



INFO SSCC

Hermanas – Sisters – Sœurs

Rome, June 20th, 2014

Congregazione dei Sacri Cuori di Gesù e Maria
Via Aurelia 145 – Scala C – Inte. 10/14 00165 Roma
www.sscpicpus.com

**CHOOSE
LIFE AND
YOU WILL
LIVE**



FROM THE GENERAL SUPERIOR

Choose life so that you and your descendants may live ..." these words from Deuteronomy that introduce the Decisions of the 35th General Chapter, continue to resonate in our hearts with a hope and joy that is ever new; we continue to choose life and focus on it. The Council of the Congregation has just celebrated a visible testimony of this truth.

All the sisters of the Congregation joined their hearts in a common prayer that the Lord, through His Spirit, would guide, enlighten and inspire the preparation and realization of this Council of the Congregation, and afterwards all that was experienced, I can state unequivocally that the Lord has been and is on our side, is with us and wants to continue journeying with us. To experience this meeting during the week of preparation for the Feast of Pentecost, was a grace and blessing difficult to explain in words, but can be perceived within the whole experience.

From the beginning of the meeting, we asked the Spirit to stay with us, to guide our work, to enlighten our minds and to form our hearts, so that all we experienced over these days would be according to the Heart of God. From what we experienced it can be said that there was in each and all a great openness and willingness: to let the Spirit, the creative source of life to

work in and through us, to co-operate submissively and to be at the service of a continuous Pentecost for each of our sisters and for those to whom they proclaim the joy of the Gospel.

With these sentiments and attitudes we began this important meeting of Congregation, but one could also tell that each sister brought her own expectations and hopes for the journey we are making, the same as those that were slowly emerging. At the end of the second day of work and reflection one could recognize some similar feelings to those of the disciples of Emmaus "*we were expecting something more constructive, as we have already said, that would be the new configuration of the Congregation and the new face, but we are still talking about processes that have to be experienced...*". In this environment and with these expectations within the heart of each one, the Spirit, our silent protagonist, still speaking to us through Xavier Quinza, our general consultant, who told us again and again, that in a restructuring process like ours the primacy is of the Spirit, He is the one who begins, initiates, accompanies and sets the pace; what matters is not what we can do, but the work of God in us and this is the only thing that will give consistency to the process. It is a path from fragility to trust.

It is our weakness that attracts the Spirit, not our strength nor our projects... it is in our need where He acts, gives us strength, calls us together and binds us. In this context, the invitation is to choose life from the point of view of the Magnificat, from the humble acknowledgment that all is gift and grace.

It is our weakness that attracts the Spirit, not our strength nor our projects...

In this atmosphere we came to the third day in which a model in stages was proposed, with its respective modes of participation, with a methodology of discernment and co-responsibility that generates processes of involvement and always facilitates listening to the Spirit. A roadmap for the reconfiguration process of the Congregation with three clearly defined phases was presented: **revitalization, review of works and presences and suggested models of reconfiguration**; three phases that will be accompanied by a preliminary phase of **motivation and socialization** of the Council of the Congregation and a **Prayer Itinerary** that will accompany the whole of this process. Finally the time line of this Roadmap, which begins in June this year and will continue until the next Council of the Congregation to be held in January 2016, was presented.

At this point the hearts of our sisters were touched and throbbed in another way and they said, now we see more clearly, there is a path that is before us; there is a process that has to be done and experienced; there is a large task in which we must all get involved, in which we have to give the best of ourselves, but always giving prominence to the Holy Spirit, because it is "*He who comes to help us in our weakness ... He himself intercedes for us with unspeakable groanings*" (Rom. 8:26)

Now we see more clearly... there is a path... a process..., a task..., in which we must all get involved ..., but always giving prominence to the Holy Spirit

The Council of the Congregation Council has ended, but its impact will continue in the life and mission of each sister and community. The sisters who participated in it, have a large task and responsibility, but it cannot be carried out without the participation and involvement of each sister; we have to experience the reconfiguration process together and in communion, welcoming it with love, responsibility and a sense of belonging, which with the blessing of

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God and his Spirit we have to experience as a Congregation in this part of the process. We need to believe and we need to act; our life is defined by our choices, by our daily decisions and by our actions; we need to choose life each day and remain committed to it.

To believe in this way that we are sensing and moving along is an act of hope, not of certainties; it calls into play the best of each and all of us; it is trying to create, to put the bricks needed to build something new, located in a present that has a past and dreams for a future. We will experience this stage of the process with much hope and creativity or with what is the same, with an active hope. It will not be a vision or creation from nothing, nor a repetition of the same; to act creatively implies that we seriously take charge of who we are and what we have in all its intensity, and from there to find a way that manifests the new.

