

THE CAMILLIAN PROJECT
TOWARDS A FAITHFUL AND CREATIVE LIFE
Challenges and Opportunities

Foreword

A Brief History of a Long Journey

Three years ago our Order began a process of reflection and of discernment in which individual religious, Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Delegations were invited to take part.

Under the heading ‘The Europe Project’, a detailed *questionnaire* was sent out the whole Order on an ‘interior map’ and an ‘exterior map’. This questionnaire sought, on the one hand, to throw light on the fundamental elements of Camillian consecrated life (evangelical counsels, spiritual life, fraternal communion, formation, ministry, and prospects for the future); and, on the other, the intention was to have the most realistic vision possible of the ages of people in the Order and the prospects for the future.

The committee, appointed by the General Council, drew up a summary of the answers that had been received from the various parts of the Order. On the basis of these answers it drew up the present programme which was first approved by the Major Superiors who met at Lima in the month of October, 2011.

This programme, with suitable modifications made to it, was carefully examined at a meeting of the Major Superiors which was held in Montinello (Italy) in the month of May 2012.

This text, which was approved by the fifty-seventh General Chapter of May 2013, is now offered to all our religious brothers of the Order.

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Challenges and Opportunities

*‘We have put our faith in love’ (1 Jn 4:16)
and, moved by the Holy Spirit,
we embrace the charism of the Order
and commit ourselves solely to lives
dedicated to God and the merciful Jesus Christ,
serving the sick in chastity, poverty and obedience’ (C, n. 11)*

1. Motivations, Objectives, Methodological Recommendations

1.1. A critical and loving look at reality

In our globalised world, despite the great differences, consecrated life is called upon by strong questions and issues which are often similar or shared in all the continents of the world. They are, rightly, true signs of the times, that is to say *sufficiently generalised*, positive and negative, phenomena which call for true discernment:

- The obscuring or the crisis of essential values.
- A loss or crisis of the meaning of consecrated life.
- Falling into relativism, into individualism.
- Mediocrity and pessimism.
- A thirst and arduous search for renewal, above all of a spiritual character.
- The urgent need to respond to the challenges of a time marked by epochal changes.
- The wish, shared by very many, to live ministry with passion and creativity.
- A lack of vocational perseverance.
- An absence or diminution of vocations.
- Uncertainties about the future and its management
- The need to set in motion processes of restructuring and of inter-Provincial cooperation.

This look, animated by faith (a believing vision of reality) and hope, invites us to engage in a discernment that must be translated into action, into operational approaches, into changes, of a deep character as well, and into conversion and interior revitalisation.

For this reason the so-named ‘Europe Project’ became the ‘*Camillian Project*’ shared in by the whole of the Order: a choral movement guided by the Spirit who invites us every day to ‘*start afresh from the merciful Christ*’, and which requires the responsible commitment of each individual religious.

1.2. Objectives: revitalisation and restructuring

The ‘Camillian Project’ was conceived of, and developed, in order to facilitate a journey on two inseparable rails. Ever since the beginning of the process, these have been formulated in the following way:

- *Interior revitalisation*, through a personal and community commitment to spiritual discernment whose aim and horizons are:
 - exploring and savouring the essential values of Camillian consecrated life;
 - retrieving the meaning of the gospel radicality handed down by the Founder.
 - proposing anew with courage and an enterprising spirit his creativity and holiness;
 - motivating perseverance in the pathway of holiness, promoting a new culture of dynamic faithfulness;
 - renewing human and professional skills in order to effect an implementation of ministry that is adapted to new situations;
 - deepening ecclesial communion and openness to lay people;
 - intensifying and renewing pastoral care as regards vocations...

And all of this supported by an intimate certainty of the centrality to be given to spiritual life, lived in a healthier fraternal life, on which to base every achievement of the present and the future.

- *Restructuring or reorganisation through a process that leads to:*
 - Reviewing the organisational structures of the Order;
 - fostering a change in mentality which will make possible and effective necessary cooperation between the different parts of the Order;
 - optimising the resources of the Order by unifying or centralising services, above all in the field of formation;
 - unifying, amalgamating and incorporating Provinces, Vice-Provinces or Delegations;
 - looking for new forms of leadership of the Order, etc.

1.3. Methodological recommendations: how to read and share the project

The Camillian project, in accord with what has been said hitherto, is divided/distributed into two parts.

