

**Meeting of the Superior General and the General Consultors
with the Provincial Superiors, the Vice-Provincials and the Delegates**

Warsaw, 18 May 2015
House of hospitality and Welcome of the Barnabites

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST DAY, MONDAY 18 MAY 2015

At the welcoming house of the Barnabite religious of Warsaw (Poland) on Sunday afternoon we came together for the by now customary but increasingly important and determining annual meeting of the Superior General and the General Consultors with the Major Superiors of the Order.

At the outset let us express feelings of gratitude to our religious brothers of the Camillian Province of Poland for their welcome and applauded their excellent scheduling of things and organisation.

The Superior General, together with Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon, had already had an opportunity to meet the communities and our religious brothers and to learn about their ministerial activities on 13-18 May – days that were dedicated to paying a fraternal visit to the Province of Poland.

The chairman of the day of the assembly of Monday 18 May was Fr. Aris Miranda, the General Consultor for Ministry.

The meeting, after an introductory prayer, **was inaugurated by Fr. Leocir Pessini with his introductory message in which he summarised the brief history of the pathway that had led our Order to elect the new general government of the Order at the Extraordinary General Chapter of June 2014.** The message of Fr. Leocir was a message of hope which took up some provocations of Pope Francis to consecrated men and women: ‘You do not only have a glorious history to remember, but also a great history to build! Look to the future, into which the Spirit projects you to do even greater things!’

In order to be continuators of this history, as Camillians, prudence, courage and prophecy are the essential ingredients of the pathway, without which we cannot project ourselves towards the future with hope, taking upon ourselves with responsibility the heritage of holiness of those who have preceded us and who worthily transmitted such holiness to us.

With respect to our Camillian history, which reveals to us ‘our charismatic identity as an Order’, basing ourselves on this ecclesial perspective we are asked to **‘look to the future with gratitude, to live the present with passion’** – and we would add to serve with Samaritan compassion – ‘and to embrace the future with hope’. In this approach to, and vision of, time as a *Kairos* of God (*a time of grace*) Pope Francis invites us to walk, directing ourselves together towards the emergent and urgent priorities that were defined by the Camillian project for the revitalisation of our Camillian consecrated lives, a project that was approved by the whole of the Order at the recent Extraordinary General Chapter. There are three areas that are priorities at the level of government for this six-year period of 2014-2020.

1. **Transparency and economic organisation**, above all at the generalate house and the institutions connected with it (the *Camillianum*, the Rebuschini House).
2. **Formation and the promotion of vocations**. The aim is to implement the formation of future religious, the formation of those who provide formation, and strategies for the ‘throwing out of nets’ for new Camillian vocations. Here our very existence in the future is at stake. The recent Extraordinary General Chapter asked for an updating of the ‘Rules for Formation’ of our Order. This is a task that should be begun as soon as the membership of the Central Commission for Formation has been decided upon.
3. **Communication**. We humans are essentially beings of communication! This is a vital area for the construction of communion and the nourishment of fraternal relationships. The professionalization of this sector, like the creation of an *Office for Communications* at the generalate house, as in Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Delegations, is an initiative that should be taken seriously. The publication of a newsletter with the principal news of the Order in a certain sense fills a gap that exists and meets the widespread wish to know about, and to communicate, the facts and events that tell the story of the vitality of our Order.

The programme that we will follow at this annual appointment in Warsaw is substantially organised around the three priorities that we received from the Extraordinary General Chapter of June 2014. This is a ‘first report’ that we offer to the Order, listing the initiatives that are being developed, reporting their results, the points of strength, and the problems and the prospects for hope that await us. **At this meeting each General Consultor as regards his own specific area of responsibility, will describe the needs and the initiatives that should be engaged in during this not six but five years given that one year has already passed quickly!**

In the planning of this international meeting of ours, especial attention was paid to pilgrimage (not a mere touristic trip, as one could hurriedly think and/or understand). We will visit the important places in the life of John Paul II (Krakow, Wadowice and Czestochowa) as well as the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz. This pilgrimage in reality seeks to be a spiritual experience and an integral part of our meeting: not only reports and discussions in the hall but also an exercise by which to learn to walk, to reflect and to pray together!

