



# Missionari del Preziosissimo Sangue

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**La Curia Generalizia**

*Fr. Francesco Bartoloni, cpps*

Moderatore Generale

## **XX General Assembly Report of the Moderator General**

My time as Moderator General is coming to its end. With this detailed report I want to recap the ways in which I tried to fulfill my duties as Moderator General for the period 2007-20013. First, I wish to report to you the plan of work that my Council and I envisioned at the beginning of our ministry of leadership of the Congregation. Secondly, I will review the major activities undertaken by myself and the General Council during this period. Finally, I will also indicate some projects that are still pending and I will dare to express my opinion concerning some issues that will still challenge the next General leadership of the Congregation.

### **Part one: Our plan of work**

When I met with the Councilors for the first long General Council meeting in October 2007, we made a plan of work for the six years of our ministry of leadership for the Congregation. We first considered those issues that the participants of the XIX General Assembly found important for the animation of the Congregation; these were expressed in the Message of the XIX General Assembly. I expressed my commitment that all members of the General Council have an active role in the ministry of leadership. We made these decisions:

1. We would work as a team, fulfilling C49 of the Normative Texts which speaks of shared leadership as the model of leadership in our Congregation. Each member of the General Council will be responsible of a part of the work of animation and promotion.
2. Our work will indeed be directed to all units of the Congregation, but with a particular sensitivity for the new units and the smaller units. The new units are those which grow faster and need help in envisioning a future that will correspond to the charism of the Congregation and the needs of the local Church. The smaller units need encouragement to continue fulfilling their mission and remain a vibrant and living part of the Congregation.
3. We would invite all units to construct a vision for their short term (5years) future. The invitation would be issued and the units would be free to accept or decline the invitation. Ordinarily, this will be done at the end of the official visitation of the Moderator General and would include a general meeting of all members of the

- unit. The members of the unit will be guided in the discernment of the vision by a member of the General Council, Fr. William Nordenbrock, who has experience in this task using the methodology of Appreciative Inquiry. The goal is to animate the units and to support the members, both individually and as a community, as they work together to discern a vision that is rooted in the charism of the Congregation and their tradition. The members together must share a commitment to fulfill their vision.
4. The General Council will work in the animation of four issues which are important for the whole Congregation:
    - Mission: to help create a common language of mission; reflecting on the theology and the spirituality of mission in the light of our charism, our history and the new understanding of Precious Blood spirituality.
    - Formation of candidates and on-going formation of members: to help formulate formation programs in those units where they are not yet formulated or in need of updating; and to foster collaboration, both on regional and the international level, among formators and candidates.
    - Justice, peace and integrity of creation: as integral part of our ministry of the Word in the light of the spirituality of the Precious Blood and as a call of Catholic social teaching.
    - Lay associates: to develop a lay spirituality of the Precious Blood inspiring life in the family, in the workplace, in the society.
  5. Each member of the General Council will be responsible for the animation of one of these issues: Fr. William Nordenbrock will dedicate himself in the animation for mission; Fr. Lucas Rodriguez Fuertes in the animation for formation; Fr. Felix Mushobozi in the animation for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation; Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz in the animation for lay associates.

In that first long meeting of the General Council we also decided:

- to appoint an Archivist General whose goal will be the study of the General Archives with the intention of compiling a history of the Congregation of the time after st. Gaspar and our foundation;
- to appoint a Postulator General who will continue the cause of beatification of Ven. Giovanni Merlini;
- to give a mandate to the Treasurer General to work with the Provincial Treasurers to the study of future financing of the General Curia and to investigate ways to improve the investment return on the financial reserves of the General Curia;
- to finalize the contract with the Teutonic Province for the establishment of the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality at St. Josef Kolleg in Salzburg and to make the appointment of its first Director.

We encountered difficulties in implementing our plan of work. Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz resigned as member of the Council; I accepted his resignation and followed the requirements of S32. Fr. Larry Hemmelgarn was selected as a new member of the Council, but was subsequently elected as Provincial Director of the Cincinnati Province and needed to resign. Fr. Mark Miller, of the Kansas City Province was selected as the replacement and he accepted on the condition that he could remain a non-resident Councilor. He took over the responsibility of animation of the lay associates.

## **Part Two: Activities of the Moderator General and the General Council**

The Normative Texts of the Congregation affirm that *“the first duty (of the Moderator General) is to animate and renew the spirit of the Congregation, and to promote its expansion. Working in the closest harmony with the other major superiors, he coordinates the whole life of the Congregation, and promotes unity among members and Provinces, Vicariates, and Missions, and foster the mission of the Congregation” (C61).*

The Moderator General promotes a frequent and continuing reflection on the meaning of our charism in the members’ lives and ministry. It can be said that the Moderator General is a living memory of the charism at the service of the mission. He does not do this work alone, nor he is just assisted by the General Council. He works in union with the General Council and in a dimension of shared responsibility he calls the members to fidelity to our charism and to form a true communion in the diversity of cultures and characters in the spirit of the bond of charity.

