

**Society of Mary**

**2017  
GENERAL CHAPTER  
STATEMENTS  
AND DECISIONS**

**N. 185 – XIV, 1**

**15 November 2017**



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**I.****DECLARATION ON THE MISSION  
OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY TODAY**

1. *Jean-Claude Colin and the first Marists believed that Mary wanted a Society called after her, to act on her behalf in a world in crisis. This was the Mission she was entrusting to them, despite their limitations. This conviction inspired them to do great things for God in Mary's name and under her direction.*
2. *Since Mary is in the Church and not apart from it, the Mission she gives to her Society is an expression of the Mission that the Church receives from Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, whom the Father has sent into the world to bring about His reign.*
3. *Mary first called her Society to share in her work at a time of profound change in Europe (Const. 2 & 3). Today she calls us to bring the joy of the gospel, at a time of global change, to a world all too often scarred by fragmentation and by the degradation of the poor and the earth.*
4. *As Mary pondered the Word, so are we called to a life of contemplation, centered on the Eucharist, bearing fruit in service within the Church and beyond.*

5. *From our communities, where we care for our brothers as we care for all who are struggling to be faithful disciples, Mary, the mother of the New Creation, calls us to nurture life in all its forms, especially among our most vulnerable brothers and sisters and in our damaged planet.*
6. *Like Mary, we are called to be missionary disciples, bridge builders, instruments of reconciliation, bearers of the Good News, especially to the poor and youth.*
7. *Mission is not primarily about where we are or where we go. Rather it is an attitude of heart. "Mission" could be as simple as crossing the road. Mary's Work will not be finished until, at the end of time, all God's children are gathered together "one in heart and mind" (cf. Acts 4:32).*
8. *Specifically, we believe that Mary is directing us today to hear the urgent challenge of previous superiors general, who stated boldly: "The status quo is not working".*

## ***Decisions***

9. The Chapter calls on each province and district of the Society to:
  - a. Search for creative ways to grow constantly in lives of contemplation and lead others along the path of discipleship and mission rooted in deep prayer.
  - b. Strive for a higher level of professionalism in missionary involvement through further education, research, teaching, publishing and advocacy, especially in the areas of inter-religious dialogue and reconciliation, work with ecology and work with migrants, for the wider Church and the world.
  - c. Focus on the poor, migrants and youth – and the spirituality that underpins these directions.
  - d. Seek “partners in mission”, most obviously from within the Marist Family - especially lay Marists.



## II.

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES APPROPRIATE FOR TODAY

10. *The commitment made by the superior general, the council and the major superiors at CS2013 remains as relevant today: a commitment to build a future together, to exercise leadership globally and locally, in which priority is given to animation, competent government, increased collegiality at all levels, and appropriate structures.*
11. *In order to respond with promptness to the most urgent needs of God's people the Society needs to continue to adapt its government structures, choosing forms that are appropriate for our mission. In the light of the rapidly changing world, the variety of contexts in which we serve, and the different capacities of units, it is necessary to move towards more flexible forms of government.*
12. *In light of an overall diminishment, particularly in the number of men available for leadership roles, an adaptation of our leadership structures, including our ways of selecting major superiors, is required.*
13. *With the intention of enabling our little Society to carry out its mission in the best way possible, it remains imperative, in spite of the pain and set-backs, for units in cooperation and collaboration with the general administration to continue with the work of*

*reconfiguration. This sometimes taxing task must not distract us from moving forward in our mission.*

## **Decisions**

14. In seeking flexibility in our government structures, the following proposals for changes to the Constitutions be presented to the Holy See for approval:

a. Constitution 201

“When all the assistants general have been elected, the superior general shall then select one of them to be the vicar general. Should the office of vicar general become vacant between general chapters, the general council will be brought up to full strength following the procedure in n. 200 above. The new vicar general will then be selected from among the assistants by the superior general.”

b. Constitution 205

“The provincial superior is selected according to the norms of general and provincial legislation. If by election, the provincial-elect will be confirmed in office in writing by the superior general.”

c. Constitution 212

“Every Marist is normally under the authority of a local superior, who must be a priest perpetually professed for at least two years. He is appointed by the provincial after consultation with council for a period of three years, once renewable. A third consecutive term in the same community requires the permission of the superior general.”

