

New convocation of General Chapter XXIV

Dearest Sisters,

On the solemnity of Pentecost, we reach you with an important communication matured in prayer and in discernment together with the Sisters of the Council.

In this time of difficult trial for the world because of the pandemic provoked by Covid-19, keeping in mind the measures established by the governments and, above all, by the travel and movement restrictions, we realize that it is not possible to celebrate the General Chapter XXIV on the established date (cf. *Circular of Convocation* 985).

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, on 2 April 2020, authorized the Religious Institutes to defer the celebration of the General Chapters and therefore it extended the mandates of the Major Superiors and their respective Councils until the next celebration of the Chapters.

After an appropriate discernment with the present Council members, keeping in mind the information gathered during the course of the pandemic in the world, with this Circular **I officially convoke General Chapter XXIV** according to the norms of Article 138 of the Constitutions of the Institute.

It will begin in Rome at the Generalate on **17 April 2021**.

The conclusion is expected to be on 19 May 2021.

Listening to the current reality, dense with challenges and unprecedented opportunities, I confirm the theme of the Chapter according to this formulation:

**“Do whatever He tells you” (Jn 2: 5).
Communities that generate life in the heart of contemporaneity.**

The objective that we propose to reach is to *Awaken the original freshness of the Institute's vocational fruitfulness*.

As *Moderator* of the Chapter, I confirm the nomination of Sr. Chiara Cazzuola, who assumes the responsibility of accompanying the preparation and actualization of General Chapter XXIV.

The General Chapter will be preceded by some days of spiritual retreat in Rome for the participants.

Given the emergency situation, we will not be able to live the Spiritual Exercises at Mornese. Thus I invite all the Provincials and Delegates to the Chapter to provide for their annual Retreat in their own Provinces.

Considering the precautionary measures adopted in the various countries, and therefore also in Italy, we plan to organize at the Generalate the places and ways of implementing the Chapter in order to favor the best conditions for the health and smooth running of the Chapter work.

The *Working Document* that has already been sent remains a valid document for the actualization of the Chapter. We are called to further question how we can be communities that generate life in this unprecedented situation.

Thus, we will be sending to the Provincials and Delegates opportune indications on the necessary preparation for General Chapter XXIV, keeping in mind also the consequences of the pandemic that have repercussions on our life style and mission.

Together, let us seek to immerse ourselves in ‘the heart of contemporaneity’, listening to reality through a believer’s reading of the situation to understand what the Holy Spirit is saying to us today and how we can, with His help, look to the future with faith and hope.

Precisely in this situation that took us all by surprise, do we need the special light of the Holy Spirit and the motherly presence of Mary Help of Christians. She teaches us to look attentively at reality, to intuit needs, to foresee new paths in our educational mission to give hope to children, teenagers, and young adults, especially the poorest.

She educates us to obedient listening to Jesus who, with His Spirit, regenerates the educating communities by working the miracle of the ‘new wine’.

We feel we are all in communion during this difficult journey, but enlightened by hope. Our trust is rooted in the One who does not abandon us but remains with us every day as a presence of love, of hope, of perennial newness.

During this time of preparation for General Chapter XXIV, I ask you to gather daily in the prayer of entrustment to Mary indicated in the preceding Chapter convocation (cf. *Circular of Convocation* 985).

With the Sisters of the Council, I greet you with affection, asking for each of you and for your educating communities, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of Mary Help of Christians.

Rome, 31 May 2020

Aff.ma Madre

New indications for General Chapter XXIV

By Monday **11 April 2021**: Capitulars arrive in Rome.

From 12 to 14 April: days of prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit.

On 15 and 16 April: presentation of the technology and the directives for General Chapter XXIV.

On 17 April: **Official Opening of General Chapter XXIV**.

The maximum duration of five weeks is foreseen with closure on **19 May 2021**.

The departure of the Capitulars from Rome is foreseen from 20 May 2021.