The following are the means the General Council and I have used to implement this animation.

### **Visitations of Units and Membership**

It is an important aspect of the ministry of the Moderator General to visit each member in his place of ministry. During these six years I have visited all members, many times accompanied by a member of the General Council who took part in the dialogue with the members. This gave me and the Council the possibility to form a picture of the CPPS worldwide and the awareness of the status and the challenges facing members and units in their journey of fidelity and creativeness in implementing the charism of the Congregation.

In many units the visitation ended with a three days gathering of the unit’s members. They committed themselves to the discernment of a vision for their unit to be implemented in the short term future (5 years). As previously noted, these gatherings were guided by Fr. William Nordenbrock and were conducted with the methodology of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI).

The following is a chronological list of the visitations:

2009

- India: Feb. 4 – March 20; with Fr. William Nordenbrock, followed by AI gathering
- Brazil: May 2 – 18; with Fr. William Nordenbrock, followed by AI gathering
- Mexico: Sept. 1 – 8; by myself (Fr. Felix Mushobozi could not get the VISA on time)
- Guatemala: Sept. 9 – 24; with Fr. Felix Mushobozi.

2010

- Peru: Jan. 25 – Feb. 5; with Fr. Felix Mushobozi, followed by AI gathering. Preceding the visit the General Council met in Lima for two weeks and then participated to the Symposium of Ecology and Precious Blood Spirituality organized by the Peruvian Mission.

- Colombia: Feb. 6 – 13; with Fr. Felix Mushobozi
- Tanzania: March 14 – April 17; with Fr. William Nordenbrock, followed by AI gathering
- Poland: May 10 – 21 by myself and May 30 – June 10; followed by AI gathering
- Iberia : Sept. 20 – Oct. 21; with Fr. Lucas R. Fuertes. The Province had a AI gathering a few months after the official visitation
- Guinea Bissau: Oct. 22 – 29; by myself
- Croatia: Nov. 8 – 13; with Fr. William Nordenbrock

#### 2011

- Chile: Feb. 7 – 27; with Fr. Felix Mushobozi followed by AI gathering
- Atlantic: Apr. 11-30 and May 6-21; with Fr. Lucas R. Fuertes in the first part
- Teutonic: June 11 – 30; with Fr. Lucas R. Fuertes
- Kansas City: Sept. 1-28; by myself
- Italian: Oct. 10-18, and Oct. 24-Nov. 6; by myself

#### 2012

- India: Feb. 8 – June 22; collaborating with the commission of India
- Cincinnati: Sept. 19 – Oct. 8; with Fr. Felix Mushobozi
- Teutonic: May 29 – 31; by Fr. William Nordenbrock alone for AI gathering

#### 2013

- Vietnam: Feb. 8 – 28; with Fr. William Nordenbrock
- Cincinnati: Apr. 8 - May 12; with Fr. William Nordenbrock

I wish to thank the Directors of all our units for their warm hospitality. I have realized how all units share the spirit of hospitality and it can be truly said that hospitality is a unique characteristic of the CPPS. I also wish to thank all members of their openness to share their life, joys and concerns with me.

After each visitation I sent an *Official Letter* to the Director of the unit, expressing my impressions, thoughts and concerns on those matters concerning the life of the unit. They were intended for reflection both at leadership and the membership level. In the letter I addressed to the Teutonic Province I invited them to undergo the process of AI with the purpose of giving new energy to the members for mutual reconciliation and construction of a common vision. My sincere thanks to the Teutonic Province leaders and members for their positive response to my invitation and their continuous work in the implementation of this project! I have done the same with the Italian Province but their response has been cool.

I have participated also in the Electoral Assemblies of provinces when I was able to do so. When I was not able I was represented by one of the Councilors.

These visitations and assemblies gave me a great opportunity to get to know the members better, the dynamics of their relationships, the many good things that form the solid ground of their history and their projects for the future. Praying and celebrating the

liturgy together gave me a deeper insight of their communion with God and their communion with one another.

### **The Biennial Meeting of Major Superiors**

*“Working in the closest harmony with other major superiors, (the Moderator General) coordinates the whole life of the Congregation, and promotes unity among members, and Provinces, and Vicariates, and Missions, and fosters the mission of the Congregation.”*  
(C61)

*“The Moderator General and his Council are aided by the Provincial, Vicariate and Mission Directors. They are to meet at least biennially in one or the other Province to share their experience and discuss questions that pertain to the whole Congregation.”*  
(S36)

The main goal of these meetings is to strengthen an understanding of our internationality among the leaders of the units, to grow in the understanding of true subsidiarity and to live the mission in the diversity of cultures. These meetings are ordinarily consultative but our Statutes define cases where the decisions of the Major Superiors are deliberative. The location of these meetings are rotated among the different continents in order to give the Major Superiors a firsthand knowledge of the diversity existing in the various units of the Congregation. Four such meetings were held during this period.

