



CLARETIAN MISSIONARIES

GUIDELINES ON SOLIDARITY AND MISSION (SOMI) CMF SOMI CONGREGATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Approved by General Government, 2024, October 31st

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GUIDELINES ON SOLIDARITY AND MISSION (SOMI)

“Solidarity and Mission (SOMI) is the Claretian face of compassion and commitment in favor of the less privileged of our brothers and sisters in the planet and towards all Creation”¹.

[1] The Risen Christ sent his followers to preach the Gospel in every time and place (Mt 28: 19-20). We, Claretian Missionaries, have been granted with the gift of following Christ in a communion of life and are called to go out into the whole world to proclaim the Good News to every creature (CC 4). To evangelize is to make the Kingdom of God (His plan of love for humanity and Creation) present in our world. This mission carries a social dimension, which cannot be renounced without distorting the announcement of the Gospel (cf. EG 176, 182). For the Catholic Church, action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world are vital to the proclamation of the Gospel².

[2] The social dimension of evangelization is closely linked to our life and mission (cf. QC 21). Although the Congregation did not adopt the expression “Solidarity and Mission” (SOMI) until about ten years ago, it is not something new within the Claretian charism (cf. *infra*, n. 13). The General Chapters following the Second Vatican Council have frequently referred to these matters³.

[3] SOMI is “a way of coordinating the social ministries and their supportive structures”⁴ promoted by the Congregation to animate and effectively coordinate its initiatives in support of integral human development and the transformation of the world according to God’s plan. This includes its commitments to Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), the Mission Procures, various institutions (groups, foundations, non-governmental organizations...), and the Congregation’s presence at the United Nations, all working together to promote integral human development.

[4] When we speak of SOMI, we are not only referring to a specific area of our apostolate or to peculiar activities carried by a Major Organism. To speak of SOMI is to speak of spirituality, formation, economy, and fraternal life; it is to refer to values that extend throughout everything we, Claretian Missionaries, live and do (cf. QC 21). This is why we can speak of SOMI as a transversal issue or axis called to be a

¹ VATTAMATTAM, MATHEW CMF (2023) *Message to IV SOMI MICLA Continental Assembly*.

² Cf. WORLD SYNOD OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS (1971). *Justice in the World*, 6.

³ For instance, 2003 General Chapter states that “the commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation is not for us a free option; it is a genuine obligation” (TMHL 13). 1997 General Chapter had referred to these issues several times: cf. IPM 33, 34, 42-44, 50. Previous Chapters had talked about them within the framework of the reflection that the Catholic Church was doing at each moment.

⁴ Cf. VATTAMATTAM, MATHEW CMF (2024) *Message to MICLA Assembly*, 4.5.

relevant reality and to have a clear and effective structure in each Claretian Major Organism (cf. *infra*, nn. 66-81).

[I] FUNDAMENTALS OF SOLIDARITY AND MISSION (SOMI)

[5] In seeking to enlighten the life of the Congregation, the 2015 General Chapter reminded us that “we are Missionaries” and opened the Chapter Declaration by describing our vocation. This accentuates that Mission is a gift of the Spirit and is central to our most fundamental identity (cf. MS 1-4). Living the Mission is the main reason for our existence as a Congregation. This Mission ensures that “God the Father is known, loved, served and praised by all, and that the Kingdom - His plan of love for humanity and Creation - is fully realized”.

[6] Both elements -the one referring to God and the one referring to God’s plan for Creation- cannot be separated (cf. Mt 22: 34-40; 1 Jn 4: 20). As the Church emphasizes, “how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace” (LS 10; cf. EG 88). One cannot be a true Claretian if he acts like the poor did not exist, as stated in *Missionari Sumus*. Nor can he do so “without denouncing unfair structures, fighting against the system that subjugates the poor and proposing alternatives” (MS 49)⁵.

[7] For us, Claretians, called “to seek God’s glory more earnestly” (CC 159), these words of Pope Francis take on special value: “Those who really wish to give glory to God by their lives are called to be single-minded and tenacious in their practice of the works of mercy” (GE 107). The same apostolic exhortation points out that it is not simply about performing a few good deeds, but about struggling for authentic social change (cf. GE 99). This transformation “means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity in addressing the real needs we encounter” (EG 188).

[8] Endorsing deepest Christian convictions (cf. Mt 25; Lk 10: 25-37), the 2015 General Chapter affirmed that Claretian Missionaries are called to witness through our lives to “the absolute primacy of God and his Kingdom, the divine option for the poor, the weak, the impoverished, and the sacred value of human rights, of Creation, and of all life” (MS 3).

