

Congregation of the Holy Spirit

# BAGAMOYO 2021

XXI General Chapter



*Behold, I am doing something new*

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## XXI General Chapter

*“Behold, I am doing something new”*  
*« Voici, je fais une chose nouvelle »*  
*“Vejam, vou fazer algo de novo”*  
*“Tazama! Ninafanya jambo jipya”*

[Is 43,19]



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*“BEHOLD, I AM DOING SOMETHING NEW”*

*(IS 43,19)*

Dear Confreres and Lay Spiritan Associates,



*Alain Mayama, C.S.Sp.,  
Superior General*



Postponed twice because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the celebration of the 21<sup>st</sup> General Chapter took place from 3 to 24 October 2021 in Bagamoyo, Tanzania. For the second time, Bagamoyo opened its doors to a Chapter of the Congregation. There were 71 elected delegates, 4 Lay Spiritan Associates [LSA] and 28 functionaries. 36 different nationalities were represented. Thanks to modern technology, other members of the Spiritan family were able to follow the events on a daily basis.

Among the 71 delegates, we noted a rejuvenation of the average age of the capitulants as well as their increasing diversification. We experienced God’s love for our Congregation, our internationality and interculturality, the spirit of openness and communion, and the confidence that the Lord accompanies us despite our frailties.

For three weeks, attentive to the Holy Spirit and faithful to our fundamental mission in the Church, which is “the evangelisation of the poor”, we listened to and shared our vast and diverse experiences in the Congregation, and reflected on the future of our charism and our mission in the context of the contemporary world. Helped by the Chapter theme, inspired by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, I am doing something new” [Is 43:19], we discerned

a call to consider new initiatives and a need for conversion in the way we respond to the needs of Spiritan mission today. The conviction that the changing world in which we live calls the whole Congregation to new methods and forms of missionary expression animated the Chapter's deliberations. We recognised that the new forms of poverty that are emerging in our world call for radically new and creative responses to living the Gospel; they require the broadening of our vision and the necessity of taking risks.

Spiritan mission today requires a willingness to be sent to the peripheries or frontiers of the contemporary world to share the joy of the Gospel, a synodal attitude and a special attention to youth, the marginalized, the new poor, migrants and ecological issues. Bagamoyo II stressed the importance of synodality and collaboration among ourselves and with our partners in mission [LSA in particular]. We are enriched by listening to each other and to those with whom we work. The Chapter insisted on a change of approach and style of mission, on the courage to abandon commitments that are no longer in line with our charism in favour of others that are more relevant [SRL 25]. Emphasis was also placed on the adequacy of our resources, both human and financial, and the need to adapt some aspects of our formation programmes to the needs of today's world in order to better prepare our young confreres for the Spiritan mission. Finally, the Chapter recalled the importance of the vocation of 'brother', whose meaning is being lost in the Congregation, because of an almost exclusive focus on the ordained ministry.

The decisions of the Chapter, presented in this document, focus on the important themes that are at the heart of our shared life and ministry: justice, peace and integrity of creation, interreli-

gious dialogue, development, protection of minors and vulnerable adults, spirituality, intercultural communities, initial and ongoing formation, finances and organisation.

The booklet of Chapter texts that you have in your hands inaugurates the phase of putting into practice the invitation of Bagamoyo II to do 'something new'. The success of this phase depends on the fruits of personal conversion and the necessary changes in the lifestyle of our communities. May the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, guide this process of implementing the Chapter decisions.

Lord, send your Spirit, and renew our Congregation and the face of the earth.

Rome, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022, Solemnity of Pentecost.



Alain Mayama, C.S.Sp,  
Superior General

# ★ STELLA MARIS HOTEL





## Part One: Spiritan Mission Today

### 1. SPIRITAN MISSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

#### ● READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

*One basic characteristic of the Spiritan calling is an **availability** for the service of the Gospel, a readiness to go where we are sent by the Congregation. We accept to free ourselves from an engagement in order to respond to new and different calls from a local Church or from the universal Church. Attentive to the signs of the times, we re-examine periodically the reasons that underlie our present commitment and our present apostolate. [SRL 25]*

1 In its reflections on the contemporary world, the Chapter discerned the following challenges

- the considerable importance of COMMUNICATION, beyond cultural differences. This transforms the ways of representing oneself, of living with others and of situating oneself in the world. It has brought the world into an immediacy of information;
- a universal awareness marked by major ECOLOGICAL CHALLENGES and their urgency to safeguard “our common home”;
- a heightened awareness of PEOPLES’ RIGHTS, especially of women and minorities, with demands for equality;
- a new understanding of the RELATIONS OF POWER, with demands for participation and consideration of citizens’ aspirations. Paradoxically, this can be expressed both in populist and authoritarian tendencies and in democratic demands.

*The whole life of Jesus, his way of acting with the poor, his gestures, his single-mindedness, his daily and simple generosity, and finally his total dedication, are all precious and speak to our own life. Every time someone begins to discover this,*



*he or she is convinced that this is what others need, even though they do not recognise it: “What you worship without knowing, I have come to proclaim to you” (Acts 17:23). Sometimes we lose enthusiasm for mission by forgetting that the Gospel responds to the deepest needs of people, because we were all created for what the Gospel proposes: friendship with Jesus and brotherly love. When the essential content of the Gospel is adequately and beautifully expressed, this message will certainly respond to the deepest needs of hearts.*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 265

## ● A RE-EVALUATION OF OUR MISSIONARY COMMITMENTS

2 Bagamoyo I [2012] proposed a strategic plan for the use of the resources of the Congregation. Bagamoyo II [2021] invites the circumscriptions to develop a strategic plan for mission deployment. This strategic plan will include:

- a succinct statement of what mission is;
- the identification of new initiatives and tasks that need to be abandoned because they are no longer a priority for the group or are no longer sustainable;
- the identification of priority tasks, with details of available resources and personnel, and an estimate of the sustainability of the projects.

3 Mission priorities should be in line with a creative reading of the signs of the times in the light of our charism, and to a synodal approach, that is, of collaboration. They will include:

- outreach to young people [taking into account the digital world];
- attention to people on the peripheries of society, the new urban poor, migrants and respect for ecology;
- actions in favour of justice and integral ecology.

4 Circumscriptions will only accept missions that are consistent with the vision of the Congregation, that can be sustainable and that are carried out in collaboration with Lay Spiritan Associates and other partners in mission. Synodality will be an essential criterion for commitment.

5 The strategic plan for our missionary commitments will also include a process of discernment to close missions or works that are no longer sustainable, those where Spiritan community life is non-existent or weak, or that are no longer consistent with the missionary priorities of the Congregation.

## ● MISSION APPOINTMENTS

6 Mission appointments will be based on the choice of type of pastoral commitment rather than country or circumscription.<sup>1</sup>

7 Any preferences expressed by the candidates should be reconsidered with emphasis on availability, spirit of sacrifice, self-giving and apostolic zeal for mission wherever it may be.

