



Dear Confreres,

greetings to all only on the eve of Christmas' celebrations. The last few months saw us quite busy with the XVIII General Chapter which has indicated to the Institute the direction to be followed in the years ahead. As far as administration is concerned, these are the main highlights:

1. XVIII General Chapter. The report of the General Treasurer to the Chapter focused on the journey of the TCF and the examination of the six-year financial report, which showed an increase in resources, but unevenness in their distribution. The reflection that followed was very sensitive to this situation and focused on the solidarity among the provinces, reaching some decisions unexpected for their radicalism. There was also a strong call for a verification of the funds to avoid forms of accumulation.
2. Hand-over of offices to the new General Council. The hand-over of the financial assets of the General Administration from the outgoing to the incoming General Council took place on 13 November, during the General Consulta, having as reference the balance sheet at 31.10.2015.
3. General Consulta. In the Consulta of November 2015, the General Council has authorized some extraordinary operations, as required by the respective provinces:
  - a) Brazil: restructuring of the Provincial House.
  - b) Mozambique: construction of pre-postulancy.
4. Financial Council. The Financial Council (FC) was held on November 24-26 for the usual purpose of preparing the budget of the General Administration and Scholasticates/CIF for the year 2016. The proposals were subsequently approved by the Consulta.

Two other important issues were tackled the FC:

- a) The Post-capitular plan, for which the FC has drawn up a proposal concerning the General Secretariat for Finance. This draft is available to the General Council that in January will dedicate two full weeks to the Six-year Plan.
- b) The International Agreement for the abolition of bank secrecy, with a valued lecture by Prof. Lamberti. We are trying to assess the implications of this agreement for the administrative procedures of the Institute and its journey towards an ever greater transparency.

The two meetings of the FC in 2016 were set for May 24 to 27 and November 22 to 24.

5. Publication and translation of the General Directory for Finance. Last September, after an additional revision of the Spanish and English translations, the new General Directory for Finance was given to the press. Through the Chapter members each province has received the requested copies.
6. Book on the TCF. A small volume (98 pp.) was published, collecting the articles that appeared on *Mccj Bulletin* on the Total Common Fund. These articles tell of the journey of the six years after the XVII General Chapter and the reflection that has accompanied it.
7. Courses in Scholasticates/CIF. In July, Bro. Joao Ferreira and Fr. Ancaes held the course in the scholasticate of São Paulo. The next round will be in Kinshasa in late March.
8. Continental Assembly for Anglophone and Francophone Africa. The Assembly, scheduled in Maputo from 30 October to 5 November, 2016, will constitute an important step in the post-chapter journey. Also in this assembly we will seek to enhance the Agreement for the automatic exchange of financial information.
9. Visits of the General Treasurer. For the year 2016. The expected visits are:
  - a) Kinshasa (Congo) from 27 March to 3 April 2016: formation course of scholastics.
  - b) Maputo (Mozambique) from 29 October to 15 November 2016: Anglophone-Africa Assembly.

These past few weeks have given us moments of extraordinary grace with the opening of the Jubilee of Mercy and with the choice of Pope Francis to open the first Holy Door in Bangui, Central Africa. For one day, Bangui has become "the spiritual capital of the world".

The Pope himself made come true what he had hoped for when proclaiming the Holy Year: "Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity and let us recognize that we are compelled to heed their cry for help. May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our fraternity". (*Misericordiae Vultus*, n. 15)

The last very recent gift was the decree on the heroic virtues of Fr. Giuseppe Ambrosoli, signed on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

In light of these joyous events, receive our best Christmas wishes.

Fr. Claudio Lurati  
General Treasurer