



SISTERS OF JESUS GOOD SHEPHERD PASTORELLE

8° GENERAL CHAPTER

INFORMATION N.6

Dear sisters,

we wish to share with you the last phase of the general Chapter, which has engaged us in the research of the objective, the guidelines and the priorities for programming the next six years. Issues of general concern, sent by the circumscriptions and from the sisters, were also presented for reflection; the outcome of these would be integrated into the programming of the General Chapter.

The previous steps of illumination and confrontation with reality, led us to draw an 'horizon of reference', a meaningful base which was shared among all. We have firm guidelines, the charismatic gift, the Founder, the Rule of Life, the Church's journey... but the reality that we live, in all its dimensions, is dynamic, a constant movement: within us and around us. We must seize this vocational and missionary dynamism: it challenges in depth our personal and congregation lives, it questions us on how the truth, the way, and the life of Jesus the Good Shepherd can reach and comfort our contemporaries.

The task is to listen to the Spirit. In this process, there always emerges the diversities: cultural, pastoral sensitivities, languages... But the Spirit, as we well know, needs a 'body' to live the reality: that is of deep and authentic ties, able to 'articulate' well together, ties of trust, and humility. It's really a challenge to find the same words, in the same formula: at one time or another, each giving up her own point to accept what the other said, and together take a step forward in establishing consensus and then, when required, a vote. The desire on how to best express ourselves with completeness at times remains unfulfilled. But we know that the Spirit continues to work in every sister and, in his wisdom, provides to fulfill our limits.

On days 12 and 13 July we dealt with different areas of concern: *pastoral collaboration* (with the pastors, lay people, among us) and asked how we are called to live this gift today; *the new generations* with questions about vocations and the influence of the digital world on young people; *the third age* which we recognized as precious and in need of much care and attention by all, and finally the *general services*, through which we bring together the responsibilities of being a family. The process always followed the same pattern -personal work, in groups, and then in the assembly where the summaries were presented. Once all summaries were heard there followed further discussion at table level, with a feedback to the assembly. We also had an information sheet on the journey thus made of the unification of the circumscription of Philippines - Australia - Saipan.

Meanwhile, a small editorial group, composed of Sr. Giuseppina Alberghina and Sr. Annarita Cipollone, worked to draft a comment on the based text- which we had arrived at the end of the illumination and confrontation phases. The presentation was done in the evening of Wednesday 13. The next morning, Thursday 14, at the assembly, the sisters expressed their comments and an overall agreement. Soon after sr Elena Bosetti offered the biblical comment on the icon that was chosen by the assembly for the next six years. Both of these commentaries on the based text and on the icon will accompany with their contents the guidelines of the next six-years. At this point the focus was placed on *the objective*, and by late morning, with satisfaction, it was voted and approved.

In the afternoon we began to reflect on the priorities that will help us reach the goal. On Friday, 15 a.m. we shared our personal work in groups and then in the assembly.

The priorities to be identified, are four, one for each area (life in Christ / pastoral ministry/ formation and vocation promotion/ evangelical service of authority and administration). Of course, the priorities are for the entire congregation and must be clear and indicative, at the same time, after the

general programming, they need to leave room for the implementation in the reality of each circumscription.

It was interesting to see how we came to the final formulation, approval and acceptance. Sr. Marisa Loser and Sr. Angela Napoli prepared the first draft from the work that was presented and discussed in the assembly. Gradually by following the process, already indicated earlier, the final form of the priorities was presented, voted on and approved. Sr. Marta reminded us that the general government will pick up other elements that have emerged during the rich and lively chapter's journey.

We continue working with the topics of general concern on which it was important that after the dialogue and exchange, we express our choice with a vote. Following are the other areas of concern: Establish an *international commission* for a systematic research and study on the texts of the preaching of the Founder; *Solidarity* in and for the congregation; a *congregational web site* as a tool for the Pastoral Care; *Our belonging to the Pauline Family*: how to deepen and enliven it.

Despite the fatigue that occurs during the final days, we continue with the commitment that has been entrusted, with equanimity and even with moments of merry making. The evenings, which we called recreational, were actually real cultural moments: the use of power points that enabled us to enter a little into the various nations, dances, songs, costumes, local products. From Asia to Latin America, Africa and Oceania... every night we were able to enjoy the richness of our congregation and understand, once again, that we receive each other as a gift. The final evening could not be missed with the long gallery of photos of different moments of the chapter and the opportunity to renew our thanks to Sr. Albina, Sr. Luz Mary and Sr. Arsie who have completed their service as general counselors.

The last day, July 16, was very intense. We completed the exchange of observations in regards to the areas of concern and approved the final drafts of synthesis that some of the sisters had been editing. It is in times like these that we become aware of how dear the life of the congregation is for us, all trying to think of the best and share it with a passion for insight, in a spirit of co responsibility and participation.

We also signed a motion of solidarity with the community of Eldorado (São Paulo Brazil) where our sisters are carrying out their pastoral ministry. In fact the community of *Quilombolas* suffered the killing of one of their leaders who fought for the human rights of these people.

The concluding procedures the chapter's assembly were: the final message for all the Pastorelle Sisters, the sharing of this informative leaflet, the closing greeting of Sr. Marta Finotelli, who narrated the experience of the Chapter in prayer: "*Father, you offered us the experience of living these days in a serene atmosphere, intense in a sincere search for your loving will, in a loving, simple and profound fraternal communion, docile and open to your Spirit. You led us with fatherly patience, helping us to understand what is dear to you for our congregation in the next six years*".

Along with Sr. Marta, the heart of all was filled with a deep sense of gratitude to the Father who has promised to continue to cultivate our vineyard, because there in its midst is planted the 'Vine', the Son, the crucified and risen Shepherd. There we are, united to him as 'branches', from which gushes the Holy Spirit, the wine of celebration.

Words of thanks are reciprocated because each of us, in different ways, had offered her own gift. A very special thanks went to Father Germano Marani, who with his valuable expertise and its precise indications and in a deep spirit of service, facilitated the journey of the Chapter. Not only that: we are also grateful for his patient listening and the willingness to understand the needs of the assembly.

Thanks to Sr. Marta, always very attentive and fraternal in her task of presidency; Sr. Soeli Branco, Sr. Angiolina Rossini, Sr. Purisima Tañedo for their service in the Coordination committee. Thanks to the sisters in the various services, they have been outstanding for the smooth progress of work, to the Daughters of St. Paul and, in particular, to sr. Lucia for the fraternal, attentive hospitality. Thanks to all those who supported and accompanied us with their prayer and fellowship.

After each participant signed the Chapter's attendance form at 15.25, the superior general *declared closed* the 8th CG of the Sisters of Jesus Good Shepherd, *in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*.

With the Pauline Family, invoking the blessing of our founder, Father James Alberione, we met in the crypt of Regina Apostolorum Shrine. At 17.00 in the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Msgr. João Braz de Aviz,

João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, we raised the cup of praise and blessing, while handing over to the Good Shepherd, who is full of beauty and gentleness, the journey that awaits us.

On behalf of the Sisters of the Chapter
Sr. Annarita Cipollone
Secretary for the Information

Rome, July 16, 2011