15. That a number on the Annual Review and Consultation (ARC) be included in the General Legislation, as follows:

“The superior general, together with his council and general officers, shall conduct annual meetings with major superiors, in order to continue restructuring, to make and review plans, to strengthen and deepen communication, understanding and collective ownership of initiatives for the Society. The superior general may invite other participants to the meeting. The agenda will be established by the superior general in collaboration with major superiors.”

16. That a number on the responsibility of the general administration to assist units in addressing difficulties in governance and organization be included in the General Legislation, as follows:

“The superior general and his council assist those units anticipating or experiencing diminishment by offering flexible forms of governance.”

17. **Staffing of International Works:** The superior general and council, in consultation with major superiors at their annual meeting, shall identify “particular works” in the Society for which the general administration will work with the local unit to ensure their continuation into the foreseeable future.
  
18. **Location of general house:** The superior general and his council shall initiate a feasibility study to determine the best location for the general house. This will be presented to CS 2021 for review and discussion.



## MINISTRIES OF HOPE

19. *In reflection on ministries for today and for the future Marists draw inspiration to be missionaries of hope particularly from:*
- a. *Chapter One of the Constitutions, especially Nos 12, 13 and 14, and the Mission Declaration of this general chapter;*
  - b. *the needs and potentialities of the world of today, aware of the need for justice and peace, of planetary health, of the importance of safeguarding;*
  - c. *the call of the Church, particularly that of Pope Francis, to go towards the peripheries and the more abandoned;*
  - d. *the situation of our Marist reality: despite our diminishment and ageing we have new members in formation and are capable of doing the Work of Mary;*
  - e. *the commendable work already done in many of our ministries such as city-centre evangelization, formal and non-formal education, parishes, work with youth, migrants and the poor.*

## Criteria to evaluate our ministries

20. *In the light of the General Chapter's Declaration on Mission, the Society is called to refocus its energies, re-evaluate its ministries and set priorities so that it can be available for the more urgent needs to which it may be called by its mission (Const. 14).*
21. *We are looking for ministries which:*
- a. *reflect our identity as apostolic Marist religious;*
  - b. *fulfil the requirements for our community life;*
  - c. *express the corporate nature of our mission;*
  - d. *provide avenues for evangelization;*
  - e. *give a clear sign of Marist mission to possible candidates;*
  - f. *give us the opportunity to work with branches of the Marist Family;*
  - g. *provide opportunities especially for young people to work alongside Marists in paid or volunteer employment.*

## ***Decisions***

22. Units shall prioritise, where possible, the following kinds of ministries (not listed in order of importance):
  - a. Education: both formal and non-formal, especially among the young and most disadvantaged (Const. 13);
  - b. City-centre evangelization;
  - c. Those works specifically among the materially poor.
23. They seek to respond to the needs of migrants and engage in ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.
24. That in all ministries, grounded in the gospel, Marists pay special attention to safeguarding, planetary health and social justice.
25. The superior general shall investigate the feasibility of establishing new communities in Africa, Asia and South America.

26. The superior general in collaboration with ARC shall endeavour to indicate some works to which younger and newly ordained Marists should preferably be appointed.
  
27. The general administration shall establish ways of communicating information on matters of peace, justice and the integrity of creation.



## IV.

# RELIGIOUS LIFE TODAY

28. *Marist community life is to be 'simple and modest in its expression, close to the lives of ordinary people, apostolic in character, and marked by spontaneity and joy.'* (Const. 117)

## A. Conditions for community living

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### ***Decisions***

29. In their planning for the future, and when appointing confreres to communities, superiors will pay particular attention to the following:
- a. Ensuring a balance in the composition of the community in terms of the make-up of the members;
  - b. Whenever possible, aiming at communities of a minimum size of 4/5 to allow for sufficient diversity, interaction and continuity of community life;
  - c. The physical layout of the dwelling and its impact on community living, providing accommodation which is

simple, with appropriate spaces for personal life and community, including a sacred space for individual and community prayer, provisions for offering hospitality, and a specific area reserved to the community (Const. 134).

