



Prot. SG 93/2026

LETTER OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AFTER THE INTENSIVE SESSIONS

Our Congregation journeying towards the XXVII General Chapter

Dear brothers,

Wishing you the blessings of the Lord who has suffered and is risen.

Hope is alive. It continues to permeate all creation, which we celebrate in the Easter season. Yet, since last February, we have been passing through one of the tensest moments of our times after the global pandemic Covid-19. The world's political scenario reveals the dominance of national and economic interests, often trampling every effort to build a more just and fraternal human family that cares for our common home. As Pope Francis invites us, *let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home (Fratelli Tutti, 8)*.

1. A world in crisis

It is heartbreaking to see on the news the charred bodies of civilians, especially children, buried under the debris of so-called precision bombings, and millions living under the terror of war. When reason and compassion are drowned by threats, polarized narratives, and even God's name being misused to justify violence, we are reminded of the profound truth taught by Pope Benedict XVI that authentic human development is possible only through "charity in truth," where love is inseparable from justice and the dignity of every human person (*Caritas in Veritate, 1-2*).

Echoing this truth, the cry of the human soul finds expression in the words of Pope Leo XIV, whose pontificate has been marked from the beginning by a persistent call to work for peace in our world. As he reminds us, *Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life*. We unite ourselves with this call, rejecting the illusion of omnipotence in those who wield power and resources. God does not bless violence; no cause justifies the shedding of innocent blood, nor can the destruction of a people or culture ever be acceptable. True peace can arise only from dialogue, humility, and a shared commitment to the common good.

With you, I feel deeply the pain of suffering humanity, which is itself a gift of the Lord within us. Indifference to the suffering of our brothers and sisters becomes a kind of spiritual leprosy that consumes us. My heart grieves for our brothers and sisters who endure the harsh consequences of today's political and economic realities, especially in places such as Cuba, Venezuela, South Sudan, Congo, Haiti, Nigeria, Cameroon, and many other regions where we serve, as well as in the more visible scenes of conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine, where war continues to bring immense human suffering.

2. Our role in promoting peace.

Yet we may be tempted to respond to this pain by blaming external systems alone, rather than allowing it to transform us from within. As Pope Leo XIV reminds us, the path to peace begins with personal conversion and a commitment to serve life in concrete ways. In this light, as Pope Francis also teaches, peace takes root in the human heart and grows through gestures of fraternity. At the personal level, we are invited to recognize our own capacity to wound others, especially those we perceive as threats. At the community level and in our pastoral platforms, we are called to foster spaces of dialogue, mutual correction, respect for the rule of law, and fidelity to conscience in the service of the common good.

At the same time, we must remain vigilant against the subtle temptation to identify ourselves uncritically with political ideologies or to idolize human leaders. As Pope Leo XIV has repeatedly reminded us in his recent teachings, power finds its true meaning only in humble service to life and never in domination or self-assertion. While we are called to respect and cooperate with legitimate authorities in the service of the common good, we cannot allow any earthly power to claim the allegiance that belongs to God alone. As Pope Benedict XVI teaches, without truth we risk losing the capacity to discern and to direct our action toward authentic human development (*Caritas in Veritate*, 9). Our true allegiance is to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and to His Gospel. From Him we receive the grace to discern wisely, to welcome what is good and just, and to promote all that is truly life-giving, so that our witness may remain free, prophetic, and rooted in the Kingdom that does not pass away.

3. Preparation towards the XXVII General Chapter

The General Government met in Sri Lanka during the first week of March to initiate the preparation for the XXVII General Chapter in 2027. Owing to the outbreak of war in Iran, four members of the General Curia and four Major Superiors were either delayed *en route* or unable to travel, as the conflict significantly disrupted regional flights. Nevertheless, the meeting was held and successfully fulfilled its principal objective.

This gathering marked the beginning of a synodal process of preparation, understood as a shared itinerary of congregational discernment of God's will in the present time. A strong conviction that emerged is the need to cultivate, at all levels, a culture of listening, synodality, and discernment, recognizing that the very process of preparation can itself be transformative.

In our March–April intensive session, the General Council gave priority to outlining a clear and structured program for this preparation with the aim of engaging the whole Congregation in a spiritual journey. The Chapter concerns all of us and calls for the active participation of the entire Congregation at various levels. We are therefore invited to journey together, listening attentively to one another and to the Lord, so that the Chapter may truly renew and strengthen our missionary life.

At this stage, I wish to communicate some essential information regarding the preparation process. More detailed orientations will be provided in due time.

Dates of the XXVII General Chapter

15 August – 10 September 2027

Theme for the preparation

One Mission, One in Mission: Mystical and Prophetic Missionaries on the Synodal Path

General Chapter Preparatory Commission

Fr. Henry Omonisaye (Coordinator), Fr. Carlos Sánchez, Fr. Pedro Belderrain, Fr. Jude Langeh, and Fr. Antony Bhyju.

Methodology

The preparation will be carried out through “Conversations in the Spirit,” fostering participation, shared reflection, and communal discernment at various levels. These conversations will take place within communities, Organisms, including those who share our life and mission.

To facilitate this process, each Organism will be asked to designate a small animating team to guide and coordinate the preparation locally. In addition, a continental synthesis group will help to gather and integrate the fruits of discernment emerging from different contexts.

Phases of the Preparation Process

- *Stage of Sensitization (May – August 2026)*
Announcement of the Chapter, dissemination of materials, and preparation of animators.
- *Stage of Elections and Participation (September 2026 – February 2027)*
Election of delegates, organization of conversations at various levels, preparation of reports, and identification of key themes.
- *Stage of Immediate Preparation (March – August 2027)*
Final discernment processes, preparation of documentation, and organization of the Chapter.