The *first* concerns interior revitalisation. It thus takes into consideration the central axes of Camillian consecrated life, its founding and fundamental cores or elements. Following a certain theological logic, they are enunciated or distributed in the following order:

2.1. Called: *fraternal life*

2.2. Spiritual: *the personal relationship with God*

2.3. Consecrated: *the evangelical counsels*

2.4. Formed: *prepared for radicality*

2.5. Sent: *the ministry of service.*

The same methodology of discernment is proposed for each of these headings. After a brief introduction, *operational recommendations* are suggested which have a dual value or intention: to make reflection and discernment fall on the concrete and also to try to generate answers to be implemented in the process of renewal.

The *second*, under the indicative title '*Open: a Future of Hope*', proposes for the discernment of the Order the various 'moments' involved in the process of restructuring and reorganisation, which requires first of all a change in mentality and a profound renewal of understanding of the Order as a body whose life depends on openness animated by hope.

2. First Part: *Towards Revitalisation and Interior Renewal*

We Camillians are the sons and heirs of a convert who lived out and proposed following the merciful Christ under the sign of *radicality*. Our vocation to consecrated life is a freely-given gift of God that involves us in all the dimensions of our being. We thus perceive a profound need for conversion, for holiness (cf. *VC*, n. 35), for unconditional dedication to the Kingdom of God, for forgoing ourselves so as to live totally for the Lord, so that God is everything in everyone (1Cor 15:28).

Following our history we recover awareness of our typical form of life which is achieved in a specific service of a community of fathers and brothers who were already seen at the beginning by the Founder as being religious with equal dignity and the same task (*C*, nn. 43, 90).

Called to behold and to bear witness to the transfigured face of Christ, we Camillian religious are also called to a *transfigured existence* which finds in creative faithfulness to the charism of mercy towards the sick, the spirit and the passion so that 'we do not bury the very valuable talent that our Lord has placed in our hands because we achieve holiness during our lives and then in eternal glory' (Testamentary Letter of St. Camillus).

Committed to responding generously to the gift of God, we interact with the fundamental elements of our Camillian consecrated lives.

2.1. *Called: fraternal life*

The community dimension of our Camillian life project is very visible in our Constitution:

- We are and we become Camillians in the Order and in membership of a community (*C*, n. 29).

- By our profession we give ourselves with our whole hearts to the community and to the Order (*C*, n. 29)

- Everything (evangelical counsels, ministry, spiritual life) is referred to the community and lived within it.

- For us, as well, vocation is a *convocation* to live with others who are called to the same life project (VFC, n. 44).

As a consequence, each religious, with his own personal talents and his never-to-be human and spiritual individuality, is called to be a fellow participant in the full achievement of fraternal life, which finds its original and dynamic centre in the mystery of Christ (C, n. 16).

In the experience of common life, each religious commits himself to making his vocational choice fruitful, maturing his charismatic and ministerial identity in works of mercy for the sick.

In order to live with greater transparency the synergy between vocation, fraternity and ministry, a clear distinction should be made – without a separation – between community lived as communion of love with a view to renewed fraternity (*community of life*) and community lived in its functional dimension as shared ministry (*team work*).

Operational recommendations

The Camillian community is at one and the same time a spiritual and human reality. It exists to the extent that, generated and called forth by the Spirit (VFC, n. 8), those gathered together within it:

- have chosen to live together and are suited to common life;
- provoke and recreate every day the event of community;
- support the spiritual and human ‘laws’ (needs) of living together;
- have shared points of reference at the level of life, spirit and ministry;
- renew and cultivate a pleasing sense of membership.

As a consequence, personal and community discernment, to these ends, could have present, and make operational, the following points:

- use suitable times (retreats, spiritual exercises, courses...) to deepen fraternal life and the value of community;
- promote, therefore, community reflection and discernment, and cooperation between our religious brothers, communities and Provinces (C, n. 58);
- appreciation of the instrument of the ‘*community project*’, realistically organised, shared communally, faithfully lived, and honestly assessed;
- live the ‘*house of the community*’ with a renewed sense of belonging, according to a spirit of sharing and participation;
- give *primacy to community/fraternity* in the taking on of the new apostolate on which ministerial projects are grafted (a new ministry either depends on a constituted community or envisages a new community);
- invite the communities to *open themselves to religious with their own charisms*, bearing in mind community discernment as regards the creation of

new bodies (associations, movements, foundations....) and in relation to those that already exist, in the search for ways to achieve possible integration into the projects of the Provinces and the Order.