## B. Prayer and Community

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30. *Contemplation as the energy source, the mystical heart of Marist mission, is intimately linked with our identity as Marist religious. To form a communion for mission, we need to deepen the contemplative dimension of our lives (cf Const. 118). With Jesus at the centre we can, like Mary, be missionaries of hope.*
31. *The Chapter emphasises the particular importance for our identity of the Marian practices specified in our Constitutions. These symbolic practices express our shared identity throughout the world, and help us always to bear in mind 'this woman who by gracious choice called them and gave them her name.' (Const. 144)*

## ***Decisions***

32. Marists are recommended to spend one hour in private prayer each day.
33. Leadership at different levels in the Society shall endeavour to support Marists in deepening the quality of their prayer, both individual and communal.
34. It is recommended that the practice in many communities of reading the Constitutions, for example after the main meal of the day, be continued.

## **C. Healthy community living**

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### ***Decisions***

35. Good community requires the adequate training of local superiors.
  - a. In conjunction with the general administration, units shall provide training for local superiors as spiritual

leaders of communities, focusing on the skills necessary to coordinate community activities and to animate community meetings.

- b. When appropriate and available, professional facilitation is recommended to help in the animation of community meetings, most particularly the annual planning session at the beginning of each year (Const. 176).
36. Rapid developments in communication technology are transforming the way we live together in community. It is important that we reflect on this so that we can make informed, life-giving choices. Superiors at unit and local levels shall take measures to stimulate reflection and discernment on the use of the media, by communities and individuals. This may address areas such as personal use of the Internet and other media and how the contemplative aspect of our vocation, the quality of community living with its sharing of prayer, meals and free time, is maintained.
37. Each Marist is called to play his part in participating in the life of his community. Wholesome community life helps reduce the likelihood of depression, isolation, alcoholism and other addictions. Studies show that such factors are often present in the lives of people who abuse others.

38. Hospitality is a significant aspect of community life. It is important to share prayer, faith and social activities with others. Sharing with lay Marists can be particularly significant.
39. The Chapter is favourable to the formation of well prepared and clearly defined mixed communities (lay and religious). Such communities respect the specific vocation of each member and provide mutual enrichment for the sake of the common mission.

## D. Building a Safeguarding Culture in the Society of Mary

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40. *We acknowledge with sorrow and great regret the crimes of sexual abuse committed by Marists and those occasions when it was badly handled by Marist authorities. We must do all in our power to promote a safeguarding culture in our own houses, in our ministries, in our institutions and in all places where we work and where we are; one in which the protection of children, adolescents and vulnerable adults is paramount.*

## ***Decisions***

41. The chapter draws particular attention to the directive of the Administrative Directory of the Society of Mary requiring all units to have protocols in place conducive to creating a safeguarding culture. Marists are to follow these protocols in both letter and spirit so that whether a Marist is at work, at home, or visiting the home of friends or others, he will know what standards of behaviour to follow and the need to be proactive and constantly vigilant.
42. Major superiors shall encourage all Marists in active ministry to avail themselves of supervision, where it is available, and appraisal.
43. The general administration shall ensure that unit protocols include the requirement that all Marists and all those who work with them as employees or volunteers participate in education in the safeguarding of children, adolescents and vulnerable adults.

## E. Care of our Common Home

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44. *Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato si' demands a conversion of life. An ecologically sustainable style of living is an intrinsic part of living the gospel today. Care for the planet and care for the poor are intrinsically linked. When the planet is degraded, it is the poor who suffer most.*
45. *Marists cannot live authentically the Spirit of the Society (Const. 228) without looking to the implications of our way of life for the care of the planet. This is part of living the vow of poverty today. The encyclical gives us a new perspective for reading the Constitutions.*

### **Decisions**

46. Each Marist community shall address some of the concrete implications of the encyclical most particularly at the planning meeting at the beginning of each year.
47. The general administration shall create a program for an appropriation of *Laudato si'* providing a variety of practical tools to carry out this process of renewal.

