



Circular
of the
Superior General

7

CONVOCAÇÃO
OF THE
XXXV GENERAL CHAPTER

Manuel José Cortés, SM
XIV Superior General
Society of Mary
(Marianists)

25 March 2017
Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord
Feast of the Marianist Family

CONVOCATION
of the
XXXV GENERAL CHAPTER

Dear Brothers,

With this *Circular*, in accordance with Article 7.26 of the *Rule of Life*, I officially convoke the Thirty-Fifth General Chapter of the Society of Mary, which will take place at the General Administration, Via Latina 22, beginning on the afternoon of Sunday, July 8, 2018.

The *Rule of Life*, in Article 93, reminds us that the “General Chapter, held at least once every six years, is the highest authority of the Society. It determines policies and objectives for the entire Society and elects the Superior General and the members of the General Council. Its purpose is to ensure fidelity to the spirit of our foundation, as well as continuing adaptation to the needs of each age.” It has both legislative and evaluative functions, described in Articles 7.24 and 7.25, which assign duties to all religious and all communities of the Society.

It is, therefore, as always, an event of capital importance for our life and our mission, for which already from this moment onward, we must ask the Spirit to shed light upon, as well as call upon the help and the special accompaniment of Mary.

Theme of the Chapter

Every General Chapter is an opportunity for each member and each community of the Society to evaluate their own life and discern what the Lord wants of us at this moment of our history. Therefore, one must be open to the inspiration of the Spirit by means of the concerns and questions manifested by the brothers.

In this case, by the expressed wishes of the General Leadership Assembly of July 2015, keeping in mind that we find ourselves in the midst of our bicentennial celebration, the whole Society of Mary is evaluating and discerning its life and its mission according to a plan outlined on September 12, 2016. On that date, I wrote a letter, calling upon all brothers and communities to participate in the aforementioned plan and proposing a timetable for its implementation. I concluded by calling for responsible participation, being aware of the importance of the present moment for the future: *we have a very important task ahead, which can bring significant fruit to our life and our Marianist mission for the future. Everything depends on the seriousness, the enthusiasm and the commitment that we, each and every one of us, devote to this task. Let us help each other. And, above all, let us ask for the help of the Spirit and the accompaniment of Mary. Collecting the witness of the two hundred years of history of the Company, let us see ourselves as “other Chaminades,” heirs of his courage and his commitment to the gospel.*

I know that throughout the world, we are working in this direction. We look forward to the arrival of the conclusive proposals for this task by June 30 of this year. These proposals, by means of the *Lineamenta*, will inspire the reflection at the next General Chapter and motivate its decisions.

Preparatory Commission

Later, and after knowing the result of the elections to the Chapter, I will proceed to the appointment of the Preparatory Commission of the same, following the norms established in *Rule of Life*, Article 7.27. Its function, as indicated in the same article, will be " to prepare for the Chapter, to examine propositions received from members of the Society, and to make the necessary material arrangements to allow for the proper functioning of the Chapter."

Once constituted, the Commission take up the *Lineamenta* elements gathered from the different Units and prepare, in agreement with the Chapter members, the agenda of the Chapter. Likewise, it will be in charge of giving the pertinent instructions on the sending of the motions that the brothers consider opportune, as well as the other practical indications necessary.

Composition of the Chapter

The composition of the Chapter is determined by the *Rule of Life*, Articles 7.30-7.35. According to the criteria established therein, the distribution of Chapter members in the 2018 General Chapter will be as follows:

UNITS / # of members	CAPITULANTS			
	By Right	Elected		
		Religious Priests	Lay Religious	TOTAL
Argentina / 13				1
Canada / 18				1
Chile / 22				1
Colombia-Ecuador / 29				1
Ivory Coast / 35				1
Eastern Africa / 53		1	1	2
Spain / 188	2	1	1	4
France / 91		1	1	2
India / 88		1	1	2

Italy / 44				1
Japan / 32				1
Korea / 24				1
Meribah / 39				1
Austria-Germany / 17				1
Peru / 15				1
Togo / 38				1
USA / 285	2	2	2	6
General Council	4			4
T.C. of Switzerland (observer)				(1)
TOTAL (1041)				33

In each unit, elections may be conducted from the moment this *Circular* is received, following what has been established in Articles 96 and 7.35 of the *Rule of Life*.

The final results are to be communicated to the Secretary General **before April 30 of this year**.

With this convocation, we fully enter into the preparation period for the next General Chapter. I invite you to intensify your prayer for the fruit of its works, using the prayer for the bicentennial for this intention. May the Lord inspire us, and Mary help us to renew our fidelity to the Charism with which and for which we were founded.

Manuel J. Cortés, SM
Superior General

In Rome, March 25, 2017
Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord

