



*Missionaries
of the
Sacred Heart*

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PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 2011

Dear Confreres,

I write to inform you that the Provincial in Council at its meeting on the 16th March 2010 convoked the next Provincial Chapter in accordance with the Constitutions and Statutes no.158 which states:

A Provincial Chapter will be convoked by the Provincial Superior in Council:

1. In preparation for the General Chapter;
2. In accordance with decisions of the Provincial Chapter;
3. When they judge it necessary or useful after consultation with local Superiors.

The forthcoming Chapter is an ordinary Chapter (Confer Provincial Statutes no.73). The Chapter will commence on Monday evening 9th May 2011.

Purpose:

Our Constitutions and Statutes, nos. 156 and 157 outline the purpose of the Provincial Chapter as follows:

No.156 The primary purpose of Provincial Chapters is to determine and clarify the goals of the Province, to foster the evangelical life and the apostolic endeavour of the local communities, to assure unity and a common spirit in the face of diversity of apostolates, and to express and actualize the participation of all the members in the responsibilities of the Province.

No.157 The Provincial Chapter will make policies and legislation as it deems necessary and useful for all.

Venue and Date:

The Chapter will be held at Grace Dieu Manor, Retreat House and Conference Centre from **Monday evening 9th May 2011** until lunch time **Friday 20th May 2011**.

Theme:

The theme chosen for the next General Chapter is Obedience and Mission, following on from the General administration's letter to the Congregation entitled "Authority and Obedience in our MSC Tradition", the General Administration has proposed that this also be the "principal theme for the Provincial Chapters that should be celebrated in preparation for the General Chapter (CS 158.1)". On reading the letter and noting the many positive and creative insights in it on Obedience and Mission, we have decided that it is a very meaningful, relevant and challenging theme for our Chapter. Hence we have chosen **Obedience and Mission** as the theme for the Provincial Chapter.

Composition of the Chapter:

Provincial Statute No. 75:

The Provincial Chapter will be composed of the following persons:

a) Those who are members of the Chapter:

1. By reason of office:

The Provincial Leader as President, the members of the Provincial Team, and all Regional and Sectional Leaders.

If a Regional or Sectional Leader attending by reason of office is impeded, his Deputy will be his substitute.

2. By reason of election

- a) The number of elected delegates will be three times the number of the delegates by reason of office at the time of election of delegates for the Chapter. Election of delegates will take place six months prior to Chapter.
- b) Each Assembly area (i.e. England, Ireland, Russia, South Africa, U.S.A., Venezuela) elects a proportionate number of delegates (from the brothers and priests) to the Chapter, which will not be based on age criteria or any other division.
- c) Professed students (i.e. scholastics who are finally professed and temporary professed) in Ireland and England, South Africa, and Venezuela will elect delegates from the finally professed in each area in the same proportion as other delegates are elected in the Province. If there is not a finally professed scholastic, then a temporary professed scholastic may be elected, but will have active voice only.
- d) In the election of delegates from each group, if the number of votes is equally divided, the senior firstly by profession, then by age, is to be considered elected. The second senior by profession, then by age, will be deemed the substitute delegate. Where the number of votes is not equally divided, the person receiving the second highest number of votes will be considered the substitute delegate.
- e) To cater for the situation created by any works or other aspects of the Province being unrepresented at the Chapter, the Provincial and Team, may co-opt delegates as members of the Chapter with active

and passive voice, to represent such works or other aspects. No more than four such members may be co-opted (Cf. CS 159.3).

b) Lay People

The number of lay people will be in the proportion of a third of elected MSC members). The laity are elected or chosen by the lay people in each Assembly area in a manner to be decided by each Area Assembly. Each Assembly area will codify this electoral or selection process. In chapters or Assemblies where Laity participate there will be time for MSC and Laity to meet separately.

Please note that in virtue of this Statute we are entitled to include nine lay people.

Provincial Statute No. 76:

Members of the Chapter shall not be excused from attendance except for reasons considered grave by the Provincial and Team (Cf. CS 255).

We extend an open invitation to members who might wish to attend the Chapter as observers with consultative voice only in accordance with General Statute no. 161. More information regarding this will be made available later.

Facilitators:

Chris Partridge and Ronnie McEwan from the Kinharvie Institute have been appointed as the Chapter facilitators.

Pre-Chapter Committee:

The Provincial Council has appointed a committee to plan and prepare for the Chapter. The membership is Alan Whelan, Tom Mulcahy, Diarmuid O'Murchú, Manus Ferry and Pat Courtney. They will be assisted by Ronnie McEwan and Chris Partridge as facilitators. They will hold their first meeting on April 22 in the course of which they will devise a strategy to facilitate the participation of the members of the Province in both the preparation of and in the Chapter itself. Following on that meeting they will send a communication to all the members of the Province. I appeal to your generosity and good will for your support and co-operation for the Chapter to ensure that this will be a Chapter for all the members.

Significance of our Chapter:

A Chapter is a crucial event in the life of a Province. In this fast changing world the issues and concerns of today may be very different from those of six years ago. We too have moved on in age and maturity! Since the Provincial Conference of 2008 members in the various parts of the province have been engaged in a process of discernment and

prioritisation of our ministries. It would be our desire as a Provincial Council that the forthcoming Chapter would deepen this process of reflection on our mission.

A Chapter is a privileged time for reflection, for sharing, a time for addressing together fundamental questions such as who are we; what are we about; how does our charism, spirituality and mission inspire us and resonate with the needs of people of today? How prophetic are we? How credible are we as church and as religious in the light of the fallout from scandals in the Church in different countries of the world? The answers to such questions challenge our very *raison detre*. Yet deep in the heart of each one of us is the yearning to say to the Lord "at your word I will put out the net". On the occasion of the Chapter perhaps we can do so together with renewed conviction, energy and enthusiasm.

Prayer:

Let us invoke the Lord through His Spirit to guide us in all our Chapter deliberations, always mindful of the words of the psalmist: "that unless the Lord builds the house they labour in vain who build it". Let us invite Our Lady of the Sacred Heart to accompany us in the work ahead, that she will lead us "to the source of living water that flows from his heart".

Election of Provincial and Delegates to the Chapter:

Detailed information on the voting for Provincial and Delegates will be forwarded to each of you in August.

Yours fraternally,

**Pat Courtney, msc
Provincial.**