

The 19th General Chapter of the Servants of Charity

“Evangelized to Evangelize”

A Province’s Project toward a New Evangelization

Motions - Proposals - Syntheses of the Commissions’ Work

Rome, October 2012

Italian Province
Congregation of the Servants of Charity
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Extract from the
Quaderni del Charitas, n. 38
[*Notebooks of Charity*]

Introduction

I hereby introduce the text approved by the 19th Chapter with this reflection, analyzing it in its global context. These are personal thoughts, which can help us to better internalize some guidelines the Chapter has given us, and which we must study more deeply in our communities throughout the course of the next six years.

It is very important that the confreres who participated in the Chapter, and above all the Provincial Superiors encourage everyone to reflect on it, bringing with them their own personal vision and offering sound direction that corresponds more to the situation of their own communities and the cultural context in which they work.

The Chapter focused on the theme of “A Province’s Project for a New Evangelization.” Its purpose was to offer key points in keeping with our charism, so that every one of our Provinces (with its own particular configuration and cultural specificity) may help our Communities to increasingly grow as effective promoters of the New Evangelization in response to the needs of the territory in which they work.

Therefore, the intention was to place the Community at the center of our spiritual and apostolic renewal, developing the four elements which recall the essential points of our project of life and mission, as presented in our Constitutions.

Of course we already have the Constitutions, which are the source from which we draw the charismatic orientation of our life and mission. However, it is also always necessary to emphasize some aspects that refer more concretely to the moment in which we are living and the needs of the areas in which every one of our Communities is working. It is now precisely up to each Province to contextualize the guidelines and the course of action, in order to make them conform more to the diversity of our community and the concrete challenges we face in religious life.

I am certain that with everyone’s contribution, the suggestions offered by the Chapter will infuse new spiritual enthusiasm and apostolic zeal in the confreres in order to make our community life more dynamic and better define our mission.

- Undoubtedly, the Chapter carried out its work in the perspective of “globalization,” summed up by the slogan “think globally and act locally.” Even now, in the phase of its implementation that lies ahead us, it is essential that we not lose this vision, which demands that we be able to open our horizons to the complex social reality of the globalized world. The Congregation is living an evident process of

internationalization, which without a doubt implies a change in our mentality and the capacity to adapt our structures to the new situation.

- Another perspective to consider when reading our Chapter's Document is the age difference among the confreres belonging to our various Provinces. The median age of the Chapter members adequately reflects the reality of the Congregation, with an abundance in some areas of "more experienced" confreres and a concentration in others of young ones. It is possible that this generational "imbalance" will be corrected even at the organizational level, but most of all we need to spiritually overcome the two basic attitudes that may arise in us from these situational differences: on the one hand, resignation, stagnation and resistance to change, while on the other, inexperience and the desire for novelty and experimentation. We need to integrate, at the Congregational level, but also at the community level, mutual trust in the various cultural and personal resources of the individual confreres and fidelity to our Congregation's history and tradition.

- One of the strongest convictions we experienced during the Chapter was the need for us first to be evangelized ourselves, in order to be able to spread the Gospel to others. On various occasions we heard the invitation: "become flames which light other flames..." The Chapter, and thus our reflections on the fruit it has produced, should inflame our hearts and strengthen our passion for Christ, for humanity and for our poor.

In the light of our renewed passion for Christ and for the world (and this is the third perspective in which to read the Document) we will know how to live the priorities which the Chapter, it seems to me, clearly indicated:

- A renewed spirituality, deepened in the foundational elements of our charism: the Fatherhood of God, the "bond of charity" and our spiritual fatherhood... as requested of us by Motion 3.

- The promotion of meaningful expressions of evangelical radicality in living our religious consecration and greater creativity in charity with new ways of responding to the needs of the poor in a simple and clear-cut manner.

- Attention to initial and permanent formation.

Indeed, in order to live this time of ours in harmony with the Church, we should allow ourselves to be guided by her Magisterium and the guidelines given to us by the various pastors of our local Churches. We should know how to offer our contribution, beginning with the specific character of our charism and our educational heritage. Thus, we should especially place at the center of our apostolate the evangelizing capacity of the following: our poor, our pedagogy as an education of the heart and in the ways of the heart, and our objective to offer an integral service to our poor, according to the other slogan which characterizes us, "Give Bread and the Lord." Perhaps we should express this in the reverse order, that is, "Give the Lord and Bread," because men and women today need spiritual and moral support more than material food, at least in western

nations. We are also aware that in our secularized contexts the Church encounters particular difficulties in evangelizing new generations. Yet, we have at our disposal another resource if we are able to make the merciful love of God visible, witnessing vigorously to our predilection for the poorest and those who find themselves at psycho-social risk, as was precisely added to our Constitutions as a specific objective for our times. These are the new poor of our society, characterized by the loss of the meaning of life or by indifference to values and victimized by a culture focused on a superficial well-being or on a concept of freedom that obscures social responsibility, certainly without forgetting material poverty in other contexts. In fact, the Chapter made us more aware of the necessary relationship between these two realities, which we too live in our Congregation: not only in making us more sensitive through the communion of goods, but above all in inviting us to a greater simplicity, to a more austere and humble life, which manifests our decision to put all our treasures in the Lord Jesus.

I now present to you the text the Chapter has given to us to generously implement in our Communities.

It is my wish for all of us to discover, almost between the lines of the text, that spirit we experienced in the days of the Chapter. May it already be present in each of our Communities.

In the Document each topic begins with an introduction, which establishes principles from which we can develop concrete initiatives to favor in our personal projects and in those of the Congregation. I, therefore, repeat the invitation to consider the present text as an initial stimulus for further study and for “inculturated” implementation by the individual Provinces, possibly even establishing times to examine commitments, which will be incorporated in the Province’s Project.

As a final invitation, I would ask all of you to consider the “Document” as not pertaining exclusively to us. For there are many aspects which implicate people who share our charism and mission. It is our duty to get them involved in our search and commitment to strive together for a holier life and to make our charitable apostolate a defining force of communion and effective evangelization.

Yours faithfully,

Rome, 11 October 2012
Indiction of the Year of Faith

Fr. Alfonso Crippa
Superior General

YEAR OF FAITH

The “door of faith” (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church. It is possible to cross that threshold when the word of God is proclaimed and the heart allows itself to be shaped by transforming grace...

Ever since the start of my ministry as Successor of Peter, I have spoken of the need to rediscover the journey of faith so as to shed ever clearer light on the joy and renewed enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ... We want this Year to arouse in every believer the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope.

(Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei*)

And in this sense, the Church is already at work.

In the light of these words, we can understand what I myself felt at the time: during the Council there was an emotional tension as we faced the common task of making the truth and beauty of the faith shine out in our time, without sacrificing it to the demands of the present or leaving it tied to the past: the eternal presence of God resounds in the faith, transcending time, yet it can only be welcomed by us in our own unrepeatable today. Therefore I believe that the most important thing, especially on such a significant occasion as this, is to revive in the whole Church that positive tension, that yearning to announce Christ again to contemporary man. But, so that this interior thrust towards the New Evangelization neither remain just an idea nor be lost in confusion, it needs to be built on a concrete and precise basis, and this basis is the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the place where it found expression. This is why I have often insisted on the need to return, as it were, to the “letter” of the Council – that is to its texts – also to draw from them its authentic spirit, and why I have repeated that the true legacy of Vatican II is to be found in them. Reference to the documents saves us from extremes of anachronistic nostalgia and running too far ahead, and allows what is new to be welcomed in a context of continuity. The Council did not formulate anything new in matters of faith, nor did it wish to replace what was ancient. Rather, it concerned itself with seeing that the same faith might continue to be lived in the present day, that it might remain a living faith in a world of change.

(Benedict XVI, *Homily for the Opening of the Year of Faith*, 11 October 2012)

OBSERVATIONS WITH REGARD METHOD

By mandate of the 19th General Chapter, the General Council was entrusted with “the task of revising, refining and modifying in form all the Proposals and Motions approved by the General Chapter, as well as promulgating and implementing them in the next six years” (Motion n. 51), and proceeded in the following way:

1. The Motions and Proposals were organized in a logical form, that is, according to the content of the topics developed, and not to the fields proper to the Commissions that proposed them.
2. The Motions and Proposals provide a preliminary explanatory introduction and a framework to the text.
3. For every Motion and Proposal the responsible party entrusted with the task of implementing the same Motion or Proposal is highlighted in bold print.
4. This text assigns official numbering to the Motions and Proposals of the 19th General Chapter. Henceforth, we shall refer to this same numeration in our citations.

COMMUNITIES THAT EVANGELIZE WITH AND IN THE CHURCH

The multicultural and often secularized context in which we live and work demands of us, as consecrated persons, a clear and strong witness to the values that animate our life, both in relation to God and our brothers, which make up community life.

Today more than ever before, we are urged to use meaningful language composed of concrete acts capable of communicating clearly to those who share in our mission and in the same milieu, the strength of our faith, the attractiveness of our brotherhood and fidelity to our Guanellian charism. This charism invests us with the responsibility of spiritual fatherhood in relation to men and women of today, especially the least among them.

The Church at the beginning of this third millennium of Christianity entrusted to consecrated persons the task, more urgent than ever before, “of spreading the spirituality of communion, first of all in their internal life and then in the ecclesial community, and even beyond its boundaries, by opening or continuing a dialogue in charity, especially where today's world is torn apart by ethnic hatred or senseless violence” (John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata* 51).

For this reason the Chapter confreres, having noted the difficulties that still exist in living meaningful fraternal relationships in many of our communities, feel obliged to reintroduce with great hope, in the next six years, the inestimable value of the spirituality of communion. This requires both spiritual persons formed interiorly by the God of merciful love and communion and mature communities where the spirituality of communion is the law of life.

The Chapter confreres intend to offer to the entire Congregation some concrete guidelines to follow and, as an authoritative point of reference, the words of Blessed John Paul II: “A spirituality of communion indicates above all the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us.” Moreover, “A spirituality of communion also means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as ‘those who are a part of me.’” From this principle there derives with cogent logic some consequences for feeling and

acting: “This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship. A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a ‘gift for me’. A spirituality of communion means, finally, to know how to ‘make room’ for our brothers and sisters, bearing ‘each other's burdens’ (Gal 6:2) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy. Let us have no illusions: unless we follow this spiritual path, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose” (*Novo Millennio Inuente* 43). The Chapter confreres, therefore, urge the communities of the Servants of Charity to include at least the following elements in their community project:

- To revitalize the experience of God and service to our brethren in order to bear courageous witness to the foundations of our vocation and mission to men and women of today: God and the poor;
- To favor time for meditation, shared *Lectio Divina*, Eucharistic adoration and fraternal correction;
- To deepen our understanding and appreciation of the charismatic value of the fatherhood of God as the source of our spirituality, as well as the call to form a family in Christ with the laity and our poor;
- To feel united with one another by the bond of charity and, above all, to rediscover our spiritual fatherhood: as fathers of the poor, fathers among ourselves in mutual, benevolent and fraternal acceptance and in the exercise of the Guanellian preventive method, fathers of those whose paths we cross throughout our journey and of those who collaborate with us in our mission, fathers of the young in an ever more secularized culture far adrift from God, and fathers committed to generating in faith and service men and woman in the “Court of the Gentiles.”

In fact, the experience of God and Christian witness cannot exist except within a living experience of brotherhood. As in a symphony, everyone places in common what they possess and experience, but they cannot recognize each other as brothers unless they first recognize one another as children of the same Father in heaven and of the same charismatic father, the Founder, and of the same Mother, the Church and the Congregation.

(*Synthesis of the work of the 1st Commission*)

1 *Lectio Divina* and Fraternal Correction

(Motion)

“If the Church is to reveal her true face to today's world, she urgently needs such fraternal communities, which, by their very existence, contribute to the new evangelization” (*Vita Consecrata* 45). Aware of this fact and accepting the Pope's

invitation that: “the *Lectio Divina* must hold a central place, immediately after the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharistic liturgy in the life of a consecrated person,” the Provincial Superiors and those of the Delegation, with their respective Councils, appreciate the following aspects of the Province’s/Delegation’s project:

- The practice of *Lectio Divina* as an instrument which enables the confreres to preserve, not only personally but also as a community, their condition as disciples who follow the Lord, and let him continually teach and guide them throughout their lives.
- The exercise of *fraternal correction* as an expression of the fraternal style of sharing in faith, of being disciples and of “strengthen[ing] the bonds of fraternity and of love he [our Founder] has laid down for us in the ‘Preventive Method’” (C. 13). All of this is done in the awareness that this mutual love demonstrates in a strong and visible way the fact that “we who evangelize are evangelized.”