2007 – Rome, Italy – July 27

- Follow-up to XIX General Assembly and organizational

2008 – Bangalore, India – Nov. 3-12

- Workshop on Leadership
- Approval of policy of the member of one unit working in the ministry of another unit

2010 – Fatima, Portugal – Sept. 20-26

- Decision to establish a commission for the Indian Vicariate,
- Approval of General Policy on Responding to an Accusation of Sexual Misconduct with a Minor

2012 – Carthagen, Ohio, USA– Sept. 10-18

- Preparation to General Assembly with the decision to use AI methodology in the discernment process.
- Approval of policy of people of one unit working in the territory of another unit

### **International Workshops**

International workshops, envisioned in proposals # 2 and #3 of the XVI General Assembly have now become a familiar tradition are an important activity of the General Administration. They took a lot time for their preparation but the participation of members was very good. They gave fruitful insight for their continuation. They were all sponsored by the General Curia.

- **2008 – Bangalore, India on Leadership.** Participants were all Units Directors. Decision was taken to have a course on leadership for all newly elected units directors after their election.
- **2009 – Salzburg, Austria July 20-24 on Mission.** Participants were Units Directors and representatives of each units who will assist the Director in implementing the result of the workshop. The workshop was held as a first step in the implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> resolution of the XVII General Assembly that invited the membership to develop a plan for a common language and theology for mission
- **2010 – Roma, July 3-16 for Formators.** Participants were those involved in the formation of candidates in all stages of formation.
- **2011 – Roma, July 20-30 for Newly Incorporated Members.** Participants were those with five years of incorporation
- **2012 – Roma, July 22-29 MERLAP III.** Participants were delegates of Lay Associates from all units and their directors.

## Communications

*“The bond of charity is fostered among the members by the sharing of communications which deepen the sense of community-consciousness and identity and help the individual members realize that they form an international and multicultural family as a worldwide Congregation.” (C10)*

## General Curia Web Site

The General Curia website ([www.cppsmissionaries.org](http://www.cppsmissionaries.org)), which was created in 2001 has been completely renovated. Fr. William Nordenbrock has been made responsible as webmaster to implement the desired vision. He is assisted with the technical expertise of Br. Juan Acuña. Each member of the General Curia has been assigned a specific area of responsibility for the development of content according to his field of animation or his ministry.

The Proposal # 4 of the XVI General Assembly stated that “...*the General Curia should become a resource center of information, supplying the membership of reports, analysis and evaluation of what is happening in the larger C.PP.S. community and suggesting how we might respond in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world.*” In this spirit the web site was created.

The site offers:

- information of all documents of the General Curia;
- updates of events of interest occurring in the different units of the Congregation;
- coverage of our international gatherings, workshops, assemblies;
- reference for connecting to the links of all the units of the Congregation, of the lay associates and of the family of the Precious Blood worldwide;
- a central international directory of the Congregation;
- eventually a forum of discussion of issues of interest.

C3 of the Normative Texts states that *“the Congregation dedicates itself to service of the church through the apostolic and missionary activity of the ministry of the word, which includes the promotion of human dignity, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.”* Sometimes it is difficult to get information or resources from the units. Surely we need to examine more deeply how to use this modern means of communication to fulfill our mission of evangelization and dedication to the needs of the people we serve.

**The Cup of the New Covenant** is published twice a year in five languages. Its goal is to create a tool of communication among the members of the Congregation to foster knowledge and awareness of what it is happening in the C.P.P.S. around the world. The person in charge of the publication is Fr. Barry Fischer, Director of the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality. Themes of the publication are discussed with the General Council. Many times they concern international events, or workshops or gatherings of the Congregation organized by the General Curia. In each issue members and others are invited to share their impressions and opinions. This contributes to the building of a common language with which we communicate about C.P.P.S. basic themes. I want to thank and congratulate Fr. Barry Fischer for his excellent work.

A total of twelve issues were published:

- October 2007                      Challenges facing Societies of Apostolic Life
- April 2008                        Leadership and the ministry of animation
- October 2008                    Collaboration between Religious and Laity
- April 2009                        Leadership as service and a collaborative activity
- October 2009                    Mission for a common language
- April 2010                        Precious Blood Spirituality as wellspring for JPIC
- October 2010                    The Precious Blood Family
- April 2011                        Ven. John Merlini and the order of love
- October 2011                    Preaching, in the light of Precious Blood Spirituality
- April 2012                        Ongoing Formation
- October 2012                    Lay Associates, MERLAP III
- April 2013:                        Units Histories

### **Activities of Representation**

As Moderator General I participated biennially in the meetings of the Union of Superiors General. I also participated to the meetings of the Superiors General of the Societies of Apostolic Life and for two years I was their coordinator.

