



***“Servants of Christ,
servants of the poor”***

THE PERSON OF THE ORIONINE RELIGIOUS

**Fidelity and prophecy in dialogue with the outskirts
of poverty and of the new evangelisation**

Final Document

Montebello della Battaglia (PV), 16th May – 5th June 2016

PRESENTATION

**Dear Confreres.
Sons of Divine Providence.**

The 14th General Chapter has been celebrated at Montebello della Battaglia from 16th May to 5th June 2016. The theme of the Chapter was *“Servants of Christ, Servants of the Poor” from the point of view of fidelity and prophecy in dialogue with extreme poverty and evangelisation*. Now, I am able to present to the whole Congregation the final document, after a very carefully work of the General Council, which has, of course, not touched the content willed and approved by the “community” of the 44 Chapter Fathers.

The document now in our hands is the “Magna Carta” for the road ahead for the next six years. It has to be read and reflected upon, in the different aspects of the life of the Congregation, kept in mind for planning and taken up again, at other times, for necessary evaluations and re-launchings. Without doubt, it will help us to be creatively faithful to the charism of Saint Luigi Orione, to apply the principles of the Constitutions and Norms and, above all, it will help us *“to follow the Gospel with great humility and tender love”* (c.f. *Constitutions* art. 4).

Just as he has accompanied us in the journey towards the 14th General Chapter, Saint Luigi Orione will accompany us, as guide and intercessor with the Lord, also in the journey of planning and practical and concrete application of the chapter guidelines.

Just like a tree

We cannot fail, it is said, to understand the symbolism of the tree. In fact, the image of a tree is full of meaning (the seed, the roots, the trunk and branches and the fruit...) It has always served as a metaphor to indicate profound and universal values. It is a symbol which is present in many forms and richness, in numerous passages of Sacred Scripture and it is used also by Don Orione to explain his plan for the Little Work. Let me quote his own words, *“it is a new tree, which has sprouted at the feet of the Church and in the Italian garden...growing year by year in the light and warmth of God...one tree with various branches, all given life by the same sap, all pointing towards heaven, with flowers of love for God and humankind.”* (Nel Nome, 130-131).

It is such a universal and powerful message, that it could not be lacking among the Chapter Fathers, this “symbolism of the tree”. This actually happened on 27th May, before the audience with the Holy Father, when we listened to the Word of God during the Eucharistic Celebration in the Church of St. Anne in the Vatican.

Mark the Evangelist, in the passage of that liturgical day, told how Jesus was hungry and approached a fig tree, full of leaves, to see “*if he could find something, but when he got close, he only found leaves*” (c.f. Mark 11:11-25). It was a tree without any fruit, only leaves, looking good at a distance, unproductive.

This page of the Gospel says a lot to the Congregation seen as a “tree with many branches”. If a Congregation were like the tree full of leaves but without fruit, it might be a beautiful sight to see, even attractive, but without ability to express itself and with little effect in spreading the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, the Church and the Pope, especially among the people. Furthermore, it would be incapable of uniting the people to the Apostolic See by means of the apostolate of charity. Thus it would be a Congregation which had lost the way of “*diaconia*”, the way of service to God and humankind.

The Holy Mass that day, celebrated immediately after the choice of the members of the new General Government, was the opportunity to thank Fr Flavio Peloso and all his Council – Fr Achille Morabito, Fr Eldo Musso, Fr Silvestro Sowizdrzal, Fr Joao Batista de Freitas and Fr Fulvio Ferrari – because they had guided the Congregation during the six-year session 2010-2016, keeping alive its quality and efficacy in producing fruits of charity and fidelity to the charism of Saint Luigi Orione.

It is our duty now to continue in the same commitment and to ask ourselves, “What can I do, what must I do, what can we do, and must we do together, so that the Congregation continues to be a good tree with a lot of fruit?”

What are the fruits of the 14th General Chapter?

As normally happens, the Chapter formed its final document as a result of a journey which began with personal reflections which then made up the so-called “Community Chapter” and then the “Provincial Chapter”. In this way it is true to say that we were “all in the Chapter”. Now with the document in hand, it is also true to say that we recognise that we are all in its text, because, while respecting the different levels and responsibilities, the result is the work of us all together.

We have written a document, but – we must ask ourselves – is this the “fruit” of the Chapter? No! It must be clearly stated that the document is not the “fruit” which the Chapter is supposed to produce. Certainly – keeping within the ample content of the symbolism of the tree – it is a good “fertilizer” which we shall use as a technical instrument to renew, keep and increase the “fertility” of the “one tree with many branches”. When it is spread at the feet of our personal, community, provincial and congregational “tree”, with humility and full trust in Divine Providence, it will promote its growth and development and the fruits will come, *“now thirty, now sixty and now a hundredfold”* (c.f. *Mk 4:8*). So, to make the point again, the success of the Chapter (*“it produced its fruit a hundredfold”*, c.f. *Lk 8:8*) will not be measured by written words, but by the ability and readiness to let ourselves, personally and as communities, be taken up by the spirit of the lines of action proposed. If we do that we can humbly foresee that *“down in the middle of the city street (where the Orionines are) ...there is a tree of life (part of the one tree with many branches) which produces fruit every month of the year”* (c.f. *Rev 22:2*).

Precisely for this reason, we have said that the 14th General Chapter as a Chapter has not yet finished. In fact, it is like that for every Chapter, but because of its specific style and methodology, it is especially true for 14th one in our history. So, it will conclude only on the vigil of what will be the 15th one.

I think I can say that, during the phase before leading up to the Chapter, we were being led, almost naturally, by the “Principle of the Transfiguration”. According to this principal, the General Chapter as the “full assembly” of the Congregation was drawing us upwards, by speaking to us especially about the dream of Don Orione. In fact, in our process – guided by the *personal reflection booklet* – was always a movement which started, so to speak, “from below”, from examining our actual life situation, sometimes recognizing our failures, in order to make us arrive above with resolutions of renewal and growth. It was the dynamic of “Orionine transfiguration”.

Now that the Chapter has been celebrated and we have examined, reflected and made decisions on the basis of the contributions of all the confreres, we are now being given the “Magna Carta” for the detailed planning of the next six years. So, with the document in our hands, it is now the time to put into action another principle, that of incarnation. Following this principle the questions that we need to ask are, how to incarnate and translate into action the choices made by the Chapter? What general, provincial,

community and personal choices need to be made to be “Servants of Christ and the poor”, in today’s world and in the context in which we are actually living”

It will mean answering these questions at the following levels:

- ✓ The *General Council* presents the final edition of the document and prepares the plan of the next six years with appropriate initiatives of a general plan, especially through the work of the secretariats.
- ✓ The *Provinces* hold the Planning Assembly to work out the strategies “in order to put into practice” what has been decided by the General Chapter and propose “solutions to the problems of the Province” (c.f. *Norm* 169). Once the provincial plan is made, the Provincial Council is the main body responsible for putting into practice, accompanying and verifying that what has been decided has been done.
- ✓ The Communities and *individual religious* accept the Congregation’s *Plan* as specified by the provincial plan and decide on the choices to be made in applying it to the life and apostolate of each community and individual.

With the two principles of transfiguration and incarnation in mind, we can see how every six years there takes place a dynamic of reflection and practical application which begins on the ground (individual religious, community and provincial chapter), meets at the summit (General Chapter) and returns to the ground by being put into practice, especially through the planning of the Planning Assembly.

The uniqueness of the document of the 14th Chapter

I have had the opportunity to participate in some meetings organized by the previous General Council in which suggestions were asked for about how to organize the Chapter. The first was during the Verification Assembly at Aparecida in 2013, and then, in two other meetings in 2015, the first with the Provincials and the second with methodology experts. Certainly, remembering the many lines of action and decisions of the previous Chapter, we all agreed to do things somewhat differently in the 14th Chapter, proposing that it should concentrate on the essentials (with less words) and be simpler. Thus, after a brief look at the document which we now have, we can see that the Chapter Fathers decided to prepare only 7 lines of action which correspond to the different aspects of religious life. Here is a reminder of the titles: 1) the humanity of the religious, 2) the religious lives of God, 3) the religious identified in the charism, 4) the vital relationship with the community, 5) the religious in mission: witness and service, 6) the congregation’s apostolate, a gift to the Church, 7) going towards the real fringes of the world.

