INSTITUTE
OF THE BROTHERS OF THE SACRED HEART

Call to a Prophetic Mission

35th General Chapter
Ordinance, Decisions, Information

25 April 2012 - 25 May 2012

General House
Rome
Introduction by the Superior General

Brother José Ignacio Carmona Ollo, s.c.

In introducing the message of the 35th General Chapter of the Institute, I send fraternal greetings to all the brothers and partners in the mission.

The capitular assembly of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart ended on May 25, 2012. Despite the passing of time, the light of faith that illumined us then still shines in our eyes; the fire of love that was kindled in our hearts is ever burning; and the salt that gives taste to our apostolic life in prophetic mission still retains its flavor.

“What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad” (Ps 126:3). We genuinely lived this verse in the daily experience of the chapter. We all felt God’s presence in the prayerful atmosphere, liturgical celebrations, fraternal climate, sincere collaboration, joyful sharing, and mutual respect despite our differences. Attentive to discerning the ways of the Spirit and faithful to the founding charism in our day, we sought to identify the primary recipients of our educational service and how best to meet their needs.

Though nothing is perfect in this world, we may nevertheless be justly proud of what we were able to accomplish, thanks to the presence of the Lord among us. Was God not already present during the preparatory stages of the chapter, in the hearts of each of the brothers and partners in mission, in their prayers and personal reflections, in their fraternal sharing on the principal theme, in their work during the provincial chapters and pre-capitular assemblies, and in their efforts to draft various documents for the general chapter?

Well aware of all the help received, I cannot but give thanks to God. I am also grateful for those who, through their prayers, reflection, and work contributed to the smooth running of the chapter.

In an episode in the life of the prophet Elijah, the Lord was neither in the hurricane nor in the earthquake nor in the fire. It was “in the gentle breeze” that the Lord’s presence was revealed (1 Kgs 19:12). Something similar occurred in our preparation for the chapter and during its deliberations. We discovered the Lord in the humble
silence of the poor, the little ones, and the simple of heart whose thirst for justice has not yet been quenched. We experienced a powerful call to be prophets, to offer to the world our founding charism, whose apostolic dimension is embodied in ministry on behalf of children and youth.

Father André Coindre founded the Institute in 1821 so that, as brothers and partners, we might break the chains of ignorance that shackle children and young people, liberating them to live in dignity at the heart of a more just and caring world. He wanted us to accompany them as spiritual guides in their quest for genuine meaning in life, as they encounter God in the person of Jesus and in his message.

Among the various challenges that the chapter sets before us, we are called to make our mission more prophetic. We will succeed in meeting this challenge to the extent that, faithful to our charism and united in the Heart of Jesus, we develop a more compassionate outlook on children and young people, especially the most rejected, and thus respond to their needs with greater boldness and creativity.

To ensure the prophetic dimension of our life and work, the chapter strongly urged us, brothers and partners, to participate together in a formation in the charism of Father André Coindre for a shared mission. The chapter was no less compelling in its call to promote vocation ministry in order to secure the future of the mission.

In this booklet you will first find a chronicle of the general chapter. There follows the presentation of the chapter’s ordinance, orientations, and decisions, accompanied by comments prepared by the general council. In the third and fourth parts, you will find other decisions of the chapter as well as the commitments of the general council to support, by its service of animation and administration, the implementation of the chapter’s orientations and decisions.

The official text of the chapter encompasses the letter to brothers and partners; the ordinance on a prophetic mission that is both collaborative and enduring; and several administrative decisions and other resolutions. For each of the three aspects of the mission – prophetic, shared, enduring – the chapter issued a call, made a discernment, and proposed a response of commitment.

My firm and sincere hope is that this booklet will be of help to all of us, brothers and partners, as we listen in a spirit of authentic communion to the Lord’s call to a prophetic mission lived out in faithfulness to our charism. Let us discern in prayer and in fraternal dialogue the scope of this mission; let us embrace our commitments by taking the means necessary to fulfill them. May the Hearts of Jesus and Mary obtain for us from the Spirit the light and strength we need to succeed.
Members of the general chapter
7th row: Brs. Jean Élithère Luxama, Julio Alfredo Palacio, Rafael Hernández Lostao, Cuervo Germán Herrera, Louis-André Bellemare, Felipe Álvarez Herranz.
4th row: Brs. Bernard Couvillion, Stéphane Léon Sané, Eusebio Calvo Calvo, R. Carlos Almaraz, René Gallant, Jean-Guy Roy, José Roberto de Carvalho, Dena Donat.
2nd row: Brs. Joseph Rocco, Robert Croteau, André Rémy Koublanou, Simplicio Mupondi, Raphaël Rakotomiandrisoa, Jasmin Houle, Yves Granger.
1st row: Brs. Serge Toupin, Denis Plourde Caron, Jose Ignacio Carmona Ollo, Raymond Hetu, Charles Biagui.
Chronicle of the 35th General Chapter

Preparation

In 2006, the 34th General Chapter invited brothers throughout the Institute to embark upon a pilgrimage of hope. Throughout that journey of communion, a fixed point on the horizon was the 35th General Chapter in 2012.

The general council served as this chapter’s preparation committee. Having consulted the major superiors during the general conference of 2009, the preparation committee fixed the global theme of the chapter: *A Call to a Prophetic Mission*. At the same time, it chose two other subjects related to the general theme: vocation ministry and the common formation of brothers and partners in mission.

The official announcement marked the beginning of a preparatory period in all the local communities and works of the Institute. Brothers and partners in mission were invited to discern the key traits of prophetic mission and to identify the unmet needs of young people within their own social and cultural context. Brothers and partners were also invited to reflect on vocation ministry in light of prophetic mission. Finally, they were asked to undertake a discernment on common formation as brothers and partners in prophetic mission.

The discernment that took place in our local communities and apostolic works continued in the assemblies and chapters of the entities, and ultimately in the pre-chapter assemblies which met in January 2012.

The delegates who convened in Rome thus greatly benefited from the contributions of all sectors of the Institute. The preparation for the general chapter was itself a formation for prophetic mission.

Opening of the chapter

With an invocation of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the 35th General Chapter opened on April 25, 2012, under the presidency of Brother José Ignacio Carmona Ollo, superior general.

The chapter was comprised of 23 ex officio and 27 elected delegates. Among the chapter’s first acts was the election of Brother Yvan Turgeon as moderator of debate. Brothers Joseph Mbissine Ndong and Jean Toora were chosen as secretaries. In keeping with tradition, the three youngest delegates – Brothers Alfredo Julio Palacio, Raphaël Rakotomiandrisoa and Joseph Koudé – were appointed tellers. The coordinating committee, entrusted with the formulation of the daily agenda and the organization of chapter proceedings, consisted of the president, the moderator of debate and four elected members: Brothers Eusebio Calvo, André Cloutier, Raymond Hetu and Serge Toupin.

The chapter adopted the global agenda
recommended by the preparation committee. The delegates also agreed to revisit the ordinances of the General Chapter of 2006 and to consider a number of proposals relating to financial management, the viability of governance structures, the mission of elderly brothers, and prophetic solidarity within the Institute.

**Recollection**

Having organized itself for deliberations, the chapter paused for two days of recollection guided by Brother Sean Sammon, FMS, former superior general of the Marist Brothers. Brother Sean’s presentations touched upon the dynamics of decline and renewal in religious congregations. He described a style of transformational leadership that inspires religious communities with enthusiasm for a common vision of life and mission. He invited the chapter to consider the traits of a healthy religious community rooted in faith, spirituality, mutual support, and a spirit of reconciliation. Br. Sean touched lastly upon the challenge of vocation ministry, leaving the chapter delegates to ponder, “In what ways might you and I need to change if we are to invite young people into our Institutes today? What might the Chapter do to address, once again, the question of vocations?” These presentations and the time dedicated to silence and prayer helped to prepare the chapter members spiritually for the challenging work ahead.

