

38th General Chapter

SSCC 2012



**Congregation of the Sacred Hearts
of Jesus and Mary**

Brothers

Rome



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MISSION

(Original in Spanish)

*“Everyone will be salted with fire.
Salt is good,
but if salt becomes insipid, with what will you restore its flavour?
Keep salt in yourselves
and you will have peace with one another.”
(Mark 9:49-50)*

Introduction

1. This text from the Gospel of Mark can inspire our understanding of our SSCC mission. The image of salting with fire reminds us of the sacrifices of expiation prescribed in the book of Ezekiel (cf. Ezek 43:24). The image is an exhortation to be brave in the face of difficulties and tenacious in the face of the formidable task of transforming the human heart. Fire and salt also speak of the heart of Jesus inflamed with a love which burns, heals and transforms and whose radical desire is for the Kingdom to come. Our mission is essentially participation in the “Missio Dei” (mission of God and mission of Jesus) which is “to make the Kingdom of God present,” (Const. 6). Fire and salt recall the zeal of which the Good Father spoke – that we do not be satisfied with situations of mediocrity or to become too settled. The words of Jesus suggest a way of understanding our mission in terms of “usefulness” and “taste.”
 - Mission as usefulness: salt is something useful, it serves for a host of things. The Good Father often said that the members of the Congregation should be useful to the church and the world. We are an apostolic Congregation and we are called to render specific services for the good of others.
 - Mission as taste: if salt loses its taste, it becomes useless. In our case, the religious and charismatic flavour of our life is at stake. We are useful missionaries to the extent that we conserve and relish the flavour of our SSCC religious life.

Just as “usefulness” helps us to question the impact of our community on the life of others, so “flavour” helps us to reflect on the impact our consecration has on each one of us. We want to welcome the words of Jesus who invites us to be salted in ourselves and to be at peace with one another. This salt comes to us as gift and we need to maintain its quality so as to participate in that profound renewal which is caused by the Lord ‘coming to set the earth on fire.’ (Luke 12:49).

2. As disciples of Jesus we are called to discern the signs of the times (cf. Mt 16:1-3) in the light of the Gospel. We know that in order to respond to the deepest questions of humanity we need to understand the world in which we live, its dramas, hopes and aspirations (cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 4). We live our mission in an age which is marked – among other things - by globalization in the different areas of human life; by economic growth in certain social sectors, by the rise of new information and communication technologies; by ethnic, cultural and religious pluralism; by a shift in ways of feeling, thinking and acting. The situation of the poor challenges us, as do those who are excluded or victimized; there is also the breakdown of the family, the neglect of children, the disorientation of young people, the abandonment of the old; abuse of authority, violence and corruption, the discrimination of people on grounds of gender, race, appearance,

culture, religion; the crisis of meaning in its many manifestations. At the same time, we are encouraged by efforts to be in solidarity with the poor, by various food projects, by health, housing, education and work initiatives; by the defence of human rights, care for the environment, biodiversity and multiculturalism; accompanying people who are trying to recover meaning in their lives...

3. We have been called to be with Jesus and to be sent by him. (Mark 3:14). At this time in the history of our Congregation we want to recover our enthusiasm for our SSCC vocation and mission. It is true that there are reasons to be disheartened: internal weaknesses and external threats; however, let not discouragement defeat us, but instead let us put into deep water, having absolute confidence in the words of Jesus (cf. Luke 5:5-6). In faith it is possible to hope for a time of grace for all, for a new Pentecost. We believe that we have something valuable to offer to the church and to the world, a charism motivated by the desire *to contemplate, live and announce to the world God's love which was made flesh in Jesus* (cf. Const. 2). In the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Luke 10:30-37), we recognize ourselves in both the one who was moved by compassion at the plight of the man left for dead on the roadside and in the man who needs to be healed. We know, of course, that we are sent not just to bring the Gospel but to receive it from the persons and peoples to whom we go.
4. To inspire us to live the mission of the Congregation we have in our tradition the testimony of many brothers who in their own time and circumstances incarnated the charism they received from the Founders. Think of Damien de Veuster, who leaving home, family and country gave himself generously to the service of those abandoned on Molokai, opening possibilities for those who had lost hope and coming to identify himself with his beloved leprous patients even to the point of death. Think too of the twentieth century martyrs in Spain: Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi, Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano Abechuco, Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares, Eladio López Ramos and Mario Ros Ezcurra. These five men – along with many others – witnessed to their faith with their own blood in a painful situation of confusion, persecution and violence. And then there is Blessed Eustaquio van Lieshout who exercised his ministry of healing of body and soul among those whom he met on the way. Certainly there have been many other brothers who have preceded us in serving the people of God and who are rightly raised up as a living inspiration to those who come after them. Also in our own time there are many brothers who inspire us with the testimony of their life and mission. Each brother today - wherever he is - feels impelled to give his life generously. As the Good Father himself said about his community, they “would fall short of their most essential vow once they begin to live for themselves alone and not work for the salvation of their brothers.”
5. To the brothers of the Congregation the Chapter offers this document on mission which has been the central theme of our Chapter. The objective of this Chapter has been “to search for concrete orientations for our apostolic service, given the needs of the world and the Church and a realistic consideration of who we are.” (Letter announcing the 38th General Chapter). What follows is the outcome of that search.