## F. Brothers

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48. *The General Chapter re-affirmed the vocation of the Brother in the Society of Mary and gave attention to some current challenges about the brother's vocation.*
49. *All Marists profess the same vows according to the Constitutions and share one common call. We are all brothers with differing ministerial roles. This is best shown in Constitutions 6-14.*
50. *Brothers contribute to the mission in a distinctive way. They can be present in different milieux in ways that are not possible for ordained Marists. They can often relate to laity in circumstances and in a manner that puts lay people at ease. This extends the reach of Marist ministry.*
51. *Brother candidates are to be capable of studies beyond secondary education. They need to be prepared to take studies in the formation house with the scholastics so as to form common peer bonds and to undergo an education that prepares them for the common life. We continue to welcome those with manual skills and trades who may be less prepared for academic studies.*



52. *As with all Marists, Brothers should be assigned to a ministry based on their skills and abilities. They should be provided with a sense of challenge and development for growth in their ministry.*
53. *Any prior sense that the vocation of the Brother is meant for one who does not have the basic talents for priesthood should be relinquished in the Society. It is a vocation in its own right and not in reference to capacities for the priesthood.*
54. *The way we often name ourselves plays a role in clarity about the dignity and value of the vocation of the Brother. When we refer to ourselves as the Marist Fathers we need to be aware that this can render the brothers among us invisible. Our formal title the Society of Mary is more inclusive.*

## **Decisions**

55. The Chapter asks the superior general to continue to join other generals in seeking approval of the Holy See to appoint brothers as local superiors on their own discretion in the appropriate situation. If the rule should change, this Chapter asks the superior general to request the Holy See for an exemption from the requirement of Constitution #212 that the local superior be a priest, until the next general chapter.

56. Given the current lack of vocations for brothers, the Chapter recommends that the Society clearly seeks brother candidates. When appropriate, separate vocation material explaining the vocation of a brother is to be produced.

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## G. Elderly Confreres

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57. *Marists do not retire from religious life, but continue a spiritual journey that culminates in the surrender of death. The mission of Marists does not cease when their pastoral and sacramental ministries cease.*
58. *Older Marists are a valuable gift to the Society: the elderly and infirm witness to Christian hope; their prayer, suffering and wisdom are a precious resource, making a unique contribution to community life and ministry. The presence of older confreres in our formation houses can be a source of inspiration and good example.*

## ***Decisions***

59. As the Society has a fundamental duty of care to our elderly confreres (Const. 146), the local superior shall consider it to be an important aspect of his role.
60. Leadership at each level shall promote age-appropriate ministerial outlets for older confreres and shall encourage them to search creatively for possibilities.
61. The Society shall explore the possibility of third age programmes for confreres, possibly in cooperation with other congregations at the general and unit level.
62. Where possible superiors shall ensure that our buildings are accessible and easy-to-use for older confreres.
63. Activism and overwork earlier in life do not prepare religious for the later stages: confreres in their middle years are encouraged to participate in programmes which can assist in preparing them for later life.

**V.****FORMATION  
FOR THE FUTURE****A. Vocations Promotion**

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64. *Vocations promotion is the responsibility of each Marist. They need to be sensitive to the spiritual aspirations of a younger generation of Catholics whose religious culture might be different from their own. Individual Marists need to realize that their personal witness promotes or does not promote vocations. The Chapter encourages each Marist to explicitly invite others to join them in their life and ministry.*
65. *We recognise the role the laity have played and will continue to play in fostering vocations to the Society of Mary. This is especially the case where the Marist charism has been received by the family. Part of our efforts to promote vocations will therefore include fostering Marist spirituality amongst the laity.*
66. *The Chapter commends the work of units who maintain a 'Community of Welcome' so as to ensure the implementation of that part of the Society's programme of international formation.*

## ***Decisions***

67. Each unit shall develop a creative culture of vocation promotion. It shall have a vocations director who will promote vocations by:
- a. Providing high-quality literature and social media material on the Society of Mary;
  - b. Being a contact for those seeking further information;
  - c. Arranging accompaniment for prospective candidates;
  - d. Attending workshops as appropriate to his work;
  - e. Maintaining a link with formators and knowing what is required for candidates entering the formation program;
  - f. Speaking, preaching, advertising and writing about a vocation to the Society of Mary;
  - g. Fostering a culture of vocations within the unit by engaging unit membership in active promotion of vocations.

