

## Program Part One



With the Convocation of the General Chapter, July 1, 2008, we begin a preparation time consisting of two stages, or parts: the first stage takes place throughout the entire year prior to the Chapter, leading up to July 2009; part two follows the Chapter event and is aimed at putting the Chapter decisions into practice.

Before the General Chapter, each Province or Delegation, implements a preparation plan in which everyone can participate and reflect on the suggested theme. As was the case in previous General Chapters, we wish to invite all of those persons who feel a connection with our charism and the educational mission of the Company of Mary, and who desire to freely participate: Laity Network, members of school staff/faculties and other apostolic works, alumni, other groups....

### ■ Selection of **theme** and its **content**:

As stated in the convocation letter, the Chapter theme is: ***Culture, Identity, Interculturality, Universality, from the Perspective of the Kingdom.*** Like the themes in past Chapters, it invites us to, together, find specific ways to *express in our present day* the values intrinsic to the Company of Mary charism.”<sup>1</sup>

In the coming six years, 2009-2015, our interconnected, diverse, inter-racial world... will become even more so, and so will the Company of Mary. The call to live our identity in plurality and universality will be even greater. This demands that we continue to participate through the educational charism of Saint Jeanne de Lestonnac in creating a new culture where the KINGDOM is made visible

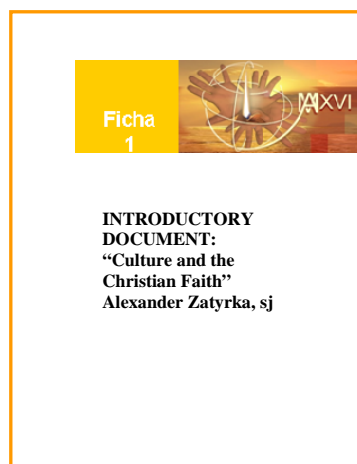
■ Keeping in mind the above statement, the three **major goals** we wish to achieve are the following:

- Live this Chapter year as a special time to renew our desire to encounter the God of life; to renew our commitment to making the Kingdom of God more present in our world.

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<sup>1</sup> Constitutions of the Company of Mary 2006, Government 37, p.89.

- Take an in-depth look at some of the characteristics of our present-day reality, listening to the calls the Lord makes through them.
  - Discern and identify the greatest needs we should be addressing and point out common action lines for 2009-2015.
- We suggest a working methodology that “touches” our lives in specific and concrete ways; one that leads us to review our daily life and encourages us to discover the “next step” to take in the coming years in making God’s will for the Company of Mary a reality.
- The **reflection** material is organized in **TWO GUIDELINES:**



- The goal of **GUIDE 1** is to study and interiorize the Introductory Document: “*Culture and Christian Faith.*” Alexander Zatyрка sj.
- This is a general overview on the relationship between culture and evangelization. It is an initial approach to the conceptual framework of culture.
- **GUIDE 2** contains seven core topics on different aspects related to the Chapter theme. Each topic has two parts: one is a study paper prepared by sisters and the other prepared by lay people.

The objective is to *reflect* on the impact of these aspects on the educational mission, and to formulate *specific questions* on issues needing further in-depth reflection in order to reach some conclusions.

Each group can work on all the topics or select those it considers more in tune with its reality.

The study papers we send do not exclude the possibility of using other resource material related to the same topics as well.

■ **Suggested timeline:**

- *July 1, 2008 - 10 de febrero de 2009*, reflection and discernment in groups, teams....
- *February 10*, send a report on the groups reflection to the persons assigned to prepare the overall summaries for the Chapter.
- *Before February 28*, send report with ideas for the Provincial Chapter to the Provincial or Delegation Secretary.
- *Between April 6 and 18*, the Provincial Chapter will take place. The dates correspond to Holy Week and Easter Week. Each Province will select the dates most suitable to its particular circumstances.  
In each context, where it is possible, lay people will participate in previously determined sessions.
- *December 2008*, after prior consultation with the local leadership, Provincials, Territorial Delegates and Interprovincial Ambit Delegates. invitations will be extended to the lay people who have been suggested to participate in the General Chapter
- *July 1- 31, 2009*, XVI General Chapter in Rome. The laity will participate in the predetermined dates for one week and specified in the invitation.

We invite the Laity Network, educational communities, work teams, groups, etc. to set a time for meetings and specify other aspects to keep in mind in order that this Chapter process may generate abundant life in each person and in the Company of Mary for the good of God's Kingdom.

Beatriz Acosta Mesa odn  
and General Team

Rome, July 1, 2008