Starting with a strong request that had already emerged in the General Chapter about the need for a greater presence of the Superior General amongst our religious brothers and the communities of the Order and the achievement of greater learning about each other *in loco*, during this first year we have tried to be more present through ‘fraternal visits’ in many areas of the Camillian world. We need to rediscover and live the *theology of encounter*, that is to say to leave (to engage in a personal exodus) in order to encounter the other, above all going towards the existential and geographical outskirts of human life, according to the recommendations of Pope Francis. In this sense, our programme of fraternal visits has been very intense, covering practically two-thirds of the Camillian world.

At this point analysis and sharing became prayer to ask for the gift of wisdom and discernment at this meeting and in our communities, in line with the gospel and Camillian style.

After the break at 10.30 the meeting resumed its deliberations at 11.00. **Br. Ignacio Santaolalla, the general financial administrator, presented an economic report on the generalate house and its dependencies** (the community of ‘St. Mary Magdalene’, the rectory of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, the *Camillianum*, the Camillian Task Force, the ‘Casa B. Enrico Rebuschini’ Community). The guidelines and the tasks of the Central Economic Commission were then presented.

In the afternoon, the discussion of the assembly was resumed with common prayer and watching the **moving video of CNN with an interview with our religious brother Bernard Kinvi who works in the Central African Republic** and who recently received a prize for his role in defending human rights in saving about 1,500 Muslims during the civil war in that country.

Fr. Rosario Mauriello – the Provincial Superior of the Province of Sicily and Naples – **presented a report on the economic situation of his Province.**

A discussion then took place on the status of the *Camillianum*. Fr. José Carlos Bermejo – the first freshman of the *Camillianum* – offered an analysis of the Institute for the Theology of Pastoral Care in Health between nostalgia (the origins of the *Camillianum* in the words of Fr. C. Vendrame, of Pope John Paul II and of Fr. Monks, ...) and the description of certain qualitative achievements, dwelling upon the present but also engaging in a timid look at the future.

At the end of the afternoon, preparations were made to welcome the Archbishop of Warsaw, Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz, for the celebration of the evening Eucharist. The Cardinal, with words of sincere esteem for the Camillians and their valuable service for the sick and the disinherited, exhorted us to go to, and to remain in, the ‘existential and geographical outskirts’ of humanity, in line with the evangelising style of the early Christian communities.

SUMMARY OF THE SECOND DAY, TUESDAY 19 MAY 2015

The chairman of the assembly on this day was Fr. Laurent Zoungana (the Vicar General of the Order). Those taking part in this meeting were all present.

The morning session was opened by an introductory prayer and an invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Aris Miranda, the General Consultor for Ministry, presented his report on the sector of ministry. He concentrated on certain general projects for the revitalisation of our charism in the active exercise of ministry while waiting to be able to complete the team of the Secretariat for Ministry with the people who would act as reference points for the various geographical areas of the world.

Definition of the question: consecrated life (the Camillian life, in particular) is threatened by the loss of its fundamental values and meaning, by a fragmentation of the approaches and the programmes of ministry, and by the absence of passion and creativity in living our charism (cf. *The Camillian Project*, 2013).

Challenge: ‘Starting afresh from our witness to the merciful Christ’, subjecting our activity to critical and authentic discernment in order to achieve the (*interior*) revitalisation and (*exterior*) reorganisation of the Order.

