jamaica/West Indies and Puerto Rico), Holy Cross (USA) and Christ the King in Mexico; and the **Southern Zone**: the Provinces of Gethsemane (Brazil, Mozambique, Argentina, and Uruguay) and Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Brazil).
2. One of the most significant **goals** is continuity in the **Northern Zone** in studying the current **migration crisis**, a global problem, focusing attention on the sufferings of migrants, as instruments of God's mercy and compassion; we are a Church without borders. The President, the Major Superiors of the Northern Zone of the "Jesus Crucified" Configuration, the Daughters of the Passion of Jesus Christ and our Lady of Sorrows, the Secular Institute of the Passion and the Lay collaborators have assumed concrete commitments. We participated in the Inter-council meeting in New York, in February 2023, on **Migration**; and the same topic was further addressed in Mexico in 2024. The Director of the Passionist Solidarity Network, Michael Nasso, moderated the Meetings and reported on the process to the Superior General and his Council and invited the **Preparatory Commission** of this 48th General Chapter to call upon the Congregation to prepare objectives in **Formation, Communication and Action in ministry with migrants** - the crucified of our world.
3. We participated in the **36th Provincial Chapter of Holy Cross Province**, June 2023, with the theme: **"Charism without borders."** The Province suggested concrete actions on the topic **"Passion of the Earth-- Wisdom of the Cross", renewing the Passionist Charism.**
4. Due to the resignation of the **Vice President and Secretary of the Configuration, Fr. Giovanni Cipriani**, who was appointed Director of Students in Angola, Africa, **Fr. Alfredo Ocampo** was elected from the CRUC Province.



5. We participated in **the Interprovincial Retreat of the Provinces of Gethsemane and Exaltation of the Holy Cross** in Brazil, August 2023, and celebrated the Assembly in the Southern Zone.
6. I attended the **Extended Council meeting in Rome** in September 2023, with the General Council, the Presidents of the Configurations, and the members of the Preparatory Commission. We began to organize the 48th General Chapter, in terms of theme, motto, dynamics, etc. with the **Moderators** of the Chapter.
7. We presented to the Superior General the **Norms** for the Election of **Delegates and Substitutes** for the priests, professed students, and Brothers of the Configuration for the 48th General Chapter in Rome, since they were not included in the **Statutes of the Configuration**. They were approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council.
8. The General Consultors Frs. Eddy Vásquez and Rafael Vivanco, the Major Superiors of the Americas, the Provincial Superior of SCOR, members of the Secular Missionaries of the Passion and the President of the Configuration, gathered in a **General Assembly** in April of this year in Sao Paulo, Brazil. They **elaborated and approved the Regulations of the "Passionists in the Americas", divided into three Zones**.
9. *"Starting from the reality of our people, the **Passionists in the Americas** aim to walk together in strengthening Passionist spirituality, theological reflection, initial and ongoing formation and mission, for improving our lifestyle and for the transmission of the charism".*
10. These **Regulations** contain the **General Principles, the organization, and the various associated entities**:
 - **Passionist Formators of the Americas**, whose mission is to foster, coordinate and communicate the formation processes at the level of the Americas.
 - **The Passionist Reflection Team of the Americas**, whose mission is to encourage, coordinate and communicate the theological reflection that is being carried out at the American level on the Passionist charism and spirituality, on the Theology of the Cross

and on the themes that the Magisterium of the Church and the Congregations are proposing.

- **The Mission Team**, composed of members from the different Zones whose mission is to foster and coordinate missionary activity based on the Passionist identity.

11. Among the services offered to the entire Passionist family and the Church in the Americas are:

- a) **The Castellazzo Retreat--** as a propitious means to experience and to live Passionist spirituality for the laity, male and female Religious, individually or in groups, throughout the Americas.
- b) **The Passionists in the Americas Bulletin**—an informative and official instrument of communication of the Passionists in the Americas.
- c) **The Passionists in the Americas Notebooks--** A publication of the Theological Reflection team to share their reflections and theological-pastoral research.
- d) The celebration of **Congresses of Passionist Spirituality and the Theology of the Cross in the zones and in the Americas.**

12. Finally, the specific **Regulations** concerning the **functions** of the Coordinating Team formed by the President, Vice-President, Zone Coordinators and Secretaries. It concludes with the **economic dimension based on an annual budget.**

The **difficulties and challenges** continue to be those highlighted in the XVI Synod of the Congregation:

- Personnel continues to diminish in number, the rising median age, the sick, etc.
- In some **countries**, drug trafficking, violence, insecurity, corruption, organized crime.
- **Learning foreign languages and fields of specialization.**
- Resolve some gaps in the Configuration Bylaws at the next General Assembly.



CPA

PASSIONISTS IN AFRICA

Fr. Raphael Mangiti

Introduction

Dear brothers, allow me to extend my greetings of peace and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to all of you. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the General Superior, Most Rev. Fr. Joachim Rego, and the entire General Council for having journeyed with us in these last six years. General Chapter, dear brothers, offers us an opportunity to reflect, examine and reevaluate our identity, community life, apostolic life, leadership, formation, finances, major challenges, vision, and future prospects. In doing so, it should promote our unity, common good, fraternity and mutual listening that allows the Holy Spirit to guide the delegates.

As the president of the Configuration of Passionists in Africa (CPA), I take this humble opportunity to update all members present in this General Chapter of our mission situations in Africa, which is made up of four Vice Provinces (entities): CARLW – Kenya, GEMM – Tanzania, SALV – Congo DRC and MATAF – Botswana, Zambia and South Africa.

1. Personnel

CPA is a young and growing configuration. We have CARLW – Kenya (63 perpetually members = priests + brothers); GEMM – Tanzania (36 perpetually professed members = priests + brothers); SALV – Congo DRC (52 perpetually professed members = priests + brothers), and MATAF – Botswana, Zambia and South Africa (25 perpetually professed members = priests). We have, 46 temporary professed candidates in different theology houses (Morogoro Theologate in Tanzania, Kinshasha Theologate in DR Congo and Kisima Theologate in Nairobi, Kenya); 16 Novices; about 40 students in philosophy, and a good number of Aspirants (those Residential Programs).

While this can be good news to the future of the Congregation in the African continent, we still continue to struggle with finances, particularly on how to support initial formation of these young men for our future apostolates and missions.

2. Formation

We have different initial formation houses in the Configuration comprising of formators and candidates in formation. However, the main challenge that still remains, is how to finance and to support formation work. There is a great need to prepare those working in formation houses as formators before they are engaged in the work of formation. The entities are also committed to ongoing formation of those working in different areas of apostolate.

3. Mission and Apostolate

As ardent sons of St. Paul of the Cross, we seek to spread our charism and Passionist life to the people around us. We carry out our mission and apostolates in retreat houses, parishes, schools, hospitals, disciplined forces (militaries) and prisons. We seem to be collaborating well also in the sharing of personnel whenever there is some dire need within the configuration or between the entities.

4. Finances

Finance still remains the greatest challenge for us in Africa. The leadership has to struggle to find ways of how to support the initial formation of our candidates and ongoing formation of the members; cover medical bills for the sick or infirm confreres; support non-income generating missions and apostolates, salaries for the workers (subordinate staffs) and maintenance of the already existing structures.



Conclusion

Despite all these challenges that we are facing in the Configuration of Passionists in Africa (CPA), I am glad to report that the confreres are happy and enthusiastic. We are hopeful and trust in God's providence and believe that Africa is becoming slowly but surely, a beacon of Good News. We commit ourselves to walk together and to be in solidarity with one another both in joys and in sorrows.

Thank you very much.

May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ remain always in our hearts.



MAPRAES

Province of Mary Presented in the Temple

Fr. Giuseppe Adobati

Introduction

The MAPRAES Province/Configuration (Province of Mary Presented in the Temple) was legally constituted in the 2012 General Chapter but began its journey with its 1st Provincial Chapter in 2015. The new entity was the result of the union of eight Provinces.⁶

MAPRAES was initially structured as a single Province, divided into Regions (which corresponded to the previous Provinces) with a central government, headed by the Provincial Superior and his Council, and 8 Regional Superiors appointed by the same. This arrangement was superseded in the Chapter of 2019, in which the Regions were replaced by a new system of government⁷, with a single Provincial Council, which governs the Province divided into Areas of Jurisdiction grouping different communities. There are 4 Areas: NORTH (communities in France and Italy), CENTER (Italy, Bulgaria), SOUTH (Italy), and WEST (Portugal-Angola). This organization, which has been in operation for six years now, is gradually bearing fruit, with a broader sense of belonging to the united Province⁸, greater subsidiarity in the exercise of authority, periodic intervention and guidance of the communities by the Consultors in their Area of responsibility.

⁶ In 2015, the 8 provinces were composed as follows: CFXI (Italy): religious = 31, average age = 60.41, houses = 6; CORM (Italy): religious = 82, average age = 63.80, houses = 8; DOL (Italy): religious = 65, average age = 61.45, houses = 9; FAT (Portugal - Angola): religious = 31, median age: 51.50, houses = 6; LAT (Italy): religious = 54, mean age: 63.10, houses = 8; MICH (France): religious = 12, median age: 73.10, houses = 3; PIET (Italy - Bulgaria): religious = 99 median age: 66.65, houses = 12; PRAES (Italy - Nigeria): religious = 63, median age: 62.10, houses = 11.

⁷ Whereas in the previous model, each Region had a Regional Superior with delegated power, in the new model everything is managed within the Provincial Council, with four Consultors/Reference Consultor of an Area having the task of constant communication and support within the communities in their area.

⁸ Currently, 262 religious live and work in Italy, subdivided into 38 houses; in France there are 8 religious working, subdivided into the 3 communities of Champigny sur Marne, Lourdes and Notre Dame du Cros; another 4 religious are housed in rest homes; in Portugal, there are 19 religious in the 3 communities of Barreiro, Barroselas, Santa Maria da Feira; in Angola, there are 10 religious subdivided in the 3 communities of Calumbo, Huambo, Uige; in Bulgaria, there are 7 religious subdivided: 4 in the community of Belene, and 3 in the mission stations of Svistov and Ruse and Tranciovitsa; 19 MAPRAES religious live in the Generalate; 21 religious are out of the community with various permissions.



The MAPRAES Province

Beyond the internal juridical structure, from the very beginning MAPRAES has sought to follow a path that would enhance its history, charismatic and apostolic heritage, while also addressing the issues of diminishing and aging religious, the need to renew the dynamics of fraternal life, and the search for new apostolic ways and means to respond to new socio-ecclesial realities.

Internally, the Province is characterized by very different histories and cultures, which need to be discovered, welcomed, shared and integrated into a new common identity. We have presences in urban and metropolitan settings, others in more peripheral and isolated areas; shrines, retreat houses, apostolic communities, parishes, infirmaries for our religious, and a health facility. We have presences in developing and growing areas, such as the Angolan mission, and realities in numerical decline and apostolic transformation, such as the European context, where the presence in Bulgaria stands out, the Congregation's first mission and today a presence in a poor Church on the border between Eastern and Western Europe.

The Provincial Chapter of 2023 redefined some goals and actions for supporting the life and apostolate of our religious and communities. We list them briefly: the growth of community life in its spiritual foundation and fraternal life; the revitalization of vocation promotion with the creation of a team dedicated to it full-time; support for the formation of young people with the presence of properly structured formation communities; an apostolic presence that promotes evangelization in response to the rampant de-Christianization of European society; the support of the growth of the mission in Angola with formative support to young Angolan Passionists; the enhancement and coordination of the lay groups present in our communities; the financial and real estate management of the Province, with a better distribution of economic resources within it. These various action steps are presented each year in a proposal for ongoing formation (Provincial Community Project), organized by the Curia and offered to the entire Province, with opportunities for meeting and updating, specific proposals for categories of our religious, celebratory and spiritual occasions, which are then collected



and assumed by each community, which draws up its own annual Community Project.

A particular step taken by the Provincial Chapter of 2023 was the approval of a "Plan for the Charismatic Redevelopment of Our Life and Mission" for the communities of the Italian Area, which led to the identification of shared criteria for reorganizing the projects present in this area, with a view to the future of the Province. In the same Plan, the closure of some communities was also defined, in order to be able to reduce the dispersion of religious and recover personnel and financial resources for active projects. We are aware that this process of upgrading the Italian presences is not yet complete and will need to be further developed and extended to communities and projects in France and Portugal as well. The general objective of this action is to possibly safeguard the projects that are essential for the future of the Province, (houses of formation and for the elderly/sick), typically charismatic presences (historical communities linked to our saints), apostolic activities (parishes, retreat houses, shrines, evangelization projects), considering the socio-ecclesial reality of each nation where we minister.

For years the province has been placing fraternal life at the center of its goals as the basic element on which our apostolic witness stands. The motto that has guided the journey in recent years is: "to be a sign of fraternity according to the charism in a divided world." More and more we are aware that the most important resource for our future is our religious, to whom we must be attentive, showing care and offering formation for their human, relational and spiritual growth. Fraternal life in community requires prayer, presence, listening, communication, care, planning, cooperation and evaluation. It must welcome and value the history and also the frailties that each religious brings, seeking to integrate them into a shared project. Fraternity is therefore not automatic, but requires time, availability and patient cooperation, enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps also because of this complexity, some religious have experienced fatigue, depression and crisis, going so far as to ask for time off or even to leave the Congregation. In this regard, beyond the individual cases, we feel we can say, that more and more a sort of "vocational



trend" is manifesting itself, which leads several religious, after their initial formation and insertion in communities, to a certain "individualism" in which they re-envision themselves and their service "apart from" and "outside" the Congregation. It is not easy to recognize these symptoms, but, while acknowledging the limits and responsibilities of our communities, we cannot fail to consider the opportunism of several religious, who, without open/honest dialog with superiors, ask to leave the Congregation because they are looking for a better place for themselves.

The following are the Province's statistics with some reference numbers to explain what has happened in recent years.

The current situation (July 2024)

- Total professed religious: 349
- Median age: 66.3
- Communities/houses: 50
- Priests: 296
- Religious Brothers: 28 (of whom 6 are permanent deacons)
- Clerical candidates in initial formation: 24 (of whom 6 are transitional deacons)
- Brothers in initial formation: 1
- Novices (Europe): 3
- Novices (Africa): 3 (in Tanzania)

What has occurred during the 9 years of the existence of MAPRAES (2015-2024)

- First professions: 48
- Perpetual professions: 27
- Priestly Ordinations: 25
- Departures from the Congregation: 62
- Deaths: 108



The MAPRAES Configuration

Our Province also exists as a Configuration, according to the model of "One juridical entity" as described by No. 95 of the General Regulations - *"To achieve Solidarity in the three areas of Personnel, Formation and Finances, the Configurations are formed either as an aggregation of several autonomous juridical entities (Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates) or as a single juridical entity with different internal structures (Province with Regions/Zones). The Configurations are principally organized to promote dialogue and cooperation between the different parts of the Congregation, and to foster initiatives and common action for the life and mission of the Congregation. Each Province, Vice province and Vicariate will belong to a Configuration."*

As a Configuration, efforts have been made to develop among our members and various communities a sense of solidarity and belonging, promoting greater co-responsibility in an exchange of personnel, formation programs and finances.

From the juridical point of view, having a central government, everything is moderated and confirmed by the Provincial Superior and his Council, but this does not mean that solidarity, as required by the General Regulations, is automatic or free from obstacles. In fact, the historical and charismatic component, collectively and individually, built up over the years in the previous 8 provinces, made up of personalities, mindsets, and customs, is still very much present among the religious, with its positive and negative aspects. This means that in the governing of the communities and in the reorganization of the various services, the Central Authority appeals to the readiness of the religious to enter new and different contexts and projects, often finding resistance, impediments or weaknesses that need to be respected.

In spite of this, the dynamic of solidarity is very useful to promote and inspire within the Province a spirit of co-responsibility and cooperation, which gradually can overcome resistance and fears. Some religious, for some time now, have been repeating with a certain pessimism, that the unity of the Provinces has not produced the fruits that were envisioned, and therefore, in their opinion, it is necessary to return to the former organization. Some other religious, criticize the criteria used by



the provincial government to manage planning, pointing out that they do not consider the past, the history of the various areas, complaining of decisions that are abrupt and discontinuous. These feelings of the religious, which must be respected, signal the presence of resistance, partly instinctive or unconscious, connected with the fatigue of change, the uncertainty of the future, the fear of having to accept choices that are not shared. Therefore, the call to "be represented," with one's identity, history, heritage, and culture always returns in the various decisions of the Province, expressing an attitude that tends to be defensive and conservative. These attitudes somewhat reduce the strength of solidarity within and outside the Configuration and can only be developed and changed by a slow and gradual sensitization of people, about their vision of the future, for themselves and for the Congregation. For this, not only juridical or managerial decisions are sufficient, but a personal adherence, a change of mindset, a willingness to go beyond the known and the already experienced is what is required on the part of the religious. The fruits of the MAPRAES Configuration must be seen, therefore, within a medium to long term time frame, because the real goal is to be able to reorganize our charismatic and apostolic presence in the territories of our competence, that will allow us to guarantee in the future (within 10-15 years) a reduced but significant presence of the Congregation. However, a different reality is the Angola mission which is instead gradually growing and will have Passionist life in Africa as its future context.

Coming, now, to the verification of our ability to live Solidarity in the three areas of Personnel, Formation and Finances, I will try to present, not so much the choices made by the central government, but above all the adherence and movement that is being created within the communities and by individual religious.

First, **Solidarity in Personnel:** this is a necessary action within our Configuration that has found significant expressions of willingness and generosity from the religious, but also great resistance and many obstacles. As a percentage, we have managed to involve more or less 30 percent of the religious in the Configuration in this action. The figure is not high, partly because many of our religious are already elderly and sick,



although this is not the only reason. The reduction of religious and their reduced operational capacity oblige us to reorganize present projects, removing resources from one part, to insert them in another. This causes some complaints and polemical judgment on the part of those who feel excluded. An element that is often a source of misunderstanding, is "the newness" that is instilled in various planning and communities arousing, on the one hand, enthusiasm and openness and on the other hand some criticism about the lack of continuity with previous models.

We feel that this is still an evolving journey, which will take time and we trust that the grievances or just observations can be transformed into greater co-responsibility. In the Configuration we are promoting initiatives that foster knowledge and appreciation of the religious, as well as of the various communities and their histories and peculiarities.

Concerning Solidarity in personnel with other Configurations or Provinces, we need to better study the possibilities of collaboration with them, knowing that in "our territory" there are religious from other entities. At the moment, we note the presence of religious from Congo (SALV) in Italy and France, where there is also the historical presence of the English-speaking parish of St. Joseph (PATR) in the heart of Paris. We believe it is important to promote greater knowledge and cooperation with these religious coming from other configurations and working in "our territory," with a view to mutual support, on spiritual and pastoral levels.

We also note the collaboration that our religious, Fr. Antonio Curto and Fr. Patricio Manosalvas Rizzo, have offered since 2015 to pastoral activities in the Holy Cross Province (CRUC) of the United States. Fr. Antonio returned permanently to Italy last March, while Fr. Patricio continues his pastoral service in the parish of Birmingham (Alabama).

We have made a request to some Provinces which have more young religious to send us some of their religious to collaborate in some of our projects, especially in "founding houses" and in the shrines of our saints, which are a patrimony of the Congregation, or, in some specific presences, such as the mission in Bulgaria or the mission in Angola. The REPAC Province has offered us the collaboration of a young priest, who will soon join our communities. In the Angola mission, on the other hand, Fr. Francisco Chamero has been present for several years. We thank his



Province (SCOR) for allowing him to bring his missionary experience in support of the work of our religious. We believe that this interprovincial and intercultural dimension, in part laborious and complex, is a necessary element for a future vision of our Congregation.

Regarding **Solidarity in Formation**. Our Configuration, even before its unification, had several shared formation stages and over time the "formation chain" was stabilized, redefining step by step the various steps of growth⁹. In this new articulated organization, formation turns out to be entrusted not only to those responsible (Postulancy Director, Novice Master, Director of Students, Vocation Director) but also to the communities that, in different ways, welcome and guide the religious after the completion of theological studies. This post-theological itinerary proposes to the religious who have completed their theological studies, to be inserted in communities where they will live the final stages of their initial formation. They, in the community, live like everyone else, but they are supported by a religious who is responsible for guiding them, while asking all the religious to support these young religious fraternally through prayer and in the apostolate. Although not all communities receive a young religious after theological studies, this program is helping many of our communities discover co-responsibility in formation, experiencing the joy of supporting the future of the Congregation through the young people entrusted to them.

We also do not want to forget solidarity in "ongoing formation," which is promoted within the Configuration, with spiritual and cultural events, fraternity and study days, retreats and recreational moments, offering the collaboration of many religious who make their skills and experience available.

Regarding Solidarity in formation with other Configurations, this is operative in our Angolan mission, where the presence of many young religious in initial formation has gradually required that we structure the various formation stages (the aspirancy, the postulancy, theological studies) making use during the novitiate year of the collaboration with

⁹ Currently, the formative stages are: vocational animation, initial vocational reception, pre-postulancy or aspirancy, postulancy, novitiate, theologate, post-theologate.



the GEMM Vice-Province of Tanzania. Although the future goal might be to have all formation done in their own country, we believe that this inter-configurational sharing offers our young Angolans an African vision of the Congregation, opening possibilities for future collaboration.

In this area of Solidarity in Formation we thank the Province of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (EXALT) for allowing Fr. Giovanni Cipriani to assume the role of Director of the Passionist Theological Students in Huambo, giving us time to prepare a few Angolan religious who may in the future succeed him in this service.

At the general level, as a Configuration, we propose to consider the creation, in Europe and Africa, of international Passionist theologates to offer our young people a more international and intercultural outlook.

At the level of **Solidarity in Finances**, our Configuration has tried to reorganize the management of capital from the previous entities, and to channel it for the common good. In this process, there has been a certain hesitancy in overcoming some particular visions, with fear and resistance, because today's resources are the result of a long process of savings, Providence and wise management, and there are fears that they may "get lost" in a generic centralization. We admit that the economic history of the old entities has been very diverse in method, organizational style and results, in some cases positive and prosperous, and in others, more modest and uncertain.

There has also been the added problem of the size and complexity of the Configuration's financial and real estate assets, which are spread across different European and African nations, with diversified legislation. It is precisely this latter legal dimension that is making the management of our assets more complex and "technical," complicating and lengthening the time for unified reorganization.

From a practical point of view, the Configuration has created Common Funds, at the Provincial and regional levels, supported by the resources of the old Provinces, aimed at supporting provincial initiatives and ensuring help where there is a need. There are also cases of horizontal solidarity between communities, which with the consent of the central government, support specific projects by sharing their resources. What



is still lacking is a sense of full economic co-responsibility that makes one feel in a shared way a "common good," for better or worse.

Our goal is to make each community grow so that it is autonomous and self-sufficient, with its own apostolic ministry and the resources that Providence offers. At the same time, to offer all religious a sense of serenity that they are part of an institution that will be able to guarantee support and assistance in the expansion projects and for individual needs with a focus also on the poor and needy of today.

A specific problem in Financial Solidarity is that of the destination of the structures that are no longer used by the Communities. Not only in Italy but also elsewhere there is difficulty in appraising these structures due to the complexity of the regulations that constrain their transfer or renovation, with a view to their reuse for other purposes. This real estate situation affects the whole Church in Europe, with structures that are used more infrequently and not always easily evaluated.

Lastly, we do not rule out implementing greater Financial Solidarity with the Congregation or other provincial entities, although we already note that there were several donations for specific projects, especially in support of our presences in poor and missionary areas.

We then wish to highlight that, due to internal difficulties and poor utilization of closed facilities, the MAPRAES Configuration struggles to pay each year the percentages of the communion of goods that are required of it by the General Curia. In this regard, we take the liberty of requesting an evaluation of the criteria used to calculate the quotas for the communion of goods, referring not only to the numerical consistency of the Provinces or Configurations, or their location in the macroeconomic context, but also to the real economic resources that each of them possesses.



PASPAC (ASIA – PACIFIC)

Fr. Denis Travers

INTRODUCTION

The Configuration is made up of four Provinces (REPAC, PASS, MACOR and SPIR) and two vice Provinces (THOM, MAIAP).

We comprise of 10 Nations, with two being communist governments and eight democracies.

Apart from our own zone of the Asia/Pacific region of the world, there are communities in Israel and Sweden and members of various Paspac entities work in the Generalate and in the United States, Canada, UK, Ireland, Bermuda, West Indies and Peru.

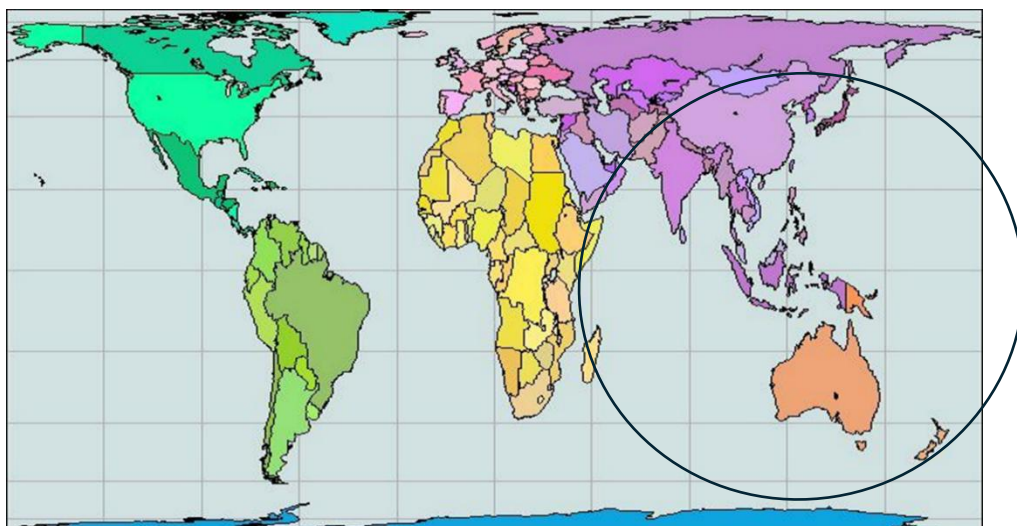
CONTEXT

The Passionist Asian Pacific Configuration is geographically vast. Its territory covers one third of the globe. The distances across the configuration are enormous e.g. *to cross REPAC (takes 8 hours flight) / Crossing SPIR (8.5 hours flight) / India to Australia (10hours flight) or Japan to Indonesia (8 hours flight)*

We operate across at least 13 major languages (not related to each other) but our working language is English – which is a second language for most of our members. There are countless indigenous languages within our countries.

Movement between countries is not simple with many of our countries requiring us to apply for entry visas.

Christianity is a minority religious in all countries of our Configuration with the exception of the Philippines where it is the majority religion.



STATISTICS

PASPAC	REPAC	MACOR	MAIAP	THOM	PASS	SPIR
COMMUNITIES	37	4	1	8	17	10
PROFESSED RELIGIOUS	194	32	9	57	62	80
NOVICES	10	2	-	2	4	6
POSTULANTS	31	4	-	23	25	16

Totals: As a Configuration we have four hundred and thirty-four (434) professed members (clerics, brothers, vowed students in formation) and currently twenty-four Novices (24).

Major Challenges and Ministries

The major social issues within our configuration are: violence in society at large and against women and minorities, environmental degradation and its effect on indigenous people, poor civil government, persecution of minorities, loss of democratic rights and in two countries communist Government oversight of all activity. In some areas the citizens are being polarized and there is civil mistrust of Government in society, and we are assisting where we can in the ministry of care of migrants.



In many places we are challenged to achieve good outcomes in dialogue with Bishops in order to promote our Charism and gain some financial assistance from Dioceses where we give considerable help through our ministry.

In response to the social challenges across our Configuration our major Passionist ministries within our entities are to respond through our work in parishes, mission stations, in education programmes at University, school and local community levels, retreats, and initiatives that work with the poor through agencies and projects. We have numerous members working in foreign mission and internal formation ministers is also a major work. In our preaching and teaching we stress the promotion of harmony, indigenous rights and interreligious dialogue, so as to promote inclusion and brotherhood across our multi-cultural societies.