I was elected by the plenary session of the Union of Superiors General to be one of the eight Superiors General to participate at the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops on the theme “The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace” in October 2010.

### **Other engagements**

#### **2007**

- Mexico: For the inauguration of the Mission in November

- Caceres (Spain): Presiding the Electoral Assembly of the Iberian Province in December

## **2008**

- Vietnam: For the incorporation of the first Vietnamese member in February
- Guinea Bissau: On invitation of the Iberian Province Director to facilitate collaboration with the Tanzanian Vicariate, in March
- India: To preach two courses Retreat to the Members, in April
- Italy: Presiding the Italian Electoral Assembly in June
- Baumgartle (Teutonic Province): for the celebration of the Precious Blood Feast and Schellenberg for the 150 years of Foundation, in July
- Tanzania: On invitation in August
- Rome: Meeting with all USC Directors for CPPS and ASC in Europe and Canada for establishing new USC Statutes, in October
- India: Visitation of seminarians at Ashram, in November

## **2009**

- Poland: Presiding at the Electoral Assembly in January
- Salzburg: Seminar for newly elected Units Directors in July
- Salzburg: Meeting on Constructing the new Website of the Generalate
- Rome: Participating at the African Synod in October
- Toronto: On invitation in November

## **2010**

- Peru: Symposium on Precious Blood Spirituality and Ecology, in January
- Peru: Mission Gathering for AI process, in January
- USA: Provincial Electoral Assembly of Cincinnati Province, in May
- USA: Precious Blood Family Congress in St. Louis (MO), in July
- Fatima: Seminar for Newly Elected Units Directors, in September

## **2011**

- India: Installation of the Commission for the Indian Vicariate, in February
- Argentina: Visit to ASC Sisters, in March
- Rome: Meeting with Provincial Council about the Indian Vicariate and financial situation of the province
- Liberty, MO USA: for the Electoral Provincial Assembly of Kansas City Province, in May
- Kufstein, Austria: Presiding the Electoral Provincial Assembly of Teutonic Province, in June
- Caceres, Spain: For the gathering of Iberian Province on AI process, in October
- Zagreb, Croatia: Inauguration of the Mission, in October
- Teutonic Province, Districts Meetings, in December

## **2012**

- India: From February to June to assist in the work of the Commission
- Rome: Presiding the Electoral Assembly of the Italian Province, in July
- Peru: For the 50 years celebration of CPPS foundation, in August
- Colombia: visiting confreres, in August



- Cathagena, Ohio, USA: Seminar for newly elected Units Directors, in September

### **Activities of the Members of the General Curia**

**Fr. William Nordenbrock** was appointed Vice-Moderator General after the resignation from office of Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz. He was also appointed Treasurer General.

His area of animation in the Council has been the Mission: for “*developing a Congregation-wide understanding of the theology and the spirituality of mission today*” (Message of the XIX General Assembly) and implementing the mandate of the 2004 extraordinary General Assembly that asked the Moderator General and the General Council, in consultation with the Major Superiors, to develop a plan for mission which would include: a) a process for arriving at a common theology of mission, and b) a plan for the Congregation where we should next expand our missionary efforts and develop a concrete plan. He organized the workshop on Mission that was held in Salzburg, Austria on July 2009, with the participation of all Units Directors and representatives of the units who would help their Directors in developing the plan in their units. Fr. William has been fostering this animation that still needs to be continued.

Fr. William has been the guide in the gatherings of the members of many units after the official visitation of the Moderator General; with the goal of discerning a vision for the near future using the methodology of the Appreciative Inquiry or Appreciative Discernment. As I have already said, these gatherings of members to discern a common vision for their unit, in the spirit of the charism of the Congregation and the development and expansion of their mission, have been a characteristic of our administration. Fr. William has travelled a lot and has deeply involved himself in this ministry of animation to develop the common mission.

As General Treasurer, in collaboration with the Provincial Treasurers and Provincial Directors, he has developed a new plan for financing the General Curia. The Normative Texts (A 9) states that in his report about the life of the Congregation, the Moderator General presents also a financial report of the General Curia. You find this report in your folder.

**Fr. Felix Mushobozi**, Councilor and Secretary General. He prepares documents and the Acta of the General Council Meetings, the Acta of the Major Superiors Meetings and of the General Assembly. He also maintains much of the official correspondence of the General Curia. In collaboration with the Archivist General he has worked on updating the archives.

Most recently he has represented me presiding the Electoral Assembly of the Polish Province last May.

