

# Guide for the implementation of the XVIII General Chapter and Programme of Activities

*“Comboni Missionary Disciples”*



*Rome – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016*

COMBONI MISSIONARIES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AG	=	Assistant General
APDESAM	=	Association of the Provinces and Delegations of English-Speaking Africa and Mozambique
CA	=	Chapter Acts 2015
CAR	=	Central African Republic
CCPF	=	Central Commission of On-going Formation
CLM	=	Comboni Lay Missionaries
CWHP	=	Comboni Works of Human Promotion
GC	=	General Council
GD	=	General Direction
GDF	=	General Directory for Finance
GSEV	=	General Secretariat for Evangelization
GSF	=	General Secretariat for Formation
GSFI	=	General Secretariat for Finance
GSM	=	General Secretariat of Mission
GSMA	=	General Secretariat for Missionary Animation
ICB	=	International Centres for Brothers
JP/IC	=	Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
OF	=	On-going Formation
PS	=	Provincial Superior
RL	=	Rule of Life
TCF	=	Total Common Fund

## MESSAGE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

*"I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance. I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:10-11).*

*"We are working for God; let us leave everything to God and he will help us. Our Work is based on faith" (W 6933).*

*"There are many well-identified Comboni Missionaries, generous and ready to give up their lives for Christ and the Mission; they spend their lives quietly, day after day, in the various services entrusted to them ..." (CA, No. 14).*

Dear Confrères,

We greet you in the name of the Lord.

Around this time, you are receiving the Chapter Acts, fruit of the journey made during the General Chapter where you also were present through the contributions you made before the Chapter and your prayers of intercession during the Chapter itself. Now, with that same spirit of belonging and of love, by materially receiving the document, but most of all by means of your Assemblies and your reflections, you are welcoming the Acts. All of us now commit ourselves to receiving the General Chapter into our individual and Community lives. The Chapter Acts are a reflection of the journey and the sharing carried out on the life of the Institute: showing in a concise manner the dream, the vision and the desire for planning that emerged during the General Chapter.

The General Council, with the help of the General Secretaries of the various sectors, has prepared and wishes to present to you an instrument intended to be our Guide to the implementation, a plan of action and life that wishes to welcome and respond to the invitation that the Holy Spirit has given us by means of the XVIII General Chapter.

As you have already noted, some parts of the Chapter Acts are just suggestions or indications for a style of life and service that is difficult to take into consideration in planning; others are programmatic elements that must become specific activities. This Guide carries on the discernment which was begun in Communities and Circumscriptions and it has become a concrete proposal in the General Chapter: it proposes a journey for the Institute with concrete duties to which each one must dedicate himself, in the service proper to him, respecting specific deadlines. The fixing of deadlines is not an option but a duty so that the proposals may be taken up with due responsibility and urgency.

Our planning comes from our faith. All of us, in fact, believe that, in trying to respond with commitment to what is indicated by the General Chapter, we are responding to the invitation of the Holy Spirit, thus taking our place in the *Missio Dei*. We believe that when we are faithful to our Mission we are working "*for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. ... But then we are working for God; let us leave everything to God and he will help us. Our Work is based on faith. It is a language that few of the good on earth understand. But the saints understood it ...*" (W 6933).

The Guide concentrates on the themes of the Chapter, concerning which the participants carried out discernment and took decisions, seeking to indicate to one and all their proper tasks in the various levels of the Institute.

We are aware that neither the Chapter Acts nor the Guide to the implementation of the Chapter contain all the richness inspired by the Chapter itself. We want to leave room for the Holy Spirit working in our hearts, in our Communities and in the places of our witness and apostolate. At the same time, the Guide and the Six-Year Plans that are to be made, remind us with realism of what we may accomplish with the resources we have at this moment, taking into account the fact that they bear witness to our being.

We are heirs to a great gift comprised of the commitment, witness and dedication that so many **Confrères** hand on to us from all the circumscriptions and continents. In planning for the future, we do not wish to break this link with the past: we receive it and celebrate it with gratitude because it reinforces our feeling for God, our passion for his Kingdom and our dedication to his people.

The spirit of Pope Francis who inspired and stimulated us with *Evangelii Gaudium*, encourages us as missionary disciples, to cry out with our lives in order to wake up the world. Faced with our call and the Mission to which the Lord Jesus has sent us, in the Holy Spirit, we do not feel we are experts but recognise that we are pardoned Christians. For this reason, in a spirit of sharing the Mercy of God and His tenderness for humanity, we feel

called to serve the wounded and those placed at the margins of our society.

In our planning, we have full confidence in God who will give us the grace necessary to live it and to accomplish it. Providence has placed at our side people who are Sisters, Secular and Lay Comboni Missionaries, collaborators, animators and workers in the Local Church who help us to live the Gospel and to serve in a better way, according to the charism of Comboni and our tradition.