Current Status of the Configuration

Communities

Across the seventy-seven communities of the Configuration there is a range of small communities focused around parochial or mission projects, numerous smaller communities engaged in local justice, education or outreach apostolates, formation communities and larger institutions with retreat houses. Across all our entities we continue to work at achieving the balance of life giving community and effective apostolate in our lives.

We are trying to build up fraternity in our communities and in our various Provinces and Vice Provinces. We are doing this through regional gatherings, gaudeamus days, common recreation times, creating supportive structures for local superiors, combining communities for days of recollection, monthly meetings for sharing (spiritual and practical matters), province assemblies each year (sometimes in zones or by internet), retreats in zones, seminars for brothers, local superiors and our professed men who are less than 10 years ordained or professed. We often have coordinators appointed for different zones,

We are supporting the leadership of the community leaders by means of retreats for the leaders, meetings of leaders for sharing and learning



to help leaders to build community life against the push for individualism. We encourage the community leaders to have resources such as a 'supervisor' or 'spiritual director'.

Presence at the Peripheries

This is a significant aspect of the life of Paspac. Across the various countries projects range from deliberately opening new communities in zones with poor or needy people, working with migrants, creating ministry to indigenous people, participation in combined ministry for drug addicts, sponsoring youth ministry teams, participating in social justice ministry with the marginalised and maintaining a commitment to poor parishes and promoting education for the poor.

Interculturality

Within each entity there are now very few foreign missionaries. Many of our communities are mono-cultural (but SPIR is very mixed. We continually need to create awareness of the different styles of communicating that each cultures uses and we have to maintain a sensitivity to the use of language, gender issues (and how different cultures relate to men and women). Some of our cultures have difficulty asking for funds.

Accountability

In each Province or Vice Province, the Major Superior visits each community annually (often with the Econome to help to train the local economies). We place a cap on how much each community can hold, and many entities have external auditors for an annual financial inspection and review. Some countries employ lay assistants while others manage finances by their own members and most entities utilise the same accounting programmes in each house.

Formation Personnel

Across each entity we need more formators and we recognise that training for formators is very important especially professional courses in areas of psychological or personal issues. Difficulties arise for all of us



when a formator is transferred, external resource persons are important, and inter-institute formation is growing in many of our countries.

Professional Standards, Protection of Children and any Adults 'at risk'.

There are different standards in different countries, but we have policies from the Vatican, and we have documented our policies and procedures at the Paspac level. Each Province and Vice Province has policies that are in accord with Government or Church requirements. Civil laws are becoming very strict. Regarding our own policies we need to modify procedures at times to align with local cultures. We have trained some members in this field and provided in-service for our own members. We can learn from other orders and from each other.

Support for newly Professed/Ordained

Within our Provinces and Vice-Provinces we have gatherings for our younger men (e.g. up to 5 or 7 years professed or ordained) as part of their on-going formation. Some provinces have well organised programmes for younger men with topics including preaching, psycho-sexual integration, difficulties in ministry. In some places this is a yearly programme. We discern a need to balance the self belief of many of the younger members with their actual capacity. As part of the Jubilee celebrations, the gathering in Rome of younger religious was very appreciated. There is a need to distinguish between extraordinary encounters/programmes & the need for ongoing 'ordinary' formation in situ (via mentoring, supervision, reading, study).

Finance for such on-going formation remains a concern for us. To offer formation or other support for our men in China is difficult due to the Chinese Government policies and travel restrictions.

Community as a place of Vocation Promotion

Across 77 communities, not all communities are equally able to promote vocations. While we often have a contact person in each community, generally we have a province vocation director or team to co-ordinate this ministry. It is important to promote the right image of religious or priests – i.e. as a 'servant'. Vocations are high in some countries, less so in our more 'middle-class' areas. Parish ministry is a major



source of vocations. While vocations are plentiful, we need to maximise our efforts to build the future.

The Financial obligations of candidates (to their families) is a new issue to be responded to in various ways.

JPIC as part of formation

Not every seminary where our students study is addressing this issue; we have a JPIC commission in Paspac and most Provinces and Vice-Provinces have a person to coordinate this awareness. Some areas focus more on justice issues, others on environmental issues. We often depend on individuals promoting issues

Myanmar Mission

We had invested considerable effort in beginning this mission. Research, meetings with church officials and dialogue within Paspac led to the establishment of a presence (2-3 missionaries). They made a contribution immediately. However political turmoil and suspension of an elected Government which placed new restrictions on foreign presence, led to us discontinuing our presence in the mission. We remain in contact with the Bishop through our General Consultor.

We do not consider the mission closed. We know we cannot operate at the moment, but we continue to hold funds for Myanmar, we still have some religious willing to enter the country or work from a community in India (across the border), but political issues make it not possible yet. We continue to be hopeful about the future.

EVALUATIONS

Level of Solidarity

How are we going and what are the next steps?

We have had significant exchange of personnel and most of this has been for formation. A lot of arrangements have been bi-lateral. However there are various projects for ministry that have involved sharing



personnel across the Configuration (Israel and Papua New Guinea are combined projects).

There has been some financial sharing and help for different members of our Configuration and we do have a small Paspac Fund. However most financial matters are handled within each entity.

Since Covid ended, the Paspac Council has been able to meet again and has scheduled meetings each six months over 2023 and 2024.

Configuration Mentality

There is a good awareness of our identity as a Configuration but for many of the reasons already mentioned in this report, we are not able to have many common projects. The leaders are more aware and try to work together, but the general membership knows Paspac more as a Conference.





We prefer to continue to work as a collaborative body.

Distances, very significant cultural differences, and the multitude of languages all suggest to us that we remain as we are – a cooperative, collegial configuration.

We have had some common projects (e.g. the International Novitiate program), but we have no other common formation house.

We have four common Paspac commissions – Personnel, Finance, Formation and JPIC. The leaders attend to the area of personnel, and each of the three commissions is currently working in some common programmes that can be brought into action in 2025.

Challenges for our Future

-  Formation of our own students and having sufficient formation personnel.
-  Funding for our mission work and outreach. Creating new ministries and communities.
-  Building up our infrastructure and funds.
-  Particular assistance to our brothers in Japan as they age and live with diminishment.



Summary Statement

As a Paspac Council we try to act in a Synodal fashion and plan for action across the Configuration, but mostly we have to act locally (subsidiarity).

The distance between entities, differences in languages and culture, the financial costs of travel and very different practices and priorities in each Local Church make it difficult for us to have a 'configuration wide' project or action that affects everyone. It is more a matter of us 'sharing' (in solidarity). Many of our projects are organised between individual entities rather than being 'configuration wide'.

We continue to recover from the set-backs that Covid caused – especially the suspension of travel and meetings – and we recommit to creating a 'sense of belonging' (syneisodos) with each other.

The fundamental natures of our various societies and ways of living suggest to us that we continue to operate as Provinces and Vice Provinces seeking an ever increasing level of solidarity, and that it is through the creation of respectful relationships with each other that we will advance most successfully.



SACRED HEART (SCOR)

Fr. Juan Manuel Benito Martín

I. General Information

- A. One SCOR province with 13 countries. [11-year process]
- B. Number of religious: 287
- C. Average age: 62 years
- D. Number of houses: 53 (8 without religious)
- E. Students: 5 novices; 20 professed students

ANALYSIS

A. Strengths of the Province.

1. **There is great cultural diversity and internationality in the communities and formation processes.** The exchange among the religious of the thirteen countries that form the province has rejuvenated and balanced the various areas, at the same time that it has favored great cultural diversity in our communities, in consonance with the migratory movements that are taking place in our surroundings. The language itself facilitates exchange in an increasingly intercultural and richer reality.
2. **Community life and mission.** Each Passionist presence, 75% of 4 or more members, together with its community dimension, has a pastoral mission that ranges from parish pastoral care to houses of spirituality, shrines, formation and other apostolates. There are many roots in our parishes, which develop three characteristics: social ministry, Passionist spirituality and missionary dimension along with collaboration with the laity.
3. **A great missionary projection.** Our reality continues to be missionary, the expansion of our old structures made possible the missionary development in the Americas. Today there are many of our missionary centers, especially our presence in the Vicariate of Yurimaguas (Peru), the mission of Colombia Huila, the



mission of Honduras, Guatemala.... Also, given the current circumstances, it is especially significant in Cuba and Venezuela.

4. **Unification of formation processes.** All formation processes have been unified according to the principles of our SCOR Formation Plan in line with the guidelines offered by the new formation document of the Congregation.
5. **Reactivation of the work of vocation ministry.** Given the need for new vocations for the challenges of our world today, after the pandemic, the work of vocation ministry has intensified. Today we can say that in practically all 13 countries where we are, we have candidates in the process of discernment.
6. **Work with Passionist Family.** Although still in very different ways, the concept of Passionist Family is being developed in our presences with different results.
7. **Training of formation personnel.** We are working in coordination to achieve a solid "training of formators", conscious of the challenges of formation at this present time. Accepting the challenge of the great number of departures or discouragement in the first years of religious or priestly life.
8. **Work in NGOs.** We have an important network of social work and solidarity that allows us to be present in the existential peripheries providing from our charism a human and quality service. We work in network with ADECO Bilbao and others in Spain, ADECO Mexico, SSPAS in El Salvador, SSPAS in Honduras and SSPAS in Venezuela. The Solidarity team also works to propagate the reality of our missions, favoring solidarity between areas.
9. **Presence of educational settings.** We are currently present in 9 evangelizing educational settings, which allow us to contribute our grain of salt to children and young people based on our charism: "Passion of Christ, passion for life".
10. **Communication and exchange networks.** More stable communication and exchange networks are being established, from in-presence meetings, which involve effort, to frequent virtual meetings in the different areas.
11. **Collaboration and exchange with other provinces, especially MAPRAES, REPAC, CRUC, and PAUL.**



B. Weakness of the Province.

1. **Progressive aging, decrease in the number of our religious.** At this moment, half of the religious are of Spanish origin; we estimate that in about 5 years, a third of the province will be over 80 years old. This fact, very clear and relevant, makes us consider the reality and viability of our presence in all countries, especially in Spain.
2. **The great geographical distance between our communities, which could be bridged by intercommunication.** We note that sometimes our communities are veritable islands, not always due to geographical distance. In some places it is very costly to work as across communities or to participate in the initiatives of the Province.
3. **Fraternal life.** In spite of being the most recurrent theme in all our chapter documents, community life continues to be a challenge, sometimes because of the small and limited size of the communities, usually because of the pastoral commitments that absorb us, but basically because of the tiredness and apathy of a comfortable and easy life.
4. **Individualism and particular needs,** as opposed to the opportunity to take on community and province projects. We believe that there have been many advances in our sense of belonging but there is still nostalgia for the past structures. Some communities are quite alienated from the life of the province and the Congregation.
5. **Lack of availability for committed leadership.** Sometimes there is a lack of genuine availability to carry out the more committed tasks of formation, community leadership, coordination of joint actions, etc.
6. **Departures and discouragement.** We note that in the last period there have been several departures of young religious (10), several in perpetual vows and recently ordained priests. Other cases of illegitimate absence have been resolved.
7. **Financial solidarity.** There is a willingness to share our goods, to administer them in communion, but it is still difficult to lead by example and to have a more global vision beyond each country.



III. PROPHETIC AND HOPEFUL ASPECTS

A. Successful initiatives

1. **Meetings of those in formation.** They are a good opportunities to connect with young religious who "dream of our Congregation".
2. **Formation of formators.** It is important that the religious who carry out this ministry be trained as well as possible. On the other hand, it is essential that there be coordination among the formators to avoid voids in the formation process.
3. **Networking of the Passionist Family.** There is periodic work of formation in this area of the province, which is slowly evolving.
4. **New popular missions are recently being relaunched in Mexico.**
5. **Revitalized presence in social networks with a very creative team.**
6. **Work of the ongoing formation team, offering the communities materials and resources to keep them up to date.**
7. **Networking in the schools of the province.** We are taking steps towards more networking within the various educational settings we have in the province.
8. **Solidarity team that works to make our social works and missions known throughout the province.**

B. Hopes for the future

1. **Work in Passionist Family.** This area has great potential in the search for new ways of living and developing the mission in community.
2. **Passionists in the Americas.** Small steps are being taken to coordinate work on the American continent, with a progressive impulse of coordinated work in formation, reflection and spirituality, the Passionist family/youth and the Passionist mission in collaboration with the laity and religious working on the continent.
3. **Search and discernment of forms of presence in various countries.** This is necessary in order to decide where to employ our forces.



IV. CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS TO BE PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL CHAPTER

A. Challenges of the Province.

1. TOWARDS A SCOR PROVINCE MENTALITY. As in other settings, we are still often locked into a "my old province" mentality. We recognize that, in the great diversity of our countries, cultures and entities, mission is local, responding to what is happening where we are. This is necessary and healthy, but we cannot forget our missionary dimension and our presence with the crucified. With regard to the development of the Configuration/Province, there are still groups that have not fully accepted the restructuring process and maintain that it should have been done differently, that the structure is too geographically widespread and difficult to govern. We believe that these groups are more and more in the minority, but due to the reduction that is taking place, they are beginning to accept the need to look forward, to join forces and to adhere to a community model.

2. REVITALIZING COMMUNITY LIFE. Integrated and healthy religious life in healthy communities is the basis and the precondition for everything else we do as entities or as a Province and as a Congregation. Although we all acknowledge this, it is still difficult for many religious to understand the need to opt for communities that favor the Passionist mission rather than a particular community.

3. TO BE MEMORIA PASSIONIS. We believe and maintain that the Passion of Christ is effective in every age, culture and locality. The Passion of Christ will never be obsolete or detached from culture or out of place. The challenge, especially in a rapidly changing and uncertain atmosphere, is to be "memoria passionis". A clear option for an incarnated and real Passionist spirituality is needed, beyond customs and traditions that are sometimes far removed from the reality of the world. It is necessary to continue to maintain the radical nature of our life and mission.



B. Questions for the Chapter

1. THE FUTURE OF THE PASSIONIST FAMILY. While many entities have appreciated the role of the laity, we still do not know (or are unwilling to learn) how to significantly employ the expertise of the laity, especially in our important structures such as formation and ministries. The future of our Congregation cannot be based on professed religious alone. There is such a great diversity in the concept of Passionist family that this can generate confusion and lack of direction. It seems important to us that the Chapter give some directives in order to be able to guide the Passionist family.

2. A NEW PENTECOST? Cultural diversity without the Spirit can degenerate into confusion, into defense of personal concerns, if the Charism does not unite us. Could it be that the effort to renew the mission has become somewhat diluted by the way we organize or configure ourselves? The structures may become obstacles if they are more of a hindrance than a launching pad for the mission.

3. EVERYTHING IS CONTAINED IN THE CROSS. In the synodal process with the whole Church, the Cross can be a place of encounter and adoration. How can we, from the Cross, continue to offer opportunities for encounter, listening, forgiveness, adoration? How can we propose the "meditation of the Passion", with an updated method, as the "most effective remedy for the evils of our time"? Do we believe this?



The Procurator General

Fr. Alessandro Foppoli

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the tasks that our Constitutions assign to the General Chapter is - according to the Italian version of this text - to "evaluate the work of the general government and the implementation of the programmes of the previous general chapter and general synod without, however, exercising administrative power, which depends on the superior general" (127).

Of course, the main source of information on the work of the General Government in the years 2018-2024 is the report of the Superior General.

Therefore, my report is intended simply as an aid to the Chapter Members to complete the overview of what has happened in recent years.

I would like to recall briefly - for the benefit of all - the function assigned by our own law to the Procurator General: **"The Procurator General deals with the juridical affairs of the congregation, in particular those before the Holy See"** (Gen. Reg. #89).

For the past 6 years, this task has been performed by two religious: Fr. Antonio Munduate (from the close of the General Chapter until 15.09.2019) and Fr. Alessandro Foppoli (from 15.09.2019 to the present). Both these religious, despite not having a licence in Canon Law, were able to take advantage of the abundant material left at the Procurator's Office by their predecessors, as well as the help of various Canonists and Officials of the Roman Dicasteries. Among all, the most valuable help was provided by the *Canonical Consultant of the General Curia*, Fr. Leonello Leidi, LDC, Head of Office in the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

My report consists of three parts. (1) Description of the work carried out during the six-year period; (2) Some issues; (3) Suggestions and proposals for the future.



PART ONE:

ACTIVITY AT THE HOLY SEE

(A) DICASTERY FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE.

It is the main Dicastery we deal with, although the relationship with it has gradually diminished over the six years due to Pope Francis' legislative interventions that I will mention during this presentation.

Going back to the report of Fr Antonio Munduate to the 47th General Chapter, the following cases are referred to this Dicastery. Compared to that list, some things have changed, as I will point out now

(a) Endorsement of signatures for visa applications and residence permits.

This is by far the most frequent procedure. Basically, in recent years, it has been the one for which I have had to go to the Dicastery the most. Concerning this procedure, I would like to emphasise just one thing, to remove all doubt and avoid problems for the Procurator General who signs the papers. If a religious of our Congregation enters Italy legally and - as requested – within 8 days applies for a Residence Permit for Italy, then he cannot move to work permanently in another European Country. In other words, if the final intention of a Major Superior is to have a man working permanently in another European Country, he must apply for entry and for a Residence Permit in that Country and not in Italy.

(b) Dispensation, amendment or introduction of new texts in the Constitutions.

On 12 May 2019, the Holy See was asked to approve the changes to the Constitutions made in 2018. By a letter of 10 June 2019, the Holy See granted approval in definitive form of the new numbers 146 and 147b, and approved *ad experimentum* the changes to numbers 104, 129, 138, 139, 147 and 159. The new texts were then published in the booklet "A Call to Action".



(c) Permissions for sale, lease, works, investments, loans or extraordinary administrative activities in general or exceeding the maximum permitted quantities.

Over the six-year period, permissions were requested for property sales in the GABR, MAPRAES and PAUL Provinces, because the value of the assets exceeded the maximum quantities set by the Holy See. Requests were also made for the rental of property with a duration of more than nine years. Many Provinces, unfortunately, are not aware that it is obligatory to have the Holy See's permission for certain sales and rental operations, which, however, it must be said, only concern those properties that are clearly registered in the name of our Congregation and therefore fall under the qualification of Ecclesiastical Goods.

(d) Prolonging or granting indulgences of excommunication for more than three years, incardination *ad experimentum* in a Diocese, expulsion of religious, appeals by religious or third parties against the Congregation, whether in first or second instance...

During the sexennium, no religious has asked for an extension of the indulgence of excommunication for more than three years. Pope Francis on 11 February 2022 ruled that the Superior General may now grant up to five years of excommunication.

Since 2018, 13 religious have been expelled from the Congregation, almost always for illegitimate absence. In fact, the dossiers presented to the Holy See were more, but in some cases they were rejected due to procedural errors made by provincial superiors in sending canonical admonitions. As of 11 February 2022, Pope Francis ruled that confirmation by the Holy See is no longer required for the expulsion of a religious.

Two religious appealed against the decree of expulsion: the first case was rejected by the Holy See; the other case, after two years of waiting, has still not received a response, despite the Superior General having requested a clarification from the Cardinal Prefect.



From 2018 to date, 11 religious have requested an indult from the Holy See to incardinate *ad experimentum* in a Diocese and it has been granted. It should be noted that 21 other religious, during the same period of time, have obtained definitive incardination into a Diocese with an indult granted directly by the Superior General by virtue of the privilege granted to us by the Bull *Supremi Apostolatus*.

(e) Postulation of a Brother to be elected Superior.

Only on two occasions has such a request been made (and it was granted in both cases). On May 18, 2022, Pope Francis derogated from the provisions of Canon 588§2 by allowing non-clerical religious to also assume the role of Superior in a Clerical Congregation, stipulating, however, that it is up to the Superior General with the consent of his Council to appoint a brother as local Superior, and not the Provincial Superior. Since some Provincials had already made this appointment themselves, the situation had to be rectified at a later date.

(f) Complaints that may reach this Dicastery about the behaviour of our religious in any part of the world.

During the six-year period, only in one case did a complaint reach the Dicastery for Religious directly against one of our religious. In addition, there were two cases in which the complaint file, initially submitted to the Doctrine of the Faith, was sent by it to the Dicastery for Religious as being their responsibility.

(g) Legal recognition of Superiors and Entities (Provinces, Vice-Provinces).

During the six-year period, a dossier was presented for the creation of a Foundation to manage one of our hospital works. The procedure was not concluded because the same Province that had requested it, changed its mind and abandoned the project. Other recognitions requested concerned the appointment of new legal representatives of our legal entities.



(h) Correction of decisions or legal acts wrongly taken.

We did not need to submit anything to be remedied.

(i) Representation of Passionist Nuns' monasteries and some women's Congregations of the Passionist family.

Following the canonical erection of the Monastic Congregation of the Nuns of the Passion of Jesus Christ on 29 June 2018, the cloistered Passionist nuns celebrated their first General Chapter in January 2019, electing their new General Government.

The Statutes of the new Institute state in No. 4 that: "The Passionist Superior General, in agreement with the President, must assign a religious of proven experience and virtue as Assistant General of the Congregation. It is his responsibility to help the nuns to promote, preserve and develop the Passionist charism and to safeguard the genuine and entirely contemplative spirit of the Congregation. He also has the task of expediting the Congregation's relations with the Holy See. He may participate in the General Chapter'.

At the request of Mother Catherine Marie Schuhmann, President of the Passionist Nuns, on 20 February 2019, Fr. Joachim appointed Fr. Antonio Munduate, as Assistant General of the nuns. Since he was still Procurator General, until September 2019 he acted as representative to the Holy See for both our Congregation and the nuns. Since September 2019, however, he has devoted himself entirely to the nuns. Therefore, since the end of 2019, our Procurator General no longer has to deal with this issue, being entirely in the hands of the Assistant General for nuns.

(B) DICASTERY FOR THE CLERGY

a) Processes of dispensation from the obligations inherent in the sacrament of Orders and religious profession, including dispensation from celibacy.

There are 22 religious who have asked for dispensation from the obligations of priesthood and profession of vows. In some cases (not many, however) these were religious who had already contracted marriage. What is striking is the average age: for the most part, these are religious between 35 and 49 years of age, over ten years of



priesthood. This should suggest special attention for this age group, perhaps by setting up a specific ongoing formation course. Only in three cases were religious over 50 years of age.

b) Topics related to Mass legacies.

In only one case did a Province request the intervention of the Procurator General's Office in a matter of the reduction of the number of masses left as 'legacies' in a community. The request was granted.

c) Application of Special Faculties.

The Dicastery for the Clergy has three special faculties with which it can impose as a penalty the dismissal from the clerical state.

The first faculty is for clerics who have made an attempt to marry and who, having been admonished, do not repent, but continue their irregular and scandalous life, or who have committed serious external sins against the sixth commandment.

The second faculty is for cases in which there is a serious violation of the laws and an urgent need to avoid an objective scandal for very serious reasons.

The third faculty is when the Dicastery declares the loss of clerical status for those clerics who have voluntarily and unlawfully abandoned the ministry for a period of more than five consecutive years.

Our Congregation has no shortage of cases in which these faculties could be applied, and it would seem an easy route to take, but in truth this is not the case. On two occasions, our Congregation has requested the application of these faculties, for objectively serious situations, but it was an unfortunate decision, because it complicated our procedures enormously, lengthening the time and increasing the costs.

(C) DICASTERY FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith judges crimes against the faith, the most serious crimes of morality or in the celebration of the sacraments, plus other special reserved crimes (such as sexual abuse against minors or vulnerable adults) if they are committed by clerics (i.e. persons who have received the Sacrament of Orders). From 2018 to date, our



Congregation, like many other Institutes, has had to increasingly relate to this Dicastery. For the sake of knowledge, I recall here which are the most serious crimes and those reserved for this Dicastery.

Crimes against the faith: heresy, apostasy and schism.

Crimes against the sacraments:

(1) *Eucharist*: removal or preservation for sacrilegious purposes, profanation of the consecrated species; attempted liturgical action by the non-ordained; simulation of liturgical action; forbidden concelebration, together with ministers of ecclesial communities who do not have apostolic succession and do not recognise the sacramental dignity of priestly ordination.

(2) *Penance*: the absolution of the accomplice in sin against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue; the attempted sacramental absolution or the forbidden hearing of confession; the simulation of sacramental absolution; the solicitation of sin against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue in the act or on the occasion or under the pretext of confession, if directed to sin with the confessor himself; the direct and indirect violation of the sacramental seal; the recording, made by any technical means, or the dissemination by the means of social communication carried out with malice, of things said by the confessor or the penitent in sacramental confession, whether true or simulated.

(3) *Order*: the attempted ordination of a woman.

Crimes against morals:

(1) the crime against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed by a cleric with a person under eighteen years of age or with a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason; ignorance or error on the part of the cleric concerning the age of the minor does not constitute an extenuating or exonerating circumstance;

(2) the acquisition, possession, exhibition or dissemination, for lechery or financial gain, of pornographic images of minors under eighteen years of age by a cleric in any manner or by any means.

Over the last six years, we dealt with several cases concerning these crimes.



The Superior General, in addition to governing the Congregation, must often take on the "unpleasant" role of judge in extra-judicial trials against our religious: it is up to him to evaluate the evidence and, if necessary, issue sentences, according to the faculties and indications received. The Holy See does not replace the Superiors General in this task of discernment and administration of justice. No Superior, Provincial or General, can remain indifferent in the face of a crime. No superior can refrain from intervening. In fact, the new Book VI of the Code of Canon Law has introduced the possibility that a Major Superior who is negligent in acting against such crimes will be punished and removed from his office.

As you can imagine, this creates an unpleasant situation, because **no one would ever want to have to condemn anyone. We are missionaries of the Gospel and not judges of the apocalypse!**

But the love of justice, the need to repair the damage caused by our religious, and also the deep respect and concern for the suffering of the victims of the actions of our religious, requires us not to close our eyes and to courageously take even very unpleasant decisions, always wishing to serve the truth. Leading people to the truth in charity is also a service to the Gospel.

At the moment, we still have four extrajudicial trials going on, in different parts of the world.

As a Procurator, I can say that this is definitely the most unpleasant matter I had to deal with.

I would like to point out some concrete problems:

- (a) We lack trained Canonists in the Congregation who can serve as assessors or as delegates of the Superior General in the various cases.
- (b) We lack policies for the prevention and education of religious and - in some Provinces – these policies are not sufficiently known, updated or implemented, neither by the religious nor by the Major Superiors.



I would also like to point out that Pope Francis has introduced a new Penal Code in the Church. The Pope wanted to bring about a change of mentality in the Church, because there were abuses of authority, or because people were excessively harsh in their judgement (punishing religious without inquiring into the truth), or because they were too lax.

After recalling the need to protect **the presumption of innocence of the accused** until the conclusion of the trial, the new Penal Code has given greater weight to the duty to repair both the scandal and the damage caused by the offender. I recall some crimes, which have been formulated in a new way, and which may also concern our religious:

- (a) Voluntary and illegitimate abandonment of the ordained ministry for six continuous months (this is the case of a religious who returns home and no longer wishes to exercise the priesthood but does not ask for any permission or dispensation). The problem is that the intentionality of such a choice must be demonstrated.
- (b) The exercise of business activities by an ordained religious without permission from the competent authority.
- (c) A cleric committing other economic offences, including civil offences (fraud, theft, incurring debts without permission, acts of maladministration, etc.).

PART TWO: SOME ISSUES

In this second part I present some reflections that I hope will be useful to the capitulars, but also to those who will assume a governing role in the next six year period. Some of these reflections were also shared by the members of the General Council, and I simply quote them, as I fully share them.

(A) SPECIFIC TRAINING COURSE FOR MAJOR SUPERIORS

Over the course of the past six years, we have repeatedly noticed something that had been apparent for some time: the need for those appointed to the role of Provincial Superior or Vice-Provincial to acquire certain technical skills. Mistakes are often made, in the governance of Provinces, that are related not to ill will, but to a lack of



knowledge of the norms and practices in use in our Congregation and in the Church. In addition, sometimes one is faced with situations and 'legal cases' that are pretty new and unexpected for him. Not everyone had the good sense to seek guidance from those who preceded them in Office or from the General Curia.