8 Confreres on mission appointment should have the capacity to adapt to the circumscription which receives them, with a spirit of abandonment to the mission of the Congregation and acceptance of the community which receives them.

## ● FRAGILE CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

9 Adequate attention will be given to the overall well-being of the confreres in the most fragile or precarious missions in order to support their presence in the mission.

10 A programme of discernment, reception and accompaniment of candidates for the most fragile missions will be developed by those in charge of the circumscription to enable the confreres to settle down properly in such missions.

11 The sending circumscriptions will maintain effective communication with the confreres engaged in the most fragile missions and will visit them periodically.

12 Particular attention will be given to the support and needs [financial, personnel, security] of these most fragile missions.

<sup>1</sup> The application form will therefore be improved accordingly.

## 2. JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION [JPIC]

*“We count the following as constitutive parts of our mission of evangelisation:*

- *the integral liberation of people;*
- *action for justice and peace;*
- *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 those who oppress them”*

[Regulations 1849; N.D., X, 517]. [SRL 14]

### ● THE CIRCUMSCRIPTION COMMITTED TO JUSTICE AND PEACE

- 13 The circumscriptions ensure that the confreres and Lay Spiritan Associates have access to and participate in JPIC training, whether it is provided by the Spiritans or by other bodies.
- 14 JPIC is an essential part of the circumscription’s strategic plan and is part of the formation programme from postulancy to ongoing formation.
- 15 Confreres and communities are called to a simple and ecologically respectful way of life.
- 16 In the parishes entrusted to us and in the works animated by Spiritans, JPIC groups will be formed with appropriate accompaniment. These groups will pay particular attention to educating and sensitising people regarding:
  - situations of injustice,
  - threats to life and the environment,
  - the defence of social, fiscal and economic justice.
- 17 Special attention will be paid to the following situations and issues
  - situations of injustice towards migrants, refugees, prisoners and indigenous peoples [Bagamoyo I, 1.25] as well as intercultural and religious conflicts and issues;
  - issues related to threats to the environment, nature and natural resources.

18 In connection with the National Conferences of Religious, Spiritans actively participate in the local branches of VIVAT International.

19 The encyclical *Laudato Si’* remains a source of inspiration and a reference point for our personal and community commitments to promote an integral ecology.

*There are not two separate crises, one environmental and one social, but one complex socio-environmental crisis. The possibilities for a solution require an integral approach to combat poverty, to restore dignity to the excluded and at the same time to preserve nature.*

Pope Francis, *Laudato si’*, 139

### ● CIRCUMSCRIPTION UNIONS AND JPIC

- 20 Commitment to JPIC is a transversal mission that intersects and interacts with spirituality, interreligious dialogue and development.
- 21 Each Union appoints and trains a JPIC Coordinator [Bagamoyo I, 1.21].
- 22 The networking of the different JPIC partners will be strengthened within the Unions.
- 23 The Unions organise regular formation programmes and inform the professed and Lay Spiritan Associates of what is available and easily accessible in this field.

### ● THE GENERAL COUNCIL’S COMMITMENT TO JPIC

- 24 JPIC is one of the main areas of animation of the General Council for the next eight years.
- 25 The communication system regarding JPIC activity in relation to VIVAT International and other advocacy tools will be strengthened.
- 26 Information on inter-institutional actions and possibilities of alliances will be shared within the Congregation.
- 27 The JPIC Guide will be updated to establish a common vision with VIVAT International and following the guidelines of the encyclical *Laudato Si’*.

28 The General Council is a forum for advice, information and formation. The website will be developed to include, among other tools, the JPIC training modules produced by Duquesne University.

29 The General Council shall oversee the deployment of JPIC programmes in the circumscriptions and the appointment of confreres for this apostolate.

### 3. INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Interreligious dialogue is an integral part of the Spiritan mission in the world today. The situations with which confreres are confronted are extremely diverse according to the contexts in which they live: traditional religions linked to the land, more or less Islamised contexts, insertions in Asia within cultures and countries marked by Hinduism, Confucianism or Buddhism, secularised Western cultures where an inter-confessional dialogue remains nevertheless indispensable, the experience of living at home or being welcomed (and sometimes only tolerated) in a foreign country... It is difficult today to find a circumscription or a mission that would not be impacted by the challenge of interfaith dialogue, whether within the Christian communities we serve or in the context of their lives.

*We try in dialogue to co-operate honestly with the leaders and the faithful of other religions, as well as with those who do not believe in God. We put our trust in the Holy Spirit, leading both us and them "to the complete truth" [cf. Jn 16:13]. [SRL 16.3]*

#### ● INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE REQUIRES FORMATION AND EXPERTISE

30 The General Council and circumscription superiors will ensure that in all houses of formation there are courses and seminars, given by competent persons, on the knowledge of religions, the theology of religious pluralism and interreligious dialogue. The study programmes offered to students will be reviewed every three years.

31 The period of missionary experience (PME) is particularly suitable for discovering concrete situations of interreligious dialogue.

32 Initial formation is a time when young confreres interested in this type of ministry can be identified and trained for their future mission appointment.

33 Specialised training on the great religions of the world, traditional African religions, indigenous religions, should be planned so that trained confreres return to their mission area to invest in the long term in the field of interreligious dialogue.

*An attitude of openness in truth and love must characterise dialogue with believers of non-Christian religions, despite the various obstacles and difficulties, especially the fundamentalisms on both sides. This interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and therefore a duty for Christians, as for other religious communities.*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013, no. 250

#### ● INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE CONCERNS ALL CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

34 The circumscriptions regularly transmit information on interreligious dialogue to the coordinator of Interreligious Dialogue at the Generalate, highlighting the concrete experiences of Spiritan confreres.

35 The confreres involved in interreligious dialogue are fulfilling the mission entrusted to our Congregation. They therefore need to be recognised, supported and encouraged by their circumscriptions.

36 Every circumscription and every Spiritan is concerned about interreligious dialogue. It is important to involve Lay Spiritans in this area in order to offer them training and the possibility of a long-term commitment in this field.

37 The commitment to interreligious dialogue is integrated into the strategic plan of the circumscription, according to the concrete reality and challenges of the circumscription. The plan specifies the places and means of this missionary commitment.

38 Commitment to interreligious dialogue is lived out in a network and in partnership with the local Churches, as well as with other Congregations that share the same concern. Confreres working in places where there is a significant or majority Christian presence are also sensitive to the reality of interreligious dialogue.

## ● THE GENERAL COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

39 Interreligious dialogue is a dimension of the utmost importance in the Congregation. It will be appropriate to assign young confreres to this type of ministry and to ensure the availability of experienced confreres to accompany the younger ones.

40 With the help of the coordinator of interreligious dialogue at the Generalate, we rely on the experience acquired by the confreres engaged in the ministry of interreligious dialogue to create a dynamic of communication and collaboration.

41 The General Council will plan the organisation of a new Spiritan forum on interreligious dialogue during its mandate.

42 The General Council will establish a database in the three official languages of our Congregation for the Spiritan ministry of interreligious dialogue, which will be freely accessible to all confreres.