We have a dream, a vision before us and at the same time we have a reality that we need to take care of. Being creative does not mean getting rid of all the more limited, fragile and worn out current reality that this presents. There is no future without a present and without a past; creativity involves remembering and co-responsible discernment.

The road we have to travel is long and perhaps difficult, but the One who has called us and has brought us together does not leave us alone, He is by our side, He is at work in us and through us despite our weaknesses and fears. In this part of the journey we should well remember the words of St. Augustine: "*ask as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on you*", we are all called to give our best human and spiritual resources, to engage with creative hope throughout the whole of the process of reflection and discernment that we have to go through during this time; but we cannot forget that it is the work of God and we need to ask him with deep faith that He will carry it to fruition according to his Heart.

**the One who has called us
and has brought us together
does not leave us alone, He
is by our side...**

I would like to finish these words with something that can resonate with much persistence, but given its importance I cannot help but bring it to mind. Let us continue to work together and in communion on everything that lies ahead, because only through working in communion and co-responsibility that will we fulfil the dream of the Congregation "*to have a new face.*" Let us always invoke the spiritual presence of our founders that they may accompany us from heaven and walk with us to continue recreating with creative hope our beautiful ss.cc charism and spirituality.

May Mary, who knew how to embrace life, cultivate it and surrender it, be our faithful companion along the way and teach us to choose life, to cultivate it and surrender it in the everydayness of our life.

***"Happy Feast of the Sacred Hearts
of Jesus and Mary"***

*Emperatriz Arrobo ss.cc
General Superior*

SHARING THE LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

COUNCIL OF THE CONGREGATION – EL ESCORIAL 2014



If we attune ourselves to look and listen, we may find God present with us, all around us and speaking to us constantly. But if we don't bother to look, it will seem that there is nothing to be seen. Elizabeth Barrett Browning describes what happens when we so often miss what lies plainly in front of us:

*“Earth's crammed with heaven.
And every bush afire with God.
But only he who sees takes off his shoes.
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries”*

We are called to recognize that we live and work and stand in a holy place. Such was the experience of each of us as we lived through the Council of the Congregation held in El Escorial, Spain from the 2nd to 8th June. We recognized that we were in a “holy place”; we recognized the presence of God with us in His fidelity as he led us from the mystical experience and impulse of the Spirit during the 35th General Chapter to the constant and evident experience of joy and communion as we walked, searched, talked and prayed together this week. The objective of this Council of the Congregation was to present, approve and implement a Roadmap for the Reconfiguration process of the Congregation with the appropriate tools for its implementation in each of its phases, from a common and unifying vision.



We will share with you an outline of what we lived during these days of encounter. We began the meeting with an opening Eucharist; during the offertory each sister was invited to symbolically express her desire to bring the best of herself and in this way to facilitate the action of the Spirit who wants to do something new with our Congregation. Each sister sowed a

handful of seeds in previously prepared soil. These symbolic seeds of life and hope were nourished in the contact with the soil, grew and flourished as the week progressed.

In this same atmosphere Xavier Quinzá,^{sj} our general facilitator, began preparing the ground of each one of us for the eventual presentation and approval of the Roadmap by highlighting some important elements in a process of Reconfiguration. He drew on ideas from the document previously studied by the participants, which was taken from Rosa Ma Balda's book "Gestión con Corazón". We were invited to become aware that this process of reconfiguration calls us above all to a spiritual reconfiguration of each and every one of us, allowing space for God and for the newness of the Spirit in each one of us. We are called to believe in this "Kairos" moment, in the certainty that God is walking with us and is enabling us to face the future and our reality, not just what is, but what we would like to do with what is.

Xavier spoke of the need to let go of the old ways of seeing things, inviting us to "*second level*" thinking- a more intuitive way of perceiving our present reality, alert to and seeking out what is different so that we can transform present habitual ways of doing things into something new. He called us to reflect on the present in the light of the future (*our horizon of expectation*) gathering hopes and energy, real forces that move the Congregation at this moment (*attractors*) and acknowledging fears, resistances that diminish and paralyze life at this moment (*retractors*). This model of restructuration is a process or a series of processes, one arising from the previous one, in which we will create together something new and with the involvement of everyone. The Congregation is a living organism, a cellular model in which differences and diversity are articulated and coordinated, where one part affects the other and all of this underpinned by the charismatic values which are lived and shared, strengthening links of communion and identity.

In processes such as ours the importance of a "*vocational culture*" was emphasised if we want to search, choose and live a shared future together. What is the witness of our group life? How alive and happy are we with who we are? Where does zeal for our life and mission consume us?

