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# **INSTRUMENTUM LABORIS**

**Licheń 2020**

"Behold, I am doing something new" (Is 43:19)

XXI GENERAL CHAPTER



GCh.20/13/E



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## FOREWORD

The main purpose of this *Instrumentum Laboris* is to list the major themes of the second consultation and of the Spiritan meetings, in order to make them available to the confreres and lay Spiritans in general and in particular to the delegates to the XXI General Chapter, which will take place in Lichen, Poland. Each one will be able to find there an important source of reflection, debate, stimulation and action. Indeed, what becomes clear, and what the drafting committee of this document has identified as a desire to see realized, is listening to the Word of God, always creative, and to the voices of those who hope and aspire to a better world (cf. Prayer for the XXI General Chapter).

For each dossier presented, three questions served as the founding text for our overall approach: Where are we as a Congregation seven years after Bagamoyo? What do we want to be as a Congregation in fidelity to our charism? What do we need to do to get where we want to be? In short, it is a question of highlighting three model ideas corresponding to the questions asked: 1) the realities of the Congregation today, 2) the ideal to which we are called to live as Spiritans, 3) the specific proposals or means at our disposal.

Thus, seven major themes make up the document:

- Spiritan mission in the contemporary world;
- initial and continuing formation for contemporary mission;
- intercultural community for contemporary mission;
- spirituality for contemporary mission;
- the professional and ethical standards of contemporary ministry (protection of minors and vulnerable persons, financial responsibility, etc.);
- finances for contemporary mission;
- organization for contemporary mission.

In addition to these seven themes, we must add proposals for revision of the Rule of Life and the conclusions of recent international meetings (Inter-Religious Dialogue in Zanzibar, Spiritan Spirituality in Rome, Formation in Dakar, Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults in Rome). The report of the Superior General and his Council and that of the Bursar General also constitute a considerable support for various topics touching the life of the Congregation and which the capitulants will have to consider.

We thank all those who participated in the consultation process initiated by the General Council. This *Instrumentum Laboris* will serve as a basis for reflection and exchange to enable the delegates to speak and discuss with the confreres and lay associates they represent at the chapter. We are all at work in this project, and we will only succeed if we listen to the Spirit who makes things new (Is 43:19).

The Editorial Committee:

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# A) SYNTHESIS OF 2<sup>ND</sup> CONSULTATION

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## 1. SPIRITAN MISSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

*“The effort to proclaim the Gospel to the people of today, who are buoyed up by hope but at the same time often oppressed by fear and distress, is a service rendered to the Christian community, and also to the whole of humanity.”*

(Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1)

The Church's mission or evangelizing action, understood as proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ in all walks of life and, by its impact, the transformation from within, renewing humanity itself (Is 43:19) (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 18), is linked to the world, to our humanity and to the concrete life of men and women.

Our Spiritan circumscriptions, like all the structures and institutions of the universal Church, constantly make this synodal definition of mission their own. In this regard, and at a time when the whole Church is invited to reflection, prayer and action, on the occasion of the centenary of the publication of the Apostolic Letter of Benedict XV *Maximum Illud* on Mission (30 November 1919), the major concern underlined in the responses to the Spiritan mission in the contemporary world is the unity between the proclamation of the Gospel and human life, a proclamation directed towards men and women and committed to their integral well-being. Mission is intimately and inseparably united to the world, in the sense that it is exercised in the world. To understand mission as a link between Revelation, the life of human beings and the world, as a multiform reality that concerns daily life and human, socio-political, economic and cultural situations, is to situate oneself in “the living history that welcomes us and pushes us forward” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 13).

### 1.1 OBSERVATIONS AND CHALLENGES:

- a) The contemporary world is characterized by a great diversity of political, economic, social, cultural and religious situations. Among these are the following:
  - cultural, religious and political pluralism;
  - dictatorial political regimes;
  - secularization;
  - scandals in the Church;
  - fundamentalist religious organizations;
  - migration of peoples, refugees;
  - the rise of populism;
  - poverty in the cities and the countryside;
  - social divisions;
  - socio-political conflicts;
  - families in distress;
  - unemployed youth;

- movements fighting for human rights, individual liberties and for the preservation of creation; etc.

Because of the situation of each mission, these different characteristics cited are not lived to the same extent by all confreres on the ground.

- b) Because of the diversity proper to the circumscriptions in missionary personnel, the Congregation has the assets to respond to the mission that the contemporary world needs. However, some circumscriptions also complain about the decrease in missionary personnel at the same time as others see their numbers increase. Also, the poverty of financial and material means and of personnel makes it difficult to maintain missionary commitments.
- c) Since the last General Chapter of Bagamoyo 2012, Spiritan mission continues to diversify. Different practices in the field today reflect the diversity of missionary commitments:
- missionary animation;
  - presence in the peripheries of cities;
  - presence in rural areas;
  - commitments to migrants and refugees, undocumented migrants, the homeless, young people, women and adults in difficulty, prisoners and the sick in hospitals;
  - first proclamation of the Gospel;
  - witness of Christian life in environments where the Church is a minority;
  - relations with believers of non-Christian religious denominations;
  - ecumenism;
  - foundation and accompaniment of Christian communities;
  - participation in the integral development and promotion of people living in precarious situations;
  - service in the media;
  - service to education through presence in schools and universities;
  - promotion of justice and peace;
  - integral ecology;
  - defence of minors and vulnerable persons;
  - commitment in the formation of the laity, commitment in initial formation; etc.
- d) The various commitments of Spiritans in the world show many faces of mission and reflect the theologies or missionary paradigms of the whole Congregation (SRL 13.1): mission as
- proclamation in areas of first evangelization;
  - presence and interreligious dialogue;
  - inculturation;
  - justice and peace and the integrity of creation;
  - communication;
  - foundation and accompaniment of Christian communities and people in difficult social situations;
  - formation and education.

- e) Spiritan mission, like the Church itself, is lived in a world in constant change. A major part of the response to the challenges of contemporary mission requires a good knowledge of the world in general, and of the environment in which we work in particular.
- f) The “missionary strategic plan” (Bagamoyo 1.9) has not been drawn up by all the circumscriptions.
- g) Our lifestyle and missionary commitments do not always correspond to what is prescribed in SRL 12, 13, 14 and 17.
- h) In most local Churches we are well received. In others, especially in Churches where we have been present for a long time, we may need to rethink our way of being present and relevant.
- i) Mission priorities cannot be the same everywhere. Their principles are general while their implementation on the ground depends on the means available to Provinces and Groups. The context in which circumscriptions find themselves is decisive in defining their missionary priorities.
- j) The presence in education - Spiritan schools - is strong in some circumscriptions and weak in others. The dossier “mission as education” (Bagamoyo 1.29) seems to have been interpreted by the former in the sense of a formal education (kindergartens or pre-schools, colleges, high schools and universities) to the detriment of education in general and informal education (the marginalized, street children, those who are failing at school...). The example of Poullart des Places and the little Savoyard chimney sweeps is not always followed.
- k) The world is criss-crossed by media and social networks. Thus, the means of communication - written press, radio, television, internet... - are at the service of mission. But this does not appear as a missionary priority in many circumscriptions.
- l) The missionary commitment of some confreres is not always linked to the circumscription in which they are assigned. There are some who make commitments to the bishops or dioceses without the prior approval of the Superior of the circumscription. Others work in a “solitary way” and are not accountable to the leadership of the circumscription.
- m) Mission and time on mission go hand in hand. Some confreres leave their country of mission early or change assignments more frequently. This instability does not allow for the building of a long-term missionary vision for either the circumscription or the local mission area.
- n) A certain number of problems prevent us from taking up a truly Spiritan mission : the way of understanding mission and the ministerial priesthood - clericalism and power; the lack of enthusiasm to go elsewhere among both young and old; the reception given to new arrivals; the unfavourable prejudices about those who ask to go on mission elsewhere (mission ad extra); defeatism when one sees oneself as a “stopgap”; the dispersion or absence of a common vision of mission; the confusion between Spiritan lifestyle and diocesan lifestyle.
- o) We are sometimes constrained or conditioned by the demands and pastoral plans of local Churches, which prevent the circumscriptions from setting their own missionary orientations.