43 Many confreres who work or have worked in places marked by violent conflicts experience trauma and post-traumatic crises. Superiors, in consultation with the General Council, will work with resource persons who can accompany confreres living in situations of conflict and religious tension and organise psychological support for them in the field and during their periods of leave at home.

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## 4. DEVELOPMENT

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Evangelisation is intimately linked to integral human promotion and development [SRL 14].

Action in favour of development corresponds to a call of the Church [*Evangelii Gaudium*, 186] which is heard and assumed by the Congrega-

tion [Bagamoyo I, 5.10]. Our commitment to development also adopts the broader objectives of sustainable development as promoted by the UN and responds to the needs of people.

*From our faith in Christ who became poor, and who was always close to the poor and the excluded, flows a concern for the integral development of the most abandoned in society.*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 186

## ● NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE AND PROJECTS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY

44 We distinguish two categories in our commitment to development:

- donor-funded development projects, which aim to improve the conditions and living standards of local people in a country or region;
- self-sufficiency projects, which also aim to generate long-term income for a circumscription to carry out its mission.

45 Development projects and projects aimed at the self-sufficiency of the circumscriptions are both complementary and necessary for the Spiritan mission.

## ● CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS AT THE SERVICE OF DEVELOPMENT

46 Development is at the heart of our mission: it is enshrined in the strategic plan of the circumscriptions.

47 The strategic plan of each circumscription may include the functioning [organisation, personnel, financing] of the Development Office among the activities and works of the circumscription. The Development Office is responsible for providing resources to support the mission and the priorities or necessary Spiritan projects in the circumscription.

48 The Development Office assesses needs, advises, coordinates, supervises, monitors development projects and relays requests for funding of projects in the circumscription.

The Development Office is therefore involved in the planning, drafting, implementation and evaluation of projects.

49 The Spiritan staff of a Development Office will be trained [possibly during the initial training course, local training, training abroad or online,

and then ongoing training] and will also draw on the professional skills of employees or Lay Spiritan Associates. It will always be a team effort.

- 50 Competence and integrity are criteria for the recruitment of Development Office staff.
- 51 The availability of Development Office managers to take on the work required of them [full time investment and for a term of at least six years] should be ensured.
- 52 Training in integral human promotion and development will be integrated into the various stages of initial training, with the necessary updating during ongoing training.
- 53 The Generalate and the circumscriptions will ensure, with the help of appropriate contemporary techniques and tools and in an integrated approach, the convergence of financial issues with those of development in general and the safeguarding of creation.

## ● THE GENERAL COUNCIL AT THE SERVICE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 54 The Central Development Office [CDO], based in Rome, will be strengthened to carry out its mission. It coordinates and facilitates the identification, preparation and financing of projects in the Unions and in the circumscriptions. It assists and supports the young circumscriptions to adopt best practices in investment and project management to ensure their self-sufficiency.
- 55 The CDO is responsible for promoting a common vision of development in relation to the mission of evangelization.
- 56 The CDO trains and advises the actors of the Circumscription Offices, in order to work towards a networking of Spiritan development projects with the aim of promoting and giving credibility to the Spiritan know-how in this field.
- 57 The CDO disseminates the necessary tools for the implementation of good practice and remains vigilant as to the respect of procedures [finances, ethics, objectives] at the level of the Circumscription Offices.



- 58 Effective collaboration is essential between the Local Development Offices, the CDO and the Development Support Offices in the circumscriptions which relay projects to funding organizations:
  - Kibanda [Brussels]: European Spiritan Center, for Cooperation and Development;
  - Spiritan Office for Mission Advancement SOMA [Houston];
  - International Overseas, Development Office IODO [Dublin];
  - SOLSEF [Lisbon].
- 59 The CDO establishes a list of trained development confreres who are able to work in the local Development Offices or in the CDO.

## 5. PROTECTION OF MINORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Since the beginning of the 21st century, in many countries, greater attention seems to be paid to situations of domination and abuse [sexual, power, spiritual] committed against people, whether children or adults. The Church itself is being challenged and sometimes questioned as an institution capable of doing good. In response to this crisis situation, the time has come to undertake demanding but necessary reforms at all levels so that every Christian community is a healthy place, that is, a place that ensures the physical and moral safety of people.

Our Spiritan mission promotes an “integral liberation of man” and asks us to be “advocates, supporters and defenders of the weak and the little ones” [SRL 14]. The General Chapter considers the crucial issue of the protection of persons to be a constitutive part of our mission today.

*The only way we can respond to this evil [of sexual abuse] that has ruined so many lives is as a duty that mobilises everyone and belongs to all of us as God's people. This awareness of feeling part of a people and a common history will allow us to recognise our sins and mistakes of the past with a penitential openness that can allow us to be renewed from within. All that is done to eradicate the culture of abuse in our communities without the active participation of all the members of the Church will not succeed in creating the necessary dynamics to achieve a healthy and effective transformation.*

Pope Francis, *Letter to the People of God*, 2018, no. 2

## ● PASTORAL RESPONSE

- 60 Circumscription leaders will provide a pastoral response to victims, offering them listening, support and accompaniment, with an emphasis on restorative justice.
- 61 Our listening to the victims and our desire to finally act justly towards them is in keeping with the charism of our Congregation, which sees the poor as the first recipients of the Good News.
- 62 The Congregation will cooperate with the civil and canonical authorities when a confrere is accused of abuse [sexual abuse, situations of exploitation, etc.].
- 63 Appropriate support will be provided to accused confreres during the period of investigation and after the verdict.
- 64 Every effort will be made to clear a colleague's name if an allegation is found to be false.

## ● INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

- 65 The preparation of confreres as specialists in this field, will include training in the protection of persons. It shall aim to give priority to the spiritual and human dimensions in the initial stages of the spiritual training programmes of all candidates.

- 66 Formation communities will ensure the selection and appropriate formation of candidates. It is particularly important that formators provide accompaniment for all candidates in order to promote healthy relationships in the community and in ministry.

- 67 Each circumscription will include in its overall plan for ongoing training, training in personal protection and refresher training for all members.

- 68 Members new to a circumscription will be given an introduction to the local culture and the standards of practice for ministers. They will familiarize themselves with the circumscription's Code of Conduct and sign it.

## ● PROTECTION OFFICERS, TRAINING AND COLLABORATION

- 69 Structures will be put in place to ensure adequate training of major and local superiors on safeguarding issues, including the appointment of safeguarding officers and an advisory committee to assist the superior in the implementation of the policy.

- 70 The presence of professional and competent lay people is encouraged at all levels of protection, including in training programmes and accountability structures.

- 71 Collaboration with the Union of Circumscriptions, with other religious bodies and with local Church structures is important in addressing common challenges in the area of protection.

- 72 Circumscriptions will support each other within the framework of the Unions. They will share resources and develop a job description for protection officers with a clear definition of their role. They will take advantage of local training sessions and those offered in Rome.

