

ZOOM PRE-CAPITULAR MEETINGS, May 26, 27, 28, 2023

Members of the General Council, delegates, substitutes and S. Marian Murcia

ZOOM - ROME TIME: 2:00 to 4:15 p.m.

May 26, 2023, 2:35pm

WORD OF WELCOME...

Dear sisters,

*The love of Christ impels us,
let us move forward in the footsteps of Saint Marie Rivier!*

It is good to be together! Welcome to this Pre-Chapter Assembly! It is good to see one another, to listen to one another, to get to know each other better in the beauty of our hearts and our eyes. We come from the four corners of the world, where each of us bears witness to our vocation and prophetic mission as Sisters of the Presentation of Mary. As Church, we live in synodality, welcoming with dynamism, simplicity and faith, the new pathways that are opening up before us. Let us allow the Spirit of Jesus to transform us, and let us rejoice with creative fidelity, knowing that we are called to offer the salvation of God, Father of Tenderness and Mercy, to our suffering world. Every situation, in our personal and community lives, is a new moment that requires a new light.

We are journeying towards our General Chapter with the confidence, inner strength and heartfelt enthusiasm that come from our encounter with Jesus Christ. We are all familiar with the experience of the disciples of Emmaus: ***were not our hearts burning within us, as he spoke to us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?*** Lk 24:32. The Risen Jesus is always present on our journey. He is there, wherever his disciples are.

The whole Congregation is on a journey, committed in the Church and in the world where light and shadow reign in relationships between people. So much suffering in our world!

Jesus tells us: ***You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world*** Mt 5:13-14. As consecrated women, Sister of the Presentation of Mary, we are called to do something more. ***Enlarge the space of your tent*** Is 54:2.

In our Rule of Life, **C 109**, we read: *Our apostolic zeal knows no boundaries, neither that of race nor of peoples. Missionary ardor must live at the heart of the*

Congregation. As long as there is a corner of the world where Jesus Christ is neither known nor loved, the daughters of the Woman Apostle cannot be at rest

Let us listen to the cries of the Church, of our world and of our Congregation. We sense that something new is emerging. And we know that what will lead us into the future is creativity and dynamism, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

I now propose a moment of silence and reflection. ***This is what the LORD says: Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths ... ask where the good way is, and walk in it,*** Jr 6, 16. I invite each sister to place herself in the presence of God. Let us listen to the cries that come from our land, let us listen to the calls that come from the Holy Spirit, and let us be humble and courageous.

It is with great joy and gratitude, to the Lord and to each of you, that we gather together today. Thank you so much for responding to the call to be present during these very important days for us as a spiritual Family.

We are journeying towards our General Chapter. The aims of these pre-Chapter meetings are to get to know one another better, to enter into the dynamic of discernment, because the whole Chapter is a time of discernment, a profound spiritual experience, the celebration of our unity and communion, an experience of faith lived in love.

Our unity is lived and expressed in the diversity of our ideas and projects. What unites us is **our shared vision**: the eyes of our hearts centered on Jesus Christ. It is He who has called us to the Presentation, and it is He who, day after day, brings us together in the same Spirit.

D 1a) *Fidelity to the spirit of our religious family depends primarily on our personal fidelity to our vocation in docility to the Holy Spirit. It is related to the spiritual quality of our life and the interiority of our observance of the Rule of Life. It also depends on the fidelity of the Congregation to renew itself constantly in the midst of the ever-changing conditions of life. In order to make the necessary adaptations to these changing times and places, in true docility to the Holy Spirit, our history must be marked by a continuous return to the exigencies of the Gospel and the original inspiration of our Institute.*

We are living a privileged moment in the Church, **walking together towards the Synod** that will take place in October of this year. Pope Francis has chosen the theme: ***For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission.***

"Synodality," says Sr. Nadia Coppa, President of the UISG, "is a prophecy for today's world: only unity in Christ gives meaning to the plurality of the members of the body. **From this unity in plurality and with the strength of the Spirit**, the Church is called to serve the Gospel by bearing witness to a new style of relationship."

She continues: "We believe that synodality, which is the essence of the Church and its constitutive reality, is above all an experience of the Spirit. It is a path that is forged through encounter, sincere dialogue, and inner conversion and sharing, and which broadens vision and opens up new horizons of communion".

It is in this dynamism that we are called to prepare and live our General Chapter. With our feet firmly planted in our concrete reality and our eyes fixed on the future, where the Lord Jesus is calling us to give a radical response, one that is bold and filled with evangelical simplicity, to the movements of the Holy Spirit and the signs of the times. Let us not be afraid to dream, as we journey towards the future.

Let us journey, full of trust, with the Virgin Mary. *We look to her as we journey in hope. C 48.*

Saint Marie Rivier walks with us.

She seeks for us and with us the pathways for today and tomorrow.

Let us listen to her! She speaks to us with her motherly love and exigencies.

This is the first General Chapter that we live together since her canonization.

Together, on the pathways of the will of God!

I wish you a good session! Thank you very much!

S. Maria dos Anjos Alves