The variety of cases is very broad, and one cannot write everything down in this report. But it certainly seems urgent that, as is the case for newly appointed bishops, we also think of a formation course for newly appointed Major Superiors, to avoid abuses or errors in the governance of their Provinces.

(B) PASSIONIST RELIGIOUS AND CELIBACY/CHASTITY

This is an issue that concerns our Congregation in almost all parts of the world. Sometimes the cultural context or the poor quality of initial formation has led to a very light interpretation of the obligations arising from the vow of chastity. If on the one hand the case of religious who enter into marriage is very easy to deal with, on the other hand we are increasingly faced with cases where either one simply cohabits without marrying or has children while continuing to live within the religious life of the community.

Over the six-year period, only eight religious were declared ipso facto expelled from the Congregation for contracting marriage. But many more were found to have had children. The way of dealing with this issue was, in some cases, quite unclear on the part of some Superiors, because the child was not always the result of a clear will to leave consecrated life and the priesthood (some spoke of an *accident...*). Some have suggested to brethren who have found themselves in this situation to switch to the diocesan clergy, continuing to exercise the priesthood while abandoning religious life. There have been cases in which the mother of the child did not want the religious to abandon his consecrated life and his priesthood at all, and, on the contrary, ousted him from the life and care of his child. And this seemed to some an acceptable solution. But, quite frankly, it must be said that one cannot look at things only from the point of view of the priest guilty of infidelity



to his vows. Priority must be given to the good and the rights of the children.

The practice of the Church, with Pope Francis, has sought to bring some clarity to this issue. On 2 May 2019, the Dicastery for the Clergy sent all Bishops and Ordinaries a note, signed by the Cardinal Prefect, informing them of the direction given by Pope Francis regarding these cases during his visit to the Dicastery.

Pope Francis asked that **the natural right of children to have the assistance of both parents be respected**. He asked that this right be given precedence over the right to exercise the priestly ministry. In other words, if a priest has a son or daughter, he has the duty not only to support him or her financially, but also to give affection, education and all that is involved in the exercise of responsible fatherhood.

The concrete effect of this instruction by the Pope is that the Holy See recommends that Bishops invite priests (both diocesan and religious) who have fathered children to abandon the exercise of the ministry and ask for a dispensation from the obligations deriving from Ordination. One must, of course, take into account all possible situations, especially when the children of clerics have already reached adulthood. But the general line is to ask them to take responsibility for the son or daughter they have had.

In this same vein, the General Government of our Congregation, over the past six years, has always recommended that religious abandon all duplicity of life and give priority to the good of their offspring, leaving religious life and asking the Holy Father for a dispensation. Each case, of course, must be considered in itself, but the Congregation should have a clear policy on this issue, to avoid the accusation of hypocrisy in the management of one's religious vows (an accusation that, at times, already falls heavily on our heads in the exercise of religious poverty).

(C) ONLINE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS.

We all know that (1) each Major Superior (Provincial, Vice-Provincial or Vicar) has a canonical obligation to make use of his Council in making decisions, either by consulting it, or by explicitly seeking its consent;



and (2) a Council must be composed of at least two persons other than the Major Superior, summoned to meet at a specific place and time.

After the experience of the COVID pandemic, the practice remained of continuing to use the possibility of on-line meetings of Provincial Councils, which had initially only been granted for the period of the pandemic. However, I would like to point out that on 19 March 2023, the Holy See sent a circular letter on the use of Computer-Telematic Tools to all the Superiors General.

After recalling that these means were a useful and valuable instrument for the governance of the Institutes, the Vatican Dicastery wished to emphasise some practical pointers.

1. The Council meeting conducted electronically (on-line) must remain an extraordinary method and not an ordinary solution for the governance of the Institute or the Province.
(We need to preserve dialogue, confrontation, interpersonal and shared discernment as an expression of being physically united in the name of the Lord in the same place, as the Apostles did in ancient times in prayer and listening to the Word. It is not, in fact, the same thing to be able to embrace, greet and dialogue as brothers as to be able to see each other only through a screen).
2. For certain matters it is important to have a council meeting **in presence**: when matters concerning the most serious or reserved crimes are to be dealt with; to deal with questions relating to the departure of religious from the Institute (exclaustrations, resignations, dispensations from vows); when a religious is to be admitted to perpetual profession or to the Sacrament of Holy Orders; when acts of extraordinary administration are to be approved, or to take measures concerning the public exercise of the ministry by religious. (For us Passionists, it could also be said that a meeting of the Council in presence is also necessary for those appointments or decisions that, according to proper law, require the consent of the Council in order to be validly made).
3. Confidentiality and secrecy must always be guaranteed, even when conducting on-line meetings.



4. The Vatican Dicastery asks the Institutes, in the light of experience to date, to regulate the way in which these means are used. Our Congregation does not yet have any regulations in this regard.

(D) REVISION OF PROVINCIAL STRUCTURES

In the 2012 Chapter, new Provinces and Vice-Provinces were created, which, unfortunately, did not always succeed. The most striking case was, I believe, the creation of the PAC Vice-Province of Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic, erected at the 2012 Chapter and suppressed by the Superior General in 2017. Other entities have since lost their role or ability to truly act as autonomous Entities. Some Entities no longer even have the minimum number of canonically erected Houses to be such.

All this has led me to think that a profound revision of our territorial subdivision into Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates is necessary. On the occasion of the request for a Vice-Province to become a Province, I presented to the Superior General some features that, according to a common sense criterion, should be present in a so-called 'Province'.

Some of these criteria are coming from our History and from our practical experience as Congregation over 300 hundred years.

I present them below, without claiming to be exhaustive.

1. THE PRESENCE OF THREE CANONICAL HOUSES (DOMUS ERECTA)

- a. These houses must enable religious to lead a regular Religious Life according to the aims and character of our Congregation.
- b. The three Communities must be composed of at least 3 members.
- c. the main roles of the Community must be ensured. The role of Local Superior and the role of Local Econome must be carried out by two separate persons.



2. A REAL CONDITION OF AUTONOMY.

- a. There must be a sufficient number of religious in perpetual vows to allow for a turnover in the governance of the province in all its sectors (provincial authority, economy, formation); it must be possible to achieve a turnover in personnel (local superiors, provincial superior, economes, formators at the various levels)
- b. The Economy must be solid and allow for "long term" survival
- c. The Prayer Life must be regular and in conformity with what is required by the Constitutions
- d. The Province must have the means to place itself at the service of the Congregation as well: it must be able to open itself to mission and configuration with personnel, economy and formation
- e. The Provincial Superior should always be able to carry out all his duties (including the annual Canonical visitation to the whole province and the personal care of the members), without being limited by the territorial extension, the cost of traveling, or the numerical size of the communities. (In Provinces that are too large, the Provincial Superior must constantly delegate his duties to others!)

Therefore, in the negative, I would venture to suggest that an entity is not ready to be a Province:

- if there are not three canonically erected Communities, with a regular Life of prayer and ministry
- if, to make up for ministerial commitments, regular community life cannot be guaranteed: prayer, community meetings, etc.
- if there is no harmony among the religious, if there are discords, divisions, factions, etc.
- if in an Entity there is no real economic autonomy, but total dependence on the outside



- if there is a constant accumulation of different roles (e.g. the same person is Superior, Formator and Parish priest and perhaps also Provincial Consultor)
- if there is a lack of personnel to ensure that each community has at least a separate Local Superior and Econome
- if there is no real possibility of turnover in the governance of the Province, because there are only a limited number of religious capable of assuming the office of Provincial Superior (this is the case when there are only one or two people capable of leadership)
- if the possibility of a turnover in formation-related roles is lacking
- if the possibility of contributing to the good of the Congregation, Configuration or Mission is lacking (this is the case of a self-referential Province, which never shares personnel with the rest of the Congregation)
- If the Provincial Superior is objectively impeded in the exercise of his duty by the numerical or territorial extension of his Province.

It should be noted that it is not the Cultural or Territorial criteria that should determine the reason for being of a Province, Vice-Province or Vicariate, but simply the possibility of truly living one's Religious life according to our charism.

In the past, many Provinces or Vice-Provinces came into being not for pastoral or charismatic reasons, but because of quarrels between religious from different cultural areas. This is historically documented. Now it is appropriate that it is no longer these elements that determine the structure of government with which we are present in a given territory.

PART THREE

PROPOSALS TO THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2024

PROPOSAL 1.

Establish the practice of an annual formation meeting (of at least one week) for all newly elected Major Superiors, to be conducted with the



help of experts and, if possible, in the form of an in-presence meeting (modelled on the course for newly elected Bishops).

PROPOSAL 2.

While recognising and respecting the conscience of every member, paths of formation and conscientization on the value of consecrated Chastity for the kingdom of Heaven should be promoted, along with renewed attention to respecting professional protocols in dealing with women and men in every pastoral setting.

PROPOSAL 3.

The General Chapter draws up a rule, to be included in the General Regulations, to clearly define the areas for which the convocation of an in-presence (and not on-line) Provincial Council is always required.

PROPOSAL 4.

The General Chapter should state explicitly which acts of extraordinary Administration each Major Superior must have the approval of the higher authority for (cf. Financial Stewardship Manual, Appendix 3).

PROPOSAL 5.

The General Chapter shall carry out a review of the Provinces according to the criteria for "canonical and real autonomy" (see Report of the Procurator General, part 2, letter D). This review may include an initial phase (General Chapter 2024), an evaluation at General Synod 2027 (with a possible proposal for downsizing or suppression of the Entities that are no longer viable) and a final phase (General Chapter 2030).



Financial Report

Fr. Antonio Siciliano

Introduction

This report will begin with an account of the **extraordinary maintenance work on the Generalate [Casa Generalizia]**. This will be followed by an examination of **some financial issues** concerning this central administration which require functional solutions; **a report on the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund; and a report on the Solidarity Fund.**

As for the cash received and managed during this six-year period (specifically, from 1 January 2019 to 31 July 2024), you have already received the corresponding spreadsheets (Numbers 2-6). Therefore, this report will be divided as follows:

- A. Extraordinary Maintenance of the Generalate.**
- B. Some Financial Issues.**
- C. The Fund for Extraordinary Maintenance**
- D. The Solidarity Fund**

A. EXTRAORDINARY(and Ordinary) MAINTENANCE OF THE GENERALATE

These extraordinary/ordinary [the distinction is difficult to maintain; see explanation at #3, following] maintenance projects began during the previous administration, in the first half of 2014. They were occasioned by leaks in the roof of the library. This was like the spark that flamed into an awareness that the entire structural complex required a program of regular and planned maintenance. In fact, aside from sporadic repairs which were forced by specific emergencies, a systematic maintenance of the roofs, exterior walls and infrastructure of the Generalate seems to date back over 50 years.

During this six-year period (2019-2024), various projects have been carried out, due mostly to the urgency of the problems, and almost always a consequence of the aging infrastructure which has been deteriorating for about the last 50 years.

A: 2019 - (€28,825.00 + €259,096.00 = €287,921.00)

B: 2020 - (€63,595.00)

C: 2021 - (€16,510.00 + €97,100.00 = €113,610.00)

D: 2022 - (€3,516.00 + €32,180.00 = €35,696.00)



E: 2023 - (€47,898.00 + €61,586.00 = €109,484.00)

F: 2024 - (€2,728.00 + €260,136.00 = €315,121.00)

This comes to a grand total of **€925,427.00** and an annual average of **€154,238.00**. This rather significant expense has, on some occasions, been incurred on the basis of a **fifty-fifty** [f/f] division between the Financial Administration of the Generalate and that of the Community. It is an amount that exceeds our means.

N.B. Chapter Hall: The renovation project lasted from July to September, 2024. It was funded by Belgium for an estimated total expense of around €330,000.00.

Archive: The digital copy of the documents regarding Blessed Dominic was requested and paid for by the IOS Province and the PATR Province, each of which paid half of the costs.

The Library/Archive receives an annual grant of €36,000.00 from the CEI (Italian Episcopal Conference) + additional contributions from the Ministry of Culture.

The SPE Province donated €1,000,000.00 to the SOLIDARITY FUND, part of which the Curia could allocate at its discretion to the EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE FUND.

There is an accounting circumstance that should be mentioned. Our Generalate, which is recognized as a legal entity by both the Italian State and the Prefecture of Rome, is owned by the Vatican and benefits from the Italo-Vatican Customs Agreement of 30 June 1930. The people residing there are exempt from paying VAT (Value Added Tax).

In Italy, VAT is 22% on invoices. Our invoices are VAT-exempt, but they must be endorsed by the Vatican Governor's office, where we are required to pay up to a maximum of 5% (for purchases of motor vehicles). For construction work, the tax we need to pay is 4% of the invoice.



B. SOME FINANCIAL ISSUES

Before presenting the problems that are currently before us, with some practical examples, I would like to emphasize that this Generalate is a large complex, and its different sections have several problems, partly due to their age. In other words, the work never ends, and just when you think you're done, it's time to start all over again.

- a) **The section of the building we call the “Belvedere”**, required urgent intervention in 2024 (although the problems had already been noted several times in previous years). There was no water circulating any longer, neither hot nor cold. The project cost around € 65,000.00, and was split fifty-fifty with the Community.
- b) **The large meeting hall on the third floor of the Community**, the Student sector. It had been kept locked on the advice of a health officer (from the Military Hospital) due to the risk of disease from the many pigeon droppings. The cost of remediation and restoration will depend on its intended use. (How long can we postpone this?)
 - I. In the meantime, disinfestation/disinfection; replacing the false ceiling, flooring and doors and windows; and repainting have been carried out, at a total cost of around €30,000.00.
 - II. If the intention is to create (7) rooms with bathrooms, the estimate is around €150,000.00.
 - III. An offer was also received from the Lay Centre to rent the space. It would have covered the cost of renovation, because the expense would have been deducted from its rent over several years. This offer was not followed up on, partly due to the reluctance to allocate more space to the Lay Centre Association. Meanwhile, everything remains as it was, except for the aforementioned cleanup. Had we gone ahead, the rooms would already have been renovated, and we would have started collecting rent on their eventual use.
- c) **The Curia section, second floor** (formerly the STEM section), is outdated and cannot be left as it is. Once properly renovated, it could provide 18 rooms with bathrooms, to be reserved for our Passionist guests. The total cost would be around **€300,000.00**.
- d) **The Retreat House roof** is a problem that cannot be ignored, even if it doesn't seem urgent. The roof beams are made of wood and are sagging; for the time being, they have been braced to avoid unpleasant surprises, but this is obviously a



temporary solution. Keep in mind that the beams of all the roofs in our complex are made of wood, including these of the Retreat House, and the Retreat House is the most recent section in the entire Community area of the building.

- e) During the previous term of office, the **exterior** of this large complex of the Generalate Community was the focus for extraordinary maintenance. On the other hand, the **interior** (such as repainting the rooms, etc.) has been carried out as the occasion arose, but not systematically.
- f) The fundamental problem remains: All the systems at Sts. John and Paul (water, electrical, heating, and now even more so—security) are over fifty years old! The work carried out on the Belvedere was necessary because the pipes had become blocked due to limescale in the plumbing. This issue had been treated from time to time by bypassing the affected sections with alternate piping. However, this problem affects the whole house. Often, repairs were carried out on an ad hoc basis whenever damp spots showed that buried pipes had leaked. There is a need for a comprehensive and total reassessment. I will make a proposal in this regard to submit for the Chapter's approval. At this point, I would like to introduce a somewhat lengthy consideration.

C. THE FUND FOR EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE

This previously listed group of projects, both completed and pending, highlights a glaring gap in the administration of the Generalate Community's **Extraordinary Maintenance Fund**. This Fund should allow for a certain level of administrative autonomy without always having to resort to soliciting subsidies from the Congregation's entities.

This is an embarrassing and paralyzing situation. Ordinary administrative expenses are borne by the Generalate Financial Administration, or by the Econome of the Community. Here, however, we are talking about extraordinary expenses, which must be granted by the General Chapter and the General Council. **As it currently stands, the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund** does not allow for autonomous or timely action. During this term, I have tried to not use the Fund, by relying on the reserves which we have. However, a serious and well-structured plan is becoming more and more urgent, and the recurring question is always the same: **where do we get the money we need?** COVID and the war



in Ukraine have certainly limited the possibilities and slowed the search for solutions.

Allow me to remind you of a particular situation concerning the administration of funds by the General Curia — the previous administration created several reserve funds. One, the TFR fund (a severance fund) for the benefit of employees, is legally mandatory and was already in place. Then, five additional funds were created, but they are rather small, partly because in recent years the limited resources available have not allowed them to grow. With regard to the contributions requested from various entities to address the problems caused by COVID and the war, and to respect the objective financial difficulties of each entity, the fixed sum of €500,000 per year, as approved by the 2015 Synod, was not requested. Instead, the contributions received were about €150,000–€200,000 less. This resulted in the inability to add to the Funds, and only managed to cover the ordinary operations of the General Curia, which has significant expenses. I will expand on this point, if asked. The existing funds are as follows:

- Medical Fund** (for members of the General Curia)
- Building/structures Fund** (for ordinary maintenance)
- Extraordinary Maintenance Fund**
- Motor Vehicle Fund** (for replacement of cars in the fleet)
- Synod and General Chapter Fund**
- Socio-Cultural Fund** (both Euro and US Dollar).

Let's review some history - The February 2018 *consulta* decided to form a small committee to study the issue of the **Extraordinary Maintenance Fund** in order to find a viable solution to be submitted for approval by the General Chapter. A **proposal** emerged, which was partially accepted and voted on at the 2018 General Chapter:

"Until the next General Synod (2021), for one year, and only once, from 2018, permission to withdraw 10% of the total Solidarity Fund to constitute an extraordinary fund available to the General Curia for extraordinary expenses. For steady growth in this fund, the General Econome is requested to provide for the organization of the administration of the General Curia.

"The General Synod of 2021 will assess the previously established extraordinary maintenance fund and be able to make any changes that it considers to be appropriate."



As already mentioned, the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine did not allow for any increase. This was partly due to the economic difficulties of all, so that the contributions requested from the various entities were significantly lower than what was foreseen in the 2015 Synod (a fixed annual sum of €500,000). During this six-year period, efforts were made to avoid depleting the fund. Today, the fund consists of €600,000 + €500,000 which was recently added from the SPE donation (50%).

It is clear that if the development of this Fund continues as it has, it will be largely insufficient for its intended purpose, especially in light of a possible renewal of the entire infrastructure. Keep in mind that the systems of the Generalate Community plant are over 50 years old. Since 1976, nine General Chapter have been held (1976, 1982, 1988, 1994, 2000, 2006, 2012, 2018 and 2024), and no further infrastructure renovations have been made, except in 1998, when some work was done in the central part of the Community section, but even that was 26 years ago.

A proposal will follow at the end of this Report.

Another note, which also serves to inform all the entities of the Congregation: Until now, the **per diem for university students** has been €1,350 payable quarterly. That is, €15 per day (90 days x €15). Starting on January 1, 2025, the *per diem* may be increased to at least €20, which means €1,800 per quarter (90 days x €20). This fee, of course, is not for the General Curia but is passed on to the Community administration.

REPORT ON THE EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE FUND

1) 2019 - UNDER FATHER VINCENZO CARLETTI'S ADMINISTRATION

At the end of December, 2018, the total amount in the Solidarity Fund was equal to €8,495,767.02. This money was held on deposit at the IOR (Vatican Bank), and at the Banca Popolare di Sondrio. One part was in Euros, another in US Dollars. The greater part of the Solidarity Fund was invested.

In accordance with the decision of the 2018 General Chapter (Decree no. 5), **on 13 February 2019, my predecessor, Fr. Vincenzo Carletti, with the permission of the Superior General and his Council, withdrew €800,000.00** (approximately 10% of the total) from the Solidarity Fund and created a separate **Extraordinary Maintenance Fund (FMS)**.



At the end of 2019 the fund held **€700,000.00**. The fund would need to be replenished every year.

Note: **The fund is replenished from the surplus which remains at the end of the year**, i.e., from the money received from the Provinces (via contributions) or from the activities and work of the religious members of the General Curia that were not used for other expenses.

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN 2019

In this six year term, the total cost of extraordinary maintenance was **€277,264.00**

INITIAL TOTAL: **€808,696.99**

TOTAL WITHDRAWN IN 2019: **€218,075.00**

FUND REPLENISHMENT AT END OF YEAR: **€118,075.00**

For this reason, it can be said that roughly half of the extraordinary expenses in 2019 were covered by the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund (€100,000), and the remainder by the finances of the Generalate Community and the General Curia.

2) 2020: UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF FATHER SICILIANO

During the first full year of my administration, I did not make any use of the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund (FMS), which remained at €700,000.00 throughout 2020.

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE PROJECTS CARRIED OUT IN 2020:

The total is **€59,278.00**.

3) 2021: UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF FATHER SICILIANO

On November 30, 2021, I decided to withdraw €100,000.00 from the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund to cover the extraordinary maintenance expenses that, unfortunately, I had to bear during the year.

By the end of December 2021, the Extraordinary Maintenance Fund amounted to €600,000.00.

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE WORK CARRIED OUT IN 2021:

The total is **€99,800.00** .

As mentioned, these expenses were covered by the FMS.



4) 2022: UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF FR. SICILIANO

In 2022, I did not draw funds from the FMS, which remained at **€600,000.00** euro.

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2022

The total is **€32,030.00**

5) 2023: UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF FR. SICILIANO

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE PERFORMED IN 2023

The total is **€109,369.00** euro

6) 2024: UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF FR. SICILIANO

EXTRAORDINARY MAINTENANCE PERFORMED IN 2024

The total is **€93,176.00**

This year, the **renovation work on the Chapter Hall** is still ongoing. **So far, €230,036.00 has been spent** out of a total estimated cost of around **€325,000.00 to €330,000.00**. These works are fully funded by Belgium.

D. SOLIDARITY FUND

On this topic of the Solidarity Fund, I refer you to the attachments regarding the Solidarity Fund, which are included with this Report (Numbers 2-6).

The Synod of 2015 established the Solidarity Fund – There is an attachment to this report that describes this formal action.

I particularly wish to emphasize point no. 6, which states as follows:

6. Increase: The Fund will be grown through the contribution of the Solidarity Tax of 2% on the income of each juridical entity and its local communities, through the 7% tax on the sale of land and properties and through voluntary contributions which are received for this purpose.



Regarding this point, I have written several times to all of the Entities, and I must acknowledge, that the majority of them are contributing. However, I must also say that some Entities, practically always, though perhaps with the exception of a few years, are reluctant to collaborate. This can also be seen in the attachments to this Report concerning the Solidarity Fund from 2013 to now. I will not go into the merits of the issue. Actually, I had not intended to include these Attachments, but the General Council has requested complete transparency on this particular point. Anyone who wishes can review these records personally. I believe that there are certainly objective difficulties for some of our Entities in collaborating with these contributions. However, I believe that this is a moment in which the evangelical message regarding "the widow's mite" is particularly relevant as an example. In my letters, I have always stated that an exemption can be legitimately requested from the General and his Council, who may legitimately grant it. However, it is also clearly stated that the exemption is never permanent, but must be requested, year after year, if a difficult situation continues in effect.

PROPOSALS:

- A. "A comprehensive proposal should be prepared for the general restructuring of the plant systems (plumbing, heating, electrical, and security) of the Community ["Casa"] sections of Sts. John and Paul (particular projects, costs, etc.). This proposal should be presented at the next General Synod, 2027, for its possible approval and for suggestions regarding the financing of the project." (Estimated cost around 50,000 euros)**
- B. "Each and every Entity should open an account in euros and dollars at the IOR, registered in the name of the respective Entity, by which remote HomeBanking transactions can be carried out; the account will have the signatures of the Provincial or Vice Provincial, the Provincial Economy or Vice Economy, and with power of attorney for the General Economy, who can act solely and on behalf of each one of the Entities when requested, and when a personal presence is necessary, such as for depositing of cash."**

This is already the case for the EXALT and GETH Provinces headquartered in Brazil and the Passionist Sisters at our Generalate.

This proposal also comes from a direct request from the IOR. These accounts, even if for only a small amount of deposited funds, are opened by the Entity and remain the property of the Entity. They can serve as a link between the single Entity and the General Economy's



administration. They can be quite useful. The fees for internal transfers between accounts are zero.

Conclusion

I have certainly not exhausted all of the topics that should have been addressed, but I believe that I have remained true to the brief introduction I stated at the beginning of this report, and thus kept within the limits I set for myself.

I will repeat the same conclusion given by the previous General Econome, Fr. Vincenzo Carletti, and I make it my own.

One word best expresses my feelings at this moment: **thanks**. Thank you for the rich experience of these years of this term of office, in which I was called to serve as the General Econome. **Thank you** to the Superior General and his Council for the trust they placed in me and for their collaboration in our work. **Thank you** to all the members of the General Curia for the joyous atmosphere of mutual understanding as we worked together. **Thank you** to the Community of Sts. John and Paul, especially to the Superiors, *Luis Alberto Cano was the first*, followed by Natale Panetta; and to the Vice-superior and Econome, Erasmo Sebastiano. **Thank you** to all of you Chapter members who represent the Congregation: the most wonderful experience of these years has been the outstanding fraternal collaboration expressed in so many ways by your Entities. **Thanks** be to God for giving us **St. Paul of the Cross** and the **Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ**, to which we have been gifted with belonging; and whose mission we are now called by this Chapter to renew.



The General Secretariat for Solidarity and Mission

Fr. Aloysius Nguma

Introduction

This Office is under the Secretary General for Solidarity and Mission. Until August 2022, it was Fr. Paolo Aureli who held the position. Despite being ill, he did his best until his last days. He was admitted to the hospital and passed away on 6 August 2022. (May his soul rest in peace.) At this point, the General Council decided to entrust this office to me, and today I am presenting this report to you.

The Solidarity Fund and its distribution

The office for Solidarity and Mission is mainly concerned with financing 'Solidarity Projects' for our missionaries around the world, particularly in the poorest and most deprived areas.

The Solidarity Fund was created to help entities in financial difficulty, especially in growth areas. The support of this Fund is sustained by contributions of 2% of the profits of each entity and 7% from the sale of land or valuable assets of any size, as well as voluntary donations from the various Provinces.

The request for funding, duly documented, is examined by the General Council for approval and then financed with the available funds! Requests are sent to the General Secretary for Solidarity and Mission via the Major Superior of the entity needing financial support. After examining and evaluating the requests, the Secretary General for Solidarity and Mission submits them to the General Council. The funds are disbursed by the General Econome, who is informed by the Secretary General about the General Council's decision.

I would like to sincerely thank the former Province of St Gabriel (GABR) in Belgium and the Province of the Mother of Holy Hope (SPE) in the Netherlands, among others. I also take this opportunity to thank the



various entities that directly support the growing entities. Some send their support directly to the individual entities, while others send it through the office of the General Economy. Provinces such as St Patrick's (PATR) in Ireland and the United Kingdom, Holy Cross (CRUC) in the United States and Holy Spirit (SPIR) in Australia have supported these growing entities. We thank you very much for your great support.

For the list of the entities that were supported by the Solidarity Fund and the projects that were presented to us, you can refer to the report given by the General Economy.

ONLUS - Passionist Solidarity Association

In recent years, this office has also been running an ONLUS (Non-Profit Organisation of Social Utility) called "Passionist Solidarity Association", created in 2010 by Bishop Jesús María Aristín, responsible at that time for Passionist Solidarity and Missions, and endowed with a specific Statute, with the aim of supporting and accompanying the Passionist missionaries in their social initiatives and projects. To promote social development, through collective support and/or to people marginalised for reasons of poverty, illness, age, gender and legal status, both in Italy and in other countries. Promote the development of peoples in the areas of social health and economic development, especially in the Third World. Support environmental initiatives that better protect the dignity of the human being, both as a person and as a community (Art. 1 of the Statute).