⁵ “The world cannot continue down the path that it is taking now. If a Christian in these days looks away from the needs of the poorest of the poor, then in reality he is not a Christian! (...) Actually, this social doctrine does not come from any pope or scholar. It comes from the heart of the Gospel. It comes from Jesus himself. Jesus is the social teaching of God” [FRANCIS (2016) *DO CAT. What to do? The Social Doctrine of the Church*].

[9] In 2021, the 26th General Chapter reaffirmed this vision when discerning God's Dream for the Congregation: *"We dream of a Congregation committed to universal brotherhood (Fratelli tutti), justice, peace and the care of the common home (Laudato Si')*. *In a spirit of synodality, we collaborate with people of different cultures, ethnicities and religions for the transformation of the world in accord with God's plan (cf. CC 46)"* (cf. QC 43, 79).

SOMI is a call from God to all Christians.

[10] This 'divine option for the poor' is clearly visible in Jesus' life and in His proclamation of the Gospel as well as in the early Christian communities and the teachings of the Church Fathers. St. John Chrysostom reminds us not to honor Christ in the temple while neglecting Him outside, where He suffers from cold or nakedness. This preferential option highlighted in our Constitutions (nn. 3, 24, 26) is repetitively emphasized in the social teachings of the Church.

[11] This preference is meant to have consequences in the life of all Christians (cf. EG 198), not only those who may feel more inclined to welcome it. No one can consider himself exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice, nor claims his own lifestyle demands more focus to other areas (cf. EG 201). "There is one sign which we should never lack: the option for those who are least, those whom society discards " (id. 195).

[12] The Congregation has expressed this conviction through the concept 'Solidarity and Mission' (SOMI). Called to proclaim the Word of God, we are also called to collaborate, through our lives and actions, to help realize God's plan for humanity and Creation: universal brotherhood, justice, peace and the care of the common home (cf. QC 79). This is why our General Superiors have described SOMI as the Claretian expression of compassion, or a tent to shelter and heal for the wounds of Humanity and Creation ⁶.

SOMI is an experience deeply rooted in the spirit of St. Anthony Mary Claret.

[13] Saint Anthony Mary Claret was a man, moved by the fire of God's love, who sought to ensure that his brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, could enjoy the dignified and joyful life God created for them ⁷. Going beyond the mentality of many in

⁶ Cf. VATTAMATTAM, MATHEW CMF (2023) *Our Missionary Journey on the synodal path* (Circular Letter) (25.03); ID. (2023) *Message to IV SOMI MICLA Continental Assembly*.

⁷ Claret understood really well Pope Francis' statement: "We are not in this world merely to survive, but so that everyone is allowed to live a dignified and happy life" [FRANCIS (2022) *Message for the 6th World Day of the Poor*, 8].

the Church and society of his time, Claret promoted new actions aimed at transforming the world and improving the living conditions of men and women. History bears witness to his deep concern for the poor and to the diverse initiatives he encouraged in education, work, care for the sick, stewardship of the earth, and respect for human dignity⁸. Although his commitment to these causes is particularly evident during his years in Cuba, it remained a central reality throughout his life.

SOMI is a way of living and an invitation to continuous growth.

[14] In 2021, the General Chapter noted that "we need to convince ourselves that the issues of Solidarity and Mission have a lot to do with our life and mission" and underlined that "we need to walk again the roads of Emmaus (Lk 24: 13-35) and Jericho (Lk 10: 25-37) in order to grow in enthusiasm and compassion" (QC 21).

[15] Consistent with its Dream, the Congregation proposed that by 2027 "striving for justice, building peace, and caring for the common good have become hallmarks of our spirituality, formation, and mission" (QC 80).

SOMI serves as a mechanism of animation and articulation.

[16] In 2014, nearly forty representatives from many Organisms of the Congregation gathered in Vic to discern together some key characteristics of Claretian missionary work in JPIC and Solidarity. They proposed the establishment of a new mechanism for animation and coordination: Solidarity and Mission (SOMI)⁹. One year later, following the 2015 General Chapter, the General Government decided to increase Solidarity and Mission.

[17] At that time, the Church had not yet established the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, which was created in 2016 to better coordinate the activities of various pontifical councils and institutions, such as Justice and Peace and Caritas Internationalis.

⁸ Cf. PALACIOS, JESÚS MARÍA CMF (2010) 'La acción social de San Antonio María Claret', *Studia Claretiana* 25, 9-59; SÁNCHEZ MIRANDA, CARLOS E. CMF (2014) 'Promotion of justice, peace and integrity of creation in the missionary action of St. Anthony Mary Claret as the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba', *Workshop on JPIC & Solidarity, Vic*; SÁNCHEZ MIRANDA, CARLOS E. CMF (2018) 'Claret, evangelizer of the peripheries of his time'. *Claretian Workshop on peripheries*. Guatemala. This last conference has been published in Spanish in *Studia Claretiana* 34 (2019) 75-103.