By committing ourselves to welcoming responsibly this Guide, thanks to the prayers of Mary our Mother, of Comboni and our many holy friends and Confrères, we are making an act of faith in God and in what He will accomplish in our lives: *“In the meantime, be happy, calm and trust in God, who can see all, who can do everything and who loves us ... You have placed all your trust in God”* (W 172).

Rome: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
185<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Birth of St. Daniel Comboni.

*Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie*  
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# **Comboni Missionary Disciples**

## **called to live the joy of the Gospel in today's world**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This planning document constitutes a re-reading of the Chapter Acts guided by the concern to formulate a programme of the essential aspects of the “doing” that awaits us.

This is why we have chosen to maintain the same editorial structure of the Acts of the XVIII General Chapter in this Guide to the implementation of the XVIII General Chapter. Therefore, one and the same are the fundamental themes we use: Mission, Persons, Re-Organization and Finance. Compared with the past, the only differences worthy of note are the treatment of Spirituality in the Section dedicated to Persons, and the fact of having reserved a separate section to issues linked with Finance.

Each of the four Sections begins with the citation of select excerpts from the first part of the Chapter Acts (CA), and a brief introduction followed by a detailed examination of the programming elements, each of which is attributed to one of the three organizational levels of the Institute (General Direction, Council and Secretariats; Continents; and Circumscriptions). The text illustrating each programming element has been kept as close as possible to what is

set forth in the CA, and, only where necessary for reasons of clarity of presentation, has the text in question been adapted.

It must be noted that the text we propose does not reflect any concern to motivate and exhort, this being the concern proper to the CA, which, as is readily evident, are constantly evoked under each point. In fact, we want to make it clear that without constant and timely cross reference to the Chapter Acts, this document would prove to be less than readily understandable.

On the other hand, however, this Guide projects the concern to single out what must be done “in practical terms” and at which organizational level of the Institute, with the addition of a time line, without which any programme would be meaningless. Some dates indicate the deadline by which the action in question is to be concluded. Others indicate the point of departure at which it is expected that the action is to begin. Others refer to recurrent activities, which therefore call for on-going and coherent implementation. The time lines given are at times linked to specific statements in the CA, or, more often, rendered necessary by a programming rationale that takes into consideration the regular holding of events in the life of the Institute (Assemblies, Elections, Meetings, the Chapter and its preparation), set forth in detail in the last pages of this Guide (cf. Dates of Events, Anniversaries, etc.).

Therefore, it should not be difficult for Confrères to identify the things to be done and the relative time line, ever following the indications of the CA, which situate what “is to be done” within the necessary horizon.

## THE MISSION

- Inspired by the Magisterium of Pope Francis, the Chapter calls on us to launch a process of reflection to re-think the goals and spheres of the Mission (*cf. CA, No. 44.3*), following the criteria listed in No. 44.5 of the Chapter Acts.
- The reduction of commitments must foster the re-qualification of our missionary service according to the criteria of closeness to marginalized groups of persons or those in frontier situations, and the option for specific pastoral services/ministeriality (Inter-religious Dialogue, JP/IC, Education, Healthcare, Mass Media, Missionary Animation) (*cf. CA, Nos. 45.1, 45.2, 45.3 and 45.4*).
- It no longer suffices to consider the European Continent as a place for Missionary Animation and Vocation Promotion alone. Europe as well is a Mission field, keeping in mind the fact that the first subject of Mission is the Local Church (*cf. CA, No. 46.1*)

### Introduction

We are Comboni Missionaries, and for us the announcement of the Gospel shapes and moulds every dimension of our life. We are aware of being part of the Church's rich missionary history, and, in particular, know we are the continuation of the charism brought forth by the Spirit in St. Daniel Comboni one hundred and fifty years ago.

Worldwide changes in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres entail important consequences for us as well, because they summon us to undertake a profound revisiting of our methodology. Moreover, the paradigm of Mission has changed: we are aware that the Mission begins from the heart of God, and therefore ours is participation in the *Missio Dei*; it is global because it surmounts geographical borders and has the construction of the Kingdom of God as its horizon; it is attentive to the differences of context, and is likewise a composite reality made up of diverse dimensions: Proclamation, Liberation, Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation, and Dialogue with cultures and religions.

Pope Francis summons us to revisit our Mission beginning from the outcasts of society and to be witnesses of the Father's mercy.

The XVIII General Chapter has called on us to let ourselves be transformed by the Gospel in order to better respond to the challenges of today's world. Down through the years our missionary activity has been hampered by some structures and methods that have prevented us from being suitably flexible. We must also acknowledge the fact that the Institute is changing due to both the reduction in personnel and the increase in the number of Confrères from other cultures.