With the contributions received from the Italian State through the 5 *per mille* of taxpayers' taxes, this Association is able to fulfil its function by financing some small social solidarity 'Projects' requested by our missionaries, such as: the construction of the Education Centre in Janauba Brazil (EXALT Province); the construction of a well for the extraction of water at the Apostolic Vicariate of Yurimaguas Peru; help with the training expenses of our young philosophy students in Arusha Tanzania (GEMM Vice-Province); the construction of a school for the indigenous population of some mountain villages, in the Philippines (PASS Province). We have financed numerous other 'micro-projects'; for the sake of brevity we have listed just a few examples.



Lately, this office has also taken over the management of "Distance Adoption" from the former CORM Province, which involves the periodic sending of offerings from individual benefactors, for the support and help with studies of some poor children in our missions in Tanzania and Kenya. All the donations we receive are then sent to our missionaries in charge, with a list of the children supported together with the names of the benefactors!

Conclusion

At the end of this brief report of mine, I would like to sincerely thank all those who, with great generosity, contribute to the financing of the Passionist Solidarity and Missions Projects, either by subscribing to the 5 *per mille* of the ONLUS, or by sending free offerings. A special thanks to those who support the "Adoption at a distance" project in favour of so many poor children. Thanks to the VULN Province, which periodically sends us its offerings for the missions.

On behalf of the General Curia and the entire Congregation, I would then like to thank all of you.

Allow me then to thank those who have preceded me in this task. A thank you to Bishop Jesus Maria Aristín for having understood the usefulness of the non-profit organisation that brings us so many contributions. Thanks to Fr Paolo Aureli who diligently continued to run this office until the end of his earthly days. May the Lord reward him in the heavenly homeland.

A big thank you to Fr Ottaviano D'Egidio as President of the Onlus, to Vice-President Fr Luigi Vaninetti, and a big thank you to Mr Franco Nicolò who has always helped us as a volunteer in the management of our office of Solidarity and Mission!!!

May the Lord continue to bless us all.



The General Secretariat for Formation

Fr. Rafael Vivanco Pérez

Introduction

I begin this report by recalling number 1 of the revised General Formation Program 2023 (GFP) which introduces us to the subject of formation:

"Formation is the term we use for the guided journey into the mystery of God undertaken by everyone who aspires to the fullness of life in the Congregation of the Passion. Passionist formation is a life-long process of personal growth and daily conversion to Christ Crucified and his Gospel. Moved by the Spirit, each one sets out along the path taken by Jesus as He headed for Jerusalem. It is a journey into the fullness of life that also implies the experience of dying to all that prevents us from giving our whole life to God. It is a journey into the fullness of the light that passes through the regions of darkness and struggle.

Christ draws each one to closer union with himself just as he promised, "And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to myself" (John 12:32). The goal of formation is for every Passionist to be conformed to Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, such that he acquires the same mind, heart and feelings as Jesus (Phil. 2:5) who freely offered his life to the Father for the salvation of the whole world."

We must begin by expressing gratitude to God the Father for the gratuitous call we have received from Him from within our personal uniqueness and that He continues to call new vocations to follow Christ Crucified and Risen in the Congregation of the Passion as a community, animated by the Spirit. From this call comes every formation process that leads us to "form new men... men entirely of God, entirely apostolic... being able to call themselves in all truth disciples of Jesus Christ", as St. Paul of the Cross communicated in the "Brief Account of the Congregation of 1747".



The Congregation must collaborate responsibly with the action of the Holy Spirit in the initial and ongoing formation of each religious, in order to achieve in every time and place its vitality and development in the life and mission of the Church and in the world.

1. The 47th General Chapter, six years ago, identified and proposed to the Congregation to assume three areas of priority closely connected to each other, for the renewal of our mission: Community life; Formation (initial and ongoing); the promotion and revitalization of the Configurations as structures of solidarity ("Call to Action", 2019). Regarding initial and ongoing formation, the following were proposed as objectives:

- To create a community culture and attentiveness to ongoing formation, which does not end in a particular place, time or stage of life.
- Make initial formation an effective priority at all levels of the Congregation.
- Be especially attentive to the area of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

The following were proposed as action steps:

- + The elaboration and implementation of a General Formation Plan (broad consultation; support and guidance of formators: implementation of programs, meetings and seminars at various levels).
- + Promote ongoing formation (provide resources, programs, retreats; assistance to superiors; education for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

2. The Formation Commission

The initial phase of the Commission was directed by Fr. Martin Coffey (PATR), Secretary General for Formation, who continued the work he had been doing since the previous six-year term. Some religious were invited to participate in the commission at different times: Frs. Orven Gonzaga Obispo (PASS), Joash Oloo Okeyo (CARLW), O'Brien Chanda (MATAF), Ademir Guedes (GETH), Elson Mauro do Nascimento (EXALT).



Fr. Rafael Vivanco (REG) was the liaison with the General Council. In September 2023, Fr. Martin was reassigned to his province, and Fr. Rafael Vivanco was appointed the new Secretary General for Formation.

3. International Meeting/Course/Workshop for formation personnel

From the beginning of this six-year period, the General Secretariat for Formation prioritized the realization of an International Course for Formators, originally planned to coincide with the official inauguration of the Jubilee Year of the Congregation. The course would last three weeks, beginning on 1 November 2020. Some 35 formators from all the Configurations/Provinces would participate in the program.

The Commission sought the advice of Fr. Larry Duffy S.M. The theme would revolve around "Renewing our mission through formation", taking as a starting point the founding experience of St. Paul of the Cross and the Congregation; recognizing the ministry that formators carry out and listening to their experiences, needs and current challenges; proposing the elements and tools necessary to carry out this ministry of formation; and elaborating a project that will help us move forward in the realization of our formative life and mission.

The course would use an interactive and participative method, fostering a fraternal atmosphere of shared faith, Passionist identity and gratitude for our Jubilee; opening ourselves to internationality and interculturality; taking advantage of the experience of the formators and involving them in the development and organization of the course; an opportunity for self-evaluation in order to identify each participant's needs and the challenges he wished to address; sharing his own experiences in formation; receiving some enlightening conferences; and visiting the "historical Passionist locations" on pilgrimage.

It was not possible to conduct this course on the indicated date due to the Covid 19 pandemic. It was postponed and rescheduled for September 2022. Again it did not take place for the same reason. No other time was proposed for this meeting.



4. On-line meetings with formation personnel

Faced with the difficulty that the pandemic caused of conducting the course for formators, twice postponed, and in light of the uncertainty of when it could be attempted again, and although the advantages of an international face-to-face meeting are obvious, it was necessary to find alternatives. The General Secretariat for Formation took the initiative of promoting a series of online meetings for formators at the Configuration level that would facilitate communication and an exchange of ideas and experiences that would make it possible to have a common vision and approach concerning the formation experience of our religious at that time. This means could facilitate the use of a language common in the Configuration (for the most part), interpersonal and intercultural relationships, the possibility of closer cooperation in the future and financial feasibility. Possibly, with this form of meeting, we could adapt the materials that had been prepared for the face-to-face meeting.

With the technical help of Fr. Javier Solis (REG), Director of Communications, the online meeting with the formators of each of the Configurations took place on various dates. The formation commissions of each Configuration were contacted, a list of formators was compiled and they were summoned to these meetings. In each Configuration the proposal was well received and endorsed. Initially, the dialogue with the formators revolved around a presentation by each participant concerning the current experiences, achievements and challenges in their formation work. On a second occasion, a meeting was held with the novitiates of the Congregation, formators and novices. A new online meeting was convened with all the formators where the theme of discernment in formation was studied.

I can say that this strategy was very positive and well employed by all of us because it brought us closer and helped us to socialize despite the difficult experience of being in the midst of the pandemic. It made us address several formation topics and served as a means for growth and encouragement within the formation communities.



5. Resources for initial and on-going formation

During these years, the General Secretariat for Formation has been elaborating a series of study aids for reflection and guidance by the Formation Commission itself on various significant themes which, at the time, reflected the experience of society, the Church, the Congregation and formation itself: the Jubilee of the Congregation; the Passionist Charism; initial and ongoing formation; the service of formators; sexuality in religious life; the Covid 19 pandemic; spiritual discernment; community life and leadership; the Passionist mission; war and peace; the synodal Church; the world situation, etc. They are simple texts, easy to access, that respond to the need to continually form ourselves from the events we are living and to reflect on subjects and themes proper to formation. These aids can be found on the Congregation's website.

These are the titles:

*** 2019**

- Revision of the General formation Program (Second draft for study).
- The formator today.
- Sexuality and Religious Life.
- Formation for celibacy, one possible approach.

*** 2020**

- Reflection on Passionist formation.

*** 2021**

- An argument for intellectual life.
- Formation and the COVID pandemic.
- Love for the Passion.
- Presentation to formators on discernment.
- Together with Jesus on the road to Calvary.
- Passionist community life.
- Leadership in Passionist communities.
- Passionist formation for mission.

*** 2022**

- Passion for peace.
- The Passionists in a Synodal Church.
- The Passionist Charism: A Passion for the Kingdom of God.



- The world in the summer of 2022.
- Notes on Passionist formation, summer 2022.

*** 2023**

- Revised General Formation Program.

*** 2024**

- Various catechesis on the General Formation Plan (in progress)

6. The Revised General Formation Program

This document has existed as a draft since before the 2018 General Chapter, thanks to the International Commission for Formation, under the direction of Fr. Martin Coffey as Secretary General for Formation. Since then the whole Congregation, on different occasions and levels, has had the opportunity to become acquainted with it and to offer suggestions for its improvement. The General Synod of 2022 made the final revision of the text and offered its input. The Superior General, with the consent of his Council approved it on 2 March 2023.

The objective of this work over various years has been to revise and update the previous General Formation Plan of 1986 based on the new social, ecclesial and congregational circumstances, and to offer - as a road map that can guide our formation itinerary - those values necessary for formation at this particular moment of our history, the same values that will have to be integrated and concretized in each socio-cultural and ecclesial reality where the Congregation finds itself. *"It is a living, time-bound document, so it will need to be revised in later years to respond to the as yet unknown challenges of the future."* (Joachim Rego) It is obvious that all the Provinces and Vice-Provinces will have to renew their own formation program in order to implement the orientations of the GFP 2023 in their respective territories and environments.

Among the various topics addressed in the document are: what is initial formation and its stages; the broader socio-ecclesial context of formation; the protection of minors and vulnerable persons; integral formation; the Passionist Charism, the core of Passionist formation; the various people involved in formation; mission-oriented formation; internationality and interculturality in Passionist formation; the ministry of the formator; the human aspect of formation; the Passionist Charism in the



various stages of initial formation; ongoing formation; the need to achieve professional standards in ministry, etc.

It also recognizes the particular challenges of this time that arise from the new digital and technological culture, the media, the process of modernization and secularization in the world, conscience and mission of the Church today, the need for trustworthy and safe community and pastoral environments, etc.

The main focus of this document is the living and dynamic centrality of the Gift of the Spirit to the Church, which is the Passionist charism, in the formation of new Passionists, both Brothers and clerics. Initial formation is understood as a gradual process of learning and growth as human, Christian persons called to consecrated life in the Congregation. This Passionist charism focuses us, identifies and assimilates us with the mystery of Jesus Crucified and Risen.

The document refers mainly to initial formation. It does not attempt to offer a complete program of ongoing formation for our religious today, but it does mention and introduce it. A specific document on ongoing formation is to be prepared in the near future.

Regarding permanent or ongoing formation, this is defined as an ongoing process in which the Passionist religious conforms himself more fully to the Crucified and Risen Christ, starting from the different stages of life, including particular inappropriate or crisis situations. The human and spiritual growth of Passionists never comes to an end, and it is a necessity and a duty that the Congregation must assume and guide its different entities in order to maintain the integrity, validity and dynamism of Passionist life and mission in each religious.

This presupposes in each religious an interior attitude of attention and availability-- "docibilitas", or attentiveness of heart and mind to grasp every small formative impulse... to allow oneself to be formed by life, for all of life, to learn from all the circumstances of life... in failure and in success, when everything goes well, when someone accuses and attacks, in health and in sickness, in health and in old age..." (Fr. Amedeo Cencini, FdCC). Clearly it must be said that these elements do not



begin with ongoing or permanent formation, they should have already begun to be assumed as part of a process since initial formation.

An important element mentioned in the document is the time period immediately after perpetual profession and/or ordination to the priesthood and the years that follow, the passage from the community of initial formation to the community of ongoing formation. This step has a joyful and challenging character for everyone, but there are also situations of frustration and disillusionment that must be addressed by all the religious in the provinces and communities. Surely this guidance and care is needed as a solution to the problem of the many requests of our religious for departures/separation, or "exclaustration" and/or "incardination" in dioceses, whose causes cannot be only socio-cultural. We should not resign ourselves to this phenomenon, rather we should seek greater discernment for a solution.

7. Catechesis about the revised Formation Program

During the past year, once the revised Formation Program had been approved and published, the General Secretariat for Formation requested the collaboration of several religious, members of the various Configurations, to propose to the whole Congregation, particularly to the Communities and Formation Teams, a series of 12 catechetical instructions containing the main contents of the GFP, in order to promote knowledge, reflection and implementation of the Program.

To date, some of these files have been published on the web page of the Congregation ("Passionist Formation"; "I, Peter the Apostle and the Cross"; "The Charism of the Memory of the Passion, core of Passionist formation"; "Passionist formation in the context of post-modernity"; "Pedagogical Elements of Passionist Formation".) Those that are missing will continue to be published in the hope that they can be used by all. We acknowledge and thank all our religious who have collaborated in this task for their generous service to formation in the Congregation.



8. Points of View/Challenges

Based on various meetings and opportunities for dialogue within the Congregation, Provincial Chapters and Assemblies, General Council meetings, especially from the responses to the first and second consultation questionnaires in preparation for the General Chapter, I think it is important to point out some points of view/challenges that require our attention and response.

- The **international and intercultural character of the Congregation** is a motive for joy and appreciation, and it also requires rooting the Good News of our charism and its values in different cultural sensitivities and, from them, enabling a rich exchange about new points of emphasis and ways of being Passionist. Formative dialogue between the cultural background of our incoming vocations and the culture they encounter in our communities is important. Initial formation could be more and more a space for establishing an exchange among young people in initial formation concerning some significant stage or experience within a culture different from their own in order to understand the varieties of life and situations in the Congregation. These experiences can be created within the same country, configuration or among configurations, enabling participation in international or inter-regional formation centers or communities of Passionist formation. It requires a certain openness, breadth of vision, the study of a new language and the reorganization of our structures among other things.
- **The ministry of formators is fundamental and challenging.** It requires serious preparation and human, spiritual and academic maturity. The interaction of the formation community and the ecclesial community with those in initial formation should be a significant point of concern in the formative processes. In several places and circumstances it is difficult to count on sufficiently adequate and prepared formators, or formators who are not full time and have other commitments in addition to formation, or they do this ministry alone. It also happens that young, newly perpetually professed or newly ordained religious are assigned to serve as formators without proper guidance. It is important to choose and



train the right religious to form teams to direct the ministry of formation. Equally important are all our religious communities and ecclesial communities as participants in the formation process and those who are directly responsible for formation, as vital elements and sources of support for developing these formation programs.

- We need to more decisively promote **solidarity to "revitalize our life and mission" in initial formation, personnel and finances at the Congregational level, in each Configuration and in each Province** and to think and act more as a Congregation and not as individual entities. Although there are some successes in formation, in general, in some Configurations there is a need for additional integration, unification, organization and support in order to have the necessary and prepared personnel for formation teams, in the functioning of the houses/stages of formation and in organizing and obtaining material resources and financing for formation. It will be opportune to merge the stages and houses of formation by configurations and to increase congregational support in personnel for formation and financing. Obviously this requires a new way of thinking congregationally, a new organization and being open to new opportunities for language learning. What can we do and how can we do this so that our human and material forces are strengthened and not dispersed and so that we can increase the quality and effectiveness of our initial formation? How can we continue to promote interprovincial, international, and inter-configurational formation communities/houses?
- **Any behavior incompatible with our identity and lifestyle as Passionist religious is a detriment to the religious himself who engages in it, to others in the Congregation, to the life and mission of the Church, and to society.** We are challenged to create mature individuals and communities for our mission, who are trustworthy and safe. We must prevent these types of behavior from occurring in the Congregation, and we must provide adequate codes of conduct, protocols and preventive measures for the protection of minors and vulnerable persons. Do we already have these protocols in each entity? Are we adhering to them? What are the results?



- **Our vocation is a precious gift contained in earthen vessels (2 Cor 4:6).** Ongoing formation, essential in Passionist life, needs to be addressed, defined and put into action through the preparation of a Congregational Program of Ongoing Formation. Ongoing formation cannot be reduced to a series of courses or to the acquisition of skills. Additionally, we seek the integral growth of the Passionist religious throughout the stages of his life. We must frequently evaluate this growth.
- **We need to reconstitute the General Formation Commission composed of an Executive Secretary, a General Consultor and the representation of all the Configurations through the President of the Formation Commission of each of them.** This Formation Commission has to be in communication with, available to and in contact with the real situation of formation in the Configurations. From the General Secretariat for Formation and the formation commission, in dialogue and in close relationship with the Configurations, locations and time periods, courses, seminars, study aids or meetings on different aspects of formation can be offered and promoted, based on the needs present in each Configuration, and also as support for the formation of the laity of the Passionist Family.

Conclusion

May this time of grace during this General Chapter, illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit, help us to listen to one another, to dialogue and together to find the ways, the means and the modalities so that "... Jesus Crucified and Risen may continue to be formed in us..." (Gal 4:19). May our Holy Father and Founder, Paul of the Cross, who always sought to be attentive to the formation of his sons, and for this purpose made great efforts and dedicated the most suitable persons in the Congregation to this ministry of formation, intercede for us.



The Postulator General

Fr. Cristiano Massimo Parisi

The Causes for Beatification and Canonization in process by the Passionist General Postulation

Thanks to the work done by my predecessors and the work of some other men and women religious who, according to their competencies, have contributed and are contributing to the on-going progress of the Causes, at the time of the commencement of the 2024 General Chapter, the "*status causarum*" is as follows.

Saints

- St. Paul of the Cross, Founder, canonized 29 June 1867.
- St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother canonized 13 May 1920.
- St. Gemma Galgani, canonized 2 May 1940.
- St. Vincent Mary Strambi canonized 11 June 1950.
- St. Maria Goretti, canonized 24 June 1950.
- St. Inocencio Canoura Arnau, canonized 21 November 1999.
- St. Charles Houben, canonized on 3 June 2007.

Blesseds

- Bl. Dominic Barberi beatified 27 October 1962.
- Bl. Isidore De Loor, beatified 30 September 1984.
- Bl. Pio Campidelli, beatified 17 November 1985.
- Bl. Bernard M. Silvestrelli, beatified 16 October 1988.
- Bl. Lorenzo Salvi, beatified 01 October 1989.
- Blesseds Niceforo Diez Tejerina and XXV Companions Martyrs of Daimiel, beatified 01 October 1989.
- Bl. Grimoaldo Santamaria, beatified 29 January 1995.
- Bl. Bishop Eugene Bossilkov, beatified 15 March 1998.



Venerables

- Giovanni Battista Danei, declared Venerable 7 August 1940.
- Galileo Nicolini, declared Venerable 27 November 1981.
- Maria Crocifissa Costantini, Foundress of the Passionist Nuns, declared Venerable on December 17, 1982.
- Giovanni Bruni, declared Venerable 9 June 1983.
- Nazareno Santolini, declared Venerable 7 September 1989.
- Giacomo Gianiel, declared Venerable 21 December 1989.
- Gerardo Segarduy, declared Venerable 21 December 1991.
- Antonietta Farani, of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross, declared Venerable 13 June 1992.
- Fortunato De Gruttis, declared Venerable 11 July 1992.
- Giuseppe Pesci, declared Venerable 6 July 1993.
- Norberto Cassinelli, declared Venerable 15 December 1994.
- Germano Ruoppolo, declared Venerable 11 July 1995.
- Egidio Malacarne, declared Venerable 26 March 1999.
- Francisco Gondra Muruaga (Patxi), declared Venerable 15 March 2008.
- Generoso Fontanarosa, declared Venerable 27 March 2013.
- Maddalena Marcucci, Passionist nun, declared Venerable 3 April 2014.
- Leonarda Boidi, Passionist nun of Ovada, declared Venerable 21 December 2018.
- Addolorata Luciani, Passionist nun of Ripatransone, declared Venerable 7 November 2018.
- Ignatius Spencer, declared Venerable 20 February 2021.
- Bernard Kryszkiewicz, declared Venerable 22 May 2021.
- Martin Fulgencio Elorza Legaristi declared Venerable 9 April 2022.
- Maria Maddalena Frescobaldi Capponi, Foundress of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross, declared Venerable 14 March 2024.



Servants of God

- Candido Amantini (the Positio super virtutibus is being reviewed.)
- Benito Arrieta (the Positio super virtutibus is being prepared.)
- Eugenio Raffaele Faggiano (the Positio super virtutibus is being reviewed.)
- Theodore Foley (the diocesan Process is in progress.)
- Carmelina Tarantino, of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross (the Positio is being elaborated).
- Marthe Vanden Putte, of the Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross in Belgium, (the Diocesan Supplemental Inquiry is underway.)

Causes of various Institutes of the Passionist Family assumed by the General Postulation

Venerabili

- Mary Potter, Foundress of the Little Company of Mary, declared Venerable 8 February 1988.
- Teresa Gallifa Palmarola, Foundress of the Congregation of the Servants of the Passion, declared Venerable 25 June 1996.
- Dolores Medina Zepeda, Foundress of the Mexican Passionist Sisters, declared Venerable 3 July 1998.
- Gemma Eufemia Giannini, Foundress of the Sisters of St. Gemma, declared Venerable 15 March 2008.
- Elizabeth Prout, of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, England, declared Venerable 21 January 2021.



External Causes

In addition to the Causes of the Congregation and of Institutes that share our charism, there are some external Causes that have been assumed with various titles.

- Stanislao Battistelli, Passionist bishop of Teramo (the process "super virtutibus" is in process.)
- Tarsilla Osti, of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Hearts, declared Venerable 15 March 2008.
- Giuseppe Codicè, Founder of the Pious Society of the Sisters of the Visitation, declared Venerable 21 December 2018.
- Leonilde Rossi, of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Hearts, declared Venerable 23 March 2023.
- Alessandro Vitetti, priest of the Diocese of Rossano-Cariati (Positio super virtutibus in process).

I was appointed Postulator General on 1 October 2016 by the current Superior General, Father Joachim Rego. This appointment was ratified by the Cardinal Prefect Angelo Amato of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 27 October 2016. From January to June 2017, I attended a 72-hour academic course offered by the Congregation for Saints, which included two final exams. This enabled me to function as Postulator General.

In the course of these seven years or so since my appointment, I would like to report on the progress of the following Causes:

- The declaration of Venerability of Leonarda Boidi, Passionist Nun of Ovada, declared Venerable on 21 December 2018;
- The declaration of Venerability of Fr. Joseph Codicè, Founder of the Pious Society of the Sisters of the Visitation, declared Venerable on 21 December 2018;
- The declaration of Venerability of Maria Addolorata Luciani, Passionist nun of Ripatransone, declared Venerable on 7 November 2018;



- The declaration of Venerability of Elizabeth Prout, of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion in England, declared Venerable on 21 January 2021;
- The Declaration of Venerability of Ignatius Spencer, declared Venerable on 20 February 2021;
- The declaration of Venerability of Bernard Kryszkiewicz, declared Venerable on 22 May 2021;
- The declaration of Venerability of Martin Fulgencio Elorza Legaristi, declared Venerable on 9 April 2022;
- The declaration of Venerability of Sr. Leonilde Rossi, of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Hearts, on 23 March 2023;
- The declaration of Venerability of Maria Maddalena Frescobaldi Capponi, on 14 March 2024;
- The consignment of the printed *Positio* of the Servant of God Eugenio Raffaele Faggiano;
- The consignment of the printed *Positio* of the Servant of God Candido Amantini;
- The consignment of the printed *Positio* of the Servant of God Maria Magdalena Frescobaldi Capponi, Foundress of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross;
- The consignment of the printed *Positio* of the Servant of God Leonilde Rossi, of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Hearts;
- The conclusion of the Diocesan Inquiry *super virtutibus* in favor of the Servant of God Carmelina Tarantino, of the Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross (the Inquiry lasted 13 years);
- The beginning and conclusion of the Diocesan Inquiry *super miro* in favor of Venerable Tarsilla Osti, of the Missionary Sisters of the Hearts (the Inquiry lasted 2 years).
- The beginning and conclusion of the Diocesan Inquiry *super miro* in favor of Blessed Pio Campidelli

For the purpose of an ever greater understanding of the Passionist charism, I have published the following texts (one book and five articles) of a scholarly nature:

1. *La memoria della Passione nel carisma di fondazione di san Paolo della Croce. Linee guida per un'ermeneutica*, EDB, 2021,



pp. 200. The text is on passiochristi.org in English and Spanish and can be downloaded;

2. *La memoria della Passione nel carisma di fondazione di san Paolo della Croce* (The article was published in the Proceedings of the Fourth International Theological Congress *La sapienza della croce in un mondo plurale*, Roma PUL-Cattedra Gloria crucis, 21-24 September 2021, directed by F. Taccone and C. Benedettini, volume I, Velar, Bergamo, 338-356 and in "La sapienza della croce", 2 (2021), 211-234.
3. *Dimensioni sinodale e carismatica nella vita dei primi compagni di san Paolo della Croce. Un tentativo di lettura*, in "La sapienza della croce", 1 (2022), 83-101.
4. "Grata memoria" e 'spiritualità della Passione', ovvero: le tracce viventi di san Paolo della Croce, in "Claretianum ITVC", n.s.13, t.62 (2022), 193-215.
5. *La missione popolare passionista nel terzo millennio. Linee di pensiero tra passato e presente*, in "La sapienza della croce", 2 (2022), 159-177.
6. *L'epoca ipermoderna. Quale 'spazio' per la memoria passionis?*, in "La sapienza della croce", 3 (2023), XXX.

At the end of this essential Report, while I thank the Superior General and all the former Provinces and Configurations of the entire Congregation for the trust that they placed in me, I also feel it is my duty to thank those religious who have worked and are working for the benefit of the various Causes, particularly those who represent the General Postulation in conducting them.



The General Archive

Dr. Eunice Dos Santos

CARING FOR HERITAGE AND MEMORY

A secret of life is to continuously return to one's Sources, to meditate on the spiritual synthesis of the Founder, and to rediscover one's soul. This consolidates, develops, and preserves one's spirituality. This way, the flame of charity, which leads to inner life and apostolate, is constantly rekindled. This also strengthens shared thoughts, life, and bonds, creating a sort of collective consciousness that increasingly forms and becomes a burning lamp for the entire family.

Of this treasure passed down through the centuries, the General Archive—now available in its new arrangement—is the institution that collects, preserves, organizes, and makes documents available for study and research.

During the six-year period 2018-2024, in addition to the recognition of its historical and cultural value by the Superintendence for Archives of Lazio, 70% of the archival material was reorganized, and the Archive's spaces were expanded and restructured with cleaned and air-conditioned rooms (from 223.44 to 392.04 m²). The security and fire prevention systems were installed, and the entire Archive (450 linear meters) was surveyed and inventoried, resulting in over 600 pages. New technological resources were implemented, and some important collections of papers (such as those of Strambi, Barberi, early documents, manuscripts) were digitized, and the Index was developed. I would like to emphasize that much of the Heritage kept in the Historical Archive is consulted weekly by dozens of scholars and enthusiasts of your History and Spirituality.

The initiative of some religious individuals to personally deliver important paper and digital archives, including various documents of the Founder and from the early days, is commendable and should be encouraged.



DIFFICULTIES AND SUGGESTIONS.