I. Sent in community by the community

6. Our communities are “a means for fulfilling our mission, a leaven of communion and reconciliation in our world and a sign which anticipates the full life of humanity in the Kingdom of God,” (Const. 38). The principle agent of our mission and of our formation is

the local community. For us as religious the community is the true apostolic subject of the actions through which we realise our mission. In the apostolate, we are sent by the community. The fact of living in a local community with other brothers is a fundamental part and the primary testimony of our mission (cf. Const. 40).

- 7.** We note that often we appear to be reticent with regard to community life. The apostolic life attracts us and we see community life as a hindrance to our personal and apostolic growth. How can we be convinced that community life is something good and actually makes us better people? How can we be persuaded that mission needs our community life? Where do we find the motivation to engage in the self-denial that living together demands? How can we move from putting up with community life to actually desiring it?
- 8.** The local community is a school of humanity (cf. 37th General Chapter). Our religious commitment invites us to move towards cordial acceptance of each other, mutual confidence, sincere and patient dialogue and to do what we can to care for each other.
- 9.** Life in the local community shapes our SSCC identity both at a personal level and in the ministry that each one has. The foundation of our being together is faith, faith in the call of the Lord and in his plan. Only in Jesus Christ do we recognise ourselves as brothers and live as such in a concrete community.
- 10.** The local community is in itself an apostolic team and it is the place where the apostolate of each brother is sustained, the place where all are called to work together. Although the brothers may not always work in the same ministries, it is in community where the apostolic activity of each is discerned, shared and evaluated.
- 11.** Community life requires practical objectives that give real substance to our commitment to community: daily times for prayer, celebration of the Eucharist, regular meetings, meals together and the placing in common of all goods. The local community PARL, fruit of dialogue among the brothers, will capture the essential elements that sustain both our community life and our apostolic service.
- 12.** Local communities opt for a style of life that is simple, with few (or no) employees to do the housework. The brothers embrace the common law of work in keeping with their age and health. The resources that the community relies on for living and sharing usually come from the work of the brothers, (Cf. Statute 5.5). Holding all goods in common is an important witness in today's world. If we truly live this we will have more resources for the mission.
- 13.** The local superior is the servant of communion. He will be attentive to the needs of the brothers, encouraging them to do what is needed for communal life and ensuring that they participate in those activities which sustain communal life. He will see to it that there are times for discerning, sharing and evaluating the experience of apostolic work.
- 14.** The building of a common life in the local community constantly demands overcoming our tendency to individualism. It is a continual process of learning, self-denial and conversion. The effort of every brother is needed to give flavour and spirit to our daily life together and to the things that are done in common.