⁹ In previous years, Fr. Josep Maria Abella CMF, Superior General, had already insisted in his writings to the Congregation on the promotion of the themes of Justice and Solidarity and on the convenience of better coordinating actions and presences. Cf. (2006) *Witnesses and Messengers of the God of Life*; (2012) *Missionaries* (Circular letters).

[18] By promoting SOMI, the Congregation aims to animate, articulate, and coordinate initiatives to achieve a greater impact of Claretian involvement in the transformation of the world, to better serve those most in need and Mother Earth, and to facilitate the exchange of information and resources.

SOMI serves as an experience shared by millions of men and women.

[19] Our participation in the Mission binds us to all Jesus' disciples, "and with millions of men and women of good will committed to the transformation of the world according to God's plan" (MS 3.6). The life of the Congregation across the five continents is filled with examples of this commitment. Solidarity and Mission is a privileged space in which we can live, at all levels, the synodality and shared mission to which we feel called to contribute (cf. QC 43).

SOMI represents a commitment to various realities and situations.

[20] God's plan for Creation, as the Church teaches when speaking of integral human development, includes many issues related to the care of the common home, human dignity, and human rights: health, education, justice and peace, the economy and labour; the integral care of Creation, the environment and biodiversity; migrations and humanitarian emergencies; the prevention and transformation of conflicts; the fight against hunger and poverty and the elimination of their causes: the rejection of violence, the death penalty, and any form of abuse against life ¹⁰; gender equality; care for the sick and people with special needs; the promotion of just and comprehensive health care and just fair models of development; good governance and anti-corruption initiatives; as well as support for migrants, refugees, displaced persons, indigenous peoples, and marginalized or persecuted or minorities.

[21] As the II Vatican Council clearly states, nothing truly human fails to resonate with the disciples of Christ (cf. GS 1). The call to coordinate Claretian communities' commitment to integral human development ¹¹ through SOMI is not intended to limit or control efforts but rather to amplify their transformative effectiveness and achieve a greater ecclesial and social impact.

[22] Unfortunately, millions of women are still far from having their dignity and rights recognized as God desired in His Creation project. As disciples of Jesus, we are called

¹⁰ In its Declaration *Dignitas Infinita. On Human Dignity* (2024), Catholic Church's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith recalls "some of the many violations of human dignity" that occur in the contemporary world: cf. nn. 33-62.

¹¹ In St. Paul VI words, "to be authentic, development must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each human being and of the whole human being" [(1967) *Populorum progressio*, 14].

to join those who believe that “women possess the same dignity and identical rights as men” (FT 23) and work for their rights (cf. QC 80).

SOMI expresses values that are integral to all Claretian actions.

[23] Enlightened by the Word of God, the teachings of the Church and the reflection of the Congregation (cf. GPF 118, 481), SOMI invites us to:

[i] Proclaim that the Gospel of God's love for humanity, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are a single and indivisible Gospel that is at the heart of Jesus' message (cf. EV 1-2).

[ii] Critically analyse the world around us and engage especially with the lives of the poor, marginalized, and discarded people and communities so that we can develop creative and committed responses with them.

[iii] Promote the care and protection of Creation and biodiversity by embracing sustainable practices, building consciousness, fostering ecological conversion, advocating for climate justice and substantial lifestyle changes.

[iv] Nurture a culture of peace through intercultural, inter-religious, and ecumenical dialogue, cultivating global solidarity and justice for all. Emphasize conflict resolution and transformation, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and the recovery of victims' rights.

[v] Embrace and accompany individuals, marginalized groups, and communities in such a way that they become protagonists in their own processes of self-dignity, self-determination, development, and liberation.

[vi] Articulate processes of personal and collective transformation that promote local cultures and identities, enabling people to be active agents of their own destiny.

[vii] Encourage widespread involvement in SOMI causes with particular emphasis on promoting volunteering.

[viii] Promote and establish associations or foundations within the Congregational structures for JPIC or Development, creating network with others while avoiding claims of protagonism.

[ix] Denounce and resist against oppressive policies and systems that produce poverty, inequality, violence, and environmental destruction of nature, while advocating for a just society.

[x] Confront discourses of intolerance, xenophobia and *aporophobia* (hatred of the poor), and the challenge narratives that lead to indifference, meritocracy, and individualism.

