

COMMUNITY GUIDING REFLECTIONS ON THE XIX GENERAL CHAPTER STATEMENT



Part 1 Our Personal Wounds Guide 4 Holistic Healing

“We are bearers of light and at the same time seekers of the light of Christ shining in people, cultures, and all creation where we work.”

(Faithful to the Word 6, n. 33)

“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (Jn 10:10)

The mission of Jesus is not only to save us from sin but to restore us to wholeness. Healing, in the biblical sense, is not limited to curing sickness—it is about becoming fully alive in body, mind, soul, relationships, and spirit. The early Church Fathers called this *salus*—salvation as healing.

As missionaries and disciples, we are invited to experience Christ’s healing in our own lives and to become instruments of healing for others and for creation. This journey of *Holistic Healing* unfolds in five movements:

1. Restored to Wholeness in Christ – Healing the whole person.
2. Healing of Relationships – Reconciling with one another in love.
3. Healing of Memory – Transforming past wounds into hope.
4. Wounded Yet Healing with Christ – Embracing weakness as a source of grace.
5. Healing of Creation – Living in harmony with our common home.

May these reflections guide us to encounter Christ, the true healer, and to carry His mission of healing into a wounded world.

RESTORED TO WHOLENESS IN CHRIST

“The light of Christ in us is the expression of the love of God poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5). This is our anchor of hope in the turbulent moments of the changing scenes of life.” (Faithful to the Word 6, n. 21)

“Jesus said to him, ‘Rise, take up your mat, and walk.’ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.” (Jn 5:8-9)

Healing in the Bible is never just about the physical body. When Jesus heals, He restores the whole person—body, mind, soul, and spirit. At the pool of Bethesda, Jesus does not only give the man the ability to walk again. He restores his dignity, his freedom, and his relationship with God. The man is no longer a passive sufferer—he is empowered to reclaim his life and live fully.

Saint Paul reminds us that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 6:19). Every aspect of who we are—our emotions, our relationships, our spirit—is sacred. Holistic healing means recognizing that our wounds are never isolated. If we neglect one part of our being, it affects the others. Jesus calls us to wholeness, to rise from our brokenness, and to walk in the fullness of life.



REFLECTION

1. Where in my life do I most need to hear Jesus' words: "Rise, take up your mat, and walk"?
2. How can I care for myself as a whole person—body, mind, soul, and spirit?
3. In what ways can I bring Christ's healing presence to others in my mission?

HEALING OF RELATIONSHIPS

"Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal 6:2)

Relationships are at the heart of our humanity. Yet, they are also the source of some of our deepest wounds. Words spoken in anger, betrayals, and misunderstandings can leave scars more painful than any physical injury. Jesus came to reconcile us—to heal the brokenness in our relationships with one another and with God.

Holistic healing is never complete if it does not include reconciliation. Forgiveness does not mean forgetting the hurt, but it means choosing to let love and mercy be stronger than resentment. To bear one another's burdens is to carry one another with patience and compassion. Christ invites us to build relationships that restore, encourage, and lead us to God.



REFLECTION

1. Who in my life needs reconciliation and forgiveness?
2. Do I carry grudges that prevent me from healing?
3. How can I foster relationships that are life-giving and rooted in Christ?

HEALING OF MEMORY

"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing!" (Is 43:18–19)



Our memories carry both blessings and burdens. Many people are held back by past wounds, failures, or regrets that continue to shape their present life. Healing of memory does not mean erasing the past. It means allowing God to transform painful experiences into sources of wisdom, empathy, and compassion.

When we bring our memories into the light of Christ, He gives them new meaning. The cross, once a symbol of shame and suffering, became the source of salvation. In the same way, our wounds can become channels of grace if we surrender them to God. Healing of memory allows us to move forward with freedom and hope.



REFLECTION

1. What past wounds continue to shape my present life?
2. Am I open to letting God transform my painful memories into blessings for others?
3. How can I accompany others who are burdened by the past?