**Report on the state of the Institute**

Following the opening recollection, the Superior General presented his report on the state of the Institute. Br José Ignacio addressed the strengths and weaknesses which the general council had observed during their fraternal visits throughout the Institute. Adequate formation of brothers – for spiritual accompaniment, formation ministry, and the service of authority – was identified as a pressing need. The international session in Rome for brothers preparing for perpetual profession was highlighted as one successful initiative in formation.

The Superior General noted that formation in the founding charism had been a central concern of the general council, as shown through his six circular letters and through the creation of an international team for the promotion of the charism. He emphasized the need for each entity to foster initiatives that allow partners in mission to share in the charism of André Coindre.

Brother José Ignacio highlighted the opening of a new mission in Amatongas, Mozambique, as a response of the Institute to the urgent needs of both a local church and poor children without hope. Brother Paul Montero then offered a presentation which illustrated the powerful impact made by the international team in Amatongas, comprised of Luc Favreau (BRA), Fabian Jongwe (ESA), Ángel Monge (ESP-PER), and Chris Sweeney (NO).
Brother José Ignacio used his report as an opportunity to praise and thank the outgoing general officers, Brother Marcel Gagnon, general secretary, and Brother Giuliano Alleva, general treasurer. He lauded the skill and professionalism which each of these brothers brought to his tasks, as well as their generous availability and fraternal spirit. He also expressed gratitude to the general councilors – Brothers Gaston Lavoie, Paul Montero, Denis Plourde Caron, Charles Biagui – each of whom had brought to the council’s work a spirit of openness, trust, co-responsibility and discretion.

Reports of the entities

The presentation on the mission in Mozambique was followed by reports from each of the Institute’s fifteen provinces and three delegations. Often illustrated with maps and photographs, these presentations inspired the chapter members with the richness of the entities’ fraternal life and the vitality of their mission to children and young people, especially the poor and vulnerable. The reports also highlighted the challenges facing the Institute in respect to aging and diminishment, vocation ministry, initial and ongoing formation, collaboration with partners in mission, and funding of apostolic works.

Prayer and liturgy

Throughout the chapter, delegates and staff members gathered for morning and evening prayer in language groups. Within the chapter hall, Taizé hymns were used to begin each session. These chants enabled the delegates to pray in English, French, Italian, Latin, Portuguese and Spanish. Their beauty and simplicity unfailingly lifted the members’ hearts in prayer.

Brother Nelson Dionne (NE) presided at Eucharist throughout the chapter. Through special liturgies, the chapter members offered thanks to God for the gifts and talents of our outgoing general officers and general councilors. The new general council was welcomed in a Eucharistic celebration and banquet at which members of the general council of the Religious of Jesus and Mary were guests of note.

A Requiem Mass commemorating the 164 brothers who had passed to eternal life since the last general chapter was a dramatic and moving occasion. As the name of each departed confrère was read, a candle was lit in celebration of the light he had brought to the world.
The chapter’s guiding scriptural reference was Christ’s declaration in the Sermon on the Mount that his disciples must be light for the world and salt for the earth. Salt and candles were present throughout the chapter, both in the chapel and the meeting hall. In the closing liturgy, each provincial superior and delegate received salt and a candle to bring to his own entity as symbols of the Institute’s prophetic mission to the world.

The Holy See

Gathering in Rome, the chapter members were especially mindful of the Institute’s communion with the Holy See and the Universal Church. As the chapter opened, the delegates received a letter from João Cardinal Braz Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The Cardinal conveyed the encouragement of the Apostolic See that the Institute continue its mission in the service of the gospel wherever it is present in the world. The Superior General, accompanied by many chapter members, attended the papal audience of May 16th to receive, in the name of the Institute, the cordial greetings and apostolic blessing of Pope Benedict XVI.

The new general administration

The selection of a new general administration was initiated on April 30th with the appointment of an electoral board under the presidency of Brother Marcel Gagnon. Brother Joseph Mbissine Ndong was named secretary and Brothers Joseph Kemtchang Koudé and Raphaël Rakotomiandriasa were appointed tellers.

On May 4th the electoral board led the chapter through a process of discernment that began with the Mass of the Holy Spirit. The chapter members later shared, both in language groups and in full assembly, their expectations of the superior general and councilors in light of the Institute’s call to a prophetic mission. The members then returned to the chapel to pray and, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, to cast nominating ballots for the office of superior general.

Brother José Ignacio Carmona Ollo of the Province of Colombia was subsequently reelected superior general. Declaring that the burden of office could not be borne on the shoulders of one man, but
was possible to carry with the help of God and the support of the brothers, Brother José Ignacio accepted to serve a second term as superior general of the Institute.

In the days that followed, the chapter called Brothers Denis Plourde Caron (AMA), Raymond Hetu (NE), Serge Toupin (CAN) and Charles Biagui (SEN) to serve as general councilors.

To complete the ranks of the general administration, the superior general in council later nominated Brother Augustin Nelson of Haiti for the office of general secretary and Brother Omar Patrick Andriambahoaka of Madagascar for the office of general treasurer. The chapter confirmed these appointments with gratitude for these brothers’ availability to serve the Institute in Rome.

**Study of the chapter’s theme**

The heart of the general chapter’s work was the study of the principal theme, *A Call to a Prophetic Mission*. In turn three members of the preparation committee introduced the three aspects of this theme.

On May 1st, Br Paul Montero initiated the chapter’s study of prophetic mission, grounding this reflection in Article 150 of the Rule, which declares, “We adapt our apostolate of education to the needs of the time and place with clear-sightedness, good sense, and boldness in order to give the best possible response to the Spirit’s calls.”

Prior to the chapter, brothers throughout the Institute had reflected on the prophetic qualities of our founder. Now one brother from each conference – Carlos Almaraz, Louis-André Bellemare, André-Remy Koublanou and Ivy Leblanc – was invited to share the insights he had found in the reports of his conference’s local communities. These brothers highlighted André Coindre’s constant search for the will of God, his concern for juvenile delinquents for whom no one else provided, his faith in the potential of every young person to enjoy a future of happiness and fulfillment, the inclusion of laypeople in the work of the Pieux-Secours, and his preferential option for the poor.

Working both in language groups and in general assembly, the chapter devoted three full days to the Institute’s prophetic response to the most urgent unmet needs of today’s youth. As a first step toward crafting an ordinance, a drafting committee began to synthesize the chapter’s study and to formulate specific proposals.

On May 8th, Brother Denis Plourde Caron introduced the topic of vocation ministry in light of prophetic mission and the renewal of the Institute’s commitment to vocation ministry. Several days later, Brother Charles Biagui initiated the chapter’s deliberations on the common formation of brothers and partners for prophetic mission. In addressing each of these topics, the chapter members reviewed the reports of the pre-chapter assemblies and deliberated both in language groups and
in general assembly. Drafting committees were appointed to develop specific proposals for the chapter’s ordinances and decisions. Brothers Denis and Charles also invited the general chapter to contribute to the revision of the *Formation Guide* of the Institute by offering suggestions for its chapters on vocation ministry and the common formation of brothers and lay partners.

The chapter then appointed a fourth and final redaction committee to synthesize the work of the first three committees on the principal theme. Comprised of Brothers Felipe Álvarez, Joseph Court, Bernard Couvillion, André-Remy Koublanou, and Jean-Guy Roy, this committee gave form and structure to what became the general chapter’s ordinance, decisions and orientations for prophetic mission in the Institute.