II. To Evangelize on the margins

- 15.** "Our mission urges us to evangelizing action by which we enter into the interior dynamism of Christ's love for his Father and for the world, especially for the poor, the afflicted, the marginalized and those who have not heard the Good News," (Const. 6). We want to go, therefore, toward the margins, to where the love of Christ –the Good Shepherd - is pushing us.
- 16.** This movement toward the margins is an option for all, even though not all the brothers can be there. In any case, a significant number of our religious will dedicate their missionary activity to the poor and marginalized. (Cf. Const. Stat. 44.5)
- 17.** At this time there are a number of 'marginal situations' that we feel called to: the poor; the world of unbelief; situations and people in need of reconciliation; those who find themselves "spiritual orphans"; places where the church is not present, people who feel themselves marginalized by the church itself...
- 18.** These marginalized situations need to be discerned according to their reality and context. In order for the discernment to be valid, there needs to be on our part an appropriate spiritual disposition, a clear desire to serve, a detachment regarding one's own interests and the freedom to accept the changes that would be necessary. Finally discernment calls for an openness to conversion both as individuals and as major and local communities.
- 19.** We are aware of the many difficulties in moving toward the margins. Many think that we are blocked by institutional routine, satisfied with what we are already doing without experiencing the need for any change. In spite of all the difficulties, the Congregation is called to evangelize on the margins and to leave itself open to be evangelized by those who are there. Today this requires that we have a community life that is simple, open to the poor around us, building a Church that is close to the people and networking with others who also want to promote a world of justice and love.
- 20.** Our brothers, Damien, the twentieth century martyrs and Eustaquio are an inspiration for our mission. Damien invites us to go to the people who live in extreme poverty: "a Molokai can exist in any place," (Joseph Dutton). The Spanish martyrs of the Twentieth Century encourage us to be witnesses of the faith at a time when many people, including ourselves struggle to believe. Eustaquio motivates us to work for reconciliation, health and peace of people and even whole communities, bringing us closer to those who suffer violence of all kinds and who are hurting in heart and body.

This Chapter makes an appeal to all the brothers for this same missionary spirit to pervade and transform all of our apostolates. At the same time the Chapter asks the major communities of the Congregation over the next six years to commit to implementing some missionary presence directed explicitly to these marginalized situations: those who live in extreme poverty, those who experience difficulty in believing, the many who seek reconciliation, health and peace in today's world.

III. A Special Message to the Priests of the Congregation

- 21.** We are a Congregation of sisters and brothers, who share one vocation and one mission at the service of the church and the world. Knowing that the majority of our brothers are priests, this Chapter wants to direct a special message to them.
- 22.** The ordained ministry substantially determines our processes of initial formation and the works to which we dedicate ourselves. The Founder was a priest, he imagined that many of his followers would also be, and he considered the ordained ministry a great help to the mission of the Congregation. That said, there is very much alive today a critical awareness of clericalism in the Church – with its negative aspects of abuse of power, individualism, discrimination against women and the laity. Hence, many feel the need to "protect" our religious vocation from the danger of clericalism, and see ordained ministry as a threat.
- 23.** However such a perspective does not help renew our mission. It's not about being "less priests" so that we can be "more religious," but rather about living the ordained ministry as fully as possible as SSCC religious. We need to look deeper for an integrated way of seeing ourselves as SSCC priest-religious. We need to have a vision that harmonizes these two dimensions. We need a model that helps an "SSCC priest" to live his missionary vocation of service in an integrated, peaceful and fruitful way.
- 24.** The ordained minister is at the service of the sacraments, of Jesus made really present through his ministry, of the liturgy which celebrates the mystery of salvation, the signs of God's love. More than the repetition of an empty rite, the liturgy celebrates the sacrament of an encounter of one's own life with that of Jesus and that of the community. In the face of violence and disregard for life, the abuse of power, the lack of communication and the fragility of human relationships, we see in the ordained ministry a privileged opportunity for the SSCC mission of reparation and reconciliation. Likewise, this is an opportunity to revitalize the sacrament of reconciliation as an experience of a personal encounter with Jesus and the healing of people's suffering (cf. Const. 4-5).
- 25.** The ordained minister is the servant of the Word. We see in this service a privileged opportunity to proclaim the Gospel and preach the faith. Our personal encounter with the Word makes what we are and what we preach credible in situations of unbelief and in the midst of the noise which affects us deeply and makes difficult our encounter with Mystery. We know that we too need to undergo conversion in order to recover that essential element of our SSCC mission which is to make known the love of God manifested in Jesus (cf. Const. 2 and 6).
- 26.** The ordained minister is the servant of the community and exercises his authority to promote community and strengthen fraternity. We should not exercise power in an authoritarian way but seek co-responsibility among all. Over against an abusive, aggressive use of authority we must be a sign of something different. Simplicity and the family spirit, which are characteristic to our Congregation, help to connect us with others as equals in dignity and fragility and inspire our exercise of the ministry. Here we see a privileged opportunity to seek the transformation of the human heart and to be agents of communion in the world. (Const. 6 and 7)