68. The International Coordinator for Vocations Promotion shall maintain close and frequent contact with the unit vocations director. The International Coordinator may coordinate international Marist youth events.
69. When choosing new communities/ministries serious consideration shall be given to the prospect of vocations to the Society of Mary.

## B. Pre-Novitiate Preparation, Novitiate, and Theologate

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### ***Decisions***

70. A general councillor or other Marist shall be appointed as the coordinator of initial formation across the Society.
71. The general administration shall ensure that the uniform set of criteria and methodology for the acceptance of candidates and for the call to novitiate from the General Directory of Initial Formation are followed. Reliable and accurate reports should follow candidates from stage to stage and be copied to the International Formation Coordinator.

72. Marist formators shall develop a common understanding and practice of the required standards for progress at each stage of formation. This shall be supported by regular gatherings of formators, at least triennially.
73. The general administration shall continue to coordinate programmes for the formation of formators and the ongoing formation of formators.
74. The preliminary stage of formation (the propaedeutic stage) is the responsibility of the local unit and could include language learning.
75. The general administration shall give consideration to reducing the number of places in the world where formal postulancy and philosophical studies are done, and to ensure that the approved places have appropriate staffing and resources.
76. The novitiate formation community, wherever possible, shall include an older confrère or confrères.
77. The Rome theologate programme is four years in duration and integrates pastoral formation and experience.

78. For the theological studies of candidates in the Society, there are two locations, Rome and Suva. The International Formation Coordinator, in consultation with the major superior and superior general, has the competency to send candidates to the location where they can best progress.
79. The Chapter reaffirms the directive of the 2009 Chapter that the formation team is to ensure “that the element of Marist laity [be] sufficiently included in the program and that there is some interaction of those in formation with lay Marists.”

## C. Ongoing Formation

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80. *To be a Marist on mission requires daily ongoing formation: spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human.*

### ***Decisions***

81. All Marists, especially those in active ministry, are encouraged to have a spiritual director/accompanier. They are to avail themselves of methods of appraisal and feedback plus opportunities for professional development.



82. A Colinian Period of Renewal following the model of the “second novitiate” shall be organised for perpetually professed Marists after at least ten years in ministry. La Neyliere has been a good venue for this.
83. The Chapter welcomes the completion of the biography of Jean-Claude Colin and encourages all in the Society to read and study it, and to engage with the person of our founder.
84. The general administration is to be conscious of the need to have Marists engaged in higher studies, including archival and Marist Studies.
85. Major superiors, if need be in collaboration with other religious or diocesan institutes, are to put in place workshops which will assist Marists to be more effective ministers taking account of contemporary needs and the specific settings in which Marists are living and working.
86. Units shall continue to put in place ongoing training programs for those in leadership particularly local superiors, bursars, pastors and those in leadership roles in schools, etc.
87. Units shall collaborate with a view to putting in place developmental programs for young, middle-aged and older Marists.

88. The world we are living in is challenging and often stretches our capacity to cope. Care shall be taken to encourage confreres to avail themselves of wholesome Lifestyle and Health programmes.
89. All Marists are to be aware of the possible abuses of clerical power. The asymmetric nature of the helping relationship can lead to disordered behaviours by either or both parties. Marists are responsible for maintaining professional boundaries and limits.
90. The Chapter recommends the exchange of confreres between units so as to develop the international dimension of the Society and the wellbeing of the confreres concerned.

## VI.

# DIALOGUE AND COMMUNION WITH LAY MARISTS

91. *The Chapter explored elements of common identity, mission, accompaniment and mutual enrichment between lay Marists and Marist religious in a changing context.*
92. *Catholic lay movements have had a growing impact on the life of the Church in the world of today. Pope Francis has urged bishops and priests to resist the temptation of clericalism and at the same time reminded all the faithful of their baptismal dignity.*
93. *In 2015 the World Marist Laity Coordination was constituted. This has the potential to “bring added life to the Marist laity and to the Marist family as a whole. It is a good framework for the Society of Mary to deepen our relationship with them, respecting each other’s identity, whilst looking for elements of a common mission to show the Marian face of the Church.” (§61 Superior General’s Report to the General Chapter).*
94. *The Chapter welcomed the presence of lay Marists “at the table” with them, where they made a real and vital impact on the Chapter through structured dialogue and engagement.*
95. *The Chapter heard them state that “they seek to be a presence of Mary where they find themselves in daily life. While they*

*live their faith in another way, their experience can only enrich the life of the whole Marist family”.*

96. *The Chapter recognises the important contribution to the common mission made by lay Marists associated with the other branches of the Marist Family.*

## **Decisions**

97. That the general administration and units promote a continuation of dialogue and engagement with lay Marists.

98. That the general administration engage in a process to help Marists to recognise the Marist laity as integral to the Marist family. To achieve this, at the general and unit level, a Marist religious shall be appointed as promoter of lay Marists.