### Financial administration

Beginning May 15th, the general chapter addressed the finances of the general administration, funding for solidarity, and the formation of brothers for the responsible stewardship of assets. The outgoing general treasurer, Brother Giuliano Alleva, presented a comprehensive review of the general administration’s accounts over the preceding six years. Brother Gaston Lavoie introduced the general council’s proposal for the financing of the general administration in the coming six years. Brother Gaston affirmed that the existing *per capita* levy remained a viable system. Nevertheless, even with a 10% increase in the levy, the diminishing membership in those provinces paying the highest amount *per capita* would produce, by 2016-17, a net decrease in revenue. The Institute’s income in Italy, however, was expected to compensate for the projected reduction in income from *per capita* contributions.
Letter to the Institute

Toward the end of the general chapter, its members drafted a message to brothers and partners throughout the Institute. The chapter affirmed their prophetic gifts and encouraged them in the renewal of their prophetic response to the world’s most vulnerable youth. The 35th General Chapter of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart came to a close with these words of encouragement to all the brothers and partners in mission:
Letter to brothers and partners in the mission

Brothers and Partners,

From the four corners of the world, we gathered in General Chapter in a spirit of discernment and renewal. The Holy Spirit led us, through much exchange, to imagine future thrusts for our mission, which we pray will become more prophetic. We are aware of the great challenges which our provinces and delegations are facing throughout the world, but we are confident that God is walking by our side and is constantly urging us to transform our world so it can radiate greater interdependence and brotherhood.

Jesus reminds us that the Reign of God is already breaking through and that he counts on us to bring it to fulfillment despite our hesitancy and our limitations. As Prophet par excellence, he proclaimed to us with power: “You are the salt of the earth … You are the light of the world.” With those forceful words, he urged us forward in quest of renewal and prophetic initiatives for the future.

In assembly, we admitted our limitations, our apprehensions, and our fears about focusing our mission on the new needs of youth. Inspired by Andre Coindre’s charismatic and prophetic example, we tried to bring to light the most pressing needs of today’s young people. Almost everywhere on the planet, hurting youth are making cries of distress. They are calling us to be a prophetic presence to them. The words and actions of Andre Coindre keep pleading with us to stop and look in a new way upon young people whom no one else will help. They are there for us. We are here for them.

Through his Spirit, the Lord spoke to us clearly. He put these words in our heart:

“Set your fears aside. The salt I’m talking about is already a part of you. It is a precious gift for the Reign of God. It gives taste and value to all you are and to all you do in your different works for youth. It is up to each of you to be creative and not let your salt lose its savor.

“As for my light, it’s still shining out from your founder’s zeal for young people. It is the fire of his passion to rescue children and youth from destruction, to surround them with attention, and to help them live out their dreams and their hopes.

“May his fire burn everywhere in your institute so it can illuminate, purify, and renew your mission among marginalized youth.”
The fruit of our prayer, which enlightened all phases of the Chapter, and of our many hours of exchange, was an increasing desire to rediscover the prophetic dimension of our *Rule of Life* and of the mission which it so eloquently calls us to renew.

May the ordinance which you will later receive take hold like a grafted branch on the tree of the Institute and bear fruit that will nourish us on the way of radical brotherhood with Jesus.

In closing, we wish to thank you for your numerous messages of encouragement and your fervent prayers. We felt close to you, one in heart and spirit.

Your brothers, members of the General Chapter of 2012

The chapel of the Provincial House in Lomé, Togo (AFO)
Auxiliary Staff
3rd Row: Brothers Marcel Brière, Jean Toora, Jean-Pierre Phaneuf, Nelson Dionne, Robert Boucher, Bernardo De Amicis
2nd Row: Brothers Ángel Ibarzábal, Roger Bossé, Yvan Turgeon, Antonio López García-Nieto, Joseph Mbissine Ndong, Léon Lussier
Front Row: Brothers Tomás López Lamán, André Laflamme, Laurent Bérubé, Célestin Gnabri, Jesús Ortigosa García.
Absent: Mrs. Daniela Persia

New General Officers
Br. Augustin Nelson
Secretary
Br. Omar Patrick Andriambahoaka
Treasurer
ORDINANCE

That the whole Institute — brothers, local communities, partners in mission, and educational teams — commit itself with renewed determination and in a spirit of ongoing conversion to highlight the prophetic dimension of its mission.

That, in order to develop this prophetic dimension in prayerful discernment inspired by the charism of Father André Coindre, the Institute re-envision how its mission is expressed in light of the urgent needs of young people for whom no one else is concerned.

That those responsible for animation and administration at every level call forth and encourage initiatives which will

- revitalize the prophetic mission of works and communities;
- form brothers and partners together in the prophetic dimension of their apostolate; and
- promote vocations by inviting young people to encounter Jesus and, together with the brothers, to be in close solidarity with marginalized children and youth.
The chapter invited us to bring out the prophetic dimension of our mission. Its call is addressed to all those who support the mission of the Institute, that is to say, each brother, whatever his age, and each partner in mission.

We are called to “highlight the prophetic dimension” of our mission, which implies underscoring, accentuating and strengthening it.

It is the responsibility of us all to progress towards this goal “with renewed determination.” In no way does this constitute a rejection of our present commitment to the mission. We are well aware that we can always do better, but we must certainly not consider the call of the chapter as a criticism of a lack of dedication to the mission or a failure to achieve expected results.

This call is born of a zeal for everything that is of God. It is also born of the realization that we are deeply loved by God, and in response we desire to love him more and more. To love is to renew and to increase our love day by day. The one who sets off to reach the summit of a mountain knows the climb that awaits him. This is what is meant by the expression “with renewed determination.”

Our commitment to strengthen our prophetic mission will come to nothing without a spirit of conversion. Authentic conversion implies a change of path or direction. Therefore, to attain our objective, personal and institutional change is essential.

Personal change steadfastly aims for the glory of God and the welfare of all children rather than our own personal interests. In other words, it consists in finding our own well-being in the service of God and neighbor.

Given our innate weakness, we are often tempted to turn in upon ourselves: our comfort zones, our gratification, our opinions, our things, our plans, etc. The desire for personal glory leads us to think that we are the owners and masters, when in reality we are called to be disciples of Jesus, the sole Lord and Master, the Prophet of prophets, who says of himself: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.” (Lk 4:18)

Institutional change will entail revisiting the direction of our organization and our present works in order to accentuate the prophetic quality of their mission. This emphasis could involve giving up some of our existing apostolic works in order to take on new ones.

Personal and institutional transformation will allow us to update the expression of our mission, to center it with renewed passion and dedication on the present-day needs of young people.

This kind of change does not derive from whim or the desire to be trendy. To discover where we ought to exercise our mission today and how to bring it to a successful outcome requires mature and exacting discernment. This discernment can only take place through prayer and
reflection, both personal and communal, in the daily sharing of life and mission among brothers and partners. This means gaining a greater awareness of our own charismatic identity and having the freedom, wisdom and boldness to adopt new ways of exercising our apostolate, whether in our existing works or in new endeavors.

What is the appropriate setting of our mission today? In what way should we exercise it? To make that discernment, we must consider both the person of André Coindre – his work and charism as founder – and the charismatic legacy of our Institute as reflected in Brothers Xavier and Polycarp, in all our predecessors, and among our brothers and partners in mission today.

Our study and reflection also presumes, in respect to diverse geographical, historical and cultural contexts, an ability to distinguish between what is essential and permanent in the founding charism and what is relative and changing. Finally, we must clarify what will be, in the lived experience of the charism, our specific contribution to the whole community of the church for its harmonious growth.