- 73 The General Council will continue to identify confreres as protection officers to serve Unions and provide them with training.

## ● CODE OF CONDUCT AND GENERAL POLICIES

- 74 Each circumscription will have its own Code of Conduct.

75 The Code of Conduct shall be contextualised and adapted to the cultural situation and civil law of the circumscription.

76 Each member will sign the document and be responsible for its application.

## ● POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

77 Policies and procedures will be developed by each circumscription to ensure the implementation of its own safeguarding plan, in line with the *Safeguarding of Minors – Guidelines* [revised edition 2016] and *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Guidelines* 2018.

78 Circumscriptions that do not have a safeguarding policy and procedures in place are required to establish them as a matter of urgency by the end of 2022.

79 All educational establishments and other works owned by the Congregation, which are in charge of vulnerable adults, will have their own separate policies and procedures, as required by *Safeguarding Minors*, 5.3 and the *Spiritans Guide for Education*, 8.1.b.

80 The Code of Conduct and the policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly by the circumscription leadership taking into account best practice and compliance with civil and Church law.

81 The circumscription council shall evaluate the implementation process on an annual basis. Similarly, the General Council will evaluate, on an annual basis, the implementation process and the circumscription Codes of Conduct for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults.





## Part Two: Spirituality, Formation, Vocations and Communities for Mission

### 6. SPIRITUALITY FOR CONTEMPORARY SPIRITAN MISSION

The Chapter of Torre d’Aguilha [I.1] reminded us of the importance and the major aspects of our Spiritan spirituality. Regular renewal in this spirituality, inherited from the founders Claude Poullart des Places and François Libermann and enriched by the living tradition of our institute, contributes to the living out of the charism of the Congregation and gives the Spiritan mission its specificity.

#### ● SPIRITAN SPIRITUALITY: FORMATION AND ANIMATION

82 A General Councillor is appointed with particular responsibility for the spiritual animation of the Congregation.

83 The General Council, in collaboration with the Unions and circumscriptions, will encourage identified candidates to undergo formation in spirituality (e.g. using the Researcher-in-Residence programme at Duquesne), with a view to establishing a sufficient group of competent confreres. It will be necessary to train specialists who are at the same time animators.

84 The General Council plans and organises a renewal programme in Spiritan spirituality of reasonable duration for all professed members who have completed their first 10 to 12 years of ministry [cf. SRL 145].

*In addition to seeking to refine a vision and strategy for Spiritan mission in response to the signs of the times in which we live, it is also important to rediscover the missionary spirituality that sustains and gives life and meaning to all that we do. Many of us carry out our mission today in personally challenging circumstances: the reality of conflict, insecurity and the daily threat of violence; overwhelming poverty, corruption and injustice; pervasive secularism that eats away at and undermines our faith; a Church whose credibility has been*



*seriously undermined by the revelation of successive scandals and the failings of its leaders; circumscriptions and communities divided by internal tensions and mutual distrust. We need deep inner resources that can sustain and nourish us in these situations and that allow us to avoid the traps of pessimism, discouragement and disillusionment.*

P. John Fogarty, Superior General, “The Spirit Helps Our Weakness”, Pentecost Letter 2019

- 85 The General Councillor in charge of Spiritan spirituality ensures that Spiritan spirituality and the writings of and about our founders are presented in a simple form and are accessible in publications and on social networks open to a wide audience.
- 86 A regular plan of animation, centred on a prayerful reading of the Word of God, following the method of *Lectio Divina*, rooted in Spiritan spirituality and mission, is proposed by the General Council to the whole Congregation. This activity, which encourages meditation and prayer, is intended for each professed member and each community, and for Lay Spiritan Associates, and may be shared with the Christian faithful wherever possible.
- 87 Each circumscription develops an annual plan of spiritual animation for the confreres. During their visits to the circumscriptions, the members of the General Council will be attentive to evaluate the implementation of this programme.
- 88 All future novice masters, in addition to the classical formation they receive, are required to follow a programme on Spiritan spirituality.
- 89 Centres of formation in Spiritan spirituality will be established in the regions where the new generations of Spiritans are found. These centres could be set up in the existing houses of ongoing formation in the Unions, equipped for this mission.
- 90 Lay Spiritan Associates are invited to participate in formation and sessions related to Spiritan spirituality and identity (houses of formation, communities, circumscriptions, etc.).

## ● OUR SPIRITUAL AND MISSIONARY HERITAGE

- 91 Each circumscription continues to pay special attention to the celebration of Spiritan feasts that mark important dates in our common history and in the history of the circumscription.
- 92 The proper ritual for Spiritan celebrations will be updated.
- 93 The General Council continues to give priority to the causes of beatification of our founders and canonisation of our blessed confreres.
- 94 The General Council is attentive to the preservation of our heritage and history in the circumscriptions.
- 95 Each circumscription is careful to make an inventory and to preserve the spiritual patrimony and the archives of the Congregation available in the circumscription. A copy of this patrimony is obligatorily sent to the general archives.
- 96 The Unions of Circumscriptions shall endeavour to train a confrere for the service of the archives.

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## 7. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITIES FOR MISSION TODAY

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Internationality is a positive value, which has its demands. In a world marked by the rise of populism and cynicism, interculturality must be welcomed as a fundamental element of Spiritan life and of our spirituality. As missionaries, we are determined to pursue intercultural encounter and exchange within our communities.

### ● INTERCULTURALITY IN THE COMMUNITIES

- 97 The formation of superiors in the area of interculturality will be deepened so that they can better resolve the issues that arise in community.
- 98 We will deal with unresolved tensions and conflicts and address the issue of equity and equality among confreres in a dynamic of fraternal correction and conversion. In this dynamic, we are also aware of the power games that may exist within the community.

99 We commit ourselves to recovering the charisma of religious life as a community of faith determined to create a more fraternal and healthy experience among the members of the community.

*It hurts me a lot to see how in some Christian communities, and even among consecrated persons, there is room for various forms of hatred, division, slander, defamation, revenge, jealousy, the desire to impose one's own ideas at any price, and even persecutions that resemble a relentless witch hunt. Who do we want to evangelise with such behaviour?*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 100

## ● INTERCULTURALITY IN THE CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

100 We will develop, within the circumscriptions, a spirituality of encounter, hospitality, accompaniment, and generosity. To this end, we will put into practice the recommendations of the *Guide for Mission Appointments*, of the SRL 141.2 and of the message of universal fraternity of the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.

101 Circumscription superiors have an important role to play in recognising and addressing unacceptable practices such as prejudice, domination, stereotyping, racism and tribalism, whether latent or overtly expressed, perceived or real.

102 Circumscription councils reflect the international nature of the Spiritan group. Without sacrificing the quality of service of authority, care will be taken to ensure that they are representative of all members of the circumscription.

103 It is important to find competent people to facilitate the integration process of confreres who arrive in a new culture. The appointment of a mentor for newcomers to a community greatly facilitates their integration. [Guide for Mission Appointments].