Each line of action has been developed indicating: a) a precise and viable *goal to be reached*; b) *a way to be followed intended as a prolonged action* in time marked by *initiatives which enable the religious to reach the goal*; c) each line of action is introduced by *a reminder of the situation which calls for it and the religious values/criteria which require it* (Don Orione, Magisterium, Constitutions....).

In the structure of each line of action it is important to note that it starts with an examination of our situation, namely, the Orionine reality. This analysis is the result of the contributions which arrived at the Chapter. So, it clearly recognises the specific point of view of the Orionine religious and is expressed clearly and concisely. Then there are the motivations which present the sources which recall the important values and criteria which help us to judge the situation and put in motion a journey of conversion, with various initiatives and suggestions.

It is then up to the Planning Assemblies to transform the lines of action into a concrete Provincial project. In fulfilling this important task, each Province can count on the participation, by right, of its own delegates to the General Chapter. This is an important sign of unity between the Assembly and the Chapter, a sure sign of communion and continuity with the intuitions of the 14th General Chapter.

Dear Confreres, I invite you not only to read this document, but, above all, to use it in our planning at all levels. As I have said, it is our “Magna Carta” of planning and orientation for the next six years. It will help us to “produce good fruits” according to the charism of Don Orione, such that the “one tree with many branches” may be “bent over under the weight of its fruit”.

Let us move ahead! *“Every tree is recognized by its fruit”* (c.f. Mt 12:33; Lk 6:44). May the great tree of our Congregation flourish and give very much good fruit full of divine love (*caritas*).

With Don Orione, *Hail Mary and go ahead!*

Fr. Tarcisio Vieira
Superior General

Approved by the General Council in Rome, on 21st September 2016
Feast of Saint Matthew Apostle and Evangelist

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE
GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SONS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE (ST LUIGI
ORIONE)**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to meet with you on the occasion of your General Chapter. I greet you cordially, beginning with your new Superior General, whom I thank for his words and to whom I extend my best wishes for his work, together with the Councillors.

We are all on the path of following Jesus. The whole Church is called to walk with Jesus on the roads of the world, in order to meet the humanity of today that is in need — as Don Orione wrote — of the “Bread of the Body and of the divine balm of faith” (*Letters* II, 463). In order to embody your Founder’s words today and to live the essence of his teaching, you have put your identity at the very centre of the General Chapter’s reflection, which Don Orione summarized in the title of the “*servants of Christ and the poor*”. The royal road means to keep these two dimensions of your personal and apostolic life ever united. You have been called and consecrated by God to stay with Jesus (cf. Mk 3:14) and to serve Him in the poor and those excluded by society. In them, you touch and serve the flesh of Christ and you grow in union with Him, always taking care that faith does not become an ideology, that charity is not reduced to philanthropy, and that the Church does not end up by becoming an “NGO”.

Being servants of Christ qualifies all that you are and all that you do; it ensures your apostolic effectiveness and makes your service fruitful. Don Orione urged you to “seek and heal the wounds of the people, to cure their illnesses, to meet them morally and materially. In this way your action will not only be effective, but it will be profoundly Christian and saving” (*Writings*, 61, 114). I encourage you to follow these guidelines; they are ever more true! In doing so you will, in fact, not only imitate Jesus the Good Samaritan, but you will offer people the joy of meeting Jesus and the salvation that He brings to all. Indeed, “those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew” (*ibid.*, [*Evangelii Gaudium*](#), n. 1).

The proclamation of the Gospel, especially in our time, requires a lot of love for the Lord, united with a particular initiative. I learned that, when the Founder was still alive, in some places they called you “the priests who hasten” because you were always seen in action, among the people, with the quick pace of those who care. As St Bernard reminded us, “*amor est in via*”, love is always on the way, love is always journeying. Together with Don Orione, I urge you not to remain closed in your environments, but to go “forward”. There is so much need for priests and religious who not only work in charitable institutions — albeit necessary — but who know how to go beyond those boundaries, to bring the fragrance of Christ’s charity into every environment, even those which are farthest away. Never lose sight of the Church nor of your religious community, rather, the heart must be there in your “Upper Room”, but it must then go out to take God’s mercy to all, without exception.

The more you seek to foster your personal commitment to Christ and your spiritual formation, the more your service to the church will be effective. Witnessing to the beauty of consecration, to the good life of religious “Servants of Christ and of the poor”, you will set a good example to the young people. Life begets life, and a holy and happy religious inspires new vocations. I entrust your congregation to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, whom you venerate as “mother of divine providence”. I ask you, please, to pray for me and for my service to the church, because I, too, am on the journey. I impart my apostolic blessing to you, your confreres, and especially to the elderly and the sick, and to those who share the charism of your institute.

Pope Francis

LETTER TO THE ORIONINE FAMILY

Montebello della Battaglia, 31st May 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Orionine Family,

The 14th General Chapter, which began at the shrine of Our Lady of Safe-keeping (Madonna della Guardia) at Tortona, is nearly over. It began near our Founder and his first companions, Fr Sterpi, Fr Pensa, Fr Goggi and Canon Perduca. Encouraged by our family saints, we began the work of the chapter with the desire of following in their footsteps, although in a very different social, Church and economic times. We wanted to continue to be a sign in the world, as servants of Christ and the poor, and absorb the fullness of the great charismatic richness which our history has handed on to us. That is why we valued the meaning of the place where we are in, and started the Chapter in the same room in which the first General Chapter was held and which elected the first successor of Don Orione.

During the last weeks we have tried to dream of a new Congregation, new in its fidelity to the charism, in fraternal communion and apostolic zeal. In order to make this a reality we returned to the dream of Don Orione where many people, of every race, nation and language, were gathered, as one family, under the blue mantle of Mary. Those persons, protected by the blue mantle, remained with their culture, their own language and the colour of their skin but were united. We too, belonging to different Provinces, have experienced the joy of meeting each other, and of work which has required us to welcome and bring together our gifts and our limitations.

A particularly positive moment of the Chapter has been the participation of the Sisters, the Members of the Orionine Secular Institute, some friends of the Orionine Lay Movement and fellow-workers. Their presence has renewed the joy of belonging to one Family which is energised by one charism which it is called to bring to the whole world, “*with the speed of people who are in a hurry*” (Pope Francis to the participants of the 14th General Chapter). In fact, our charism is a gift which we cannot keep to ourselves and, so that it does not become weak, needs to travel along all the roads of the world, towards the little ones who are in the midst of the flames of new times.

We have desired to incarnate our charism in the Church and world of today and so we have tried to express Lines of Action which highlight our identity as *Servants of Christ and the poor*. This means holding together, as Pope Francis recommended, the spiritual tensions present in our identity when he said, “*You are called and consecrated to God to stay with Jesus (c.f. Mark 3:14) and to serve Him in the poor, in the people excluded from society. In them you touch and serve the flesh of Christ and grow in union with Him*” (Pope Francis, to the participants of the 14th General Chapter). Planning our way forward for the life of the Congregation in the next six years has convinced us even more of the preciousness of our charism, a vocation to keep, to renew and to give to others.

As happens at every general chapter, we have elected the superiors who will guide us for the next six years. As they have said, several times, they want to be at our service, and

speak to our hearts, with the conviction that some personal, community and congregational new initiatives will not happen unless we give them our full cooperation. This means that we need to be open and ready to cooperate.

Dear Confreres, we feel the need to thank you for your participation in the General Chapter, right from the time of preparing your contribution in each community and continuing right up to now with the support of your prayers. Although you have not been physically present with us, we have felt your closeness. This spirit of fraternity, which has been shown to us by many, has meant that the General Chapter has been a precious time for the Congregation because all of us, and not just the Chapter Members, have been involved in receiving a gift which is greater than us and which “*generates new life.....and raises up new vocations*” (Pope Francis to the participants of the 14th General Chapter).

Now the next step is the most important, that is, to put into practice what the Lord has given us in these weeks of reflection. It is a task which demands the commitment and involvement of us all, so that we may return to the source of our vocation, to the fire of that first love. We are sure that from Heaven Don Orione will give us a push to fulfil what he has been praying for us.

May Mary, Mother of Divine Providence and our Patroness, intercede for us from Heaven.

The Confreres of the 14th General Chapter

RELIGIOUS MEMBERS OF THE CHAPTER

General Council

1. Fr. PELOSO Flavio (*Superior General*)
2. Fr. MORABITO Achille (*Vicar General*)
3. Fr. MUSSO Eldo Rubén (*General Councillor*)
4. Fr. SOWIZDRZAŁ Sylwester Janusz (*General Councillor and Secretary*)
5. Fr. DE FREITAS João Batista (*General Councillor*)
6. Fr. FERRARI Fulvio (*General Councillor and Bursar*)

Other ex officio members

7. Fr. SIMIONATO Arcángel Roberto (*Former Superior General*)
8. Fr. ROCHA Jorge Henríque (*Procurator General*)

Province of Mother of Divine Providence (Rome)

9. Fr. FUSI Aurelio (*Provincial Superior*)
10. Fr. ONDEI Pierangelo
11. Fr. GIAROLO Giovanni
12. Fr. GROPPELLO Walter
13. Fr. CAROLLO Giovanni
14. Fr. VERRILLI Leonardo
15. Fr. D'ACUNTO Alessandro
16. Fr. LEMBO Alessandro
17. Fr. MACCHI Maurizio

Province of Our Lady of Częstochowa (Warsaw)

18. Fr. BARANOWSKI Krzysztof (*Provincial Superior*)
19. Fr. GOŁĘBIAK Adam
20. Fr. JASEK Piotr
21. Fr. KROMKA Leszek

Province of Our Lady of Safekeeping (Buenos Aires)

22. Fr. AIME Gustavo (*Provincial Superior*)
23. Fr. CADENINI Omar
24. Fr. FORNEROD Fernando
25. Fr. MARTÍN Hernán Cruz
26. Fr. TROMBINI Raúl

Province of Our Lady of Fatima (Brasilia)

27. Fr. VIEIRA Tarcísio Gregório (*Provincial Superior*)

- 28. Fr. DE BONA FILHO João
- 29. Fr. ROSA Zenildo
- 30. Fr. DOS SANTOS Ademar José

Province of Our Lady of the Annunciation (São Paulo)

- 31. Fr. THOMAZELLA Rodinei Carlos (*Provincial Superior*)
- 32. Fr. BOGAZ Antonio Sagrado
- 33. Fr. DEBOITA José

Province di Our Lady of Africa (Bonoua)

- 34. Fr. AKA Basile (*Provincial Superior*)
- 35. Fr. KOUASSI Assamouan Pierre
- 36. Fr. MEDA Serge
- 37. Fr. DZANKANI Jean-Baptiste Komi

Vice-Province of Our Lady of Pilar (Madrid)

- 38. Fr. PARIS ALONSO José (*Superior of the Vice-Province*)
- 39. Fr. DE LA RED MERINO Laureano

Vice-Province of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Santiago)

- 40. Fr. VALENZUELA RAMOS Sergio Felipe (*Superior of the Vice-Province*)
- 41. Fr. OLIVARES FERNANDEZ Álvaro Rodrigo

Delegation of Our Lady Mother of the Church (Rome)

- 42. Fr. FERRARI Oreste (*delegate superior*)
- 43. Fr. DYER Malcolm George

Representative of the Brothers (c.f... Cost. Art. 140)

- 44. Br. SILANES Jorge David (*N.S. de la Guardia*)

COUNCIL OF PRESIDENCY

Fr. Flavio PELOSO	– <i>president</i>
Fr. Tarcísio Gregório VIEIRA	– <i>1st vice-president</i>
Fr. Fernando Héctor FORNEROD	– <i>2nd vice-president</i>
Fr. Sylwester Janusz SOWIZDRZAŁ	– <i>secretary</i>
Fr. Jorge Henrique ROCHA	– <i>1° vice-secretary</i>
Fr. Aurelio FUSI	– <i>2° vice-secretary</i>

INVITED GUESTS
(From 19th to 24th May 2016)

1. Fr. BOSCHI Marcelo (*Coordinator of the mission in the USA, Missionary Delegation “Mother of the Church”*)
2. Fra Ivan SEVÀ (*Representative of the Hermits,, Province “Mother of Divine Providence”, Rome - Italy*)
3. Sr. SPAGNUOLO Maria Mabel (*Superior General of the Little Missionary Sisters of Charity, Rome*)
4. Sr. ZAGÓROWSKA Maria Sylwia (*vicar General of the Little Missionary Sisters of Charity, Rome*)
5. Sr. ROJAS Maria Vilma (*Provincial Superior “Mater Dei”, Italy*)
6. Sr. RAVAOARISOA Maria Françoise (*Regional Superior “Mary Queen of Peace”, Madagascar*)
7. Miss ORRÙ Rita (*General Responsible Orionine Secular Institute*)
8. Mr. RODRIGUEZ MENDEZ Javier (*General Responsible Orionine Lay Movement*)
9. Mrs. SANO Armanda (*Secretary General Orionine Lay Movement*)
10. Mrs. ZALBA Virginia (*Territorial Responsible Orionine Lay Movement Argentina*)
11. Mrs. CARVALHO VILELA VALVERDE Edilaine (*Territorial Responsible Orionine Lay Movement Brasil*)
12. Mr. MARTÍN FERNÁNDEZ Carlos (*Representative Orionine Lay Movement, Madrid - Spain*)
13. Mr. FRANCHINI Roberto (*Consultant Provincial Team, Genova - Italy*)
14. Mr. COBZARU Ciprian (*Administrator Voluntari - Rumania*)
15. Mr. WALCZAK Andrzej (*Administrator Warsaw- Poland*)
16. Mr. NG'ANG'A John Kiguru (*Administrator Nairobi - Kenya*)

THE NEW GENERAL COUNCIL

On 25th and 26th May, the Chapter elected the New General Council which will remain in office during the six year period 2016-2022.

Fr. Tarcísio Gregório VIEIRA
Superior General

Fr. Oreste FERRARI
Vicar¹

Fr. Fernando Héctor FORNEROD
Councillor²

Fr. Pierre Assamouan KOUASSI
Councillor³

Fr. Laureano DE LA RED MERINO
Councillor⁴

Fr. Fulvio FERRARI
Councillor and Bursar⁵

In the General Council meeting of 7th June 2016, the Superior General confirmed the responsibilities of each Councillor (*Const. 176*) and appointed the Secretary General.

Fr. Sylwester Janusz SOWIZDRZAL
Secretary General⁶

¹ Responsible for *Religious Life, Initial and Continuous Formation, Brothers and Hermits...*

² Responsible for *Youth and Vocations Apostolate, School and Education Apostolate, Orionine Study Groups, Communications and Orionine Press Office.*

³ Responsible for *Parish Apostolate, Missionary Apostolate, Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue.*

⁴ Responsible for *Works of Charity, Orionine Secular Institute, Lay Groups (Orionine Lay Movement, Friends of Don Orione, Former Pupils, Oblates).*

⁵ Responsible for *Finances and Administrative Apostolate, bodies connected to the General Curia (ENRis, Fondazione "Don Orione", and SEV-Orione '84).*

⁶ C.f.. Cost. 184, 186.

BRIEF CHRONICLE OF THE CHAPTER

- **16th May: The 14th General Chapter begins on the feast of St. Luigi Orione** at the Shrine of Our Lady of Safekeeping in Tortona with a concelebrated Mass (6pm) presided over by the Superior General, Fr. Flavio Peloso, in which all the Chapter Fathers participated together with many other Confreres. After the celebration, with a brief rite near the famous remains of the body of Don Orione, the roll-call of the Chapter Fathers was carried out which signalled the beginning of the Chapter. In the evening the Chapter Fathers transferred to Montebello della Battaglia.
- **17th May:** The Chapter Fathers gather in the hall of the 1st General Chapter (in Villa Lomellini at Montebello), where a brief celebration begins with the *“Veni Creator”*. Then all move to the Chapter Hall and a brief presentation of the Chapter Fathers follows. Fr Flavio Peloso confirms the presence of all the Chapter Fathers and officially declares the XIV General Chapter open. The scrutinizers are elected. The Superior General presents the Report on the government for the past six years with a wide view of the Congregation. The Bursar General Fr Fulvio Ferrari presents the financial part of the Report. Afterwards five reviewers of the Report of the Superior General are elected and they leave to begin their work.
- **18th May:** While the Reviewers continue their work, the Provincial Superiors give a report on the situation in their Provinces. Halfway during the morning, the work of the Reviewers having been completed, their report is listened to and discussion follows. In the afternoon, the Regulations of the Chapter are read and some changes are proposed and approved. Then follows the election of the Presidency of the Chapter.
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- **19th May:** Then a cycle of three conferences begins, each one followed by group work in 4 groups. The first conference, given by Fr. Amadeo Cencini, a Cannossian Father, professor and expert in psychology and formation, concentrates on the theme, *“An educational view and indications for formation in the light of what emerged from the Provincial Chapters and the sociological survey”*. Then His Grace Archbishop José Rodriguez Carballo, Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life presents a conference on the theme, *“Consecrated Life in the Church today, urgent needs, expectations and developments”*. In the evening arrive the Invited Guests who will stay until 24th May.
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- **20th May:** Fr Vito Orlando, director of the Institute of Sociology at the Pontifical Salesian University, Rome, gave the *“sociological interpretation of “the person of the Orionine Religious”: data to be kept in mind and indications for a way forward.”* The Invited Guests (Religious, Sisters and Lay People) also participate. In the afternoon the results of the working groups on the 3 conferences are presented in the Chapter Hall. Afterwards, the President of the Chapter gives information about the organization of the work of the Chapter on the central theme and 5 working committees are formed.
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- **21st May:** The Chapter Members and the Invited Guests go to Sant’Alberto di Butrio for a brief period of recollection: there is a visit to the Hermitage, which is followed by