His field of animation in the General Council is about Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. The XVIII General Assembly moved a step forward in broadening our understanding of mission when it declared in the Statement of values that “*We recognize working for justice, peace, human life and the integrity of creation is an integral part of the ministry of the Word in a spirituality of the Blood of Christ as an expression of catholic social teaching.*” (#11) (cfr. Also C3). Fr. Felix involved himself very deeply;

first at learning what does it mean to be an animator of JPIC and participated very actively at the JPIC commission of the Union of Superiors General in Rome, where he assumed directive responsibilities. In all workshops and gatherings prepared by the General Curia he has animated the participants at this topic which is becoming an important aspect of our mission. He is in contact with those members of the units who have the same responsibility to animate their units members for JPIC. Fr. Felix report is available in the folder.

**Fr. Lucas Rodriguez Fuertes**, Councilor. He has been appointed as Procurator and Legal Representative of the Congregation. As Legal Representative he is the contact person with the Italian government and as Procurator General he is the contact person with the Vatican for all those official cases that need the Vatican consideration and deliberation; e.g.- requests of laicization; situations involving accusations of the sexual abuses of minors; visa requirements; etc..

His field of animation in the General Council has been Formation. He has travelled in all units of the Congregation to visit and talk with the units' formators and the candidates. In some of the units he has helped to form or to update the program of formation according to our spirit and the charism, as defined in the General Policies for Formation. He has been involved closely in the elaboration of the common program of formation for the Latin American units. He has prepared, in collaboration of the General Council, and guided the workshop on Formation. He has compiled a long and detailed report of his ministry of animation on formation. If you wish to read it you ask Fr. Lucas to send you by internet mail.

He has been my representative and presided at the Electoral Assembly of the Iberian Province in December 2011.

He is also the House Superior of the Generalate. I wish to thank him in a special way because he accepted to come and live in Rome at the Generalate after the resignation of Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz.

**Fr. Mark Miller**, Councilor. He has been selected as General Councilor after the resignation from office of Fr. Grzegorz Ruchniewicz and the election of Fr. Larry Hemmelgarn as Provincial Director of the Cincinnati Province.

His field of animation in the General Council has been Lay Associates. In the workshop of MERLAP II the participants asked that a member of the Council be involved in this animation with the goals of fostering and deepening the relationship between our lay associates and the members; integrating them more deeply into the life of the Congregation worldwide; and moving all units to develop a plan to include laity into the charism of the Congregation. In that workshop it became evident that the spirituality of the Precious Blood inspires people to a fuller following of Christ and participation in the ministry of the Congregation. I myself have been able to witness how many of our members and communities have been enriched and found new life and purpose in sharing with the laity our C.P.P.S. charism and ministries.

Fr. Mark in collaboration with the General Council has prepared and guided the workshop of Lay Associates, MERLAP III.

I sincerely want to express my sincere thanks to all members of the General Council. I want to say that we have formed a good team and shared leadership in the spirit of our Normative Texts. Everyone of the Councilor in his own field of animation and all together as a team, we have tried to exemplify the bond of charity. In all sincerity I have to say that I was lucky to have such confreres in the General Council.

**Fr. Barry Fischer**, Director of the International Center of Precious Blood Spirituality in Salzburg, Austria. The Center was established responding to the resolution of the XVIII General Assembly that resolved to establish “*an international center for promoting the spirituality of the Precious Blood, which will coordinate and disseminate the resources of the various units of the Congregation* (Resolution #6).” As the first Director of the Center, Fr. Barry has had to “invent” ways to implement the mandate of the General Assembly. He has been involved in the ministry of preaching, in organizing workshops and expanding material about the spirituality of the Precious Blood. He has worked in close collaboration with Sr. Johana Rubin, ASC and various Companions from the United States who volunteered to work in the Center for a period of time.

He has been editing all issues of *The Cup of the New Covenant*. This work takes time and energy.

The General Council appointed him to chair the International Commission for the Bicentennial observance of the Congregation. This is an ongoing task.

In 2010 he was requested by the Holy See to guide as Commissioner a newly founded religious institution that needed special consideration; this appointment was accepted with the permission of myself and the Council. This work basically ended in May 2013 with the approval of new Constitution for the Congregation and the election of a new General Leadership. This was truly a work of reconciliation, but somehow it limited his availability for the work of the General Curia.

**Fr. Emanuele Lupi**, Archivist General. The General Council appointed Fr. Emanuele in this office with the idea of having a person who is an historian to do research in the archives of the General Curia with the goal of writing a History of the Congregation. He accepted the office and came to stay at the Curia.

He has been working at this project and he has taken a course for archivists at the Vatican. At the request of the units, he has collaborated to improve their archives or to give conferences or seminars on the CPPS History.