- In order to sensitise in relation to, and possibly overcome, situations of vocational or ministerial crisis, the Superiors should accompany religious brothers in *taking advantage of specialised internal and external help*.

2.2. Spiritual – the personal relationship with God

Spiritual life, to be living and faithful, must involve a religious at the roots and the totality of his life. This is an experience of God, of a process that penetrates all of the expressions of consecrated life: charism, consecration, fraternity, prayer, ministry, formation and the wish for renewal.

Understood in this way, in spiritual life the question becomes central of the *meaning and the values* on which one bases and then involves one's life. Are they able to found, signify and sustain the growth of our Camillian vocation?

The cardinal element of consecrated life, the foundation of every other existential and religious dimension, is to have, nurture and cultivate a spiritual life 'according to the Spirit' which allows a permanent 'rebirth from on High' (Jn 3:4) in the renewed identity of sons in the Son.

Operational recommendations

In order to base our vocational response strongly on the 'rock', certain instruments are required:

- *Spiritual discernment* experienced in dialogue with a spiritual director, nourished by readings and by mediation, with apex moments such as spiritual exercises and retreats;
- *fraternal correction* experienced evangelically in the spirit of a revision of one's life;
- faithfulness to the life of prayer, which is necessarily supported not by an intimistic and self-referential spirituality but by inserting it into shared *communal prayer*;
- *relational Camillian spirituality* at the side of the suffering;
- the personalisation of, and personalisation in, Camillian spirituality;¹
- the promotion within the Order of the study, the diagnosis and the treatment of spiritual, anthropological and ethical illnesses.

2.3. Consecrated – the evangelical counsels

¹ Between the two extremes, individualism (exaggeration of the self) and massification (elimination of the self), which both cause dehumanisation and spiritual illnesses, the balance lies in the 'personalisation' of spirituality, when it is lived in the form most suited to one's own life (cf. Kees Waaijman, *Spirituality, Forms, Foundations, Methods*, Peeters, 2002) and in spirituality, that is to say self-knowledge in order to fructify the spiritual talents received.

In trying to understand the sensibility expressed by our religious brothers in the answers to the questionnaire, without diminishing the depth of other evangelical counsels, attention is focused on poverty, which perhaps more than the others points in an immediate way (in lifestyle, behaviour, daily habits) to that radicality that bears witness to religious life from which, at times, there has been a very marked distancing.

Our religious consecration, that is to say following the merciful life, is a following that implies of necessity *being-like-him*, and not only doing what he did. This is a consecration in community which, if lived in truth, makes us radical in our choices, essential in lifestyles and thus as seductive and attractive as the first apostolic community (Acts 2:42-45), showing in a concrete way that we have chosen God as the highest good and cultivated with passion ‘the same feelings as Jesus Christ’ (Phil. 2:5), which were inseparably and without any mediation *passion-for-God and passion-for-man*.

A spiritual discernment which seeks to be translated into action and coherent commitments should be engaged in with wisdom and truth, in transparency and freedom, seeking above all else to understand and savour the gift of God, that we have embraced, without concealing from ourselves the dimension of the cross, of forgoing and of asceticism.

Operational recommendations

In awareness that it is the daily style of our activity that constitutes the identity of the community, we can identify certain approaches that should be cultivated, and operational choices that should be matured, with reference to the practical implementation of our religious vows.

So that the *vow of poverty* is not altered or darkened in its purity (cf. Testamentary Letter), it is necessary:

- to identify the possible aspects of *personal and institutional poverty* that should be encouraged to counter hedonism, consumerism and individualism;
- to adopt a *sober lifestyle* in contrast with an excess of consumerism that attacks the very safeguarding of the creation;
- to grow in the *communion of possessions* as a fundamental element of witness *ad extra*;
- to identify and multiply in every community *actions of concrete solidarity* towards the poor at an individual and community level.

To live in harmony and to make fertile the choice of a *chaste life*, the following is proposed:

- committing ourselves to a process of growth in affections towards those whom Providence entrusts to us, developing a *capacity for relationships of friendship*, as well, with our own religious brothers and with people outside the community;

- exercising ourselves in a *healthy ascesis* which allows an integration of sexuality and affectivity and moving with responsible freedom and *maturity in today's culture*;
- interiorising and sharing the *objectives of consecrated life* in order to nurture passion and commitment;
- beginning and/or continuing the pathway of the *personalisation* of vocation.

