

### **III. MISSION**

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*“All of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the ‘peripheries’ in need of the light of the Gospel.” (Evangelii Gaudium 20)*

**3.1** Our mission comes from God, proceeding from the example of Jesus Christ and his irresistible call to follow him. We live our Christian vocation by sharing the charism, the spirituality and mission of the Congregation. We try to respond to the challenges of the present day, each according to his/her personality, history and talents. Set in the heart of the world, we are aware of our responsibility: we offer to the world the witness of our apostolate, of our prayer and of our community.

#### **3.2 OUR APOSTOLATE**

**3.2.1** In all circumstances of our life, we want to adopt a profoundly missionary attitude, based on humility, availability, respect, a spirit of welcome and hospitality, a spirit of service and openness to others – all elements of a “Spiritan culture”.<sup>15</sup> We allow ourselves to be challenged and taken out of our comfort-zones. We offer our talents and aptitudes for the benefit of the common mission.

**3.2.2** “The evangelisation of the poor is our purpose” (SRL 4; ND XIII, 170): our life, our activity and our witness as members of the Spiritan family must really be “good news“ for those we meet in the circumstances of their lives. Our apostolate demands firstly that we identify who are the “poor” today.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Bagamoyo 2.10.7.

<sup>16</sup> Bagamoyo 1.3.

**3.2.3** As members of a Church which “goes forth”, the Spirit urges us to go beyond frontiers.<sup>17</sup> Our insertion at the heart of things allows us reach the peripheries. We look in particular towards the world of youth (a new continent), of migrants, the marginalised, the excluded, and those separated from the Church. We stress also kinds of service and groups for which the Church has difficulty in finding labourers (SRL 4).

**3.2.4** Our apostolate can find expression in the normal circumstances of our lives (local, professional, the voluntary sector), or is attached to a particular project of the Spiritan circumscription. In this latter case, it may involve lay people only or be a work of collaboration with professed confreres.

**3.2.5** This involves engaging in various works, such as the following: an explicit proclamation of the Gospel; supporting human communities, particularly those situated on the margins of society; the promotion of justice, peace and integrity of creation locally and at the global level; dialogue between people of different generations, cultures and religions; the world of education.

**3.2.6** Whether it be an original individual initiative or involvement in a work of the circumscription, our apostolic activity is always in line with the projects and priorities of the Spiritan family and, particularly, of the circumscription (SRL 21). It is the result of close collaboration with the circumscription, which confirms, supports and attempts to guarantee its viability.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf Evangelii Gaudium 20-24, 2013.

### 3.3 OUR PRAYER

**3.3.1** *“In all the baptized, from first to last, the sanctifying power of the Spirit is at work, impelling us to evangelization.”*<sup>18</sup>

The Holy Spirit, who leads us in prayer and gets us moving forward, is “the principal agent of evangelisation”<sup>19</sup>: our spirituality is fundamentally missionary; our prayer is a reflection of our mission.

**3.3.2** An authentic relationship with God implies a dynamic relationship between prayer and activity, which promotes Christian commitment in the service of others. Following Libermann we live this tension between prayer and action that is inherent in all Christian life in a “practical union”, a habitual state of fidelity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit (SRL 88).

**3.3.3** Our prayer draws upon various sources: listening to the word of God, reflection with the Church, the intuitions of our founders. We reflect on global trends in the contemporary world to discern the signs of the times. We are also open to the inspiration given by other spiritual traditions.

**3.3.4** Our commitment to prayer is shown in personal and communal prayer, sharing in the prayer of the Church, and especially the Eucharist, through meditation and scripture sharing, together with moments for retreat.

**3.3.5** In all aspects of our life, and especially in our prayer, Mary is our model of responsiveness and courage in fidelity to all the inspirations of the Holy Spirit (SRL 89).

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<sup>18</sup> Evangelii Gaudium 119.

<sup>19</sup> Evangelii Nuntiandi 75, 1975.

### **3.4 OUR COMMUNITY**

**3.4.1** Where we have the good fortune to be several Lay Spiritan Associates living in a relative proximity, our group forms a real community of disciples, united by the same calling and care for the common mission, and where our sense of belonging to the Spiritan family opens up and sees in action our motto of “one heart and one spirit”.

**3.4.2** As Lay Spiritan Associates wishing to promote evangelical fraternity, this presupposes that we live it, firstly, in our own group. This is for us a place of sharing, discernment, inspiration and mutual encouragement. It’s in this community space that the talents of each one are expressed, together with our diversity and complementarity. Responsibilities are fulfilled as a service there. The solidarity between us shows itself in friendly, spiritual support and if circumstances allow, in material support too.

**3.4.3** Each one of us, individually or in a group according to geographic circumstances, is in close liaison with a community of professed members. This relationship demonstrates and sustains our common belonging to the Spiritan family. In some cases, Lay Spiritans involved in the same missionary project form community with professed members.

**3.4.4** We keep contact with one another, within one circumscription and between circumscriptions. We seek to make known the richness of this form of missionary commitment beyond the limits of our own group.

**3.4.5** Our family is our first community and remains the priority in our discernment and choices: and this can never suffer from our commitment as Lay Spiritan Associates.