Programmes, Objectives, Strategies and Activities

Programmes	Objectives	Strategies
<p>Revitalisation <i>(interior)</i></p>	<p>Broadening the horizons of the actuation of the Camillian charism by integrating forms of care with the great challenges of the world of health and health care, such as prevention (of illnesses) and the promotion of public health (cf. agenda n. 4).</p>	<p>* Involvement in health-care programmes that develop and implement the capacities of the most vulnerable people who do not have access to health-care services.</p> <p>* Relaunching of the forum of Camillian physicians and its extension to professionals of the health-care sector who are members of the great Camillian family with a view to the formation of a group of medical doctors (<i>Foreign Medical Team– FMT</i>) which is ready to respond to disasters and emergencies (cf.. WHO)</p>
	<p>Organising a common project on formation and research in the field of pastoral care and health and revitalising the ministry of chaplaincy.</p>	<p>* The coordination of all the Camillian centres for humanisation and pastoral care in health of each macro-region under the supervision of the <i>Camillianum</i> (cf. OG # 13).</p>
	<p>Assessing our communion with the local Churches and collaboration with lay people and coordinating our ministry with the pastoral needs and plans of the local Churches.</p> <p>(cf. agenda n. 3).</p>	<p>Reinforcing our presence in the local Churches, through the Camillian religious who exercise the ministry of parish priest and/or rector as well.</p>

Reorganisation (<i>exterior</i>)	Promoting a change of mentality with respect to inter-regional/Provincial cooperation and changing our outlook: this means that the Order should be lived as a body, a single organism, even though multiform and diversified, seeking a renewed efficacy in harmony of the various forms of cooperation, in a synergy of the very many resources that are made available by divine Providence.	Reintroducing the <i>political</i> project for a consortium of all the Camillian NGOs in order to respond in a more effective way to situations that are economically and materially difficult on the lower part of the socio-economic pyramid which are socially marginalised, culturally silenced and politically excluded.

The *Camillian Task Force* towards its institutionalisation: the project for the years 2014-2020 (starting with the strategic conference organised in Bangkok at the end of 2013).

At the present time there are four projects underway: in Kenya, the Philippines, Nepal and Sierra Leone.

Kenya (on the border with Somalia, in the north-east of Kenya): this is a food security and health education project. The objective is to reduce the dependence of these people on the external supply of food by humanitarian organisations and to help them to produce food in an autonomous way through the use of technology.

The Philippines (two projects): reforestation of the coconut plantations after the great Bofan typhoon and the reconstruction of the resilience of the community after that traumatic event with the aim of strengthening the resilience of the survivors (our role is to help them to develop the dynamics of resilience).

Sierra Leone (the diocese of Makeni): this is a project shared by Camillians, the Lay Camillian Family and Camillian women religious and has the goal of strengthening health-care institutions and supporting families and basic communities with psycho-social programmes after the emergency generated by Ebola.

Nepal: after the dramatic and recent earthquake, after investigating the needs, a team of twelve workers (Camillians and men and women religious of other Congregations) is organising initiatives of a health-care character.

In the face of the impact of disasters, it is possible to intervene on the front of the suffering and the pain of humanity. When one speaks about a disaster one is speaking about the *vulnerability* of man: the more he is vulnerable (in social and environmental situations which are already fragile and poor), the more the effects will have an impact.

Vulnerability is a Camillian field: it calls our attention to social exclusion, to poverty, to marginalisation and to inequality. Faced with human suffering and pain we have to offer faith, hope, justice and resilience (and not only food in an immediate way!!).

Faced with marginalisation, we are asked to bear witness to compassion; this is to declare the frontier spirit of St. Camillus in bearing witness to *tenderness*, being at the side of these men and women and offering them support to grow in resilience but also speaking out in the face of those injustices that determine and aggravate the impact of disasters.

Faithfulness to our prophetic roots of St. Camillus and to a spirit of transformation compels us to adopt a creative ministry in the post-modern scenario. It is not enough to have a heart that suffers in the face of suffering – one must also have a head that analyses the needs of the beneficiaries and offers intelligent initiatives which are suited to urgent and emerging needs, naturally enough organising human and economic resources in an efficient way.

Resilience is ability in frailty: such is the motto of the CTF.

Who are **the beneficiaries of initiatives of the CTF?** They are the most vulnerable families, people who are most isolated in a geographical sense, the economically isolated, and the victims of injustice.

