



# MISSIONARI COMBONIANI DEL CUORE DI GESÙ

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**Rome, 21 October 2012**  
**86<sup>th</sup> World Mission Sunday**

**To the attention of:**

*Circumscriptions' Superiors*  
*Formators of Scholasticates*  
*Scholastics*  
*All Confreres*

**Re: Decisions of the General Council concerning:**

**Missionary Service,  
Continental Scholastics,  
Small Communities of Scholastics inserted into pastoral realities  
and Comboni missions (CA 2009, n. 101)**

Dear Confreres,

Fraternal greetings in Christ the Good Shepherd with a transfixed Heart!

We are writing to inform you of the final decision of the General Council on missionary service, on continental scholastics and small communities of scholastics inserted into pastoral realities and Comboni missions. We hope that the acceptance of these decisions will help us improve the quality of our formation for the mission today.

## **1. Missionary Service**

- 1.1 **The procedure for Missionary Service.** After a long discernment and various consultations, the General Council, in his letter of 8 April 2007, officially gave the green light to the missionary service for all the scholastics immediately after the end of the scholasticate, starting from January 1, 2008. Later, the General Chapter of 2009 supported the decision of the General Council concerning the period of missionary service (CA 2009, n. 101), as an initiative *ad experimentum* to be evaluated during the Intercapitular Assembly of 2012.
- 1.2 **Evaluation at various levels.** A previous survey conducted by the General Secretary for Formation during the general and continental assemblies on basic formation and also conducted among the confreres who have replied to the questionnaire (including some scholastics), shows that a large majority agrees on the period of missionary service. Remains some diversity of opinion as to which is the best time to do the missionary service. Participants at the Intercapitular Assembly 2012 have also made a positive assessment of this missionary service. The proposal that has received the most support was to do it after the novitiate in mission areas, as an experience that will help us to link our formation with mission. Some have also supported the proposal to reduce the duration of the novitiate to just the canonical year.
- 1.3 **The Decision of the General Council.** In the October Consulta 2012, the GC has carefully examined the results of the extensive consultation and assessment, especially the one made by the Intercapitular Assembly 2012.

**Given the positive evaluation of the Intercapitular, the General Council confirms the current practice that the scholastic finalists who are recommended by their formators for perpetual vows and holy orders make a period of missionary service. The GC has decided to maintain the current practice concerning the time of missionary service, namely after the scholasticate, even if the orientation of the Intercapitular Assembly 2012 was to do it after the novitiate. The main motive for this decision is to strengthen the praxis developed over the past four years – a praxis by now familiar to everyone. We thought that this solution makes us avoid the complications and the long bureaucratic delays associated with the idea of having to change the Rule of Life on the duration of the novitiate.**

The General Council would like to clarify the following points:

- 1.3.1 The length of the missionary service will be twelve (12) full months. During this time commitments which distract the scholastic from his missionary service are not permitted.
- 1.3.2 Towards the end of this period, beginning from the eleventh month, the Superior of the circumscription will prepare the necessary documents that are to be forwarded to the Consulta nearest to the time for taking the perpetual vows and holy orders. Once they have made their Profession of Perpetual Vows and after the ordination to the Diaconate, the missionary service will continue in the exercise of diaconal ministry for six (6) months in the same circumscription, till the priestly ordination.
- 1.3.3 As a rule, the missionary service will be done in the circumscription of origin. This will facilitate the insertion of the scholastic in the life and mission of his circumscription. Exceptions will be evaluated in dialogue with the GC.

## **2. Intercontinental Scholasticates**

- 2.1 The participants at the Intercapitular Assembly 2012 showed consensus on intercontinental scholasticates.
- 2.2 **The General Council, therefore, decides that the scholasticates are to be intercontinental.**
- 2.3 For the assignment of the newly professed scholastics, the General Direction, in dialogue with the Superiors of the circumscription and the Father Masters, will use a certain amount of flexibility in implementing the inter-continentiality.

## **3. “Small Communities of Scholastics inserted into pastoral realities and Comboni missions”.**

- 3.1 .The Intercapitular Assembly 2012 showed some disagreement concerning insertion during the formative stage of the scholasticate. In itself, insertion is a widely accepted value, but the manner of its implementation is still to be clarified.
- 3.2 **The General Council deems to leave open for the future the possibility to create some small communities of scholastics, set in pastoral realities and Comboni mission, where the local situation may be able to accept it and when the availability of formators allows it.**

We entrust all the stages of the formative journey in the Institute to the intercession of St. Daniel Comboni, our Father and Founder.

*P. Enrique Sánchez González*

*Fr. Enrique Sánchez González, Superior General*

*Fr. Alberto Pelucchi, Vicar General*

*Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie, Assistant General*

*Fr. Villarino Rodríguez Antonio, Assistant General*

*Bro. Daniele Giovanni Giusti, Assistant General*