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a. The Provincial Superiors and those of the Delegation, with their respective Councils, should offer the concrete experience of *Lectio Divina* prayed in common, make sure that *Lectio Divina* and fraternal correction are regularly practiced in the community, and in dialogue with the local community confirm its fruitfulness.
- b. The local community, guided by its Superior, should introduce the practices of *Lectio Divina* and fraternal correction at important moments of community life, including the *Community Meeting* and the *Monthly Retreat*, to educate in discernment, that is, in the ability to evaluate choices, styles of life and orientations, both personal and those of the community, in the light of faith and the Gospel, and to support one another on the path to holiness.

2 Personal and Community Project (Motion)

In order to rekindle and promote the visible and living sign of evangelical communion, to grow in mutual giving, and to offer a credible personal and community witness, in a peaceful atmosphere of sharing in the same mission, we once again emphasize the importance of the community Project. This project is the expression of our life’s plan, with a shared choice of ideals, methodologies and strategies in apostolic service. The community Project also takes into consideration the fact that a proper reliance on lay people for economic and managerial tasks can foster more regular participation of the confreres in community commitments.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a. In the period of initial formation, the formators help the candidate develop a personal Project of Life “as a path leading to the ideal and dynamic tension toward what has not yet been achieved” (RF 76)
- b. In reference to article n. 26 of our Constitutions, the confreres lay out a personal project of life, which is a useful tool for personal growth, for conversion to holiness and for an ever better response to God’s call.
- c. At the beginning of the pastoral year, the Superiors of the communities, with one member of the Provincial Council present where possible, should develop the annual community project, indicating with clarity the vision and mission for the Community to implement in the territory, with special attention given to the Areopagi of the New Evangelization.

3 The Bond of Charity

(Motion)

Our Founder, in various contexts and since the Regulation of 1899, sees the “*Bond of Charity*” as the specific element of the nascent Congregation, to the point of considering it an element of vocational fruitfulness: “We are united principally by the bond of charity. This bond is the strength of the institute, the reason for its progress and perfection.” Our Constitutions identify fraternal Communion as one of the most precious values of our vocation (C. 17). It, therefore, seems important and a priority that the conditions for mutual edification and dialogue, which transcend demographic and cultural differences, be fostered within the community.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The 19th General Chapter requests that the General Council appoint some confreres to study more deeply the following subjects proper to our charism: the “Bond of Charity,” “the Fatherhood of God” and “our spiritual fatherhood.” It will then be the General Council’s task to prepare material to aid in formation on these subjects.

4 Composition of the Communities

(Motion)

“Communities of consecrated life, where persons of different ages, languages and cultures meet as brothers and sisters, are signs that dialogue is always possible and that communion can bring differences into harmony” (*Vita Consecrata* 51).

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The 19th General Chapter requests that the Provincial Superiors and those of the Delegation with their respective Councils, in order to achieve what is expressed in the document *Vita Consecrata*, give special attention to the numerical composition of the Communities, the availability of the each confrere to be in tune with the Project of the Community in which he will be placed, his capacity to balance the needs of the brotherhood with those of apostolic activity, and his age and culture.

5 Establishment of International Communities

(Proposal)

In the perspective of the communion of goods, which identifies the confreres themselves as the greatest treasure to be shared, and with a view to more effective cultural exchanges of the charism, the General Chapter requests the General Council, in dialogue with the Superiors and Councils, both Provincial and of the Delegation, to establish international communities throughout the entire Congregation. This should be done, where appropriate, as early as the initial formation period.

COMMUNITIES THAT ATTRACT WITH THE BEAUTY OF THEIR CHARISM

Our charism inserts us into the great movement of the *Sequela Christi*, which leads us to live the essence of the consecrated life through the evangelical counsels, reproducing Jesus' own lifestyle under the dynamism of the Spirit for an ecclesial mission in today's world, with its socio-cultural contexts and challenges. Starting from this foundation and based on our identity, which is well-defined in our Constitutions, we thought it was important to reflect on the appeal and beauty of our charism, and in this way to put into perspective the community dimension of our life. We would like this dimension to be more evangelical and able to meet the challenges of our future and of evangelization, so that by its visible and viable style which continues to be proposed, it may fascinate, attract and call.

Beginning precisely from this fundamental perspective, we feel the need to fuel the fire of the great passion that is the driving force of our consecrated life as Guanellians. For this reason, we indicate three essential directions to be pursued:

1. The spirit of the Congregation and its formative unity;
2. Consecration in its visibility and viability;
3. Care for the Guanellian vocation, especially in the phases of initial discernment, postulancy and the definitive decision.

More specifically:

- Attention to initial and permanent formation is considered an essential priority, so that the attraction to the Guanellian vocation, the sign of our fraternity and spiritual fatherhood, and the joy of serving will not be diminished in the Church.
- In order to make the beauty and prophetic potential of consecration shine forth, we need to recover the evangelical radicalness of the *Sequela Christi*, by decisively directing ourselves to a more authentic living out of the three evangelical counsels, by a brotherhood capable of restoring the warmth of familiarity, and by a service of charity. Through love of Christ and closeness to the poor, we ourselves become poor with the poor and ready to evangelize them, while at the same time allowing ourselves to be evangelized by them.
- It is necessary to dedicate special attention to youth ministry, to the pastoral care of the Guanellian vocation (both the ordained ministry and the consecrated brotherhood), and to the younger confreres. We became aware of this need, having

painfully noted both the decrease in the number of vocations in some areas where the Congregation is present and the phenomenon of confreres leaving the Congregation in others, as well as the difficult balance between the demands of consecration, community life and commitment to works, which at times discourages the younger confreres.

(*Synthesis of the work of the 2nd Commission*)

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6 Primary Attention to Formation (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly requests that the General Council be an “animating nucleus” for the whole Congregation. In this regard, within the powers and duties set forth in the Constitutions (n. 120), it should give primary attention to formation.

7 *Ratio Formationis* as a Point of Reference (Motion)

The Chapter requests that the General Council, in order to ensure that *Ratio Formationis* become increasingly more a point of reference for guaranteeing unity and formative continuity, continue to offer opportunities for understanding and implementing the text.

8 Formation of the Formators (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly requests that the Provincial Councils and the Delegation Council – in dialogue with the General Council – invest more adequate resources in the formation of formators, ensuring that passion and a formative attitude be found in the designated confreres, and that they arrive at a personal and academic preparation in accordance with the anthropology of the Guanellian vocation delineated in *Ratio Formationis*.