a talk by the Bishop of Tortona, the Right Revered Francesco Vittorio Viola on the theme of charity in 1Cor 13:1-13 and the Eucharist. After lunch the Chapter Members say farewell to the Hermits of Sant'Alberto and leave for Tortona and the House "Open Arms and Heart" to listen to pioneering experiences, some in the same place, and others, via Skype, followed by a time for reflection and questions. The following talks are presented: "Open Arms and Heart" (Tortona), "the Gurisaes Project" in a link-up with Uruguay, a video from Poland on the House for the Homeless, a video on "Queen of Peace" (Campos do Jordão), a video on the Badjao People in the Philippines and the experience of Boschetto in Genoa. In the evening all return to Montebello

- 22nd May: Sunday, and the Chapter Members organise themselves for visits to various places nearby.
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- **23rd -24th May:** Work begins on the central theme of the Chapter comprising the 7 dimensions of the Life of the Religious. The Chapter Members, divided into 5 committees, read the *instrumentum laboris* (*working document*) which comprises the material from the Provincial Chapters and Assemblies and the text of the 3 challenges and the 3 guidelines prepared in the previous days on the basis of the presentation of the situations presented by the 3 speakers. Reflection and discussion begins on the lines of action to be proposed for the approval of the General Chapter. Also "Other Themes" are considered. Work in the committees and in the full assembly alternate with each other. In the evening the Invited Guests leave the Chapter.
- **25th May:** In the morning the results of the work of the Committees is reported. In the afternoon there is adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in silence. Returning to the Hall, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the new Superior General is elected, Fr. Tarcisio Gregorio Vieira. After the official proclamation, Fr Tarcisio Vieira receives the homage of the Confreres present in the hall and the Orionine Religious present in the house. The new Superior General takes over as president of the General Chapter and then take place the elections of the Vicar, Fr. Oreste Ferrari, and the Bursar General, Fr. Fulvio Ferrari.
- **26 May:** In the morning the Chapter elects the other three Councillors (Fr. Fernando Héctor Fornerod, Fr. Pierre Assamouan Kouassi and Fr. Laureano de la Red Merino. In the afternoon we all leave to Rome by coach, where we will be received by the Pope in a private audience. The members of the Chapter have their accommodations in the John Pal II Guests house (Monte Mario), in the provincial house and in the General Curia.
- **26th May:** In the morning the Chapter elects the other 3 General Councillors (Fr. Fernando Héctor Fornerod, Fr. Pierre Assamouan Kouassi e Fr. Laureano de la Red Merino). In the afternoon all leave for Rome by coach, to take part in the audience

with Pope Francis. The Chapter Members stay overnight in House of Hospitality John Paul II, the Provincial House at Monte Mario or the General Curia.

- **27th May:** The Chapter Members meet in the Church of St. Anne in the Vatican for the Eucharist presided over by Fr Tarcisio G. Vieira. During the Holy Mass the new Superior General and his Council make the profession of faith and the oath of fidelity. Afterwards the Chapter Members and the invited Guests go to the Clementine Hall in the Apostolic Palace, where they meet Pope Francis. The Pope gives a special message to the Chapter Members and greets each Member and Invited Guest personally. The Chapter Members return to Montebello in the evening.
- **28th May:** the Chapter Members finish the work in the committees.
- **29th May:** Sunday, the Chapter Members organize themselves for visits in the surrounding area.
- **30th May – 1st June:** The results of the work in the Committees is presented and the lines of action are definitively approved. The work of reforming the Norms is begun.
- **1st – 3rd June:** The Chapter Members work in the assembly modifying and updating the *Norms*.
- **4th June:** The Chapter Members meet in the Chapter Hall and then again in groups, to deal with some themes suggested by the Chapter Members. In the afternoon all move to the Hall of the 1st General Chapter, where each Chapter Member signs the acts and decisions of the Chapter. After this, the Superior General declares the 14th General Chapter of the Sons of Divine Providence closed and leads a prayer of thanksgiving.
- **5th June:** The Chapter Members go in pilgrimage to the Holy Door of the Cathedral in Tortona and, after the Jubilee Prayer, visit the places frequented by Don Orione as a young seminarian. The Mass in the “Paterno” officially seals the closure of the Chapter.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADO	Archivio generale della Piccola Opera della Divina Provvidenza, Roma.
<i>Atti</i>	<i>Atti e Comunicazioni della Curia generale della Piccola Opera della Divina Provvidenza</i> , Roma.
CG 12	<i>Cent'anni di fedeltà creativa</i> , Documento del 12° Capitolo generale dei Figli della Divina Provvidenza (San Luigi Orione) Ariccia (Roma) 21 giugno – 16 luglio 2004.
CG 13	<i>Solo la carità salverà il mondo</i> , Documento del 13° Capitolo generale dei Figli della Divina Provvidenza (San Luigi Orione) Ariccia (Roma) 30 maggio - 23 giugno – 2010.
CIVCSVA	Congregazione per gli Istituti di Vita consacrata e le Società di Vita Apostolica.
Cost.	<i>Costituzioni dei Figli della Divina Provvidenza</i> , Roma, 2012.
CPV	Centro Provinciale Vocazioni.
EFO	Escuela de Formación Orionita.
EG	Papa Francesco, <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> , 2011.
FDP	Figlio della Divina Provvidenza.
ISO	Istituto Secolare Orionino.
<i>Lettere</i>	Luigi Orione, <i>Lettere</i> , Postulazione della Piccola Opera della Divina Provvidenza, Roma, 1969. Volumi I e II.
MGO	Movimento Giovanile Orionino.
MLO	Movimento Laicale Orionino.
MR	SCRIS, <i>Mutuae Relationes</i> , 1978.
<i>Nel nome</i>	<i>Nel nome della divina Provvidenza; le più belle pagine di Don Orione</i> , 4ª ed., Piemme, Casale Monferrato, 2014.
<i>Norme</i>	<i>Norme dei Figli della Divina Provvidenza</i> , Roma, 2012.
ONG	Organizzazione non governativa.
<i>Parola</i>	<i>La parola di San Luigi Orione</i> , ADO, Roma.
PSMC	Piccole Suore Missionarie della Carità.
<i>Scritti</i>	<i>Gli Scritti di Don Orione</i> , ADO, Roma.
<i>Sui passi</i>	<i>Sui passi di Don Orione; sussidio per la formazione al carisma Dehoniane</i> , Bologna, 1996.
VFC	CIVCSVA, <i>La vita fraterna in comunità</i> , 1994.

PRIORITIES AND ORIENTATIONS

- 1 The first phase of the Chapter has been dedicated to listening to what was sent over by the provincial chapters and to the analysis of the survey done by some experts among our confrères. The Assembly, after listening to the speakers, and the feedback work made in small groups, has arrived to a synthesis on three main urgent topics and orientations for the journey of the Congregation. This reflection has then become the starting point for the discussion on the Lines of Action.
- 2 **A) To form the person, the religious**

Preamble: *Our Constitutions offer us several means for formation, but then we can see that they are not effective because of lack of appetite for a formation which should bring us to have the same sentiments of Christ (Phil 2,5).*

Need: To Form people to take care of themselves and at the same time to care for the communitarian relationships, offering ever new motivations to revitalize the gift we have received. (see 2Tm 1,6) This often still burns under the ashes, even in confrères who seem to be in deep crisis.