The second part of the morning was dedicated to the deliberations of groups formed according to linguistic areas.

At 15.00 the deliberations of the assembly began again. During the first part Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon, the General Secretary, presented a report on the current situation and the immediate projects for the general archives, the General Secretariat, the Office for Communications and the rectory of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Campo Marzio.

Premiss

The general archives of the Order are in large measure made up of two compartments: the *historical* archives and the *current* archives.

The *historical* general archives do not need to be described given their value and their prestige. The *current* archives, instead, contain all the documentation in our possession relating to contemporary religious and to the institutional matters connected with them. At the end of each year the General Secretariat has the task of bringing together the documentation that has been produced and placing it in the archives of the Order

It is evident that a correct conservation of the documents assures historical faithfulness to the facts and does justice to the people who are involved in them. So that the material can be correctly archived and conserved, we need to have – *ad intra* – a physical and ICT structure that can receive and send out documents on request in a precise and rapid way, and – *ad extra* – a close, faithful and rapid cooperation between the Provincials, Vice-Provincials, Delegates and the General Secretariat.

Historical General Archives

1. The gathering of data and their organisation (information on the present, the past).
2. The protection and conservation of documents.
3. Continuation with the digitalisation by indexes of the documents of the archives and the current activity of the General Secretariat.

Current General Archives

4. A *Census* of the religious of the Order in order to complete the personal files.
5. The proposal to renew systematic study activity (the team research for the ‘twentieth century project’: from the Second World War onwards; the Second Vatican Council; missionary expansion; the renewal of the Constitution...).
6. The supply of a wider historical circuit.

General Secretariat

7. A more precise use of the *Handbook* in the presentation of official cases.
8. A report on the *status quo* of the revision of the Constitution of the Order.
9. The preparation of a small *legal office* in order to be able to debate in a serious and appropriate way ordinary and above all extraordinary questions (the revision of Provincial statutes, documentation connected with the Holy See, assessment of the status of individual religious or individual religious Provinces...).

Office for Communications

10. Intensification of the publication of articles relating to the Camillians on our web site.
11. Communications to be implemented from the ‘*periphery to the centre*’ as well.

After the break the deliberations of the assembly recommenced with a report in the hall of a summary of the deliberations of the groups in the morning.

Some practical advice for the pilgrimage on the following day to Krakow, Auschwitz and Czestochowa ended the day.

SUMMARY OF WEDNESDAY 20 / THURSDAY 21 MAY 2015

'Do not be afraid! Open, indeed open wide, your doors to Christ ...'

'Jezu Ufam Tobie – Jesus, I trust in you!'

The pilgrimage of the Superior General, the General Consultors and the Major Superiors of the Order can be physically and symbolically included in these two messages which can be almost taken for granted at the level of their formal simplicity but which are overwhelming in their substantial radicality of contents at the level of spiritual renewal for believers and consecrated people – ourselves: *'Do not be afraid!'* And *'Jezu Ufam Tobie – Jesus, I trust in you!'*.

Fr. Pessini when opening our meeting – on Monday 18 May of this year – had presented this journey to certain special places in the land of Poland specifically in these terms: 'In the planning of this international meeting of ours, especial attention was paid to pilgrimage (not a mere touristic trip, as one could hurriedly think and/or understand). We will visit the important places in the life of John Paul II (*Krakow, Wadowice and Czestochowa*) as well as the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz. This pilgrimage in reality seeks to be a spiritual experience and specifically for this reason – and this is no accident – it has been placed in the middle of our meeting and not at its end! This is an important experience and an integral part of our meeting: not only reports and discussions in the hall but also an exercise by which to learn to walk, to reflect and to pray together! For a whole generation of today's adults, and many of us here belong to this category, who live in and come from the so-called 'outskirts of the world', the charismatic figure of John Paul II has been for us a point of reference'.