The Archive is still incomplete and partial. For the future, the following is proposed:

- The application of the Archive STATUTE, already in effect since 2019, to the entire Congregation. This aims to address the issue of dispersion, favor the traceability of the historical archives of the Provinces and monasteries, and centralize and preserve unofficial sources (religious) for the history of the Congregation (Statute, n. 10)¹⁰.
- Recompose the ten main Registers of the Congregation, some of which have been stagnant since the 60s-70s (Ratio Annua, Professions, Dismissals, and Obituary Notes, Protocol, Council Meetings, Benefactors, etc.; in addition to the house Registers: Religious Family, guests, gatherings, Platea, etc.). From the reorganization of the General Curia Archive, it was found that since 1988, the General Secretariat, due to a misunderstanding in the allocation of personnel responsibilities, has not regularly and in an orderly way delivered the documents produced and received by the Curia. It is necessary to address this gap by creating a stable connection between the operational documents of the General Secretariat and their cataloging and preservation in the Archive.
- Reconstruct the last twenty years of history by printing all the Bulletins, News, Information, and Communications sent by the individual provinces, vice-provinces, vicariates, etc., which were sent in digital format but never printed and archived.

A complete dossier is available at the Archive office for those who wish to see the results of the work carried out.

The General Archivist

¹⁰ See articles published in BIP n° 52, pp. 40-41; n° 53-54, pp. 56-57; n° 56, pp. 52-53; n° 57, pp. 3-9 and the Statute nn° 8 to 11.



Passionists International

Dr. Annemarie O'Connor

Director/NGO Representative to the United Nations

PI has been a voice at the UN for nearly 23 years. Our Passionist board members recall the energy and commitment that came from the first General Chapter held in Brazil where “we came to understand that the Spirit of God was calling us to be willing to speak our Passionist word in new places and in new ways. In a world that is forever changed by the forces of globalization, we heard a new call to add our voice...” (Kevin Dance) Likewise in their General Chapter, the Sisters of the Cross and Passion committed themselves to make justice, peace and integrity of creation central to their way forward as a community into the future. All knew that Paul called us to remember (and insist) that life is not just for some but for all, and this is what calls us to work for justice and uphold the life and dignity of all people, especially those most marginalized and vulnerable. This is the Gospel, and the crux of Catholic Social Teaching, which also finds parallels in the aims of the United Nations, the Declaration of Human Rights, many other UN conventions and treaties.

Passionists International's vision remains the same at the UN: to amplify the voices of those affected by all forms of poverty, inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and violence; and to commit to the care of all creation, the equality and empowerment of women and girls and all marginalized groups, the promotion of peace and reconciliation, and the building of socially just and resilient communities.

It is more important than ever to continue to be a voice at the UN, as poverty, hunger, inequality (economic, social, gender, racial, political, educational), environmental destruction, climate disasters, conflicts and forced migration are escalating, and those with the least resources are most affected. They must not be left behind. While the UN



Sustainable Development Goals seek to provide a path forward, the reality is that we are sorely behind: only 17% of goals expect to be met by 2030; another 48% show marginal to moderate progress; the rest have stagnated or regressed. There is a strong need to push for increased commitments and hold leaders accountable (locally & globally). Eradication of poverty, addressing debt and climate crises, and including a cross-cutting gendered perspective are overarching goals essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

To this end, PI has continued its efforts to focus on the following areas:

Women and Girls (via the Working Group on Girls and Commission on the Status of Women). We advocate for girls to be able to live lives free of discrimination, harassment and sexual and/or other forms of violence; to advance girls' education and empowerment to reach their full potential; to end early and forced marriage and other harmful practices; to enable girls' participation in decision-making at all levels regarding issues that affect them.

We submit collaborative statements with girls, participate with girl delegates in dialogues with various UN entities, organize International Day of the Girl at the UN, and support girl-led peer conversation circles globally and locally which enable girls' direct input to UN mechanisms to advocate for their needs. Girls are currently participating in a major review of the Beijing Platform for Action (4th World Conference on Women) which in 1995, recognized the importance of including a section on the rights and needs of the Girl Child due to the many indicators that show that the girl child is discriminated against from the earliest stages of life, through her childhood and into adulthood... "The reasons for the discrepancy include, among other things, harmful attitudes and practices, such as female genital mutilation, son preference - which results in female infanticide and prenatal sex selection - early marriage, including child marriage, violence against women, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, discrimination against girls in food allocation and other



practices related to health and well-being. As a result, fewer girls than boys survive into adulthood.”

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/girl.htm>

For both women and girls we advocate for their equal rights and access to all opportunities and services necessary to enable agency over their lives and to live in full dignity. A great ongoing concern has been the high rate of poverty among women and girls as a result of discriminatory attitudes and policies, thwarting their ability to maintain a decent standard of living, health, education, right livelihoods and true flourishing. This has resulted in the *feminization of poverty*, and is present throughout the world. Women and girls also continue to be the hardest hit with regards to climate change and climate emergencies... and are particularly vulnerable as migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons, as well as in areas of conflict and high degrees of violence.

Haiti Advocacy/Justice Coalition of Religious (via contact with Fr. Rick Frechette and colleagues, and in collaboration with 9 other congregations who have ministries in Haiti and are members of the Justice Coalition). We continue to maintain regular engagement with the UN Expert on Human Rights in Haiti and other UN Representatives to the Secretary General, Security Council members and Representatives of Permanent Missions to keep issues of Haiti front and center. We continue to share on-the-ground reports from our ministries re: the devastating effects Haitians are experiencing on a daily basis due to the brutal violence of heavily armed gangs; the 580,000 people who have had to flee their homes; the daily exacerbation of humanitarian needs as nearly half the population experiences acute hunger, and malnutrition and wasting are very high among children; the brutal sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls by gangs now at the highest levels such that it cannot even be counted; and that January to March has seen the highest number of deaths, wounded and kidnapped victims in Haiti's history.



Haiti has now seen the first instalments of the Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission led by Kenya and authorized by the UN Security Council to support the Haitian National Police in ending the gang violence and restoring security to Haiti. A Transitional Presidential Council has been sworn in, and an Interim Prime Minister has been appointed. Together they will govern Haiti, restore Haiti's justice system, work with the MSS mission, and work towards eventual free, inclusive and transparent elections and meeting the long-term needs and wellbeing of the people of Haiti.

At this time, our advocacy group is also urging US President Biden and US Congress to address the illicit arms and ammunitions flow from the US that is fueling gang activity, by calling for increased oversight of exports to Haiti. In July, in collaboration with a number of organizations advocating for Haiti at the UN and in the US, we are hosting a webinar on this issue, to educate and mobilize for a lobby day in Washington DC in September. We are also petitioning for US compliance with the international-law principle of *non-refoulement* by extending and redesignating Haiti for Temporary Protected Status beyond August 2024, and maintaining eligibility of Haitian nationals for the Humanitarian Parole Program which would prohibit their deportation

(PI is a member of the governing board of Justice Coalition of Religious. I coordinate the Haiti Advocacy Team and serve on JCoR's strategic planning committee.)

Extractive Industries (via participation in the NGO Mining Working Group). We continue to advocate against harmful mining practices and illegal land grabs by the extractive industry infringing on the rights of **Indigenous Peoples** and local communities, and their human rights to health, clean water and self-determination. We have met with Indigenous activists from Papua New Guinea, West Papua, Amazonia and the US during the **UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues** and post-COP28. Those from Amazonia represented REPAM (PanAmazon



Ecclesial Network), and CLAR (Religious Conference of Latin America.) and reported on the harm being done to their regions and way of life by the extractive industry, and the abuse of their legal rights to free, prior and informed consent re: projects in their territories. They also presented a comprehensive report outlining their advocacy priorities which has been submitted to the UN, and requested our continued support as we advocate with UN Missions and other UN entities re: extractive industry.

Our working group is also currently studying issues related to the "Green Transition" and the rush to extract essential minerals (eg, lithium, cobalt, etc.) at the expense of people, earth and ocean bodies, as well as other "false solutions" noted by Indigenous science and others. We hope to organize webinars later in 2024 to provide further information and as we determine our advocacy strategies at the UN.

GAZA – (via participation in the Israel-Palestine Working Group)

Israel's continued attacks on civilian populations and deaths now numbering 39,000, (mostly women and children), the obstruction of humanitarian aid, increased malnutrition and wasting among children, designation of famine, lack of medical care and facilities, massive forced displacement of Palestinians are all of grave concern.

We have been closely following international community responses (Security Council and General Assembly), and reports of the Special Rapporteur on human rights issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to inform our advocacy at the UN, and have also been engaging in interfaith witness outside the US Permanent Mission. Passionists International has also signed on to letters from our Justice Coalition of Religious and another from US Catholics to President Biden calling for an immediate ceasefire and halt to weapons sales/transfers to Israel. The letter remains open to individuals and organizations in the US for signing:



<https://paxchristiusa.org/2024/05/02/sign-on-letter-from-us-catholics-on-israel-palestineopen-for-endorsements/>

In January, **the International Court of Justice** warned Israel that it must cease genocidal activities as defined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, and that all parties to the convention must refrain from aiding and supporting such activities.

In July, the ICJ ruled in its Advisory Opinion that: Israel's continued presence is unlawful and must end as soon as possible; all settlements are illegal, must cease immediately, and all settlers must be evacuated immediately; Israel must pay reparations (restitution, compensation) to Palestinians for damages related to settlements and taking of natural resources; all states and all international organizations are obligated not to recognize Israel's unlawful presence; and the UN and especially the General Assembly (which requested the Advisory Opinion) and Security Council should consider modalities to end Israel's unlawful presence.

Meantime, in May, a draft resolution was put forth by France to consider Palestine for full membership in the UN. Over 150 Member States have now voted in favor.

NGO Committee for Social Development: Member

Passionists International also co-sponsored and assisted in organizing the Civil Society Forum - a dialogue between Civil Society, the UN, Member States and other stakeholders at the UN: *Fostering Social Development and Social Justice through Social Policies to Accelerate Progress on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to Achieve the Overarching Goal of Poverty Eradication.*



Other Committees *PI* attends to keep informed on advocacy issues:

Climate Working Group of Committee of Religious NGOs – *PI* is currently applying for accreditation to attend COP19 Biodiversity Conference in Colombia to support faith-based and Indigenous advocacy efforts there; **NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous People** + participation in Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; **NGO Committee on Migration** and **NGO Committee on Financing for Development**.

Reflection and Recommendations re: our work at the UN:

As challenges increase in almost all areas of life, especially for people who are close to, on or below the margins, and the Sustainable Development Goals remain stalled or worsened, accelerated efforts and concerted commitments need to be made by leaders of UN Member States. More and more we learn that even where nations and local jurisdictions have laws and rights enshrined in their constitutions, there is often a lack of political will to truly implement them and prioritize the needs of those who are most prevented from living with dignity and equality. We need to put pressure at local and international levels to amplify their needs and voices. We need to join with others/engage with allies (within the UN system and in civil society) in promoting decisions for the Common Good, and supporting efforts towards a “social solidarity economy” or a “care economy”.

People ask why it is important for Passionists International and other congregations to maintain a presence at the UN. More than ever, those of us working in this context have come to recognize the UN as gospel space – a place where we have the opportunity and the mandate as “friends of God and prophets” to push for “recognition of the rights of people at every point of contact”, just as governments/institutions/societies/local communities/families are meant to heed the call to serve in ways that give every person what they need to live, “each according to their needs.” We should be a voice for that - a disturber,



a disruptor to the status quo , and a catalyst for change - to keep reminding decision-makers what people are really experiencing, and what they are needing and deserving of - those inalienable human rights. We must make it a priority to bring their direct voices to the table so they can engage firsthand. There are many people working in this vast system who want to hear the realities, and they ask us to keep sharing our “on the ground” reports from our ministries. They need to be reminded of the human face of it, just as we need to see the dangerous memory Christ asks us to hold – of people suffering - and that we respond to co-create conditions for the kingdom here, building right relationships and alliances.

The United Nations is far from perfect, and is often dysfunctional, like our own institutions. Space for civil society seems to be shrinking – there are limited opportunities to bring voices to the table - but we must take them. Some Member States would rather exclude us; others are very supportive partners and value our input and our ground reports greatly. Rather than walk away, my colleagues and I believe we should stay and engage – be the persistent woman in the Gospel who presses for more than crumbs. Make visible and audible the grassroots experience in an international forum. Hold leaders accountable. Work with and for others towards making freedom, justice and peace a reality. I believe we are also called to be in hard and often slow-changing places...We need to let the yeast rise. We are called to keep the dream alive: “I myself will dream a dream within you.”

Regarding the role of Director/ Representative to the United Nations, I recommend that it be returned to a full-time position, based in New York, and that consideration be given to a model of shared leadership – perhaps of lay and vowed, splitting the time and tasks, and providing better linkage with the larger Passionist community.



I say this because in my three years as director, I have found the position somewhat isolated from the larger Passionist community. Organizationally, *PI* seems to be an island. We do not belong to any one region or province, nor are we part of a global group of Passionist JPIC ministries. Even in the past when such a group existed, we were a separate entity. My colleagues at the UN (both lay and professed) seem to be more fully integrated into the overall mission and communications of their congregations. I am most grateful to have the ongoing support and strong commitment to justice of our board of Passionists and partners in ministry, and appreciate opportunity to attend the SPC province assemblies bi-annually. Yet through my ten years of involvement on the board, this gap and desire for *PI*'s greater connection with the larger Passionist family has been expressed as a recurrent concern.

I had also hoped to establish at least a small network of JPIC contacts that could both inform my work and allow me to bring their regional issues to the UN. When I did receive JPIC contact information last year, I was able to connect with more Passionists/Partners: in Brazil, Honduras, S. Africa, UK/Ireland, Poland, Australia, Bethany/Holy Land, and Vietnam. I have also had ongoing opportunities for collaboration with PSN and Passionists UK, as well as CP Sisters in the US and in Ireland/UK (in addition to my longstanding contact with Fr. Rick in Haiti and our board members from Kenya, Philippines, Argentina.) Yet I found I could not do more than the initial outreach to most, as much time was needed for advocacy at the UN. I found my hopes were unrealistic for a half-time position. Likewise, I found it difficult to maintain communications with the larger community via *PI* newsletters and website presence due to time constraints and less advanced tech skills/need for tech support. (However, *PI* board members were fully and regularly informed.)

I hope that these concerns can be further explored to more fully and effectively engage the mission and integration of *PI* with both congregations. In these past 23 years, we have gone from having two



representatives, to one, to half-time. Yet the needs of the world grow more pressing and need to be addressed globally as well as locally. They go hand in hand. I hope too that we can engage in a process of Appreciative Inquiry to acknowledge all the strengths and positive outcomes generated by our work at the UN over these twenty-plus years, as well as the gaps, challenges and future opportunities. Our commitment to justice is at the heart of our calling!

With much gratitude!

Annemarie O'Connor

Passionists International Addendum

Board Meeting Discussion, August 20, 2024

Re: Desire to Become a Community of Justice and Advocacy

In addition to Annemarie's Report, a decision was made to share Kevin Dance's reflection (*below*), and additional remarks from board members, with the General Chapter and the CP Sisters' Congregational Leadership Team.

Passionists International –

Some thoughts from Kevin Dance:

A constant sadness for me in the years I was officially representing the Passionist family to the United Nations was the lack of obvious 'ownership' by our members of the purpose and thrust of Passionists International (PI).

There was a consistent lack of communication and few spoken statements of support.

Because of this there did not grow and develop an obvious interaction between the PI Representative and Passionist religious in the various parts of our Congregations.



I longed for regular statements by the Leaders of our Passionist Congregations to support and encourage the work and the statements of our Representative to the governments where our men and women live and work to plant the gospel in their own countries. Such statements and support were few and far between.

We said at our official meetings that justice is truly constitutive of our charisms. But we never quite translated this into action and into practical advocacy.

I did believe and I continue to believe quite passionately in the importance of promoting justice at the United Nations and in the public activity of the countries in which we live and minister.

Is it possible that our Congregations can ever reach out to become a community of justice and advocacy? I believe that this growth would bring energy to our ministries and to deeper and better communication among our members throughout the world.

If something is worthwhile, then it needs also to be paid for, not only with the involvement of our members, but also with the support of some finance to make this work truly possible.

Jesus said to us so often "I have come that you may have life and have it to the fullest." Courage, commitment and passion among our Sisters and Brothers are what I long for as we search to become believable witnesses to a more human, just and loving community.

I support and encourage the work of Annemarie O'Connor, our Representative at the United Nations. I pray that we will support her and make it possible for her to carry on this challenging and valuable work to bring the gospel alive among the nations.

-Kevin Dance

(First Official Representative
of the Passionist Family to the United Nations)



PI board members recognize that justice and advocacy is happening in a number of Passionist communities, and that active ministry commitments of Passionists already require multiple engagements, yet the question remains:

Is it possible that our Congregations can ever reach out [do more] to become a community of justice and advocacy? As Kevin stated, we believe that this growth would bring energy to our ministries and to deeper and better communication among our members throughout the world.

We recognize that there is a history of ambivalence and at times hostility re: US/UN (location of UN in capitalist country), and also some resistance to forming a network of JPIC ministries inclusive of Passionists International. PI has had to operate as an island of sorts for many years.

Other congregations at the UN integrate their UN Representatives more fully: in their meetings, reporting mechanisms, in-person engagements, Chapter discussions, website communications, etc., all as part of the their overall justice and peace commitment. The UN Representative is seen as providing a voice on the international level, with grass roots input. Depending on the level of investment (Full-time or part-time), resources, and support from/integration with the congregations, representatives can be a more effective voice in a number of priority areas.

Some questions we have:

Does the Passionist Community desire to actively support PI's work at the UN?

How can the Passionist community contribute to its growth?

Will PI be integrated into an overall Passionist commitment to justice and advocacy?

Will a larger Passionist JPIC network be re-established and include PI?



Can Passionists establish broad-based communication re: on-the-ground situations among the Passionist justice and advocacy ministries around the globe, such as via a yearly JPIC gathering? (last gathering held in 2015 and no appointment of JPIC Coordinator since). Can we work together to be more effective instruments of justice?

We have very limited opportunities to speak about issues of concern at the UN. This General Chapter opportunity is valuable to us, but we hope for more opportunities to gather with the larger Passionist community around issues of justice and advocacy, to hear from each other what is happening and discern effective response on all levels.



Message from the Holy Father to the Superior General

on the occasion of the 48th General Chapter



To the Reverend
Fr. **Joachim Rego**, C.P.
Superior General
of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ

On the occasion of the 48th General Chapter of your Religious Family with the theme, *"Here I am, send me (Is. 6:8). The Passion of Christ Source of Life and Mission,"* I extend to you and your confreres my cordial best wishes.

The Chapter event you are about to celebrate is an important moment for the Congregation since you are called to listen to the Holy Spirit, the One who can stir up new pastoral goals to be implemented with joy and renewed vigor in the Church and in the missionary field where He has sent you. Therefore, with a grateful and docile spirit dispose yourselves to take on the innovations He will reveal so that strengthened in faith and enlightened by Him you may make creative choices to face the challenges of the present hour.

"See your neighbor in the side of Jesus-- thus you will love him with pure and holy love." (Letters, 437) *"Let us love our neighbor in God; let us love God in our neighbor."* (Letters, 327) The words of St. Paul of the Cross, a man



transfigured by the Passion of Christ, are still a strong reminder to you today to be instruments of mercy among those who are afflicted in body and spirit.

Additionally, be attentive to the exhortation to become "compassionate apostles," dispensers of God's love among the underprivileged, faithful instruments of divine Mercy to heal the wounds of humanity distressed by so much suffering.

Be enthusiastic witnesses of the *Sapientia Crucis* [the Wisdom of the Cross] by disseminating its salvific value. It is through the contemplation of the Crucified that we can know the immense power of the sacrificial love that emanates from the weakness of the Cross. Only in this way do we learn the humble manner of God who gives himself unconditionally in order to be close to man and set him on the path of hope that does not wane— *Ave Crux Spes Unica* [Hail O Cross, our only hope].

Finally, I renew the invitation offered on the occasion of the Jubilee Celebrations for the Third Centenary of the Founding of your Congregation - July 1, 2021 - that this event may give you new impetus to "deepen the relevance of the Cross in the framework of the many contemporary contexts" and as spiritual heirs of St. Paul of the Cross, "ensure that the Paschal Mystery, the centre of the Christian faith and the charism of the Passionist religious family, is proclaimed and disseminated in response to divine Charity, and that it addresses the expectations and hopes of the world."

With these sentiments, as I entrust each of you to the intercession of St. Paul of the Cross and to St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, I gladly impart to you my paternal Blessing. May the Virgin Mother protect you everywhere. And please do not forget to pray for me.

Fraternally,

Francis

Rome, from St. John Lateran, September 29, 2024
Feast of the Holy Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael



Address of His Holiness at the Audience with the Participants of the Chapter

*Clementine Hall
Friday, 25 October 2024*

Dear brothers, welcome, good morning!

I greet the Superior General and all of you – Passionists or impassioned.

I am pleased to meet you at this time, as you are about to conclude your General Chapter, which questioned how to respond appropriately to our tumultuous time – all times have been tumultuous – and how to respond to the initiative of God, who always calls us to cooperate in his plan of salvation. Was it an elective Chapter? And were you elected? Who was before you? Have you been freed? Good, well done...

You did so by reflecting in a particular way on the words addressed by God to the prophet Isaiah: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (*Is* 6:8), and meditating on Jesus' invitation before the expectations of the Kingdom: "pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (*Lk* 10:2). And how many novices do you have? ["50"]. And where are they from? ["All over the world, especially Asia"]. From Europe too? ["Europe too"]. The old Europe... [They repeat: "The old Europe"].

To the prophet Isaiah's question, to start over as proclaimers of the Crucified and Risen, with lips purified with the fire of love, which is drawn from the contemplation of the mystery, it is necessary to answer again, "Here am I! send me" (*Is* 6:8). This will renew missionary energies also in view of the imminent Jubilee.

A mission that aims to reach as many people as possible is desirable, indeed necessary, because everyone, no one excluded, is in dire need



of the light of the Gospel. Without renouncing the usual methods of pastoral action, I wish you to also identify new paths and create new opportunities to facilitate the encounter between people and the encounter with the Lord, who abandons no one, but "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4).

It is therefore necessary to go out into the streets, squares and alleyways of the world, so as not to become inflexible and musty, and as a test of one's own joyful and fruitful faith. However, to go out in this way can only be effective if it springs from the fullness of the love of God and of humanity, lived in the contemplative life, in the fraternal relations of the community and in mutual support – contemplative life and relations with the community. Do not leave the contemplative life: you have a rich tradition of contemplative life – so as to walk together, experiencing the Lord's presence in your midst.

To create events of evangelization, presenting the sublime beauty of the Person of Christ together with the face of an attractive, welcoming and engaging Church, therefore requires a constant rootedness in prayer and in the Word of God. This rootedness in prayer is an important part of your tradition: withdrawing for prayer and contemplation, sometimes for a few months or sometimes every day or part of the day.

Be faithful to your task of keeping alive the precious charism of Saint Paul of the Cross. Evangelization, based on good self-witness, on *kèrigma*, on homilies, proclaims the love of God given in the Son for human salvation. Your Founder grasped all this in its root, and enraptured by this mystery, guided by the Spirit, found himself immersed in a spiritual experience that made him one of the most famous mystics of his time.

His most original insight was that the death of Jesus on the Cross is the supreme manifestation of God's love. It is the miracle of miracles of divine love, the doorway to enter in the intimacy of prayer and of the union with him, the school for learning all the virtues, the energy that makes it possible to bear any pain. At the same time, your Founder was



tormented by the perception that humanity is not fully aware of this love. "God's love is not known, it is not appreciated", he exclaimed.

From this inner experience arose the determination to gather companions who were immersed in the contemplation of that love and were ready to proclaim it.

With the joy and strength of this charismatic belonging, Passionists also know how to proclaim the presence of the Crucified and Risen in the suffering of our day. We know its vastness and devastation in poverty, in wars, in the laments of creation, in the perverse dynamics that produce divisions between people, and the rejection of the weak. Let everything possible be done to prevent the pain of our brothers from remaining meaningless and resulting in a waste of humanity

and despair. In the throes of this pain Christ passed, suffering and crucified, living every wound in love and offering meaning to pain offered out of love.

Your Chapter took place at the same time as the convocation of the Synod of Bishops on synodality and not far from the opening of the Jubilee, which has among its main themes, that of *hope*.

The virtue of hope has a special relationship with the charism of the Passionists. Indeed, its theological reason is the death and resurrection of Christ. The blood and water that flow from his heart tells us that beyond death, life continues, love is poured out on humanity in the gift of the Spirit, communicating itself with a power that no-one can eliminate. If nothing can stifle in the human being the capacity to love, then nothing is lost, everything rediscovers meaning and value, everything is saved. Hope is grounded in this certainty of faith.

Be drawn also by the solicitude of the Virgin Mary who, at the dawn of her special mission in the Father's plan for salvation, set out in haste towards the mountain, where she gave herself in helping her elderly relative. Declaring herself a servant of the Lord, she placed herself at



the service of her neighbour and was proclaimed Mother of the Lord by her cousin Elizabeth.

Following the example and through the intercession of the Virgin Mary – who, on Calvary, before her dying Son, lives “the deepest ‘kenosis’ of faith in human history” (Saint John Paul II, Encyclical Letter [*Redemptoris Mater*](#), 18) – the Passionists live their consecration and mission, aware of the urgency of spreading the message of salvation. It is not the haste of the clock, *krónos*, but that of grace, *kairós*, of the love that runs to reach its goal, like the wave of the sea that hastens to touch the shore.

A love that is expressed with the word that is the echo of the Word of truth, with the gesture of lifting up the poor and needy, or with the simple silence of staying close to those who suffer.

May God bless each one of you, your Congregation and your mission!

CHRONICLES

OF THE 48th GENERAL CHAPTER

October 4-6

The 48th General Chapter (October 4-26, 2024) was preceded by a pre-Chapter phase consisting of a three day workshop (October 4-6).

On October 4, at 8.00 am, the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The session began with a time of prayer, during which the newly renovated Aula was blessed. During the prayer, a biographical profile of Father Harry Gielen (1925-2013), to whose memory the Aula was dedicated, was read. The Chapter President, Father Joachim Rego, also thanked Father Vito Patera and the architect Francesco Pezzini for overseeing the renovation work. Before the conclusion of the session, a life-size statue of the Founder located within the Aula was unveiled.

Afterwards, Father Joachim officially greeted the Chapter participants, introduced the Facilitators, Father Yago Abeledo, a Missionary of Africa, and Mr. José Villoslada, and the spiritual adviser, Father Kenneth Thesing of the Maryknoll Missionaries.

The Facilitators presented the schedule for this first day and introduced the work with the presentation of the workshop.

In the first session, the religious were invited to enter into the beauty of the blessing received during the moment of prayer. Afterwards, the Chapter members were invited to express their thoughts about the word "blessing" and their impressions about being in this Hall, particularly regarding the arrangement of the tables. Returning to the theme of blessing, the topic was further developed by talking about the meaning of blessing in different cultures. This was followed by a practical exercise, whereby each Chapter member was invited to bless a confrere.

The first session included an additional time period when the Chapter members were asked to reflect on the following points:

1. Do they feel blessed to have been elected delegates to the Chapter?
2. How is this blessing manifested in each person?



After that, each Chapter member was invited to share with the confrere next to him. After this time of sharing in the Hall, there was a break, as prescribed by the day's schedule.

Sharing continued during the second session and focused on the video "The Blessing - world edition 2024," which was viewed at the end of the first session.

This was followed by a time of prayer introduced by Father Kenneth Thesing and led by the facilitator, Father Yago. Afterwards, Chapter members were invited to reflect on the following questions:

1. Can changes be a blessing?
2. Can we perceive blessings in difficult and unexpected situations?

Again, each Chapter member was invited to share with the confrere next to him.

After a moment of fraternal sharing in the plenary assembly concerning the above questions, the facilitator, Father Yago, presented the Chapter Logo and asked the Chapter members to share their opinion about the image.

The second session ended as scheduled, after a time of prayer in the form of storytelling, led by Fr. Kenneth.

In the third session the facilitator, José, proposed a brief mental and physical exercise focused on one's breathing and the choice of a comfortable posture.

Afterward, Father Yago, having explained that the spirit of this chapter should be a synodal spirit, presented a video in which testimonies reminded the capitulars that Christ is present in every person and in everything.

Then, each capitular was invited to share his experience of the video with the confrere beside him.