- p) Because of the rapid changes in the world - changing cultural values, economic development and its consequences, political change and its impact - views of the Church and its activity are also changing. In mission, it is not a question of being revolutionary or of allowing oneself to be dictated to by the ongoing march of the world. We are “in the world without being of the world” (Jn 17:1). Nor is it a question of remaining stuck in the methods of the past - “we have always done it this way” - but of having a creative and relevant approach, of updating ourselves, of being flexible, of having the freedom to be and to do.
- q) Mission for most of the circumscriptions is still confined to the parishes where classical pastoral work is done: catechesis of children and adults; administration of the sacraments; accompaniment of groups, Catholic action movements and basic ecclesial communities; etc. To define the mission by a single category of activities is to confine it to a single vision that impoverishes it.

## 1.2 PROPOSALS:

- a) Re-evaluate our presence in mission situations when circumstances change or when missionary personnel are precarious. On the basis of clear and objective criteria - financial means, personnel resources, work done (cf. the parable of the useless servant in Lk 17:5-10) - it is urgent to say what really needs to be kept: international communities, parishes on the periphery, mission in situations of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, centres of spirituality, etc.
- b) Pope Francis invites us to dare to go out to “the geographical and existential peripheries” and to meet the men and women of the milieu in which we work. This means :
- frequent the places that are significant for mission;
  - question the causes of poverty, migration and displacement of peoples;
  - promote human solidarity in all the situations in which we find ourselves;
  - be present among the marginalized in our local environment - prisoners, the excluded, the sick, etc. ;
  - be available to serve men and women in difficulty, especially young people in contexts of multifaceted crisis (cf. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, 72-80).
- c) Choose missionary commitments that witness to our charism (SRL 14-15), in circumscription, in community and in communion with the local Churches, and to refocus as a community on a mission carried out together.
- d) Sign or renegotiate contracts with dioceses and other mission partners. We must continue to work with them without confusion but in complementarity, collaboration and mutual recognition of our diversity.
- e) Give priority to works in collaboration with other participants in mission (religious congregations, development partners...).
- f) Continue to arouse in each confrere the importance and passion for dialogue in our world today. As recommended by the Zanzibar Forum 2018, inter-religious dialogue should “be part of the strategic missionary plan of each circumscription” (no. 15).
- g) Develop the following missionary attitudes and convictions :

- be attentive to the culture of the environment in which one finds oneself;
- analyse the situations of the peoples and communities for which one is responsible, being open to their ideas and expectations, listening to them;
- put at the centre of mission not the ministerial priesthood but an open and integrated pastoral care outside our “comfort and security zones”, always ready to cross borders of all kinds, without prejudice or partiality.

Thus proclamation must remain at the heart of our mission, especially in its dimension of service. All this requires discernment in the Spirit.

- h) Adapt our missionary style to the situations in which we find ourselves, for there is no mission defined once and for all, but the mission is thought out and renewed in order to respond to new objectives which the Congregation sets for itself through its Provinces and Groups.
- i) Diversify missionary commitments within the same circumscription so that the charisms of the confreres may also be expressed because, though the Spiritan charism is one, it is expressed in many ways by the confreres in the field.
- j) Define clearly and precisely the human, financial and material resources of Spiritan mission today. For this, the implementation of the “missionary strategic plan for each circumscription” decided at Bagamoyo must continue.
- k) Set up a team of confreres with different profiles in each circumscription, which will be responsible for reflecting and publishing regularly on the challenges of mission today and integrating them into the programmes of initial and ongoing formation.

### **1.3 GOING FURTHER IN THE REFLECTION ON SPIRITAN MISSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

- a) In order to take into account the current challenges of mission, the General Chapter needs to answer a number of questions, among which are the following:
  - What are the criteria for a specifically Spiritan mission today?
  - What are the significant places to exercise our mission “according to our own vocation” (SRL 13)?
  - How can we get out of the diocesan dynamic to invent other ways of working?
  - How can we articulate the reference to “a common missionary project” (SRL 184) and the consideration of the questions proper to each continent or country?
- b) Like many dioceses and religious congregations today, we find ourselves in the logic of ecclesial collaboration and communion. Thus, in addition to the “collegial organization” of the Unions of Circumscriptions (SRL 184), our Provinces and Groups are part of the pastoral units of the local Churches whose aim is to undertake overall pastoral care.
  - What do we need to do to move forward in collaboration?
  - What are the main lines of an “ecclesiology of communion” that we propose?

## **2. INITIAL FORMATION / ONGOING FORMATION FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION**

*“Without undervaluing academic preparation, Spiritan formation will place strong emphasis on the preparation of candidates for the mission of evangelising the poor”*  
(Bagamoyo 3.4).

### **2.1 INITIAL FORMATION**

Initial formation cannot be improvised and demands long-term planning as well as appropriate training to accompany candidates. In order to have a healthy balance in the formation programme, the spiritual and human dimensions, especially in the early stages, must not be sacrificed due to academic or other demands placed on candidates. As there are different ways of living out the Spiritan vocation (priest, brother, LSA), it is important that each be formed appropriately according to their calling within the Congregation.

### **2.2 ONGOING FORMATION**

Ongoing formation for Spiritans is of vital necessity in the contemporary world. Both the Spiritan Rule of Life (142-147) and the *Guide for Spiritan Formation* (76-106) make a number of references and provide orientation as to its implementation. Particular attention needs to be given to moments of transition in life and ministry (c.f. GSF 93). Aware also that many confreres can encounter serious difficulties not only at the beginning of their ministry but also around the 10 years mark in their missionary journey, a challenge for the Congregation is to accompany and assist younger members in their pastoral, human and spiritual growth and renewal as Spiritans.

### **2.3 PROPOSALS**

- a) Throughout their time in formation future Spiritan missionaries will possess the following essential elements:
  - A passion for mission;
  - A healthy balance between apostolic activities, intellectual work and prayer;
  - A desire to work and collaborate with lay people (cf. SRL 101).
- b) Candidates at all stages of initial formation will be introduced to a holistic understanding of our religious missionary calling and the servant model of priestly identity and leadership among the People of God.
- c) All directors of formation communities are accountable and make an annual report to the major superior (s) and to the Coordinator for Formation in the Generalate as to how the human, spiritual, community, pastoral and academic dimensions are fostered and integrated into the formation programme.
- d) There will be an adequate preparation given to formators so that they can transmit the charism and the spirituality of the Congregation to future missionaries.

- e) Specific human, intellectual, spiritual, religious and community conditions will be created that will allow students to develop their gifts and talents given by God. This will happen both at the stage of initial formation and during ongoing formation
- f) There will be more harmonisation of formation in the Congregation and the centralisation of the second cycle will be speeded up to aid interculturality and internationality.
- g) Areas to be covered in the Formation Programme will, among other subjects, include:
  - JPIC;
  - human sexuality;
  - child protection;
  - accountability.
- h) Formation will include training in inter religious dialogue as well as the study of the popular religion of the peoples that welcome us to work among them.
- i) In as much as is possible, PME will take place in a circumscription that will be the candidate's future mission appointment.
- j) Encourage the promotion of Spiritan vocations.
- k) Evaluate the programme for the formation of Brothers.
- l) The clerical sexual abuse crisis has drawn attention to the underlying issues of accountability, transparency and clericalism. It is critical to promote, as an essential component of formation, the ecclesial vision outlined by Pope Francis, a synodal journey, where the faithful are co-responsible and every form of clericalism needs to be fought decisively.
- m) As with confreres in ministry, all confreres in formation will be accompanied and supervision.
- n) The chapter will consider the needs for ongoing formation and define its different stages and requirements. Each circumscription will draw up a programme of ongoing formation.
- o) Confreres will read and keep themselves informed about publications of the Congregation and which are available on the section « Spiritan Collection » on the website of Duquesne University.

### **3. INCULTURAL COMMUNITY FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION**

*“We have been called in Christ to live out our Spiritan calling in community....the Congregation has adopted life in community as its founding principle. Its members shall all live in community at all times” (SRL 27).*

*“We who come from different cultures, continents, and nations, and who have different outlooks, are brought together by the Spirit of Pentecost into one larger community, the Congregation. Cultural diversity is welcomed as a positive factor. Our unity bears witness to reconciliation in Christ” (SRL 37).*

*“Fraternity is the first and most credible Gospel that we can witness to. We are asked to humanize our communities” (Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Circular Letter to Consecrated Persons, February 2, 2014).*

#### **3.1 OBSERVATIONS AND CHALLENGES**

- a) Our communities are increasingly international, intercultural and intergenerational (Bagamoyo 4.5). The Spiritan mission is lived, in many ways, in an intercultural context.
- b) Interculturality is a major constitutive element for living as a Spiritan and for Spiritan identity today, because “the proclamation of the Gospel takes place under the sign of the Incarnation” in a place and time marked by a culture (SRL 16).
- c) Human mobility, so characteristic of the contemporary world, reinforces the urgency of being in tune with interculturality. Interculturality has become an essential part of Spiritan witness and missionary commitment.
- d) Interculturality and the intercultural community are made up of people of different affiliations: national, ethnic, family, socio-cultural environment, style of formation, province, etc. Each one is marked by these affiliations like in a default position. At the same time, one is called to a true encounter with the other, with difference and diversity in a process of mutual transformation and conversion.
- e) Questions of inequality of financial and material resources among confreres feed the dynamics of power within a community.
- f) The encounter and discovery of the other person, of another country, another culture, another way of living a common faith can give rise to many questions and uncertainties.
- g) A fruitful community interculturality is welcoming and respectful of the other and of his or her capacities. It celebrates diversity, requires real clarity and requires preparation and accompaniment.