WOUNDED YET HEALING WITH CHRIST

“Aware of our shadows in the bright light of truth, we dialogue with one another with a heart of mercy. We show the face of mercy which is ‘the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life.’” (Misericordiae Vultus, 2) (Faithful to the Word 6, n.33)

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Cor 12:9)

Holistic healing is not a new idea in the Christian tradition. The early Church Fathers often described *salus* (salvation) as healing—a restoration to wholeness. St. Irenaeus beautifully captured this when he said, “*The glory of God is the human person fully alive.*” To be fully alive requires the integration of body, soul, and spirit in communion with God and with others.

Henri Nouwen, in his classic *The Wounded Healer*, reminds us that ministry is not about hiding our frailty but about allowing God’s grace to work through it. Our deepest connections with others happen not in strength, but in shared vulnerability. As fellow wounded pilgrims, we do not minister from a distance but from within the same broken world, carrying each other in compassion and hope.



Psychology echoes this truth. Carl Jung observed that true healing requires bringing our darkness into consciousness, while Richard Rohr warns that untransformed pain will inevitably be passed on to others. Holistic healing, therefore, is not avoidance but courageous integration—allowing Christ to transform our wounds so that they become sources of compassion, communion, and mission.

REFLECTION

1. How do I understand my own woundedness in light of God’s healing grace?
2. Do I see my weaknesses as obstacles, or as opportunities for God’s power to shine through?
3. How can I accompany others not as a “distant professional” but as a vulnerable companion in Christ?
4. What unhealed pain in my life still needs to be transformed, so it is not transmitted to others?

HEALING OF CREATION

“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God...We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now” (Rom 8:19, 22)

Healing is not only personal, it is also cosmic. Creation itself suffers because of human greed, neglect, and exploitation. Forests are destroyed, rivers polluted, and the earth cries out under the weight of injustice. The mission of Christ calls us to be stewards of creation, healers of our common home.

Holistic healing includes ecological conversion. To live in wholeness means to live in harmony—with God, with ourselves, with others, and with creation. Every choice we make—what we consume, how we use resources, how we care for the environment—becomes part of the healing or the wounding of creation. Christ invites us to be instruments of healing not only for people but also for the earth.



REFLECTION

1. How do my daily choices affect the integrity of creation?
2. In what ways do I contribute to ecological harm—or ecological healing?
3. How can I integrate care for creation into my mission and spirituality?



CONCLUSION

As Divine Word Missionaries, we are reminded that the call to mission is inseparable from the call to healing. The reflections on holistic healing show us that to proclaim the Gospel is to restore life in all its dimensions—personal, relational, historical, spiritual, and ecological. Our wounds, too, become part of the mission when we allow God’s grace to transform them into channels of compassion. As St. Arnold Janssen taught, we are sent not as perfect healers, but as wounded servants who let Christ’s power be revealed through our weakness. In every community and culture where the SVD is present, we are invited to embody this healing presence—lifting up the broken, reconciling relationships, transforming painful memories into hope, and caring for creation as part of our missionary witness.

In the Jubilee Year 2025, as we celebrate 150 years of our Society, may these reflections renew our missionary identity as healers in a wounded world. Each SVD confrere, whether in parish, formation house, media apostolate, or mission frontiers, is called to witness that “the glory of God is the human person fully alive.” (St. Irenaeus). Let us walk together as wounded yet healing missionaries, restoring dignity where it is lost, sowing seeds of reconciliation where there is division, and building communion with creation where it is wounded. In this way, we continue the mission of Jesus who came that all may have life, and have it abundantly (Jn 10:10).

CLOSING PRAYER PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS AND HEALING

Lord Jesus,
You are the Healer of body, mind, and spirit.
You restore dignity to the broken, freedom
to the burdened,
and hope to those weighed down by the
past.

Heal our relationships with one another,
that forgiveness and compassion may
overcome resentment.
Heal our memories, transforming wounds
into wisdom.
Heal our wounded hearts, teaching us to
find Your strength in our weakness.
And heal creation itself, groaning under the
weight of human neglect.

Make us, Lord, wounded healers in Your
name—
companions to the suffering,
servants of reconciliation,
and stewards of Your creation.

Grant that, by Your grace,
we may live fully in communion with You and
with one another,
and so give glory to the Father, Son, and Holy
Spirit,
forever and ever. Amen.



“Your Light Must Shine” Mt 5: 16

