



Dear Confreres,

At the end of 2025, a year marked by the Intercapitular Assembly, we decided to publish a new issue of EUR News. Last year was an important moment of evaluation, taking stock of the implementation of the XIX General Chapter halfway through its term.

In this issue, we wish to summarise the main points touched upon in the evaluation and the guidelines that emerged for the three-year period ahead, with particular attention to the area of economics.

We wish you all a good read.

1. Epochal Changes - The Institute is undergoing profound transformations from various perspectives, and we all feel that we are moving towards 'a world different from the past.' Even in the economic sphere, we are in a phase of profound transformation: the Institute still finds its main sources of support in Europe and the United States. However, the decline and ageing of confreres and benefactors from these geographical areas lead us to ask ourselves some questions: what will happen in the next 10-20 years? Will these circumscriptions still be able to continue to make the same contribution to the Institute? Are we preparing ourselves by making all the Circumscriptions increasingly sustainable through a serious commitment to seeking local resources?

2. The XIX General Chapter emphasised the theme of sustainability, and it is clear that over the last three years this topic has been the focus of everyone's attention and concern. I remind how the Chapter, in the section dedicated to the economy, expressed the dream of 'an Institute that is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, thanks to Providence and an effective sustainability plan' (AC 2022 no. 36). In concrete terms, it is the six-year plans of the Circumscriptions that should have detailed the seven guidelines offered, identifying concrete commitments to be implemented in the various contexts. The guidelines must be implemented in a synergic way, because each one helps and reinforces the others. There is no single activity that solves all problems; each of these aspects is fundamental, and the dream cannot be realised without giving adequate attention to all paths. The continental economic assemblies held over the past three years have recognised these paths as a

reliable compass for outlining concrete courses of action in various contexts.

Pianificare a partire dal XIX Capitolo Generale



3. Spirituality of Comboni Economy -

The Total Common Fund (TCF), now accepted as the norm by all, is the concrete technical tool that helps us live our vow of poverty in a genuine way. However, if it is not animated by a deep spirituality, it cannot produce the desired result on its own. It is interesting to note that all the Continental Assemblies emphasised the importance of creating connections and synergies between the various areas of our life, particularly between economics, formation (basic and ongoing) and mission. An incarnate missionary spirituality necessarily involves education in the transparent and responsible use of the goods placed at our disposal, with the ultimate goal always directed towards mission and service to the people. Among the most urgent concerns that emerged is the relationship between Economy and Formation. On the one hand, there is a need to introduce, in an increasingly concrete and effective way, technical tools to empower young people in the management of goods, while at the same time educating them in their transparent use. On the other hand, it is the missionaries in the field who must give young people a concrete witness of sharing and of an evangelical lifestyle.

4. Structures and Management - The qualification of the Circumscription Treasurer, accompanied by an effective Finance Secretariat, appears to be one of the main elements that allows a Comboni Circumscription to undertake a serious process of restructuring and sustainability. The Circumscription must therefore plan in such a way as to avoid uncontrolled and improvised rotations in this area. Furthermore, Finance Secretariats in our era

can no longer work alone. 'Collaboration with professionals is becoming increasingly necessary. It is important to learn to work with them, especially in areas where we lack expertise.'

In some cases, the difficulties lie precisely in the impossibility of finding expertise among the confreres present within the Circumscription. The Chapter reiterated the need to 'create numerically larger Circumscriptions in order to be able to count on greater human resources and skills and, possibly, economies of scale' (AC 2022 no. 43.1). In the days spent in Rome the Superiors of Circumscriptions have devoted considerable attention to the issue of merging, especially working at the continental level.

5. Continental Collaboration - One of the possible solutions proposed by the Financial Council to help treasurers facing greater difficulties is to strengthen collaboration between treasuries in neighbouring Circumscriptions. It has therefore been proposed to establish interprovincial support groups among treasurers. These groups will gradually grow and take on various functions, but we believe it is important to grow gradually, starting with responses to the concrete needs of the moment. For this reason, we believe it is important to focus initially on: Auditing and Training of local treasurers. The groups are coordinated by the Councillor in charge of the Continent, always in consultation with the General Treasurer. Some pilot projects have already begun in this regard, especially to help Circumscriptions with the most fragile secretariats. We believe that one of the most important means of overcoming the crisis and building sustainability is the training of Local Treasurers and confreres in general, as well as the ongoing support to the Circumscription Treasurer so that he can keep the books in order and, in turn, grow professionally.

6. Projects - In an era of declining donations from benefactors, projects funded by various organisations can play an important role. However, access to this source of funding is conditional on good organisational capacity. The confreres must therefore be well trained to be able to respond to the requirements of this type of fundraising. It is essential to be more professional in the management and reporting of projects, strictly adhering to the guidelines of the funding agencies. During the meetings of the Finance Council, was also felt the need to develop centres of support to elaborate project. These could be developed at the continental and/or general level. The difficulty of finding the necessary personnel remains. The above proposal for interprovincial

support groups could, at a mature stage, evolve to include joint fundraising.

In identifying projects, it is important to involve all levels (community, Secretariat of Economy and Provincial Council) to ensure a synodal process with deep discernment that allows the available energies and resources to be focused on shared objectives.

I would also like to mention the recent creation of a European platform that will become the standard means of requesting projects within the Institute. It will be the responsibility of the Circumscription Treasurers to enter the request into the platform according to a pre-established model.

7. Other Themes - The Sustainability Fund, designed to support self-sustainability initiatives, has encountered difficulties in raising the necessary funds to get started. The resources raised are rather limited compared to the needs for effectively creating projects capable of making an impact in our Circumscriptions. In the meantime, new aspects have emerged from the debate in the continental assemblies, especially in Africa, which have been included in the fund's statutes: there has been talk of the importance of graduality, 'always starting on a small scale and growing by steps. Experience and expertise in the field are essential'; it was proposed to open up 'also to inter-provincial projects', with contributions that 'could also be sought at the continental level'.

The Institute's **Elder Confreres Fund**, set up to support confreres in countries without a social security system, is being established, albeit with some delay. During the Assembly, a general appeal was made to all European provinces and to the NAP to make an extraordinary donation to help make up for this delay. We believe that this could be a concrete gesture of solidarity towards the neediest elderly members of the Institute, both present and future.

Other topics discussed were: investments consistent with our faith and mission, as called for in the document 'Mesuram Bonam - Faith-Consistent Measures for Catholic Investors'; new means of payment that are rapidly developing in all contexts; and the services provided by our Procures and Treasuries.

Thanking you for your patience in reaching the end of this article, which is nevertheless concise, I would like to remind those who are interested that the full contributions of the General Treasury to the Intercapitular Assembly are published in the MCCJ Bulletin.

P. Angelo Giorgetti
General Treasurer