Orientation: Give continuity to a model of formation that generates transformation, that is a more experiential formation; at the same time , we have to establish way of verification which are simple but frequent, with concrete indicators at personal, communitarian and apostolic levels.
- 3 **B) To put community life at the centre and value the confrères.**

Preamble: *The difficulty to find balance between the personal and the communitarian dimension makes it difficult to experience the community as a place which is safe and fruitful. The culture of self-accomplishment brings people to identify themselves with their role and reduces their availability to the mission.*

Need: To put community life at the centre and value the confrères, revising the models of community prepared in the past. In the community life it is urgent to shift from “demanding” to “giving” and to strive to build it rather than to exploit it.

Orientation: Each community should make a discernment to achieve building an environment where they may live in simplicity, sharing like brothers.
- 4 **C) Actualize the charism**

Preamble: *We need to make our upsurge for evangelization new in the old institutions as well as in the new ones. Fidelity and prophecy demand us to dialogue with the outskirts where we must bring not only solidarity but also evangelization.*

Need: Actualize the charism understood as the gift of the Holy Spirit and which translates into charity. It is necessary to overcome the simple philanthropic attitude, and find new forms of giving and witnessing Jesus while serving; it is necessary to touch again the flesh of Christ.

Orientation: Start discerning deeply about our institutions to assure that they are a faithful and creative expression of our charism, giving first place to those who work on charity more directly; we need to prefer forms of implementing our charism in places with less beaurocracy and a simpler and more fraternal way of serving. Therefore it is necessary to gradually close some of them, renew some other and or open new ones.

1st Line of action: The humanity of the religious

SITUATION

- 5 From the analysis done in the different provinces, we see some situations of sufferance due to personal history and to socio-cultural context, which often influence the joyful witness of the religious and his brotherly relations. This makes it urgent to pay attention at the humanity of the religious.

Our Constitutions offer us several means for formation, but then we can see that they are not effective because of lack of appetite for a formation which should bring us to have the same sentiments of Christ (Phil 2,5).

AIM

- 6 Put in place without hesitation an on-going holistic formation to help people to accept and, when necessary, heal their history and so grow in conformity with Christ.

MOTIVATIONS

- 7 **Constitutions, art. 110**
« Formation cannot be thought of as ended with perpetual profession or priestly ordination. It must, of necessity, last for the whole of one's life. ».
- 8 **Pope Francis, Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter (27 May 2016)**
« Indeed, “those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew” (EG 1) ».
- 9 **Orionine Formational Journey, n. 56**
« In the sphere of human formation it is important to start from a deep knowledge of oneself and one's own identity. *Knowing oneself* is truly indispensable for seeking to *understand oneself* and to *manage one's own existence*. ».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 10 In order to favour a more experiential formation, through a personalized support of the religious, we suggest to implement with *creativity*:
- 11 **A)** The several tools already available to us (formation booklet, personal project, community plan...). For that purpose we must establish simple and frequent ways of verification with some indicators which have to be concrete at the personal, communitarian and apostolic level.
- 12 **B)** New tools that the Provinces have to device according to the context in which they operate.

2nd Line of action: The religious lives of God

SITUATION

- 13** In the last few decades our globalized world has taken a secular direction. This has done so that people have in front of them merely material things while their capacity for living in touch with transcendence is getting weaker. Even religious are, with more or less awareness, conditioned by these cultural forms.

After reading the answers sent by the confrères to the inquiry we can notice many positive points. At the same time we can notice some difficulties at the level of personal and communitarian life.

First struggle is to reconcile work and prayer. Furthermore we are signed by individualism. There is the risk that prayer becomes mechanic, routine, dry, a prayer that is made only by reading words. Spiritual sharing is often done at meetings but seldom in communities. We see therefore the urgent need to promote a return to the “first love”.

AIM

- 14** **Renew spiritual life with creativity, both at the personal and communitarian way, so that it may be a real relationship with God, who is the source of life that gives life to the apostolate. At the same time the apostolate gives life and meaning to the spiritual life.**

MOTIVATIONS

- 15** **Don Orione, *Letters I*, [1923]**
«The first charity we must do it to ourselves: we must pray more ».
- 16** **Pope Francis, *Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter (27 May 2016)***
« The more you seek to foster your personal commitment to Christ and your spiritual formation, the more your service to the church will be effective. ».
- 17** ***Perfectae Caritatis*, 8 in *Constitutions* art. 116**
« Therefore, all our religious life should be filled with an apostolic spirit and all our apostolic work should be animated by a religious spirit in intimate union with the Divine Master. ».
- 18** ***Evangelica Testificatio*, 42 in *Constitutions* art. 67**
« Faithfulness to prayer, or the abandonment of it, is the barometer of the vitality or decadence of religious life ».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 19** To find new means of animation and renew/make true what is already written in our constitutions and in our tradition about spiritual life, we need:
- 20** **A)** Plan times and ways for the daily prayer, for the weekly one (i.e. Lectio Divina on Sunday's Gospel, community day), and the monthly one (e.g. recollection).
- 21** **B)** Prepare community prayer with more creativity.
- 22** **C)** Endorse spiritual sharing.
- 23** **D)** Facilitate prayer meetings with lay people.
- 24** **E)** Develop a methodology of the orionine spirituality, using instruments like the book "On the footsteps of Don Orione".
- 25** **F)** Establish times and ways to verify if these initiatives are put into practice.

3rd Line of action:: The religious identify himself in the charism

SITUATION

- 26** The charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the members of a religious family, for the Church and for the world, that needs to be known, accepted, lived, reinterpreted, and constantly developed in harmony with the body of Christ always growing”. (cfr. MR 11).

From the results of the inquiry and the contributions of the provinces, it appears that many confrères find it difficult to identify themselves with the charism.

AIM

- 27** **We must rediscover the chore of the orionine charism and practice it to favour the identification of the religious with it.**

MOTIVATIONS

- 28** ***Constitutions, art. 5***

« The special aim of our Congregation is to spread the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, the Church and the Pope, especially among ordinary people. ... It does this by means of an apostolate of charity among the humble and poor ».

- 29** **Pope Francis, *Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter (27 May 2016)***

« You have been called and consecrated by God to stay with Jesus (cf. Mk 3:14) and to serve Him in the poor and those excluded by society. (...) Being servants of Christ qualifies all that you are and all that you do; it ensures your apostolic effectiveness and makes your service fruitful. ».

- 30** **Pope Francis, *Apostolic Letter To all consecrated people, n. 1***

«Recounting our history is essential for preserving our identity, for strengthening our unity as a family and our common sense of belonging. (...) We may encounter cases of inconsistency, the result of human weakness and even at times a neglect of some essential aspects of the charism. Yet everything proves instructive and, taken as a whole, acts as a summons to conversion. To tell our story is to praise God and to thank him for all his gifts».

- 31** **13th General Chapter, n. 82.**

«In recent years there have been deeper studies of a historical and spiritual type concerning the person and times of Don Orione. In order to facilitate a greater sense of belonging and for a better embodiment of the charism, we now realise that it is

necessary to deepen our knowledge of our spirituality and the *Constitutions* and to create ways of charismatic growth».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 32 In order to help religious in their task of identifying themselves with the
charism and put it into practice, we must:
- 33 **A)** Restart a critical study of our spirituality and go deep into it to
make it relevant for today's society. The same we must do with our
history (the saints of our family, the pioneer of the provinces), and the
sources and the pastoral action.
- 34 **B)** Review the charismatic formation plan to make it simpler, more
attractive and easier to practice.
- 35 **C)** During the initial and on-going formation, encourage experiences
of exposure to the poor, in whom we can touch and serve the flesh of
Jesus and with whom we can grow in union. (see Pope Francis,
Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter, 27 May 2016).
- 36 **D)** Make use of the formation booklet to deepen our charismatic
identity in all its aspects, and promote experiences of charismatic
“Lectio”.
- 37 **E)** Create interprovincial occasions by age groups in which to share
charismatic experiences.
- 38 **F)** Enhance the secretariats as tools and system of mediation and
actualization of the charism.
- 39 **G)** Create an informative website, shorter, simpler and more usable,
organised by theme, available under the General Archive (ADO).

4th Line of action:: The vital relation with the community

SITUATION

- 40 Communion is a gift given by God (mysticism), powered with the confreres (ascetic) and offered in the apostolate (mission).

The model, which traditionally has entered the living of consecrated life, based on discipline, has especially emphasized the "ought to be" and the mere observance of the rule. Today this is no longer meaningful.

