



COMMUNITY GUIDING REFLECTIONS ON THE XIX GENERAL CHAPTER STATEMENT

Introduction to the Guiding Reflections

Our XIX General Chapter came out with a Final Statement worthy of our continuous reflection and prayer. We are indeed immersed in a wounded world thirsty of reconciliation, healing and liberation. We face this reality in our day-to-day apostolic contact with people, living in different situations, many times looking at us for guidance and encouragement. What is more striking is that we are not freed from these pains, but, as our Chapter Statement says, we are ‘wounded healers’, we also carry our own wounds, we also thirst for healing.

After the closing of the SVD Jubilee Year, the four Generalate Characteristic Dimensions’ coordinators thought of coming up with a simple subsidy to continue reflecting and deepening on the Chapter’s Statement. These are ‘GUIDING REFLECTIONS’, which aim at motivating and accompanying our moments of community sharing. We offer this as material to be used on different occasions and with the most appropriate methodology that can fit in with your own context.

Following the main outline of the Chapter’s Statement, we have divided these Guiding Reflections into three parts. The First Part will deal with Our Personal Wounds. The Second Part will reflect on the suggesting image of the Light of Christ and our commitment to shine in His light. The Third Part will be dedicated to our Faithful and Creative Discipleship founded on God’s fidelity and the guidance of the Spirit. Thus, the plan:

- 2025 - wounded world
- 2026 - in the light of the Word
- 2027 - faithful and creative disciples

As we are very much aware of, proposals or subsidies like this count ahead of time with the channeling push of the local leadership team and all those who share the responsibility of leading a community. Our Characteristic Dimensions’ coordinators are also encouraged to volunteer as facilitators. It will add richness if we can even share these guides with our Lay Partners.

Tips for the Facilitator:

- This material is available on our SVD Web site, ready to be downloaded as a PDF, on our mobiles or, if needed, to be printed out and distributed among the community/group members.
- A personal reading and reflection before the actual gathering might help to deepen our sharing.
- These 'guides' can be complemented or adapted with other materials according to the proper context.
- A narrator among the community members could summarize the main points of the sharing to document the activity and to make this summary available for our media department. A summary means, among other things, avoiding direct personal references.
- When sharing with our Lay Partners, we pay special attention to sensible aspects, emphasizing a respectful and comprehensible listening, without any comment or outspoken interpretations.

Part I: Our Personal Wounds

Introduction

The different PRMs' contributions to the last General Chapter preparatory communal reflections on our personal and common woundedness is such a rich material that could not be fully tackled during the sessions of the Chapter itself. Though we have named our wounds in the Chapter's Final Statement, we realized how difficult it is for us to openly talk about them. None of us wishes to be exposed, especially in a space that does not promise acceptance, understanding or trust. However, in fraternal sharing, we rediscover, to greater or lesser amazement, that we have many wounds in common and that locking ourselves in our own world is akin to suffering the same thorn that persistently touches the wound.

The following 'Guiding Reflections' does not mean either to exhaust the topic, nor to be invasive in any given situation. The main purpose is to allow ourselves to be heard, to hear and to keep walking together. Listening and be listened is already a way of animating and encouraging each other in our different missionary services.

The itinerary of the first four subsidies will focus on our personal/communal wounds. By using key verbs, we will anchor our reflections on some citations of the Statement and the Word of God. Some tips are also offered to widen the spectrum of our own personal and communal healing process.