We are therefore called to reflect upon and revise our commitments in order to adapt them all the better to changes underway in society and to our Institute's real possibilities. This reduction of our commitments makes it possible to concentrate on some areas and become specialized in them. This also implies the need to

collaborate all the more with the Comboni Family at large, as well as with other missionary institutions and forces.

The Comboni Mission in Europe requires a profound revision that may help us clarify our role as missionaries in a Local Church that often feels overwhelmed by the presence of peoples coming from other cultural and religious identities. We believe we are able to give much indeed to this Church in Europe on the basis of our experience of direct contact with numerous peoples throughout the world.

## **Programmatic Elements**

**Reflection upon, and revision of, our Commitments (*cf. CA, No. 44*)**

### **General Direction (GSM)**

- The GSM gives the Circumscriptions concrete indications for reflection leading to “re-thinking the goals, structures, style and methods of Evangelization” (*EG, No. 33*) (***cf. CA, No. 44.4***)
  - By 31.12.2016

### **Continents**

- With their respective Assistant General, the Continents monitor the implementation of decisions relative to the reduction and focusing of the commitments of each Circumscription, reporting on progress made to each Continental Assembly (***cf. CA, No. 44.8***)
  - Recurrent as of 1.1.2019 (beginning of the Second Triennium)

### **Circumscriptions**

- Each Circumscription prepares a Six-Year Plan which, in addition to containing a revision of commitments, is to

promote the re-qualification of our missionary service according to the following detailed criteria (**cf. CA, Nos. 44.7 and 45.1**)

- By 30.6.2017
- The programme for the reduction and focalization of commitments is presented to: (**cf. CA, No. 44.7**)
  - The GC/GD by 30.6.2017
  - The Continental Assemblies by 30.6.2018
  - To the Inter-Capitular Assembly (for its evaluation) by 31.8.2018
- In total forty-five (45) Communities will be closed, thereby creating more numerically consistent, stable and international ones (**cf. CA, Nos. 44.9 and 44.10**)
  - By 30.6.2021

## **Evangelization and specific pastoral services (cf. CA, No. 45)**

### **Circumscriptions**

- Each Circumscription begins a process of identification and discernment regarding specific pastoral services and ministries present and possible alliances to be strengthened (**cf. CA, No. 45.4**)
  - By 31.12.2016
- Each Circumscription draws up a plan of specializations necessary for the specific pastoral services and ministries present, which is to be shared with the Continent and submitted to the General Council (**cf. CA, No. 45.4**)
  - By 30.6.2017
- Each Circumscription has commitments in the field of JP/IC and fosters the involvement through networking of Confrères at the Provincial and Continental levels (**cf. CA, No. 45.6**)

- By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

### **Continents**

- The result of the identification of each Circumscription's specific pastoral services is shared during the Continental Assemblies (**cf. CA, No. 45.5**)
  - By 30.6.2018
- Then a continental plan of specializations is drawn up for collaborative projects in specific pastoral services and ministries (**cf. CA, No. 45.5**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- The Continents of Europe and French-speaking Africa prepare a plan of collaboration among Circumscriptions making it possible to create a CWHP (**cf. CA, No. 45.7**)
  - Within the Sexennium

### **The 'Comboni' Mission in Europe (cf. CA, No. 46)**

#### **General Direction**

- The GC fosters the internationalization of the Communities in Europe by transferring non-European Confrères there (**cf. CA, No. 46.3**)
  - Within the Sexennium

#### **Continents**

- The European Continent draws up inter-Provincial collaboration projects also through the exchange of personnel (**cf. CA, No. 46.3**)
  - Within the Sexennium
- In communion among themselves and with the Local Churches, the European Circumscriptions reflect upon and develop specific pastoral guidelines regarding migrants to be

implemented in one or more Circumscriptions as an expression of continental collaboration (**cf. CA, No. 46.5**)

- To be shared at the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

### **Circumscriptions**

- The On-going Formation and Mission Sectors of the European Circumscriptions map out itineraries of formation on the new vision of Mission and the ensuing processes of conversion this calls for (**cf. CA, No. 46.3**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- Each European Circumscription identifies community premises able to host migrants. Reception and hosting takes place in collaboration with local Ecclesial Organizations (**cf. CA, No. 46.5**)
  - Within the Sexennium.

## PERSONS

**CA, No. 27.** The appeal to go out of self towards others reiterates the Christian vision of the person as a being in 'relationship', in contrast to an ever more widespread culture of individualism.

**CA, No. 28.** This vision responds to the Comboni spirituality of the Good Shepherd, places us in an attitude of 'going forth' towards others, and becomes the source of our joy. To be able to live this impulse it is necessary to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, who introduces us to the contemplation of the mystery of God and the mystery of man wherever we find him in his richness and diversity.