27. Our religious life in community is the natural means to carry out this ministry. In the religious community we are helped to overcome temptations to clericalism, we share the mission with our brothers, we engage in fraternal correction and we strengthen the spirit of humility and service, all essential characteristics of our ministry as religious and priests.
28. In our religious community we grow in affective maturity in order to avoid and overcome the bureaucratic laziness and indifference of religious functionaries and the temptation of spiritual leaders to lord it over people and manipulate them.
29. Beginning with our common vocation to faith through baptism, we are called to improve communion with the laity and to promote co-responsibility with them. At the same time we are called, in the midst of God's people, to loyally accept the necessary control systems that come with our work and our responsibilities.
30. The ordained ministry also binds us, through special bonds of communion, to the pastors of the local and universal Church. Similarly, the ministry disposes us to be available to the needs of the church.

IV. To live and die in the Service of the Sacred Hearts

31. The process of formation, growth and renewal of our religious life lasts until death. With our eyes fixed on the radical following of Christ, our commitment to the development of the mission of the Congregation and the quality of its internal communion does not stop with old age but lasts a lifetime. (Cf. Const. 66).
32. We get old as we have lived. Our whole life is a preparation for old age. We have to work at ongoing formation at all the stages of life, always striving to be generous, both when we are young and strong and when frailty becomes part of our life. We have always to make an effort to understand health in a holistic sense.
33. In old age we make way for other generations, we allow ourselves to be led and we accept our increasing limitations. It is good to prepare ourselves to let go and pass on responsibility to others. We have to ready ourselves to be able to trust in those who come after us.
34. At the same time, we try to remain active as long as we are able. We can give up the exercise of ministry but we never "retire" from being SSCC religious. It's good to always have some type of activity be it pastoral, intellectual, manual or spiritual.
35. We live in community all our religious life. We also grow old in community. The community will acknowledge the particular contribution of older brothers (Cf. Stat. 14), show them the respect that they deserve and take care of them as needed. The major communities will review the place of the elderly and what the community is doing to animate their religious life right up to the end. The presence of old and sick brothers is significant. They are a blessing for the local community and with the richness and wisdom that comes with getting older they make a positive contribution to the atmosphere in community. We know that suffering can be an integral part of this stage in life and a particular way of imitating the passion of Christ, which lived in a Paschal sense, is also a wonderful testimony to the presence of the Risen Lord.

- 36.** Whenever possible, it is preferable that local communities be made up of brothers of different ages, and that every effort is made to integrate the older brothers. When it is necessary to create special communities for the elderly and infirm, the local superior will give special attention to the care of the brothers, both physically and spiritually. The Congregation is extraordinarily grateful for the love and dedication of the brothers who care for our elderly.
- 37.** The simplicity with which we want to live our life is also true of old age. Our elderly and sick brothers will be able to count on the ordinary means necessary to adequately care for them. (Cf. Stat. 14) Our desire, expressed in the formula of profession, is to live and die in the service of the Sacred Hearts. When the end of life draws near, what we want to do is prepare ourselves to die as believers and to make of our death an act of praise for the God who loves us. In that way, our death will be a witness to Christ, a final act of mission.

V. Ministers of Reparative Adoration

- 38.** The Chapter wants to remind all the brothers that we have been called to the ministry of adoration which makes us participate in the attitudes and the sentiments of Jesus before the Father and before the world, and associates us especially to his redemptive work. Adoration impels us to assume a ministry of intercession and reminds us of the urgency to work for the transformation of the world according to the criteria of the Gospel, (cf. Const. 5). Each community is encouraged to renew its concrete and meaningful ways of living Adoration and each brother is asked to reaffirm his commitment to daily adoration (cf. Const. 53.4).

Conclusion

- 39.** This General Chapter sincerely hopes that each brother and every community will receive this document and be disposed to apply its orientations at the different levels of the Congregation. We urge superiors to incorporate the contents in personal, communal and apostolic discernment with a view to revitalizing our common SSCC mission. Knowing that Mary precedes and accompanies us in the radical following of Christ (cf. Const. 3) we entrust the fruits of this Congregational event to the intercession of our Lady, Queen of Peace, Patroness of our missionaries.