- h) Does the community that welcomes a confrere allow itself to be challenged by a new presence, by a newcomer? Does it allow itself to be challenged in its certainties and its way of living and doing things?
- i) How can we reassure confreres who have the impression that their lifestyle is being questioned or threatened by heterogeneity, by otherness or by cultural diversity?
- j) How can we accompany, support and guide, without paternalism, the confreres who arrive in a community or mission so that they can discover the surrounding culture, life in society, the pastoral orientations in place and the missionary challenges without too much hindrance?
- k) How can we articulate our lifestyle and vows in relation to the values of the freedom of the individual and his subjectivity, in certain societies that seek to maximize experiences (even of limits), to flourish, to have more means and resources? Can we find our way without the reliable compass of a well-meaning fraternity?
- l) Interculturality lived well can be a sign of universal fraternity and catholicity. It is a true expression of *Cor unum et anima una*, because it underlines the strength of the witness of an international community in a world marked by fear of the other, conflicts and suspicions of all kinds. An intercultural community bears witness that fraternal living together is possible.

### 3.2 PROPOSALS

- a) Pursue, without respite, as human beings and missionaries, intercultural encounter and exchange within our communities. Internationality must be seen and presented as a positive value that also brings challenges. In a world where the rise of populisms and shameless nationalisms is emerging and in the face of globalisation which leaves both on the sidelines, interculturality must be embraced for what it is: a fundamental element of Spiritan life and spirituality.
- b) Reflect in depth on the challenges of intercultural living together to ensure the effectiveness of interculturality during the years of initial formation, with an emphasis on the Primary Missionary Experience(PME) in another culture (SRL 136.1), as well as beyond initial formation.
- c) Welcome and accept the other in our intercultural communities as a brother as he is and not to try to assimilate him. To give time and space to the one we welcome into the community.
- d) Strive to create an environment in the community that fosters a climate of trust and growth in the confreres.
- e) Reflect on the importance of preparation for missionary appointment. This would allow the young confrere to be more aware of the contrast between his aspirations and the reality of mission. An awareness of the need to be open-minded in meeting others will be necessary.
- f) Reaffirm internationality and interculturality as integral parts of Spiritan culture and ethos. This is the DNA of our Spiritan living-together.

- g) Reaffirm our commitment to the practice of true intercultural community life as a witness in mission and in a world which is globalized but which tends to be more and more closed to the other.
- h) Develop a spirituality of encounter, welcome, journey, accompaniment and recognition. Draw inspiration from the Gospel of the disciples of Emmaus (Lk 24:13-33).
- i) Adopt better training in teamwork to defuse and resolve conflicts. Encourage a culture of frank speaking, fraternal correction, sharing of life, re-reading of experience and forgiveness and reconciliation within our communities.
- j) Draw on the documents of the general chapters on internationality and intercultural life, to develop a policy to combat prejudices, clichés and racism, whether latent or openly expressed, perceived or real.
- k) Recognize and name the tensions that exist between majority and minority cultures, in North-South relations, between young and old in a process of truth and reconciliation.
- l) Address serenely and objectively issues of equity and equality in community. Review the financial and material means available to confreres in terms of equity while keeping an eye on the power dynamics within a community and in relation to JPIC.
- m) Reaffirm the provisions of the Guide for Spiritan Formation concerning language learning by confreres in initial formation (GFS 5.1; SRL 141.2). Ensure that confreres on mission appointment have sufficient time to learn the language well, to become familiar with the culture, habits and particularities of the place of insertion and not to push them too quickly to take on pastoral responsibilities.
- n) Lead and deepen reflection on thinking, acting and living together effectively at all levels of the Congregation.
- o) Adopt means to think about and systematize the welcome, accompaniment and support of confreres arriving/living in a community of confreres of diverse origins.
- p) Always seek the necessary conditions for a fruitful presence in pastoral and missionary life, as well as the ecclesiological challenges of interculturality and internationality within the community.

## **4. SPIRITUALITY FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION**

*“In addition to seeking to clarify a vision and a strategy for Spiritan mission in response to the signs of the times in which we live, however, it is equally important that we rediscover the missionary spirituality that sustains and gives life and meaning to all that we do”*

(John Fogarty, Superior General, Pentecost message 2019).

### **4.1 ANIMATION OF SPIRITAN SPIRITUALITY**

We recognize the need to foster a stronger Spiritan identity and a sense of belonging among members at all stages of the journey. From the first stages of initial formation, candidates will be introduced by their formators to the fundamentals of our spirituality, the founders, history and charism of the Congregation and are responsible for deepening their knowledge in this area throughout their Spiritan lives. Superiors also have a fundamental role in animating the circumscription, in the accompaniment of the formation communities, the organising of retreats and in ongoing formation in Spiritan spirituality.

The General Council and administration have an important role in the animation and articulation of our Spiritan spirituality and charism in a way that supports and sustains members in difficult situations. This can help avoid a falling into activism or other problematic behaviour that seek to fill a void. However, without the active collaboration of major superiors and those responsible for initial formation communities, the Generalate cannot do much on its own. Therefore, there is a need for more investment in key players, especially superiors and formators, in creating a common vision and commitment to spiritual renewal.

### **4.2 PROPOSALS**

- a) Include in a renewed plan of the services within the Generalate a confrere with special responsibility for the animation of Spiritan Spirituality who will promote synergy between areas of responsibility and closer collaboration with the General Council.
- b) Encourage the Spiritan Scholar-in-Residence programme in Duquesne and participation in other programmes of formation for the study of spirituality. Provide for ongoing spiritual formation in Duquesne and other possible places. Invest in Marian, biblical and pastoral missionary spiritual formation.
- c) Develop a plan for the ongoing training of superiors and formation personnel, particularly in the specifically Spiritan aspects of their ministries. A possibility for this could be Union meetings, where Spiritan Spirituality is developed.
- d) Encourage the sharing of information, collaboration and teamwork between Spiritan centres (Duquesne, Silva, Rennes, Ardraccon, Sainte Croix, etc.), particularly in the sharing of Spiritan resource materials and training programmes in the different languages.

- e) Give special attention in each circumscription to the celebration of Spiritan feast days, the marking of important dates in our history, the organising of events involving members working outside the circumscription and the sharing of missionary experiences with the wider Congregation.
- f) Our foundation story is part of a continuity which cannot be brushed aside under the pretext of adaptation or paying attention to the signs of the times.
- g) Follow the example of Libermann and recognise the importance of practical union in our life. Our daily prayer is fashioned by the faces of those we encounter in our mission as well as the joys and struggles of our brothers and sisters. In this way our spirituality is nourished by the lived events of our places of mission.
- h) Spirituality is at the heart of our Spiritan calling. It is the Spirit that gives life (John 6,63) so our spirituality is life giving and affirming of the gift of all God's people.
- i) Rediscover the meaning and value of *Cor unum et anima una* in our personal lives and in the communion that exists within our Congregation.

#### **4.3 FOR FURTHER REFLEXION**

- a) Give more importance to the spirituality of our founders and their lives in our mission and pastoral work.
- b) Place more emphasis on Spiritan culture.
- c) Do not forget the spirituality that grounds our commitment to JPIC and our presence among migrants.
- d) Motivate the new generations of Spiritans to study the history and spirituality of our founders.
- e) Insist on the importance of retreats and community prayer as means to strengthen our spirituality when faced with the temptation of over activity.
- f) Deepen the dimension of prayer and contemplation in our religious missionary lives.