This pathway of affective growth should be accompanied by a specific formation centred around '*sequela Christi*' which highlights the kind of imitation to be followed and allows an accurate and vigilant discernment of behaviour and signs of possible anomalies.

Obedience, in addition to readiness to follow Superiors, is achieved in taking part in the projects of the community through a shared analysis of the signs of the times and acceptance of a shared programme.

There is not only a 'personal' obedience which takes place in relationships between individuals. There is also an 'institutional' obedience whose subjects are the local community, the Provincial community and the Order as a whole, which are obliged – in the search for, and implementation of, the will of God – to engage in both mutual cooperation and listening to the requests that come from society and the Church.

We propose therefore to:

- take part in the lives and projects of our Provinces and the Order;
- live in an approach of readiness to engage in change;
- educate ourselves in open dialogue and shared discernment of the will of God.

2.4. Formed – prepared for radicality

The future of the Order depends on the quality of the formation of candidates. Given gospel facts, Christ himself educated his disciples and actuated a pathway of discernment and formation (cf. Jn 1:39: '*Come and you will see*' and the frequent '*Come to one side*').

Jesus through the exemplariness of his life and his words defined himself as the permanent witness-teacher of the mercy of God who increasingly consciously took upon himself the incontrovertible profile of giving himself to men on the cross. The pathway of formation has as its horizon and as a journey the progressive conformation of one's own life according to the image (icon) of the merciful Christ.

One of the objectives of formation is affective maturity which allows sharing in the '*feelings of Christ*', learning his relational style, allowing oneself to be seduced by his passion for God and for humanity, and growing in interior freedom.

Insubstantial or uncertain affective maturity can be the cause of a mediocre life or even of abandonments. In affective maturity, special importance is given to ongoing formation which must be looked after in a special way not as an extraordinary moment but one that is ordinary in the life of a religious, who is called to constant growth.

Operational recommendations

This formation – as a guarantee of a consecrated life of depth – must be organised at *three levels*: the formation of *those providing formation*, *initial formation* and *ongoing formation*. In practical terms, certain operational choices are necessary and urgent:

The Formation of those providing formation

- *The formation of those providing formation* constitutes an absolute priority in which the Order is called to invest continually. Their specific training, which is not only academic (psycho-pedagogic) but also experiential and ministerial (pastoral and spiritual), is the best guarantee for the future itself of the Order. Whereas in the case of the promotion of vocations it is right to involve the youngest religious, as regards the sector of formation religious should be co-opted who have had at least six years (two three-year periods) of community religious life lived in the practical implementation of the charism.

Initial formation

- The important and delicate field of *initial formation* is perhaps the aspect that most highlights in an unequivocal way the need for the unification of efforts and cooperation between Provinces and/or exchange with other Institutes, both for a more effective optimisation of resources and for a more complete formation of candidates.
- For the youngest religious above all there should be an encouragement of the study of *Italian and English*, the official languages of the Order, in order to assure a greater participation in the life itself of the Order and any cooperation there may be between different Provinces.

Ongoing formation

- *Ongoing formation* should be defined on the occasion of the fourth centenary, the jubilees of religious and above all *during the ten years after perpetual profession*: the organisation of an *ad hoc* programme drafted for continents or linguistic areas constitutes a priority. This programme of formation should contain inescapable references to the tie between the charism and spirituality, fraternity and the vow of poverty, and the capacity to bear witness to a sober life that respects the resources of the Creation.

2.5. Sent – the ministry of service

Ministry, received by us as a mission and as Grace, and professed by a vow, possesses the same radicality as the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience. It is the same ministry of Christ, and it is possible to the extent that we re-live his way of acting, his deeds and feelings, and his generosity.

This is how Camillus lived, basing himself on the Biblical image of the Good Samaritan and Christ as identified with the least.

In a community, gathered around Christ, we become Camillians, that is to say sent out to carry out the same merciful mission of Christ who called and then sent out his disciples (Lk 10:37)

Each religious lives out his being 'sent' out for a mission, which is the very purpose of his personal vocation. In the case in hand, the Order, a living part of the Church, has received, through its founder St. Camillus, the charism of living anew and bearing witness to the merciful love of Christ, serving the sick and teaching others how they can be assisted (C, nn. 1 and 8).