Xavier used an interactive style of presentation in which his input was interspersed with "buzzing sessions" and group work. Above all it was highlighted that we needed to "unlearn in order to learn" to be open and willing to learn from our abilities and our limitations. After these rich and innovative ideas, the group was presented with a possible roadmap of the process to be lived until the next Council of the Congregation, with concrete phases and different instruments and respective timetable.

We will begin with a preliminary stage of Motivation through the transmission of the Council of the Congregation and from October we will work through stages of Revitalization, of Revision of Presences and Works bringing us to proposed models of Reconfiguration as timetabled. All of this will be accompanied by a prayer itinerary on a monthly basis which will help deepen and integrate each stage of the process of reconfiguration.

The phase of Revitalization will be a graced moment personally and as communities in which our hearts and disposition will be prepared for the process which will follow. In this phase we will be invited to reflect on each of the aspects of our lives, our consecration, our communal life and our apostolic commitment. We will cast a contemplative gaze on our present reality, on ourselves, our daily lives, allowing ourselves to be questioned by our charismatic and

spiritual values, trying to discern the traits of the New Face of the Congregation in each of these areas. This phase will prepare the way for the following phases: Revision of presences and Proposed models of reconfiguration.

We availed of the opportunity presented by this meeting so that the respective commissions; Initial Formation, Financial Solidarity, Constitutions and the Secular Branch could share the process they had been living in response to the Decisions of the 35th General Chapter. We could not have anticipated the reaction of the Assembly; in short, there were expressions of joy, gratitude and a lot of hope for all that each commission had done and delight for the life that had been growing silently in obscurity, like the seeds sown at the beginning of our week.

Info this year has been dedicated to a series of reflections on the theme of leadership. We also availed of the meeting to have a workshop on Leadership, in which we were invited to revisit our experience of leadership as vocation, call and mission received.

As always there was space to talk about other issues of common interest: a reminder of the calls of the 35th General Chapter, information from the JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) at the level of religious Congregations with the different resources available for work in this field of so much importance in our world today, Youth and Vocation Ministry etc...

Our time together ended with a moment of evaluation followed by a beautifully prepared closing Liturgy. The seeds which had been sown at the beginning of the week and which silently and lovingly had been watered and nurtured became the focal point for the closure.



The seeds sown in the hope of producing a harvest did not disappoint us and indeed appropriately reflected the abundant life and joy expressed in the evaluation at the end of our meeting. These seeds in vibrant process of growth were again presented in the offertory, representing the experience of what had been lived this week in which we had given the best of ourselves with the creative strength of the Spirit: we contributed our part but it was God who did the rest.

We once again placed ourselves and the process of Reconfiguration under God's care and light, so that the New Face of the Our Congregation will take shape under His gaze and according to His heart.

ECHOES OF THE COUNCIL OF CONGREGATION

THE SPIRIT HOVERING OVER CHAOS



When some friends of a friend invited me to their house in Rome some months ago now, I could have never imagined what a gift that invitation would turn out to be for me. First of all they told me about the “breath of the Spirit” which had set them off on a new and risky adventure, then they gave me a hand so that I could get on their train and plan together with them the new journey!

As I wasn't prepared for such a journey, I was a bit innocent, but the wind was strong and its "energy" attracted me to share with them and many others their adventure. After that it all went very fast: meetings, plans, insights, hard work, and most of all, an experience that tasted of communion, of bread shared and of good wine! We prepared the journey as if we already had the ticket in hand and the seats reserved. But we didn't know that to get on such a special train we needed to dispose our spirits and prepare our hearts in another way... Prepare our hearts... as if it were easy!

We were lucky to have in hand another Way, that of the Two Hearts with their particular feature of commitment and generosity! We risked all with Them, placing our fragility in hopeful expectation of the Spirit and we joyfully launched out on the journey following the Road Map! Thank you sisters for welcoming me as a brother and companion!

Xavier Quinzá, SJ

WALK TOGETHER TOWARD GOD'S DREAM FOR US



Part of my experience of the first three days of the Council of the Congregation was that of living in uncertainty. As in any experience of life, when you do not know what the future will be it almost always brings anxiety and questions. Yet it was a moment of faith and enrichment as I learnt to unlearn, to let go of my ideas and to let God work through the Spirit according to its own rhythm. Once again I was reminded that there is a time for everything, that everything has its process. Yet we need to start to work towards God's dream for the Congregation in collaboration with the Spirit through the road map that was offered by the General Government and approved by all the members of the

Council of the Congregation.