**CA, No. 30.** We feel the deep need for a spirituality that heals and makes us whole, able to integrate our humanness and that of others with its limits, frailties and inconsistencies. A spirituality based on the Word of God that is listened to, lived, celebrated and announced, and is able to touch and inspire all the dimensions of our missionary life: the Person, Community, Mission, Finances and Governance (*EG, No. 174*).

### Introduction

One of the most beautiful expressions of the Chapter is the one defining the person as "a being in relationship", in contrast to a culture which fosters an individualistic mentality (*cf. CA, No. 27*). A relationship that does not highlight inevitable differences among

persons, but rather fosters communion and enables us to discover that we are brothers and can also become friends (*cf. John 15:15*), above and beyond our differences.

This is the reason why we felt the call, more so and even more intensely than during other Chapters, to deepen the theme of inter-culturality (*RL, No. 18*). It is good not to forget that we are a dream fulfilled by our Founder: from the very outset he was the one who wanted a 'Catholic' Institute that would open its doors to all those who wanted to collaborate with him in the Mission.

In both the Working Groups and in the Chapter Hall we knew we were not saying anything new, but we were aware that the beautiful things written have more often than not remained a 'dead letter' because we have not deepened them and perhaps not even lived them. Therefore, we are not afraid to recover some of them and once again strive to live them.

Our Institute is not only international, it is also inter-cultural (*cf. CA, No. 47.2*), and on our part this requires greater openness, tolerance, mercy and true charity towards one another. This will be possible if we first and foremost cultivate an integral spirituality based on the Word of God that touches all the dimensions of our life (*EG, No. 174*). To this end, the Chapter deemed it necessary to undertake a reflection on what is proposed by the Rule of Life in this regard so we may revisit and re-think this in order to respond to the challenges we are facing today in the world, the Church and the Institute.

In the journey we are now embarking upon it is fundamental for us to remain close to the poor, ever attentive to the margins of humanity that cry out to heaven and continue to appeal to us as persons, as consecrated men, and as missionaries.

## Programmatic Elements

### Inter-culturality (cf. CA, No. 47)

#### General Direction

- The GSF prepares material on the theme of inter-culturality along with content and methodologies for implementation (**cf. CA, No. 47.6**).
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- 2019 is dedicated to the theme of inter-culturality (**cf. CA, No. 47.6**)
  - By 31.3.2016

#### Circumscriptions

- Following the indications set forth in the material prepared by the GSF, specific formation sessions for Local Superiors on the dynamics of inter-culturality are organized in each Circumscription. The ensuing preparation of the Community Charters is monitored so that they explicitly foresee and mention how to live the dimension of inter-culturality (**cf. CA, No. 47.6**).
  - Recurrent activity as of 01.1.2019

### Spirituality (cf. CA, No. 48)

#### Circumscriptions

- During visits to the Communities, Circumscription Superiors make sure and verify that the Comboni Communities are receptive, attractive and open places with a “going forth” attitude. They also make sure each Confrère has drawn up a personal project of life, receives spiritual accompaniment,

and avails himself of the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis (**cf. CA, Nos. 48.3, 48.6**).

- Recurrent activity as of 30.6.2017
- Each Circumscription plans and implements endeavours (e.g. materials, seminars, encounters, ...) for learning and expressing the values of the Comboni charism in a new language inspired by *Evangelii Gaudium* (**cf. CA, No. 48.4**)
  - Recurrent activity as of 01.1.2018
- The preparation of the Community Charters is monitored so that moments of daily prayer are foreseen, with spaces of silence, meditation and sharing of both the Word of God and the journey of faith (**cf. CA, No. 48.2**)
  - Recurrent activity as of 01.1.2018

## **Rule of Life – Reading, Revisiting and Revision (cf. CA, Nos. 49 and 50)**

### **General Direction**

- The GC appoints a Commission for the Revision of the Rule of Life, assisted by non-Comboni experts (**cf. CA, No. 50.1**)
  - By 31.12.2016
- The Commission prepares a draft of proposals for the revision of the Rule of Life, which takes into consideration the reading and revisiting work done in the Circumscriptions, and submits this draft text to the Inter-Capitular Assembly (**cf. CA, No. 50.1**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- Together with the Commission, the GC organizes a consultation of the Confrères on the proposed draft revision of the Rule of Life after it has been examined by the Inter-Capitular Assembly. The final revision proposal is submitted to the XIX General Chapter for approval (**cf. CA, No. 50.1**)

- By the end of the Sexennium

### **Continents**

- Each Continent sets up a team to prepare materials, methodological guidelines and animators to help Confrères in reading and revisiting the Rule of Life (**cf. CA, No. 49.3**)
  - By 31.12.2016