Operational recommendations

In order to live this identity of being sent out in a concrete way, one has to:

- Retrieve the gospel, mystical, ecclesial and pastoral dimension of our service, in coordination with the local Church and open to its needs;
- strive in every time and place (in order to respond in a suitable way to the gift received from God) to achieve faithfulness to the charism and renewal of the ministry, in harmony with the spirit of the Founder and the requirements of inculturation (C, n. 58);
- provide formation to and involve lay people more in our ministry, sharing with them work and the house, with balance and due limits;
- understand the specific needs that emerge from the local area in which one lives (inculturation of the charism) in order to achieve a more vital and effective adherence to the real needs of man;
- rediscover direct contact with the sick in order to nurture empathetic nearness and compassion accompanied by a renewed competence as an effective exercise of our fourth vow;
- expand the horizon of ministry – in line with the mandate of the community – beyond the limited field of our apostolic works (palliative care, prevention, public health, domestic church, home care, education in and promotion of health, etc.).
- In the Provinces where there are parishes 'Guidelines' should be established for the ministry, holding dear the offering a Camillian countenance.

3. Second Part: Open – a Future of Hope. Requirements for a Suitable Restructuring

Our trusting openness towards the future, and even before that our tenacious commitment in the present, spring from an act of faith in the permanent contemporary relevance of the Camillian charism.

Faith moves mountains (Mt 17:20) and hope pushes towards goals that are increasingly higher and makes us journey towards the summits.

We believe that Love is stronger than death: we believe in Love and in the Holy Spirit, who is shaking us and supporting us in the commitment to strengthen the Christian message, and the presence of the Church, on the pathway of the Camillian charism, an eloquent sign of evangelisation.

This feeling must support commitment to, and love for, the Order, in the present difficult historical cycle as well, transforming this period of crisis and of stagnation into a time of opportunity, of openness, of change, and of wise discernment according to the signs of the times.

In this situation we must avoid closure or folding in on ourselves in order to defend specific and local interests; avoid the temptation to reduce consecrated life only to certain fields, within specific spatial or temporal sectors, being nostalgic about the past; and commit ourselves to an openness of the Order to the global perspectives of the Church, international dimensions, and requests that come from the new sensitivity brought by lay people.

These objectives require a change in perspectives: the Order should be lived as a body, a single organism, even though it is multiform and diversified, which finds renewed efficacy in the harmony of different forms of cooperation, in the synergy of so many resources that are made available by divine Providence.

Discernment in relation to this second part, which is certainly complex and equally in need of an ability to be put into practice, will follow the following order:

- *change in mentality;*
- *central governance of the Order and leadership;*
- *reduction in size and relocations;*
- *cooperation between Provinces;*
- *proposals and the final motion.*

3.1. Change in mentality

- The past, and even the recent past, has demonstrated the *generosity of Europe* through the sending out of numerous missionaries in the world. Today it is the European Provinces themselves that are to be seen as *lands of mission*, with the need for new evangelisers who come from regions of the world that are fertile in religious vocations. One can see the Europe-centred epoch (with strong dependencies as regards human and economic resources) as over and the season of *sharing in communion* as having begun.
- We must invest in the *re-launching of the charism, cultivating a significant presence* in a specific local area with all the positive and negative aspects that are connected with this. The meaningfulness of the charism needs a strong spiritual, community and a formative sub-stratum in order to be 'light and salt' (Mt 10:13) in the very diverse social contexts of the continents of the world.

