



SOCIETAS MARIAE

Curia Generalis

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To the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Mary

Re: Convocation of the General Chapter 2017

Dear Confreres,

As you know, the year of the next ordinary general chapter of the Society of Mary is approaching, and the Society needs to plan such an important event in the best possible way. Because the provincial and district chapters will soon start to elect the delegates, it is important to now officially call the Society to the general chapter.

Convocation. With the present letter and following the Constitutions (n. 164) I now officially convoke the 29th ordinary general chapter of the Society of Mary, to open on the morning of September 20, 2017, at the Divine Word Missionaries' *Centro Ad Gentes*, Via dei Laghi bis, 52, 00074 Nemi - (Rome) Italy. The conclusion of the chapter is foreseen for the evening of October 11.

Delegates will arrive at the location of the chapter on the afternoon of September 17th. The days preceding the opening of the chapter, September 18 & 19, will be spent in preparing fraternally, physically, and spiritually for the chapter. On the final day following the chapter, October 11, a council of the Society is expected to be held. Major superiors and members of the general administration will participate in this meeting.

Purpose. Constitutions n. 163 establishes the purpose of the ordinary general chapter:

- To evaluate the fidelity of the Society to its spirit and mission,
- To resolve important questions of the Society as a whole,
- To decide on directions for the future,
- To elect the superior general and assistants,
- To safeguard the common heritage and to foster growth and development,
- To propose changes to the Constitutions and particular legislation (n. 167).

Provincial and district chapters. In view of the importance of the general chapter I am asking that each province and district apart from electing delegates to the general chapter, the local chapters dedicate one day (or its equivalent) to preparation for the general chapter. The aim of this day of reflection and discernment is to formulate issues that the general capitulants ought to address.

Postulata. Every Marist has the right to submit individual or collective postulata to the chapter (DC, 53). These submissions must follow a set format and be signed by the authors. (The format has been provided to the major superiors and through them to the pre-chapter committees of each unit).

Election of the delegates. With respect to the election of the delegates I recall the following: According to the Constitutions (n. 165), there are two categories of members of the general chapter:

a) Ex officio members:

- the superior general, his immediate predecessor, and the assistants;
- the general officers: secretary general, general bursar and procurator to the Holy See (the latter position at this moment is held by the secretary general);
- the major superiors of the Society.

b) Elected members:

the delegates elected by your chapters. Each province and district will elect one delegate for the first 20 to 50 perpetually professed members, another delegate for the second fifty (51-100), and so on (cf. DC, 51). Number DC 51 also lays out how to calculate the number of elected delegates: *'the basis...will be the number of perpetually professed Marists who have active voice in the province or district at the date of the convocation of the chapter'*, i.e. **1 May 2016**.

I draw your attention to Constitutions, n. 166, which states that the chapter also has to elect substitutes for the delegates and for the provincial superior.

Provinces in a Reconfiguration Process. Given the situation of the provinces and district pursuing a reconfiguration process the normal procedures for the election of delegates current in the Society applies to each province and district as currently constituted.

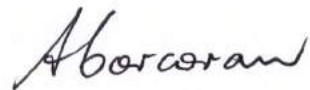
Further communications. In this convocation letter I limit myself to that information which is indispensable in view of the chapters of provinces and districts. Further communications regarding the general chapter will come in the course of the next months. An important part of the preparatory work will need to be done after the results of the elections of delegates from all provincial and district chapters have been received. A preparatory committee will be chosen soon after all the delegates to the general chapter are known.

Today marks the beginning of May, the month dedicated to Mary, we pray that, docile to the voice of the Spirit, the coming general chapter will inspire us to bring Christ to others and, together with Mary, proclaim God's greatness.

Fraternally yours,



Fr. John Hannan S.M.
Superior General



Anthony Corcoran S.M.
Secretary General