Changes to the Constitutions and Statutes

(Original in Spanish)

1. Delegations

Possibility of erecting Delegations:

Number 3 is added to Article 89 of the Constitutions

1. The Congregation is organized into Provinces, and these into lesser communities. A Province can have one or more Vice-Provinces or Regions, which in turn are made up of various lesser communities.
2. This division corresponds to the specific plans of community and apostolic life integrated within the unity of our mission, and it has both a juridical and an administrative character.
3. Exceptionally, there can be Delegations directly dependent on the Superior General (Cfr. New Statute 66B).
4. Not only the Congregation but also the Provinces, Vice-Provinces, Regions, Delegations and legitimately erected houses enjoy juridical personality.

The Article 144 of the Constitutions (Administration of temporal goods) now reads as follows:

The Congregation as a whole, the Provinces, the Vice-Provinces, as well as the Regions, the Delegations and houses, as juridical persons, have the capacity to acquire, possess, administer and alienate temporal goods in accordance with the law.

New Statute 66B (after 66)

1. When a group of brothers does not fulfill the necessary conditions to be a Province, Vice-province or Region and it does not seem possible or appropriate to incorporate them into another major community, the Superior General can erect a Delegation.
2. The Superior General with the consent of his Council and after consultation with the brothers involved erects, modifies or suppresses a Delegation.
3. The Superior of a Delegation will have authority delegated by the Superior General, according to a Statute approved in each case by the General Government.
4. The Delegation will have a plan of apostolic religious life (PARL) organically integrated into the mission of the local Church and the entire Congregation.

Recognition of the proper mission of a Delegation, even though it does not depend on a province:

Statute 23, which reads as follows, is suppressed:

23. Every place where the Congregation fulfills its mission of evangelization will be dependent on a Province. That Province approves the plan for the missionary religious life of the group, which undertakes that mission.

Representation in the General Chapter:

Number 67.3 is added to Statute 67

- 67.1 Each Major Community has the right to at least one elected representative.
- 67.2 The number of delegates of each Major Community will be determined by the Superior General with the consent of his Council, having previously consulted the Major Superiors within the two years before the General Chapter and seeking the most equitable representation.
- 67.3 The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, will also determine in each case the way of assuring representation in the General Chapter by any Delegations which may exist.

2. Exchange of personnel between major communities

Statutes 23, 24 and 28 are suppressed.

A new Statute (22B) is added, which reads as follows:

When a brother is sent to participate in the mission of a major community or delegation other than his own, the two major superiors involved will establish a contract that defines the situation of the brother in relationship to his major community or delegation of origin and to the one receiving him.

3. Active and Passive Voice

The following new statute (22C), associated with Article 81 of the Constitutions, is introduced:

No one can enjoy double active and passive voice. When a religious is sent to a major community or delegation different from his own, the written agreement between the two major superiors will determine in which of the two communities the brother will have active and passive voice.

Statute 85 is modified to read as follows:

- 85.1 The members of the General Government retain active voice in their major community of origin, but not passive.
- 85.2 Brothers called by the Superior General to a service in the General House retain active voice in their communities of origin, but they lose passive voice for offices that would be incompatible with the service to which they have been called.

The System of Contributions and Congregational Financial Solidarity

(Original in English)

1. Introduction

“Christ Jesus did not count equality with God something to be grasped” (Philippians 2:6)

1. As brothers in the Congregation, we follow the Wisdom of God revealed for us in Christ Jesus. His whole life is a consistent teaching of the values of the Kingdom. We can say with certainty that we follow him as our teacher and guide in the humility of a chaste, poor and obedient life. The One we follow, this itinerant preacher who had no where to lay his head, who shared a common purse with his disciples, who was born in humble circumstances, died naked hanging from a cross.
2. The primitive community of believers imitated this humble poverty. We are told that the “company of believers were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they put everything in common (Acts 4:32).”
3. We religious of the Sacred Hearts are consecrated to live this ideal in imitation of the Master and inspired by the first generation of believers. Our Constitutions (Const. 23-30) represent a refined understanding of evangelical poverty both for our personal holiness and for the good of the mission. Through our embrace of poverty, we are called to be free from attachments which can impede our response to Divine promptings and from the materialism evident everywhere in the world.
4. The witness to freely chosen poverty should not be underestimated. Joyfully and simply lived, it is a powerful countercultural sign as well as a supremely freeing gift. It does, of course, demand trust that God really does provide and that our future is in Him.
5. From the last General Chapter until today, we have attempted to reach a better common understanding of the standards and criteria for the preparing and following an annual budget and for the presentation of the Financial Report to the General Government. However, we need to improve the transparency and consistency of our financial information.
6. The Congregation today is calling each of us and our communities to a renewed commitment to live poverty as our religious profession requests of us. We are called to place all our income in common (Const. 26.2). Nothing should be hidden, rather as in all things, we should be open and transparent to the community.
7. The Congregation’s financial commitments are substantial and our resources limited. Some Major Communities have more resources than others. But our projects are in common and the burden is for each to share. Among many worthy works, some are more pressing than others. Some major communities have many vocations but no money to form them. At all the levels of the Congregation, we have to increase the consciousness of our co-responsibility and communion for its mission.