### **Circumscriptions**

- On the basis of the suggestions and indications proposed by the continental teams, the reading and revisiting of the Rule of Life is carried out in each Circumscription according to the dynamic proposed by the Ratio Missionis. The syntheses of the results of this process are sent to the Commission for the Revision of the Rule of Life (**cf. CA, No. 49.3**)
  - By 31.12.2017

### **Scholasticates and the ICB (cf. CA, Nos. 51 and 52)**

#### **General Direction**

- Together with the GSF, the GC identifies and programmes the timing and the modalities for closing one of the English language Scholasticates before the end of the First Triennium (**cf. CA, No. 51.2**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- Together with the GSF and the Continent, the GC, if so required by the number of candidates, prepares and implements a new **modality** for a formation presence for the Brothers in Latin America (**cf. CA, No. 51.2**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

## **Mixed Institute (cf. CA, No. 53)**

### **General Direction**

- The GC appoints an *ad hoc* Commission, which includes two Brothers, to solicit the Holy See for the change of the Institute's status from clerical to mixed (**cf. CA, No. 53.1**)
  - Within the Sexennium

## **Code of Conduct (cf. CA, No. 54)**

### **Circumscriptions**

- Each Circumscription chooses and prepares a Confrère to assist the Communities in studying and sharing the contents of the Code of Conduct with a view to fostering mutual attention to fidelity to the Comboni vocation and preventing situations of counter witness (**cf. CA, No. 54.1**).
  - By 31.12.2017

### **Continents**

- Some Confrères are prepared in each Continent, with the collaboration of the GC, to provide the competencies necessary to conduct investigations according to the Code of Conduct (**cf. CA, No. 54.2**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

## RE-ORGANIZATION

**CA, No. 39.** The new context of society and Mission challenges us to be 'daring and creative' and to re-think objectives, structures, styles and methods of evangelization and Missionary Animation (*EG, Nos. 33 and 27*). Aware that we cannot respond to all the expectations of our time, we feel guided by the Holy Spirit, who goes before us and reveals to us new journeys of evangelical fullness albeit in weakness (cf. *2 Cor 12:10; Romans 5:20*).

**CA, No. 40.** The challenges posed by the Mission have changed, and seem to ask for ever more energy. It has become impossible to maintain all our commitments due to ageing and the decrease in the number of Confrères. Our trust in God brings us to read such a resizing as an opportunity to embark upon new journeys with a sense of littleness and docility to the Holy Spirit.

**CA, No. 43.** Re-organization depends on the commitment of each Circumscription in order to overcome dispersion, helping us to concentrate on clear apostolic goals. Nonetheless, it also depends on the courage shown by Confrères and Local Communities in daring to attempt new forms of fraternity and service.

### Introduction

There is nothing new in the Institute's perception of the need to undertake in-depth re-organization in the face of circumstances that

have changed in the world around us, in the Local Churches where we undertake our ministry, and in our very own Institute.

It is more than evident, and has been for some time, that there is an imbalance between the commitments we have assumed and strive to honour with our every energy and strength. It appears to us that at times the resolve with which we remain bound to the albeit precious heritage of our past and our traditions, runs the risk of curbing and even impoverishing the boldness and creativity augured by the Magisterium of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*.

To the need identified and solicited for some time to re-qualify our commitments, the previous Chapter had already added the necessity to reduce the number of our Circumscriptions. Some steps were taken during the past Sexennium and the XVIII Chapter confirms this, telling us however that the drive towards continuing along the lines of the reform already marked out is not to be lost, **but** rather continued with renewed promptness and audacity.

The Chapter went even further, and asked the Institute to realign its organizational structures at the centre in order to better accompany the service of its operational levels: the Continents and the Circumscriptions. It is a matter of revisiting the organizational structure of some Secretariats and Offices in order to better delineate the ways and forms of their collaboration with Circumscriptions and Continents. In their turn, the latter will have to reflect and undertake discernment regarding the type of change that must be introduced in the *modus operandi* of their respective Secretariats and Offices.

The Chapter also expressed the wish that ways are sought and identified that may strengthen a transition of the Institute towards modalities of formation, organization, reflection and discernment in the line of ministeriality. To this end it is foreseen that

specializations are to clearly reflect the Institute's priority services, and collaboration at all levels be assumed as the pre-eminent way of working in the line of ministeriality.