99. The Chapter recognises the range of Marist lay groups and forms of association which exist throughout the world. It recognises a growing desire from these groups to undertake varying degrees of commitment to the Marist charism and the works which flow from it. The Chapter asks the superior general to identify, in collaboration with Marist laity, a range of possible forms of commitment open to lay people.

100. That there is greater collaboration with Marist laity on formation and training programmes especially lay leadership training. When appropriate, ongoing formation programmes may be open to lay participation e.g. Marist studies. They may also collaborate in the development and planning of these programmes.
101. That units of the Society be open to dialogue with Marist lay groups concerning engaging a lay Marist to coordinate and develop these groups, accompanying their formation, fostering unity and common terminology. These people would work in collaboration with the Marist religious promoter of lay Marists and with World Marist Laity Coordination.
102. That units respond with resources and initiatives to those people who work alongside us and show a love for the Society and its charism.
103. That units respond positively to young adults for whom the Marist charism speaks powerfully and who are interested in working alongside us.
104. That the general administration, in collaboration with Marist laity, compile a directory on the relationship between Marist religious and lay Marists.

## VII. FINANCE

105. *The Chapter accepts the bursar general's report to the 2017 General Chapter.*
106. *The Chapter approves the following **recommendations arising from the report:***
- a. *That the general administration continues working with units to evaluate their financial needs and work with contributing units on a template regarding the sharing of their resources into the future.*
  - b. *That the general administration policy regarding the reserve funds of the districts be reviewed in terms of creating secure revenue sources for the future and how these are to be administered.*
  - c. *That the general administration work with units to assist them in creating more centralized reporting structures within the unit and for the Society.*
  - d. *That the general administration work with units to ensure there is adequate training and development in finances for bursars and other Marists in the units.*

## ***Decisions***

107. The general administration shall bring together unit bursars, and financial managers where appropriate, for a meeting to discuss financial issues and to broaden the understanding of the Society and its needs.
108. The general administration shall review the Sharing of Resources policy in light of the future needs of the Society and the recommendations of the General Chapter Finance Committee.
109. The bursar general shall develop a reporting template, working with the units, which provides a standardized report for annual financial returns.
110. It is recommended that the financial policies of the general administration and an explanation of the various funds are provided to unit bursars.
111. The Finance Committee shall periodically review the Sharing of Resources Policy to see if it is meeting the requirements of the Society in terms of the movement of financial resources between units.
112. It is recommended that the general administration establish the role of Mission Procurator.

## **IX.**

## **LA NEYLIÈRE**

113. La Neylière is a place of great significance to the whole Society of Mary. With regard to the definition of the mission or task, the provision of personnel and finances, the general administration before the next Council of the Society shall consult the major superiors with a view to entrusting the responsibility of La Neylière to the general administration in close collaboration with the provincial of Europe.

## **X.**

## **THE FOUNDER'S CAUSE**

114. The Chapter supports the continuation of the cause for the beatification and canonisation of Venerable Jean Claude Colin.



# XI.

## LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

### DECRETA CAPITULARIA

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The following are new or revised legislative numbers approved by the Chapter and incorporated into the new Decreta Capitularia:

#### **#24 Before Novitiate (revised)**

“The superior general will establish a uniform set of criteria and methodology for the acceptance of candidates and for the call to novitiate. They do this according to the norms laid down in the *General Directory on Formation for the Society of Mary.*”

#### **#25 Novitiate (revised)**

“The direction of the international novitiate is the responsibility of the master of novices, under the authority of the superior general. The programme for the novitiate requires the approval of superior general in consultation with the major superiors.”