In summary then, the fundamental question which we must set ourselves to answer through this discernment may be expressed as follows: How can we embody today the charism of Father André Coindre, who looked with compassionate eyes on children and young people struggling with urgent unmet needs.

The call of the chapter to prophetic mission is addressed in a special way to those responsible for leadership and administration at local, provincial and general levels. Their specific responsibility consists in fostering initiatives that can accentuate the prophetic character of our mission in the various communities and works, to support the joint formation of brothers and partners for greater communion in the mission, and to be intermediaries in awakening the vocation of those who will guarantee the continuity of a prophetic mission in keeping with our charism.
Decisions and orientations

Young people in Madagascar

Young people of Brazil
FOR A PROPHETIC MISSION

Father André Coindre commits himself to a prophetic mission. He responds to a need that no one wants to take on: welcoming young delinquents as they leave prison. Seeing these young men “who meet rejection from everyone,” he wants to rescue them from ignorance, prepare them for life, and give them a knowledge and love of religion.

A. Call

The 35th General Chapter commits all the brothers and partners in mission to renew their apostolic action in its prophetic dimension, in fidelity to the charism of our founder, Father André Coindre.

To accomplish this, we must look upon children and young people with the eyes of Father Coindre, strengthen our closeness to them, and make our communities and our works sanctuaries for young people.

A prophetic mission that is the result of prayerful communal discernment can create new conditions to promote a local community that is more prophetic, apostolic, and compassionate. It can also give added impetus to vocation ministry.

In our communal prophetic action, we give priority to children and youth for whom no one else is concerned, who are neglected, ignored or abandoned by society, government or even our own institutions. When necessary, we speak out against injustices toward young people with clear-sightedness, good sense and boldness.

As brothers and partners, we are willing to take risks for a prophetic mission in close communion with one another.

We focus our spirituality on expressing God’s compassion in order to discern and respond to young people’s urgent needs.
Renewing our apostolic action within its prophetic dimension demands that we see young people through God’s own eyes. We must look upon them with affection, mercy, and compassion, as did Father André Coindre. This will require us to get out of our offices to become close to them, connect with them, dialogue with them, and accompany them in their struggles and their search for meaning. Hence the necessity that our local communities and our apostolic works become sanctuaries, places where they will always feel protected and welcomed.

It will be through community discernment, guided by the light of the Spirit, that we will discover the real meaning of prophetic mission for us today, and how to see it through to a successful end. Discernment can promote genuine conversion both for the local community and for each of its members, resulting in a more prophetic mission and awakening in young people the desire to share this experience with us.

In our daily apostolic action as brothers and partners in mission, we together demonstrate a preferential option for disadvantaged young people (cf. Rule 155). Whenever necessary, we denounce with clarity, prudence and boldness any injustice that makes them victims. We must also be aware of the risks involved for ourselves and be prepared to accept them.

Our commitment will be prophetic to the extent that it results from a deep experience of God and from the perception that he is truly near to us. It is God who created us, who chose us, who journeys with us and cares for us. God is merciful, offering his Word and giving us his own Son.

Our commitment is born of the nearness of a God full of compassion, who undergoes a passion with his children who suffer, and who suffers because their distance from him keeps them from the joy to be found in loving Him. God suffers to the point of giving his life in the person of his Son so as to nurture in his children an indestructible hope of salvation for today and for eternity.

We express our close relationship with the God of compassion through an authentic life of prayer: bringing to prayer the experiences of daily life and extending this prayer to our personal relationships and our passionate service to all those around us.

Children of Peru
B. Discernment

Each entity will undertake a discernment process within local communities and, if necessary, with representatives of our ministries, to determine the urgent needs of young people and to evaluate how each work is responding to those needs.

Throughout this process of discernment, which began during the preparation for the general chapter, we will seek to identify:

- the urgent unmet needs of children and youth;
- the specific needs to which we want to make a prophetic response;
- the young people to whom we wish to offer this response;
- the concrete means we are willing to put in place;
- the setting best suited to deploy those means;
- the type of involvement that the brothers will have in this mission, whether administrative responsibilities or a more personal accompaniment of the young;
- the common formation needed for brothers and partners to best prepare them for the planned prophetic mission;
- how our prospective response runs against the current of some church institutions or society as a whole;
- how to evangelize the young people entrusted to our care.
In this section the chapter invites the entities and local communities to continue a discernment process that began with the chapter’s preparatory stage.

There may be some who consider this discernment to have already been completed. Certainly, during the preparation stage, brothers and partners in communities and apostolic works in every entity began to reflect on the nature of prophetic mission and the ways to achieve that mission today. This process of reflection must now progress to concrete decisions and their implementation, lest our discernment remain a dead letter.

Authentic discernment cannot be reduced to answering a few practical questions and leaping immediately into action. Quite the opposite, it requires a favorable climate for reflection, proceeding from a knowledge of who we are and what we are called to be in the plan of God. It is vital that we carry out our discernment in the light of the Word, taking into consideration both our charism and the reality of young people, especially the most needy. It is therefore essential to create an adequate atmosphere for discernment to become, for both individuals and communities, an authentic experience of God.

All good discernment should be supported by a competent person able to guide the group along the path. Each group must determine the best way to bring its discernment to a satisfactory completion.

Finally, the discernment must be made by brothers and partners in mission together, and most especially by those who have a greater responsibility for the animation and management of apostolic works.
C. Response

The provincial or delegate in council will use the results of the discernment process to create a plan of action for a prophetic response to at least one of these urgent needs. The entity may choose to initiate a prophetic response within its existing works. It might also choose to create a new work if that proves to be a more appropriate way to meet the urgent needs that it has identified.

The plan of action will be submitted to the general council for approbation.

The discernment process, the plan of action submitted to the general council, and its implementation should all occur within a three-year period.

A report should be presented by the various entities during the general conference of 2015.

The general council will see to the animation of brothers and partners in the mission to help them give prophetic responses to the needs of young people in the spirit and charism of our founder. This animation will include the promotion of a lifestyle that is consistent with these responses.

The general council will evaluate each entity’s plan of action to confirm whether it fulfills the spirit and intent of the general chapter.

The general council will establish a means of disseminating throughout the Institute information on the entities’ initiatives to make their mission more prophetic. It will facilitate communication linked to these new initiatives and possibly help to obtain aid needed for their implementation.
The discernment required at every level commits each entity to develop a plan of action for a prophetic response to the urgent needs detected among young people. This response could be concretized either within existing works or through the creation of new fields of engagement.

The process of discernment, the action plan it produces, and its implementation are to be carried out within a three-year time frame, so that each entity can present its report to the general conference of the Institute that will take place October 12-24, 2015.

As stated by the chapter, it falls to the general council to animate brothers and partners in mission, to evaluate the action plan of each entity, to inform the Institute of the initiatives taken by the various entities to renew their mission, and to help obtain, as much as possible, the aid necessary for their implementation.
FOR A SHARED MISSION

Father Andre Coindre searches the local church of Lyon for the support and investment of lay partners: foremen, benefactors, board members, teachers. It is with them that he responds to young people rejected by others.

A. Call

The 2012 General Chapter directs the entire Institute, brothers and partners, to commit themselves to a common formation according to the charism of Father Andre Coindre for a prophetic mission.

Indeed, the Church invites religious to share “in the mission and lives of the laity, in light of the distinctive charism” (No. 29, Educating Together in Catholic Schools).