## **Programmatic Elements**

### **Specializations (cf. CA, Nos. 60-63)**

#### **General Direction**

- After receiving the Six-Year Plans of the Circumscriptions, the GC dedicates a Council Meeting to the discernment and programming of specializations and rotation by priority commitments, in collaboration with the General Secretariats **(cf. CA, No. 62)**
  - By 31.12.2017

### **Co-ordination of the Institute and the General Direction (cf. CA, Nos. 64-68)**

#### **General Direction**

- The GC, in collaboration with the General Secretariats of Evangelization (GSEV) and Missionary Animation (GSMA), as well as with the persons responsible for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JP/IC) and the Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) proceeds to create a single General Secretariat under the name of the General Secretariat for Mission (GSM) **(cf. CA, No. 64)**
  - By 31.12.2016
- The GC, in collaboration with the General Secretariat of Basic Formation and the Central Commission of On-going Formation, proceeds to the creation of a single General Secretariat under the name of the General Secretariat of Formation (GSF) **(cf. CA, No. 65)**
  - By 31.12.2016

- The GC publishes the decree amending No. 140.1 of the Rule of Life which reflects the new organizational structures, and with this revisits and also publishes the new Directory of the General Direction (**cf. CA, No. 66**)
  - By 31.12.2016
- The new General Secretariats are to animate the Continents and the Circumscriptions so their respective Secretariats and Offices streamline their structures and are able to maintain lines of effective communication with the General Direction and coordinate works among themselves without any excessive increase in work. (**Cf. CA, No. 68**)
  - By 31.12.2016

### **Continents and Circumscriptions**

- In line with the structural changes at the central level, the Circumscriptions and Continents streamline their respective structures for the Secretariats and Offices (**cf. CA, No. 68**)
  - By 31.12.2017

### **Continentality – Continental Reference Person for the Brothers (cf. CA, Nos. 69-71)**

#### **Continents**

- In dialogue with one another during the Continental Assemblies, and with the GC, the Superiors of each Continent identify the personnel to be assigned to the realization of continental projects (**cf. CA, No. 70**)
  - Recurrent activity
- Continental reference person for the Brothers: each Continent establishes the modality for choosing the Brother, taking into consideration consultation with the Brothers in the various Circumscriptions in the Continent. This Brother

takes part in the Assembly of the Provincial and Delegation Superiors of the said Continent (**cf. CA, No. 71**)

- By 30.6.2017

## **Circumscriptions and Merging (cf. CA, No. 72-73)**

### **General Direction**

- The GC identifies the Circumscriptions whose merger seems more necessary and opportune, and notifies the intention to proceed to the said merger (**cf. CA, No. 72**)
  - By 31.12.2016
- The GC proceeds to the establishment of a Delegation of the group of Comboni Missionaries in Poland (**cf. CA, No. 73**)
  - Within the Sexennium

### **Circumscriptions**

- The Councils of the Circumscriptions singled out for possible merging are to develop ways and means to heighten the awareness of the Confrères regarding the need for the merger (**cf. CA, No. 72**)
  - By 31.12.2017
- At the end of this process to heighten awareness about the need for merging, the Circumscription Superiors organize a formal consultation of the Confrères to assess the acceptability thereof (**cf. CA, No. 72**)
  - The timing will vary according to the modalities of the process developed, but within the Sexennium.

## FINANCE

**CA, No. 75.** It is necessary to grow from a perspective of Provincial sharing to solidarity with the Institute at large.

**CA, No. 78.** Each Circumscription is to aim at becoming economically self-supporting. To this end, in the first place the involvement of the Local Churches from where our Confrères come and where they work, is called for, so that it is the People of God there who above all support their own missionaries.

**CA, No. 79.** There may also be worthwhile and simple initiatives of self-reliance (including pastoral commitments) that should however always avoid any suggestion of the worldly or of a business oriented spirit. It is essential for these initiatives to be accompanied by regulation and transparent administration.

### Introduction

The concern of the XVIII General Chapter was to indicate some guidelines to adjust the availability of financial resources to the changed conditions of the Institute and the Mission.

In 2009 it was decided to extend the Total Common Fund (TCF) to all the Circumscriptions, and this step was followed by the awareness that “it is necessary to grow from a perspective of Provincial sharing to solidarity within the Institute at large” (CA, No. 75).

The second theme focused upon by the Chapter was sustainability. This was certainly not because Divine Providence no longer accompanies our work, but out of a sense of responsibility in the management of resources. The reflection on sustainability was further motivated by the awareness that it is our duty to foster ecclesial responsibility (CA, No. 78).

The Chapter also says that self-reliance can also be achieved through initiatives which, in addition to pastoral and missionary animation commitments, may also generate resources, while at the same time warning about the risks of a worldly or business-like spirit, as well as the need for strict financial administration and complete transparency (CA, No. 79).

