

# SOLIDARITY

## *Let us begin by reflecting on solidarity*

In italics are observations on the material presented.

### **Acts of the Apostles 2: 44-45**

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need.

*(This practice quickly disappeared. It is a challenge to us to keep ourselves in dialogue concerning the process we are moving forward here.)*

### **Evangelii Gaudium**

The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised. (218)

### **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis**

In order to be genuine, development must be achieved within the framework of solidarity and freedom, without ever sacrificing either of them under whatever pretext. (33)

*(We are called to move forward as brothers in a process that calls us all to conversion.)*

It is above all a question of interdependence, sensed as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world, in its economic, cultural, political and religious elements, and accepted as a moral category. When interdependence becomes recognized in this way, the correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a "virtue," is solidarity. This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all. (38)

Beyond human and natural bonds, already so close and strong, there is discerned in the light of faith a new model of the unity of the human race, which must ultimately inspire our solidarity. This supreme model of unity, which is a reflection of the intimate life of God, one God in three Persons, is what we Christians mean by the word "communion." This specifically Christian communion, jealously preserved, extended and enriched with the Lord's help, is the soul of the Church's vocation to be a "sacrament"... (40)

### **Lumen Gentium**

Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race...(1)

## **Constitutions and Statutes**

*(A number of the paragraphs of our constitutions<sup>1</sup> refer to principles that call us to move in the direction of solidarity.)*

**C 11** reminds us that “to make the Gospel really effective” we should be faithful to “the kingdom, the new world, the new order, the new manner of being, of living, of living in community, which the gospel inaugurates.” (Note: *Internal Solidarity is the starting point for our credibility in mission as we ourselves define it.*)

**C 12 §2** calls us to be prophets concerning the factors that cause an unequal distribution of the world’s goods. (Note: *What better way to be prophet than by example?*) Moreover, **12 §6** calls us to continual conversion at all levels saying with St. Paul “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind”.

**C 33** reminds us to avoid accumulation of goods in order to witness to a world enamored of materialism.

**C 98, 102, 103, 122, 123, 129; S104** remind us of the tension between subsidiarity and the unity of government with the mission of the entire Congregation holding the tension in balance.

**C 148** defines our temporal goods as patrimony of the poor used in service of the mission, warning us not to become rich and reminding us that all our goods are held in common.

**C 151, 152§1** describe a flow of resources from house to province, province to province, and from province to the general curia to support good administration and provide for needs.

*Let us turn now to the proposed project*

## **QUESTIONS**

*Please organize your answers in a separate document that the curia can easily process with Microsoft word. Please organize your answers by using the question numbers found below (example: 0.a or 2.c). If you develop new ideas that do not belong below the headings given, please create a new heading or headings at the end of your response document and place your new material there.*

*For your convenience, the text of the project proposal has been included under each section in the bold text found in the box.*

## **THE PROJECT MANDATE**

*The approved postulate from the General Assembly of 2016:*

The superior general and his council are to study and put into motion a plan which will make solidarity among the provinces effective. This plan (draft) will be studied by the various conferences in order to reach a final plan.

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<sup>1</sup> C 11, 12, 19, 25§4, 33, 98, 102, 103, 122, 123, 129, 148, 151, 152§1, 155. Statutes 17§2, 103 3, 104

## THE PROJECT – Phase 1, economic

*We apply the notion of capacity to both formation and mission. We understand “building capacity” in both the short term as in construction of buildings for housing formation and in the long term as in building the infrastructure and culture both locally and internationally that supports the local presence of the Congregation in becoming self-sustaining.*

**Enhance within the Congregation of the Mission the unity of purpose that facilitates the flow of resources among ourselves in the service of building the capacity for achieving the objectives of the Mission in each province, vice-province or international mission.**

- determine need
- determine capacity
- increase capacity of current methods of solidarity, of transparency, and of giving a report
- add new methods

0.a. Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with building capacity for mission in each province, vice-province or international mission.

0.b. Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with the vision of the Congregation of the Mission as possessing a unity of purpose that transcends the boundaries of the provinces.

### 1. APPROVAL OF PHASE ONE OF PROJECT

**1.1 General Council elaborates a draft of the plan.**

**1.2 Visitors and vice-Visitors with their councils are asked to comment on the draft of the plan.**

**1.3 Visitors and vice-visitors send the comments to the Secretary General (secgen@cmglobal.org) by November 1, 2017.**

**1.4 The General Council revises the plan and sends, by February 1, 2018, a second draft of the plan to the Visitors and vice-Visitors for discussion at the Visitors’ Conferences during 2018. Fr. Heinen will be present at all visitors’ conferences to answer questions.**

**1.5 Each Visitors conference returns its input to the Secretary General (secgen@cmglobal.org) by November 1, 2018.**

**1.6 The General Council revises the plan and promulgates the final version of the plan by January 1, 2019.**

1.a. Comment on the feasibility of completing the proposed schedule.