## **5. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS / ETHICS FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION**

*“All of us, are called to give concrete witness of faith in Christ in our lives and, in particular, in our relationship with others”*

(Pope Francis, *Vos estis lux mundi*, Motu Proprio, 9 May 2019)

### **5.1 CONTEXT**

- a) There is a growing awareness across the Congregation that clerical sexual abuse is a global issue but there still exist pockets of resistance and denial. However, this is not to deny the considerable amount of work already accomplished in this area.
- b) The scandal of abuse in the Church began with the revelations of sexual abuse but now includes abuses of power, spiritual abuse, bullying, financial abuse, abuse of conscience, etc.
- c) Bagamoyo decried a growing ‘diocesanisation’ of the Congregation which can lead to a greater individualism and isolation among confreres. Pope Francis is warning us against clericalism (among religious, clergy and laity). These have shown to be factors in the formation of abusive behaviour.
- d) Achieving the highest ethical standards in ministry and mission requires clear policy documents with guidelines for implementation and sanctions for infringement.
- e) It is worrying to note that current cases of abuse (financial, sexual, etc.) are still emerging in the Congregation.
- f) The establishment of groups which include competent men and women within circumscriptions have proved to be a valuable support in our desire to live an authentic religious life that is faithful to the Gospel. Examples of such groups are Finance Committees, Safeguarding Groups, Mediation Groups, etc.

### **5.2 PROPOSALS**

- a) Deal with issues of financial abuse, protection of children and vulnerable adults and harassment at all stages of initial and ongoing formation.
- b) Train competent persons (confreres or associates) to deal with questions of financial, sexual and other forms of abuse or malpractice.
- c) Be attentive to data protection issues and the holding of sensitive information.
- d) Update our safeguarding procedures continually.
- e) Learn from the experiences of Provinces in the North on questions concerning safeguarding of minors.
- f) Highlight the presumption of innocence of confreres accused of crimes.
- g) Be attentive to problems of racism and tribalism within the Congregation.

- h) Maintain a balance between excessive rigidity and excessive flexibility. Prudence is a good ethical standard.
- i) Give attention and care to confreres who are vulnerable or in delicate situations.
- j) Re-address the question of internal sanctions for confreres who are found guilty of malpractice.
- k) Introduce the term *delinquency* into the Congregation's texts.
- l) Psychological assessment of all candidates to Spiritan life.
- m) Train more confreres in finance, accounts and business administration.
- n) Place an obligation on circumscriptions to provide for the accompaniment of victims of abuse by Spiritans in a spirit of restorative justice.
- o) Report to civil authorities all cases of criminal activity in the Congregation.

## 6. FINANCE FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION

*“Our approach to finances is based on simplicity of lifestyle, putting in common all that we receive for the service of our apostolic life (SRL 65, 71,72) and on solidarity between and within circumscriptions (SRL 70.1; 72.4). We reaffirm these principles, particularly that of solidarity, which we wish to strengthen. To accomplish this, a climate of trust is necessary. Such a climate can only be achieved by rigour in our financial management and accountability, and a greater degree of oversight and intervention by the General Council and the circumscription councils” (Bagamoyo 5.1).*

### 6.1 OBSERVATIONS AND CHALLENGES

- a) Finances are at the heart of our mission, of our missionary commitment to the poor, of our living together in community, of the ordinary functioning of our circumscriptions, and of a sound understanding of the vow of poverty. Without finances it is difficult to talk about and realistically envisage any kind of mission: no money, no mission!
- b) Some circumscriptions have more means than others. The poorer circumscriptions often do not have sufficient means to live (health insurance, pension, food and drink, purchase and maintenance of vehicles, buildings and other tools) or to carry out their mission (training, projects, ordinary running of the circumscription etc.).
- c) Financial solidarity in the Congregation so far functions on the basis of contributions from the circumscriptions, through direct aid, through the solidarity office CESS/Kibanda, SOMA (USA), IODO (Ireland), Sol Sem Fronteiras (Portugal) and through the various funds of the Generalate (Cor Unum, apostolic fund, emergency fund, pension fund, etc.). However, the financial autonomy of many circumscriptions is not always guaranteed. Financial solidarity alone is not enough to make up for what is lacking. Moreover, sources of income from the northern hemisphere are drying up. Alternative sources (local or other) must be found.
- d) One notices and even deplores the bad, opaque, even irresponsible management of the Congregation's goods, as well as financial misappropriation, the refusal to share and the lack of rigour in accounting, without this having any consequences for the confreres concerned.
- e) Good practice in companies and in civil society of a rigorous management which would allow civil, state or ecclesiastical authorities to have a look at our finances, without us blushing with shame, does not seem to have sufficiently entered into Spiritan morals everywhere.
- f) Few confreres are trained in the principles and practice of accounting and management. Many circumscription bursars and project managers do not seem to have received a solid and professional training commensurate with their responsibilities in the areas of management and finance, control, strategic planning, portfolio keeping, investment and fund raising.

- g) There is an urgent need to put the spirit of Cor Unum - honesty, transparency and accountability - back at the heart of reflection, practice and exchange on goods and finances (Acts 4:32-35).
- h) The circulation of cash in our communities and works can encourage non-transparency and the practice of slush funds and embezzlement.

**6.1.1** The following questions must now be seriously asked and answered:

- What resources do we really have available to ensure the sustainability of our mission in the contemporary world?
- What projects have been put in place to ensure the financial means we need?
- What steps are to be taken for greater financial autonomy in communities, circumscriptions and the Congregation?
- How are these goals being achieved in practice?
- What economic or socio-political factors prevent our circumscriptions from acquiring sufficient means for their missionary goals?
- What personal and spiritual attitudes should be adopted for transparent and ethical financial management?

**6.2 PROPOSALS**

- a) Strictly comply with and apply recognized “best practices”, i.e., “procedures in relation to financial transactions in circumscriptions; orientations on investments; presentation and approval of budgets” (Bagamoyo 5.3.1), in connection with the provisions of SRL 173.3.
- b) Use declared bank accounts as much as possible for all financial transactions to facilitate the traceability of the movement of funds.
- c) Establish a financial council in the circumscriptions and in the Congregation and give it a clear roadmap for its mission.
- d) Solicit competent persons to assist in effective strategic planning and project monitoring.
- e) Do not separate financial issues from general development and JPIC issues. Analyse these issues with the appropriate contemporary tools.
- f) Reflect on the implementation of greater financial and missionary solidarity within the Congregation as well as on more respectful solidarity practices in financially less well-off circumscriptions. Ensure equity in access to resources.
- g) Implement, in so far as it is possible, a common accounting plan and accounting software for all the circumscriptions.
- h) Put in place a sound policy and self-sufficiency plans to ensure financial self-sufficiency. Discuss how to help young circumscriptions to adopt best practice in investing for self-sufficiency.

- i) Seek alternative and new funding resources (investment in economic activities, income-generating works, donors and benefactors, paid work, real estate or financial investments) that are ethically responsible. The Central Development Office (CDE) can play a role in discerning what initiatives should be taken.
- j) Integrate accounting and management into our initial and further training programmes.
- k) Emphasize the strong link between finances, the vow of poverty and the ethics of responsibility for the goods entrusted to us - including concern for the environment, for “our common home” - and for which we are all stewards (Gen 1:28-30; Gen 2:15).
- l) Cultivate more intra-congregational solidarity. Explore the possibility of a joint financial investment, a partnership between the circumscriptions.
- m) Move from decentralization to financial centralization at the Congregational level according to the spirit of our motto *Cor unum et anima una*.
- n) Have greater transparency about our financial statements.
- o) Send timely and regular reports of funded projects to funding agencies.
- p) Make the proceeds of the real estate disposed of by the Provinces available to and managed by the Generalate. Review the practice of some Provinces to transfer their properties to the local Church or civil authorities while the Spiritan mission and presence continues in the area.
- q) Cultivate the spirit of “happy sobriety” and a lifestyle corresponding to the vow of poverty in solidarity.
- r) Know how to distinguish between what belongs to non-Spiritan works (parishes, other institutions) and what belongs to the Spiritan community.
- s) Set up a community or circumscription budget line for solidarity (SRL 71.1; Bagamoyo 5.7).
- t) Insist on transparency, rigour, professionalism and ethics in financial management.
- u) Use state and civil means (police, criminal justice) in cases of embezzlement and financial irresponsibility (Bagamoyo 5.3.6; SRL 265, 267; Can 694).