9 The Prophetic Relevance of Our Consecration (Motion)

Holding to the conviction that the New Evangelization is for all of us a call to holiness, as an expression of the visibility and viability of the consecrated life and the attraction of the Guanellian charism, the Chapter Assembly requests:

a. That every community regularly review, in its monthly meeting, the concrete ways of expressing its own life of the vows. In particular it should examine the radical, prophetic and evangelizing relevance of our consecration.

b. The confreres or communities, in dialogue with the Major Superiors, in the various Congregations throughout the world, should promote meaningful expressions of evangelical radicalness (poor with the poor), where the cry of the poorest is ever louder, and where our response of solidarity can be manifested in greater generosity, courage and strength.

10 Vacations for the Confreres

(Motion)

The Chapter, considering the growing number of people living their apostolic commitment outside of their own Nation or Province, and those who study in international seminaries, requests that the Provincial Superior, in dialogue with the confrere's Provincial of origin and with the consent of its Council, – in developing guidelines and norms regarding vacations – keep in mind the criteria of equity and of witness to poverty.

11 Visibility of Our Witness

(Motion)

Aware that the coherent and faithful response to one's vocation as a consecrated Guanellian is the primary responsibility of each confrere, content to belong to his own community, the Chapter requests Superiors at various levels to keep watch over the visibility of personal and community witness and, if necessary, to intervene with clarity and determination:

- In correcting abuses in the use of social media and motor vehicles;
- In preventing or modifying the tendency to be frequently absent from the community and from apostolic responsibilities to meet the needs of family or by personal choice;
- In prohibiting attitudes and lifestyles clearly in contradiction with our public identity of men of God and servants of the poor;
- Constantly encouraging the exercise of ascetic practices as indicated to us by the tradition of the Church and the Congregation;

- Holding up the lives of our saints and the most generous confreres of our religious family as examples in order to encourage the confreres to aim for a high standard of Christian witness.

12 Vocational Planning

(Motion)

The Chapter asks that each Province and the Delegation dedicate particular attention to vocations, promoting awareness of vocations within each local community and corresponding activity on the part of a designated group of confreres. These confreres should collaborate with the communities which welcome those discerning or aspiring to a vocation and should also emphasize the instructions of *Ratio Formationis*.

- a. “The Chapter strongly urges each local community to generate vocations, witnessing to the diakonia of faith and charity with joy, in a fraternal life and apostolic commitment. It requests, therefore, that the annual community project clearly express concrete lines of action for promoting vocations” (excerpt from Chapter 18).
- b. The Province and Delegation, valuing the contribution of those confreres designated more specifically to promote vocations, should annually examine the plans and achievements of each local community. [...]
- c. The group of confreres appointed by the Provincial Superior is configured as "an operational team for the coordination of youth and vocational ministry" in the local area extended throughout the Province/Delegation. In particular, this group provides assistance in activities [...], with more specific attention to the human dimension and charismatic aspect.

13 Theological Seminaries

(Motion)

The General Chapter affirms the significance of the theological seminaries situated in the four socio-cultural contexts in which the Congregation is present: Kinshasa for Africa, Rome for Europe, Chennai for India and Bogotá for the Iberian-American regions.

Due to their valuable contribution to the formation of the confreres for perpetual profession and/or holy orders, as well as the possibilities they offer for acquiring the necessary theological and pastoral expertise, the Chapter Assembly proposes that the General Council continue to ensure these seminaries of their special care and attention. Consistent with the available economic resources and a numerical estimation of those

able to attend these seminaries, the General Council will assume the costs of any potential expansion deemed necessary.

14 Theological Seminary of Rome (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly,

- To emphasize the value of interculturalism,
 - To offer candidates of different geographical areas a wider range of theological perspectives provided by the variety of Rome's pontifical universities,
 - And to enjoy the benefit of proximity to Guanellian sites,
- considers that it should develop the Theological Seminary "Bishop Aurelio Bacciarini" in Rome, into a crossroads of European, Latin American, African, Asian and North American cultures.

In this regard the Chapter Assembly,

- a. Asks that each Provincial Superior and/or Delegate ensure the presence of an adequate number of confreres belonging to their Province and on the way to the definitive stages of their vocations, so as to guarantee features of interculturalism;
- b. And requests the assurance that the formation team - as far as possible, and according to the "resources of formators" available - assumes an intercultural physiognomy.

15 Fourth Year of Theology (Motion)

Regarding the phase of immediate preparation for the final stages of formation, the Chapter Assembly requests that every confrere normally conclude the cycle of studies in preparation for ordination, including the so-called fourth year with its pastoral-charismatic aspect, except in cases in which - due to the needs of the Province or Congregation – the Major Superiors have a confrere pursue a specialization in theology.

16 Specializations and Studies (Motion)

With regard to the possibility of studying or specializing in the theological and charismatic fields, or heading in the pedagogical-professional direction, the Chapter asks that the Provincial Superiors and those of the Delegation, in accordance with the respective Councils,

- a. Evaluate whether or not to grant such an option;
- b. Specify whether such specialization or studies should begin immediately upon the completion of the first cycle of theological studies or after a period of having already been placed in an apostolate;
- c. Decide which nations and houses of formation present therein are most suitable for the expertise they intend the confrere to acquire.

17 International Postulancy (Proposal)

The Chapter requests that the postulant confrere, in accordance with the Provincial Superior/Delegate, pursue his apostolic experience even in cultures other than that of his own country, provided that such an experience is always commensurate with what the candidate can assimilate and do.

COMMUNITIES THAT ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF THE MISSION IN NEW AREOPAGI

We hope that each project of the Province meets the challenge of the missions taking place in the various cultural contexts, inspired by the introductory principles of this Chapter: dynamism of discernment, trust in Divine Providence, old and new areopagi and ultimately, the slogan “think globally and act locally.”

1. Dynamism of Discernment

Before undertaking new initiatives or beginning works and programs, the Province should always make sure that the confreres live in a permanent state of prayer, discernment and listening. The most important and significant work demanded of them at this time is to recognize the primacy of the Holy Spirit as inspirer and guide, especially in key decisions.

Discernment means reading history through the eyes of faith as spiritual men who know how to interpret the concrete situations of their personal lives, the life of the community and the Province. This is done beginning always with the Word of God and with the same openness of spirit that the early Christian communities possessed. So, before carrying out new projects, it is requested that there be a time of listening, understanding and interpreting, otherwise one will be incapable of producing works/activities, which are the fruit of the Holy Spirit and respond to the needs of today.