Following a short period of sharing by the entire group on the theme "Being Christian means seeing Christ in everyone and in everything" (Richard Rohr), Father Yago proposed another exercise, this time about

diversity. Each table was asked to identify ten areas marked by diversity, especially those areas that often lead to division. In the subsequent sharing of the whole group, more than 60 areas were singled out.

A scheduled break followed.

In the fourth session, José introduced the topic of psychological security, a fundamental element in living a healthy fraternal life which aspires to fostering open sharing; i.e., a sharing which combines listening, comprehending, speaking, and contributing. He presented a chart showing four stages of a "security" scale, structured as follows: inclusion, learning, contribution, and challenge. Each "stage" calls for a reflection on questions which must be faced in order to achieve a state of psychological security, and thus be able to face any critique responsibly. The goal of this process is to arrive at a full sense of belonging, which is a necessary premise for eventual expansion, for example, to be achieved at the Congregational level.

Once again, each capitular was invited to share with the confrere beside him, and then sharing took place in the group as a whole.

Before the session concluded, the floor was given to Father Kenneth, who expressed appreciation for the decision to give the chapter a synodal theme; and for listening for the Spirit. However, he continued, the synodal process, which allows everyone to speak, also requires attentive listening, and this second aspect—attentive listening—takes more effort to be included. In other words, each capitular should first ask himself what he really gained from what he heard. For instance, one should ask whether there was an attempt to incorporate the presence of the Spirit and, if there had been, was enough time given to prayer. Overall, mature and responsible choices were made which point towards a successful outcome for the Chapter.

The day of workshop ended at the scheduled time.



On October 5, at 8.00 am, the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The second day of the workshop began with an invitation from the facilitator José to do the following psycho-physical exercise: put aside computers and cell phones, assume a comfortable posture in the chair, and focus on breathing.

Next, Father Yago invited the Chapter members to share how they feel. This was followed by a moment of prayer during which a quotation from St. Paul of the Cross from a letter dated March 3, 1738, to Francesco Antonio Appiani was read (below is part of the text of the letter): *"Oh! happy are they who are faithful when suffering every pain for love of Jesus! Oh! the great treasures they acquire in remaining in a dry and desolate prayer! Courage, dear one. After the storm a calm will come. [...] Be strong and constant. Love self-contempt; put human respect under your feet; be exemplary, modest, recollected and withdrawn; speak little; and use your time partly in prayer, study, and spiritual reading. Walk in the Divine Presence and get accustomed to ejaculatory prayers."* He then showed a video of a meditation song.

In the first session, Father Yago presented a 1982 study by the Passionist Costante Brovetto, entitled "The spirituality of St. Paul of the Cross and our Passionist spirituality as symbolized in the fourth vow" (Studies in Passionist History and Spirituality, No. 7, p. 21). In particular, Father Yago presented part of the paragraph entitled *"The Memory of the Cross Gives Birth to the New Man."* The following is the text that was read by the facilitator: *"According to St. Paul of the Cross, the transformation in the Passion leads to the birth of a new man, in God. The cultural context into which he immersed his perceptions received them in a rather limited manner, moralistically, ascetically and devotionally. We, on the other hand, can avail ourselves of modern theological and pastoral progress in order to propose the Gospel of the Cross in a way which is faithful to his spirit and adapted to our times."* He also presented a quote from Father Javier Melloni, SJ, on the difference between prophecy and mysticism. After that, each Chapter member was invited to share with the confrere next to him.

After a moment of plenary sharing on the figure of St. Paul of the Cross, the facilitator, Father Yago, presented a quote from Anthony de

Mello, SJ-- "There's nothing you can do to see - it is a gift" and invited the Chapter members to reflect on what they see and from what perspective. He also quoted a passage from Pope Francis' October 9, 2021, *Moment of Reflection Address for the Beginning of the Synod journey* and introduced the concept of *deep democracy*, a philosophical thought, a way of working with people so that no one feels left out, and an attitude of compassion. Father Yago suggested an equivalence between the concept of synodality and *deep democracy*.

Again, each Chapter member was invited to share with those next to him, starting from the above-mentioned reflections.

After a moment of plenary sharing on a quote from Arnold Mindell on *deep democracy*, particularly on the importance of learning how to relate, how to interact with one another, there was a break, as per the day's schedule.

Plenary sharing continued during the second session.

After that, Father Yago introduced the phrase "The Passion of belonging" and invited each Chapter member to share with the confrere next to him. This was followed by plenary sharing, during which the Chapter members were invited to speak not only about the phrase "The Passion of belonging," but also about what they felt following the sharing with the confrere; in other words, the facilitator's invitation to the Chapter members was to first speak about what they heard.

Next, Father Yago presented some images accompanied by the following phrases, "the more we run away from conflicts, the more they take over; the more we try to avoid them, the more they control us." He followed up with a summary of the 67 diversities that emerged from the exercise done during the first day of the workshop and offered four questions to help reflect on the proposed summary.

The second session ended as scheduled in the day's programme.

At the beginning of the third session, Father Yago proposed to the chapter members a conversation in the spirit based on the four questions, expression of "diversity." The chapter members were invited to dialogue in pairs of two and to do so while walking in the garden as an Emmaus experience. The criteria for choosing a confrere were as follows:



1. The confreres must share the same mother tongue;
2. One must choose the confrere whom one knows the least.

This was followed by a fraternal sharing in plenary and then there was a break, as per the day's schedule.

In the fourth session, the facilitators invited those chapter members who had shared in plenary during the third session, to stand up; the purpose of this exercise was to try to remember what contribution they had made with their reflections. Next, they invited the chapter members to share with the confreres who are at the same table in the light of the Emmaus experience; the purpose was to identify in a single sentence or paragraph the meaning of the experience of the Emmaus journey.

The workshop continued with plenary sharing, which was followed by a few minutes of silence to interiorize the experience.

Father Kenneth then spoke of the beauty of the unity he perceived on this day as the chapter members tried to listen to each other. Like Jesus Christ who, addressing the Father called him Abba, so, throughout this day, the chapter members sought to experience this moment of deep communion, even when there were moments of disagreement. Not only that, but an energy flowed within the Hall and this emerged through the use of a word that recurred several times: 'consensus.' The invitation that followed was to listen to the confrere more and more deeply and to the core; by doing so, each person's thinking can grow and grow in communion.

He also recalled Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and quoted N.15 of the Encyclical, which states that "In God's plan, every man is born to seek self-fulfillment, for every human life is called to some task by God. At birth a human being possesses certain aptitudes and abilities in germinal form, and these qualities are to be cultivated so that they may bear fruit. By developing these traits [...] the individual works his way toward the goal set for him by the Creator. Endowed with intellect and free will, each man is responsible for his self-fulfillment even as he is for his salvation [...] Utilizing only his talent and willpower, each man can grow in humanity, enhance his personal worth, and perfect himself". These words resonate as relevant as ever and concern all men and

women who, in their desire for self-realization, will only transcend themselves, because a humanism is true if it is open to the Absolute.

The workshop day ended at the scheduled time.

On October 6, at 8.00 am, the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The third day of the workshop began with an invitation from José to put aside electronic devices (computer, cell phone, and so on), find a comfortable posture in the chair and focus on breathing.

Next, Father Yago spoke and invited the Chapter members to pray and to do so with one of the prayers composed for the General Chapter.

This was followed by an invitation to the Chapter members to share how they feel.

After that, Father Yago presented a reflection based on the idea of order and disorder. There is a time for order and a time for disorder. Order is given, in a religious institute, by the Constitutions and an organized life. However, sometimes there are causes that create dissonance in our way of life; hence disorder. This has to be welcomed, accepted, because if there is only order, there is a risk of becoming machines, and the first consequence, in a religious Institute, is that we risk stifling the Holy Spirit. Both order and disorder are necessary. When we recognize the importance of both, we come to a new reality, new certainties, that is, a new order; until the arrival of a new dissonance and so on.

Next, the Chapter members were invited to work in groups and, based on the synodal approach, were asked to choose 5 criteria that can serve for discernment for the group during the Chapter.

Each group was also asked to choose a moderator and a secretary.

During the second session, the secretaries of each group shared the identified criteria.

A plenary sharing session followed. The second session ended at 12:30 pm.

In the third session, the methodology used since the beginning of the workshop was presented again: seeing-discerning-acting-evaluating and celebrating are the elements that characterize it. Each of the aforementioned aspects is centered on the word PRESENT, that is,



everything must take place in the present moment. This methodology will also be used for the General Chapter.

The 5 points of the methodology can also help to understand how each chapter member feels, particularly what the emotions of the moment are; as a result, interpersonal relationships can be managed more carefully. Not only that but, having identified the emotional states of the present moment, one can also look at one's past, to understand what, for example, has been left unresolved because it was never addressed or resolved. At this point one can move confidently into the future, which is nothing but a hidden present.

A key point of this methodology is COMPASSION, which remains a safe space for everyone.

After that, the facilitators invited the chapter members to share with the confreres present at their table on the following sentence, "how relevant has this workshop been to bond and get prepared us for a synodical chapter? Why?"

A plenary sharing followed.

Finally, the facilitators took the floor and thanked the chapter members and announced the conclusion of the workshop.

After a 20-minute break, the capitulars returned to the Hall and followed Father Marco Pasquali's presentation of the Synago program. This system allows for easier, faster and safer communication among the capitulars.

The pre-chapter work concluded at 6.20 p.m.

October 7: Day of Retreat

At 8.30 am, the religious gathered in the Chapter House. The day began with a moment of prayer led by the Chapter President, Father Joachim Rego, which was followed by acts of intercession by the chapter members, interspersed with the chant *Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo*. This moment ended with the recitation of one of the Prayers written for the Chapter.

After that, Father Joachim introduced Archbishop Luiz Fernando Lisboa, who governs the Diocese of Cachoeiro de Itapemirim, who led the day of retreat, which was structured as follows:

9.10-9.45 am: first meditation

9.50-10.25 am: silence

10.30 am-12.40 pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at the Chapel of the Retreat House

1 pm: lunch

3.40-4.25 pm: second meditation

4.30 pm: silence

6.30 pm: Opening Eucharistic celebration of the Chapter in the Basilica

The meditations focused on some moments of the Passion of Jesus Christ: the decision to go to Jerusalem, the agony in the Garden of Olives, the scourging and death. Alongside these scenes, Archbishop Lisboa recalled the figure of St. Paul of the Cross and invited his listeners to ask how the Founder of the Passionists lived out his mission to stand beside suffering humanity. The chapter members, then, were invited to ask themselves how to live out the mission of standing beside those whom the world reduces to nothing. He concluded by recalling that the Passion becomes mission and to it we are all sent.

With the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Bishop Lisboa, the 48th General Chapter officially began. The music of the liturgy was led by the "Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross." Some religious "Daughters of the Passion of Jesus Christ and the Sorrows of Mary of Sorrows" and lay Passionists were also present.



October 8

On October 8, the first day of Chapter, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. Father Joachim Rego, the Chapter President, led the prayer. The Gospel passage from Luke 10:38-42 and number 5 of our Constitutions were read. Each moment was interspersed with a hymn invoking the Holy Spirit. At the conclusion, prayer number 6 written for the Chapter was read and the chant *Salve Sanctae Pater* was sung.

The President greeted the Chapter members and proceeded to the roll call. He explained and excused the absence of Fathers José Agustín Orbegoza Jauregi and Elie Muakasa, who will not be attending the General Chapter. The Chapter members are, therefore, seventy-eight.

The following were then approved with an absolute majority:

1. The Procedure Manual;
2. The Secretary of the Chapter, Cristiano Massimo Parisi;
3. The two scrutineers: Rolly Onyango Jackwood and Luis Alirio Ramirez Riveros;
4. The facilitators: Father Yago Abeledo, Missionary of Africa and Mr. José Villoslada;
5. The Moderator, Father Yago Abeledo;
6. The Spiritual guide: Father Kenneth Thesing of the Maryknoll Missionaries;
7. The Agenda – main points;
8. The ordinary time table;
9. The digital platform *Synago* and the *Whatsapp* application for communications.

In addition, the first vote was taken to elect the members of the Central Coordinating Commission (CCC).

Approval of possible legal and editorial committees was deferred.

Afterwards, Father Joachim Rego presented a summary of his report:

- First, in the introduction, we read that "it has been a journey in response to the Spirit guiding and inspiring us to take the direction which would strengthen our fidelity in accordance with our charism and challenge our relevance in accordance with the time in history in which we are living."
- There followed a list of the main tasks undertaken during the six-year term: the Passionist mission, the formation plan, and the finance manual.
- Some events that merit special attention were recalled. First, the Jubilee, celebrated on the occasion of the third centenary of the founding of the Congregation. Among the events organized were the journey of a Jubilee icon to all parts of the Congregation, a film about St. Paul of the Cross, an International Theological Congress at the Pontifical Lateran University, a meeting with Passionist bishops, and a Passionist youth meeting and pilgrimage.
- This was followed by a reflection on the state of the Congregation, which touched on the following points:
 - ✓ The foreseeable future reality;
 - ✓ The integration of priestly and religious life;
 - ✓ Lay people in the Passionist charismatic family;
 - ✓ The care of creation;
 - ✓ The Generalate;
 - ✓ The foundation of the mission in Myanmar;
 - ✓ The Meeting of the Passionists of Africa;

At the end, he gave thanks for having had the honor and opportunity to serve the Congregation for the past 12 years as the 25th successor of St. Paul of the Cross, a "holy privilege" because the encounter with each religious was a graced event.



A plenary sharing followed, and some questions were addressed to the Chapter President.

In the afternoon there was the second and final vote for the election of the CCC members, the results of which were announced in the evening. Fathers Leonello Leidi, Christopher Monaghan, Paul Francis Spencer and Alessandro Foppoli were elected. The latter replaced Father Antonio Munduate, who did not accept the nomination.

Father Antonio Siciliano, as General Econome, presented a summary of his report. A plenary sharing followed, and some questions were put to the General Econome.

The day ended after some brief communications by the moderator.

October 9

On October 9, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The facilitator, Jose, invited the chapter members to assume a correct posture and pay attention to their breathing. He then handed over to Group 1, who led the prayer time. A passage from the Acts of the Apostles (15:7-9.12.25-28) was read and the prayer time concluded with the recitation of the Our Father.

The president greeted the chapter members and proceeded to say roll call. Father Deusdedit Patrick was found to be absent but not excused. After that, he proposed not to proceed to call the roll every day, but invited the chapter members to note any absences and report them to the chapter secretary. The chapter members accepted the proposal.

Jose proposed an exercise--the *Johari Window*--a method used to promote greater understanding and improved communication. The Johari Window is split into four quadrants: the Open Area (things you know about yourself), the Blind Area (things you don't know about yourself, but others do), the Hidden Area (things you know about yourself, but keep hidden), and the Unknown Area (things that are unknown to you and to others). The aim is to develop more dynamic listening, when, today, there would be the presentation of a summary of the reports of the six Configurations. The Johari method and the SWOT planning tool,

used to assess **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats, were the methodological strategies proposed by the facilitators.

The Configurations/Provinces CJC, SCOR, MAPRAES presented their reports according to the SWOT scheme as suggested by the facilitators. A plenary sharing followed, and some questions were addressed to the President/Major Superior and members of the Configurations/Provinces.

In the afternoon there was an online meeting with Anne Marie O'Connor, executive director of Passionists International Inc. O'Connor recalled that the vision of Passionists International remains the same at the UN: "to amplify the voices of those affected by all forms of poverty, inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and violence; and to commit to the care of all creation, the equality and empowerment of women and girls and all marginalized groups, the promotion of peace and reconciliation, and the building of socially just and resilient communities".

PI has continued its efforts to focus on the following areas:

- **Women and girls.** *PI* has submitted collaborative statements with girl delegates who participated in dialogues with various UN entities, and organized International Women's Day at the UN. Women have participated in a major review of the Beijing Platform for Action (4th World Conference on Women) which in 1995, recognized the importance of including a section on the rights and needs of girl children because of the many indicators that show that the girl child is discriminated against from the earliest stages of life.
- **Haiti Advocacy/Justice Coalition of Religious.** *PI* continued to maintain regular engagement with the UN Expert on Human Rights in Haiti and other UN representatives to the Secretary General, Security Council members and Representatives of Permanent Missions to keep issues regarding Haiti front and center. It continued to share on-the-ground reports about the devastating effects Haitians are experiencing on a daily basis due to the brutal violence of heavily armed gangs.



- **Extractive industries.** (via participation in the working group of NGOs in the mining sector).

We continue to advocate against harmful mining practices and illegal land grabs by the extractive industry infringing on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and their human rights to health, clean water and self-determination.

- **Gaza.** *PI* has been closely following international community responses (Security Council and General Assembly), and reports of the Special Rapporteur on human rights issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to inform our advocacy at the UN. In January, **the International Court of Justice** warned Israel that it must cease genocidal activities as defined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, and that all parties to the convention must refrain from aiding and supporting such activities.

Other Committees *PI* attends:

- The Climate Working Group of the Committee of Religious NGOs – *PI* applied for accreditation to attend COP26 Biodiversity Conference in Colombia to support faith-based and indigenous advocacy efforts there;
- NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous People + participation in the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues;
- NGO Committee on Migration and NGO Committee on Financing for Development.

A final reflection concerned Passionists International's somewhat isolated position in relation to the larger Passionist community. Organizationally, *PI* seems to be an island. It doesn't belong to any one region or province, nor are we part of a global group of Passionist JPIC ministries. It is hoped that these concerns can be further explored to more fully and effectively connect and integrate the mission of *PI* with the Passionist congregation.

This was followed by a plenary sharing and some questions were addressed to the Executive Director.

Next, the CCH Configuration presented their report again according to the SWOT pattern, which was followed by a plenary sharing and some questions which were addressed to the Configuration President.

At the conclusion of the day, Father Kenneth took the floor and recalled the beauty of the expression "Passionist family," stressing the importance of intense collaboration with the laity. He then emphasized the atmosphere of listening in which the chapter members were immersed on this day and finally the desire for learning, which emerged from listening attentively to the reports of the various Configurations.

October 10

On October 10, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The moderator invited the chapter members to assume a correct posture, close their eyes, pay attention to breathing and try to understand how each person perceives his or her body. He then handed over to Group 2, who led the prayer time. The Holy Spirit was invoked, followed by a reading of 1 Peter 4:10-11 and some passages from the Spiritual Testament of St. Paul of the Cross.

The president greeted the chapter members and asked each person to see if there were any absentees at their table. All the chapter members were present.

The moderator invited the CPA President to present his report. A plenary sharing followed and some questions were addressed to the CPA President and members of the Configuration.

Father Yago proposed an exercise entitled "Attitude Changes Everything," that is, taking a series of attitudes for a greater understanding of the Chapter Agenda. Seven were proposed:

1. Conciseness: attention to brevity and clarity;
2. Prioritization;
3. Respect: appreciating each participant's input;



4. Open-mindedness: being receptive to new ideas to foster collaborative decision making;
5. Collaboration: willingness to work together;
6. Systemic thinking: a mindset that can grasp the interdependence of all Agenda issues;
7. Developing a holistic perspective: interconnectedness among the Agenda items.

The 5 themes of the Agenda were, in addition, recalled:

- Inner Life
- Belonging
- Configurations
- New ministries
- Leadership

The goal was first to connect the 5 themes of the Agenda and then to prioritize them.

Chapter members were asked to share with those sitting at the same table. Next, each table was asked to link the themes and make a list based on the priorities. The next step was to compare the priorities that emerged from each table's lists to draw up a final list. The result was as follows:

1. Inner life
2. Belonging
3. Leadership
4. Configurations
5. New ministries

The chapter members were then invited to work in groups; these were in turn divided into two blocks: one worked on the theme of "inner life" and the other on "belonging".

This was followed by a plenary sharing of the groups that worked on "inner life." The objective was to identify sub-themes.

At the conclusion of the day, Fr. Kenneth congratulated the chapter members as he noted the full involvement of each person in the work that had been done throughout the day. He also noted that from the plenary reflections, there were also critical issues that emerged concerning personal and community life. All this is important for the purpose of growth, with a view to the success of this Chapter.

October 11

On October 11, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. José took the floor and invited the Chapter members to assume a comfortable posture, close their eyes, pay attention to their breathing and try to understand how each person perceives his body. He then handed over to Group 2, who led the prayer. Acts 2:42-47 and number 26 from the Constitutions were read.

The president greeted the Chapter members and asked each person to see if there were any absentees at their table. All the Chapter members were present. He also informed the assembly that proposals for decrees and recommendations should be delivered to the secretariat by next Monday, 14 October. Proposals should be brief, concise and to the point.

Father Yago presented the day's Agenda, which was as follows:

1. Processing the material on Belonging (reports, assembly and group work at the tables);
2. Discernment groups on Leadership;
3. Processing the material on Leadership.

He then presented the Agenda for Saturday:

1. Processing the material on Configuration (reports, assembly and group work at the table);
2. Processing the material on New Ministries;
3. Saturday afternoon: online meeting with the laity.

The Chapter members approved the agenda for the two days.



Afterwards, the secretaries of work groups 2,4,6,8 shared the results of their work.

This was followed by a plenary sharing on the topic of Belonging, after which the Capitulars returned again to work at the tables and discussed the topic of Belonging.

The chapter members were then invited to work in groups; these were divided into two blocks: one worked on the theme of "Leadership" and the other on "New Ministries."

A plenary sharing on the topic of Leadership followed, after which it was back to working at the tables again on the topic of Leadership.

Father Kenneth took the floor and pointed out that the Chapter members had asked many questions for clarification throughout the day. This is a sign of a growing interest in the dynamics proposed for the work of the Chapter. Furthermore, during the sharing, the urgency of the topics of formation and economy emerged. In addition, there was the topic of the religious brothers, for which it is necessary to ask what is to be done and especially how the relationship with the religious priests should be lived, at the institutional level. Finally, the question of leadership: a chapter elects leaders; these must keep in mind the recommendations and indications that the general chapter itself entrusts to them. For this to happen, co-responsibility is required.

October 12

On October 12, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. Father Yago invited the Chapter members to assume a comfortable posture, close their eyes, feel their heartbeat and pay attention to their breathing. He then invited Group 4 to lead the prayer time. 1Cor 12:12-14:27 and Mt 5:13-16 were read and the prayer concluded with invocations.

The president greeted the Chapter members and asked each person to see if there were any absentees at their table. All the Chapter members were all present.

Father Yago then invited the Configurations to present the status of their Configuration based on the SWOT analysis.

A plenary sharing followed on the topic of "Configuration".

Afterwards, the working groups shared their thoughts about the topic of "New Ministries," which was followed by a plenary sharing. After that, individual tables returned to work on the topic of New Ministries.

Worthy of mention is the intervention in the plenary session made by Father Alessandro Ciciliani, which was a historical reflection based on the weaknesses and opportunities that were expressed for each Configuration and Province. He spoke in particular to the Provincials and Presidents of the Configurations and to the new General Council, to offer them help in the process of revitalization of the Configurations.

At the conclusion of the morning, there was a proposal for a consultative vote (straw vote) to discover what the religious thought about the organization of the Configurations as an instrument of solidarity in the Congregation. The capitulars voted by secret ballot.

During the afternoon session, an online meeting was organized with Passionist laity, which was introduced by the President of the Chapter and led by Father Rafael Vivanco. At the end of his presentation, he asked the participants the following questions:

- What does it mean to you to be Passionist laity and how do you express this?
- What do you think of the reality of the Passionist Congregation at this time?
- What and how do you wish our common relationship of life and mission, laity and religious, to be today and in the coming years?

A fraternal sharing moderated by Father Rafael Vivanco followed.

After this, Father Kenneth took the floor and explained that to reach the fullness of truth, one must always be on the move. The current understanding that the capitulars have is evolving, thanks also to the testimony of the laity, who are pushing for a reflection on the charism in the light of the Spirit of God.



October 14

On October 14, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. José invited the Chapter members to assume a comfortable posture, close their eyes, pay attention to their breathing and prepare themselves to listen to the Spirit. He then invited Group 5 to lead the prayer time. The Holy Spirit was invoked, and Wisdom 9:1,5.13-14,17-18: 9-11 and No. 72 of the Constitutions were read.

The president greeted the Chapter members and asked each person to observe if there were any absentees at their table. All the Chapter members were present except Father Raphael Mangiti Osogo, who was absent for health reasons.

The president presented, on behalf of the CCC, the names of Chapter members who could serve on the Redaction Commission: Denis Travers, Paul Cherukoduth, Aurélio Aparecido Miranda Miranda and Jules Mapela Thamuzi. The Chapter members approved these names and, so, the Redaction Commission was constituted. The president also proposed a committee that would reformulate the proposals which have been received and those that will be received by the Chapter Secretariat. The Chapter members approved the following names proposed by the president: Alessandro Foppoli, Angel Antonio Pérez Rosa, Enno Rufino Dango, and Eddy Alejandro Vásquez López.

Father Yago informed the assembly that the "discernment" phase began today. He presented the plan for the week, agreed upon by the CCC, for which approval was sought. The Chapter members approved.

He projected on the screens a short catechesis on the theme of "discernment," drawing on some of Pope Francis' speeches. This was followed by short texts from St. Paul of the Cross, without citing the source, a passage from the Pope Francis' letter on the occasion of the General Chapter, and finally a quote from Father Timothy Radcliffe, OP on October 10, 2024.

After that, José distributed to the Chapter members various pages of a document concerning a "Proposed Process for Facilitating Discernment". The eight groups were arranged two by two for work on the topics as follows:

- Groups 1 and 7: Inner life
- Groups 4 and 8: Membership
- Groups 3 and 5: Leadership
- Groups 2 and 6: New Ministries

A lengthy plenary sharing on "Inner Life" followed.

Father Kenneth took the floor and underlined the importance and beauty of the inner life and pointed out the many questions which there were on this topic. He then recalled a phrase from Pope Francis that "reality is greater than ideas" (EG, 231); therefore, it is important to come to understand how to live the charism today so that it can still bear the fruit that the Spirit desires. He also praised the seriousness with which the chapter members are addressing the various issues and how listening to others means trusting the Spirit within each one; and the Spirit is always the One who guides all the work of the chapter towards right discernment.

October 15

On October 15, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. Father Yago took the floor, inviting the capitulars to assume a correct posture, to pay attention to their breathing and to be ready to listen to the Spirit. He then handed over to Group 6, who led the time of prayer. After a prayer of praise, Philippians 2:5 was read, the Our Father was recited and there was a prayer of thanksgiving to God for St. Paul of the Cross.

The president greeted the Chapter members and asked each person to observe if there were any absentees at their table. All the Chapter members were present except Father Raphael Mangiti Osogo, who was absent for health reasons.



He also announced that the CCC had accepted Father Antonio Munduate's proposal to introduce the young capitulars to the origins of the Configurations; therefore, in the afternoon, the capitulars, Father Luigi Vaninetti and Father Denis Travers told how the Configurations came into being. Additionally, it was mentioned that Father Mark Robin had written a summary of the "Reports of the Study Groups of the Configurations for the 47th General Chapter". This document has been made available on *Synago*.

This was followed by a presentation of the two discernment groups on the theme of "Belonging". Afterwards, there was a plenary sharing, during which areas of concern were identified, for which recommendations were to be made.

After this, there was a presentation of the two discernment groups on the theme of "Leadership", which was followed by a plenary sharing, during which areas of concern were identified, for which recommendations were to be made.

This was followed by a presentation of the two discernment groups on the theme of "New ministries". Afterwards, there was a plenary sharing, during which areas of concern were identified, for which recommendations were to be made.

Father Kenneth perceived an energy, a commitment on the part of the capitulars. The questions raised by the body were excellent and of various kinds. He perceived a sense of responsibility combined with the desire to expand the themes foreseen in the Agenda and therefore encouraged the Chapter to continue in this spirit. He also pointed out that the charismatic identity was mentioned several times, which is the starting point for understanding better who the Passionist is and what he wants to do to carry forward a process of renewal. For the Founder, the Passionists are called to work in the vineyard of the Lord to remember His Passion, and their vocation consists in living, announcing and teaching the Passion of Christ. He concluded by inviting everyone to pray, so that these intentions might remain in the heart and spirit of each one.