[xi] Provide resources and opportunities for both initial and ongoing formation for Claretians, volunteers, and lay people in general.

[xii] Network at Claretian level and with other religious and organizations to join the global efforts for building a society affiliated with God's plan.

[24] It is usually preferable to encourage projects connected to truly transformative processes rather than focusing on specific interventions that point to especial needs. The Church invites us to "promote processes, processes that are constantly renewed. Time never betrays when we are aware that the path neither begins nor ends with us"¹².

[III]

HOW IS SOMI ORGANIZED AT THE GENERAL CONGREGATION LEVEL?

[25] In SOMI, as in many other dimensions of Claretian life, the Congregation operates at various levels: general, provincial, local, etc. Recognizing the principle of a common but differentiated approach, Solidarity and Mission is not organized in the same way everywhere. However, SOMI is called to be a relevant reality with a clear and effective structure in each Claretian Major Organism (cf. QC 80-81).

[26] Just as shared mission - "our normal way of mission" (Dir 114)- must be present in every Claretian ministry, the values of Solidarity and Mission involve constant apostolic attitudes that should guide and articulate all aspects of our life and action (cf. Dir 110). Therefore, SOMI serves as a transversal axis of our missionary life (cf. QC 21; 79-86).

[27] The Congregation drives SOMI through the General Secretariat for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), the General Mission Procure, and a team of missionaries who, on behalf of *Proclade Internazionale*¹³, represent the Congregation at United Nations. Though approaching from different perspectives, these three bodies share the same objective: to improve the congregational experience of SOMI and are daily determined to collaborate more closely. They are coordinated by the General Prefect of Apostolate, who remains in frequent contact with the Superior General, the General Government and the Prefects of Apostolate of the Major Organisms.

[28] **The General Secretariat for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** assists the Major Organisms in making the work of evangelization both prophetic and liberating, particularly from the perspective of the poor and needy (cf.

¹² FRANCIS (2024) *Speech to Popular Movements meeting*. Rome, 20.09. Cf. EG 223.

¹³ Cf. *infra*, n. 35.

Dir 113). It brings Catholic Social Teachings closer to the Congregation and promotes commitment to justice, peace, reconciliation, human dignity, and human rights. As the Pope encouraged us, Claretians cannot be content with merely observing the dramas faced by humanity and the planet from a distance. On the contrary, we feel called to advocacy, raising our voices to denounce all that threatens life (cf. QC 83) ¹⁴.

[29] In close coordination with Claretians at UN, the JPIC Secretariat promotes Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and raises awareness about the public impact of our actions, words, and silences. Additionally, in harmonization with the General Mission Procure, JPIC Secretariat supports integral development projects and adopts collaboration between Global North and Global South to empower the most neglected areas and those affected by the triple planetary crisis.

[30] Like so many social institutions and the Church itself, the Claretians have increasingly recognized the importance of caring for Creation and meticulously addressing environment issues ¹⁵. The Secretariat of Justice and Peace, established in 1978, later incorporated the ecological dimension and became JPIC. In connection with the emphasis placed by Catholic Church social teaching, SOMI has progressively focused on integral ecology and promotes the goals of “Laudato Si”. As our Sister, the Mother Earth, cries out (LS 246): any practice of destructive exploitation must be denounced (cf. QC 80).

[31] The **General Mission Procure**, as described in the Claretian Missionaries Directory (n. 123) and strengthened in 1995, plays a crucial role in seeking and generating funds as well as promoting projects that support evangelization and integral human development. It is also entrusted with fostering missionary awareness, promoting voluntary work, spreading knowledge about the Missions, and encouraging prayer for their success.

[32] In close collaboration with *Proclade Internazionale* (FPI), the General Mission Procure (GMP), works to improve the quality of projects prepared by the Major Organisms, offering guidance to those responsible and seeking Claretian or external financing sources. The General Mission Procure maintains regular contact with the

¹⁴ As St. John Paul II clearly stated, the disciples of Christ are not only called to proclaim, but also to denounce evils and injustices. [cf. (1987) *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, 41]

¹⁵ The 2009 General Chapter spoke about ‘care of Creation’ (MFL 2); the 2015 Chapter about ‘the cry of mother earth’ (MS 6-8); the 2021 one about climate change and care of the common house (QC 12, 31). The three General Chapters invited to ecological conversion and the deep transformation of our lifestyles and spirituality (MFL 2; MS 65-67; QC 79-86).

Organisms and regularly reviews the *Guidelines for preparing projects proposals*. It also provides frequent training initiatives on projects' management ¹⁶.