In 2011 the General Council asked him to be part of the Commission of India and he lived and worked in India for a period of two years. He returned to Rome in February 2013 and is now continuing with this work in the curia.

**Sr. Nicla Spezzati, ASC**, Postulator General. The General Council, after obtaining the consent of her Regional Superior, appointed Sr. Nicla Spezzati, ASC as Postulator General of the Congregation. Her most cogent commitment was the continuation of the cause of beatification of ven. John Merlini, second successor of St. Gaspar in the guidance of the Congregation. Sr. Nicla followed the course of Postulator at the Vatican and started working with great involvement in this project, collaborating especially with the Italian Province. In 2012 she was appointed by the Vatican as undersecretary of the Congregation of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life. Her work as postulator has diminished but still continues.

My sincere thanks to all these members of the General Curia! Each one in his/her field has helped the Moderator General and the General Council in their ministry of animation and renewal of the spirit of the Congregation.

### **Special Issues – Pending Projects**

**Bicentennial Observance.** In the year 2015 the Congregation will celebrate 200 years of our foundation. This is a very important event that all members have to celebrate with adequate preparation. It must become a *kairos*, a time of grace for the whole Congregation, in which all members and those associated with us find new vigor for a re-foundation of the Congregation. The General Council, in collaboration with the Units Directors, have appointed an International Commission which has responsibility for planning and coordinating a project to involve all units in celebrating in an appropriate and prophetic way the event. The Commission has designed a program that will be lived out over the three years leading up to a major international celebration in Rome on July 1, 2015.

The focus of the first year is to reflect on the past – our glorious history to remember and to recount. The focus of the second year will be on the present – specifically on how we are called to be a reconciling presence in the world. And finally, the third year focus would look to the future with a concern for mission; specifically, how we can respond to the cry and call of the Blood.

I want to insist that all activities proposed by the Commission be shared with all members of the Congregation. In addition to these common events, I hope that each unit of the Congregation will be using these three years as a time of renewal. Working together, with the support of the Regional representatives to the Commission and being mindful of the annual themes, I wish that all units will be designing their own activities, observances and projects for the members, associates, friends and those with whom they minister to duly celebrate this great event.

**Indian Vicariate.** This is a pending tough case that I leave to the next General Leadership of the Congregation. On November 2007 the then Provincial Director of the Italian Province, Fr. Giovanni Francilia, sent a written report to the General Curia where the following issues were raised:

- The Vicariate is growing rapidly in terms of the number of its members with a disproportionate disregard for discernment on the quality of formation. There seems to be nepotism in taking candidates and assignments of ministry. A great number of missionaries come from homogeneous ethnic origin and geographical area which created tensions and disunity in the community.
- There is very little or no effort to prepare missionaries to take various ministries, so much so that there are members with academic qualifications who are not properly deployed. There is a deficiency of creativity and plan for future development of the CPPS in India which probably is the result of poor leadership.
- Ministries performed by our missionaries lack efficiency and productivity, resulting in financial difficulties. The Italian Province has already decided in its 2006 Business Assembly to reduce its financial support in less than five years time from now.

- There is a particular concern for the formation program. There is a need to insure that formators have the training that they need for the work.

The Council decided to take time to thoroughly think and discern what should be our contribution in addressing this situation. In February 2008 Fr. Felix and I went to India to preach the annual spiritual retreat to all members of the Vicariate. On that occasion we had the chance to talk individually to each member of the Vicariate. We realized that the charism of the Congregation based in the three pillars, mission, bond of charity and spirituality of the Precious Blood was lacking in the life of the members individually and as a community. In November 2008 I talked to all candidates of the Vicariate who were in Ashram Major Seminary. I realized that all formation was based on pure discipline without a sense of the CPPS charism.

On February – March 2009 Fr. William and I went to India for the official visitation. We spoke personally to all members of the Vicariate and we invited them to participate in a general AI gathering at the end of the visitation to determine a mission for the Congregation in India, in the light of our charism. It was a very difficult gathering where the divisions and lack of mutual cooperation became very evident; to envision together a project for the future seemed impossible. It was very difficult for the Vicariate leadership to implement the decision of the members because of much resistance from the members and there was a lack of commitment from the Vicariate leadership for moving forward with a vision for the future.

In their assembly of December 2010 the members of the Vicariate proposed to split into two vicariates. They presented their proposal to the Italian Provincial Assembly for approval. We gave the Provincial Director a list of conditions and a process to be followed before a recommendation on this matter could be made to the General Curia by the Italian Province. Unfortunately the Italian Provincial Director did not follow our recommendation; therefore we could not accept the decision of the Italian Province

It became clear to me and the General Council that we should intervene directly to help the members of the Vicariate to address their situation and work towards becoming a unit that lives the charism of the Congregation. Because the Italian Provincial appeared to be too close to the issue to understand and address our concerns and to be the agent of reconciliation, we took the extraordinary step of intervening and placing the Vicariate under the direct oversight of the General Curia, through the appointment of a Commission.