## **7. ORGANISATION FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION**

*“To carry out its mission and build up communion within, the Congregation gives itself various structures...” (SRL 151)*

### **7.1 CONTEXT**

- a) The priority commitments of the Congregation, despite a certain level of reinforcement in recent years, remain fragile and have not yet experienced the stability that was desired at Bagamoyo.
- b) A decentralised structure, such as exists in the Congregation today, requires a common vision and communion of mind between the General Administration and Major Superiors. This is not always the case and can lead to problems in the discernment and living out of mission priorities and can hamper the effective role of leadership in the accompaniment of confreres.
- c) Circumscription chapters are held at a rhythm that is different to that of General Chapters. This can lead to a lack of coherence and meaning between the two. Indeed the decisions and orientations of General Chapters are often neglected by local chapters leading to a disconnectedness and dissonance of chapters and assemblies within the Congregation. The same problem applies to the mandates of Major Superiors which are of three years renewable for one time while the General Council is elected for one mandate of eight years.
- d) There can be a lack of discernment and suitable candidates in the process of nominating Major Superiors. The process can also be fraught by other tensions which can interfere and damage the integrity of the outcome.
- e) The Unions of Circumscriptions are a relatively new institution in the Congregation but which in some cases mirror the previous existence of foundations. There is a varied appreciation of their workings and usefulness. Is it not time to evaluate their functioning?
- f) The General Council has had difficulty in finding suitable and competent confreres for services within the General Administration and who reflect the diversity and composition of the Congregation.
- g) The Congregation has a rich patrimony and history which should be entrusted to the archives. However it has to be noted that many circumscriptions do not have adequate resources for the storing of archives with the risk that the Congregation loses part of its rich heritage and is prevented from telling the story of its missionary endeavour.
- h) While we live in a time of rapid communication we note that we are still challenged in our desire to adequately communicate with each other and with the world.

### **7.2 PROPOSALS**

- a) The chapter, as well as the General Council, will give more attention to questions of governance.

- b) Devolve some of the General Councillors to regions of the Congregation. Have a small team of Councillors resident in Rome.
- c) Evaluate the policy concerning the appointment of functionaries to the General Administration.
- d) Draw up a Congregation policy on Data Protection.
- e) Standardise the Congregation's logo and draw up a common Graphic Charter.
- f) Develop a professional blueprint for engaging with mainstream media.
- g) Promote a more open and honest dialogue about the integration of the North and South in our global mission.
- h) Re-evaluate the mission and functions of the Unions of Circumscriptions.
- i) Maintain and re-energise the existing organisation of the Congregation in Provinces and Groups as well as maintaining the Unions of Circumscriptions.
- j) Move towards more centralisation of the Congregation.
- k) Evaluate the multiplication of circumscriptions.
- l) Give the Congregation an adequate structure that would eliminate the reality of poor and weak circumscriptions.
- m) Elect leaders who are bridge builders.
- n) Extend the mandate of leaders to four years to align them with the mandate of the General Council.
- o) Have more dialogue between Circumscriptions and the General Council regarding mission appointments.
- p) Improve relations between confreres and their Provinces of origin so that the latter is more supportive and include a reflection on the conditions for recalling confreres to their Provinces of origin.
- q) Each circumscription will draw up a road map concerning their specific mission(s) and for the implementation of their strategic plan.
- r) Seek more collaboration with other Congregations and Institutes regarding all aspects of the Congregation's life and mission (eg common mission project, formation, retirement, etc.).

## **8. PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE RULE OF LIFE**

- a) **SRL 136.1.**: Revise to clearly state PME is for 2 years.
- b) **SRL 159**: Revise to look again at criteria for belonging to a circumscription to allow for confreres on studies to be appointed to the circumscription where they are studying (cf. *Directory for the Organisation of the Congregation* 2.10).
- c) **SRL 166**: Revise to extend mandate to 4 years.

## **B) CONCLUSIONS OF RECENT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS**

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### **9. SPIRITAN FORUM ON INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE Zanzibar, 3-9 December 2018**

#### **THE SPIRITAN MINISTRY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

##### **9.1 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPIRITAN MINISTRY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

As Spiritan missionaries, we believe that Interreligious Dialogue - or any other terminology referring to the encounter with people of other religions - is a constitutive part of our mission in the Church (SRL 13.1; 15.3; 16.3). From the rich experience of our confreres engaged in this field emerge values and attitudes that we consider to be the main characteristics of the Spiritan ministry of interreligious dialogue. These are as follows:

- a) **The primacy and dignity of the human person:** Above all, we see others as human beings created in the image of God. They are our brothers and sisters. In the following of Jesus Christ, we recognize the intrinsic value of the lives of others, especially the poor and the weak (SRL 4).
- b) **Spirituality:** Our ministry of interreligious dialogue is rooted in our spirituality, which emphasizes drawing strength from God, apostolic service, contemplation in action and docility to the Holy Spirit. At the same time, our spirituality is challenged and deepened through dialogue with others and contributes to our understanding of theology.
- c) **The service of all:** We are missionaries for all, not only for Catholics. We are at the service of all "those in greatest need" and "the oppressed" (SRL 4).
- d) **Courage:** We have the courage to take up new challenges and to counter the pre-established thinking in our own religious and/or ecclesial family.
- e) **Openness:** Accepting the difference of the other, we go out to meet him/her where he/she is.
- f) **Availability:** We are ready to respond to new challenges (SRL 25).
- g) **Listening:** We take the time to listen to the other with the desire to know better the local realities, culture, language and faith of the people (SRL 16.2; 30.1).
- h) **Solidarity:** In good times as well as in times of violence, we are with the people and remain faithful to them (SRL 16.2; 30.1). We express our sympathy to them in all simplicity.
- i) **Perseverance:** We do not give up and we are tenacious.

## **9.2 PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF 2020**

### **9.2.1 INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND FORMATION**

#### **9.2.1.1 Initial Formation**

- a) The General Council and the superiors of the circumscriptions will see to it that in all houses of formation there are courses and seminars on the knowledge of religions, the theology of religious pluralism and interreligious dialogue, given by persons with concrete experience of dialogue with other religious traditions. The study programmes offered to students will be reviewed every three years.
- b) The sharing of experiences of confreres working in contexts of interreligious dialogue will be encouraged and systematized in the houses of formation. Formators and students will also be encouraged to use modern means of telecommunication (e.g. videoconferencing) for interaction with confreres in the field.
- c) Group activities for dialogue will be offered as part of the pastoral insertion of students in initial formation.
- d) The General Council will see to it that the guidelines of the Guide for Spiritan Formation are followed by the circumscriptions, insisting particularly on the fact that the missionary pastoral experience (internship) must take place in a place culturally different from the culture of the student (SRL 136.1). The circumscriptions will help students to re-read their internship experience from a theological point of view (SRL 136.4).
- e) Formators and teachers in houses of formation will encourage and help theological students doing their final thesis in the field of interreligious dialogue to interact with confreres working in the same context.
- f) Formation communities will identify opportunities for interreligious dialogue in their neighbourhood (SRL 30) and invite representatives of other religious traditions to share their experiences with them.

#### **9.2.1.2 Ongoing and Specialized Formation**

- a) Before joining a context requiring dialogue with other religions, newly assigned confreres will follow a short course on the religions concerned in appropriate centres specialized in inter-religious dialogue (e.g. IFIC in Bamako, Mali, and DAR COMBONI in Cairo, Egypt). The confreres will be prepared for the pastoral situation in which they will be working.
- b) The circumscriptions will provide ongoing formation on inter-religious dialogue and peace-building for all their members, not just those who will be working in these contexts. Spiritan institutions of higher education, where they exist, will be used to offer this type of formation.
- c) Spiritan confreres need a solid formation in the biblical foundations of interreligious dialogue. They also need to know what the sacred texts of other religious traditions

offer as resources for dialogue. As far as possible, experts from different religious traditions will be called upon for the formation of confreres.

- d) Spiritans who are already passionate about interreligious dialogue should be encouraged and receive the necessary support from the Congregation. We will identify confreres who can do research in this field and obtain scholarships for them.
- e) Specialized training in Judaism, traditional African religions, indigenous religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamic and Arabic studies, Chinese studies, will be planned with a specific project in mind, so that the confreres trained will return to their mission area for long-term involvement in the field of interreligious dialogue. Each Union of circumscriptions will have at least one well-trained confrere in inter-religious dialogue who can help as a resource person and facilitator. To ensure that there are always enough confreres available for this task, the General Council will create a special fund that will provide a scholarship for the specialization of confreres in this type of study.
- f) The Congregation will consider establishing a new Spiritan community in another Arab-Muslim country. Given the importance of learning the Arabic language and the leading role of Al Azhar University in the Muslim world, special attention should be given to Egypt.
- g) A ministry of fruitful interreligious dialogue requires the participation of all members of the local Church community. We need to use all available resources to train parishioners, staff of Church institutions and community leaders in a systematic way with an organized program. We will identify those among them who are particularly interested in interreligious dialogue and bring them together in small groups for this ministry. We also encourage confreres to promote dialogue with others in their preaching and in other Spiritan events (retreats, recollections, pilgrimages, etc.).