## **Programmatic Elements**

### **Implementation of the XVII General Chapter (cf. CA, Nos. 74-76)**

#### **General Direction**

- The GC identifies two Confrères to undertake studies with a view to specialization in financial/administrative disciplines. **(cf. CA, No. 76)**
  - A first Confrère by the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
  - A second Confrère by the end of the Sexennium.
- The GSFI prepares a report on the manner, and the respective reasons, in which the TCF is applied in the diverse Circumscriptions, and submits this to the Inter-Capitular Assembly **(cf. CA, No. 74)**
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly
- The GSE conducts a study for the institution of Social Security Funds for those Circumscriptions where such provision is not

undertaken by the State, and presents a proposal for implementation to the Inter-Capitular Assembly (**cf. CA, No. 76**)

- By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly.
- The GSE sends the Circumscriptions a model of the ‘Terms of Reference’ for the contracting of external Auditors, and then monitors the adoption of this practice (**cf. CA, No. 77**)
  - By 31.12.2016 for the dispatch of the ‘Terms of Reference’
  - Monitoring is to be a recurrent activity as of 01.01.2017

### **Circumscriptions**

- Each Circumscription (which has not already done so) introduces the practice of the external auditing of its Accounts at the end of the Financial Year (**cf. CA, No. 77**)
  - Recurrent activity as of 2017

### **Sustainability and Local Resources (cf. CA, Nos. 75, 78, 79, and 80)**

#### **General Direction**

- Together with the GC, the GSFI accompanies and assesses possible initiatives promoting self-reliance with a view to both sustainability and the need to avoid any worldly or **business-like** spirit (**cf. CA, No. 79**)
  - Recurrent activity
- The GSE accompanies initiatives of sharing and solidarity among different Circumscriptions, and develops instruments to monitor Circumscription to Circumscription subsidies (**cf. CA, Nos. 75 and 80**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

- Together with the GC, the GSFI better defines and structures the Funds for Solidarity and for Basic Formation (**cf. CA, Nos. 75 and 80**)
  - By the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

### **Circumscriptions**

- When establishing or renewing contracts with Dioceses, the Circumscription Councils pay close attention to financial matters in order to encourage local contributions to supporting the missionaries and their activities (**cf. CA, No. 78**)
  - Recurrent activity

### **Patrimony and Self-Limitation (cf. CA, Nos. 81-84)**

#### **General Direction**

- With the assistance of the GSFI the GC establishes the modalities for the distribution of the annual *superavit* of the General Direction
  - Recurrent activity
- The GSFI, in dialogue and collaboration with the Circumscriptions, undertakes a revision of their Stable Property Assets, and facilitates the institution of Stable Monetary Assets. It reports on the processes underway to the Inter-Capitular Assembly.
  - Within the Sexennium (beginning as of 01.01.2017)
  - Mid-term report submitted to the 2018 Inter-Capitular Assembly

#### **Circumscriptions**

- Each Circumscription determines the policy of Provincial Funds, preparing for each Fund a statute in line with the GSFI, and which clarifies the aims, management, ceiling, etc.

- The Provincial/Delegation Directory of each Circumscription stipulates the limit of the Working Capital in line with the indications provided by the GSFI.
- When disposing of property whose use is no longer suitable, each Circumscription allocates fifty per cent (50%) of the proceeds from the sale to the Institute's Solidarity Fund.
  - Recurrent activities

## CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion to this brief document we would simply like to recall the spirit we hope may accompany our programming: it is a matter of something to be done together, like the Cenacle of the Apostles, where each one of us, individually and collectively, bear responsibility for the one Mission. We also hope and trust that what has been programmed may be lived with boldness and creativity, collaborating with and involving others insofar as possible, involving the persons and Organizations the Spirit places along our path and by our side each day.

In order not to lose impetus and a sense of direction, it will be important to take this Guide in hand on a regular basis in order to take an honest look at the journey travelled and what still has to be done, celebrating both the successes that will be granted to us and the failures we will have to register. If assumed in evangelical liberty, both are precious.

The Holy Spirit and the example of our Holy Founder will continue to be at work and guide our steps. We entrust everything to the maternal care of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, and to St. Daniel Comboni, our Founder and Father.

## SOME COMBONI ANNIVERSARIES

<b>Date</b>	<b>Anniversary</b>
2016	50 <sup>th</sup> of the presence in CAR
2017	150 <sup>th</sup> of the Foundation of the Institute 50 <sup>th</sup> of the expulsion from Burundi 25 <sup>th</sup> of the killing of Br. Alfredo Fiorini in Mozambique
2018	
2019	100 <sup>th</sup> of the evangelization of Juba
2020	
2021	175 <sup>th</sup> of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa 25 <sup>th</sup> of the Beatification of Comboni

## IMPORTANT DATES DURING THE SEXENNIUM

### 2016

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
May – June	Calling of consultations for the new Provincials/Delegates/Councillors
October – December	Appointment of Provincials/Delegates. Election of Councillors

### 2017

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
January - February	General Assembly of the newly-elected Provincial Superiors and newly-appointed Delegates
June	First deadline for presentation of the Circumscription Six-Year Plan
December	Final deadline for presentation of the Circumscription Six-Year Plan