[33] Many of the Major Organisms' Mission Procures, with the support of the General Mission Procure, have become stronger and more competent in their work. As a coordination mechanism, Solidarity and Mission, seek to foster collaboration between the Procures and strengthen their interaction with other key agents involved in the promotion of integral development, defending justice and peace, and caring for our common home. Progressively, organizations originating within Claretian environments are offering significant services to improve the dignity of individuals and communities across all continents.

[34] Established in 2018 as an initiative of the Claretian Family, the Congregation also supports the **SOS Fund for Emergencies and Natural Disasters**. The General Prefect of Apostolate coordinates its management with representatives appointed by Claretian Missionaries Sisters (RMI) and Lay Claretians.

[35] **Proclade Internazionale** (FPI), an NGO established by the General Government in 2006 and legally recognized in Italy, works in close collaboration with the General Mission Procure. *Proclade Internazionale* has been recognized as a key interlocutor by various United Nations (UN) bodies focused on human rights, climate change and political, economic, and social rights. This recognition has enabled our NGO to actively participate in UN-led activities and forums. In 2017, FPI was granted special consultative status in United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In May 2021, *Proclade Internazionale* was accredited to the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), obtaining observer status at the environment assemblies and the UNEP branch. By the end of 2023, FPI obtained the status of observer organization with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

[36] The Congregation presence at United Nations (**Claretians at UN**) has been promoted by the last three General Chapters, with two main objectives: first, to influence the United Nations by expanding the voices of individuals and communities and advocating for just policies and decisions; and second, to inform Claretians and those who share life and mission about UN initiatives and projects, supporting those that are connected with the Claretian charism and Gospel values in contributing to the transformation of the world. Following the agreement of the General Chapter of 2021, the Congregation expanded its UN presence, which had been coordinated from New York, to include offices in Nairobi in 2022 with the purpose to better address

¹⁶ There are some criteria for requesting aid for projects, approved and reviewed by the General Government after a dialogue with the Major Superiors. The Major Organisms send their proposals, that are studied by GMP Council twice a year, in March and October. The GMP Team works during the whole year in dialogue with the Major Organisms' Mission Procures.

environmental and climate change issues (cf. QC 86). The Congregation is also discerning, as mandated by the same General Chapter, how to improve its engagement with human rights issues, primarily coordinated by the UN from Geneva (Switzerland). Although Claretians are stationed in various UN locations, they operate as a unified team with one coordinator appointed by the Superior General.

[37] As a result of discernment process involving the General Government, Claretians at UN have focused their attention on four main areas: (i) migrants and refugees; (ii) indigenous people; (iii) peace and reconciliation, and (iv) ecological issues. They also collaborate with relevant partners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which the 2021 General Chapter emphasized (cf. QC 80-81). Participating in UN activities allows us to amplify Gospel values and our prophetic voice in various forums and settings. However, promoting UN programs does not mean we are agents of the organization or uncritical endorsers of its policies and rhetoric. Together with many others, both Christian and non-Christian, we aim to contribute to the reform of the United Nations, which the Catholic Church recognizes as both essential and capable of improvement¹⁷.

[III]

SOLIDARITY AND MISSION IN THE CONGREGATION

[38] The 2021 General Chapter placed important emphasis on issues related to Solidarity and Mission within the Congregation's Dream. If we truly believe in our call to make this a reality by 2027, where "the respect and protection of integrity of creation have substantially transformed our lifestyle" (QC 80b), and "striving for justice, building peace, and caring for the common good have become hallmarks of our spirituality, formation, and mission" (QC 80c), then every aspect of our lives must be moulded by SOMI. As Pope Francis reminds us, "there are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes. (...) We must move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but lacking the courage to bring substantial change" ¹⁸.

[39] In every area of congregational life (spirituality, formation, economy, styles of governance, community life...) and in its apostolic actions, Solidarity and Mission must embrace a significant and effective presence. SOMI is a transversal theme, as affirmed in numerous documents from the Chapters and assemblies of the Major Organisms, as well as, in action plans and personal and community projects. Issues

¹⁷ FRANCIS (2015) *Meeting with the members of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization* (25.09); cf. ID. (2023) *Laudate Deum. To all people of good will on the climate crisis* (Apostolic exhortation, 4.10) 37, 43.

¹⁸ FRANCIS (2023) *Laudate Deum*, 56. 70.

of Solidarity and Mission should be integrated into all our ministries, including parishes and churches, educational initiatives, itinerant preaching, media platforms, institutes of consecrated life, and publishing houses. Catechesis and preaching must fundamentally prioritize SOMI, ensuring its importance and impact grow daily (cf. FT 86).