This invitation conforms with the spirit of the Rule of Life:

“The Institute of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart owes its origin to the apostolic zeal of Father Andre Coindre for instructing neglected youth and bringing them to the knowledge and love of God.” (11)

“Christian education cannot easily be realized without the witness of a school community which is built on close relationships among teachers, parents, students, and the local people.” (156)

“In this way, we are helping to form a dedicated laity and to develop religious, priestly, and missionary vocations.” (157)

“Everything should favor mutual respect and harmonious relations. By sharing responsibilities, recognizing one another’s talents, and cooperating in a work essential to the Church, we contribute to the personal development of each brother.” (25)

“Furthermore, a true fraternal community sensitizes its members to the needs of the world and leads them to give of themselves in carrying out the mission of the Church.” (29)

“In our dealings with people of different faiths and ideologies, we look for points of agreement and we welcome dialogue.” (160)
“We adapt our apostolate of education to the needs of the time and place with clear-sightedness, good sense, and boldness in order to give the best possible response to the Spirit’s calls.” (150)

As brothers and partners in mission, we are called to holiness of life. Enlightened by the charism of Father André Coindre, we help one another to grow continually and to give the best of ourselves for the good of the young people whom we wish to educate, beginning with the neediest.

We understand our common formation in the charism to be a path travelled together, covering different aspects of our daily life, the educational and human as much as the spiritual and religious.
In the mission assigned to the Pieux-Secours, our founder, Father André Coin- 
dre, was able to establish a close collaboration between religious brothers 
and lay partners committed to the mission of Christian education. This mode of 
apostolic commitment is very much in harmony with the spirit of Vatican Coun- 
cil II, whose 50th anniversary was celebrated this year in the month of October. 
Indeed, the documents issued by the Church to apply the Council’s teachings 
all celebrated the complementarity between the religious vocation and the lay 
vocation through a communion in the apostolate, in keeping with the charisms 
of the religious institutes. Indeed, the General Chapter of 2006 has already 
strongly urged brothers and partners in mission to share the charism.

Following the example of Father Coin- 
dre and the brothers and partners in mis-
sion who preceded us, we continue today the efforts of refoundation in faithfulness 
to the charism of the Institute. The fruit-
fulness of this mission shared between brothers and partners requires appropriate 
preparation. Therefore the General Chap-
ter of 2012, convinced that common for-
modation in the charism is an essential 
means to strengthen the Institute’s 
prophetic mission, issued this call to 
brothers and partners.

After the example of Jesus, who made it clear to the Apostle John that the spirit of exclusion was forbidden (cf. Mk 9:39), 
the chapter members exhorted the broth-
ers to an ever greater openness in the 
apostolate. The chapter recognizes and 
appreciates fully that partners are eager
to commit themselves with brothers in the common mission of Christian education. They are also capable of being called to live according to the charism of the Institute. Consequently, they deserve to be welcomed with open arms, for “the one who is not against us is for us” (Mk 9:40). United in heart and spirit, brothers and partners will know how to discern together the paths of common formation for a mission in the service of the Kingdom.

As members of the people of God, brothers and partners are called and sent for the mission of Christian education of children and youth, particularly the most vulnerable. The Church, in whose name we labor, calls us to act in communion to promote this shared educational mission. The fruitfulness of the mission is closely linked to the depth of communion among the various stakeholders. What is more, the fulfillment of any mission requires advance arrangements so that those being sent can carry out their task. To make the partnership beneficial for all, brothers and partners need to acquire common reference points through suitable preparation. To that end, the General Chapter of 2012 discerned the framework and the broad orientations for the shared formation of brothers and partners.
B. Discernment

Brothers and partners commit themselves to travel the path of common formation through personal discernment and a commitment of their lives.

Common formation is directed toward the prophetic mission of the Institute. This formation implies a greater level of participation and a greater awareness of our mission. It is a process that invites us to share our faith and that makes us co-responsible in decision making.

Common formation involves the establishment of a community based on sincere and fraternal relationships. The complementarity of vocations in our mission is a witness that we are called to offer society today. It makes us co-responsible in the mission, partners as much as brothers.

Common formation also occurs through small daily gestures in our educative work: sincere conversations, attentive listening, well-chosen prayers, respectful correction, well-prepared meetings.

Common formation can be a privileged means for the promotion of vocation ministry.
Common formation in the charism for brothers and partners in the mission leads to an assimilation of values that inspire our apostolate. These values develop and enrich our shared mission.

Formation is based on lived experience, emphasizing the three pillars of our shared lives: spirituality, community, and service. Nevertheless, beyond the sharing of personal experience, there is need for a minimum base of knowledge and a common vocabulary that will allow us to communicate our experience in a clear and meaningful way.

In addition, the formation process permits brothers and partners in mission to grow more deeply within their respective vocations as consecrated religious, laypersons and clergy; to highlight the specific nature of each calling; and most especially, to sensitize one another to our heritage as sons and daughters of Father André Coindre, whose charism is our shared legacy.

Fidelity to the charism of the Institute hinges on the way in which we embody the same charismatic intentions that inspired our foundation. It’s when we re-capture this original inspiration that our apostolate, in response to the demands of the Gospel, becomes a prophetic mission.

Programs of formation, through appropriate components, are essential to the development of our abilities. The common formation of brothers and partners for prophetic mission is principally a formation in the founding charism. For both brothers and partners in mission, it is a matter of formation in the spirituality that is the basis of the specific mission of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart as recognized and sanctioned by the Church. Formation therefore aims to achieve an ever deeper knowledge and ownership of the spirituality and apostolic zeal of Father Coindre. It is important to understand the way in which Father Coindre allowed himself to be guided by the action of the Holy Spirit. Understanding the spiritual heritage arising from our founding charism is necessary and sufficient to remain in healthy, dynamic fidelity to the charism of the Institute. To accomplish this, the chapter commits brothers and partners to undertake common formation experiences within the perspective of the call to prophetic mission.
C. Response

That each entity draft, according to its particular circumstances, a plan of common formation for brothers and partners, according to the charism of Father André Coindre and in view of a prophetic mission.

This plan should be developed with the essential elements of our charism: the spirituality of compassion, the pedagogy of trust, the preferential option for the poor, working collaboratively or in teams with other institutions, and the complementarity of vocations between brothers and partners in the mission.

Common formation requires that within each entity we continue to provide experiences of communion in the charism for both brothers and partners. These experiences are supported and evaluated by the councils of the entities, which keep the general council informed.

That the general council support the plans of common formation for brothers and partners with different resources, calling upon the Commission for the Promotion of the Founding Charism and organizing international sessions of formation with this orientation.

That the general council encourage mutual assistance among the Institute’s different entities for a more successful common formation, whether through the conferences or through other structures.

Decisions and guidelines - Shared mission

Partners in mission from England with Br Jean Roure in Lyon
As with every human organization, the future of the Institute’s mission depends on initial and ongoing formation as well as the quality of its members. Conscious of this obvious fact, the General Chapter of 2012 asked every sector of the Institute to include the formation of brothers and partners in mission within their respective programs of animation.

These programs must take into account socio-cultural realities. They can be integrated into continuing professional development and even include courses offered over a period of time. It is necessary to tailor formation to the needs of the recipients, their particular level of commitment and especially their specific vocation.

With strict respect for the state of life of those invested in the mission – consecrated religious, laypeople, diocesan priests and permanent deacons – the chapter affirms that formation programs ought to center on the following general topics: faith, vocations, spirituality, mission, interpersonal relations, and communion. From these different themes flow the elements fundamental to the charism of the Institute: the spirituality of compassion, pedagogy of trust, preferential option for the poor, apostolic community, and complementarity of vocations in shared mission.

Spirituality of compassion springs from the merciful, gentle, and humble heart of Jesus Christ. Upon that spirituality rests our own education of young people, whatever their background, to human and spiritual values such as peace, respect for differences, and justice among all persons.