The primary goal of the work of the Commission was to be the revitalization of the Vicariate and reconciliation within the membership of the Vicariate. Of primary concern is that the members of the Vicariate live together in right relationship as equal brothers within the bond of charity and as concrete expressions of our charism. The intention was to assist the Vicariate to be a faithful reflection of the three pillars of our Society of Apostolic Life as described in our Normative Texts. The Commission would be responsible for the overall administration of the Vicariate, including the planning and development of future direction. Guided by the policies of the Congregation, this may include an evaluation of possible structural changes, such as, becoming a Province, becoming a Vicariate with a Mission, etc.

Special attention was to be given to the formation of candidates and the ongoing formation of the members as a means to revitalize and renew the community.

The members of the Commission (Fr. Gianni Piepoli, Fr. Angelo Anthony, Fr. Emanuele Lupi and Fr. Matthew Perumpil, an Indian religious belonging to the Camillian Congregation) took over their leadership on March 1, 2011.

The Commission committed itself deeply to the work entrusted to them. Because of Visa problems, Fr. Gianni and Fr. Angelo could not reside continuously in India. Fr. Emanuele having a student visa could stay for full two years. They had a difficult task. Besides the above goals that the General Council gave the Commission, they discovered great problems in regard to financial administration and legal issues. After a thorough evaluation of members they appointed some members to help them in the field of financial administration, pastoral program, formation and vocation promotion, and preaching.

The Commission worked on preparing a program of formation based on the CPPS life style and charism; on preparing a new group of formators; on initiating new apostolates, like preaching and education and on preparing members for these apostolates.

In November 2012 the General Council decided to give back to the Italian Province the direct responsibility over the Indian Vicariate, where the Provincial Director and his Council would appoint a Vicariate Director from abroad and Councilors from within the members of the Vicariate.

In the meantime, anonymous letters believed to be written by one or more members of the Vicariate were sent to the civil and police authorities accusing the members of the Commission of immigration violations; of oppressing Indian citizens and negating their rights; of mismanaging the financial funds coming from abroad; etc. These accusations were false and defamatory. In response to the difficulties caused for the members of the Commission by these accusations, on March 1, 2013 the General Council, in accord with the Italian Provincial Director, decided to disband the Commission and to appoint a Vicariate Director from within the Vicariate members who is helped by a Council. These appointments were made by me and the Italian Provincial leadership. A consultative ballot was taken among the members before these appointments. It has been also decided to stop all ordinations and to restrict the expansion of the Vicariate. 14 deacons have not been ordained priests as scheduled in April and all candidates have been sent back to their homes. Additionally, the financial relationship between the Vicariate and the Province was significantly changed so that the financial concern can be addressed.

My sincere thanks to the members of the Commission who have been in India working in a difficult environment! I believe that the seed that has been planted will sprout on day and we prayerfully hope that in the future the Vicariate will be a fruit bearing tree.

The members of the Vicariate of India are our brothers and we continue to assist them with our love and fraternal support and we must continue to work towards their renewal and reconciliation so that they may become a solid and active part of the body of the Congregation.

## Conclusion

We are in a time that is special and eventful. We are celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second Vatican Council; Pope Benedict XVI has resigned and Pope Francis has been elected. Vatican II was an event for the renewal of Church that created great enthusiasm and new energy to the Church as the Church opened herself to the world. Over these last fifty years there have been signs of the times that express a hopeful future for humanity; greater understanding among peoples; a future of peace and development; the promotion of human rights; a more mature ecological consciousness; a more compact and wide spread network of mass media and digital communication; and so on. The Church has changed along with the rest of the world. Fifty years after the opening of the Second Vatican Council the Christian community has grown, yet during the last few years its enthusiasm has dwindled, and today it seems worn out and tired. Many ask themselves where the optimism and the impulse of the early post Council period have gone.

When we started preparing this Assembly no one could have imagined that it would take place in a moment of great change at the very head of the Church. Pope Benedict's XVI sudden resignation and the election of Pope Francis have changed the situation of the Church in an unexpected manner. Each new pope changes the characteristics of the leadership of the Church. Paul VI, whom I love very much, manifested an aspect reflecting the dialogue of the Church after the Council. John Paul II conveyed an image of a "triumphant" Church, which he envisioned for the third millennium. Benedict XVI presented the portrait of a Church that was "tired" and a minority. Pope Francis, during these early months of his pontificate has already expressed a new form of leadership, which I would define as "evangelical," revealing a Church that is free, poor and humble, close to the people, and which gives witness of God's mercy.