We visited *Wadowice*, the city where St. John Paul II was born, with his baptismal font and an interactive museum which allows one in addition to devotion to immerse oneself in the history of the man and Christian, Karol Wojtyla, and his message; the Nazi concentration camp in the land of Poland of *Auschwitz* where Maximilian Mary Kolbe shared to the utmost the cross of Christ by sharing in the abysmal suffering and the devastating pain of the Jewish people and many other men and women, the victims of discrimination whose dignity was violated and whose only right was death; the ancient city of Krakow, a city of kings who were saints, of culture and of deep faith; and the sanctuary of *Częstochowa* where the *Black Madonna* of Jasna Góra with the 'two signs of violence' on her face which do not alter her serene expression continues to reanimate our hope as well and the sanctuary-monastery of Divine Mercy where Jesus through the weakness of Sr. Faustina Kowalska continues to irradiate the powerful message of the mercy of God.

Our journey during these days was organised 'within' three different life histories, three different pathways of saintliness. *St. John Paul II*, a Pope, an intellectual and a theologian. *St. Faustina Kowalska*, a simple sister, cook and gardener who passed through only three classes of her elementary school. *St. Maximilian Mary Kolbe*, a Franciscan, for whom love for man rose above even the Nazi regime.

Following in the footsteps of these three saints we looked for elements by which to understand their saintliness and to draw up an answer to a question of capital importance: can saintliness be achieved by us as well?

FRIDAY 22 MAY 2015

Fr. Laurent Zoungrana – the Vicario General and the General Consultor entrusted with formation and the animation of vocations – introduced various subjects relating to formation.

Formation – the Animation of Vocations

In the sector of formation we are invited to encourage each other given that life is a school and each one of us in a different class according to his own level of development: we are all disciples so as to edify ourselves increasingly towards ‘the feelings of Christ’. As such formation never comes to an end, we are always *in itinere* because we will never be perfectly adequate to the greatness of the heart of Christ.

Young men have the right to have ‘people who are providing formation who themselves have received formation to that end’: the formation of those providing formation is increasingly becoming a priority and not a mere optional. The young men whom we draw near to – who come from a post-modern society that has been deconstructed as regards its values – need profound and serious discernment, that includes the contribution of the human sciences, which will help them to engage in truth in their human and spiritual values, rehabilitating the critical capacities of their consciences. We are called through our formation not to create ‘little monsters’ but, rather, fathers, brothers and travelling companions.

The formation of those providing formation does not involve only filling the heads of these young men with knowledge – it also involves providing formation so that they will be true men of God who bear witness to self-giving and have exemplary lives *capable of forming the heart, of forming fathers, brothers, and travelling companions, not little monsters* (Pope Francis).

Ongoing Formation

Ongoing formation is constant formation because a community provides formation, as does the environment, the mass media...as such, following Christ through the mediation of a particular charism means always feeling that we are on a journey with renewal and the updating of our consecration.

In recent years, many religious have asked for the dispensation to be reduced to a lay status as well as exclaustation: this is a warning as regards personal and community responsibility towards our own vocation.

Consecrated life is born from listening to the Word of God and takes the Gospel as its rule of life. To engage in the animation of vocations thus means to introduce young men to, and fascinate them by, this style of life. As such (C. n. 71), all religious and all communities are vocational mediators through the witness of their lives. This applies not only to the animation of vocations but also, and above all else, to initial formation.

Fr. Laurent has communicated to us that as regards the General Consulta those responsible for formation and the animation of vocations of the Asia area, the pan-American area and the African francophone area have already been appointed. The African Anglophone area, the European area and the Italian area are now being addressed.

I report the participation of eight Camillian religious – from four continents – in the conference organised by the Dicastery for Religious in the month of April of this year. This was an experience that was enriching at the level of formation.

I also list the various forms of participation in meetings with those providing formation, the Superiors of communities and some Delegations, which always had the purpose of achieving the animation of vocations and the updating of formation.

