



Prot. No. 146b/20 SG

TO SUPERIORS AND DELEGATES OF CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL
Their respective Seats

Dear Brothers,

The grace and peace of Jesus Master be with you!

After having reflected within the General Council, having heard the positive and unanimous opinions of all the Superiors of the Circumscriptions and having also discussed with other Superiors General, we have decided in the General Council of 7-9 September 2020 to transfer the date of the General Chapter – originally scheduled from 11 April to 2 May 2021 – at a new date, that is, from 6 to 26 September 2021, due to the current world situation, still troubled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This decision is in accordance with the provision contained in a letter of 2 April 2020 from the *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* (CICLSAL), which authorizes this procedure in this time of emergency.

Among the reasons for our decision, we can highlight:

- a) the impossibility of predicting how the health situation in Italy and in the countries from which the participants in the General Chapter will come next April. In fact, with the persistence of the pandemic, in addition to the fact that some capitulars could be banned from entering Italy, everyone's health would be put at risk when moving from one nation to another;
- b) the difficulty of carrying out in safety the provincial elective Chapters and the elective regional Assemblies during the six months preceding the General Chapter, as foreseen by our norms. The obstacles arise both from the fact that in some countries where we are present the pandemic is not yet under control, and from the possible problems of movement that can occur during such Chapters and Assemblies in the Circumscriptions whose territory is composed of two or more nations.

It is also influenced by the provision, approved by Pope Francis, which denies the possibility of celebrating General and Provincial Chapters electronically – or even partially personally present and partially electronically –, but only with the physical presence of the participants (cf. Letter from the CICLSAL dated 1 July 2020).

In the coming months – that is, until the Convocation to the XI General Chapter and the appointment of the Preparatory Commission scheduled for 6 March 2021 – the ante-preparatory Commission will continue its work of animation.

It is also important to consider that, given the change in date of the General Chapter, all the Superiors of the Circumscriptions, whose mandates end in the period between the Convocation of the General Chapter itself and the end of September 2021, will have an extension of 6 months (in accordance with the aforementioned letter of the CICALSAL dated 2 April 2020).

We hope that this longer period that precedes the Chapter will be lived in prayer, reflection and, above all, in openness to the Spirit of the Lord, who is the One who shows us the way to a fruitful evangelizing presence in the culture of communication. May the Lord's Cross, a sign of victory over evil, inspire us to carry on our mission with love and hope.

Fraternally.

Rome, 14 September 2020

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross



Valdir José De Castro
Father Valdir José De Castro, ssp
Superior General