*A community's life passes through moments of sorrow and moments of joy. Time is needed for growing to take place. Community living makes unremitting demands upon each member to be converted – even to “die and rise again”. Each one stands in need of help and support so that all may make progress and each individual may be able to bear those stresses that are inevitable in community living. [SRL 39.2]*

## ● THE GENERAL COUNCIL AT THE SERVICE OF INTERCULTURALITY

104 Interculturality is one of the crucial elements of animation of the Congregation for the next eight years.

105 The General Council and the Unions of Circumscriptions will reflect in depth on the demands of living together interculturality. They will ensure that interculturality is lived during the years of initial formation, with particular emphasis on the period of missionary experience in another culture [SRL 136.1]. Likewise, it will be taken into account and promoted in mission appointments.

106 A correspondent of the General Council may be called upon to help resolve problems of conflict and lack of unity in a circumscription.

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## 8. PREPARING FOR SPIRITAN MISSION: INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

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107 The General Council will take the necessary steps to ensure that the circumscriptions and the Unions observe the orientations given in the *Spiritan Rule of Life* [SRL] and the *Guide for Spiritan Formation* [GSF], as well as the decisions of the General Chapter.

## ● FORMATION FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION

108 Particular importance is given to issues related to sexuality and affectivity, with an emphasis on the protection of minors and vulnerable adults, in order to prepare the young confreres to live the contemporary mission in a respectful, human and balanced way.

109 Formation is a broader reality than the academic curriculum and includes elements which foster an awareness of the realities and the continual changes in the contemporary world. Formation includes pastoral placements that allow for concrete experience of these realities.

110 Spiritan formation will place greater emphasis on community life and collaboration with the laity, in the spirit of the encyclical *Fratelli tutti*.

*A synodal Church is a Church of listening, with the awareness that listening is more than hearing. It is a reciprocal listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the College of Bishops, the Bishop of Rome, each listening to the others; and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of Truth", to know what he is saying to the Churches.*

*Address by Pope Francis, Commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops, 17 October 2015*

111 In a spirit of synodality, Spiritan formation gives priority to missionary religious life, to community life as well as to addressing the pitfalls of clericalism and individualism.

112 The *Guide for Spiritan Formation* could be updated to include the recommendations of the meetings in Dakar [meeting of formators, 2019] and Zanzibar [interreligious dialogue, 2018<sup>2</sup>].

## ● STAGES OF FORMATION

113 Particular attention should be given to the first stages of formation, the postulancy and the first cycle, in order to lay a good foundation for the religious missionary vocation. It is important that diligent discernment allows young confreres to remain open to both forms of commitment in the Congregation: priest or consecrated lay person [Brother].

114 The list of students to be sent on the period of missionary experience each year is sent to the General Council in advance by the Superiors of the local circumscriptions, with an indication of the duration, the ministry envisaged and the place.

<sup>2</sup> "The challenges and relevance of Spiritan formation today", *Spiritan Life*, no. 25, September 2020. "Spiritan Forum for Interreligious Dialogue" *Spiritan Horizons*, issue 15, Spring 2020.

115 The circumscriptions will draw up programmes for the reception, accompaniment and integration of the confreres on missionary experience and will see to the proper application of the programme.

116 The period of missionary experience must be carried out in a culture different from that of the candidate.

117 There should be greater participation of the General Council, in collaboration with the circumscriptions, in the distribution of candidates for the period of missionary experience and in the monitoring of the process to ensure internationality and interculturality, paying particular attention to those circumscriptions that cannot negotiate the placement of their candidates in foreign lands and cultures.

118 Confreres are required, as far as possible, to have a good knowledge of at least two languages of the Congregation before perpetual profession. The period of missionary experience is conducive to this learning [cf. SRL 141.2].

119 The formators will facilitate the process of mission appointment from the second cycle of formation, based on the missionary needs of the Congregation today. The emphasis will be on the flexibility, openness and availability of the candidate.

120 Mission formation will address the different types of missionary commitments of the Congregation. The formators will seek to develop the abilities and talents of the candidates in relation to our missionary priorities.

121 Communication between formators, circumscription superiors and the General Council should be improved so that the timely transmission of candidates' files at all stages of formation will enable the General Council to make an informed decision about sending candidates on particular missions.

## ● FORMATION OF FORMATORS

122 Every confrere appointed to a formation community, whatever his function, receives an adequate formation for at least six months. The discernment to identify candidates will be made in collaboration with the General Council.

123 The formators of formation communities reflect the diversity of the community in question.

124 Following the example of the meetings of new superiors in Rome, the General Council may create a programme for formators taking into account their specific level of responsibility in formation [postulancy directors, novice masters, formation leaders]. This would help to give all formators a common vision based on the Spiritan charism.

125 Circumscription superiors should ensure that there is a sufficient balance between the number of formators and the number of students in formation communities.

## ● MANAGEMENT

126 The circumscriptions are responsible for ensuring that the houses of formation are adequately financed.

127 Formation centres are encouraged to move towards self-sufficiency and to make good use of available resources.

## ● 2<sup>nd</sup> CYCLE FORMATION HOUSES

*Number of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle formation houses:*

128 The General Council determines the number, location and eventual establishment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle formation houses.

*Distribution of students:*

129 The distribution of students is the responsibility of the circumscriptions. However, the General Council, in collaboration with the circumscriptions and the Unions, shall ensure that the distribution of students in the different formation communities is balanced and promotes interculturality.

130 Care will be taken to organise travel in such a way as to avoid excessive transport and airfare costs.

*Distribution of formators:*

131 The criteria for the distribution of formators are: language, internationality, a fair proportion between formators and students.

132 The General Council will participate more actively in the process of designating confreres to be trained as formators. Formators will be re-

cruited and trained according to the needs of the Congregation and not only in the circumscriptions that have candidates.

## ● FINANCING THE SECOND CYCLE

133 Adequate resources will be made available for smaller and poorer circumscriptions. This implies that the larger circumscriptions receive less from the solidarity of the Congregation [Cor Unum] than those which are younger or more fragile.

134 New sources of income will be found for the financing of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle houses of formation.

## ● ONGOING FORMATION

*God's call to come and work for the Kingdom is not made to us just once for all. Our response has to be updated continually. So it is a necessity for all of us to retrain ourselves without fail if we are to remain true to our calling in the world and in the Church. [SRL 142].*

*Ongoing formation involves all aspects of our calling- human, spiritual, theological, professional and pastoral. [SRL 142.1].*

135 Ongoing formation is part of the strategic plan of a circumscription.

136 During community or regional meetings, superiors remind confreres of the importance and value of ongoing formation.

137 Circumscriptions will make use of the resources and programmes offered by the General Council in collaboration with other Congregations, as is already done by ICOF [Inter-Congregations On-going Formation].

138 In general, it would be good to create an online "Spiritan Academy", with formation modules in spirituality, leadership, development, JPIC, bursar's office, etc.