The pedagogy based on trust is the fundamental orientation of the educational practice of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. We profess that every person is capable of improvement if they feel loved, encouraged, and supported. Our esteem and respect for young people – especially those who are most difficult to reach – enables us to accept them and listen to them.

Attentive listening in an environment in which each person feels known, loved, and respected contributes to the emergence of a genuine apostolic community. Partnership in mission, supported by the fraternal service of authority, finds its full dynamic expression in such a community.

In its landmark constitution *Lumen Gentium*, the Second Vatican Council taught that within the diversity of vocations, everyone is called to holiness. At the same time, fellowship in communion is the universal vocation of all people.

Therefore, in deep respect for the specific vocations of all, brothers and partners in mission are called to mutual support and encouragement.

While the brothers are guarantors and mediators of the charism of the Institute, even so they are not its proprietors. Therefore, the brothers are to welcome with joy and gratitude all persons called
to live the Institute’s charism. We are continually invited to an effort of adaptation, taking into account the circumstances of time and place, as Brother José Ignacio Carmona urged us to do in his fifth circular: “New times and new situations call us to incarnate our charism with renewed faith, trust, availability, and boldness, as we seek to find new and authentic answers to the needs of children and young people in the Church and the world of today” (*The Fire of the Charism*, p. 30).

There is no doubt that the common formation of brothers and partners will open up unexpected horizons in our apostolate at the service of our contemporaries and of the Church, for the greater good of children and youth.

Formation together, brothers and partners in mission, will promote, among other things, the revitalization of vocation ministry in the Institute by involving the entire local apostolic community. As there is strength in unity, accepting common responsibility for vocation ministry can only raise up numerous workers in the service of the Church.
FOR AN ENDURING MISSION

To strengthen and perpetuate his work, which will extend to the plight of young people in the remote countryside, Father André Coindre founds a religious community, a tender shoot from which springs the Institute of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

A. Call

The members of the chapter are aware that two realities exist within the Institute in respect to vocation ministry for prophetic mission.

Some entities of the Institute recruit new members, but also experience many departures. Moreover, these entities face significant challenges:

- discernment of the motivations of candidates;
- materialism that becomes embedded in religious life, leading to a lack of consistency in living out the brothers’ commitments;
- lack of understanding of the vocation of brother.

Other entities of the Institute have few if any candidates despite the efforts made. Several factors explain this situation:

- changes in society and the family that have eroded the culture of vocations;
- fear of commitment;
- materialism in society;
- ageing within the Institute;
- growing individualism among the brothers;
- the dechristianization of society;
- the counter-witness of some persons in religious life and in the Church as a whole.
Notwithstanding these circumstances, many young people do search for meaning in their lives. Some of them are sensitive to gospel values and capable of committing themselves to ministries of social justice and human development. But their spiritual experience is often lacking, their personal encounters with God less and less frequent, and their image of religious life is often weak and even negative.

Despite these realities, we can affirm that God continues to call in our day. It seems, however, that our communities are not doing much to develop a prophetic mission meaningful to young people and that the witness of our life in community is too feeble to attract new vocations.
As the general chapter began its study of vocation ministry for a prophetic mission, we asked ourselves, “Why do we want vocations?” This question is not trivial, and its full meaning is found in the present reality of our world. To continue the reflection, we considered the symbolic image of a branch grafted onto an old tree trunk so that it can grow and produce fruit in abundance. The graft will enable this old tree, representing our current models of vocation ministry, to generate new and adapted forms of vocation ministry.

Subsequently, the responses given to this question in the chapter’s working groups were expressed in the following ways:

We believe that God continues to call people today to his service in the Church.

We want to support young people in achieving their own personal aspirations for life while showing them the message of Jesus in the Gospels.

We want to give continuity to the mission received from Father André Coindre and remain faithful to the charism of our founder.

What the chapter proposes for this vocation ministry for prophetic mission is that it permit young people to experience that a vocation is born of gratitude. It grows in the fertile soil of God’s free and gracious gift, from the lived experience of knowing oneself to be chosen by the call of God. As Jesus declares in the Gospel, “Freely you have received; freely you are to give” (Mt 10:8). From this truth springs the lifestyle to which a person is called, and from experiences of giving oneself freely in faith arise the different vocational paths in the Church.

The call of God is often discovered when vocation ministry begins in experiences of faith and service provided by strong programs of youth ministry. The complementary of vocation ministry and youth ministry pushes us, brothers and partners in mission, to accompany young people in their journey and to engage with them in projects that meet the needs of those who feel abandoned and isolated in an individualistic society. It also provides opportunities to support young men in whom we sense a desire to give of themselves and to consecrate themselves to God in the Institute of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.
B. Discernment

For these reasons, our Institute is confronted by a major challenge to respond to the vocation crisis with a convincing witness.

In this perspective, the Chapter asks each brother and every local community to commence a reflection on their present lifestyle and the quality of their spiritual life, fraternal relationships and apostolic commitments - thereby becoming more aware of the witness they give to the men and women of our world, especially young people. This reflection must necessarily bring us to conversion in our personal, communal, and apostolic life, and lead us to take a firm decision to become active promoters of vocations in the local church.

It is only on the basis of this conversion process that the entities and local communities will be able to put forward new initiatives for carrying out vocation ministry with the young. The particular context of each local community will allow us to discern the most appropriate strategies for vocation ministry in light of a prophetic mission.
This reflection, which is about our credibility as men and as religious, must be made in a personal and communal discernment in which we have the possibility to appreciate with clear vision our situation and the action of God in our everyday life. For the chapter, the challenges of vocation ministry rest in the growth of each brother in the authenticity of his life’s witness, on the enthusiasm of his response to a particular vocation in the Church, and on the constant desire to question our own lives so that we might credibly challenge the young.

The chapter also asked partners in mission to challenge young people by their fidelity to their own vocation and to help them grow toward a mature commitment to society and the Church.

Through our efforts to revitalize both youth ministry and vocation ministry, brothers and partners will enable young people to live a happy experience of involvement in generous service to other young people in need, to reaffirm in them the values of life, love, and responsibility. This could bring true meaning to their lives and a desire to be “grafted” onto the Christ of the Gospel.
C. Response

To reinvigorate vocation ministry, the chapter proposes as a general standard, valid for all local communities, that each brother make it his priority to be close to young people and to invest time with them, even if he must sacrifice other responsibilities and personal priorities. This presence opens the door to religious witness, the transmission of human and spiritual values, personal accompaniment, and direct invitations to young people to embrace a lifestyle of human and Christian commitment.

In this way, it would be possible to awaken in the young an attraction to our lifestyle and to develop experiences aimed at their own vocational discernment. For this to happen, youth ministry remains a privileged means allowing young people to:

- participate in experiences of pastoral commitment with the brothers;
- share in the brothers’ spiritual life (prayer) and community life (meals, recreation);
- commit to the least favored members of society;
- carry out missionary experiences in poor countries;
- participate in spiritual retreats and vocational programs.

The chapter recognizes that, especially in those countries most affected by consumerism, involvement with the neediest people may release within the young a powerful process of vocational discernment. For this reason, the chapter invites local communities to give preference to this type of commitment and to involve young people who also desire to place their lives in solidarity with the poor.

The chapter asks each entity, after gathering a diverse range of proposals, to develop programs of youth ministry and vocation ministry with the power to mobilize the brothers and their partners, to challenge the young and to nurture their growth toward personal maturity. This pastoral ministry should promote the knowledge of God, the formation of a personal relationship with Christ, and opportunities for vocational discernment.
The Chapter invites each entity to provide a community of welcome that promotes vocational discernment and that can fulfill a young believer’s deep desire for personal commitment. In such a community, a young man finds fulfillment in experiences of service with the young. Supported by the brothers who work with him, he commits himself to a life of prayer, spiritual accompaniment, reading and reflection, all designed to help him hear, understand and respond to God’s call.