- A specific understanding of the Camillian vocation and mission should be fostered, starting with the local context (culture, language, social style, etc.).
- We need communities that pursue the *primary objective of evangelisation* and which dedicate themselves to prayer, to fraternity and to prophetic witness to the merciful love of God for the least of His/our brethren.
- We must implement the recommendations of the '*Magna Carta*' on our works, so as to make their Camillian countenance visible.
- Whereas in some regions institutions that provide and treatment and care to the sick and the poor could still be necessary, in other geographical areas the moment seems to have arrived *to abandon such works* because by now they are without a specific Camillian identity or are anyway irrelevant for to social context.
- *Lay people* are a valuable resource given that they can act in an effective way in the process of the revitalisation of the Order. Their presence must not be interpreted only in replacement terms, as substitutes for religious who are not present for age reasons or because of the number of the various functions at the level of service within works or in ministry in general, although it is necessary to listen above all to their need for fraternal welcoming and sharing our charism and spirituality. Our communities must remain open so that lay people can offer their competent contribution in fields that have not hitherto been very much shared, such as social communications, the promotion of vocations, and initial and ongoing formation.
- The *LCF*, a work specifically of our Order, and as such recognised by all of us, is a living sign of concrete cooperation with lay people.
- Given the development and the establishment of the *LCF*, the strengthening of *local offices* should be encouraged, above all in areas where there is greater need and human resources are available.

3.2. The central governance of the Order and leadership

- The implementation of the Camillian project, especially as regards the restructuring of the *Provinces/Delegations and their reciprocal relations*, needs *leadership* that can enable the Order to achieve its objectives and walk without uncertainties in an epoch of challenges.
- The central coordination of the bodies of the government of the Order is to be wished for, but not centralisation.
- *The bearers of the leadership* of the Order are the General Consulta and the Major Superiors and Delegates whose annual meeting must become a real form of enlarged and shared governance of the Order.
- We need as a consequence *to choose carefully* the members of the General Comsulta and, equally, the Provincials and their respective councils.

- In order to foster the government of the Order by the General Consulta and its role in assuring general development, it is believed that new openings or restructurings of the existent which involve agreements of cooperation between Provinces *require the consent of the General Consulta*.
- The future of the Order should see us ready for the *renewal of institutions* to which we are habituated, for example that of Provinces.
- As regards the institution of the *General Consulta* as well, inasmuch as it is central to the life of the Order, a revision of the criterion of election, of the functions of the members and their general identikit is needed.
- Customarily, the Provincial Superiors are appointed from amongst the religious of the same Province. There should, however, be the possibility – where there is the need and favourable conditions – of appointing a *Provincial Superior who is not of the same Province*.
- Troubled by the constant decrease in the number of *Camillian Brothers*, the General Consulta should study the causes of this and address them in a suitable way so as to find and implement the necessary solutions.
- The General Consulta should equip itself with a *Communications Office* at the service of all the activities based on it, with the presence of a religious.
- The Central Economic Committee, in which should be included expert lay people, constitutes an important stage in the reorganisation of the economic-financial administration of the Generalate House and the elements based on it. The financial administrator should chair this committee.
- A ‘fundraising’ body should be created in addition to the traditional ‘Contribution of the Provinces’ for the promotion of growth in developing countries, for interventions in situations of emergency or natural disasters, and for economic support for the *Camillianum* and for the Communications Office.

3.3. Reductions in size and relocation

- It is necessary to establish first and foremost *strategic choices for evangelisation* through the authentic style of consecrated life and witness to the charism. The criterion of the meaningfulness of a presence is fundamental in carrying out new choices or in reducing the scale of presences that are already existent.
- By now it appears to be evident that we need a *new mapping of the Camillian presences* in the various continents of the world. The goal to pursue is not the conservation of the existent but structural change: by carrying out suitable choices it will be possible to involve our most motivated religious brothers as well, trusting in a convinced cooperation between Provinces.
- We can by now no longer postpone the need for a *new configuration of the Provinces*. The fusions can be carried out by stages, gradually unifying Provinces that are geographically near to each other to the point of creating one

or two 'continental' Provinces. The low number of religious in certain areas advises against the contemporary dispersive system of a number of units.

3.4. Inter-Provincial cooperation

- The point of departure for any kind of cooperation, above all of an international character, is a *solid formation in welcoming that creates fraternity*. To this end, meetings at every level between religious and between religious and lay people is needed on evangelisation in multiethnic contexts and where religious pluralism is in force; on inculturation and capacity for integration; on the exchange of life experiences; and on the spread of our charism through modern social networks.
- A possible *exchange of religious brothers* between the various continents of the world cannot be based on the principle of the safeguarding of the existent but, rather, it should be based upon a shared project for activities and initiatives that meet the problems that are most urgent from a charismatic point of view, assuring continuity of commitment in witness through spirituality and fraternity, offering at the same time specific opportunities at the level of formation.
- In the exchange of human resources one should bear in mind criteria that respect the areas that the religious who are available come from so as not *to deprive these regions of those qualitative and quantitative strengths* that are necessary to their development.
- The *present economic situation* also calls on us to assess, with wisdom, economic-financial resources, which seem to be increasingly limited. Planning at the level of the central leadership of the Order shows itself to be necessary in order to achieve the possible creation of new institutions in the various Provinces. The study of a consortium of NGOs, of new foundations or of new initiatives of works cannot be separated from this central coordination.
- The optimisation of human and economic resources must privilege a *global approach to the Order* and cannot be determined by the interests of individual Provinces or by simple agreements between Provinces: we need a constant agreement with the mediation offered by the planning of the central governance of the Order.

