

Part One Program



The following guideline is intended to help us make the Chapter a vital experience in our lives and to fulfill the proposed goals.

1. 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.*** Along with themes of past Chapters, it invites us to, “in *union of hearts*, find specific ways to *express, in our day*, the values intrinsic to our charism.”¹

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 our identity in plurality and universality will be even greater. This demands that we continue to participate through our educational charism in creating a new culture where the KINGDOM is made visible

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

- Live this Chapter year as a new year of grace, a propitious time to renew our desire to follow Jesus and our commitment to making the Kingdom of God more present in our world.
- 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 those aspects of our identity which should be emphasized and made apparent in our personal and community apostolic lives and look for specific ways to “express, in our present day, the values intrinsic to our charism.”² From this perspective, designate the priorities in our Apostolic Project, 2009-2015.

3. We suggest a methodology that “touches” our lives in specific and concrete ways; one that leads us to review our daily living, encouraging each and everyone of us to discover the “next step” to take, thus making God’s will for the Company a reality.

4. To this end, **we will make use of**:

- *Ignatian discernment* as the foundation for living the Chapter process; a tool in helping us perceive God’s presence in our lives and in the world,

¹ Cf. Company of Mary Constitutions 2006, Gov. 37, p. 89.

² Ibid.

also enabling us to recognize where God wishes to lead us, and allowing ourselves to be led.

- *The Word of God* found in the daily liturgy and in the Letters of St. Paul, who as a witness to the Gospel, teaches us how to “translate” it for the different cultural contexts with respect and appreciation for plurality. The coincidence of the Chapter year with the celebration of the Pauline Year is another reason to feel united to the Church in this historic moment.

It requires that we consciously be on God’s “wavelength” on a daily basis, allowing the Lord to prepare us to live the Chapter process from within.

- An *introductory document*: “*Culture and Christian faith*,” will help us understand the importance of the Chapter theme and gain insight into the challenges we face today as educators at the service of the Kingdom.
- *Other studies* that will develop the Chapter theme and that the General Assembly agreed needed close examination.³
- *Other documents written in recent years*, fruit of the various studies that have taken place, express what we live and what we want to live. They will help us reflect on our journey and continue to move towards the future.

The Documents we send do not exclude the possibility of each person or community choosing other resources, as well, that deal with the same topics.

5. The work prior to the Provincial, Territorial Delegation and Interprovincial Ambit Chapters is organized in the following manner:

a) Reflection and discernment in the local communities: Guides 1, 2, 3 Part One

- **Guide 1:** Introductory Paper: “*Culture and Christian Faith*” by Alexander Zatirka sj⁴.

Personal reading of the document, sharing in community with the idea of helping one another *assimilate* its content.

- **Guide 2:** Aspects regarding the contemporary global reality and its effect on our mission.

Analysis and reflection on various topics. For this purpose, study papers have been prepared by two separate groups from various parts of the world, one consisting of religious and the other of lay people.

- **Guide 3: Diagnostic analysis of the state of the Company and future prospects**

Serious consideration will be given to each of the processes that, according to the General Government Project for this past term, 2003 – 2009, animate the life of the Company. This will give us an overall view of the “current

³ Cf. General Assembly 2006, “ideas on how to approach the General Chapter, 2009 theme,” p. 28.

⁴ Expert in inculturation and interculturality. Director of the Department of Religious Science, Universidad Iberoamericana. México D.F.

state of the Company” in each context and will help us look towards the future.

Guide 3 consists of **two parts**. The work regarding **Part One** will take place in the **communities**:

The present state of the apostolic communities of the Company.
Discernment of our reality and looking towards the future.

b) Reflection and discernment by the **Leadership Teams and various committees, commissions and groups** and the Teams of belonging to International Structures, GUIDE 3, Part Two.

These groups will carefully review the aspects of the Government Project that correspond to them; they may solicit the help of other religious, if they consider this helpful.

6. Calendar:

a) General

- **June 2008.** Send the Leadership Teams the following document: Provincial Chapters: “Criteria and ways of proceeding regarding certain aspects of Chapter preparation and for the Chapter itself.”⁵
- **July 2008**, convocation of the XVI General Chapter and sending material for the preparation of Part One.
- **December 2008**, after prior consultation with the local leadership, invitations will be extended to the lay people who have been proposed to participate in the General Chapter
- **April 30, 2009**, appointment of the Pre-capitular Committee by the General Team.
- **May- June**, immediate preparations for the General Chapter.
- **July 1 a 31, 2009**, XVI General Chapter, Rome.

b) Provincial, Territorial Delegation and Interprovincial Ambit Level

Superiora Provincial y Equipo:

- *July 2008.*
 - The Provincial Superior convokes Provincial or Delegation Chapter with a letter sent to the communities, together with the program proposed by the General Team.
 - Letter sent from the Provincial Team to the laity letting them know their manner of participation in the Chapter reflection and how to prepare their contribution to the Provincial or Delegation Chapter.
- Selection of lay people who might attend the Provincial Chapter, *during the time that the Leadership Team indicates*, and only if it is seen as feasible.
- *November 2008*, suggestion of names and information given to the General Team by the Provincial Leadership Team for the selection of lay people who might participate in the General Chapter.

⁵ According to what was agreed upon at the VII General Assembly, 2006. Conclusions regarding other topics. p. 27

Communities: July 2008 to February 10, 2009:

- Study, reflection and discernment on the topics proposed by the General Team. Preparation of the questions and proposals for the Provincial or Delegation Chapter.
Send the Provincial or Delegation Secretary:
* *Before January 15*, the work done on *Guide 2*.
* *Before February 10*, the work done on *Guide 3, Part One*.
- Election of the delegates to the Provincial Chapter according to the indications given in the Document: “Provincial Chapters: criteria and way of proceeding in some aspects regarding its preparation and during the Chapter itself,” Rome, June 2008, *at the time the Leadership Team find it most appropriate*.

Leadership Team, Commissions and Groups:

Before February 28, send the Provincial Secretary the work done on Guide 3, Part two.

Provincial Team – Superiors Meeting:

Between February 10 – 28, diagnostic analysis of the communities, **Guide 3**, Part One.

International Structures Team

- *Before February 28, 2009* send the reflection report to the General Secretary

Laity: July 2008 - February 10, 2009

Study, reflection and discernment on the topics proposed by the General Team. Preparation of questions and proposals for the Provincial or Delegation Chapter.
* *Before February 10, 2009* send the Provincial or Delegation Secretary the work done on *Guideline 2*.

Provincial or Delegation Chapters

- *March 2009*, preparation.
- *Between April 6 – 18, 2009*, the Provincial Chapters take place. The dates correspond to Holy Week and Easter Week. Each Province will select the dates most suitable to its particular circumstances.
- *Before April 26*, Provincial Chapter minutes, report prepared for the General Chapter, names of the General Chapter delegates and any other requested material will be sent to the Secretary General.

We invite each individual sister and community to set a specific time for prayer, study, reflection, meetings, and retreats... and to identify other things which should be kept in mind in order that the Chapter process may generate abundant life in the Company for the good of the Kingdom.

Beatriz Acosta Mesa, odn
and General Team

Rome, July 1, 2008