October 16

On October 16, at 8.00 a.m., the chapter members met in discernment groups to work on the theme of "Configurations" The methodology used for the work was spiritual conversation.

At 11.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall.

The CCC suggested a new time for the afternoon in view of the discernment before the election of the General. The capitulars accepted the proposal.

After each discernment group presented the results of its work, a plenary sharing followed, during which areas of concern (guidelines) were identified, for which recommendations were to be presented.

In the afternoon, the President of the Chapter led a brief moment of prayer, during which he recited "The Prayer of Abandonment" by Charles de Foucauld. Afterwards, he handed over to Father Kenneth, who led a meditation in preparation for the choice of the new leadership.

The spiritual adviser recalled that these are serious decisions: choosing the new Superior, the members of the General Council and other decisions to be made in the coming days. He invited us to take the discernment process very seriously, without fear. He then added: "Sometimes we might ask ourselves: are we on the right path? Where does our journey end? Pope Francis says that the journey is made by walking together, with personal conversion, deep listening and conversations in the spirit; this is the path of the Church, of the people of God. You say, repeatedly, this is our path as Passionists. We are synodal people". He concluded by recalling the words of God in Exodus 3:12: "I will be with you".

Finally, the discernment groups shared in plenary session on the following question: "What qualities would we like to see in the person of our superior general for the next six years?".



October 17

On October 17, at 9 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall.

The president greeted the capitulars and gave some legal and practical guidelines for a correct and transparent vote regarding the **election of the new Superior General**. The roll call took place, Articles 110 and 133 of the Constitutions were read, and there was a reminder that the calculation of votes is done by considering only the valid ones.

On the second ballot, **Father Giuseppe Adobati**, MAPRAES provincial superior, was elected with 52 votes out of 77 valid votes. Father Adobati accepted the appointment as superior general.

Father Giuseppe Adobati presided over the afternoon session.

He announced the following timetable for Friday, October 18:

- 8 a.m.: Eucharistic celebration in the chapel (choir) of the community;
- 9.15 a.m.: in the Chapter Hall for the elections of the consultors:
 - a. Voting on the number of consultors to be elected;
 - b. Election of the consultors.

He invited us to keep in mind the topics on the agenda, on which the chapter members have been working during these days, when choosing the consultors. The idea is to compose a Council that can respond to the expectations of the General Chapter and support and accompany the Configurations. A plenary sharing followed.

Subsequently, a vote was taken on the suggestion that each Configuration propose two or three names of possible candidates for the office of Consultor. The Capitulars expressed themselves in favour.

Finally, the individual Configurations met to discern the names to be proposed to all the Capitulars.

October 18

On October 18, at 9.15 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General gave some juridical and practical information for correct and transparent voting for the election of the General Consultors. The roll call took place, Articles 136 and 137 of the Constitutions were read, and there was a reminder that the calculation of votes is done by considering only the valid ones.

After that, the Superior General called for two votes by show of cards on the following topics:

- that six Consultors be elected;
- that one Consultor be elected for each Configuration.

The capitulars voted favorably on both proposals.

The following religious were elected:

1. **Paul Francis Spencer (PATR - Conf. CCH)**, who was later elected as the first Consultor;
2. **Aurélio Aparecido Miranda (EXALT - Conf. CJC);**
3. **Aloysius John Nguma (GEMM - Conf. CPA);**
4. **José Gregório Duarte Valente (Prov. MAPRAES – Conf. MAPRAES);**
5. **Paul Cherukoduth (THOM - Conf. PASPAC);**
6. **Eddy Alejandro Vásquez López (Prov. SCOR – Conf. SCOR).**

Father Giuseppe Adobati then asked for the capitulars' consent to the following change in the afternoon schedule:

- Work, until 6 p.m., on some proposals addressed to the Chapter;
- 7:15 p.m.: Solemn Vespers and Transitus.

The Chapter members were in favor.



Afterwards, on behalf of the CCC, he suggested Father Ángel Antonio Pérez Rosa as moderator for the work in the Chapter Hall on the "Proposals."

The capitulars expressed themselves favorably.

The methodology to be followed for the study of the proposals was as follows:

- Reading of the proposal;
- Reading of a brief commentary by the Review Committee;
- Opinion of two chapter members in favor and two against;
- An orientation vote.

First proposal: *New Formation System (PASPAC)*.

Chapter members voted in favor of eliminating the proposal.

Second proposal: *Quarterly in-depth study of Passionist spirituality (MAPRAES)*.

Chapter members voted to move the proposal to the "Belonging" area.

Third proposal: *Diffusion of Chapter Conclusions (SCOR)*

Chapter members voted in favor of eliminating the proposal.

Fourth proposal: *Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration*.

The chapter members voted in favor of eliminating this proposal.

Fifth proposal: *Verification of the quality of life of our communities*.

The capitulars voted in favor of eliminating the proposal.

Sixth proposal: *Union of Provinces*.

The chapter members voted in favor of eliminating the proposal.

Seventh proposal: *Suppression of all Configurations*.

Chapter members voted in favor of eliminating the proposal.

Eighth proposal: *International Commission for Revision of Texts*.

The chapter members voted in favour of the General Council setting up a commission to review translations.

Ninth proposal: *Criteria for the use of credit cards.*

The capitulars voted in favor of presenting the proposal, in the form of a recommendation, to the Superior General and his council.

Tenth proposal: *Specific annual formation course for "Major Superiors".*

The capitulars voted in favor of presenting the proposal, in the form of a recommendation, to the Superior General and his council.

Eleventh proposal: *Formation in chastity and safety protocols.*

The capitulars voted to move the proposal to the "Inner Life" area.

Twelfth proposal: *Provincial Council in presence.*

The chapter members decided to defer the vote on this proposal.

October 19

On October 19, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General addressed the assembly with a fraternal greeting and his good wishes on the occasion of the Solemnity of our Founder.

Group 7 led the brief opening prayer. The texts used were 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25; and some passages from a letter of Saint Paul of the Cross.

Father Giuseppe Adobati asked each capitular to check for any absentees from their table. All the capitulars were present.

He then asked for Fr. Alessandro Foppoli and Fr. Ángel Antonio Pérez to take over since they had directed the work on the proposals which had been submitted to the Chapter. They reported the following:

The first proposal: *Acts of Extraordinary Administration*

The capitulars voted in favor of presenting the proposal to the Superior General and his Council.

The second proposal: *A thorough repair to structure of the General House.*

The capitulars voted in favor of the proposal.

The third proposal: *The provinces shall establish accounts at the IOR*

The capitulars voted in favor of the proposal as a recommendation to be presented to the Superior General and his Council.



The fourth proposal: *A center for the study of Passionist formation*

The capitulars voted to place the proposal under the heading of "Belonging"

The fifth proposal: *Collaboration with the laity in our mission*

The capitulars voted to place the proposal under the heading of "New Ministries"

The sixth proposal: *Promoting the vocation of the religious brother in the Congregation*

The capitulars voted to place the proposal under the heading of "Belonging"

The seventh proposal: *The subdividing of the CJC Configuration*

The capitulars voted in favor of the proposal, but expressed as a decree.

The eighth proposal: *The election of delegates to the general chapter by provinces*

The capitulars voted in favor of creating a text to be presented to the General Council for the preparation of a decree.

For the following proposal, the ninth, the moderator had suggested that the capitulars dialogue with those who were together at their table, and then to select one of them as secretary to report to the plenary session.

The ninth proposal: *The minimum number of religious for a province/numerical criteria within a province*

The capitulars voted in favor of designing a grid for criteria which will be helpful for the General Council in its dialogue with the provinces.

The tenth proposal: *Approval of the modification of article 104 of the Constitutions (canonical vote)*

The capitulars voted in favor of the proposal with 78 valid votes among 78 voting members.

The eleventh proposal: *Approval of the modification of article 129 of the Constitutions*

The capitulars decided to postpone the vote.

October 21

On October 21, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. Father Giuseppe, the Superior General, greeted the Chapter members and invited Group 8 to lead the prayer time. After a hymn to the Holy Spirit, Psalm 99, Ephesians 2:1-9 and No. 5 of the Constitutions were read.

The President asked each person to look to see if there were any absentees at their table. All Chapter members were present.

Father Yago then explained that on this day the "act/celebrate" phase began, that is, the development of guidelines, recommendations and decrees to outline a path for the next six-year period.

He then presented the program for the entire week and asked for its approval. The Chapter members voted in favor.

The day's work was presented as follows:

- In the first morning session, each Chapter member would prepare on his own four guidelines based on the topics (interior life, membership, leadership, new ministries, configuration) on which he worked during the previous days.
- In the second session, the eight discernment groups would meet to prepare six directions.
- In the afternoon session, groups would be united based on the topic they worked on during the previous days (*fusion groups*: 1 and 7 interior life; 2 and 6 new ministries; 3 and 5 leadership; 4 and 8 membership) and would develop 8 points.

The results of the work of the second morning and afternoon sessions should be delivered to the Chapter secretariat.



October 22

On October 22, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General greeted the assembly and announced the absence of three capitulars for health reasons. He invited Group 9 to lead the prayer time. After an invitation to meditate on an image of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, Matthew 6:6 and some spiritual thoughts of St. Paul of the Cross were read and the prayer concluded with images of a video of a contemplative dance.

The president asked each person to look to see if there are any absentees at their table. All the chapter members were present. He informed the capitulars that the CCC proposed asking Fathers Rafael Vivanco, David Colhour, Luigi Vaninetti and Germán Méndez, to prepare a message to be sent to the laity of the Passionist Family. The capitulars responded favorably to the request.

Father Yago spoke and asked Fr. Ángel Antonio Pérez, secretary of Fusion Group 1 and 7, to present the result of the work on "Inner Life". All three 'action steps', proposed as recommendations, received a favorable orientation vote.

Next, Father Yago asked Father Lelis Adonis Villanueva, secretary of Fusion Group 4 and 8, to present the outcome of the work on "Belonging". The first five 'action steps', proposed as recommendations received a favorable orientation vote. The sixth action step received two votes, both favorable. In the first, the text as presented was accepted; in the second, the following modification was proposed: 'inclusion of the laity in ongoing formation'. 'Actions' seven, eight and nine, proposed as recommendations, received a favorable orientation vote.

Father Yago then asked Father Denis Travers, secretary of the 3 and 5 fusion group, to present the outcome of the work on "Leadership." All six 'actions', proposed as recommendations, received a favorable orientation vote.

Next, the moderator asked Father David Colhour, secretary of fusion group 2 and 6, to present the outcome of the work on "New Ministries."

All six 'actions', proposed as a recommendations, received a favorable orientation vote.

The Superior General proposed the following drafting committee to draft the 'action steps' approved by the orientation votes: Frs. Łukasz Andrzejewski, Jesús Aldea, Matteo Piccioni and James Sweeney. The Chapter members voted in favor.

At the conclusion of the afternoon session, Father Kenneth took the floor and presented the image of a ceramic artist and referred to the chapter members as the clay that needs to be shaped. He gave thanks for the long day and the hard work. He greatly appreciated the morning prayer and the preamble to "New Ministries". He, finally, asked the Holy Spirit to remain with the capitulars even in these last days so that they would bear fruit in the mission entrusted to them by God.

October 23

On October 23, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General invited Group 10 to lead the prayer time. Power-point images were projected, accompanied by background music. There were readings from John 1:18 and a letter of St. Paul of the Cross to Thomas Fossi. The prayer time concluded with the recitation of a prayer of thanksgiving and invocation.

The president reported the absence of a Chapter member due to health reasons and asked each person to look to see if there were any absentees at their table. All other Chapter members were present.

He gave the floor to Father Leonello Leidi, who, on behalf of the CCC, shared with the capitulars an issue regarding an error in the calculation of delegates to the Chapter. After citing number 50 of the Regulations, he explained that some Configurations had delegated a few extra Chapter members. The proposal was for the Chapter to ask the Holy See to 'rectify' the error that was made. The Chapter members voted in favor with 77 out of 77 valid votes.

Father Yago spoke and presented the program for the next three days and asked for the capitulars' approval. They approved. After that, he explained the methodology to be followed for this day's work.



In the first session, the Chapter members worked individually on the feedback they had from the Configurations and prepared two proposals, based on the three areas of concern. In the second session, they met in discernment groups to develop three proposals, one for each area of concern.

In the afternoon session, the secretaries of the discernment groups communicated the results of their respective work. A sharing in plenary followed.

The chapter day concluded with the Eucharistic celebration in which the entire assembly participated.

October 24

On October 24, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General invited Group 11 to lead the prayer time. After a hymn to the Holy Spirit, Psalm 133, Matthew 18:19-20, and No. 25 of the Constitutions were read. The prayer concluded with the recitation of the Our Father.

Fr. Giuseppe Adobati communicated the program for tomorrow, October 25, and asked the Chapter members for approval:

- 7:15 AM: departure from Saints John and Paul for the audience with the Pope.
- 3:30 PM: work in the Chapter Hall.

The Capitulars expressed their approval.

He then suggested the following drafting committee for the development of proposals on the "Configurations": Alessandro Foppoli, José Luis Quintero and Gwen Barde. The Chapter members expressed their approval.

The Superior General also asked whether they would like to vote on the proposals that were ready for canonical voting in the three languages or only in Italian. The Chapter members voted in favor of voting in all three languages.

After that, Fr. Alessandro Foppoli presented the four proposals prepared by the drafting committee. The first three, presented as recommendations, received a favorable orientation vote. The fourth, presented as a recommendation, received an initially favorable vote so that the introductory part would not be removed and then received a favorable orientation vote.

Fr. Emmanuel Gellez expressed apprehension about the issue of the unofficial languages; however, he reserved the right to speak with the Superior General outside of the context of the Chapter.

The Moderator proposed the following schedule for the afternoon:

First session: 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Second session: 5:30 PM – 7:15 PM

The Capitulars expressed their approval.

Afterwards, the chapter members were asked for an additional work session from 9-10 pm. The Capitulars expressed their approval.

In the afternoon session there were canonical votes.

Article 129 of the Constitutions:

1. First paragraph of the article (77 chapter members were present at the time of the vote): 77 voting members and 77 valid votes, divided as follows: 77 cards in favor (green); the first paragraph was confirmed.
2. Last paragraph of Article 129: 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, divided as follows: 46 red, 26 green, 2 white, and 4 abstaining: the proposal was not confirmed.

Article 138 of the Constitutions

78 voting members and 78 valid votes, divided as follows:

76 green cards

0 red cards

2 white cards

The proposal was confirmed.



Article 139 of the Constitutions

78 voting members and 78 valid votes, divided as follows:

78 green cards

0 red cards

0 white cards

The proposal was confirmed

Article 147 of the Constitutions

78 voting members and 78 valid votes, divided as follows:

76 green cards

1 red card

1 white card

The proposal was confirmed

Art. 159 of the Constitutions

78 voting members and 78 valid votes, divided as follows:

77 green cards

0 red cards

1 white card

The 2018 text was confirmed

This was followed by the approval in recommendation form of 15 out of 16 proposals. One proposal was eliminated (see attached “Proposals with canonical vote”).

October 25

On October 25, at 3.30 p.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General led a brief moment of reflection, reading some phrases from the Pope's address to the capitulars at the Audience this morning.

Father Giuseppe Adobati asked for a canonical vote on the proposal of the CJC Configuration to be divided into two Configurations. The capitulars had already voted in favour of this request on 19 October.

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, cast as follows: 77 green cards, 1 red.

The second canonical vote was on the following proposal: *Orientation criteria for assessment in the growth or decline phase of entities.*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, cast as follows: 77 green cards, 1 red.

The third canonical vote was on the following proposal: *Delegation for a new electoral norm.*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, cast as follows: 78 green cards.

Fourth vote: *Synodal evaluation of the journey of the Configurations*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, cast as follows: 77 green cards, 1 white.

Fifth vote: *New spaces for sharing and communication*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, cast as follows: 75 green cards, 3 white cards



Sixth vote: *Life and Mission project of the Configuration*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, as follows: 76 green cards, 2 white cards

Seventh vote: *Promotion of non-official languages*

The canonical vote had the following result:

- 78 voting members and 78 valid votes, as follows: 68 green cards, 6 white cards, 4 red cards

Subsequently, Father Rafael Vivanco presented a letter to be sent to the laity of the Passionist Family and Father Jules Mapela presented a short letter entitled 'Appeal for Peace and Reconciliation'. After some changes and additions to the texts suggested in plenary, approval was sought from the capitulars, who expressed themselves favourably on both.

Both letters were then revised by the Drafting Commission.

At the conclusion of the session, Father Kenneth recalled the words of Pope Francis, who has always invited God's people to go forward with courage. Therefore, even on working days like today's, in which there were many pros and cons, he reminded us that we must not forget to grasp the beauty of a world, the Passionist world, that is diverse and varied and, therefore, enriching for all.

The reality of the Chapter must be brought to all the confreres and applied to everyday life, in the light of what all the chapter members have learned from each other.

October 26

On October 26, at 8.00 a.m., the religious gathered in the Chapter Hall. The Superior General invited Group 12 to lead the prayer time. This included readings from Colossians 2:6, short passages from the letters of St. Paul of the Cross, and a prayer of invocation, concluding with a prayer of thanksgiving.

The Superior General announced the absence of Father Joseph Haruo Someno and Brother Longino Kamuntu due to health reasons; Fathers Josaphat Bernard Kiwori and Luigi Vaninetti were also absent.

The Facilitator first gave the floor to Father Denis Travers, who read a document which was a summary of the entire General Chapter. The facilitator then proposed a "Chapter integration and synthesis space" divided into three phases:

- A period of personal time;
- Time at the table;
- A plenary time period.

He also asked the Chapter members to recall the Chapter logo with all its particular elements. He then offered them a set of keywords and proposed questions for them to answer in writing.

At the conclusion of the session, the Superior General thanked the organizers of the Chapter and all those who, in different capacities, had participated.

Father Kenneth echoed Father Timothy Radcliffe's words spoken at the Synod of Bishops and reminded the Capitulars that "we should not be afraid of disagreement, because the Holy Spirit is working in it," and Providence was working even when things seemed to go wrong. Even if one was disappointed with the outcome of the Chapter, God's Providence was at work in this assembly and now the task of each Chapter member is to do what one believes is right; the rest is in God's hands. It was only one Chapter, there will be more. Not everything could be done, but they should try to take a next step and to begin this as soon as they return to their communities. Finally, the whole assembly sang the *Salve Regina*.

With the Eucharistic celebration in the Basilica, Father Giuseppe Adobati declared that the 48th General Chapter was concluded.

48th GENERAL CHAPTER HOMILIES

October 4

FR. CHRISTOPHER MONAGHAN

We have commenced our journey together opening our hearts to each other as brothers, listening attentively to each other in our diversity - strengths and weaknesses, joys and sorrows, hopes and dreams on our Synodal journey as a Chapter.

We walk together as brothers in this time of grace - where we long to feel safe; included, learning from one another, contributing to the process, and challenging each other as we grow together.

The readings for today have much to offer us as we begin this General Chapter.

St Paul looks at his previous life and recognises that now he can only boast of the cross of Christ not just his zeal for the Jewish Law and tradition. We too must be open to this moment and what it can offer

He has learned that in the transforming and self-giving love of Jesus on the cross he has become a new creature and wants to offer this to others. He experienced how light was Jesus' yoke and wanted to ease the burden of his contemporaries as we do reaching out to the crucified of today.

Like the butterfly in our Chapter logo Paul has been transformed, and invites us to be transformed for others, in particular, the crucified of the world. As St Francis knew so well we are brothers and sisters with all of God's creation.

This transformation led to suffering and sacrifice for the sake of the Gospel, but it bore much fruit in new communities born from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Galatia, Thessalonika, Philippi, Corinth to name but a few). This strikes me as being a process that our congregation shares in as new



communities are born, take root and develop. We see the fruits of this in our younger brothers here in the General Chapter for the first time – what a blessing your presence is for us all. You are a reminder of Jesus' words that those who are younger are the special recipients of his wisdom and we look forward to hear more from you during the chapter.

St Francis heard the call to rebuild the church – and he discovered that rebuilding had many dimensions individually and communally. Faced with such an enormous task his advice rings true for us as well:

"Start by doing what's necessary, then what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

The fruits of the Chapter will not be so much in the documents that we produce as much as the transformation in ourselves. We are called to be living documents of the Chapter.

St Francis advises us that the most powerful preaching will be who we are:

"Do all that you can to preach the Gospel and if necessary use words!!" This will be true of us as well.

St Francis said *"Remember that when you leave this earth you can take with you nothing that you have received, but only what you have given; a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage."*

May these be the fruits of our General Chapter as we respond "Here I Am, send me!"



October 5

FR. ANIELLO MIGLIACCIO

1. Job, a man of sorrows, is the image of every man wounded in body and spirit, who finds salvation in God. The mystery of pain will find meaning only in the Crucified and Risen Christ. The Passionist, contemplating the Risen Crucified is a proclaimer of the life, hope, light, that only God can give.
2. The 72 who came back joyfully remind us that mission, the proclamation of the Gospel, brings deep joy. Ask God for renewed missionary momentum for our congregation. Move from closure and withdrawal into ourselves to courageous outreach to a world that awaits the Word of the Cross.



October 6

HOMILY OF THE XXVII ORDINARY SUNDAY -B
Third day of the Prechapter.

FR. RAFAEL BLASCO BORDEJÉ

Many times, the different social and religious groups of the Jewish people confronted Jesus, they went against him, they set traps for him, they put him to the test: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "Should tribute be paid to Caesar?" "Which of the seven will she be the wife of?" "What is the first commandment?"

Many times, we, like those groups, are blind or closed off to novelty, we always prefer our old wine, what is known, what is safe, what my people have transmitted to me, my own ideas. In short, we prefer "the same old thing", "it has always been done this way". Perhaps that is why Jesus often said against them: "I truly say to you..." "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear...", "but I say to you..." in an attempt to unsettle them, to get them out of their old wineskins...

Jesus does not shy away from his trials but always overcomes them to the surprise of those who wanted to silence him. He always starts from what they know and understand: what is written, the Torah, the law... He sees them coming and never remains blank or silent. He surprises them, unsettles them, makes them reflect, but he does not always succeed in changing the hardness of their heart of stone.

Only by overcoming hardness, by getting our heart to become a heart of flesh, will we be able to live in fullness. Only if we open ourselves to the newness of God, if we stop being on the defensive, if we stop believing we know everything, if we stop having answers for everything, if we open ourselves to the "but I tell you", to the new law... will we be able to listen and open our eyes to see God in the midst of so much darkness.

Life, faith or love are never easy paths, there are always difficulties. That is why we need God, the wonderful love of God that is manifested in



the Passion of the Son so that our heart may open to the new, to the new law of Jesus, so that our heart may be a heart of flesh where his Passion is always engraved, the remedy for all the evils of this world.

We need Him, "who suffered death for the good of all" because only He can fill us with confidence, with patience in difficult times. Only He can teach us to truly love, as He loves, to the point of giving our lives for those we love. Only He can give us back the ability to be children, to trust, to express, to love, to look without prejudice or wounds, to take the hand of others and let ourselves be led, to let ourselves be guided... without pride, without pre-established solutions, without inflated egos, without acquired vices, without fear of being rejected or hurt, showing wounds that only love can heal.

Let us remember a small detail of today's gospel: Jesus' tenderness towards children.

In Venezuela, a land that I carry in my heart and that is going through difficult times, children ask their parents, their godparents, the priest... for a blessing and with complete confidence they rest their head on the chest of their parents and godparents, feeling accepted, welcomed, protected, blessed.

Jesus gets angry with his disciples when they scold the children because they wanted to get close to Jesus and receive his blessing. Once again the disciples do not understand anything, they have hearts of stone...

Being like children means getting close to Jesus, being touched by him, discovering his newness, trusting, smiling, being curious, listening to learn what is authentic, living with ingenuity... Small children are our model because their hearts are still soft, they have not hardened.

May we follow the advice that Paul of the Cross wrote to Thomas Fossi: "Abandon yourself like a child, with a simple, pure, humble and loving gaze, in this object of infinite love. Always carry imprinted in your heart, like a seal of love, the memory of the sufferings of the Savior" (3 March 1739).



And finally, on this day, let us remember our Blessed Brother Isidore and in him all our Passionist Brothers. We wish to place them once more under your protection and ask you to raise up in our time young people who respond to the Passionist vocation as Lay Brothers, remembering, as our Constitutions say (n. 100), that “all of us, both clerics and brothers, share in the same Passionist vocation, which we live in community as sons of the same Father. In our mutual relations we consider ourselves truly equal; and with common effort... we commit ourselves to foster the memory of the Passion by following Jesus Crucified.”

Blessed Isidore, pray for us.



Opening Mass - 7 October 2024

Bishop Luiz Fernando Lisboa

*"Contemplating the Child Jesus sleeping on the cross,
you must learn to sleep inwardly on the cross
of suffering in sweet silence, in faith
and in persevering patience."
✠ St. Paul of the Cross.¹¹*

Dear brothers and sisters in the Passion of Christ and in the Passion of humanity:

During this day, we gather to reflect on one of the most profound and moving aspects of our faith and our fraternity-- the mysteries of Christ's Passion. But in today's Mass, we will do so in a slightly unusual way. Let us examine these mysteries through the lens of the Annunciation as proposed to us in today's liturgy, expressed in the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38.

At first glance, it may seem to be an odd connection. After all, the Annunciation marks the beginning of Jesus' earthly life, while the Passion marks its end. However, if we look more closely, we will see how these two moments are deeply interconnected in the divine plan of salvation and in the daily practice of our ministry.

Let us begin by recalling the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary-- "Rejoice, full of grace! The Lord is with you" (Lk 1:28). These words of greeting are not mere courtesy. They announce a profound joy, but also a mission of immense weight and future sorrows. Mary, in her humility, is troubled and wonders what such a greeting could mean.

¹¹ "Contemplando il Bambino Gesù che dorme sulla croce, tu devi imparare a dormire interiormente nella croce della sofferenza in dolce silenzio, in fede e in perseverante pazienza".



The angel continues-- "*Mary, do not be afraid for you have found favor with God. You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus*" (Lk 1:30-31). Here we see the first parallel with the Passion. Mary is called not to fear in light of this surprising announcement. Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, faces his own fear before the imminent cross.

Mary, in her innocence, asks-- "*How can this be, since I have no relations with a man*" (Lk 1:34). This question is not a question of doubt, but a search for understanding. In the same way, Jesus, in his humanity, seeks to understand the will of the Father, praying in the form of a cry-- "*Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me*" (Lk 22:42).

The angel's response to Mary is profound-- "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you*" (Lk 1:35). That same Holy Spirit who made the Incarnation possible is the one who sustained Jesus throughout his life and especially during his Passion. In the most difficult moments of the cross, when Jesus cried out-- "*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit*" (Lk 23:46), we see the culmination of this power of the Most High.

The central point of the Annunciation and of the Passion is the response of total surrender to the will of God. Mary responds-- "*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word*" (Lk 1:38). This "yes" of Mary echoes the "yes" that Jesus would give throughout his life, culminating in his Passion when he says-- "*Not my will, but yours be done*" (Lk 22:42).

This unconditional "yes" is the core of the mystery of the Passion. It is the acceptance of the divine plan, regardless of the personal cost. Mary, in accepting to be the mother of the Savior, was already anticipating in some way the cross that her son would bear. She did not know exactly what the future held in store for her, but she trusted fully in God.

When we reflect on the Passion of Christ, we cannot forget the suffering of his mother. At the presentation of Jesus in the temple, Simeon prophesied to Mary-- "*a sword will pierce your soul*" (Lk 2:35). This prophecy is fully fulfilled at the foot of the cross. Mary's sorrow, foreseen from the beginning,



reminds us that the mysteries of the Passion are not limited exclusively to the physical suffering of Jesus, but also embrace the emotional and spiritual suffering of all those who loved him.

Brothers and sisters: the Annunciation is not only the announcement of the birth of the Savior, but also the prelude to a journey of sorrow and redemption. Mary, in saying "yes" to God, not only accepted to be the mother of Jesus, but also accepted the whole divine plan, including the suffering that was to come.

As children and missionaries of the Passion, this parallel between the Annunciation and the Passion teaches us several important lessons:

First: The importance of trust in God. Both Mary and Jesus fully trusted in God's plan, even when they did not fully understand it.

