

Preparatory work for the chapter

Rome, December 9, 2022



*"The bell of synodality rings loud
and calls us to a
new Time to "act autrement"*

Dear Sisters and Laity

For some time now, the sound of the bell announcing our 44th General Chapter has reached us. It is the bell of synodality that convokes each and everyone, and no one should feel excluded. In this synodal journey that began with the Zoom meeting on September 17th, we could observe how much we feel implicated in this event of the Blue Family. This is an opportunity for us, as a team, to express our gratitude for the good participation. Today we come to you with a new sound of bells: that of the icon, the orientations and the preparatory work.

✚ **Icon and Motto:** in this time of synodality, together with the pre-chapter team, immediately came the idea of adopting the bell as a symbol for our next chapter. The icon, very dear and suggestive to all of us, because it makes us think of the Refuge where Emilie, by ringing the bell, went to welcome the new girls who came to the house.

At Sainte Jeanne Emilie de Villeneuve Parish in Castres, on the occasion of the Canonization, a bell named Emilie was commissioned. Today he is the 34th sound of the carillon of the Church of Notre Dame de La Platé. Otherwise, for the 2018 Chapter, the General Team suggested that the bell of the Refuge would be transferred to the Motherhouse, to keep alive the invitation to respond hastily to the urgent calls of the needs of our brothers and sisters.

The bell is a call to listen, throughout the ages we have heard many bells, some have moved and saddened us, others have cheered us and called us to celebration, others have urged us to go "where the voice of the poor calls us", others have perhaps frightened and intimidated us, we have left them unanswered.

This 44th General Chapter invites us to be attentive to the sounds that come to us from within and without, in order to give answers according to today's needs in tune with the church in synodality.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

✚ **Dates of arrival and departure:** To facilitate the organization of the Motherhouse, we propose to the provinces, as much as possible, to concentrate the arrivals at Castres between **April 14 and 15**. We ask you to send your ticket and travel insurance to Sister Ivete Bernardes no later **than March 15**. Here is her e-mail address: etevi@hotmail.fr .

NB: Those who need an invitation letter, should send Ivete the following documentation:

1. passport information
2. For the sisters: the date of first profession.
3. Choose the type of visa you need: **short stay VISA** (3 months stay in France only) or **travel VISA** (3 months with possibility to visit other countries).

Time for lay participation: We are inviting the laity to participate in the General Chapter Assembly from April 17 to 29. On the 19th and 20th in the morning, while the sisters will work on internal congregational themes, the laity will have their own space.

✚ **Orientators:** Starting from the richness that we continue to discover in our Inspiring Horizons and in this synodal time, we invited Fr. Cristo Rey García Paredes who responded positively. He accompanied us in the previous chapter and shared with us by zoom, in September, the synthesis of the work on synodality carried out by the consecrated life. He will guide the elaboration of the project and some days of retreat and discernment before the elections.

For the daily accompaniment, our sister Marie Philomène Diouf agreed to take on the service of facilitator during the chapter.

✚ **Antennae of the Chapter:** In agreement with the pre-chapter team, and to honor the synod perspective, an "antenna team" will be formed whose mission will be to collect the main orientations that will emerge from our various conversations before and during the chapter. These orientations will be the beacons that will contribute to the elaboration of the chapter document.

- ✚ **Teams work:** We are grateful for the availability of the sisters who agreed to provide secretarial services: María Gloria Castillo and Jeanne Hermine Coly, translation: Inez Lovera and Georgette Ndour, and communication: Laure Deymier.

- ✚ **Care for the planet:** As far as possible we want to avoid using paper; therefore, we ask each chapter participant to bring a computer so that we can share the documents we will be working on during the chapter.

- ✚ **Proposals for the Chapter:** Each Sister, Delegation or Province, according to C. 2004 N°104 d, can present to the chapter an important issue for the life of the Congregation that needs to be studied and voted by the Chapter members. We ask that they be sent to the general secretariat **no later than the beginning of March 2023.**

- ✚ **Liturgy:** In the desire that the morning prayer and the Eucharist be in harmony with the theme of each day, we propose that it be prepared during the chapter by the delegates of each province, with the coordination of Sister Eliane Claire Kenguele.

- ✚ **Outings:** Throughout these days that we will be together, we will privilege walking in Emilie's footsteps in Castres, Hauterive and Gaix; we will also visit our sisters in Massac. We will go to see the "Carpets of D. Robert à Sorèze".

- ✚ **Cultural day:** In our meetings we greatly appreciate and value our different cultural riches, as well as the tasting of specialties from each country. For this, we propose one day for each continent to share its riches.