### **9.2.2 INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE LIFE OF OUR CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS**

- a) Confreres engaged in interreligious dialogue are fulfilling the mission entrusted to our Congregation. They therefore need to be recognized, truly supported and encouraged by their circumscriptions.
- b) The superiors of the circumscriptions will inform their members of the orientation of the Congregation with regard to interreligious dialogue. Inter-religious dialogue will be part of the strategic missionary plan of each circumscription.
- c) Confreres who participate in meetings on interreligious dialogue organized by the Congregation will report to the members of their circumscription. We encourage the sharing of experiences at the community and circumscription levels (chapters, general assembly, etc.) in order to set priorities and to measure the adequate means to be devoted to it. Lay Spiritan Associates will also be involved in reflecting on inter-religious dialogue at the circumscription level.
- d) In order to enhance and promote interreligious dialogue for our mission today, a committee for interreligious dialogue will be created in each Spiritan circumscription. Each circumscription will have a coordinator in this field and, as far as possible, there

will be at least one centre or office for interreligious dialogue in each Union of circumscriptions.

- e) For the continuation of the ministry of interreligious dialogue, the Congregation will appeal for donations to finance research in this area. This proposal will help to establish a baseline of our knowledge of dialogue, to apply skills, and to visualize progress.

## **9.2.3 THE MINISTRY OF INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN CONTEXTS OF VIOLENCE**

### **9.2.3.1 Working in Violent Contexts**

- a) Many confreres live in contexts of conflict and violence related to religion. As Spiritans, we are called to become defenders of those who suffer, who are terrorized and even persecuted (SRL 14). At the same time, we must remain impartial and non-violent in the face of armed groups. We respect the principle of non-violence to avoid the trap of revenge. In the interest of the victims, we seek justice as a path to true and lasting peace.
- b) We will study the root causes of religiously motivated disturbances (SRL 14.1) and, together with other partners and institutions, seek to remedy the situation by ensuring integral human development (education, housing, health care, etc.) for all members of the community, regardless of their religious affiliation.

### **9.2.3.2 Attention to Confreres**

- a) We recognize that many of our confreres who work or have worked in places marked by violent conflict are experiencing trauma and post-traumatic crises. They need the help of the whole Congregation. The General Council, in consultation with the circumscriptions, will identify those affected by these psychological problems. Superiors will work with resource persons who can accompany confreres in situations of conflict and religious tension and organize for them psychological support in the field and during periods of leave at home.
- b) Confreres psychologically affected by violence in their mission area should be given the opportunity to spend sufficient time on holiday to relax and recover equilibrium. Sufficient and regular resourcing time should be provided for these confreres.
- c) We encourage confreres not to isolate themselves but to talk with other members of the community and the circumscription and to have a common approach to discernment.
- d) Good community life and support (SRL 34; 39.2) as well as cooperation with the local Church and other congregations will help the confreres in the process of recovery.
- e) The superiors of the Congregation (General Council and circumscription superiors) will help confreres and Spiritan communities in places marked by violent conflicts to discern whether they should remain there or move to another region.

#### **9.2.4 NETWORKING AND USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES**

- a) All the existing centres of inter-religious dialogue where our confreres work should be identified and networked. We particularly encourage the creation of networks between the centres in Mauritius and northern Cameroon.
- b) Given the particular character of our presence in Mauritania, Algeria and Pakistan, there will be a unique coordination of the Spiritan mission in these countries.
- c) The ministry of interreligious dialogue requires the defence of human rights, in particular the rights of all religious minorities and freedom of worship (SRL 12). Confreres working in the context of interreligious dialogue should attend sessions or courses on human rights and promote them in collaborating international organizations (e.g. VIVAT International) and other missionary or religious institutes.
- d) Following the successful experience of the Spiritan Forum on Interreligious Dialogue Zanzibar 2018, we recommend that every four years the General Council organize a meeting for confreres working in this kind of context.
- e) Keeping in mind the "exercise of prudence and enlightened discretion" in the way we use the media (SRL 45; cf. Can. 666), we will use the vast opportunities of the digital space (blogs, websites, social media, emails, etc.) to share our experiences in order to better serve in contexts of interreligious dialogue. In particular, we need a social media group for all confreres living and working in situations of inter-religious dialogue, as a platform for mutual knowledge, sharing of information, experiences and relevant documentation.
- f) The General Council will establish a database in the three languages of our Congregation (English, French and Portuguese) for the Spiritan ministry of interreligious dialogue, which will be freely accessible to all confreres.

## **10. SPIRITAN SPIRITUALITY COMMITTEE**

### **Rome 31 May – 1 June 2019**

#### **PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER, LICHEN 2020**

##### **10.1 ANIMATION OF SPIRITAN SPIRITUALITY**

The committee recognizes the need to foster a stronger Spiritan identity and a sense of belonging among members at all stages of the journey. From the first stages of initial formation, candidates must be introduced by their formators to the fundamentals of our spirituality, the founders, history and charism of the Congregation and are responsible for deepening their knowledge in this area throughout their Spiritan lives. Superiors also have a fundamental role in animating the circumscription, in the accompaniment of the formation communities, the organization of retreats and in organizing ongoing formation in Spiritan spirituality.

The General Council and administration has an important role in the animation and articulation of our Spiritan spirituality and charism in a way that supports/sustains members in difficult situations, that also circumvent falling into activism or other problematic behaviours so as to fill the void. However, without the active collaboration of major superiors and those responsible for initial formation communities, the Generalate cannot do much. Therefore there is a need for more investment in key players, especially superiors and formators, in creating a common vision and commitment.

##### **10.1.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) That a confrere with special responsibility for the animation of Spiritan Spirituality be included in a renewed plan of the services within the Generalate that promotes synergy between areas of responsibility and closer collaboration with the General Council.
- b) In order to encourage a new generation of members who are familiar with the founders, history and charism of the Congregation, the General Council will, as a matter of urgency, work with circumscriptions superiors to identify and provide training of confreres in this area. One such possibility would be the financing of suitable persons to do an MA in spirituality and afterwards spend a further 1 year deepening their knowledge in Spiritan sources (Spiritans Scholars Program in Duquesne or guided study program in the archives in Paris, etc).
- c) The General Council will develop a plan for the ongoing training of superiors and formation personnel, particularly in the specific Spiritan aspects of their ministries. A possibility is at Union meetings, where Spiritan Spirituality is developed.
- d) The GC will encourage the sharing of information, collaboration and teamwork between Spiritan centers (Duquesne, Silva, Rennes, Ardraccon, Sainte Croix, etc), particularly in the sharing of Spiritan resource materials and training programs in the different languages, and programmes (ICOF).

- e) In each circumscription special attention should be given to the celebration of Spiritan feast days, marking important dates in our history, organization of events involving members working outside the circumscription, to sharing of missionary experiences with the wider congregation.

## **10.2 ONGOING FORMATION IN THE CONGREGATION**

Ongoing formation for religious missionaries and priests is of vital necessity in the contemporary world. Both the Spiritan Rule of Life (142-147) and the Guide for Spiritan Formation (76-106) make a number of references and provide orientation as to its implementation. Particular attention needs to be given in moments of transition in life and ministry (c.f. GSF 93). Aware also that many confreres can encounter serious difficulties not only at the beginning of their ministry but also around the 10 year mark in their missionary journey, a challenge for the Congregation is to accompany and assist younger members in their pastoral, human and spiritual growth and renewal as Spiritans.

### **10.2.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) That a Spiritan renewal course for all professed members who have completed 10-12 years in ministry will be organized by the General Council.
- b) That Unions be responsible for organizing meetings of all confreres in their first 5 years of ministry on an annual or biannual basis, e.g., as is the practice in UCE and UCAL.