Second: The role of the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit who made the Incarnation possible sustained Jesus during his Passion and continues to sustain us in our own trials.

Third: The value of "yes" to God. Saying "yes" to God is not always easy and may involve suffering, but it is the path to the realization of God's plan in our lives and in our communities.

Fourth: The interconnection between joy and suffering. The joy of the Annunciation and the pain of the Passion are not opposites, but interconnected parts of the plan of salvation.

Fifth: The mystery of divine love. In both the Annunciation and the Passion, we see God's incredible love manifested, a love willing to become incarnate and suffer for us.

Brothers and sisters: the mysteries of Christ's Passion, seen in the light of the Annunciation, reveal God's extraordinary love for us. From the moment the Word became flesh in Mary's womb to the moment Jesus gave up his spirit on the Cross, we see a divine plan unfolding-- a plan of love, sacrifice and redemption.

Like Mary, may we be able to say "yes" to God's will in our lives, even when we do not fully understand it. Like Jesus may we accept our daily



crosses, trusting that the Father is with us even in the most difficult moments. And may the Holy Spirit, who overshadowed Mary and sustained Jesus on the cross, strengthen us in our journey of faith.

May the contemplation of these mysteries—from the Annunciation to the Passion—inspire us to live Christ's love more fully in our daily lives. May we be living witnesses to this love, bringing hope and compassion to a world in need.

And may Mary, who was present from the Annunciation to the cross, intercede for us so that we may have the same courage and faith that she demonstrated.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us conclude this reflection with a prayer:

Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, Mother of God and our Mother, you who knew how to discern and accept the will of the Father with great faith and courage, intercede for us. Help us to be attentive to God's signs in our lives, to seek his will with sincerity and to respond generously to his call in our daily sufferings and joys. Amen!



11 October

FR. LEUDES APARECIDO DE PAULA

The Word of God calls us to reflect on the ineffable presence of the Spirit who leads us and unites us as brothers and sisters. In the First Reading, St. Paul reminds the Galatians, and each of us today, that we were blessed in Abraham. At the beginning of the Chapter, we asked to be blessed with the Spirit, so that we could celebrate the Chapter open to the action of the Spirit. St. Paul also reminds us that through faith in Christ we have received the promise of the Spirit. We are men of faith, who, gathered in General Chapter, must let the Spirit lead us, not making the Chapter just an act of Law, but an act of faith, open to the action of the Spirit who must lead us.

In the Gospel, Luke recounts the episode of Jesus casting out a demon. This action causes confusion among many. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, says that every kingdom divided against itself will be destroyed. Jesus draws attention to the division that causes many evils. That's why Jesus wants to cast out, with the finger of God, the demon that causes division. Let us allow Jesus, through the action of his Spirit, to expel from our midst everything that divides us. In our morning meditation today, we prayed that we might be one in all. Let us open ourselves to this spirit of unity, not allowing the Spirit of division to divide us.

Today we celebrate St. John XXIII, who was the Pope who initiated the Second Vatican Council in 1962. In his memory, we pray that the Council's decisions will continue to bear good fruit for the Church and society.

In meditating on the Word of this liturgy, I would like to conclude with the words of the psalmist: I thank God with all my heart, together with all the assembly. How great are the works of the Lord, they deserve all love and admiration.

St. John XXIII - pray for us

St. Paul of the Cross - pray for us



17 October

FR. JOACHIM REGO

Based on Matthew 10:1-7

MASS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

My brothers, so far during this General Chapter we have been praying and listening to the Holy Spirit asking that our ideas, suggestions and decisions will be in line with what is of the mind and plan of God. Today, as we exercise the service of election, choosing one from among all the brothers who will be asked to lead our beloved Congregation, we once again want to pray for the light of the Spirit, to be enlightened in the choice we make .

Firstly, we must **empty ourselves**. Perhaps this story will help...

There was a university professor who went searching for the meaning of life. After several years and many miles, he came to the hut of a particularly holy hermit and asked to be enlightened. The holy man invited his visitor into his humble dwelling and began to serve him tea. He filled the professor's cup and then kept on pouring so that the tea was soon spilling over onto the floor. The professor watched the overflow until he could no longer restrain himself and shouted: "Stop! It is full. No more will go in." The hermit said, "Like this cup, you are full of your own opinions, preconceptions, and ideas. How can I teach you unless you first empty your cup?"

Yes, sometimes we can be too full of ourselves, in which case there can be no room for the Spirit to intervene. In our talk, and with our heads, we think and say things like: "Yes, we must be guided by the Spirit"; but in our hearts, in fact, we have already taken control and made our decisions. So, I invite you in prayer to **empty yourself** and remain open for the light of the Holy Spirit.



In the Gospel, Matthew the Evangelist thought it important to **name** the Twelve disciples whom Jesus sent as Apostles. Our name is important; it identifies us to ourselves and to others. It is nice and personal when I am called by my name. When we hear the name of each of the twelve disciples called, we identify him because we know something of his story and who he is. Matthew even tries to make that clear when he identifies each disciple, e.g. by their name: like *"Simon, also known as Peter"*; by their relationship: *"James son of Zebedee, and his brother John"*; by their work: *Matthew the tax collector*; by their nationality: *"Simon the Cananaean (Zealot)"*; and by their behaviour: *"Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him"*.

As we hear the names of these apostles, we know that each one is unique and different in personality and temperament; each one has his strengths and weaknesses; each one is graced and also sinful; each one has some gift and ability. But no one of them is perfect, as we understand 'perfection' to be. Yet, these are the people whom Jesus called and sent. Jesus trusted them and entrusted them with his authority to be his collaborators in mission.

Today we will hear the name called of one of our brothers which will identify him and reveal something of his story, his person and personality, his background, his strengths and his weaknesses. Unfortunately, I doubt there will be 'perfection', but perhaps, fortunately, that is a blessing which will keep our lives in right perspective, i.e. trusting not in oneself, but in God and so that we can become empty of self and be filled with the light and gifts of the Spirit. After all, these are how the saints were, as this story illustrates:

A boy went to church with his mother on a sunny Sunday morning. He was enthusiastic about the many colourful glass figures that the sun traced through the stained-glass windows onto the floor and he excitedly asked his mother what this and that meant. She whispered that this was such and such a saint, and that was another. Sometime



*afterward, in religion class, the teacher asked if anybody knew what a saint was. The excited boy, raising his hand, said "I do". **"A saint is someone that the light shines through!"***

My brothers, whoever is called and chosen by the Chapter to serve as Superior General today (and as Consultors), must be people through whom the light of Christ shines. This ministry is ultimately about letting the light of Christ shine! Everyone is worthy; however, the ones we choose must be people whom we have discerned as the best ones at this time to serve the Congregation and take it forward in the next 6 years.

May God enlighten our minds and hearts, and may He bless our work and bring it to fulfilment. Amen!



18 October

Feast of St. Luke

FR. CIRO BENEDETTINI

Introduction

We celebrate the feast of St. Luke the evangelist, physician, faithful companion of St. Paul until his martyrdom in Rome, and the first historian of the Church. His gospel is characterized by the theme of joy, presenting Jesus full of mercy, a friend of the poor, a very prayerful man. These attitudes of Jesus must also characterize his disciples.

Today is also the eve of the feast of St. Paul of the Cross. In many parts of the Congregation we celebrate the *Transitus*, a liturgy in which we read the account of the Founder's last hours and his so-called testament. We join spiritually with the entire Passionist family as they prepare to celebrate the feast of St. Paul. We are also joyful because the Congregation is alive and has elected the 26th successor to Paul of the Cross and his Council. We ask for the blessing and light of the Holy Spirit on the new General Council, and we also ask for spiritual vigor and joy for all members of the Passionist Family to live the charism. Finally, we ask God's forgiveness if at times we have lived the charism wearily and without enthusiasm.

Homily

What is the face of Jesus described by Luke? He presents a merciful Jesus who came to "seek and save that which was lost," so much so that he is called "the friend of publicans and sinners." His gospel is **the gospel of mercy**. Love and mercy characterize the parable of the Good Samaritan, the trilogy of the parables of mercy (the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son), the salvation offered to the corrupt



official Zacchaeus, the constant choice of the last, the excluded, the final forgiveness offered to the repentant thief on the cross, and the disciples of Emmaus. Matthew's phrase "*Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*" becomes in Luke "*Be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful.*" Mercy becomes synonymous with God's perfection and must be synonymous with the disciple's as well.

He is a Jesus who is **a friend of the poor**. The poor are for Luke the first recipients of the glad tidings and the first fruits of salvation. Jesus describes himself as one "***sent to proclaim glad tidings to the poor.***" Blessed are the poor in spirit" becomes for Luke "blessed are you poor," without specifying "spiritual." The rich young man cannot follow Christ unless he first distributes "*all that he possesses*" to the poor. Condemned without hesitation are those whose only purpose in life is to multiply resources and money. Luke reports Jesus' words-- "*How difficult it is for those who possess riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*" The disciples do not just abandon "their nets and their father," as Matthew writes, but "*everything,*" according to Luke.

It is the Gospel of **Jesus at prayer**. Luke describes Jesus as a man of action, but above all a man of prayer. Jesus is par excellence a man who is very prayerful. At decisive turning points in his life he withdraws in prayer. He does so after his baptism, in the midst of the first enthusiasm of the crowd, before the choice of the twelve, before Peter's profession, and before teaching the "Our Father". He prays on the threshold of death in the Garden of Olives, with the exhortation-- "Pray that you may not be put to the test." Jesus exhorts his disciples to "*pray always, without growing weary.*"

It is the gospel of joy. In no less than 27 passages of the gospel, joy is mentioned. Joy appears immediately in the Archangel Gabriel's greeting to the Virgin, "*Rejoice Mary.*" The shepherds' joy after their encounter with the infant Jesus. Significant is the enigmatic statement in the synagogue at Nazareth, where he applies the words of Isaiah to himself and



summarizes his earthly mission as "**sent to bring glad tidings to the poor.**" An atmosphere of joy pervades his gospel when he recounts episodes in which Jesus heals the sick, eats with sinners, welcomes women, and blesses children. The parables of mercy express joy. Full of joy are those who are saved by Jesus, like Zacchaeus. With great joy the disciples after the ascension stand in the temple praising God.

In Luke's gospel Jesus is called "**Savior**" for the first time, in the angels' announcement to the shepherds in Bethlehem-- "*today a Savior has been born for you.*" Luke's gospel is not a stand-alone work, but only the first part of an overall work that also includes the **Acts of the Apostles-- the story of Jesus is extended into the history of the Church.** The kingdom of God is accepted and built today.

I would also like to reflect on the gospel. We are heirs of the 72 disciples sent to proclaim the Kingdom of God and peace. As Passionists we have reconfirmed our willingness to be sent by repeating—"**Here I am, send me.**" Jesus also speaks of the behavior of the harvest workers. Woe if in addition to being few, the workers are also lazy, without enthusiasm, weighed down by consumerism!

On this day, the ceremony of the *transitus* of St. Paul of the Cross and the reading of his testament is celebrated in many parts. The Founder's first recommendation in the testament is "*fraternal charity.*" I think that if we were able in our communities to witness fraternal charity, the joy of being together, we would not have any crisis of vocations, because it is precisely this joy of being together that young people seek. Paul of the Cross also recommends the **spirit of prayer, solitude and poverty.** They seem to be old stuff to be thrown away; but in reality they are always new to be lived according to the times. For St. Paul prayer, solitude and poverty are the conditions for the Congregation to shine like the sun before God and before all people.



19 October 2024

SOLEMNITY OF ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS

Fr. Giuseppe Adobati, Superior General

Dear Brothers, Sisters and friends,

I share with you the joy of this celebration in honor of our holy Founder, in this place permeated with his presence, and during this special time, marked by the grace of the General Chapter. There are many sentiments and memories that each of us brings to this celebration. Personally I am here, still dimly conscious of the role that has been entrusted to me. As the successor of St. Paul of the Cross, I feel rather poor and inadequate; but I am consoled by the presence of brothers and sisters who share with me the journey in the charism of Paul of the Cross, and I am encouraged by the prayers of many, who feel part of our Family.

I did not have much time to prepare this homily, so I thought I would draw directly on the words and example of the Founder to illuminate some of the points that have emerged during the work of our General Chapter.

First, I chose a few quotes from the letters of St. Paul of the Cross on the "interior life" which he understood as deep communion with God, lived intimately, and not only the work of the Holy Spirit but also our personal commitment and action. He wrote to Fr. Giovanni Maria Cioni: *"Let us remain in our nothingness with a high godlike purity of intention, in everything seeking the Divine Good Pleasure, keeping ourselves always in true fidelity and high resignation to the Divine Will, seeing to it that our interior is well governed, quiet, serene, detached from all created goods, so that we may be the delight of Jesus Christ and render ourselves always more disposed to receive the grace of interior recollection in order to become continuous adorers of the Most High in*



spirit and in truth. [Jn.4:24]" (5 July 1755). As we have heard, Paul of the Cross insisted on interior recollection, which was a conscious ability to cherish contact with God in order to become true adorers of his Mystery and also people who are aware of his Love for us.

In the General Chapter we are reflecting on our sense of belonging to our Congregation, and on the means needed to strengthen this rootedness in the mission we have received. We need to find tools that nurture joyful fidelity to our vocation, but we cannot forget that our call "has to do" with the Passion of Jesus and its paradoxical fruitfulness. Faced with the difficulties he was encountering in the foundation [of the retreats] the Founder wrote: *"I cannot conceive that God does not want our Congregation in the Church, at least not in my interior depth. His Divine Majesty must wish to work a great effect and to cause it to rise up and expand from sea to sea, for in my thinking I do not know that there could be found in the stories of other congregations similar persecutions and troubles occasioned by the noblest parts of the flock of Christ."* (Letter to Fr. Fulgenzio Pastorelli, 7 August 1748)

"The Congregation of the Passion must walk in this way, and its sons must be the strongest of men, proved by various temptations, within and without, [1Pt.1:6] in order to accomplish great things, especially in these very perilous times, which require men who are armed with faith and well accustomed to great suffering, which produces the marvelous fruit of eternal life ...". (Letter to Fr. Fulgenzio Pastorelli, 29 July 1746)

Our problem today, is not first and foremost the difficulty of making new foundations, but the commitment to keep alive within us the fire of the Memory of the Passion that generates compassion and concern for the men and women of our time.

Another area we are seriously studying during the General Chapter is formation for leadership for our life and mission, so that it sustains and nurtures each one's journey. This delicate and valuable



service of authority is rooted in the common call to fraternal charity. Thus the Founder wrote to the Religious after his re-election as Superior General: “[...] You are ‘our joy and our crown’ and ‘we have you in our heart.’ We speak of you as our dearest and most beloved sons in Christ and claim to love you with a fatherly affection of sincerity, and ‘in the heart of Jesus Christ we long for you,’ that moved by our great love, ‘now absent in body, but present in spirit,’ we embrace one and all, priests as well as clerics and lay brothers, extending our arms in a close bond of charity and testifying sincerely from the fullness of our heart that we are always ready to spare not even the hardest labor for the benefit of your souls. Even more, since ‘the charity of Christ impels us,’ to the extent it were necessary and with the help of God’s grace, as a good shepherd, we are not afraid to lay down our life for you, our sheep.” (to the Religious, 12 March 1753) May St. Paul of the Cross deepen in each of us, and in each of our communities, these bonds of communion, friendship, compassion, care and support.

Our Founder was also a great missionary, a tireless proclaimer of the mystery of Jesus’ Passion and his extraordinary grace of forgiveness and conversion. His missionary action, however, was not limited to preaching from a podium, or in a church, or in the confessional or during catechetical instruction. As he passed through towns and cities for missions, he would inquire about the existence of tensions, divisions, conflicts, and hatred between families, individuals, and sometimes even among the clergy. He would then commit himself to prayer and example, in order to invite them to be reconciled. There are many testimonies that describe him “getting in the middle,” on his knees before the adversaries or those who did not want to offer forgiveness, or did not accept reconciliation, and inviting them, in the name of Jesus and his Passion, to be reconciled. Most of the time he succeeded in obtaining reconciliation, bringing peace back to families, and welcoming people back to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. However, he did not always succeed in overcoming divisions and changing people’s



hardened hearts. For St. Paul of the Cross this was not merely a failure in strategy or effort; rather it was an opportunity to carry in his heart and prayer this mystery of rejection and lack of openness. His example inspires our commitment as missionaries today, in the third millennium, in the knowledge that we too must seek new ministries to proclaim to the world the love of Jesus manifested in his Passion, in the knowledge that where the burden of evil exists, we too must "get in the way" with our prayer, our faith, our charity, and our patience.

May St. Paul of the Cross sustain the commitment of each of us to live our vocation faithfully, and may he bless the life and mission of each member of our Passionist Family.

May he again grant each of us his protection and intercession, enabling us to fulfill the wish he expressed to the Religious of his time: *"I have great hopes for all of you, and I hope you will be competing among you to see who can be holier"*. (30 November 1760)



23 October

FR. ADIANTUS ALOYSIUS

(Eph 3, 2-12; Lk 12, 39-48)

Introduction

Today's gospel aspires to give rise in us to an attitude of expectation to welcome Jesus, the one who has become a servant to all. We are already bound to Christ in the doing of his will; however, in this celebration we are asked in a very deliberate way to serve him without reservation. The words of the Gospel remind us that the Lord has placed great trust in us, an unlimited trust, which should, therefore, generate in us the desire to imitate him in every moment. Let us ask the Lord to give us this courage to be always awaiting his return. And now, in order to celebrate worthily this holy Mass, let us acknowledge our sins. I confess...

Homily

As we listen to this Gospel we see that Jesus continues to exhort us to vigilance; we have heard him invite us to be "a faithful servant." The word "servant" is not a very satisfying word for our times because it is loaded with negative concepts. However, it is an entirely different matter when we consider ourselves servants of the Lord! Jesus is telling us that a true servant is blessed because he is in communion with the Master, who is God himself, and who makes us sharers of his own life. To be a faithful servant means to not lose oneself in one's own concerns, in anxieties, or petty preoccupations. Instead, it means that all of our life is oriented to the return of the Master, that we remain faithful in our loving service.

The word "servant" has received a renewed meaning in Christ, who has proclaimed that he has come to serve and not to be served. Our serving God has nothing to do with injustice, egoism, abusive



behavior, and humiliating others. To be a servant of God brings us to true liberty.

Now, we ask ourselves: at this time, how should we carry out this service? I would say that we should serve our brothers and sisters without any distinction of ethnicity, race, nationality, and religion; it should be a service which does not recognize any kind of barriers. This is precisely the dream of our General Chapter, that the world be experienced as one's own house, and the community as one's own family, in other words, to be Passionists without borders.

The place of our service is limitless, as it was for Jesus, who wished that all of us be saved. It takes courage to leave the comfortable "nest;" and to aspire to leave one's own comfort zone, as did St. Paul, the "apostle to the gentiles," who was actively the "missionary of the Gospel" among Greek and Roman pagans. Paul, in his humility, does not hesitate to call himself "the very least of all the holy ones," that is, the last among all those who wish to walk with Christ Jesus according to the norms of the Gospel. Still, because humility is truth, he does not hide the fact that he had received the inestimable grace of knowing and revealing to all people (even to us today!) the wonders of God's plan. Such is a love which wishes to save all who freely abide by God.

As Passionists, we are called to take into our own hands the responsibility for missionary service "ad gentes," in collaboration with others, that is, in the spirit of synodality. Our Constitutions remind us that "Conscious of being part of the wider world community, we recognize the need to collaborate responsibly with people of good will everywhere in pursuing all that is true, noble and just (Ph 4:8), bearing in mind the present needs of the Church and the world, our special mission in the Church, and the particular gifts of our religious" (Const. 69).

Pope Francis, in his message for World Mission Day, October 20, 2024 (last Sunday), writes, "Mission, we see, is a tireless going out to all men and women, in order to invite them to encounter God and enter into communion with him. Tireless! God, great in love and rich in mercy,



constantly sets out to encounter all men and women, and to call them to the happiness of his kingdom, even in the face of their indifference or refusal."

Our lives become an offering of ourselves for others through love; it does not matter that we are weak, sinners and inconsistent. Our humility comes from being aware that we are nothing without God, and that it is God who makes us strong, faithful and generous in the joyful expectation of his coming.

Let us pray: Lord, make us "humble servants, trustworthy and prudent," aware that we are responsible for one another. Amen.



Closing Mass - 26 October

HOMILY OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL
FR. GIUSEPPE ADOBATI

With this celebration we wish, first of all, to thank the Lord for the grace of the General Chapter, which gave us the opportunity to experience the richness and variety present in our Congregation and in the wider Passionist Family.

During these days, we tried to listen to each other, enlightened by the action of the Holy Spirit, in order to perceive that, in the common Passionist Vocation, we are all one body, whose head is Christ Crucified. We experienced the differences present among us, the result of distant histories, cultures and points of view; but we also perceived the unique origin of our call. As our Constitutions state in No. 4: *"We accept the urgent demands made on each of us by the personal call of the Father to follow Jesus Crucified, namely a personal and continual vigilance to make the Gospel the supreme rule and criterion of our life."*

We tried to set before us, our confreres and the laity, goals for our life and apostolate, renewing our gaze on Christ Crucified, and to dispose ourselves *"to proclaim His Passion and death, [...] ever-present realities to people in the world of today, 'crucified' as they are by injustice, by the lack of a deep respect for human life, and by a hungry yearning for peace, truth, and the fullness of human existence."* (Const. No. 65)

As Paul the Apostle writes, we are urged to *"attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ."* (Eph.4:13) However, we are aware that the journey is long and that our strength is limited, and that our sin can lead us astray from the goal. Indeed, we too, like Jesus' contemporaries, can fall into the temptation of pessimism and defeatism, justifying our resignation and indifference because of the contradictions, injustices and fatalities of life.



However, Jesus says to us-- *"I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!"* (Lk.13:3) This statement may appear to be a threat, but when interpreted in light of the parable that follows it, it is an announcement of hope. In fact, despite being unfruitful for three years, the master's willingness to let the fig tree enjoy special attention from the gardener, to return to bearing fruit, is not an act of despair; rather it is an act of trust, and a clear proposal for revitalization. The gardener intends to work at the roots of the tree, in order to restore new vigor to the whole plant.

Our Chapter was guided by the knowledge that our roots are "the Passion of Christ: our source and mission," as St. Paul of the Cross says in his Testament--*"the poor Congregation, is the fruit of your Cross, your Passion, and your Death."* Therefore, we are aware that we are "God's handiwork" and the fruit of grace flowing from the Cross of Christ. However, at the same time, we have a responsibility to respond to it with our personal and communal adherence. The work of the Chapter sought to identify tools and ways to work on the roots of our Passionist vocation, through proposals that would give us and our confreres, as well as our laity, motivation, formation and missionary impetus.

"Here I am, send me". This courageous statement from the prophet Isaiah completes the theme of the Chapter, inviting each of us to set out to bring the fruits of our religious consecration to our brothers and sisters of our time. At the same time, this action is personal and communal, individual and congregational, in the sense that each of us must be a protagonist in this process of witnessing.

At the conclusion of this Chapter let us therefore invoke the intercession of Mary, our Mother of Hope, and return to our communities and missions, where we will find signs of grace and joy, as well as situations of suffering and pain. Let us unite our gaze with that of Mary at the foot of the Cross, and that of the gardener at the foot of the fruitless fig tree. Both do not merely see the evil, the injustice, the emptiness, the problem, the unfertile soil; rather they glimpse, in that bloody cross and in that barren tree a mysterious light of hope.



May Mary, our Mother of Hope kindle in us a compassionate gaze on the reality to which we are sent, giving us the strength to offer time to our neighbors (*"leave it for this year"*), to care for them (*"I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it"*), and to believe in their ability to grow and change (*"it may bear fruit in the future"*) despite their weakness and poverty.

I conclude with the words that **St. Paul of the Cross** wrote to the religious on 12 March 1753:

*"Therefore, dearest ones, do not slacken in doing good, but with fear and trembling work out your salvation, striving rather, that through your good works, you make your call and election certain. Therefore, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave us an example that as he acted, so must we act. **Pray without ceasing for us and for the Congregation. Now, we place you to be guarded in the tabernacle of the open side of Christ and in the sorrowful Heart of Mary, our most loving Mother, and with a chaste fatherly love we pray** that the God of peace will sanctify you in everything, and that the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*



PARTICIPANTS AT THE 48TH GENERAL CHAPTER

GENERAL COUNCIL

1 Joachim Xavier Rego - SPIR	Superior General
2 Ciro Benedettini - MAPRAES	I General Consultor
3 Rafael Vivanco Pérez REG	General Consultor
4 Mirosław Lesiecki - ASSUM	General Consultor
5 Eddy Alejandro Vásquez López - SCOR	General Consultor
6 Aloysius John Nguma - GEMM	General Consultor
7 Gwen Barde - PASS	General Consultor

GENERAL CURIA

8 Alessandro Foppoli - MAPRAES	Procurator General
9 Rafael Blasco Bordejé - SCOR	Secretary General
10 Antonio Siciliano - MAPRAES	General Econome
11 José Agustín Orbegoza J. - SCOR	Ex Superior General (<i>not present</i>)
12 Ottaviano D'Egidio - MAPRAES	Ex Superior General

MAJOR SUPERIORS

13 Łukasz Andrzejewski	ASSUM Provincial
14 Raphael Mangiti O.	CARLW Vice Prov. & CPA Presid.
15 David Paul Colhour	CRUC Provincial
16 Henrique E. De Oliveira	EXALT Provincial
17 Josaphat Bernard Kiwori	GEMM Vice-Provincial
18 Leudes Aparecido De Paula	GETH Provincial
19 Peter Yeong-Dae Cheong	MACOR Provincial
20 Joseph Haruo Someno	MAIAP Vice-Provincial
21 Giuseppe Adobati	MAPRAES Provincial
22 Deusdedit P. Kumbani	MATAF Vice-Provincial
23 Nazario Plaza	PASS Provincial
24 James Sweeney	PATR Provincial
25 James O'Shea	PAUL Provincial
26 Ángel Antonio Pérez Rosa	REG Provincial
27 Sabinus Lohin	REPAC Provincial
28 Jules Mapela Thamuzi	SALV Vice-Provincial
29 Juan Manuel Benito Martín	SCOR Provincial
30 Mark-Robin Hoogland	SPE Provincial
31 Denis Travers	SPIR Provincial & PASPAC Presid..
32 Paul Cherukoduth	THOM Vice-Provincial
33 Lukas Temme	VULN Vice-Provincial

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34 Paul Francis Spencer – PATR	CCH Config.
35 Francisco Valadez R. – REG	CJC Config.



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38. Longino Kamuntu - GEMM
39. Rolly O. Jackwood - CARLW

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40. Maciej Duda - ASSUM

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41. Aurélio A. Miranda - EXALT
42. Enno Rufino Dango - CRUC
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44. Justin Kerber - PAUL
45. Kurt Wernert - CRUC
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50. Antonio Coppola
51. Daniele Pierangioli
52. Gaetano Vitale
53. Gianluca Garofalo
54. José Gregório Duarte V.
55. Leonello Leidi
56. Luigi Vaninetti
57. Marco Staffolani
58. Matteo Piccioni
59. Wellington Santos Pires

GUESTS

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Bishop of Cachoeiro de Itapemirim
Frans Damen - GABR

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Pasqualino Salini – MAPRAES
Assistant

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60. Adiantus Aloysius - REPAC
61. Brian Traynor - SPIR
62. Christopher Monaghan - SPIR
63. Efraim D. Ambon - REPAC
64. Emmanuel Gellez - PASS
65. Hendrikus Ridiyanto - REPAC
66. J. Baptist Cong T. Trinh - SPIR
67. Paskalis Nores - REPAC
68. Stefanus Suryanto - REPAC
69. Wilson Victor - THOM
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74. Germán Alberto Méndez C.
75. Héctor Manuel Peña L.
76. Jesús Aldea Peñalba
77. José Luis Quintero Sánchez
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¹² Not present.

¹³ Missionarii Africae (White Fathers)