[40] Living more faithfully to our vocation will be easier if we bring these questions into conversations with the many lay men and women, other religious, and people of good will with whom we interrelate (cf. QC 98). Regularly evaluating ourselves will help us to strengthen our commitment with enthusiasm and joy. This is not just about wishing for the transformation of the world and trying to do good. We also need to learn from those trained and equipped to lead that change. Advances in science and the wisdom accumulated by various cultures greatly enrich us.

[41] It is inspiring to witness the growing collaboration within the Claretian family in Solidarity and Mission (SOMI), where the Congregation is working alongside international unions of religious men and women. This requires teamwork across the globe, with Claretians communities joining forces with both Christian and non-Christian Organizations, as well as religious and secular groups. The result is a network of partnerships that are foresting synergies and contributing to the transformation of society.

AT THE GENERAL LEVEL

THE GENERAL SOMI TEAM

Composition

[42] The General SOMI Team is composed of key members who coordinate and support the Congregation's efforts in Solidarity and Mission. This includes the General Prefect of Apostolate, and other persons nominated by the Superior General of Claretians Missionaries such as: (i) the General Secretary of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC); (ii) the General Mission Procurator; (iii) members of 'Claretians at UN'.

[43] Additional members, such as Assistant General Mission Procurator or Assistant General Secretary of JPIC, nominated by the Superior General will become members of the General SOMI Team.

[44] The General Prefect of Apostolate will be the General SOMI Team Coordinator. If not, another person will be nominated by the Superior General.

Functions and organization

[45] The General SOMI Team's main functions are to:

- [i] Promote and coordinate the congregational options in the areas of SOMI, emphasizing the resolutions of each General Chapter to guide SOMI efforts.
- [ii] Maintain dialogue and collaboration with the Claretians and their partners and to encourage participatory processes for analysis, reflection, discernment, and action.
- [iii] Reflect on SOMI life in the Congregation and the practice of SOMI at the various levels, including General, Conferences, and Major Organisms.
- [iv] Animate SOMI ministries and reflections in Claretian communities and apostolic platforms, trying to improve the commitment to integral human development and integral ecology (cf. LS 137-162) and the awareness and living of SOMI issues (cf. *supra*, nn. 20, 23).
- [v] Articulate projects and actions by integrating advocacy, promotion, and development projects in the line with the Catholic Church's social teaching and SDGs (cf. QC 81).
- [vi] Encourage the Major Organisms to promote volunteering programs.
- [vii] Draw up, through a participatory process, a congregational strategic plan for SOMI, which will be evaluated every three years.
- [viii] Plan and propose formation programs and the annual CMF General SOMI Calendar.
- [ix] Offer timely suggestions for actions and policies to the General Government.
- [x] Present annually to the General Government a report on the experience of SOMI in the Congregation and the General SOMI Team's action plan and budget.
- [xi] Coordinate the General SOMI website and newsletter content, and to periodically evaluate SOMI's presence on social media with the general communication team of the Congregation (iClaret).

[46] The General SOMI Team will meet, at least, twice a year, either in person or online. The Team will hold at least one face-to-face meeting once every three years.

[47] At least once a year, the General SOMI Team will hold a meeting with the SOMI Coordinators of Congregation's Conferences (cf. *infra*, nn. 61-62).

[48] As JPIC Secretariat, Mission Procure, Fondazione *Proclade Internazionale* and 'Claretians at UN' have their proper annual budgets, the General Prefect of Apostolate will take in consideration particular needs of the General SOMI Team. A yearly budget will be prepared by the Team and presented to General Government for approval to ensure transparency and accountability in funding.

THE GENERAL SOMI COUNCIL

Composition

[49] The General SOMI Council is constituted by the General SOMI Team, the Conferences SOMI Coordinators, and one or two more representatives of each Conference. These last, after listening to the General SOMI Team, are nominated by the Superior General.

Functions and organization

[50] The General SOMI Council helps the General SOMI Team:

[i] in the development and fulfilment of the Teams' responsibilities, as outlined previously (cf. *supra*, n. 45).

[ii] in gaining to know better and to have a deeper understanding of the SOMI realities in the Major Organisms.

[iii] in promoting relationships and teamwork between Organisms, bodies, and institutions, ensuring that the work of SOMI is interconnected and cohesive across regions and levels of the Congregation.

[51] The General SOMI Council will hold at least once a year online meeting. It will hold a face-to-face meeting every six years.

[52] The Major Organisms' Conferences are invited to contribute to the needs of the Council. The General Government will assist with the council expenses, offering financial support as needed to ensure the Council's functions can be carried out effectively.