### 2. DETERMINE NEED AND CAPACITY

**The purpose is first to discover the methods of collaboration that affect the financial status of the Province or Vice-province or international mission. Secondly, the purpose is to evaluate the capacity of these methods to meet the needs. Finally, the purpose is to evaluate the management of the economy of the Congregation of the Mission in respect to the quality of transparency and the quality of the reports given. The evaluation is to take place at the level of the General Curia, at the level of the Provinces who contribute and at the**

**level of the provinces who receive. Each Visitors' Conference will assemble evaluation teams. The teams will work under the direction of the Econome General.**

- 2.a Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with evaluating the quality of transparency and the quality of reports given in the management of the economy of the Congregation.
- 2.b Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with the centralization of knowledge of the economy of the Congregation at the level of the Curia.
- 2.c Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with the assumption that a province is to be self-sustaining.
- 2.d Sometimes the criteria that determines the choice of a ministry is that the ministry is a source of needed income to the province or vice-province. The evaluation will attempt to measure how much effect this seeking of income through ministry has on the capacity of the province or vice-province to evangelize the poor. Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement with this aspect of the evaluation.
- 2.e Please explain your points of agreement and points of disagreement with the Visitor's conferences assembling the evaluation teams.

### 3. INCREASE CAPACITY OF EXISTING METHODS

#### **3.1 The Mission Fund**

**3.2 The Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO) currently obtains funding for specific projects of the Congregation. The VSO will increase its fundraising capacity so that it also helps meet the more general goals of the Mission Fund and Patrimonial Funds.**

**3.3 The Patrimonial Funds both those that exist now and those that will come to exist.**

**3.4 The transparency and the generation of good reports in the economic life of the Congregation.**

- 3.a Please comment upon the relationship between the transparency and the generation of good reports in the economic life of the Congregation on the one hand and the credibility necessary to attract donations and grants on the other hand.
- 3.b Please explain your points of agreement and your points of disagreement about increasing the fundraising capacity of the VSO.
- 3.c From your perspective, please explain the positive and the negative aspects of patrimonial funds and the mission fund.
- 3.d Please list other ways in which our provinces, vice-provinces and international missions share financial resources among themselves.

### 4. ADD NEW METHODS

#### **4.1 The Curia**

**4.1.1. Dedicate 50% of all the donations to the Curia that are unrestricted to the purpose of increasing the size of the mission fund.**

**4.1.2. Develop a process to convert unused or underused properties throughout the Congregation of the Mission into income producing properties.**

**4.1.3. Explore the idea of solidarity loans to be used for income producing projects.**

**A solidarity loan is from one province to another where the interest rate is lower than what is available to the province who is receiving the loan.**

**4.1.4. In order to help us begin income producing projects like schools, we will explore the possibility of attracting investors who wish to lower the income received from their investment in view of the social impact of the project.****4.1.5. Increase the capacity of the province or vice-province to solicit donations.**

4.1.a Please express any positive or negative comments concerning the five proposed methods in this section. Please use the numbers (4.1.1 etc.) for reference.

4.1.b Please add any additional suggestions for new methods at the level of the Curia. Note: all reference to fund raising will be considered under the heading 3.2. VSO.

**4.1 Self-Sustaining provinces<sup>2</sup>****4.2.1 Determine the stable patrimony of the Province<sup>3</sup>****4.2.2 Come to agreement on a process to collectively determine, for a six year period (between assemblies), both the priorities and the level of participation in the funding of their implementation in the service of increasing the capacity for mission in the Congregation.****4.2.3 Come to agreement on a method for the Patrimony of the Congregation to continue to serve the Congregation of the Mission as province membership becomes smaller and the age of the members increases.****4.2.4 Increase the capacity to host preachers, from our developing provinces, who appeal for funds.**

4.2.a Please express positive and negative comments concerning the four proposed methods in this section. Note: 4.2.1 determining the Stable Patrimony is in view of 4.2.2. "level of participation in the funding".

4.2.b Please list and explain any suggestions for new methods.

<sup>2</sup> The tax paid each year to the Curia is more than 10 000 USD.

<sup>3</sup> "Stable patrimony ought to be understood to mean the set of assets, which constitute the minimum and secure financial foundation from which the juridic person might be able to exist in an autonomous way, and carry out its proper purposes and services. There are not, however, absolute rules for nailing down the notion of the stability of an asset because this is defined by taking into account not only the nature and quantity of the goods, but also the economic requirements needed for fulfilling the purposes as well as the steady and expanding economic situation of the entity as it carries out its mission." M. López Alarcón, Can. 1285, in AA.Vv., *Código de Derecho Canónico, Pamplona 1983*, 759. (taken from *The Management of the Ecclesiastical Goods of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, At the Service of humanum and the Mission of the Church*. LIBRERIA EDITRICE VATICANA, 2015, p. 256)