2. The System of Contributions

8. The General Government will establish the percentage for the annual contribution of each major community to the expenses of the General Government (budget of the Generalate, contributions for Initial Formation, the deficit of Africa).
9. This percentage will be determined on the basis of the formula currently in use. The General Government will adjust the results produced by this formula by taking into account the number of brothers "of working age," the socio-economic level of the countries in which those brothers work ("objective factor") and the "accumulated patrimony."
10. In setting this percentage, the General Government will work with the General Treasurer, who has knowledge of the balance sheet and economic reality of each major community.
11. The percentage to be used for three years, will be set for the first time in December 2013. At the end of three years it will be reviewed and set for the next three years.
12. Until the end of 2018, the deficit of the Province of Africa, previously evaluated by the General Government, will be financed by contributions of all the Major Communities. These contributions will be calculated in the same way as the contributions to the Generalate and Initial Formation.
13. The General Government will observe the following limits in developing its annual budget:
 - a. The total amount of money available each year to fund the budget of the General house will not be more than €280.000.
 - b. The total amount of money available each year for contributions to the costs of Initial Formation will not be more than €250.000.
 - c. The total amount of money available each year to support the deficit of Africa will not be more than €80.000.
 - d. These limits set by the Chapter can be modified by the next Enlarged General Council.
14. In the case of an extraordinary need of the General Government or of a major community, the General Government will ask for a voluntary contribution from the whole Congregation, respecting the provisions of Statutes 96.2 and 97.

3. Congregational Financial Solidarity

15. The General Government, through the General Econome, will be responsible for receiving requests for aid from major and regional governments and will decide best how to call on the financial solidarity of the whole Congregation to respond to these requests.
16. The community receiving aid will send a report on how the money was used to meet the objectives of the funded project.
17. The General Government will report on any projects helped through Congregational solidarity (through INFO, www.sccpicpus.com, etc).

18. The General Government will name a brother/brothers who will be a resource for helping communities in need to find funding sources outside the Congregation.
19. This system replaces the Solidarity Network, functioning until now.

4. Other recommendations

20. The General Chapter strongly encourages the Major Communities to comply with Statue 6 by preparing, approving, and following an annual budget.
21. The Chapter requires the Major Communities to do an assessment of all fixed assets to determine which are underutilized and to take steps to make them produce income or dispose of them to reduce expenses.
22. The General Chapter empowers and encourages the Interprovincial Conference Finance Commissions to take up the tasks assigned to them by the 37th General Chapter¹ and to seek alternative sources of financing their communities' missions.
23. The General Chapter directs the Major Communities and Regions to improve transparency and accountability for use of financial resources.

¹ Each Interprovincial Conference will create a Finance Commission, composed of the Economes of the Major and Regional Communities belonging to the Interprovincial Conference. It will have the duty to share the financial situation of each Major and Regional community and, from a financial point of view, look for solutions for the interprovincial projects of Initial Formation, Ongoing Formation, Missionary Projects and other possible collaborative initiatives in the Interprovincial Conference. (37th General Chapter, *Structures* 15)

Our SSCC Patrimony

(Original in English)

1. The General Government and Curia

In order to continue to provide ongoing formation, especially formation for formators, in our spiritual and historical patrimony, the Chapter decides:

1. The General Government will appoint one of the General Councilors to coordinate study and publication on our SSCC history and spirituality.
2. This Councilor will collaborate with the General Archivist and the General Postulator who can suggest topics for research and with the General Secretary, especially as regards publication. The four will constitute a team.
 - 2.1. They will call on the assistance of other brothers to collaborate on specific topics.
 - 2.2. They will collaborate in the Picpus Summer Session, when held, and other programs sponsored by the provinces and inter-provincial conferences that promote formation in our SSCC living tradition.
3. The General Government will identify topics and initiatives to be developed related to our SSCC spiritual patrimony.
4. The General Government will give priority to any topics in this area related to decisions of the General Chapter.
5. The General Government will offer study grants for brothers who want to do specialized study in our SSCC spiritual patrimony.