### 2018

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
September	Inter-Capitular Assembly

## 2019

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
March	Establishment of new Circumscriptions
May - June	Calling of consultations for the new Provincials/Delegates/Councillors
October - December	Appointment of Provincials/Delegates. Election of Councillors

## 2020

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
January - February	General Assembly of the newly-elected Provincial Superiors and newly-appointed Delegates
June	Convocation of the XIX Chapter
July - September	Election of Chapter Delegates
October	Appointment of the Pre-Capitular Commission

## 2021

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
June	Dispatch of Chapter documentation
August - September	XIX General Chapter

## DATES OF EVENTS/ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIATS

### MISSION

The dates relative to the events of the General Secretariat of the Mission will be announced at a later date. The only programme available for the time being is the one regarding the activities of the CLM.

#### *Comboni Lay Missionaries*

YEAR	ACTIVITY	Dates - Place
<b>2016</b>	European Assembly of the CLM	22-27.8.2016 Viseu -Portugal
	American Continental Meeting of the CLM	19-24.9.2016 Mexico DF
<b>2017</b>	African Continental Meeting of the CLM	July 2017 Togo?
<b>2018</b>	European Continental Meeting of the CLM	December 2018
	American Continental Meeting of the CLM	December 2018
	Inter-Continental Assembly of the CLM (Sexennial)	??
<b>2021</b>	African Continental Meeting of the CLM	??

## FINANCE

YEAR	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS
<b>2016</b>	Continental Assembly for Finance – APDESAM  Continental Assembly for Finance – FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA	Treasurers of the Continent’s Circumscriptions and Provincials responsible for this Sector on the Continental level
<b>2017</b>	Continental Assembly for Finance – EUROPE  Continental Assembly for Finance – AMERICA/ASIA	Treasurers of the Continent’s Circumscriptions and Provincials responsible for this Sector on the Continental level
<b>2020</b>	General Assembly of Treasurers	Treasurers of all Circumscriptions and Provincials responsible for this Sector on the Continental level

### Other Events concerning Finance

<b>2016-17</b>	Completion of the Scholasticates/ICB cycle of formation: Kinshasa and Lima ( <i>after Casavatore 2013; Pietermaritzburg &amp; Nairobi 2014; and Cape Coast &amp; Sao Paolo 2015</i> )
<b>2017</b>	Course for Provincial Treasurers
<b>2017-19</b>	Scholasticates/ICB: new formation cycle

## FORMATION

YEAR	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS
<b>2016</b>	Continental Assembly for Formation – EUROPE	Continental Formation Co-ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
	Continental Assembly for Formation – APDESAM	Continental Formation Co-ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
	Continental Assembly for Formation – FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA	Continental Formation Co-ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
<b>2017</b>	General Formation Assembly	AG overseeing this Sector, Continental Formation Co-ordinators, GSF, Formators of Scholasticates/ICB and Novitiates, and Observers
	Continental Assembly for Formation – AMERICA/ASIA	Continental Formation Co-ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
<b>2018</b>	Continental Assembly for Formation – EUROPE	Continental Formation Co-ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.

<b>2018</b>	OF Course – APDESAM	Formators
	OF Course – FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA	Formators
<b>2019</b>	OF Course – AMERICA/ASIA	Formators
<b>2020</b>	Continental Assembly for Formation – APDESAM	Continental Formation Co- ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
	Continental Assembly for Formation – FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA	Continental Formation Co- ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.
<b>2021</b>	Continental Assembly for Formation – AMERICA/ASIA	Continental Formation Co- ordinator, GSF, Formators, Vocation Promoters and OF Co-ordinators.

**Nota Bene:**

1. The General Formation Assembly takes place every six years and lasts three weeks.
2. The Continental Assembly for Formation is held every two years and lasts from ten to fifteen **days**, including the Continental Council for Formation.
3. The On-going Formation Course for Formators lasts from two to four weeks. It is proposed that the Formators from Europe join the other Continents on the basis of language.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>2017 2019 2021</b>	Comboni Renewal Course	Confrères between fifty and sixty-five years of age
<b>2016 2018 2020</b>	Comboni Course on Old Age	Confrères older than seventy years
<b>2017-18 2019-20</b>	Comboni Year of On-going Formation	Priest Confrères with ten to fifteen years of missionary service, and Brothers with ten to fifteen years of Perpetual Vows

### **ANNUAL REFLECTION THEMES**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Theme</b>
2016	Reception of the XVIII General Chapter
2017	150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Institute
2018	Rule of Life
2019	Inter-culturality
2020	Ministeriality
2021	Preparation of the XIX General Chapter

**The General Council, in dialogue with the Secretariats, will give indications each year on how to develop the annual reflection themes.**