



DIARY OF THE CHAPTER

32nd General Chapter of the Augustinians of the Assumption
Rome, May 2 to 23, 2011

Hope at a time of crisis

The Chapter of 2011 actualized the three great orientations of 2005 :
an efficient manner of launching the apostolic dynamism of our Congregation

Editorial

Trust

*"I must love this world.
I must evangelize it."*

E. d'Alzon

In the context of crisis which affects our ways of thinking and living, our resources, and our hope, the General Chapter reaffirms its trust in the future that God gives to the world, to the Church, to religious life, and to the Assumption family. It is to this future that our religious life seeks to give witness, particularly among younger people who are searching for meaning in their lives. For this reason, the three themes from the Chapter of 2005 - "Men of communion, announcing the faith, in solidarity with the poor" - still seem relevant for today and able to provide guidelines for our personal life and for our communities, as well as for the mission. This "trilogy" sums up the way in which we want to follow Christ in living our religious consecration, in the spirit of Saint Augustine and following the insights of Father d'Alzon, as witness of the hope for which the world longs.

To be men of faith means freely welcoming the gift of God and experiencing that encounter with Christ without which our life collapses in ruins, for only in him will we find salvation.

To be men of communion means fighting against the spirit of the one who divides and working for the coming of a kingdom of justice and peace, within us and around us. It means working for the unity of Christians and for dialogue among peoples of different religions.

To be in solidarity with the poor making it clear that those who are poor in goods and in spirit have a special place in the Kingdom of heaven, the land of the Beatitudes. It means imitating Christ by making oneself a servant, with a special love for the poor.

This trilogy invites each one of us to grow as a disciple of Christ, as a brother living in community, and as an apostle at the service of the Kingdom. It is a call addressed to every member of the body that we constitute, to live a religious life that is more authentic, more radical.

*(from the Chapter's document
« Fundamental Orientations »)*



A "new configuration": with changing borders

The "Diary of the Chapter" has already presented to possibilities for the new territorial organization of the Congregation and the method put in place to implement them. (See edition no 4, May 18) Here are the main results:

The only immediate change is for the **creation of the Province of Europe** formed of the actual Provinces of Spain, North Europe and France. The change will take place progressively: By September 30, 2014, the latest, the new Province will have all its institutions and powers in place. In the meantime, the former Provinces maintain their Provincials and Counsels. A Counsel, composed of the Provincials of Europe and one religious from each Province, will be charged with advancing the process: elaborating orientations and common statutes, preparing a constitutive Provincial Chapter, etc.

The reorganization of the rest of the Assumption will evolve in view of a continental configuration. Here

are the major recommendations for each.

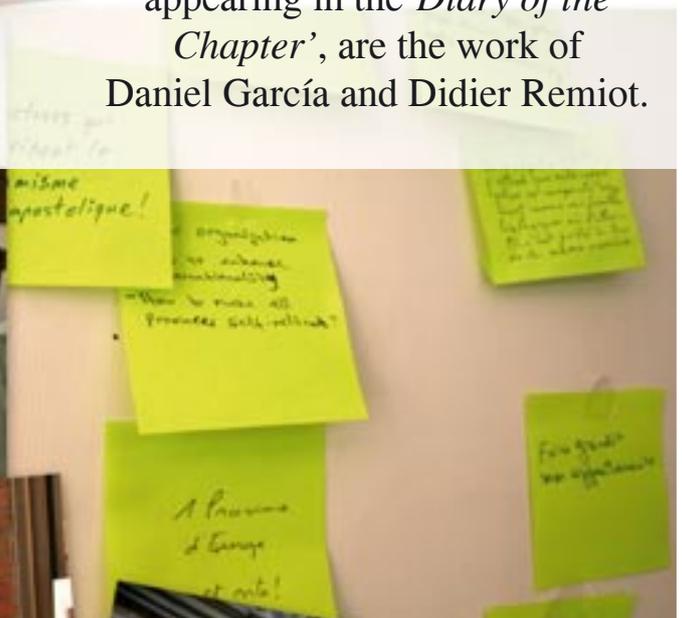
For Africa and Madagascar: make full use of existing areas of collaboration (foundations, formation, sessions and retreats); taking into account economic, cultural and linguistic disparities, create new Vice-Provinces and Regions, include West Africa in this process. **For North America:** elaborate new statutes for the Province and the regions in order to favour greater unity; associate the Philippines in the process of the unification of Asia;

For South America: Evaluate recent common realisations; organize gatherings for the young religious, elaborate common policies (formation, education, parish ministry); encourage training in both languages.