AT THE CONFERENCES LEVEL

THE SOMI COMMISSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE LEVEL

[53] These commissions are recommended to be established within each Conference, helping to strengthen the impact of SOMI work at regional levels.

Functions

[54] The main functions of the commissions are to:

[i] Animate SOMI ministries. The commissions are tasked with encouraging Claretian Missionaries within Conference area to improve their commitment to integral human development and integral ecology through SOMI initiatives.

[ii] Encourage Claretians and Claretian positions to improve their awareness and to engage more deeply with SOMI issues.

[iii] Guide the Conference projects and actions integrating the elements of advocacy and development according to the Catholic Church's social teaching and SDGs.

[iv] Offer the Conference Board suggestions about actions, policies, and potential ongoing formation programs to further SOMI work.

[v] Encourage the Major Organisms to support volunteers and young people, promoting their commitment and engagement with SOMI projects.

[55] The Conference SOMI Commission will designate three members who will be the contact persons with General Secretariat of JPIC, General Mission Procure and Claretians at United Nations.

Composition

[56] The number of members will depend on the size of the Conference.

[57] Each Major Organism must have at least one representative in the Commission.

[58] The Conference Board will appoint at least one of the prefects of apostolate of the Major Organisms as a member of the Conference SOMI Commission.

[59] The Conference SOMI Commission should include both men and women with diverse experiences (Mission Procurators, JPIC Coordinators, experts, people linked to social work, NGOs...).

Economy

[60] The Conference Commission will have an annual budget. The Major Superiors of the Conference will determine how to address the financial needs of the Commission.

THE CONFERENCES' SOMI COORDINATORS

[61] The Claretian Conference Board shall ensure that the Conference has a SOMI Coordinator, who will be a member of Conference SOMI Commission. He / she will be responsible for maintaining contact with General SOMI Team, the Claretian Conference Board, and the prefects of apostolate of the Major Organisms of the Conference.

[62] The budget of the Conference SOMI Commission shall provide financial support for the Conference SOMI Coordinator to carry out his service. This ensures that the cost does not fall on his Organism or religious community if he/she is a consecrated person, nor in his family if the coordinator is a layperson.

THE CONFERENCES' SOMI MEETINGS AND ASSEMBLIES

[63] The Conference's SOMI meetings are very appropriate times to:

- [i] Foster coordination and possible common projects.
- [ii] Promote ongoing formation and the exchange of experiences.
- [iii] Analyse together the reality and needs of the continent.

[64] The SOMI Conference's meetings should be held at least once every three years. The participation of all Major Organisms would be highly advisable.

[65] A representative from the General SOMI Team will attend these meetings.

AT THE MAJOR ORGANISMS' (PROVINCES & DELEGATIONS) LEVEL

SOMI IN MAJOR ORGANISMS

[66] Major Superior and his council hold primary responsibility for promoting and animating Solidarity and Mission within their respective Major Organism. They are tasked to encourage Claretians, communities, and positions to actively live out the SOMI aspects of our faith and vocation.

[67] The 2021 General Chapter encouraged to consolidate SOMI structures and objectives at the Major Organism level (cf. QC 81). All the Provinces and Delegations must put into practice the followings:

[i] Ensuring each Major Organism has a Mission Procure (cf. Dir 123) in good and ongoing relationship with the General Mission Procure, avoiding frequent changes in the mission procurator.

[ii] Actively engaging Claretians and Christian communities in Justice, Peace, and integrity of Creation (JPIC) (cf. Dir 113) ¹⁹.

[iii] Collaborating with Claretians at UN by taking advantage of opportunities for advocacy and development ²⁰.

[iv] Thanking the generosity of so many people involved in volunteering, promoting their organization and the increasing of the number of volunteers, especially among young people.

[v] Ensuring that Solidarity and Mission has a strong presence in all apostolic platforms (parishes, schools, media, etc.).

[vi] Promoting networking among groups, commissions, and apostolic platforms.

[vii] Incorporating SOMI themes into initial and ongoing formation programs (cf. QC 82).

[viii] Considering SOMI values in economic planning and community life (cf. QC 21).

[68] Listening to the suggestions of the General SOMI Team, each Major Organism is called to organize SOMI discerning the most effective way to:

¹⁹ In most Major Organisms, the animation of JPIC cannot be the task of a single person. The constitution of local, zonal and Major Organism JPIC commissions is highly advisable.

²⁰ Enrichment can occur in both directions. The information offered by the Major Organism helps 'Claretians at UN' in their task. 'Claretians at UN' can help in very diverse ways the Major Organism and people most in need.