2. Trust in Divine Providence

Providence was Fr. Guanella’s security and guiding light during his time of searching and waiting, and it later became the absolute protagonist in his life. It must become for Guanellians of today the source of courage in the face of new challenges. Above all, when one faces uncertainty and uncharted ground, trust in Providence must be even stronger, in imitation of our Founder. “Letting ourselves be led, in the first place, by the needs of the poor means that it is the concrete person, situated and regarded in his needy context, who governs how we are to respond with assistance. Allowing ourselves to be guided by the principle of the Incarnation signifies that we must enter into every milieu with the same spirit and love with which Jesus, through his divine Incarnation, united himself to the human environment in which he lived.” (EN 20, 40).

3. New and Old Areopagi

From the Magisterium's numerous appeals, it is clear that the New Evangelization consists in the Christian's ability to know how to read and decipher new scenarios, which in recent decades have arisen in human history, and to inhabit and transform them into moments of witnessing and proclaiming the Gospel. These scenarios have been identified several times and are social, cultural, economic, political and religious. However for us Guanellians, in addition to these new situations, there are "traditional Areopagi" formed by all the people (workers, volunteers, guests, etc.), who live or work in our centers everyday. As *Lumen Gentium* tells us: "... whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God..." (LG 17). In this way, the Guanellian, whether religious or lay, may recognize the continuous work of the Holy Spirit, the *semina verbi*, in those around him. It seems to us, therefore, that one of the modes of the New Evangelization for us Guanellians is, precisely, the continual discernment of the good, the beautiful and the true that is present in everyone.

4. "Think globally and act locally"

By the expression borrowed from other contexts, we wish to convey the universal nature of charismatic principles, as opposed to the local nature of their concrete expressions, with the mediation of the provincial government united to the leadership of the general one. Analogous to what occurs when the Christian message encounters a new culture, our charism is related to the Gospel in the same way its concrete actualization is related to inculturation. In fact, "in carrying out our service, we care deeply about incarnating our system of life and education in the culture in which we are located. At the same time, we seek to reread the Guanellian charism in the light of history and of local cultures and to actualize it in a specific existential and educational experience..." (PEG 226 and 227).

(Synthesis of the work of the 3rd Commission)

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

18 "The Creativity of Charity"

(Motion)

a. While continuing to maintain the validity of our traditional works, we renew the invitation to broaden the spectrum of charity with new ways of responding to the needs of the poor in a simple and clear-cut manner.

b. Where structures already exist, the religious community should be open to the simplest services, realizing what Fr. Guanella, in Regulation FsC of 1899, called “Alla carità” [“Towards charity”] (cf. *Scritti per le Congregazioni [Writings for the Congregations]*, vol. IV, pp. 1064-1065).

19 Interprovincial Collaboration (Motion)

The Chapter, bearing in mind the magnitude of the horizons of the mission conceived and proposed by the Founder and conscious of the current increasing exchange of confreres, requests the following:

a. Continued efforts to promote interprovincial collaboration in formation initiatives, which favor both sensitivity and availability to interculturality, as well as openness to mission projects in international contexts.

b. Drawing upon a proposal of previous Chapters regarding Italian as the official language of the Congregation, as a means for communicating and accessing the sources of our Tradition, this language is to be taught in formation programs as early as the Postulancy.

20 Shared Responsibility for the Mission (Fsmp and Guanellian Cooperators)

(Proposal)

The Chapter, in accordance with the spirit of the Constitutions (n. 77), requests that the call to collaboration issuing from the Guanellian mission projects already underway, both on the part of the Daughters of Saint Mary of Providence and the Cooperators, be kept in mind, as far as possible. In this regard, the invitations coming from Romania and Germany are particularly noted.

21 FSMP

(Proposal)

We believe that the presence of both Congregations together may be an asset to the local Church and the territory, as an expression of motherhood and fatherhood in service of the charism and in favor of wounded humanity. Drawing upon the spirit of Proposal 37 of CG 18, we hope, where appropriate and possible, to work together in communion and collaboration.

22 Cooperators

(Motion)

Guanellian Cooperators, by virtue of their common calling to the charism, share with us the responsibility of the mission. Due to the fact that they belong to the Guanellian Family, they deserve our closeness, assistance, formation and support.

- a. Taking up motion 40 of CG18, we reaffirm the following: "The Chapter Fathers invite the confreres of the individual communities to explicitly propose to the laity the vocation of Guanellian Cooperator and to be committed to helping them in discernment and formation."
- b. We confirm what was affirmed in the document of MLG, *Fare della Carità il cuore del mondo* [*Making Charity the Heart of the World*]: "Cooperators are an expression of the high standard which lay members of the MLG can reach in their journey of sharing and participating in the charism."
- c. The 19th General Chapter encourages Guanellian Cooperators to work on a national level and to receive civil recognition where it has not yet been obtained in order to manage their own works.
- d. We hope they will become a worldwide organization within the next six years.
- e. May opportunities be created for an exchange and collaboration with Cooperators, FSMP and Young Guanellians for an organic and more effective shared vocational ministry.
- f. The General Chapter, drawing from Motion 3^a (Formation of Cooperators in the Charism) and proposal 40 of CG 18 (The Vocation of Guanellian Cooperators), urges the Province and Delegation to support the Association of Guanellian Cooperators toward greater autonomy in formation.

To this end, may they be committed to organizing a school for the formators of Cooperator groups in order to grow in knowledge of the charism and make the Association more autonomous with respect to the two Congregations.

23 Samaritan Parish

(Motion)

- a. Our parishes are increasingly identified as "Samaritan parishes," promoting experiences and "micro-services," which get the laity involved in focusing attention on the new poverty often hidden within the very fabric of the parish itself.

b. We reiterate what was said about the “Guanellian parish” in CG17 and CG18. Where a parish and a work are both present, the Guanellian project should be unitary and their annual planning should be done in common (see Motion 34 of CG18).

24 Formation of the Laity

(Motion)

The Church and the example of our holy Founder have indicated to us the duty of having the laity participate in our charism and mission. Recognition of the holiness of Fr. Guanella has strengthened the conviction that we possess a rich charismatic and spiritual heritage. This requires more courage on our part and a commitment to make this heritage known and lived, especially by the lay people who collaborate in various ways with our mission, so that they may enrich it in living out their lay vocation.

a. May concrete initiatives be put in place for the formation of lay cooperators, who are necessary for the management, administration and organization of our works.

b. The workers of our houses should follow the criteria and procedures for decision making, set forth in the booklet “*Con fede, amore e competenza*” [“With Faith, Love and Competence”], which requires those working directly with the guests to share the values of our charism with them and those working in management to adopt the Guanellian charism and pedagogy.