2. Presence at Picpus

1. The General Chapter values the presence of the brothers' community at Picpus in a place of special significance for the whole SSCC family.
2. The General Chapter asks the French province to maintain the local community at Picpus with its double focus: SSCC apostolic outreach and the animation of activities around the historical places.
3. The General Government, in dialogue with the Provincial of France, will see what support the Picpus community might need from the rest of the Congregation and could eventually send personnel and/or financial assistance.

3. International Community in Louvain

1. The General Chapter asks the General Government to create an international community in Leuven, animated by a project linked to the person of Damien and all he represented. The community will be under the direct responsibility of the General Government. This ministry will have a two-fold objective:
 - (a) to care for the memory of Damien and promote his values;
 - (b) to act as Damien did: to foster apostolic actions in favor of the marginalized.

2. The community will have its own assets including ownership of the house of Sint Antoniusberg 3, the Damien Centre facilities and the Chapel of St. Anthony.
3. The General Government, in dialogue with the Provinces of Flanders and the Netherlands, will study the means of financing the community and its apostolic project. The desire of the Chapter is that the community will live simply and do what it can to be financially self-sufficient.
4. The preparation of future members of the international community is the responsibility of the General Government.
5. The community will develop its plan of apostolic religious life, in which will be specified the relationship with the project 'Damiaan Vandaag' and various other pastoral activities and activities of service which the community will consider appropriate. The plan will be approved by the General Government.
6. It is the responsibility of the General Government to make opportune decisions regarding the personnel of the community, which will have a local superior and a local treasurer appointed by the General Government.

Follow-up and Adaptation of Chapter Decisions on Structures and other Initiatives

(Original in French)

In light of the experience of the last six years and the evaluation of the decisions of the 37th General Chapter of 2006, the 38th General Chapter decides the following:

Interprovincial Conferences

1. The General Government with the communities involved will study the future of the USC (United States Interprovincial Conference). Should the USC be suppressed, the General Government with the communities involved will look for ways to facilitate the participation of its members in international structures of the Congregation.
2. The General Government and the coordinators of the Interprovincial Conferences will continue to meet at a frequency to be determined by the General Government.

Formation of New Major and Regional Superiors

3. The Chapter recommends continuing the meetings for formation of new major and regional superiors organized by the General Government.

Ongoing Formation

4. To carry out the task of animating ongoing formation, the General Government can be helped by groups and commissions created *ad hoc* (Cf. Statute 86). In consequence, it is not necessary to continue the General Commission for Ongoing Formation created at the demand of the last General Chapter. The document "*General Orientations for SSCC Ongoing Formation*" (February 2008) will serve as a basic reference in this task.
5. Each Interprovincial Conference will maintain its Interprovincial Commission for Ongoing Formation. Each conference will determine the way in which the commission is composed and functions. The document "*General Orientations for SSCC Ongoing Formation*" (February 2008) will also serve as a basic reference in this task.

Initial Formation

6. The General Commission of Initial Formation will remain in existence as it is defined in the Document "Structures" of the 37th General Chapter (n. 6)², using a criteria of flexibility as regards the representation of the Province of Africa and the Province of the United States.
7. The system by which the whole Congregation helps finance a part of the needs of initial formation of the major communities that request it will be continued. The General Government will indicate the process to be followed in presenting requests for help.
8. The General Chapter recommends that the General Government reconsider the proposal to establish a period of several months of common formation for those who, each year, are preparing for perpetual profession. This time would help to build bridges between the different cultures in the Congregation.

Vocation Ministry

9. The animation and coordination of vocation ministry is a necessary task in the Congregation. Because of that the Chapter decides:
 - 9.1. That all the major communities and regions make an effort to have a Commission for Vocation Ministry that will animate and coordinate this ministry.
 - 9.2. That the General Government, together with the Vocation Ministry Commissions, study the way to facilitate interchange of experiences, materials and reflections on this topic in the whole Congregation.