For Asia: The Superior General will name a special delegate to provide support in the process; cooperation and collaboration in common projects; better awareness of an Asian Assumption.

Souvenir Album of the Chapter

These photos, like all those appearing in the *'Diary of the Chapter'*, are the work of Daniel García and Didier Remiot.





Today's Program

Morning
 Plenary Assembly:
 - 1st examination: Messages
 - 2nd examination: Territorial organization; Postulation; Statute Rule of Life (Lay)
 - 3rd examination: Fundamental Orientations; Mobilizing Works; Finances; Formation; Youth and vocation; Languages.

Afternoon
 Plenary Assembly:
 - Documents
 - Mass and meeting with Archbishop Joao Braz de Aviz (Brazilian, new prefect of the Congregation for institutes of consecrated life)

My Voice at the Chapter



What do we expect from this Chapter? It would be wise to say: Let's wait for the end. When one has seven Chapters under his belt, one would think that he has seen

it all. But we know that there can be surprises as each chapter runs its course. We can already taste some mature fruits from this one. I'm thinking of the time to celebrate the elections or the fruits of silence, prayer, discernment and words also. Or again the fruits of an authentic brotherhood, of a place for speaking freely so we get to know and understand one another better.

But the question is this: and what happens after? We will have a few texts, a new governing body, Chapter members enriched by the experience of this great fraternal community. Then I begin to dream, for myself and for the others, to be able to take seriously once more and maybe a little better that Christ is at the center. I imagine communities that open their doors to lay people, celebrate with them and invent ways to serve our societies and the Church. I do not despair that the Provinces, on all the continents, will find new ways to collaborate and so bring about renewal. But the fruit of the new community configuration will surely take time to come to full maturity and be edible...and digestible...

Finally, this Chapter that spoke often of the financial crisis, opens the door wide for solidarity at all levels. Perhaps the word "body" to refer to the Assumption will become more familiar to us.

**Fr. Pierre-Emmanuel Rospide
(Assistant Provincial-France)**

This is the first Chapter that I attend. So even if I am supposed to be able to lend a hand, I am still just discovering this great structure. And besides, it is the supreme structure for a religious family.

At the start of the Chapter, Fr. Richard quoted Pope Benedict saying that to be Christian is to be fully human. And I continue by telling myself that to be an Assumptionist religious, is to be fully Christian.

This is a chapter of elections, an implementation chapter, a chapter of profound study, a reorganization chapter There is much to do! The election of the new general government, tangibly young and dynamic, fills me with hope.

May the chapter bring renewed color to the slight alterations that we have made. May it put a new tint to the remix of the priorities which we have given ourselves since 2005.

May each religious, each province find and appropriate herein a truly vital text. May each find a thrust for the blossoming of his vocation: at the service of God and at the service of man!

Fr. Lucien Robia (Ejeda - Madagascar)



This is the first time I participate in a general chapter. It took me some time to enter the chapter proceedings and to sense that I was a full member. I am indebted to the fraternity that has prevailed. My preoccupations! The evaluation of the 2005 orientations shows that the Assumption still has something to do in the world. But current reality invites us to invent new strategies for the mission and the Chapter theme challenges us.

As we pursue what remains to be done from 2005, I expect a practical implementation of the orientations for the restructuring of the Congregation. I await that momentous occasion when we will adopt clear orientations in favor of the "new" community organization. I have set my heart on this because I think it will promote communion and will give a new vitality to the Congregation. I sense that our family, in its apostolic dimension, strongly needs "communion and interdependence".

I dream of the day when we will find anew the mobility that characterized the Congregation at its outset: in the face of the challenges of our world, we very badly need the apostolic dynamism that marked the years of the great missions of Eastern Europe, of America, of Africa, etc. I also expect the Chapter to seriously consider the mobilizing works, as a step in the dynamism of the body, without forgetting the obligatory avenues: finances, formation, youth and vocations, the Alliance, etc. May the Holy Spirit lead us to the real choices!

Fr. Ephrem Kasereka Kapitula (Butembo, DR-Congo - Africa)