## **10.3 INITIAL FORMATION IN THE CONGREGATION**

*“For formation to be effective, it must be strictly based on a personalised pedagogy, not limited to a “one-size-fits-all” programme in terms of values, spirituality, time frame, style and procedure”* (New Wine in New Wineskins, CICLSL, 2018, n.16). Initial formation therefore cannot be improvised and demands long-term planning as well as appropriate training to accompany candidates. In order to have a healthy balance in the formation program, the spiritual and human dimensions, especially in the early stages of the formation programme, must not be sacrificed due to academic or other demands placed on candidates. As pointed out by the Congregation for Clergy, *“A correct and harmonious spirituality demands a well-structured humanity...”* and that *“human formation, being the foundation of all priestly formation, promotes the integral growth of the person and allows the integration of all its dimensions* (The Gift of the Priestly Vocation, Ratio Fundamental Institutionis Sacerdotalis, 2016, n.93-94). As there are different ways of living out the Spiritan vocation (priest, brother, LSA), it is important that each be formed in a spirituality appropriate to their calling.

### **10.3.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) The long-term planning and preparation of confreres for the ministry of formation at all stages is the responsibility of the circumscriptions/Unions in consultation with the GC. The preparation of formators will include special attention/training in human development and the spirituality of the Congregation.

- b) The inclusion in the internal Spiritan programme of all formation communities a section on the human and spiritual dimensions, e.g., specifics days of study during the academic year and/or during holiday times, possibly with the assistance of a lay professional(s) trained in psychology.
- c) All directors of formation communities are accountable and make an annual report to the major superior (s) responsible for the community and Coordinator for Formation in the Generalate as to how the human, spiritual, community, pastoral and academic dimensions are promoted and balanced.
- d) Candidates at all stages of initial formation will be introduced to a holistic understanding of our religious missionary calling and the servant model of priestly identity and leadership among the People of God.

#### **10.4 LAY SPIRITAN ASSOCIATES**

The Guide for Lay Spiritan Associates has tried to set out a vision and structure on the diversity of “those who working with us wish to be associated with us” (SRL 24.3). It is important that lay Spiritans be empowered to live out the charism and spirituality of the Congregation in the context of the lay Christian vocation in the Church and the world.

##### **10.4.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) Formation programmes in Spiritan spirituality, corresponding to the different categories of LSA, are essential (Guide for LSA 5.1).
- b) Responding to local needs, the missionary dimension should be emphasized and may take diverse forms, either in collaboration with professed Spiritans or independently.

# **11. INTERNATIONAL FORMATORS' MEETING**

## **Dakar 2019 – RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **11.1 GUIDE FOR SPIRITAN FORMATION (GSF)**

#### **11.1.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) The GSF is relevant today and helps harmonize formation in the Congregation.
- b) Circumscriptions and formation communities do not sufficiently refer to the GSF.

#### **11.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Consider the GSF as a reference document for all activities concerning initial and on-going formation, and contextualize its content according to the realities of each circumscription or union. (Cf. GSF n. 1).
- b) The General Council (GC) will ensure that each circumscription or union produces a formation directory, which will be sent to the GC's service for formation. Visits by the members of the General council or the province/group team to the formation communities will also be an opportunity for them to review the implementation of the GSF. On the occasion of each enlarged council or chapter, an evaluation will be transmitted to the GC.
- c) The circumscription council and the team of formators will ensure that each student has a copy (printed or electronic) of the GSF.
- d) Each year, an introductory session and conference on the GSF will be organized by the team of formators according to the formation stage.

### **11.2 FORMATORS**

#### **11.2.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) The number of formators in the Congregation is insufficient in relation to the number of students.
- b) Some formators have never received training, while other confreres who have been trained are either not appointed to formation communities or refuse the appointment.
- c) Several formators complain that they are not visited by the major superiors of their candidates.
- d) Some formators do not keep confidentiality regarding the decisions of the formation team. (Cf. GSF 11.13).
- e) Very often there is little communication between formators and superiors.

#### **11.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) The formators' task is full-time. It is important to consider it as a missionary appointment. It is therefore necessary to avoid overloading them with other commitments. (Cf. GSF 11.9).

- b) The formator is the custodian of the Spiritan identity within the formation community. He has to take initiatives, without waiting for everything to come from the General Council or the circumscription council.
- c) The GC will consider the training of formators as one of their priorities, while ensuring that those who receive it fulfil their task better as a result. Particular attention will be paid to the formation of future novice-masters by ensuring that circumscriptions or unions have enough confreres ready to assume this function.
- d) The formator with international and intercultural experience is able to pass it on to the students. Therefore, it is better to choose formators from among confreres who have had this experience themselves.
- e) Ensure internationality and interculturality within the formation team, with at least one member who is familiar with the local culture.
- f) Ongoing formation and periods for renewal courses will be planned for formators.
- g) Major superiors will put in writing the length of a formator's appointment (3 years, renewable).
- h) Formators should create a simple life-style and take part in community activities. This would help the candidates to become aware of the Congregation's charism.
- i) Formation communities should be simple and attractive.

## **11.3 FORMATION COMMUNITIES**

### **11.3.1 OBSERVATION**

- a) Some formation communities are under-funded.

### **11.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Have formation communities that are of a manageable size to enable effective discernment of candidates. (1 formator for 8 to 10 students).
- b) In order to avoid being obsessed with diplomas and academic certificates in initial formation, we will insist on an integral Spiritan formation articulating the three following dimensions: *the head* (intellectual life), *the heart* (human, spiritual and emotional life) and *the hands* (skill in manual work) (Cf. SRL n. 104; Ratio n. 5).
- c) It is important that superiors make regular visits to the formation communities under their authority.
- d) In formation communities, evaluate the specific responsibilities assigned to each candidate and meet with him on a regular basis.
- e) The evaluation or the discernment of the candidates will be done by a team of formators rather than by one alone.
- f) Care will be taken to promote free self-expression among those in initial formation: in community meetings, recreation etc.
- g) To help candidates become familiar with other languages and cultures, the exchange of students and formators between different circumscriptions is strongly encouraged.
- h) Each formation community should use the official Spiritan logo.

- i) Superiors should take the service of formation seriously and fulfil their financial responsibilities towards it (SRL n. 105).

## **11.4 FORMATION CURSUS**

### **11.4.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) Several factors help the candidate to form the habit of being available when needed and to develop a missionary spirituality: the personal witness of formators and confreres visiting the community, each one taking his turn at different tasks, the programming of conferences on missionary spirituality, the diversity of places for pastoral work during initial formation, the pastoral missionary experience in places “*where the Church has difficulty finding workers*” (SRL n. 4), helping candidates to become aware of their personal motivations and their way of speaking or presenting the mission, etc.
- b) Recent documents produced by the Church on formation (*Ratio Fundamentalis; New Wine in New Wineskins*) reinforce the work of the formators.
- c) The length of initial formation for priesthood seems too long (*11 to 12 years in some cases*).
- d) Sometimes the evaluations of the candidates sent to the circumscription superiors are superficial. At other times, reports from the formation team are ignored by major superiors and their councils.
- e) In certain circumscriptions, the Spiritan month for final vows sometimes smacks of tourism.
- f) The pastoral care of vocations promotes more the vocation of candidates to the priesthood than the vocation of brothers.

### **11.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Ensure that vocation ministry and formation at the level of the circumscription be geared to the call both to be priests and to be brothers.
- b) The candidates should be helped to process through the entire formation experience so that it is not reduced to success in academic studies only (RVE, 105.1).
- c) Each superior should take seriously the formators’ report (GSF 11.8).
- d) A common programme for the Spiritan Month should be devised.

## **11.5 THE PASTORAL MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE (PME)**

### **11.5.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) Some candidates are sent to formation communities for their PME, or to a provincial house to serve as drivers or to help with administrative tasks. Many are also left to their own devices, without a particular confrere being assigned to accompany them.

### **11.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Communities and confreres should be prepared to receive candidates on PME, and to assign a confrere to accompany them (Cf. SRL n. 136.3).

- b) Remember that the two years of pastoral missionary experience take place in a culture other than that of the candidate (SRL n. 136.1 and GSF n. 70-71), one year being an exception and not the norm.
- c) The PME will be a good time to introduce the candidates to the acquisition of skills in financial and project management and other skills needed by the Congregation.

## **11.6 PROTECTION OF MINORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **11.6.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) The sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults is a crime that has a lasting effect on the victims' lives. Cases of such abuse have happened in some circumscriptions. They demand that the Congregation take appropriate measures to deal with the perpetrators.
- b) Confreres are facing a sort of dilemma. On the one hand, they have to be close to people. On the other hand, they have to be professional in respecting boundaries, especially with minors and vulnerable adults.