Having the privilege of being present in the 35th General chapter and following up the process of manifesting the dream of the New Face through the Council of the Congregation has given me the confidence and hope that God is working in each one of us. A document which is very rich and full of life has not merely be left in a drawer or on our lips but is slowly being realized through the work that we are doing. I feel very grateful as the journey that we are going to do is not merely "doing" but also "being". We are going back to the essence of what it means to be religious, looking within us, our communities, Delegations, Provinces, PPC and Congregation so that we can uncover the treasures that we have. Furthermore we are doing it together as one body, with the participation of all the sisters.

The experience of family spirit and communion in prayers, meetings, meals, group works, sharing during this week also strengthened and enriched me. I feel hopeful and I give thanks to God for the treasure of our charism and for God's promise to continue to lead the way and bring us to a hopeful future which is already manifesting itself now. May we all continue to be open to walk together toward God's dream for us..

Ratna Kumalasari, ss.cc.

FROM THE BACK ROW



It has been a real gift to participate in the Council of the Congregation. I was asked to be the secretary of minutes, and was seated at the back of the room throughout the whole meeting, observing what was going on, trying to make sure that my fingers captured this historic moment in the life that was flowing. It was a source of joy for me to be attentive, listening, taking notes, trying to not lose any detail of what was happening in the room because I felt that I was a witness to what the Spirit was doing in my sisters.

Seeing the faces of my sisters, listening to the thoughts, the searching, and all of that with the greatest respect, spoke to me of this family spirit which is so ours.

There is no doubt that we perceive things depending on where we are situated, and I perceived a sort of movement, where each one tried to put themselves in the place of the other and together, at a given moment were positioned together so as to visualize the common horizon. There is no doubt that what lies before us is a big challenge, as it is not just a question of changing place, but also about the need to leave some places so that others will become the response to the will of the Good God. And this won't be easy if we don't first feel that we are a body, living cells called to continue generating life, even if the form is still unknown.

This Council of the Congregation, brings peace to my heart, sows seeds of hope in me and above all leaves me with the desire which moves me to continue the path which is being carved out for us, collaborating and co-participating in it, each one from where they are, it doesn't matter if it is the back row or the seats at the front, we are nothing if we are not doing it altogether.

I pray that the Ruah which has been accompanying in this journey, will continue breathing His spirit on us.
Yours sincerely

Nuria Lobo, ss.cc.

A GOOD MOMENT TO LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT



A group of women, Religious of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, from far, and even very far, assembled in the El Escorial Residence for the whole week of preparation for the Feast of Pentecost. What might that mean for the world today? Above all it is a good moment to listen to the Spirit. And that is what we all did together, happy to have been called to the service of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of our sisters in this moment of our history; a privileged moment indeed because of the project of drawing up this new Face which, even though it is beginning to take shape under our eyes, still has a lot of secrets to reveal.

Sharing one's impressions on this very rich experience isn't so simple. The work was intense and efficient. It must be said that everything was very well prepared and the prayer invoking the Spirit was continually present in our hearts and our meetings. Many contradictory feelings were evoked as we began to take the pulse of how the 2012 chapter decisions were advancing.

Moved by the love for our charism, I saw my sisters moved by a sense of belonging and of solidarity that is seldom seen. On the faces and in the words spoken, I saw the joy of going towards a true SS.CC. unity, of living in diversity. I was also witness to the consciousness of the weight of the task of animation and accompaniment that such a programme requires.

If the Spirit is the Master of our hearts, he is also the One whose «fruits» are called peace, joy, gentleness, serenity, happiness, unity and communion, and the One who generates energy, impetus, generosity, action, commitment and witness in abundance. I was witness to all that during the week of preparation for Pentecost 2014. Best wishes for the new Face to which each one is called to give their own unique and personal stroke.

Jeanne Cadiou, ss.cc.

SAN LORENZO DE EL ESCORIAL HAS BEEN ROBED IN INTERNATIONALITY



When I go to speak about the Council of the Congregation without having being part of it, I can only speak of the “Holy Spirit”. Is it by chance that the days of preparation for Pentecost were chosen to hold the sessions? As some two thousand years ago in Jerusalem, our house in San Lorenzo has been robbed in internationality: the Parthians, Medes Cretans, etc. of another time were the worthy representatives of the different parts of the globe where our Congregation is present.

They gathered like the apostles, I guess with a certain fear of the future, so that the Spirit, the true protagonist, would make His presence felt in their reflections, with His gifts of Wisdom, Council and Strength. His presence was felt these days in our house as “Love” and “Joy”: the joy of sisters, who knew and loved each other, meeting again. Sisters with whom, as one community, we “sang the praises of the Lord in different languages” in the daily Eucharist where we shared the bread and joy of fraternal agape, we participated daily in their good work through details such as detailed communications; these were sisters who were actively interested in the day to day life of our community.