[i] Engage commitment to integral ecology, awareness, and practice of the Catholic Church's social teaching and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (cf. QC 81).

[ii] Coordinate and interconnect Mission Procure, JPIC, the relationship with 'Claretians at UN' and all groups and organizations associated with SOMI.

[69] Each Major Organism should have a JPIC Coordinator (cf. Dir 113), a Mission Procurator (cf. Dir 123), and someone responsible for maintaining the relationship between the Major Organism and Claretians at UN. Each Organism will determine how many individuals should take these roles, but under no circumstances should any of them remain unattended. It is advised that no single individual assumes two or more of these responsibilities.

[70] In the Major Organisms that are present in multiple countries, attention to SOMI should be ensured in all of them.

[71] It is recommended to have a SOMI Advisory Council within each Major Organism (cf. *infra*, nn. 79-80).

[72] The inclusion of individuals involved in SOMI in the various councils of the Major Organism (spirituality, formation, economy, apostolate...) is highly recommended (cf. QC 80c).

[73] Major Organisms are encouraged to participate in the initiatives of the local Churches offering support and especially promoting the involvement of young people, women, and laypersons at all levels (local, regional, etc.).

THE SOMI COORDINATORS AT THE MAJOR ORGANISM LEVEL

[74] The Prefect of Apostolate is the SOMI Coordinator of the Major Organism. In case where Major Superior and his Council decide it is not possible or convenient, an alternative person (either man or woman) should be appointed to serve ²¹.

Functions

[75] The function of the Major Organism SOMI Coordinator includes coordinating and animating activities across the Organism, ensuring collaboration between different

²¹ If so the roles of the appointed and his/her relationship with the Prefect of Apostolate must be stated with clarity.

areas like Mission Procure, JPIC, and NGOs. Regular communication between the Major Organism SOMI Coordinator, and both the Conference SOMI coordinator and the General SOMI Team is essential.

[76] Maintaining frequent communication with the Conference SOMI Coordinator and Commission, promoting the participation of the Major Organism in common projects and Conference life.

[77] Maintaining frequent communication with the General SOMI Team (JPIC Secretariat, Claretians at UN, General Mission Procure).

[78] To ensure that the Major Organism is in communication with 'Claretians at UN' and participates regularly with them in projects and initiatives ²².

THE MAJOR ORGANISMS' SOMI ADVISORY COUNCILS

[79] Major Organisms are encouraged to establish SOMI Advisory Councils, which assist in overseeing SOMI issues, cultivating personal and common commitments, and promoting networking between groups, projects and communities.

[80] It is advised that the councils include lay people, young people, women, and individuals involved in various SOMI realities and experiences, ensuring a diverse and inclusive perspective in decision-making.

[81] This structured approach to SOMI at the Major Organism level ensures that the Claretian Missionaries are united in their commitment to social justice, human development, integral ecology and the promotion of Catholic social teaching, while fostering collaboration and networking across the Congregation.

These guidelines were officially approved by the Superior General and his council on October 31st, 2024, establishing a clear framework for Solidarity and Mission throughout the Claretian Congregation.

²² In case anyone has not been entrusted to, Major Organism SOMI Coordinator is the ordinary contact person of 'Claretians at UN'.

ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Claretian Missionaries. <i>Constitutions</i> .
Dir	Claretian Missionaries. <i>Directory</i> .
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council.
EG	Apostolic Exhortation <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> (2013).
EV	Encyclical <i>Evangelium vitae</i> (1995).
FPI	Fondazione Proclade Internazionale.
FT	Encyclical <i>Fratelli tutti</i> (2020).
GE	Apostolic Exhortation <i>Gaudete et exsultate</i> (2018).
GMP	General Mission Procure.
GPF	Claretian Missionaries. <i>General Plan of Formation</i> (2020).
GS	II Vatican Council. Constitution <i>Gaudium et spes</i> (1965).
IPM	22 nd General Chapter Declaration <i>In prophetic mission</i> (1997).
JPIC	Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.
LD	Apostolic Exhortation <i>Laudate Deum</i> (2023).
LS	Encyclical <i>Laudato Si'</i> (2015).
MFL	24 th General Chapter Declaration <i>Men on Fire with Love</i> (2009).
MICLA	Claretian Missionaries Conference of America & Caribe Major Organisms.
MS	25 th General Chapter Declaration <i>Missionari sumus</i> (2015).
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization.
QC	26 th General Chapter Declaration <i>Querida Congregación</i> (2021).
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals.
SOMI	Solidarity and Mission.
TMHL	23 rd General Chapter Declaration <i>That they may have life</i> (2003).
UN	United Nations.
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program.
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.