From the enquiry and from our experience it is detected that there is a widespread unease in relationships and, by some, great difficulty in entering into the dynamics of community life as it is currently proposed.

AIM

- 41 **Rethinking the traditional models of community to live fraternal life as a living relationship with Jesus and the confreres, and to build together a new family in God that will evangelize.**

MOTIVATIONS

- 42 **Don Orione, *Letters II*, p. [1934]**

«The Little Work of Divine Providence must be like a family in Jesus Christ. The Congregation will prosper and will be blessed because of all those who will contribute to keep unity and peace; Our strength is in unity, which bond is Christ».

- 43 **Pope Francis, *Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter (27 May 2016)***

« Never lose sight of the Church nor of your religious community, rather, the heart must be there in your "Upper Room", but it must then go out to take God's mercy to all, without exception. ».

- 44 **CIVCSVA, *Fraternal life in community*, n. 23**

«Community that is not mystical has no soul, but community that is not ascetic has no body. "Synergy" between the gift of God and personal commitment is required for building an incarnated communion, for giving, in other words, flesh and concrete existence to grace and to the gift of fraternal communion ».

- 45 ***Constitutions*, art. 24**

«The religious community is our true family, the place of full development of our human and Christian personality, the environment most suitable for establishing relationships of brotherly love and starting point of apostolic fruitfulness ».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 46** To build new models of the family and enhance what is vital in fraternal relationship, it is useful:
- 47** **A)** Identify the essential elements of community life through a deep discernment.
- 48** **B)** In establishing religious communities, give priority to fraternal relations rather than the institutional role and the management of the work.
- 49** **C)** In the initial training, promote the ability to live in community and the fraternal spirituality.
- 50** **D)** Achieve in the six years internal courses, or even inter-congregational ones, of theology of consecrated life and of the community dynamics.
- 51** **E)** Develop the ability to empathetic listening, to assertive dialogue, to acceptance of manifest and latent conflicts, to the practice of fraternal correction and to sharing of feelings.

5th Line of action: The religious in mission: witness and service

SITUATION

- 52 All our work has as its goal the coming of God's kingdom. Put in Pauline and orionine language, our apostolic commitment is to "establish all things in Christ." However, we are aware that, at times, our charitable activity risks being reduced to a simple gesture of help and solidarity, and that the service can be felt like a burden or as a series of formal procedures rather than contagious expression of inner life.

The experience reminds us that the fruitfulness of the mission can be achieved only if the religious has strong spirituality and if his charitable work is rooted in God. In fact, it is precisely the witness of life and humble service of the religious that can turn the simple human solidarity or philanthropy in missionary activity.

AIM

- 53 To be "servants of Christ and servants of the poor", living and implementing a missionary spirit involving, in this order, the laity and the works.

MOTIVATIONS

- 54 **Don Orione, *Nel nome della Divina Provvidenza*, p. 142 [1939]**
 «We must be saints, but we must be such saints that our saintliness does not limit itself to the faithful, nor remain only within the Church, but transcends and throws such a shining light, such a great life of love of God and man on society, that we are more than saints of the Church; we are saints of the people and saints of social wellbeing. We must be a very deep vein of mystic spirituality that penetrates every social stratum: contemplative and active spirits, 'servants of Christ and the poor'.».
- 55 **Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 88**
 «The Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. ».
- 56 **Pope Francis, *Sermon to the Ecclesial Convention in Florence*, 10 November 2015**
 «. If we lose this contact with the faithful People of God, we lose humanity and we go nowhere.
 So what do we have to do, father? — you would say. What is the Pope asking of us? It is up to you to decide: people and pastors together.».
- 57 ***Constitutions*, 116.**
 «Don Orione has made us accustomed to see and to feel Christ in man and so to work always with zeal and ardour for God, the Church and souls. Thus we are certain that our apostolic and charitable work belongs to the very nature of religious life, for it is a sacred ministry and a work of charity given to us, on trust, by the Church and exercised in her name. Therefore, all our religious life should be filled with an apostolic spirit and all our apostolic work should be animated by a religious spirit in intimate union with the Divine Master».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 58 In order to develop a missionary action imbued of witness and service,
the following initiatives can help:
- 59 **A)** Share with people a style marked by simplicity, with charity
experiences personally lived. This is implemented since the years of
initial formation.
- 60 **B)** Promote joint training routes, shared with the whole charismatic
Family. For the lay collaborators, ensure and enhance time and
resources to offer them a charismatic-evangelizing training along with
technical and professional expertise in the various areas of our
mission.
- 61 **C)** Continue the work of the apostolic conversion of our charities
without limiting ourselves to them: "move from works of charity to
charity of the works".
- 62 **D)** Devise simple and periodic programming and verification mode,
with concrete indicators, personal, communitarian and apostolic; for
example: examination of conscience, personal and community plans,
apostolic budget, assessment by people, etc.
- 63 **E)** Promote, at the provincial level and / or local level, the
establishment of an innovative and professional service, effective /
strategic communication, such as to render charity visible and
shareable which is realized in the works and in apostolic service.
- 64 **F)** Promote the creation of training schools to the charism following
the example of those made in Argentina (EFO).
- 65 **G)** Promote, in the Provinces and local realities, annual meetings of
sharing open to the whole Orionine Family.
- 66 **H)** Carry out, in collaboration with the laity, concrete actions - not
institutionalized - of charity and human promotion in the territory.

6th Line of action: The apostolate of the congregation gift to the Church

SITUATION

- 67 The global context reveals a fall in the value of the institutions, weakening the traditional references and focusing on the economic and global parameters of production and consumption to the detriment of the poorest people of the world. The Church, in this scenario, sees diminished the credit of its institutional forms that threaten to make opaque its witness. It arises, therefore, strongly felt, the need for a return to the Gospel values that put back at the centre the human person, especially in its situations of fragility and weakness. For the service of this prophetic vision, interpreted by Pope Francis, the Congregation feels called to offer its charismatic gift by the apostolic action.

AIM

- 68 **The apostolate of the Congregation must become effectively a more direct witness of the charity of the Church for the needy, transforming, where necessary, ways of management, abandoning some activities or generating new ones.**

MOTIVATIONS

- 69 **Don Orione, *Nel nome della Divina Provvidenza*, p. 39 [1920]**

« We shall not be able to penetrate consciences, or convert young people, or draw people towards the Church without a great charity, and a real sacrifice of ourselves in Christ's love. Frightening corruption exists in society; a frightening ignorance of God; frightening materialism and hate; only charity will be able to lead people's hearts to God; and save people. ».

- 70 **Pope Francis, *Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter (27 May 2016)***

« In the poor you touch and serve the flesh of Christ and you grow in union with Him, always taking care that faith does not become an ideology, that charity is not reduced to philanthropy, and that the Church does not end up by becoming an “NGO” ».

- 71 **Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 27**

« I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with him. ».

72 *Constitutions, cfr. art. 48*

The apostolate of our Congregation commits us to: « a preferential option for and service of the poor, whose rights and demands, we shall defend in the name of the Pope and in faithfulness to him ».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 73** To become an effective and direct witness to the charity of the Church, it is suggested:
- 74 **A)**** Initiate, sustain and conclude, at all levels of the Congregation, a deep review of all activities (works, schools, churches, etc.), thereby using the budget and apostolic planning as a tool for planning and verifying the charism.
- 75 **B)**** Deepen, even at the theoretical and reflective level, the actualization of the works according to our charism, renewing or abandoning the less significant and opening other ones more responsive to the current needs of the poor.
- 76 **C)**** Implement a systematic training of religious and lay people to the specific apostolate of Don Orione.
- 77 **D)**** Form religious collaboration with our sisters and the laity.
- 78 **E)**** Implement an apostolic planning that takes into account the diocesan planning.
- 79 **F)**** Promoting cooperation between the secretariats at the service of the apostolic activities (works, schools, parishes, youth ministry, economy etc.).
- 80 **G)**** Continually update the knowledge of the universal magisterium documents and those of the local Church.

7th Line of action: Towards the fringes of existence in the world

SITUATION

- 81 Our time is conditioned by a culture that no longer poses the dignity of the human person at the centre. One should add that "in the dominant culture, the first place is occupied by what is external, immediate, visible, fast, superficial, temporary" (cfr. EG 62). We see a proliferation of new forms of poverty - even of a spiritual kind -, exclusion, indifference, corruption, illegal trafficking (human organs, drugs, weapons). All this generates several "scraps", beginning with young people increasingly deprived of hope in the future, the elderly and, unexpectedly, the recent large influx of refugees. Even the fundamental rights of every human being are compromised, in this climate: the right to life, food, health, culture and work. Even the environment suffers negative consequences caused by current economic policies.