25 MLG

(Motion)

Having reviewed both of the General Councils’ approval of the document “*Fare della Carità il cuore del mondo*” [“Making Charity the Heart of the World”], we feel the need to promote this document further. Moreover, we are aware of the fact that MLG is not a superstructure which obscures the organization and identity of the already existing groups, but the coordination of an interprovincial or international service aimed at living the Guanellian spirit in a unified way. We request that MLG continue to be promoted in all of the concrete realities of the “*Opera Don Guanella*,” encouraging it to take root in our communities.

26 Approval of the Directory for Associates

(Motion)

The 19th General Chapter approves the “Directory for the Associates of the Congregation of the Servants of Charity” and proposes it *ad experimentum* for the next six years.

27 The Community, Organizer and Evangelizer

(Proposal)

The religious community carries out a leadership and managerial service for the work and, at the same time, evangelizes with its presence among the poor. In the last few years lay people have become particularly numerous in our houses and have also been entrusted with ever more important duties. These include the duties of director of activities, coordinator of services and didactic director. In addition, at times, even if with effort, they have been given more responsibility in the administration of the house. By virtue of the gift of the charism of charity, we must help them feel responsible with us in the management of charitable works. Gradually they will be integrated and formed in the awareness of this vocation (but even before this, it is the principal work of the religious community to gather the seeds of the Guanellian charism based on a discernment, so that the New Evangelization may be achieved through the exercise of the grace of the Holy Spirit in these same laity, in accordance with current theological reflection).

a. Our religious communities are called not only to be an organizational presence, but a core charismatic and evangelizing support and presence. In order to guarantee our charismatic service as Guanellian religious, it is hoped that the Province and Delegation ensure the quantitative and qualitative presence of the religious community in the Works.

b. The Province and Delegation are encouraged to experiment with new forms of managing our Works, based on the diversity both of the contexts in which we operate and of our suitable religious personal resources, while maintaining the style of a supporting core community.

c. In the event that managerial, organizational or leadership functions are entrusted to lay people, the Local Superior (in some cases the Provincial Superior) should always be ultimately responsible for the activities and work. He should know how to involve, in the spirit of true common responsibility, the various systems necessary for the organization and proper functioning of our charitable services: work council, managerial team and coordinating committee.

28 Volunteer Work

(Proposal)

We believe that Guanellian volunteer work is a wonderful opportunity for evangelization in addition to that of service. Therefore, we hope that the confreres will continue to direct their attention to the volunteers, with a commitment to both forming and supporting them.

COMMUNITIES INVOLVED IN THE ECONOMIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

Aware that we live in a historical global context characterized by a strong demand for meaning, we Guanellian religious, in communion with the Church and with all men of goodwill, feel called to make the Gospel values visible and accessible to men and women of today (New Evangelization).

We find it necessary to readjust our way of administering the goods that God the Father's Providence bestows upon us, as well as the Congregation's governing forms, in order to give greater significance to our community's presence in mission.

We hold particularly dear to us the following evangelical values:

1. Closeness to the poor;
2. Communion of goods;
3. Collaboration of the laity in the service of charity; and
4. The sense of feeling that we are citizens of the world.

1. Closeness to the poor

The goods, which God's Providence and human foresight (agreements with the State, fund raising activities, etc...) place in our hands, do not belong to us, but to the poor; all our concern and solicitude is aimed at truly placing the greatest number of economic resources at the disposition of the integral advancement of those who have been left behind in life.

All of our religious communities aim for economic self-sufficiency and seek to renew their form of community poverty so that the religious vow be credible and visible in the various social contexts in which they live.

It motivates us to be with the poor, even to the point of "dirtying our hands" to serve them, entrusting some more administrative and managerial aspects to lay people who are permeated by the Guanellian charism, aware that they "evangelize" us; they help us translate charity into concrete forms that correspond to their actual needs and keep our

union with Christ alive (Mt 25). We believe the criterion of closeness to the poor, in the context of their lives, is necessary for discerning on a case by case basis if it is opportune for our service to be configured to a looser form or one that is more structured and complex.

2. The Communion of Goods

Let us be enlightened by the witness of the apostles Peter and John in the famous episode relating their encounter with the lame man at the entrance to the Temple of Jerusalem called the Beautiful Gate, which was the theme of our Chapter's work: "I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ..." (Acts 3:6). In addition, let us be committed to cultivating a "culture of the gift, of gratuity and communion," which we draw from the Gospel. We feel it is important to restructure our economic decisions around these values.

We believe it is necessary, in this perspective, to ensure the governing bodies of the Congregation (General Curia, Province and Delegation) a fund for the management of activities tied to these same bodies or to sustain particular projects of charity or face emergency situations. Nonetheless, we feel an urgent need to revise the current contribution system and are committed to identifying and trying new ways.

3. The Laity's Collaboration in the Service of Charity

In order to evangelically administer and manage the goods of Providence, we wish to place ourselves within the perspective of the laity's call to share in our concern and organization for serving the poor as Guanellian religious. It is a call which originates in Baptism and goes beyond sharing in order to reach forms of responsibility, even direct, which mutual esteem and trust, necessary community discernment, and dialogue with the Congregation's governing bodies can help us identify. Professionalism in the administrative and managerial fields, which the laity can offer to us as religious is a treasure of which we cannot deprive ourselves. We must consider this a gift of Providence. The administrative management of our charitable works can reap many benefits and take on new forms with respect to our tradition.

4. Citizens of the World

In relation to the globalized context in which we live, we feel it is necessary that the Congregation's governing style, at all levels, be marked by a new system of thought and action, which we find well expressed in the inseparable pair: "think globally act locally." Attentiveness to the global arena must not occur at the cost of attention to the local situation. In this perspective, community discernment must lead us to rethink the composition of local communities in terms of design in order make them more and more "international"; to constantly keep in check the validity of key decisions regarding the

incorporation of governmental structures on a macro level (Provinces) and on a micro level (local treasuries); to restructure the role of the General Councilors according to the needs of the times; and to also review the norms of law proper to our Institute (Regulations) in order to achieve a greater unity of direction and operational effectiveness.