Each brother holds himself accountable for promoting vocations by the witness of his consecrated life and by the quality of his presence to young people. He is involved, to the extent of his abilities, in youth ministry and vocation ministry. At the same time, local communities, and each brother in particular, pray for vocations as requested by the “Master of the harvest” (Mt 9: 38).

Each local community evaluates periodically the quality of its presence and hospitality to young people. In his visits, the Provincial encourages the Brothers to persevere in their commitment to vocation ministry.

The visits of the general council give special attention, in the spirit of the general chapter, to the dynamism of vocation ministry in each entity.
The members of the general chapter were conscious of the very diverse realities among the Institute’s different regions in relation to vocation ministry. Nevertheless, across the Institute, some widespread difficulties that put us off track seem to be: hesitation to revive our pastoral efforts owing to the changed standards and values of our societies, the feebleness of our challenge to adolescents and young adults, our limited concrete presence to young people, and the lack of teams dedicated to youth and vocational ministry.

The chapter’s call to the Institute specifies that a program of youth ministry and vocation ministry must be started in all our entities, taking into account the immediate needs of ministry for prophetic mission. This project will make known that we dare to pray to the Lord of the harvest, consecrate time to personal presence with young people, offer young people opportunities for concrete commitments, facilitate both short and long-term mission experiences, and open communities of welcome for the young. As the present Formation Guide affirms, “Experience shows that vocation ministry is a powerful stimulus to communal renewal. The presence of young people in formation, or searching for their vocation, brings to a community a sharper perception of present times and present needs, enabling the community to undertake renewal.” (Art. 18)

During the chapter’s discussions, mention was made of other approaches that remain attractive for such a project: an interactive web site for communication and promoting knowledge of the Institute, networking with diocesan vocational teams, maintaining a presence on university campuses, vocational journeys to well-known places of pilgrimage, networks of solidarity in vocation ministry with other communities of religious brothers, hosting young adults in our local communities for short stays, etc. Any list of concrete ideas has no other effect than to engage us even more in awakening vocations and to bring us very close to youth who want to be supported in their outreach to other young people and to be accompanied in the search for meaning in their lives.
Administrative and other decisions

After studying the central theme of the chapter and the formulation of the ordinance, the delegates proceeded to review the decisions of the preceding general chapter. They also studied other administrative decisions required by the Rule of Life (R 284) and finally examined some proposals previously integrated within the chapter’s global agenda.

Follow-up to the decisions of the General Chapter of 2006

Solidarity in the Institute

The status report on the solidarity fund presented by the Brother Gaston Lavoie, general councilor, enabled the capitulants to understand that a significant effort has been made to maintain the fund’s provision of benefits, despite the global economic crisis of recent years that has led to lower returns on investment.

We also realized that the challenge of solidarity always remains a priority for each one of us; that the dream of financial independence in every province is not yet reached; that needs for aid persist in certain parts of the Institute; that the initial formation of young brothers remains a priority that we must support financially whenever necessary.

The superior general in his report to the chapter also outlined the essential criteria for good management. These criteria are: the faith of each entity in its own capabilities, personal and communal commitment to meet the needs of the entity, the proper management of external aid, rationalization of expenditure, financial management in a professional and transparent manner in accordance with the Rule of Life and Administrative Guide of the Institute, and the proper functioning of administrative and financial boards at every level of governance.

Finally, solidarity in the Institute is not limited only to assistance within the framework of the solidarity fund. In fact, it includes, to name just a few examples, the generous donations made thus far by donor provinces; the contribution of per capita support for the province of Haiti after the earthquake of January 12, 2010; the support given for the foundation of the Amatongas mission in Mozambique; the financial support provided to various aid projects through our own initiatives: the Mission Appeal program (NE), The Charles Lwanga Charitable Trust (NE), NGOs Corazonistas (ESP), calendar sales (FRA), and many other quiet but effective forms of support.

The General Chapter of 2012 has therefore renewed the decisions of the preceding chapter concerning solidarity in the Institute.
Growth of the Solidarity Fund

**Decision 2012-1**: That the entities continue to augment the solidarity fund such that, with the contribution of its annual gains, the fund can continue its mission of solidarity in the Institute.

Solidarity Fund

**Decision 2012-2**: That the solidarity fund: 1) assist entities that need to develop their own educational work to make possible an important contribution to the entity’s self-financing; 2) support specific works in favor of youth who are poor, works that are often difficult to maintain due to limited financial means.

Planning of Donations for Solidarity

**Decision 2012-3**: That provinces, as they are able, plan their annual donations to the solidarity fund on a three or six-year basis, notifying the general council so that it may ensure a better management of the fund.

Annual financial report of the provinces

**Decision 2012-4**: That the annual report made by the provinces to the general council present not only the financial situation of the entity, but also the provincial council’s reflection on its current situation, including projects planned for the middle term and their possible repercussions on the patrimony of the province.

Formation for financial management

**Decision 2012-5**: That each entity make its members aware of the management of its assets and its finances. It trains some of them to assume responsibility for this management.
Decisions required by the *Rule of Life* in financial matters (R 284)

**Financing the general administration per capita**

The per capita system in its current application functions well. The general chapter has thus maintained this system of financing for the general administration and for the general house while making some modifications in the distribution of entities by adjusting the levels and rates. The general administration also counts on the help of Casa Generalizia – constituent Italy – for its funding.

**Principle of the per capita**

**Decision 2012-6:** The general administration finances its current operations by means of a per capita applicable to all members of the Institute, excluding novices, brothers who have less than three years of profession on September 30, and brothers who serve at the general house. This *per capita* is established on three levels according to entity:

- **Level A:** Canada, Colombia, France, Italy, New England, New Orleans, New York, and Spain;
- **Level B:** Austral America, Brazil, and Peru;
- **Level C:** Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Haiti, Oceania, Madagascar, the Philippines, Senegal, and West Africa.

**Rate of the per capita**

**Decision 2012-7:** Beginning in 2012-2013, the per capita rates are fixed as follows:

- **Level A:** 880 €
- **Level B:** 522 €
- **Level C:** 88 €

*NB:* For each entity, the *per capita* rate for the period 2012-2018 has been increased by 10% over the rate for 2006-2012.

**Updated per capita**

**Decision 2012-8:** The superior general in council has the authority to review the application of these rules upon the request of an entity and to modify these amounts before the next general chapter in exceptional circumstances.
Implementation of the per capita

**Decision 2012-9:** A brother studying abroad is counted as part of his entity of origin and is assessed at the rate of this entity. A brother serving abroad, even without being incorporated there, is counted as part of the entity that benefits from his services and is assessed at the rate of this entity. The general treasurer sends a statement to the provinces based on the number of brothers present in the entity on September 30th of each year. The payment itself may be made in two parts, half in October and half in April, but is always calculated on the number of brothers on September 30th.

Extraordinary financial powers

During the last pre-chapter assemblies, some participants requested clarification of what constituted an extraordinary expense. In general chapter we clarified this term, beginning with the figures for maximum levels of authorized expenditure. The figures set forth by the chapter constitute ceilings. Accordingly, any provincial chapter can reduce these figures to lower ceilings.

What do we mean by extraordinary administrative matters? Relying on Article 284c of the Rule of Life, they are disposals of property, constructions, loans, and contracts. They therefore include expenditures as much as extraordinary investments, as opposed to the ordinary operational expenses of daily life. These matters, whether planned or unbudgeted, must receive the required authorizations.