The General Preparatory Commission will accompany this process and will provide further guidance in the coming months. This spiritual journey invites the active participation of all, so that the XXVII General Chapter may truly become a moment of grace, renewal, and missionary discernment for the entire Congregation.

4. Decisions taken by the General Government

During the intensive sessions, the General Government reflected on several important matters concerning the life and mission of the Congregation and took some decisions which I now wish to share with you.

Economic Matters

The balances for the year 2025 and the budgets for 2026 for the Major Organisms, as well as those of the communities and activities directly dependent on the General Government, were presented, studied, and approved, considering the recommendations of the General Commission of Economy. The overall economic situation of the Congregation remains positive.

While appreciating the efforts made, it was noted that some reports would benefit from greater clarity and accuracy in accounting practices. In this regard, the need to strengthen the formation of economies through practical training has been emphasized.

In a few Major Organisms, certain weaknesses in economic management were also observed, at times accompanied by limited follow-up. These situations highlight the importance of reinforcing sound accounting practices that ensure transparency, accountability, and the responsible administration of resources in accordance with our norms.

Review of the Constitutions

The General Government received the proposal of the Constitutional Review Commission, which outlines two paths: a more immediate revision in preparation for the 2027 General Chapter, and a broader, more comprehensive process involving the entire Congregation. The Commission will continue its work in dialogue with the insights gathered from Major Superiors and General Government during recent meetings. Later, the General Government will present all the fruits to the XXVII General Chapter.

Day of Claretian Vocations

Together with the Claretian Family, we will celebrate the annual Claretian Day of Vocations on May 31, the Feast of the Visitation. This year, we will focus on receiving the Vocation Directory, A Treasure to Share, and use this occasion to deepen our appreciation of the gift of our vocation, while also welcoming those whom the Lord calls to become part of the Claretian Family.

Missionary Expansion

The preparation of our missionaries from Ave Maria Province for a new mission in Papua New Guinea has now come to fruition. Three missionaries—Frs. Yohanes Paulus I, Metodius Manek, and Edvan Andreas Ru'u—arrived in the Diocese of Aitape on 26 February 2026 to begin this new presence.

In addition, in response to a request for a Claretian presence in the Central African Republic—a region from which we have received several vocations—and following a process of discernment by the Delegation of Cameroon, the General Council has approved the establishment of a new mission in the Archdiocese of Bangui.

Framework for the Universal Mission

The Council also reflected on several aspects of sending missionaries on a universal mission, emphasizing the importance of proper accompaniment of missionaries, clarity in mission assignments, intercultural formation, and the need to balance missionary availability with personal readiness. After receiving responses from the Major Superiors regarding the possibility of sending missionaries on a universal mission, we are working on concrete ways to facilitate the process.

Care for Our Common Home

The General Government has approved two initiatives from the SoMi General Team to strengthen our commitment to the care of creation. The Congregation will promote, together with the Claretian Family, a Claretian Family Ecological Network (CLAFEN) to connect and reinforce existing efforts, and has established a Claretian Climate Fund, encouraging responsible discernment regarding travel and its environmental impact. As an initial step, 5% of the General Government's outreach and governance-related travel costs will be allocated to support ecological projects through this fund, coordinated by the General Mission Procure.

Follow-up of the Discerning Leadership Program

In response to the need to strengthen our service of leadership at all levels, we are planning to offer a diversified program adapted to the needs of our Major Organisms. As a pilot initiative, the program will be introduced progressively in selected Organisms, one at a time, through a hybrid format combining online and in-person sessions. The program has been designed based on the responses received through an online survey conducted among all Major Superiors.

In addition, separate thematic online conferences will be offered to all periodically as an advanced course, especially for those who have previously participated in the workshops. Fr. Jude Langeh coordinates the program.

Formation

As the School of the Heart of Mary approaches its 30th anniversary, the Council has called for a comprehensive evaluation of its objectives, content, and functioning. This review aims to ensure that it continues to serve effectively in the formation of formators in accordance with the renewed General Plan of Formation (GPF) and the present needs of the Congregation.

The Manual of Formation (announced as a GPF complement) is being prepared by a team led by Fr. Antony Bhyju, and we expect it to be made available in October 2026. At the same time, a large team of Claretians from all over the world, coordinated by Fr. Antonio Llamas, continues to prepare the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Manual aimed at initial formation.

Deepening Our Experience of Abba

As a remote preparation for the Chapter, we will undertake a process of reflecting more deeply on the prayer that Jesus himself taught us: the “Our Father.” In place of the usual thematic circular, the General Superior has chosen to offer a series of nine short modules for personal and community reflection on the Lord’s prayer. By learning to pray the Lord’s Prayer—so familiar to us—with the mind and heart of Christ, we allow our life and mission to be renewed and deepened.

Courses and Meetings

1. *Course for New Secretaries of the Congregation*
May 11–19, 2026 – General Curia, Rome
(10 participants from different continents)
2. *Course for Referents of Youth and Vocation Ministry YVM*
May 25–31, 2026 – General Curia, Rome
(12 participants from different continents)
3. *General Economic Council*
June 2–5, 2026 - General Curia, Rome
4. Online Course: “Fundamentals of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.”
May 18–22, 2026 Online teaching. With the participation of all Organisms.

More details of these upcoming activities will be communicated in detail through the appropriate channels.

In this Easter season, may the Risen Lord deepen our faith and sustain us in embracing life with hope and confidence in every situation.



Fr. Mathew Vattamattam, CMF
Superior General



Rome, April 18, 2026