AIM:

- 82 **Look in one's environment for the most appropriate responses to the different forms of poverty and marginalization giving life to new shoots of charity, to bring God's mercy to all, without distinction.**

MOTIVATIONS

- 83 **Don Orione, *Parola*, V p. 314 [1933]**
 «I regret to say this: the Church has done still too little in this area. The Lord has chosen to entrust this to us, to comfort the scrap of humanity, to ease the hours of anguish of our brothers. This is what I really want to tell you.»
- 84 **Pope Francis, *Address to the participants in the XIV General Chapter* (27 May 2016)**
 «There is so much need for priests and religious who not only work in charitable institutions — albeit necessary — but who know how to go beyond those boundaries, to bring the fragrance of Christ's charity into every environment, even those which are farthest away. Never lose sight of the Church nor of your religious community, rather, the heart must be there in your "Upper Room", but it must then go out to take God's mercy to all, without exception. There is a great need of priests and religious who should not just be satisfied with charitable institutions – which are needed of course . but who are able to go beyond their borderlines, to bring to each place, even the farthest, the sweet smell of Christ's charity. We need to go out in order to bring God's mercy to everyone, without distinction.»
- 85 **Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 203**
 «The dignity of each human person and the pursuit of the common good are concerns which ought to shape all economic policies. At times, however, they seem to be a

mere addendum imported from without in order to fill out a political discourse lacking in perspectives or plans for true and integral development. How many words prove irksome to this system! It is irksome when the question of ethics is raised, when global solidarity is invoked, when the distribution of goods is mentioned, when reference is made to protecting labour and defending the dignity of the powerless, when allusion is made to a God who demands a commitment to justice.».

JOURNEY and INITIATIVES

- 86 To make the confreres and the Don Orione family capable of meeting the challenges of the existential outskirts, in continuity with our past history and the experiences already in place, it is necessary that:
- 87 **A)** The Community, in the context of the local environment and in communion with the local Church, gives answers in favour of new forms of poverty, and links up also with other institutions, ensuring the kind of cooperation and the relevant procedures. In this journey is involved the orionine family present in the territory, and in particular young people.
- 88 **B)** The communities implement strategies, methods and verification in continuous dialogue with the Provincial Council, who will ensure the viability and continuity of the initiatives, even suggesting other possible interventions. Let us recall what the CG 13 (n. 20) had already said: "Each province, within the next six years, forms a new community (or at least creates a meaningful experience) that begins poorly among the poor".
- 89 **C)** Promote proper training to know how to work in teams and networking.
- 90 **D)** Foster experiences in the field of poverty - from the initial training - to touch and serve the flesh of Christ in the poor and to grow in union with Him, thus cultivating the zeal, the feelings and the apostolic daring of the Founder.
- 91 **E)** The Provincial Council and the community will encourage and accompany particularly sensitive confreres in initiatives in favour of poverty, favouring - if necessary - specific training.
- 92 **F)** The General Council will assess and propose possible interventions of international solidarity, as was done in the case of Marsabit, Kenya, or the tsunami that struck the people of India, or how we are doing at present with Syrian refugees welcomed by our community in Zarqa (Jordan).

PARTICULAR THEMES

A) CANONICAL VISITS

- 93** One of the problems mentioned in the communities was about the frequency of canonical visits: in the six year period three take place (one at general level and two at provincial level). This amount can devalue their efficacy.
- 94** The two forms of the canonical visit have assumed a different identity. The provincial one takes place in the setting of continuous government by those who know the province while the general one takes place with visitors who may not really know the reality of the province and has the scope of evaluating and encouraging the journey of the religious within the Congregation.
- 95** To give an adequate response to this situation we propose *ad experimentum*, to have two canonical visits during the six year period: one provincial and one general, with particular points that we now suggest.

GUIDELINES FOR THE GENERAL CANONICAL VISIT

- 96** It will be done by the Superior General, usually accompanied by the provincial (or someone delegated) and by whom the General Superior wants to associate.
- 97** The aim of the Superior General will be above all to verify that the community is in unison with the journey of the Congregation according to the directives given by the last General Chapter.
- 98** The aim of the Provincial Superior will centre on the daily life of the community, its involvement in the apostolate and fulfilling administrative norms.
- 99** Whether the Superior General or the Provincial Superior, both will verify that the recommendations of the previous visits have been put into practice.
- 100** The canonical letter will be communicated within three months of the visit taking place.
- 101** Through the collaboration of the Superior General and the Provincial Superior there will be some advantages:
- A)** A more complete idea of the community and its apostolate;
 - B)** Greater interaction between the two governments;
 - C)** Greater strength of the final recommendations to the communities.

B) RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN PARISHES

- 102** While running parishes brings about positive and charismatic results (closeness to people, love of the Pope, the Bishops, gestures of charity) we cannot always guarantee the same for the dynamics of religious life.
- 103** We need to remember that we have two sorts of communities:
- A)** The communities where all the confreres are working in parish activities (including running charitable works but through the parish);
 - B)** The communities where the parish is part of other institutions (it is an activity of the community).
- 104** In the first case there is more freedom to plan our religious life, in the second case it is more difficult because of our necessary responsibility to be involved.

GUIDELINES

- 105** Keeping in mind the various social and cultural situations of our parishes we give the following indications:

I - Religious life in our parishes

- 106** From the moment difficulties with individuals begin to arise in the living of religious community life we should at once:
- 107** **A)** Strengthen the identity of the parish as an Orionine work run by the religious (see. CG12, Decision 4)
 - 108** **B)** Continue to live life in community as it should be lived and take part in the initiatives of the Congregation.
 - 109** **C)** Harmonize the community project keeping in mind the pastoral project of the diocese.
 - 110** **D)** Promote and implement our Norms that say: *“The parish is given to the religious community and not to an individual; therefore the parish priest should inform and get the confreres involved in pastoral initiatives, in the taking of decisions and in the administration and accounting according to the rules of the Congregation” (see the Letter of the General Council of the Curia in Atti, n. 209, year 2002, pp. 274-287. The text became part of the new formulation of the norms).*
 - 111** **E)** Propose guidelines (vademecum) (handbook) of essential elements for running SDP parishes (see. CG12, decision 4).
 - 112** **F)** The superior of the community and the various people in charge of works should participate in the Parish pastoral council. The importance of such works need to be highlighted.
 - 113** **G)** Favour the meetings within each province of parish priests according to the indications of the Provincial Secretariat for parishes.

II - The charism in the context of the diocese

- 114** The presence of many parishes is a richness for the local Church. It is also an opportunity for the spreading and development of the charism. Our Orionine way of doing things strengthens our ecclesial identity and is appreciated by the people.

115 Therefore we commit ourselves to:

- A) Have a special attention for the poor through charitable activities both structured and non-structured
- B) Maintain a simple life-style being close to the people.
- C) Make don Orione better known.
- D) Promote the presence of the lay movement OLM and Youth movement OYM.
- E) Make known the speeches of the Pope and local bishops.
- F) Participate in diocesan life and be ready to help the bishops when needed.

III - Vocational and Youth work

116 The parish offers the precious possibility to work with youth and seek vocations. Following the indications of the 13th General Chapter (n. 110), we repeat the urgency and importance of spreading and nourishing the “culture of vocations” and strengthening the Provincial Vocations network.

117 To do this we need:

- A) To have close to our hearts the youth groups in the various parishes. They should participate in the activities of the diocese showing forth their Orionine identity.
- B) To form a good vocations apostolate to help young people to understand their calling and to consider embracing the consecrated way of life (FDP, LMSC, ISO and diocesan and other Congregations).
- C) Place particular attention in teaching young people to form families with Christian values.

C) CONTINUITY AND ORGANISATION OF YOUTH APOSTOLATE

- 118** The youth-Vocational apostolate is an urgency and priority in all the provinces.
- 119** There are however some difficulties in how it is organised and continued due to the frequent changes of the religious in charge and the lack of coordination in the programmes.
- 120** To guarantee its continuation and organisation a team must be created specifically for it, in order to plan and coordinate the various activities.
- 121** Such a team should have the following pre-requisites :
- A)** It should be coordinated by a full time religious and be ongoing, and be in strict collaboration with the Provincial Council through the responsible provincial councillor.
 - B)** It should be formed of lay people and religious well rooted in the charism, sensitive and in tune with the world of young people, but also with professional competence (in the field of education, psychology, pastoral and new ways of communication).
 - C)** It should have the necessary funding for the team to carry on its work. (*see. CG12 Decision 5*).