I introduce a letter of Fr. Donato Cauzzo, the secretary of the Prefect of the Dicastery for Religious, which deals ahead of time with the request for young religious take part at the meeting in the Vatican entitled ‘Wake up the World’ which will be held in Rome on 16-19 September of this year.

The Procurator: the Importance of the Handbook and the Precise Gathering of Information

In the work of the Procurator the use of the *handbook* is very important both for him and for those who want to send him documentation for some question. But it not only important for that office. It should not be learnt by heart – a person should know how to use it so that some question does not have to be begun all over again.

The task of the Procurator in fundamental terms involves interacting with the Dicastery for Religious and the Clergy to deal with cases connected with dispensations for the secularisation or exclaustation of those of our religious brothers who ask to leave the Order or their incardination in other dioceses.

Fr. Laurent Zoungrana has told us that the pathway was completed to be able to have the permission of the Dicastery for Religious to appoint a ‘religious who is a brother’ as a Provincial Superior. This permission was denied by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

He has also referred to a new development as regards reductions to a lay status: the Dicastery for the Clergy has indicated there is no longer the limit of having to have reached the age of forty to accede to a reduction to a lay status.

Wherever there are ‘cases in suspension’ of religious who left our religious community years ago, the request is made to gather precise information – if possible and if there is a readiness to do this on the part of the religious concerned – in order to clarify their position.

The Lay Camillian Family (LCF)

‘a work of the Camillian Order...the LCF constitutes one of the forms of relating and cooperating between Camillian religious and lay people’. For this reason, it is useful to attribute importance to this lay association. The LCF is a constant challenge for we religious: we are called ‘not to bury the precious treasure that God has put in our hands’ but to share it in a clear and frank way with the members of the Lay Camillian Family. This is not a matter of confusing the level of our consecrated lives with that of the members of the LCF. However we should grow in mutual esteem, improving communication and cooperation in ministry. Over recent years the Lay Camillian family (which has different dynamisms and vitalities according to geographical areas), after the renewal of its General Council in Mottinello (VI) in May 2014, has been involved in following a pathway of renewal as regards the formation of its members, its financial transparency, communication between its members...

The Revision and Adoption of the Statutes of the ‘Beato Enrico Rebuschini’ Community in Rome

The 'Beato. E. Rebuschini' community was erected almost seventeen years ago. This is a community that receives our religious brothers who are students at various Roman universities and lecturers at the *Camillianum*. In the year 2002, after four years of existence, this community gave itself *statutes* that are known about by some and not known about by others. It seemed to us to be useful to review these statutes, together with those taking part in this meeting in Warsaw as well, in order to help this community to meet its vocation as an international Camillian religious community.

Br. José Carlos Bermejo asked whether the Order had given itself guidelines for the prevention and accompanying of *difficult situations*: the receiving on their vocational pathway of young men who are HIV-positive or with homosexual tendencies; the stances to adopt in cases of paedophilia.

Br. Baby Elckal observed from the report of Fr. Zoungrana that it emerged that about 61% of those providing formation in our Order were not adequately trained for their task of being educators and accompanying vocations. This provides a picture which is rather negative! In addition, he asked to be able to have access to the documents and the reports relating to the meeting that was in held in the Vatican for those providing formation in April of this year. He also asked for an assessment of the possibility of shared formation by stages (novitiate, philosophy...), by linguistic areas, so as to be able to share in a better way the resources for formation which are already available.

Fr. Paul Ouedraogo asked for information about the use of psychological assessment during the pathway of formation of a candidate: this could be a useful instrument – to be introduced at the beginning of the educational pathway – in order to identify and personalise a pathway of formation. He also asked whether the Order was organising itself to support the social and civic reintegration of those religious brothers who, already advanced in years, left the Order, and to accompany young candidates in a process of personal integration as regards their families.

The meeting continued with the deliberations of the groups with respect to three specific questions: the revision of the statutes of the 'Rebuschini House'; the sharing of the animation of vocations and styles of formation in individual religious Provinces; and the relationship between religious and the members of the Lay Camillian Family.