

PRESENTATION

We initiated the preparation of the 18th general chapter nearly three years ago. We had outlined that the objective of this general chapter would be to foster a process of spiritual rekindling, bringing us back to the Word of God as the source of our life, vocation, mission and our religious missionary commitment. Thus, the aim of this chapter is the renewal of oneself, community life and mission. To renew oneself/community and provinces/regions and missions (PRM), we need to see where we stand or where we are at present; to do that it is useful to look back to the previous general chapters.

The 15th general chapter dwelled on the mission commitment to the four dialogue partners – the *ad extra* aspects; and 16th general chapter guided us towards our self-understanding in five important elements of our life together – the *ad intra* aspects. In the 17th general chapter, we focused on our intercultural life and mission leading us to formulate Congregational Directions which are to give us orientations, ways and targets of our missionary life and activities. Every PRM was asked to choose its priorities among the *ad extra* Congregational Directions according to their local contexts and work on their missionary activities, and to draw up a concrete plan. Throughout the last six years, we have been concentrating on these Congregational Direc-

tions, giving more stress to the chosen priorities of *ad extra* and the five *ad intra* aspects, and finding ways our Society could be more relevant and effective in the contemporary world. During these years, every PRM continued its missionary activities with this focus along with what they have been doing traditionally, but the stress was on living and doing everything in the light of the challenging and nourishing dimension of interculturality.

We have sailed through safely, especially keeping our intercultural life and mission with much more intensity and witness value; thus other congregations are looking towards our growth in intercultural life and mission. That is leading us to discern: where are we now and what does God want us to do now? To discern where we are now, we need to go to our roots – the love of God, the Word of God, the Founders' lives, the Society's charism, etc. To discern what God want us to do now leads to more spiritual renewal and commitment. In this renewal process, we are challenged to transform ourselves, to become a “new person”, to change our attitudes and habits, etc. Transformation needs to be seen, affects our way of life and mission and directs us to be more focused on contemporary concerns. Transformation involves risks, but produces more fruits; the results are to res-

pond to the people's needs. Thus, the theme of the 18th general chapter is: "The Love of Christ Impels us" (2 Cor 5:14): Rooted in the Word, Committed to His Mission".

Every PRM superior has a responsibility to give a report to the general chapter of the last six years' activities. This task of reporting was first channeled through the book entitled *SVD Mission* in 2000; from then on, it has become a custom to publish this book before every general chapter, now popularly known as the "Yellow Book", because of the standardized color of the book published both in English and Spanish.

Basic questions were sent to all the PRMs regarding their present state of life and activities, especially focusing on the chosen priorities among the Congregational Directions *ad extra* of the last general chapter, the action plan and how they had implemented them. Similarly, what steps they had taken to deepen the *ad intra* life based on the Congregational Directions. The PRMs sent their reports to the generalate in recent times giving various aspects and activities. The distinctiveness of these reports is that they contain the implementation of Congregational Directions.

Being aware of the importance of collaboration in mission with others, some questions were asked regarding collaboration with other religious congregations, the local church and the laity. Lay partners play a vital role in our mission and many lay people share our charisms and it is our duty to welcome the lay partners to share our

mission. This will enrich our Society and the Church at large. The last general chapter had given importance to form lay associations; the reports contain this important element too by various PRMs.

In this *SVD Mission 2018*, every PRM has a social setting, which is not exhaustive; here it is largely pertaining to the local situation where the Society is present. Similarly, the ecclesial setting is also not exhaustive; mostly it delineates the Society's activities or presence in a local situation. Today there are numerous sources/websites available to get more detailed statistics and information on these aspects. For the statistics of the PRM on the ministries and the number of personnel, we take the statistics as of 1st January 2018. The average age is of all final vowed members in a PRM, and the number of nationalities is of all the members in the PRM. Mostly, the format of each report is the same; some variations are found in some PRMs due to their presentation of the report.

The PRMs sent their report according to the Report Guide that was sent in July 2016. The editorial team was faithful to the report that was submitted, but also took liberty in editing the texts according to the format that is presented in this book. Vision-Mission Statements that came from various provinces were in various forms, so the editorial team edited them to suit a uniform presentation. All these reports were sent to all the PRM superiors for their review and correction, and that gave more clarity and helped them to update the statistics and the reports.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the PRM superiors for sending these reports. They help us to know where you are now and they also give you a clear understanding of your PRM situation and how you would like to go forward. Probably, how you would like to go forward could be discerned during the 18th general chapter together with others and thereafter in your PRM together with the confreres, lay partners and people.

We express our thanks to the editorial team, Lazar T. Stanislaus, Mark Weber and Crescente de Rivera (Sonny) for their dedicated work. We thank also Stanley Uroda and Nicolas Jose Espinosa for who had meticulously read through all the manuscripts and carefully proofread them

and Sandy Ashadi for layout. This project could be completed with the immense help of our translators, thus we are able to publish them in English and Spanish, we express our gratitude to the following confreres: Pedro de Dios Martín, Gustavo Aguilera, Carlos Ferrada Montero, Roberto Flores, Marcelo Cattáneo, Navil 'Silva, Walt Miller, Thomas Gerard Umbras, and Maria Jeevaraj Arulandu.

This book is available only in the electronic format. We believe that this book is not just a report, but a guide to our confreres, especially to our formandi.

Wishing God's blessings on all our confreres, SVD Lay Partners, and all people.

Fraternally in the Divine Word,
Heinz Kulüke SVD and Leadership Team