D) VOCATION OF THE RELIGIOUS BROTHER AND THE HERMIT

- 122** The religious brother and the hermit with their participation in the salvific mystery of Christ and the Church are a permanent sign of giving one's life completely to God. They remind us above all that the mission of the Church in her varied ministries and vocations is unique and shared by all. Nonetheless, we observe that the vocation of the religious brother in particular is not always understood or valued within the Congregation.
- 123** For this reason we consider important the need:
- A) To deepen our knowledge of the recent document:** *“Identity and mission of the religious brother in the Church”* (4th October 2015).
 - B)** To insist upon, in initial formation, the essence of religious life common to the Congregation of don Orione.
 - C)** To favour and develop the personal talents of the confreres for the service of the apostolate in line with previous General Chapters.
 - D)** To foster the vocation to the brothers and hermits in all our vocation drives.
 - E)** To plan some instances of formation and fraternal sharing among the brothers.

E) THE LOCAL BURSAR

- 124** In many communities, considering also the scarcity of religious, the role of bursar is assumed by the superior and where the bursar is another religious, his work is not the same as in the past.
- 125** His role is still valid for the running of the activities of the religious community.
- 126** It is proposed that:
- A)** Where possible the role of bursar and superior should be separated (see *norms* 222, edition 2012).
 - B)** Where the managing is complex and has specific rules, the activity can be run by the confrere in charge, helped by a team. The accounts will be presented from time to time to the house council.
 - C)** The provincial bursar's office should study the best ways to verify that this is done.

F) ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

127 A) Expenditures allowed by one's position

The sums which superiors can use for charitable purposes yearly for confreres or others, without having to give the reason, but which still must be registered in the accounts are:

- The Superior General up to 6.000 dollars;
- The Provincial Superior up to 3.000 dollars;
- The Superior of a vice-province or a Delegate up to 1.500 dollars;
- The local Superior up to 800 dollars.

128 B) For the alienation of property and for contracting debts or obligations

It is necessary to have:

- the written authorisation of the superior general with the deliberative vote of his council;
- authorisation from the Holy See for acts whose value exceeds the sum fixed by the same for individual regions, or which concern property of artistic or historical value or votive donations made to the Church.

129 C) For the acquisition of real estate and the acceptance of donations, inheritances and property subject to *burdens* the authorisation of the superior general with the deliberative vote of his council is required.

130 D) Inventory of movable assets

Every local Superior is obliged to draw up a precise “inventory” of movable assets with which the house is equipped. This is to be updated every three years and on handing over at the end of his term of office. The provincial government must undertake to check that this has been done.

131 E) Technical and administrative directory

The provincial government (or the provinces of an individual region) must provide information in the most appropriate ways – technical and administrative directory, circulars, meetings, etc. – to the houses of the normative and administrative arrangements of its own Province and check that they are observed.

132 F) Signatures on *current accounts*

The norm 207 (ed. 2012) provides that where “*for technical reasons or current money management it is not possible to proceed with the joint signatures, the banking for ordinary or extraordinary acts entrusted to a single person must be authorized and supervised by the religious*”.

In order to guarantee an effective control:

- Where possible, we continue with double signature, in the manner of all time.
- The budget and final accounts be used as control tools.
- Periodically, the senior administrative manager should explain to the house Council the bank statement with the payments.
- Each province ponders about how to make the necessary checks, both at the community, and works level.
- Since the movements are verifiable, the use of the credit/debit card, registered in the name of the community itself, should be allowed at the community level

133 G) Power of attorney

Where it is considered necessary the Provincial Superior and his Council may authorise the Province’s Legal Representative to issue power of attorney for specific areas or acts, for the purposes of allowing a quicker functioning of local administration.

The holder of this power is, however, is obliged to keep to all the norms laid down by the *Code of Canon Law* and our *Constitutions*.

134 H) Cooperation in management

Joint management (at the level of houses of the area, Province or Country) of certain assets (e.g. telephones, fuel, insurance, cars, but also food, sanitary, scholastic, etc.) can lead to the saving of considerable sums. This is an administrative practice that has been achieved in some very different operational situations.

The Province, therefore, after consulting the communities, will organise the common management of certain assets.

135 I) Economic relationships between a Religious Community and the Religious working for a Parish

In this respect due attention must be paid to the instructions concerning the duty of the parish priest to give an account to his superior of the relationship between the parish administration and that of the religious community as specified in the letter from the Superior General's organisation (see. *Atti*, n. 209, anno 2002, p. 274-287).

136 J) Honesty in administration

In order to increase an authentic family spirit as well as one of mutual cooperation and co-responsibility, we must be motivated at every level - general, provincial, local and personal – by complete honesty in the administration of property.

The following applies, therefore, at every level, according to the specific areas of competence:

- **Financial plan** – The General Curia and the Provinces will draw up their own financial plan every year, making use of professionally expert consultants. (*Norms*, 198, ed. 2012)
- **Budget** – At the beginning of the year every house must prepare a budget. The provincial bursar's office will assist in drawing it up if necessary. (*Norms*, 198, ed. 2012)
- **Timely financial information** – Every month the bursars will make a report to their respective councils. (*Norms*, 226, ed. 2012)

Every six months:

- the local bursar will make his report to the house council so that, after its approval, it may be submitted to the provincial council no later than two months after the end of the six-month period.
- the work's administrative officer shall submit to the House Council, the fiscal accounts so that, after the approval, they can be forwarded to the Provincial Council, within two months from the end of the semester.
- each provincial bursar will submit the report of the Province and the houses so that, after approval by the provincial council, it may in turn be submitted to the general council no later than three months from the due date.
- the bursar general will submit the report of the General Curia and the provinces for approval. For the accounts relative to the first six months of the year this will be in the form of a statement; at the end of the year the balance sheet for the whole of the year is to be submitted.

137 K) Shared assets

- **Contributions to the common fund** – By the end of December each year every Province is committed to make the established contributions to the Superior

General's organisation and to indicate whether there is any need for assistance for any particular project (*Norms* 221, ed. 2012). The General Council informs, in a reserved manner, the provincial councils about the contributions that the provinces pay to the general common fund and about the helps that are sent to the provinces.

- Every community, even the poorest, is to make the contribution established by the Province, even at the cost of some sacrifice. In addition to this contribution, any community that has a surplus for that year must place it all at the disposal of the provincial common fund, as laid down in *Norms*, 221 ed. 2012.
- **Common fund** – The local superiors are committed to ensure compliance with the common fund, according to the procedures indicated by the superior general's organisation. (*Norms*, 203, ed. 2012)
- **Personal report** – In order to increase the family spirit and to encourage observance of the *Constitutions*, every religious must submit a monthly personal report to his superior. All superiors, whether general, provincial or local, are obliged to account for their expenditure.

138 L) Distinction between tax balance sheet and institutional balance sheet

Since in our institutions there is frequently a lack of distinction between the tax balance sheet and the institutional one, as well as conflict and confusion between the cash account of the community and the fiscal/administrative account of the work, it will be necessary for every Bursar and/or technical administration staff member to make a clear distinction between the institutional balance sheet (community-province) and the tax balance sheet (one or more works). Also the parish must have separated accountings.

This must then be conducted in a decisive and clear manner, in order to achieve a style of administration that is of a good standard and independent.

If the community intervenes in order to supplement the fiscal/administrative account this must be shown clearly as a planned intervention by the community for the purposes of rectifying the administrative *deficit* of the work.

139 M) Protection of the names and crest of the Congregation

In every country where we are present we must, in cooperation with our Sisters, register the exclusive use of certain names as well as that of the crest of the Congregation (*Don Orione*, *Work of Don Orione*, *Little Cottolengo*, *Little Work of Divine Providence*, *Sons of Divine Providence*, *Don Orione Institute* and similar).

We must not allow other bodies unconnected with our activities to use these names.

We must proceed with great caution in allowing associations and bodies, even those associated with us, to use these names, especially in the case of corporations. In the normal course of events we allow such usage when we are basically in direct or indirect control of them, not only for the purposes of good personal relations, but also for legal reasons.

In addition to compliance with the *Constitutions* and *Norms*, we must always, when setting up bodies and associations, request the authorisation of the provincial superior's team.