(Summary of the Work of the 4th Commission)

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

29 The Distinction between an Accounting of the Work or Activities and that of the Religious Community (Motion)

In order that witness to the vow of poverty be more transparent, the General Chapter requests that in every religious community the reporting of accounts be instituted in a distinct and separate form from that of the activities (Work or Parish). The Provincial Treasuries should furnish the community suitable means and proper methods to make this directive ever more functional and effective.

30 Preparation and Formation of the Confreres in the Administrative Management of the Works

(Motion)

In order to help the religious community live religious consecration and community life, even from an economic standpoint, the General Chapter requests that Superiors and Councilor's of the Province and Delegation take steps to prepare and train some confreres in economic and administrative management.

31 Toward the Economic Independence of the Provinces, Delegation and Houses

(Proposal)

In order to continue to ensure that our poor live with dignity and to protect, to the extent possible, the jobs of those working in our houses, the General Chapter requests the Provinces, Delegation and each community to commit themselves to the pursuit of economic and financial independence, calling forth the necessary creativity of all, both religious and laity, and to develop and adhere to an economic and financial plan which would ensure the balance between expenditures and revenues.

32 Alternative Economic Resources (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly converts Proposal n. 54 of the 18th General Chapter into a motion:

- a. It views the establishment, in Houses, Provinces and in the Delegation, of work groups composed of religious and laity, whose purpose is to obtain resources, both locally and abroad, also through the confreres' activities, twinning programs, sponsorships, Pious Works and similar activities;
- b. It believes that it is licit, when the opportunity presents itself and after having received input from the local community, for some real estate, when no longer needed for the institutional purposes of charitable works, to be earmarked as a wellspring of economic resources through the commercial management of structures entrusted to third parties. The management should be directly under the authority of the Major Superiors and the initiative should clearly express a charitable end in favor of the poor;
- c. It finds it favorable, when not contrary to local culture and laws, to indirectly create and manage commercial activities, as long as they are exclusively subject to the authority, organization and decision of the Major Superiors, even with regard to the use of derived revenues.

33 Relationship between Parishes, Provinces and the Delegation (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly confirms Motion n. 50 of the 18th General Chapter, which regards the *Relationship between Parishes, Provinces and the Delegation*. Aware that the parish is not entrusted to any individual confrere, but to the Congregation, with its consequent responsibilities, the pastors working in the parishes whose buildings are not the property of the Congregation, in addition to the Council of the House, are obliged to present in writing to the Provincial Council all plans for renovation and extraordinary interventions, accompanied by blueprints, estimates, economic funding, time frame, and finally, even the financial statements.

34 Economy and Administration (Motion)

The Chapter Assembly confirms Motion n. 51 of the 18th General Chapter, regarding the subject of the *Economy and Administration of the Houses*. It requests the Provincial

Superiors and those of the Delegations to plan the economic policy for the next three years and to ensure that it is communicated to and implemented in all the communities.

35 Economic and Administrative Handbook (Proposal)

The General Chapter invites the Provinces to adopt the Economic and Administrative Handbook, developed by the General Treasurer, as a technical way of standardizing the administration of goods and organization of activities in the Congregation's communities and works. Each Province, through its own Treasurer, may adapt the Handbook to its own situation and those of the Nations included in it, in a way that it may be adopted in all the houses and communities *ad experimentum* in the next six years.

36 The Calculation of Contributions to the General Curia at a "Fixed Quota" (Motion)

The General Chapter reaffirms the value of holding goods in common as a unique way of living and not only for purposes of economic survival ("together it costs less"), but above all because of its significance and witness ("together it is more beautiful, true and just). For this reason it is fitting that all the Provinces and the Delegation of the Congregation participate in contributing to the General Curia. Taking note of the request submitted by confreres and Provincial Chapters to change the current method of calculating and collecting contributions, the General Chapter has decided that in the next six years a new contribution system known as a "fixed quota" may be tried out. We describe it here as follows:

- a. First of all it is based on the basic needs of the General Curia, which is established annually in relation to the financial statement and to the volume of contributions on income from inheritances or legacies from the previous year;
- b. Applying the provisions of n. 391 of our Regulations, Provinces should contribute the amount determined in this way to the General Curia;
- c. Provinces, in dialogue with the communities, should identify the fairest and most suitable forms of contribution to apply to each house, in order to obtain the "fixed quota" to be paid to the General Curia and the amount needed to satisfy its basic needs.
- d. Three years after the new system goes into effect, the General Council, in dialogue with the Superiors of the Province and of the Delegation, will evaluate it for possible improvement.

37 The Calculation of Contributions Made to Provinces and the General Curia from Inheritances and Legacies
(Motion)

The General Chapter establishes (Regulations n. 391) that 15% of net income from inheritances and legacies be contributed to the General Curia and another 15% to the Province or Delegation.

38 The Calculation of Contributions Made to the Provinces and the General Curia on Income from the Sale of Real Estate
(Motion)

In the case of the sale of real estate that is no longer needed, the General Chapter, in reference to the Decree of the Superior General and his Council (Prot. 12.02.09 del 7/02/2009), which modifies in part n. 366 of the Regulations, establishes (n. 391 of the Regulations) that the following distribution of proceeds be applied:

- a. In the case of a complete cessation of activity and a community, net income from the sale shall be divided in half between the General Curia and the Province;
- b. In the case of the partial sale of real estate of a house or community, which continues its activity, 50% of the proceeds from the sale shall be distributed to the House or Community, 25% to the General Curia and another 25% to the Province.

39 Indemnity of Debit Accrued by Italian Provinces for Overdue Contributions to the General Curia
(Motion)

In agreement with the policy of “debt relief” implemented on the occasion of the Canonization of the Founder by two Italian Provinces in favor of their respective houses for overdue contributions, the General Chapter strongly urges the General Council to apply a total “indemnity” of the debt incurred for contributions accrued up to December 31, 2012 by the Houses of the Sacred Heart Province and the Roman Province of Saint Joseph.

40 Entrustment to the Laity of Responsibilities and the Management of Economic and Administrative Affairs
(Motion)

The General Chapter considers it fitting to entrust to knowledgeable and trustworthy lay people the administrative and economic management of some of our houses, ensuring them of the necessary support and of a confrere to whom they may refer. In this way, even these houses or activities entrusted to the laity can actually be considered directly managed by the Congregation.

41 Entrustment of Economic and Administrative Supervision to Competent Persons

(Proposal)

Reintroducing Proposal n. 57 of the 18th General Chapter, the Chapter Assembly finds it opportune to entrust to a competent administrator (religious or lay) the supervision of the treasury and administrative offices of neighboring houses or those in the same area.