### **#31 Programme of studies (revised)**

“At the level of the province the provincial, with the consent of his council and in consultation of the formation committee, will determine a suitable programme of theological, biblical, pastoral, human and Marist formation for the temporary professed religious of the province, to be submitted to the superior general for his approval (Const.79). At the level of the international theologate this responsibility belongs to the superior general in consultation with the major superiors.”

### **#33 Periods of apostolic and pastoral experience (revised)**

“The provincial, after consulting the formation team, will determine the practical details of periods of apostolic and pastoral experience: communities to receive the students, the nature and purpose of the experience, etc. The students will be directly associated with the decision and the communities will be readied to carry it out. For the international theologate this responsibility belongs to the superior of the theologate in consultation with the major superiors concerned.”

### **#51 Election of delegates to general chapter (revised)**

“Each province and district will elect one delegate to the general chapter for the first five to forty (5 – 40) perpetually

professed members, another delegate for the second forty (41-80) perpetually professed members, and so forth. The basis for calculating the number of elected delegates will be the number of perpetually professed Marists who have active voice in a province or district at the date of the convocation of the chapter.”

### **#52 Preparation for general chapter (revised)**

“The superior general and his council, in consultation with the Council of the Society, will prepare the general chapter and decide its location. They will ensure that, prior to the chapter, all confreres, communities and provinces have an opportunity to express their views on matters to be considered by the chapter. At an appropriate time before the chapter, a preparatory committee to make remote preparation will be appointed by the superior general with the advice of his council. Once delegates are elected to the general chapter the superior general with the advice of his council, will appoint a pre-capitular committee which will continue the preparation process. The duty of the pre-capitular committee will be to draw up a provisional agenda for the opening days of the chapters and to make whatever other immediate preparations are necessary. It will be composed of some delegates and some members of the general administration.”

## **Annual Review and Consultation (New, to follow #60 of DC2009)**

“The superior general, together with his council and general officers, will conduct annual meetings with major superiors, in order to continue restructuring, to make and review plans, to strengthen and deepen communication, understanding and collective ownership of initiatives for the Society. The Superior General may invite other participants to the meeting. The agenda will be established by the superior general in collaboration with the major superiors.”

## **Concern of superior general and his council for units in time of diminishment (New, to follow #72 of DC2009)**

“The superior general and his council assist those units anticipating or experiencing diminishment by offering flexible forms of governance.”

## **#93 Ways of selecting provincial superiors (revised)**

*Note: Changes to #93 are dependent on the outcome of recourse to the Holy See for a change to Constitution 205; should approval not be given the number remains as before.*

“The selection of the provincial can be made in different ways according to the choice of the provincial chapter.

1. In the case where there is an election by the membership, the following norms will be included: (a) within the limits set by the Constitutions, the provincial chapter will determine who enjoys active and passive voice, the procedure and the number of stages of the election process, when and how a religious can withdraw his name from the list of candidates; (b) at the stage determined by the provincial chapter, each religious will offer names in order of preference and these ballots will be sent unopened to the superior general for the counting of votes and the nihil obstat; (c) after counting the votes (weighted by preference) and consulting with the incumbent provincial, the superior general with the advice of his council will give the nihil obstat to those having received the highest number of votes and are judged to have the qualities determined by Canon Law and the Constitutions for carrying out the tasks of the provincial. Then he will consult the religious concerned. The names receiving the nihil obstat are returned to the province in the manner requested by provincial legislation (in alphabetical order or according to the votes received) without the number of votes received.
2. In the case of election by the provincial chapter, council of the province, or another electoral body the above norms as

in No 1 will also be followed. The election properly speaking will take place within a legally constituted session of the chapter, council of the province or other electoral body.

3. In the case of appointment by the superior general, a consultation of the membership is organized. Having the results of the consultation, the superior general will first consult the outgoing provincial, and then with the advice of his council proceeds to make the appointment."

### **# 128 Third consecutive terms for local superiors (revised)**

"A Marist should not normally remain in a position of local superior for more than six consecutive years. A third consecutive term in the same community requires the permission of the superior general."

Rome, 15 November 2017

John Larsen, SM  
*Superior General*

Anthony Corcoran, SM  
*Secretary General*