- ✚ **Gesture of solidarity:** Considering the moment of world crisis in which we live and knowing so many needs around us, we want to make a gesture of solidarity for the community of Haitians who are in Mato Grosso, accompanied by our sisters. We wish that, instead of buying gifts to exchange among ourselves, that each province contribute with an amount of solidarity that we will collect for a project in favor of them. Later on we will share the project with you.

- ✚ **Prayer for the Chapter:** In our letter of convocation to the chapter, we have already sent you a prayer that disposes us to live this chapter time that involves everyone; this prayer will help us prepare ourselves and be in communion.

NB: The schedule we will send you later will include the dates of the liturgy and cultural evening for each province and continent.

PREPARATORY WORK

✚ In dialogue also with the pre-chapter team, we saw that the presentation of the reports of each province and mission team could be presented before the chapter. This space of presentation that we envisage by zoom, as members of the same charismatic family, will allow us to:

- ✓ Listening to each other;
- ✓ To become aware and to welcome the steps that have been taken by each other from our Inspiring Horizons;
- ✓ To question ourselves, to continue to give meaning to our presence in the world and to our mission;

For this, we propose to meet for zooming, on 4 Saturdays in March, from 2 pm to 5 pm in Rome. let's reserve this space in our agendas.

✚ **Reports from provinces:** To prepare these reports, we propose to use the synod **methodology**, which offers us the possibility to continue having meaningful conversations from different points our HI. Before questioning ourselves about the four orientations of synodality, it would be good if we took the time to reread our HI, particularly: our diakonias, another community is possible, another formation, Vocation, dream and gift of God, economy of communion in solidarity...

After impregnating ourselves again with our Horizons, we can then, in a synodal dynamic, follow this methodology that we propose to you.

✚ **Methodology:**

1. **Evoking/narrating** stories and life stories from our communities, province, mission... remembering the biblical Word: Listen, Israel. It is time to listen to ourselves, to listen to the stories of our daily experience, because in them God communicates himself to us.

- ◆ **What concrete steps have we as a province taken with regard to our HI?**
2. *From these stories and narration, **discover the seeds of life that** are already present, and **the scythia**, the bad weeds that threaten the life of the seed.*
- ◆ **What lessons have they left us with? And what are the most important challenges facing us as a province?**
3. *To dream God's dream, of synodality for the communities, province, mission, congregation...*
- ◆ **From the stories we remember and the challenges to take on, what new dreams do we have?**
4. *Design and commitment - implications for our life and mission.*
- ◆ **What concrete action proposals for our life and mission?**

NB: At the end of the presentation of each province and each mission team, there will be a feedback, in the form of a summary. This feedback, an echo of the life that animates our Congregation today, will allow us to continue to question ourselves about "God's loving designs" in and with our Congregation.

- ✚ **Time:** Each Saturday we will have 2 or 3 presentations from provinces and one of the mission teams. The duration of the presentation will be 20' followed by a time for resonances. We ask that the presentations be made in plain text, ppoint or pdf and avoid videos which are heavy to play.
- ✚ Below is the calendar with the dates on which each province and team will perform.

Calendar of the presentation of the provinces and mission areas		
DAY	PROVINCE	TIME
March 4th	Introduction - prayer PAC AR/UY Interval Social Team Communication Team Farewell	14:00 14:15 to 14:55 15:00 à 15:40 15:40 3:50 PM to 4:25 PM 16:30 to 16:55 5'
March 11	Welcome - prayer Europe Mato Grosso Interval Mexico Education Team Farewell	14:00 14:10 a 14:50 14:55 a 15:35 15:35 15:45 a 16:20 16:25 a 16:55 5'
March 18th	Welcome - prayer PAO Philippines Interval Benin History Team Farewell	14:00 14:10 a 14: 50 14: 55 a 15: 30 15:30 15:40 a 16: 15 16:20 a 16: 55 5'
March 25th	Welcome - prayer São Paulo Paraguay Interval Lay Team Conclusion/Evaluation - M^a Philomène	14:00 14:10 a 14:50 14:55 a 15:35 15:35 15:45 a 16:20 16:20

NB: We have attached some documents that you can use to clarify the methodology or use as reference for your work and proposal sheet:

1. The congregational synthesis of the work on synodality,
2. A synthesis of the UISG/USG contribution on synodality,
3. The link to Fr. José Cristo Rey García Paredes' conference on the occasion of the zoom on September 17: <https://prezi.com/view/guaUvzHcR9ConzeO5elv/>
4. Proposal Schema.

With love and prayers from your sisters on the General Animation Team.

Justi Amice *R. Melo* *M. Beatrice* *J. F. Joubert*