## 9. CALL TO THE VOCATION OF BROTHER

The Chapter expresses its concern about the loss of the sense of our character as a missionary religious Congregation, with an almost exclusive emphasis on the ordained ministry. In order to value the religious missionary vocation in itself, it will be necessary to insist on the fact that the vocation of brother is the common vocation of all Spiritans: all are brothers, all are religious.

For vocation promotion, as for formation, this should be much more explicit, both in terms of admission and discernment, and in terms of accompaniment during the formation of candidates. The personal vocation, discerned during the formation process, determines the final option.

Religious profession is valued in its celebration, as well as in its successive anniversaries.

The Chapter wishes that this concern be truly shared by all professed and lay members. This is not a new issue in our assemblies and chapters: the statistics are worrying and clearly call into question the continuity of the presence of non-clerical Spiritan religious. The current outlook is not encouraging.

It is not a question of a lack of vocations to the Spiritan life, for they are numerous, especially in Africa. But the question remains: why don't we have any "brother candidates"? Are we really convinced of the importance of diversity within the Congregation? Are we not confusing the Spiritan vocation with the ministerial priesthood? Our fundamental choice is that of religious life; without it our choice of life loses its meaning.

We call on the whole Congregation to reflect in order to truly rediscover the essence of our vocation and our choice of life as consecrated persons. We must make efforts to make this desire a reality.

*It is important that we Spiritans see ourselves as religious missionaries. Is there not an unconscious assumption among us that the priesthood is more "important" than religious*

*life? That the Fathers are primarily "priests" and the Brothers are "religious"? As long as Spiritans do not accept, both theoretically and practically, that we are all brothers, sharing the same missionary commitment, there will always be a kind of "alienation" within the Congregation. The 1974 Chapter underlined this.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Enlarged General Council, 1978*

## 10. LAY SPIRITAN ASSOCIATES

*Whether lay or professed, what binds us is a dynamic of 'covenant', blessed and strengthened by the Spirit. It expresses itself in fidelity, humility, forgiveness, reciprocity and solidarity.*

*Together we form 'but one family, intent on one mission' (SRL24.2), in which there is a commitment to a greater fruitfulness, with no hierarchy, but with our diversity and complementarity. This synergy 'helps to give a clearer and more complete picture of the Church itself, while rendering more effective the response to the great challenges of our time, thanks to the combined contributions of the various gifts. In some places, this mutually enriching relationship extends to other congregations that share the same Spiritan charism.*

*Guide for Lay Spiritan Associates, no. 2.5 and 2.6*

**139** Each circumscription appoints an accompanier for the Lay Spiritans Associates [LSA]. The mission of this person is to accompany the Lay Spiritan Associates to grow in the vision, charism and mission of the Spiritans and to feel welcome in the Congregation.

**140** The accompanier refers to the *Guide for Lay Spiritan Associates* and the formation programme of the circumscription.

**141** Each accompanier encourages Lay Spiritan Associates to take on responsibilities in the communities and in other circumscription bodies.

- 142 Each Union appoints an Lay Spiritan Associates to coordinate communication between the LSAs in their Union and those around the world, and to participate in international meetings.
- 143 Each Lay Spiritan Associates candidate discerns, with the accompanier, the type of association to which they feel called. Each Lay Spiritan Associates participates in a formation programme appropriate to their level of commitment.
- 144 Each circumscription ensures that Lay Spiritan Associates receive all communications from the Generalate.
- 145 The General Councillor responsible for Lay Spiritan Associates continues to work in close coordination with Lay Spiritan Associates leaders at the Union and circumscription levels to further explore and identify the various forms of lay association within the Congregation.







## Part Three: Finance and Organisation in the Service of the Mission

### 11. FINANCES FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION

In the present and foreseeable world context, marked in particular by globalisation, climate change, digitalisation, urbanisation, secularisation and migration, the adequate and sustainable financing of the activities of the Congregation requires the consideration of three major observations:

- a. *due to the demographic shift of the membership, the Northern circumscriptions need the solidarity of those in the South to continue the mission;*
- b. *due to the structural shift, a large number of circumscriptions in the South are in a state of re-foundation through the establishment of sound and solid bases for their development;*
- c. *as a result of the first two changes, the financial solidarity provided to the circumscriptions by the General Administration through the Cor Unum fund and the personal contribution of the members will diminish rapidly in the years to come.*

Consequently, the new economic model leading to the sustainability of the financing of our contemporary Spiritan mission is based on the development of self-financing. It is reflected in the preparation and execution of income-generating projects in all the circumscriptions of the Congregation. The realisation of such an economic model requires continuous decisions and actions.

#### ● SELF-FINANCING

**146** To promote self-financing, the General Council and each circumscription shall actively promote and encourage:

- the preparation and implementation of self-sustaining and income-generating projects;
- the use of a network of friends, advisors and benefactors



- mobilising a network of professionals, technical partners and funding agencies;
- maintaining and improving existing property and income-generating works.

**147** The General Council and the circumscriptions will need to engage competent persons to assist in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

## ● SOUND MANAGEMENT

The self-financing business model of missionary activities requires sound and efficient management by the General Council and the circumscriptions. In this context, the following actions should be implemented:

**148** The activity of the General Administration must be matched to its financial resources. The General Council will assess the need to increase the number of competent and trained staff in the general bursar's office in order to ensure better management. The circumscription councils will do the same with regard to their circumscription bursars.

**149** The General Council will assist the circumscriptions in the analysis and control of risks in area of management and in the establishment of good prevention practices.

**150** Emphasis will be placed on optimising relations between the General Council and the circumscriptions. The requirement for timely transmission of financial statements and personnel movements to the general administration must be respected.

**151** The General Council and the circumscriptions will ensure the efficient application of ethical standards in economic and financial matters. The obligation of control on the part of the circumscription administration and the obligation of accountability on the part of communities and works must be strictly applied. The bursar of the circumscription will present a consolidated report of the accounts of the circumscription, communities and works. The circumscription council must examine and approve this report. [SRL 246.1.21]

**152** The prior agreement of the General Council is still required in the event of the transfer of goods of the circumscriptions or the confreres to the local Church or to the civil authorities [SRL 248.5.5].

## ● FINANCIAL SOLIDARITY

*Our dwellings, our reception of guests, and our style of living are simple and modest. This simplicity brings us closer to people who are poor, homeless or disadvantaged and increases our solidarity with them. It facilitates our working alongside them to improve their circumstances in the world. We work with them too to change unjust social structures which victimise them. [SRL 71]*

Financial solidarity within the Congregation and the circumscriptions must be at the heart of the economic model emphasising self-financing in order to sustain the Spiritan mission [SRL 65; 70; 71; 72]. In order to strengthen and optimise this financial solidarity, the following actions will be undertaken:

**153** The General Council and the circumscriptions should encourage and promote intra-Congregational solidarity, including the conduct of joint financial investment projects, partnership between circumscriptions, co-financing and solidarity financing.

**154** In keeping with a tradition of the Congregation, the circumscriptions will allocate to the General Council 10% of the proceeds of any sale of real estate. This will be used to assist in the acquisition or construction of real estate in other circumscriptions of the Congregation.

**155** In order to strengthen the personal contribution to the financing of the General Council, an increase in its rate is recommended. The percentage increase and the modalities of application will be defined by the General Council.

**156** The General Council will work to improve the method of distribution of Cor Unum with the aim of providing more support to those circumscriptions most in need.

**157** The strict application of SRL 65 is essential for the integrity of our life and mission: "... gifts, salaries, pensions, grants, insurance, Mass stipends and every other income we may derive from our work - belongs to the Congregation [Can 668,3]". Action will be taken if this article of the Rule of Life is not respected.

## ● ADMINISTRATION OF OUR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The adoption and efficient implementation of good financial and risk management practices are essential for the mobilisation and trust of technical and financial partners, for the success of investment projects, for the proper functioning of the circumscriptions and the Spiritan communities and, ultimately, for the sustainability of the economic model based on self-financing. With this in mind, the following actions have been identified:

**158** The General Council and the circumscriptions ensure the efficient application and respect of the good practices described in the *Guide for Spiritan Bursars* and the document on procedures according to the SRL.

**159** The circumscriptions ensure the use of bank accounts managed by reputable institutions and ensure the traceability of all financial transactions.

**160** The General Council and the circumscriptions will proceed with the inventory and formal assignment of their stable patrimony as requested by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life [CICLSAL].

**161** The circumscriptions will set up a financial council and/or accounting, financial and technical assistance, with a clear roadmap for its mission. This arrangement will be regularly evaluated and adapted accordingly.

**162** The General Council will study the opportunity to set up, in collaboration with the circumscriptions and with the assistance of professionals, a chart of accounts and an accounting software applicable to all circumscriptions, taking into account the diversity of local legal frameworks.

**163** Each circumscription has an annual external audit of its accounts for certification by a professional accredited under the applicable legal framework. As this can be very costly, in small circumscriptions the financial council may be responsible for this audit.

## ● ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL TRAINING

Accounting and financial skills are essential for all Spiritans in the mission. To enable the acquisition and development of such skills, the following actions are selected:

**164** The General Council and the circumscriptions ensure that accounting and financial management are integrated into the initial and ongoing formation programmes of the Congregation.

**165** The circumscriptions are encouraged to work with the National Conferences of Religious as well as at the level of the Unions, for the formation of bursars in the different aspects of accounting, financial, fiscal and human resources management according to local contexts.

**166** Emphasis will be placed, in initial and ongoing formation, on the strong link between finances, the vow of poverty, the ethics of responsibility and solidarity in relation to the goods entrusted to us, including the management and protection of the environment.

## ● OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

*Pension fund:*

**167** To address the sharp deterioration in the rate of coverage by annual contributions of pensions paid to retirees, the contribution rate is increased from €75 to €100 per year for the next four years [2022-2025] and to €125 for the following four years [2026-2029].

**168** In addition, the General Council will seek further investment opportunities from the current portfolio, looking to other parts of the world, including Africa, to strengthen the capital of the pension fund. It will accompany the circumscriptions to undertake actuarial and prospective studies to assess future needs, with particular emphasis on the care of elderly confreres.

*Debt of the Provinces of Central Africa:*

**169** Taking into account the principles of imputability of the debt - which implies that the responsibility is borne by those who were at the origin of the expenditure -, of subsidiarity - which implies that the circumscription which appointed the managers can also assume the responsibility of this

debt - and of solidarity - which implies the common and joint management of crises -, the following actions are adopted:

- detailed prior information is required on the causes of the debt as well as on the managers behind it;
- partial cancellation of the debt according to the situation of each circumscription;
- the definition of the modalities for the reimbursement of the remaining debt, including the participation of the persons at fault;
- the application of sanctions for the confreres at fault.

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## 12. ETHICS IN FINANCE

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Integrity is a value required of all, confreres and laity, especially those who are responsible for the goods of the Congregation.

### ● ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL

- 170 The General Council and the circumscriptions are required to have a Financial Council comprising competent lay professionals who ensure proper accounting procedures.
- 171 The General Council and the circumscriptions shall establish a manual of procedures that provides clear guidelines on how finances are to be managed within a circumscription.
- 172 Competent superiors will provide bursars and other collaborators at all levels of leadership in the Congregation with a clear written description of their work, duties and responsibilities. This will include a procedure for effective control and transparency of finances.
- 173 The General Council shall monitor the proper conduct of the handing over of services to the circumscription superiors and bursars. The circumscription superiors will do the same for their communities and works.

### ● CREATING A CLIMATE OF TRANSPARENCY

- 174 The General Council and all the circumscriptions will work to create a culture of transparency at all levels, beginning with initial formation.
- 175 The General Council and each circumscription will establish a realistic timetable for regular external audit of financial accounts to be carried out on all circumscription accounts.
- 176 All bank accounts, as well as payment orders, must have at least two signatories.
- 177 The General Council and each circumscription will ensure adequate skills and training for bursars.

*Every year, the bursar shall present to the community and to the major superior a balance sheet and a budget which have already been approved by the superior and the council of the community. [SRL 173.3]*

### ● SETTING UP A RESPONSE TO MISCONDUCT

- 178 The General Council will develop procedures to be put in place against those who abuse the finances of the circumscriptions in accordance with the Code of Canon Law [C. 1377] and civil law [SRL 267].
- 179 The General Council shall develop a series of sanctions, which may include denial of grants, withdrawal from leadership, etc., for those circumscriptions that do not comply with the requirements of providing the General Council with financial reports and personnel status updates.

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## 13. CONFRERES IN IRREGULAR SITUATIONS

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### ● FORMS OF IRREGULARITY

- 180 The following are the situations in which a confrere may be considered as being in an irregular situation, either in his circumscription of origin or in another circumscription:

- a confrere who is illegitimately absent from his community and mission appointment for a period of at least six successive months [Canon 696§1, SRL 77.1, 77.2 and 267, Bagamoyo I, 2.11].
- a confrere who lives in another circumscription than the one to which he is appointed, without the prior agreement of the two circumscription superiors concerned. [SRL 182, 182.1, 77.1, Directory for the Organisation of the Congregation 2.10.2]
- a confrere who no longer participates in community, local or regional life, nor in the life of the circumscription, who has chosen his own residence and remains financially independent of the circumscription [Canon 696§1, SRL 63 and 246.1.7, Bagamoyo I, 4.3].
- a confrere who habitually neglects the obligations of the consecrated life and repeatedly violates the sacred bonds [Canon 696§1, Bagamoyo I, 4.1]
- a confrere who has *de facto* left the Congregation, but has never regularised his new situation.