Meetings of Treasurers

10. In each interprovincial conference there will continue to be regular meetings of the treasurers of the major and regional communities and delegations. Each conference will determine the way of organizing these meetings, which will be an important occasion for interaction with the General Treasurer who will normally be present.
11. The General Government and the Major Superiors will ensure, at the levels for which they are responsible, that the Economes will receive the formation and training that they need, in order to carry out their office in a way that is Gospel centered and effective. Superiors and Economes will seek whatever professional assistance they need for financial administration. They shall take advantage of existing resources in this field from national organizations of Religious Life, as well as from other kinds of professional consultants. (37th General Chapter, Finances 2)

² a) The General Government will create an Initial Formation Commission to help the General Government in animating and implementing Initial Formation at all levels of the Congregation, paying particular attention to the Chapter decisions in that regard.

b) The General Government will appoint from among the four Councilors a Coordinator for the General Commission for Initial Formation.

c) The General Commission for Initial Formation will be made up of the Coordinators of the different Interprovincial Commissions of Initial Formation.

Cause of beatification of the “Martyrs of the Paris Commune”

(Original in French)

The General Chapter mandates the General Government to continue the Cause of beatification of our four brothers “Martyrs of the Paris Commune”: Ladislas Radigue, Polycarpe Tuffier, Marcellin Rouchouze and Frézal Tardieu.

Secular Branch

(Original in Spanish)

The General Chapters of 2012 ask the General Governments of the brothers and sisters to put in place a team of spiritual animation of the Secular Branch at general level.

The function of this team will be:

- To be attentive to the development of the Secular Branch worldwide,
- Inform and sensitize the Congregation about the reality of the Secular Branch,
- Provide tools for spiritual animation and ongoing formation to members of the Secular Branch and to the religious accompanying them.

The team:

- Will consist of Brothers and Sisters appointed by both General Governments,
- Should maintain, in all its activities, a permanent interaction with members of the Secular Branch.

Internationality and moving personnel throughout the Congregation

(Original in English)

1. The conversations, reflections and decisions that have taken place throughout the Chapter as regards the subject of Mission have led the Chapter to consider the reality of internationality and the criteria for moving personnel throughout the Congregation. As fruit of these reflections, the General Chapter offers the following topics on internationality for deeper reflection as well as some practical criteria for moving personnel.

Topics on internationality

2. Internationality: in our Constitutions internationality is understood in the first place as being intimately related to the mission of the Congregation. (cf. Const. 60-61) We also believe that internationality is something desired as a sign of new life in the Kingdom of God. However, experience tells us that we do not have a common understanding of what is internationality and what are its implications for our lives.
3. Internationality and Interculturality: brothers who come to live together from different countries are called to grow in knowledge of each other and in appreciation of the diversity and acceptance of the differences of culture that exist among them, overcoming any fears and prejudices that they may have. Interculturality is also a reality which is lived within our own local communities and countries.
4. Internationality and Inculturation: when we exercise the mission of the Congregation in countries other than our own, our Constitutions ask us to inculturate ourselves. (cf. Const. 62) This signifies that the community, from the beginning, will look for ways to insert itself in the host culture.
5. Countercultural internationality: the process of inculturation includes a time for evaluation on the countercultural significance of our local communities in international contexts. What can we offer, from our religious life and from the Gospel, to the culture in which we live?
6. Internationality and Initial Formation: Internationality must be promoted, lived and experienced in Initial Formation in order to develop the sense of belonging to the entire Congregation.

Practical criteria for moving personnel

7. "In his apostolate, each brother is aware that he has been sent by the community". (Const. 41.3) Subsequently, this applies to "the brother who is sent to participate in the mission of a major community or delegation other than his own". (New Statute 22B)

8. There should be a clear contract drawn up between the Superiors involved.(cf. New Statute 22B)
9. The local community to which the brother is sent should have a PARL that reflects the conviction in the value and future of our SSCC religious life in that context.
10. Every brother who is part of an apostolic project outside of his community of origin should be given the necessary formation to help him be fully incorporated into his new community (cf. Statute 22) and integrated into the culture where he is in mission.
11. The General Government should be informed by the major superiors of the various initiatives that are taking place regarding moving personnel throughout the Congregation. In some cases, the General Government can also encourage and coordinate this kind of movement of personnel.
12. The General Government is required to ensure that the above criteria are put into practice.

Elections of the SSCC General Government

Javier Álvarez-Ossorio	<i>Superior General</i>
Camille Sapu	<i>Vicar General</i>
Alberto Toutin	<i>General Councilor</i>
Pankrasius Olak	<i>General Councilor</i>
Felipe F. Lazcano	<i>General Councilor</i>