**Decision 2012-10:** For each project that involves an alienation, construction, loan, contract or important purchase (cf. R 284 c, 294 h, 296 d):

a) The provincial superior, alone, can authorize an amount not to exceed 50 000 €.

b) The provincial superior in council can authorize an amount not to exceed 250 000 €.

c) The superior general, alone, can authorize a supplement of 50 000 € beyond the limit fixed for the provincial superior in council.

d) The superior general in council can authorize an amount exceeding 300 000 €, taking into account the requirements of the universal law.
**Representation for the General Chapter of 2018 (R 278 b)**

The general chapter, taking account of projections for the evolution of the Institute’s membership through the next general chapter, the number of entities and the expected number of professed in 2018, established a new ratio for representation at the general chapter of 2018.

**Decision 2012-11:**

a. That the ratio be the same for the provinces and delegations, except if a delegation has less than 15 professed brothers; in that case, the number of professed brothers is added to that of the province of which it is a member.

b. That all members be elected according to the following scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Provinces</th>
<th>Delegations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Up to 50 professed</td>
<td>provincial</td>
<td>Delegate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers:</td>
<td>+ 1 elected member</td>
<td>+ 1 elected member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 15 to 50 professed Brothers:</td>
<td>provincial + 2 elected members</td>
<td>Delegate + 2 elected members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 51 to 100 professed Brothers:</td>
<td>provincial + 3 elected members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 101 to 150 professed Brothers:</td>
<td>provincial + 4 elected members</td>
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<tr>
<td>From 151 to 200 professed Brothers:</td>
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c. That, in the event that this ratio results in the number of ex officio members being equal to or higher than that of elected members, the General Chapter mandates that the general administration, at the moment of the indictment’s publication, modify this ratio so that the elected members will be more numerous than the ex officio members.
Proposals submitted to the general chapter

Of all the proposals received from either the provincial chapters or the pre-chapter assemblies, the general chapter retained three of them which became capitular decisions:

Prophetic solidarity

Decision 2012-12: That, following the theme of the general chapter A Call to a Prophetic Mission, the general council find concrete means at the level of the entire Institute to:
   a. reinforce the mobility of Brothers in order to revitalize the mission of the Institute;
   b. continue to do what is possible to accentuate community sharing.

Reflection on current structures

Decision 2012-13: It is proposed that the superior general in council carry out a reflection on the current structures of our Institute.

Addressing our sick brothers and elderly brothers

Decision 2012-14: The general chapter wishes that a word be addressed specifically to our brothers who are sick or elderly. It asks the superior general in council to express, in the manner of its choosing, the gratitude of the chapter members for their lived experience in the mission and the need for their continued contribution in the pursuit of this mission that we want always to be prophetic.
The Superior General in Council takes the opportunity provided by the publication of the 2012 General Chapter’s proceedings to communicate to the entire Institute its commitments arising both from the capitular assembly and from its ordinary mission of animation and administration.

Relative to the ordinance and decisions of the 2012 General Chapter

Concerning prophetic mission, the general council will carefully consider for approbation the entities’ plans of action for prophetic responses to urgent needs identified among children and adolescents. Furthermore, in regard to the founding charism, the superior general in council will conduct follow-ups and evaluations of the implementation of these action plans. At an opportune moment, a newsletter will be published to present initiatives in progress to the entire Institute.

In respect to shared mission, the general council will, within the limits of its possibilities, support the common formation of brothers and partners with both human resources and material assistance.

To help secure an enduring mission, the superior general in council will count vocation ministry among the major themes of animation during its visits in the different entities.

Vis-à-vis the proposals adopted, the general council will endeavor to revitalize prophetic solidarity in the Institute, conduct a reflection on current structures, and address a message of gratitude to the elder brothers for their contribution to the Institute’s prophetic mission.

Relative to other decisions

The superior general in council has identified other tasks that, for the greater good of the Institute, must be accomplished in the coming six years. The council intends to complete the work of updating the *Formation Guide of the Institute*. It will be published in the course of 2013.

Within the framework of formation ministry, the General Council will always support the preparation of formators, which is a recurring challenge for the Institute. A session on the accompaniment of brothers in temporary profession will be organized in collaboration with other religious institutes. The *Session International de Rome* (SIR) for brothers preparing for perpetual profession will be maintained through 2018, along with

Commitments of the general concil

The Superior General in Council takes the opportunity provided by the publication of the 2012 General Chapter’s proceedings to communicate to the entire Institute its commitments arising both from the capitular assembly and from its ordinary mission of animation and administration.
shorter renewal sessions that will resume in July 2014.

At least once a year, the superior general will issue a circular focused on prophetic mission. He will conduct visits in the entities, generally on the occasion of special events, but sometimes for canonical visitations. However, these latter visits will be principally conducted by general councilors in teams of two.

As provincial administrations take office, new provincial superiors will come to the general house to participate in a formation session organized by the general council. The council will ensure support for the animation and administration of the provinces.

The general council will strive to provide support for financial management in the entities.

The superior general in council will maintain the Commission for the Promotion of the Charism of Foundation, whose members include the Postulator for the Cause of Saints.

As the contract linking the Institute with the Diocese of Chimoio expires in 2015, the general council will study the future of the project in Amatongas, Mozambique. In keeping with the call to a prophetic mission, the superior general in council will explore opportunities for a new foundation in Asia.

In view of the approaching bicentennials of the Pieux-Secours (2018) and the foundation of the Institute (2021), the General Council will initiate a preparatory process to observe these milestones.

Finally, in the framework of the forthcoming bicentennial of the Institute’s foundation, the superior general in council will study the feasibility of introducing the cause of beatification of Father André Coindre.

The Superior General in Council is firmly resolved to assume these various commitments in collegiality, co-responsibility, confidentiality, subsidiarity and communion.
Conclusion

Brothers and partners in mission,

As you will have noticed in the preceding pages, the chapter centered its reflection in prophetic mission, which, in keeping with our founding charism, we are called to bring to fruition in today’s context.

The capitular assembly tried to respond to certain questions. Why a prophetic mission? Where should it be carried out? In what works? In what manner? For whom is the mission intended?

Do we think that everything is settled with the work of the chapter, with nothing left to do? Certainly not. Now begins the second part of the chapter, or if you will permit the expression, it is now that the chapter really begins.

Having fled into the wilderness, Moses encountered Yahweh at the burning bush. There, Yahweh spoke to him, saying, “Go, I am sending you to Pharaoh, to bring my people, the Israelites, out from Egypt” (Ex 3:10). First, this intimate experience of God gives him the courage to undertake the liberation of his people; secondly, this risky venture becomes the very occasion of his encounter with God.
Conclusion

We are also called to live such an experience of God in our prophetic mission to serve young people, especially among the poorest, the most needy, the ones whom no one sees and for whom nobody cares. The mission will strengthen our friendship with the Lord and it will encourage us to devote ourselves more earnestly to serve the least of our brothers and sisters.

When Moses came down from the mountain to meet his people, his face was radiant because he had spoken with Yahweh (cf. Ex 34:29). We had a similar experience in the preparation and unfolding of the chapter. May the Lord grant that our contemporaries detect in us the same transformation thanks to our encounter with Him in the sanctuary of our mission.

May the Hearts of Jesus and Mary inflame our hearts in the love of God so that we may truly meet him in the mission and that from this intimate encounter will be born the fruit of a mission that is more prophetic on behalf of children and youth.

Your brothers of the general council,

Br. José Ignacio Carmona Ollo, s.c.
Superior General

Br. Denis Plourde Caron, s.c.

Br. Raymond Hetu, s.c.

Br. Serge Toupin, s.c.

Br. Charles Biagui, s.c.

Rome, 2 December 2012, the First Sunday of Advent