42 Role of the General Councilors

(Motion)

The Chapter Assembly confirms Motion n. 44 of the 18th General Chapter regarding the Role of the General Councilors.

a. Though the General Council is free to nominate some Councilors responsible for certain areas of activity, it is requested that preference be given to the Councilor of the respective geographical area. His duties should include the following:

1. To dedicate more time to staying in the area entrusted to him;
2. To maintain a close relationship in harmony with the Provincial Councils and those of the Delegation;
3. To transmit and promote the values of the General Chapter and the plans of the General Council;
4. To participate, above all, in the Province's and Delegation's planning and evaluation periods;
5. To update the General Council on the situation and problems of its area;
6. To resolve by mandate of the Superior General specific problems which may arise.

In turn, the Superiors of the Province or Delegation should promote the work of the General Councilor through an exchange of knowledge about the situation and the problems of the Province, as well as a productive collaboration.

b. It is necessary that the Councilor of a geographic area communicate the times he will be present in his area; to this end the General Council should arrange its calendar, establish the date for its meetings and bring them to the attention of the entire Congregation.

43 General Councilors and Local Responsibilities (Proposal)

The Chapter Assembly, while leaving the General Council free to decide conversely in the case of special situations, for the purpose of ensuring greater availability for the specific organizing role, considers it appropriate for the General Councilor, as provided for by n. 285 and 286 of the Regulations, to normally reside in the same house in which the Superior General lives and not assume duties of responsibility in local communities.

44 Nomination of the Secretary General (Motion)

The 19th General Chapter requests that the Secretary General be nominated by the General Council (and not the General Chapter), either from among the same Council or outside of it, and by a collegial vote of the same General Council.

45 Nomination of the General Treasurer (Motion)

The 19th General Chapter requests that the General Treasurer be nominated by the General Council (and not the General Chapter), either from among the same Council or outside of it, and by a collegial vote of the same General Council.

46 New Provinces Spread across Vast Geographical Areas (Proposal)

The General Council is asked to evaluate, through dialogue with the Provincial Councils and individual communities, the effectiveness of policies and procedures with which new provinces were established and to consider possible modifications.

47 The Participation by Right of the Superior of the Delegation in the General Chapter Depends on the Superior General
(Motion)

The Chapter Assembly provides that the Superior of the Delegation, dependent on the Superior General and his Council, may participate as a member by right in the General Chapter.

48 The Participation by Right of the Superior of the Delegation in the General Chapter Depends on the Provincial Superior
(Motion)

The Chapter Assembly establishes that the Superior of the Delegation, dependent on the Provincial Superior and his Council, may participate as a member by right in the General Chapter.

49 Directory of the Chapters
(Motion)

The 19th General Chapter approves the Directory of the Chapters (edited in July 2012), and adopts it as belonging to the law of the Institute.

50 Economic Report
(Motion)

The 19th General Chapter approves the economic report of the General Treasurer, also in light of the audit and the auditors' contributions.

51 Final Motion (Motion)

The Chapter gives the General Council the task of touching up, refining and modifying in form all the proposals and motions approved by the General Chapter, to promulgate and implement them in the next six years.

52 Motion for the Approval of the Minutes and Adjournment of the 19th Chapter
(Motion)

- a. The Chapter Assembly approves the minutes of the Chapter and mandates the secretaries to create a uniform draft.
- b. The Chapter Assembly, by a show of hands, affirms the official adjournment of the 19th General Chapter of the Servants of Charity.

CONSTITUTIONS AND REGULATIONS

The Chapter, furthermore, wished to reconsider our texts of the Rule (Constitutions and General Regulations) and decided to make some changes and additions to it, in light of its reflection on the New Evangelization.

Essentially, the motivation that led the Chapter to this decision was the need to update our Norms in conformity with the changes that have taken place in the Church and in the world, particularly with regard to:

- The laity's participation in our charism and their involvement in our mission;
- The Congregation's openness to new cultures;
- The evolution of poverty in areas where we are already present with our traditional works and the consequent necessity for the "creativity of charity";
- New areopagi in which to proclaim the Gospel of love;
- New forms of cultural expressions contrary to the Gospel, which call for a more vigorous and visible defense of life and the family.

For the Constitutions: The Chapter approved a number of changes or additions to be submitted to the Holy See for canonical approval.

For the General Regulations: The Chapter authorized the Council to review, with the appropriate Commission, the Regulations, pursuant to the Constitutions and consonant with the above approved changes, including motions approved by previous General Chapters as well.

BALLOT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 19TH GENERAL CHAPTER

On a personal level:

Implementing n. 6 of our Regulations: “Every confrere should meditate periodically on the Constitutions and utilize them for his personal prayer.” It is recommended, for example, during Lent, that in addition to the Constitutions, the confreres read the revision of these points, which the Chapter highlighted for the renewal of our religious life and apostolate.

At the community level:

Every community in its annual planning, and especially in the revisions to be completed at the end of the fiscal year, should take into consideration the various points that the Chapter entrusts to the responsibility of the Local Superior and that of the community itself in order to both examine its faithfulness and encourage the confreres’ commitment to it.

At the level of the governing bodies (Local, Provincial or General Councils and that of the Delegation):

To plan annually (or in appropriate times and ways) what the General Chapter entrusts to the different governing bodies for their implementation. Some special topics proposed by the General Chapter should also be treated on inter-community and interprovincial levels and communicated to the confreres to foster a sense of spiritual unity and real belonging to the Congregation.

In this regard the General Council is committed to an in-depth examination of an annual topic to be offered for the reflection and witness of our religious community.

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God, Provident Father,
You enlighten the entire universe with your presence
and call all of us to cooperate with You
so that every man may receive the gift of Bread and Paradise.
We bless you.

Lord Jesus, Good Samaritan,
You are the model of our consecrated life.
You nourish us at the table of your Word
and of your sacrificed Body
and you send us to serve and evangelize the poor.
We thank you.

Holy Spirit, Love,
You gather the Guanellian family in unity
and sustain the Church in her commitment to the New Evangelization,
inspire and guide our journey
of holiness and evangelical witness.
We invoke you.

Mary, Mother of Divine Providence,
You shine as a star over our future,
help us become joyful supporters of the Guanellian laity
so as to make charity the heart of the world.
We pray to you.

Saint Luigi Guanella, our Founder,
we entrust to your intercession
our life and mission
in this new six year term.
Makes us attentive to the signs of the times
in order to incarnate your charism of charity.
Amen.