And all week we were praying for the coming of the Spirit, not only on the day of Pentecost in the closing Eucharist, but also in this future time which we are awaiting that he would come down with His gifts and produce His fruits in the whole Congregation.

María Fe Gargallo, ss.cc.

“THE LORD HAS WORKED MARVELS FOR US AND WE ARE FILLED WITH JOY”



I have been asked to write something about my impression of these days of the Council of the Congregation...; what can I say? Already the fact of being in a meeting of this category and not being a member by right is in itself a great gift, or rather, a grace. As the days went on I became more aware of what the 2012 General Chapter decided for our Congregation; it didn't fall into a torn sack, it didn't fall into oblivion.

It was a moment of great happiness for me, from the moment of our arrival, with the warm welcome from the El Escorial community, with the house at our disposition and no detail spared and the opportunity to meet sisters again that we loved, whom we only meet on few occasions.

As I said a moment ago, what was decided by the General Chapter has been realized; beginning with all the work of the General Council facilitated by Xavier Quinzá... perhaps the sisters who at times wanted to see concrete things, were satisfied to see that steps had been taken and, at the end of these 3 days, saw the programme with dates which will enable the Congregation to accomplish, what it has undertaken, by the next General Chapter 2018.

I was very happy to see also that the different commissions had been working in the different Provinces, Delegations etc. It could be felt in the air that the new face that we wanted to live in our family is gradually taking shape..., we want in fidelity to renew, adapt, return in some way to our first love, backed up by the prayer and the life of so many sisters who ask this of the Lord in their prayer and adoration each day. With certainty and with joy, I would like at this moment to say “the Lord has worked marvels for us and we are filled with joy”.

Mercedes Paramo, ss.cc.

RUAH, BREATH OF LIFE WHICH CREATES



Renews, builds, reinvents the future
of which we are responsible.
With your inspiration we are capable,
of new actions
of actions that are liberating.
Make us new women
in openness to your creative dynamism.
May we in your light,
receive the light of creativity.

In rhyme and poetry (which will be lost in the respective translations), I want to share with you dear sisters, my experience of this rich space of encounter in the Council of the Congregation, which as you

know took place in this beautiful context of Pentecost. That is why I make allusion to Ruah: “Breath of God in us”.

Ruah, author of our craziness, of our seeking, of our dreams.
Once more you have burst into our meeting.
You have made yourself our ally from when we decided to create a new face.
You have surprised us once more in this Council,
we were expecting something formed, already made,
however you tell us that we need to live processes with a hope-filled gaze,
embracing the present with trust and risk.

In this adventure of weaving new stories,
you remind us once more that we are all authors and that no one remains apart.
From those who are beginning to those who bring years of commitment,
All of us recreating the charism and finding new forms
of living that love which repairs, gives dignity and liberates.

We have a road map and we count on your presence,
which will awaken new and creative responses in each sister.
We do not know the result, but one thing is certain, that we want to continue walking
Because we know that in the movement you will find a space,
so as to do in and with us
what you are dreaming for us.

Elizabeth Fuentes, ss.cc.

AGENDA OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT

| Date | Activity and Responsible | Place |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| June 23th – 30th | Sessions General Government | Rome |
| June 26th – July 8th | Financial Solidarity Commission | Rome |
| July 5th – 7th | Visit to Nederland Delegation Gregoria Marín | Nederland |
| July 10th – 12th | Formative meeting of the two General Governments | Rome |
| July 21th – 30th | Assembly of the Conference of Latin America | Rio de Janeiro - Brazil |

CHRONICA CONGREGATIONIS

PROFESSIONS

TEMPORARY PROFESSION

YANDI Yeni Lilian

28/06/2014

Medellín

Colombia

PERPETUAL PROFESSION

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|----------|
| AGUILAR Yolanda | 12/07/2014 | Presidente Franco | Paraguay |
| BARRIOS Martina | 12/07/2014 | Presidente Franco | Paraguay |

JUBILEES

JULY 2014

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|---------|-------|
| RUIZ Oliva | 16/07/1954 | Diamond | Spain |
| ALBENDEA Luisa Teresa | 16/07/1954 | Diamond | Spain |

IN MEMORIAM

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--|-------|
| VILLAR María del Pilar | 03/06/2014 | | Spain |
|------------------------|------------|--|-------|

*For more information please go to our Web page, blog and Facebook.
www.sccpicpus.com*