St. Gaspar entrusted us with a charism that is a gift not just to us, but to whole Church. We have to realize that what we do, we do not do for ourselves. Pope Francis tells all Christians that the Church is not auto-referential, but must open itself and make its journey in the world. He would say that he prefers a wounded Church that walks in the ways of the world together with the people of the world than a Church closed in its palaces where it lacks air and becomes sick. The great gift of the spirituality of the Precious Blood, the missionary endeavor and the bond of charity that we have received, must become our gift to the Church. This gift to the Church is witnessed by our style of life, that it is a style of dialogue, of nearness to others, of understanding and accepting the situations in which we find ourselves.

In these years of my ministry at the General Curia, first as Vice Moderator General and then as Moderator General I had the opportunity to learn a lot and at the same time, I had the opportunity to give a lot. I thank God for what I have learned and I regret if I was unable to give all that was requested from me.

I have learned to appreciate the uniqueness of each person and to respect individuality. I have learned to work as a team with my Councilors and with the Directors of the Units of the Congregation. I have realized that my fundamental duty has been that of motivating my brothers to continue along a faithful way even when it becomes difficult and complicated. I have insisted at all times to look at what is positive in others and to look positively at all situations as they occur, even those situations that seem to be hopeless and difficult to address. Many are the personal gifts of the members and glorious is the

history of our units! I have tried to encourage all to look at these positive charisms and always to be hopeful that together we can overcome difficulties. At the same time, I sometimes felt that certain challenges were beyond my personal capabilities. Working as a team has given me the gift of perseverance and patience.

Sometimes it was difficult to make decisions, especially those which would affect or may cause suffering for a member or even an entire unit of the Congregation. I felt the sadness of giving the final permission for an indult or dispensation; the sadness to change the decision of the members of the Indian Vicariate; the sadness of some cultural clashes during collegial discernment of the General Council; the sadness of resistance to changes that according to me would assure greater vitality and viability in a unit. On the other side, I felt the closeness of many of the units directors, of many members and many lay associates who support me with their prayer and friendship.

I regret that the situation of the Indian Vicariate is unresolved and it will continue to require our effort; these are our brother and they have many good qualities and they need our closeness and special help. There are cases where I should have worked with more energy and generosity, especially those regarding the new units of the Congregation. I should have insisted more on the expansion of the Congregation, on the work of vocation promotion, on the formation of candidates according to the charism of the Congregation and on the ongoing formation of the members, especially in those units where this sensitivity is less. I regret that I could not support enough the project of ministry to immigrants started by the European Provinces in Madrid. This project was discontinued just after one year.

As I already told the Major Superiors at our last meeting in September, I do not seek reelection. I have been serving in the General Leadership for 12 years; 6 as Vice Moderator General and 6 as Moderator General. Reelection would mean another 6 years in the General Curia for a total of 18 years. Too many! Not because I am tired, but because I believe that all I could have given, I have done. New persons can give new energy and enthusiasm to the members of the Congregation to fulfill their personal charism and the Congregation charism for the Church and the world.

The theme of this assembly is: A Prophetic Multicultural Communion for the Renewal of the Church and the Reconciliation of the World. This was what the Major Superiors envisioned for the Congregation in their meeting in September. The work that we will do during these days of Assembly will be on how to implement this dream. We will discern a vision for the Congregation and to choose competent and generous people who will help all members of the Congregation to implement and fulfill it.

Again I thank you for your welcoming and supportive attitude towards me and your encouragement during these years. I have been challenged by you but above all I have been enriched and blessed.

I want again to thank my Council; it has been a grace to work with them

I feel that it is time for me to let go. A new General leadership team will bring new talents and new gifts.

In the spirit of the bicentennial celebration I wish all of you and the whole Congregation a “glorious future” where all will live and work together as a communion.



I would like to finish this report with the words of Pope Francis spoken during a homily at morning mass at Santa Marta guest house where he lives (May 22, 2013):

*The Lord redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! 'Father, the atheists?' Even the atheists! Everyone! And this Blood makes us children of God of first class. We are created children in the likeness of God and the Blood of Christ has redeemed us all. And we have a duty to do good. And this commandment for everyone to do good, I think, is a beautiful path towards peace. If we, each doing our own part, if we do good to others, if we meet there, doing good, and we go slowly, gently, little by little we will make that culture of encounter. We need that so much. We must meet one another doing good."But I do not believe, father, I am an atheist!' But do good: we will meet one another there!*

Pope Francis is the same person that invited the priests of his Diocese of Rome to leave the sacristy and to go to the periphery; to the margins of the city; to the good places where people in need are found.

May St. Gaspar continue to walk with us and encourage us in the mission which has been entrusted to us.

Fraternally yours in the Precious Blood



Fr. Francesco Bartoloni, cpps  
Moderator General



Rome, July 8, 2013