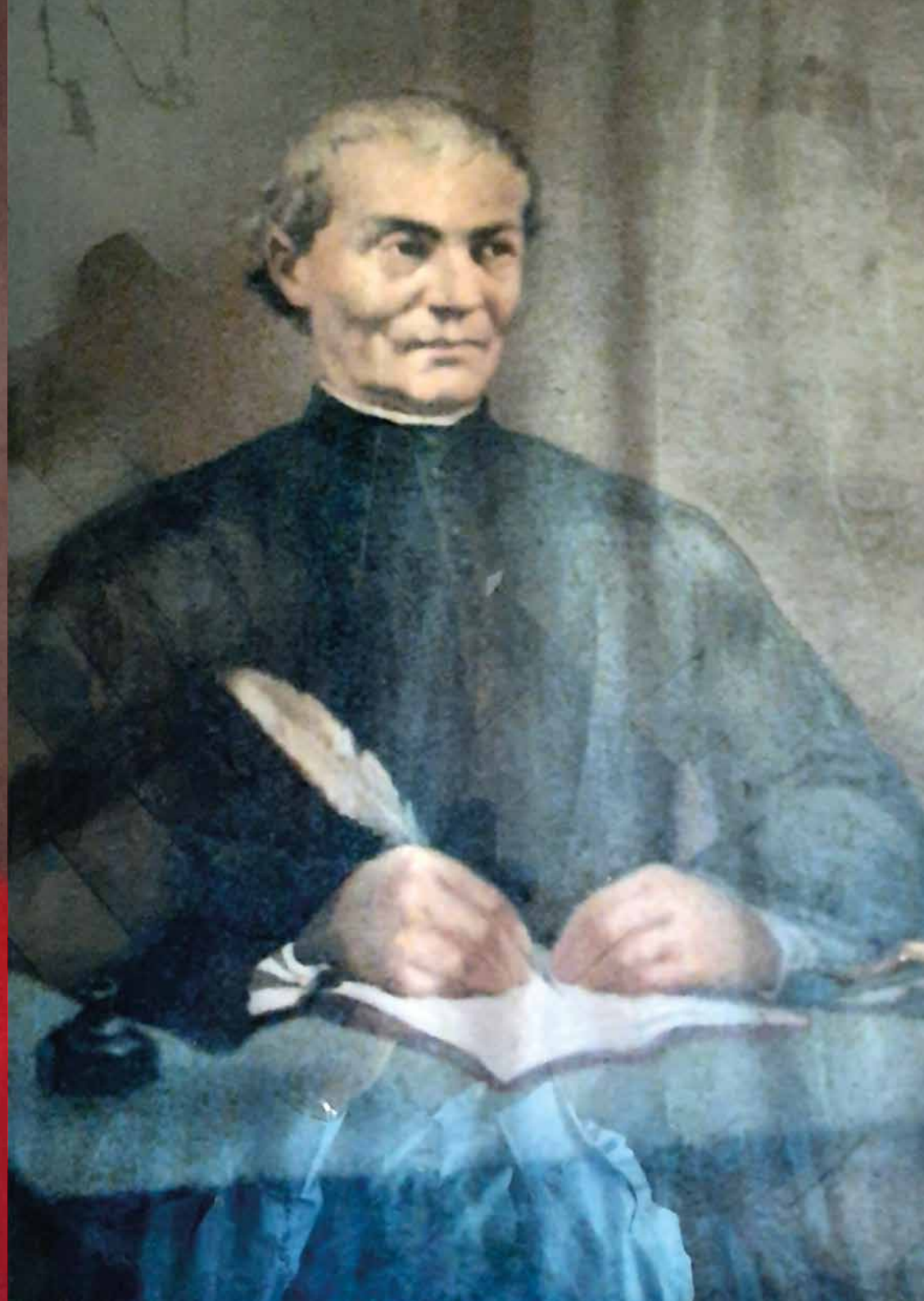
## ● FRATERNAL CHARITY, DISCERNMENT AND ACTION

- 181** The superiors of circumscriptions will continue the work of the outgoing General Council to regularise the status of confreres in irregular situations. The General Council will provide support and advice in cases that need to be dealt with.
- 182** The superiors of circumscriptions will maintain an attentive and fraternal dialogue with the confreres in irregular situations, inviting them to enter into a process of conversion and to join their community, in accordance with the Spiritan Rule of Life [SRL 251].

*If a member absents himself from his community with the intention of withdrawing from the authority of his superiors, the latter shall make every effort to contact him, help him come back and persevere in his vocation [Can. 665,2]. If the member proves obstinate, the canonical procedure for dismissal may be begun [cf. SRL 204]. [SRL 251].*

- 183** If a confrere does not respond to the call to join his community, the six-month period required by canon law must be respected to initiate proceedings against that confrere, both to try to bring him back to his vocation and to protect the Congregation.

- 184** The major superior of the circumscription to which the confrere is appointed is responsible for initiating and following this procedure in accordance with the prescriptions of canon law and SRL. He must ensure that the procedure is completed in good time.
- 185** Wherever possible, the assistance of an independent mediator within the circumscription will be used to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation.
- 186** Sending and receiving superiors will abide by the requirements of SRL 182.1 in assuring the understandings are in writing before a confrere travels to another circumscription for studies or ministry.
- 187** If a confrere in an irregular situation is living in a circumscription that is not his home circumscription, the sending and receiving superiors will work closely together to deal with the situation.
- 188** The major superior of the receiving circumscription will communicate with the local ecclesiastical authorities to inform them of the irregular situation.



## Changes to the Rule of Life

### New text

166. Major Superiors are appointed for **four** years.

167. They may be reappointed once.

170.2 The Councillors shall be chosen for a renewable period of **four** years.

179. The Provincial Chapter shall meet at least every **eight** years, upon convocation by the Superior of the circumscription with the consent of his Council.

179.1 In the interval of these **eight** years an enlarged Council of the Province may be held, whose members have the right to vote. It is for the Chapter of the circumscription to determine the mode of representation in this enlarged Council.

180.4 The Group Chapter meets at least every **eight** years, when convened by the Superior of the circumscription, with the consent of its Council.

180.5 In the interval of these **eight** years there may be an Enlarged Council of the circumscription whose members have the right to vote. It is for the Chapter of the group to determine the mode of representation in this enlarged Council.

### General Services

206.1 With the exception of the General Bursar, the heads of these services are appointed for **four** years by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council.

### Stable Patrimony

229.1 The stable patrimony is made up of all the real and movable goods which, through a legitimate assignation, **\*are intended to guarantee the economic security of the Congregation. The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, makes this assignation\* for the goods of the Congregation. The Superior of the circumscription, with the consent of his council, does the same for the goods of the circumscription and submits his assignation\* to the Superior General and his council for confirmation. Any change in the stable patrimony must be approved by the legitimate assigning authority and, in the case of circumscriptions, confirmed by the Superior General with the consent of his council.**

246.1.22 the sale of movable or immovable goods within the limits established by general ecclesiastical legislation (Can 638) or by local regulations and those of General Chapters, **as well as the modification of the stable patrimony of the circumscription.**

248.5.5 permission to alienate movable or immovable property of the Congregation **or to modify the stable patrimony of the Congregation.**







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