3.5. Formation for the future that has already begun

- The General Consulta, the Provincials and the Delegates are entrusted with sensitisation as regards, and the decision upon, the achievement of the *unification of the centres for formation* for the pre-novitiate, the novitiate and those moving towards temporary profession, either by continent or by the major linguistic areas of a continent, in places where this is possible.
- The creation of a single continental centre (or centres for linguistic areas) is proposed for a year of shared pre-novitiate, so as to make human formation,

which is the goal of this stage of formation, more homogeneous. Where the creation of this centre is not yet practicable, shared programmes at least should be drawn up.

- *Pastoral care for the vocations of young men* should be entrusted to the individual regions of a Province, helped by a central leader who fosters meetings between local leaders and the availability of suitable instruments.
- Emphasis is laid upon the validity of *carrying on with theological studies* for the youngest religious after the diploma in theology. The specialisation studies, however, belong to a true Provincial or inter-Provincial programme or a programme of the Order (privileging the Camillianum or other centres for pastoral care in health and humanisation), and only after a minimum of three years of community life lived in ministerial engagement.
- All possible forms of giving *publicity* to the *Camillianum* should be encouraged, in particular in those countries with a greater availability of students. This should be a commitment of all religious and in particular of the direct heads of the same institute.
- The coordination of Camillian centres for humanisation and pastoral care in health, at a micro-regional level, in synergy with the Camillianum as well, should be fostered.

4. Final Recommendation and Motion

- **Final Recommendation**

The implementation of the project for the revitalisation of the Order is the *direct responsibility* of the Superior General and the General Consultors, shared by the other Major Superiors and Delegates.

While, on the one hand, we have before us medium-term (for example inter-Provincial cooperation) and final (for example the fusion of Provinces) objectives whose achievement takes place by stages and with timetables and forms established by the General Consulta, on the other hand this period must witness us involved in a *renewed impetus towards mission*, an adventure that should not be limited because of contingent restraints: this is the challenge that we accept today for a faithful and creative life.

The Provincial and Vice-Provincial Superiors and the Provincial Delegates, grasping the urgent need – that cannot be postponed – for this project for the good of the Order, from the beginning of their mandates shall believe that *readiness to help and cooperation with the central government of the Institute is of priority importance in the implementation of the project*.

- The Order – during the course of the Fourth Centenary – should take to heart the resolutions of the General Chapter on the Camillian Project, ending personal, community and Provincial reflections in assemblies that will lead to operational decisions with their modes and timetables of implementation.
- *In the letter accompanying* the appointment of the Major Superiors reference should be made to the priority of the commitment to the implementation of the ‘Camillian Project’ for the revitalisation of the Order. A similar reference should be made in the case of Provincial Delegates once they have been appointed.

Prayer

Our Father, the author of Life and source of Love,
In this time of grace and renewal,
Turn your gaze on us,
Members of the Family of the Ministers of the Sick,
Founded by Camillus de Lellis.

You raised this family up to be a witness in the world to the merciful love of Christ for the sick:

Make it increasingly able to meet the challenges and the opportunities of our time.

It is the *work* of your Son Jesus Christ:

Revitalise it, now and in the future, in each one of us.

It is a living part of the Church:

Enrich it with the charisms of your Spirit.

It is your little plant:

Grant to it new vocations, who multiply their arms and hearts.

It is a new school of charity:

Renew it in ministry and in its organisational structures.

It is a Family that is consecrated to you:

Make its fraternal communion increasingly alive and industrious.

You who are the Father of the poor:

Keep it open to the sick who are most in need.

We who have believed in your love:

Help us to relive the same deeds and feelings of Mary Health of the Sick and Jesus the Good Samaritan

Amen