### **11.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) In initial formation, formators should educate the candidates in the practice of vigilance in their relationships to others – in creating boundaries.
- b) The demystification of sexuality, the critique of clericalism and the exaggerated importance given to the status of religious life, self-knowledge, the ability to cultivate healthy relationships with people of the same or opposite sex and the renunciation of ambiguous attitudes and gestures give candidates guarantees based on trust.
- c) The formation team will ensure a rigorous application of the means put in place by the universal Church, the particular Church and the Congregation (cf. *The Protection of Minors; The Protection of Vulnerable Adults*) with regard to the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.
- d) Get to know the social and family environment of the candidates to Spiritan religious life.

## **11.7 PSYCHOLOGY IN FORMATION**

### **11.7.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) Psychology is one of the indispensable tools in the accompaniment of candidates in formation.
- b) Not all formators have the basic tools in Psychology.

### **11.7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) Circumscriptions will provide the basic training of formators in Psychology.
- b) The psychological evaluation of candidates will be done before their entry into the postulancy and, if formators find it useful, at another formation stage (cf. *Ratio* n. 193).

- c) The circumscription councils will take care not to admit candidates with a declared or latent pathology (cf. *Ratio* n. 191).
- d) Implement the instructions of the Church and of the Congregation on candidates with a homosexual tendency (*Ratio* n. 199-201).

## **11.8 INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN FORMATION**

We, the formators share the resolutions of the 2018 Zanzibar meeting on interreligious dialogue.

## **11.9 JUSTICE AND PEACE AND SAFEGUARD OF CREATION (JPIC)**

### **11.9.1 OBSERVATIONS**

- a) The SRL contains passages that clearly indicate the Congregation's commitment to JPIC (SRL 4, SRL 11, SRL 12, SRL 14, SRL 18.1, SSRL 24, SRL 71). There is also, in addition to the directives of the JPIC service of the GC and the GSF, a formation program in JPIC developed by the Union of the Circumscriptions of East Africa (UCEAF).
- b) The location of our Spiritan missions in a poor area serves as a sign to young people, helping them to understand that we must place JPIC at the centre of our thinking and our action.

### **11.9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) The JPIC office of the GC will inform the whole Congregation about the formation program of the UCEAF in JPIC ministry so that it can be adapted to the missionary context in which each formation community is located.
- b) As *Laudato Si'* recommends, candidates will be educated in how to care for the environment by such simple gestures as binning rubbish lying on the ground, and creating and maintaining green spaces in their surroundings.
- c) Practising justice includes the way we treat our staff, by ensuring that their salaries and working conditions meet the standards of justice that we are trying to promote

## **11.10 SKILLS IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

### **11.10.1 OBSERVATION**

- a) Some of our formation communities have very little or nothing in their program on leadership financial management skills and development projects.
- b) The RVS contains passages clearly indicating the commitment of our Congregation in matters of development which is at the heart of our mission of evangelization: "*We count the following as constitutive parts of our mission of evangelization: the "integral liberation" of people, action for justice and peace, and participation in development. It follows that we must make ourselves "the advocates, the supporters and the defenders of the weak and the little ones against all who oppress them."*" (Rule of 1849; N.D. X, 517)

- c) Pope Francis also reminds us of the requirements for mission in *"Evangelii Gaudium"*: *"From the heart of the Gospel we see the profound connection between evangelization and human advancement, which must necessarily find expression and develop in every work of evangelization."* (178)
- d) The establishment of our communities and Spiritan missions in the contexts of extreme poverty requires us to become increasingly involved with the people where we work for the human development.

### **11.10.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) That financial management skills, leadership, accountability and management of development projects be mandatory part of our formation program.
- b) From the initial formation, Spiritan candidates will be allowed to familiarize themselves with the problems of development through courses, training sessions and regular practice in the context where they live.
- c) Future Spiritans called to this vocation will be helped to deepen their training in development within the existing formation structures.
- d) The Central Development Office (CDO) will make available to all formation communities a comprehensive documentation concerning all that can be covered in the area of development.
- e) The CDO may offer specific training to students during the formation.
- f) The CDO may also offer training on the issue of self-financing projects.

## **11.11 NEW INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **11.11.1 Observations**

- a) NICTs are tools that are part and parcel of today's means of evangelization. But they are also reconfiguring the fabric of social relations. They can help maintain links with our family and friends. Their use can build people up or destroy them.
- b) Candidates in formation are more skilled in the use of NICTs than most of their formators.

### **11.11.2 Recommendations**

- a) Formators will facilitate access to NICTs and will educate them in how to use them responsibly.
- b) The circumscriptions will give training to the confreres in the area of NICTs.
- c) In the novitiate, care will be taken so that the use of NTIC does not harm either the necessary degree of rupture with the world or the need to cultivate the interior life.
- d) The formation communities will be linked by social networks so that the candidates can get to know each other.

## **12. SAFEGUARDING REFLECTION GROUP PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2020 27-28 May 2019**

The Reflection Group acknowledges with gratitude that significant progress has been made in recent years in the area of Safeguarding.

### **12.1 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Despite cultural differences, there is a “common standard” of conduct applicable to all members of the Congregation. This standard of conduct is articulated in the Spiritan Guide for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults. All members are accountable to uphold this standard in their personal and professional lives.

#### **12.1.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) Each circumscription will have its own code of conduct for which each member of the circumscription will be held accountable
- b) Those directly involved in our life and ministry in any capacity, lay Spiritans, Co-workers and volunteers are bound by the same standards.

### **12.2 ROLE OF LEADERSHIP**

The role of leadership at all levels in the area of Safeguarding is critically important.

The Safeguarding Group recognizes a gap in the culture of the Congregation, between “theory” and “practice.” That which we profess, which we articulate as an expectation for leadership in the Congregation, does not always translate into practical action. We urge the General Chapter to examine new ways of leadership formation, new ways of holding leaders accountable for the life of their members.

The role of leadership committed to, and skilled in, Safeguarding practices is fundamental.

#### **12.2.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) The chapter clearly states that the commitment to safeguarding is an essential requirement for positions of leadership in the congregation.
- b) Structures will be put in place to ensure adequate formation of Congregation superiors in the area of Safeguarding. Such structures are essential to the creation of healthy and wholesome circumscriptions. (workshops, on-line training etc)
- c) Annual Union meetings will include Safeguarding on the agenda.
- d) If Unions have named Safeguarding Officers these members will participate in the Annual Union meetings.

### **12.3 SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS**

The training of officers in Safeguarding is recognized as a particular strength of the Congregation.

### **12.3.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) The Generalate continue its commitment to this practice, along with the necessary funding to maintain it.
- b) Each Union will have a named and trained Safeguarding Officer
- c) Clear job descriptions for the Safeguarding Officer need to be provided in each Union and Circumscription, and ensure adequate financial support.

## **12.4 SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The publication and periodic revision of Congregation Guidelines for Safeguarding has been beneficial to our members. Ensuring that these documents are widely and specifically known and “owned” by the members remains a challenge.

### **12.4.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) That there is regular review and revision of best practice and compliance with civil and Church law.
- b) As a matter of greatest urgency, those Circumscriptions who do not have a Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are required to do so within six months following the Chapter.
- c) Each member will be familiarized with Policies and Procedures in their circumscription and sign a document stating that they have read, understood and will comply.

## **12.5 INITIAL AND ON-GOING FORMATION**

Initial and on-going formation in the area of Safeguarding is critical. Greater attention and balance is needed in the different dimensions of Spiritan life (intellectual, pastoral, human, community, spiritual).

### **12.5.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) Throughout initial formation, especially at the early stages, clear provision be made for human and spiritual development.
- b) Particular attention will be given throughout formation to the potential danger of clericalism and different forms of abuses (sexual, spiritual, conscience, power etc)
- c) Structures be put in place to provide formators with the skills necessary in safeguarding and discernment particularly in the early stages of formation.
- d) Commitment to safeguarding practices be a requirement for all formators and all assigned to positions of responsibility in formation communities.
- e) Provision be made in the overall on-going formation plan of each circumscription for regular inclusion of Safeguarding training and updating for all members.
- f) The chapter encourages networking of Safeguarding Officers for sharing of resources and information.

## **12.6 ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDE**

### **12.6.1 PROPOSALS**

- a) The Administrative guide will include the following:
  - A draft Code of Conduct for circumscriptions;
  - A draft Job Description for Safeguarding Officers.
- b) An outline of what is being done in the area of Safeguarding in the Circumscription be included in the Pre-Visitation Report.



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